The Eternal Roadmap:

ISLAM

Dr. Murat Kaya



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Dr. Murat KAYA

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Translator :	Dr. Mehmet Riza Derindag
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INTRODUCTION

The age we live in is talking about Islam. Islam is on the agenda worldwide. Both believers and non-believers are discussing Islam. Those pondering how humanity will emerge from the crisis of finding meaning in existence and how individuals will overcome their own crises are also talking about Islam. This is because we live in a turbulent era where materialism has been deified. In this turbulent era, believers turn to the primary sources of Islam to understand how its rulings should be interpreted and applied to life to avoid falling into the traps of the self and Satan. It could be said that Muslims are experiencing a greater hunger for knowledge about Islam than ever before. This hunger emerges from a desire for enlightenment.

Humanity is on a profound quest. The turmoil caused by the loss of the meaning of existence is evident, and humans want to overcome it. The path to this is meeting with revelation. And the final revelation is Islam. It would be a great misfortune for a person to be on a quest yet not find their way to Islam, especially in this age of tremendous communication. The path leads to Islam, and it leads with great curiosity and depth.

And the opponents of Islam, they are also striving to generate Islamophobia in this era. They have taken on a sort of roadblock mission. They will stand in the way of humanity and hinder its path to the Truth. Therefore, they launch unimaginable smear campaigns against Islam. They attempt to associate a religion of mercy with violence and aim to attribute the flaws of Muslims to Islam. Moreover, on a global scale, they produce a kind of mischief by misleading the minds of communities that are not sufficiently knowledgeable about Islam.

What should be done in the face of these situations?

Publications that present Islam as a whole and correctly should be produced. Starting from the Qur'an, the blessed words and lives of the Prophet Muhammad, reaching to the rich accumulation of 14 centuries of Islamic culture, aiming to satisfy the hunger for knowledge of Muslims, and the questions and curiosities of searching individuals in the most accurate way, and targeting to satisfy hearts and minds against the sedition of opponents. New publications should be made!

This is an urgent need...

Efforts by Muslims to bring Islam to different social contexts have made this need even more urgent and vital. Dr. Murat Kaya's book "Eternal Roadmap - ISLAM" was born out of such a need.

We know that more works like this are needed. We need books, magazines, audiovisual broadcasts for different societies, different age groups, different segments of society, different genders, in short, to find a voice that can reach all diversities. For this, we need books, magazines, audiovisual broadcasts...

We hope that this book will fill a gap.

We hope it will be read in Turkiye and abroad.

Altınoluk magazine, like the gift books it has given before, will reach tens of thousands of people with this book as well. With this work, we will have given our 27th volume in 24 years (the first gift book we gave, Veliler Ansiklopedisi, was in 4 volumes). Looking at the works we have given as gifts, it can be seen that this is a small library containing the basic subjects of Islam.

Here, we express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Murat Kaya, whom we previously knew through the two-volume book *"Usve-i Hasene,"* and who has brought us this beautiful work. We pray for the continuation and blessings of his scholarly efforts, increasing in abundance.

ALTINOLUK PREFACE

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ
عَلَى رَسُولِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, and blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and all his companions.

We begin by praising our Lord, the One who brought humanity from non-existence into the realm of existence, created them in the most perfect form, and bestowed countless blessings upon them, teaching them the unknown, and showering them with His infinite grace and mercy.

From the very beginning, Islam has been guiding humanity. It has been a guiding light for people, helping them find their way back to the straight path when they went astray, restoring their honor and dignity. We send our endless blessings and peace upon all the prophets, especially our final prophet, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who has been guiding humanity since the first day.

Islam is the common name for the monotheistic religion sent by Allah, from the first prophet, Adam عليه السلام, to the last prophet, Muhammad ﷺ. Our Lord has not accepted any other religion from His servants:

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account." (Ali-Imran, 19)

"And whoever desires other than Islam as religion - never will it be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers." (Ali-Imran, 85)

Because Islam is one unified religion, there can be no difference in faith among the prophets who conveyed it.

The struggle between faith and disbelief, virtue, and vice, has continued throughout history. But an undeniable truth is that the ultimate victory belongs to the path of the prophets. Systems rise and fall, lifetimes come to an end, but the prophets continue. The bitter consequence of a worldly life spent outside the path of religion and prophecy is expressed in the Quran as follows:

"That Day, [all] sovereignty will belong to Allah; He will judge between them. So those who believed and did righteous deeds will be in the Gardens of Pleasure. But those who disbelieved and denied Our verses - for those there will be a humiliating punishment." (Furqan, 26-28)

The path of religion followed by communities in unity with many prophets from Adam عليه السلام onwards reached its perfection in the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Now, the one true religion, pursued for the sake of Allah's pleasure, is Islam, as laid out in the Quran and Sunnah (the practices and teachings of the Prophet). In the Quran, it is stated as follows in an ayah revealed during the Farewell Pilgrimage:

"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion." (Al-Maidah, 3)

Seeking any religion other than Islam is to embark on a path that leads to a dark and regrettable end.

Since Islam is the true religion sent by Allah, it is certain that it will eventually reach its full light and have a wide sphere of influence, as promised by divine prophecy. The efforts of those who try to extinguish this light are destined to be in vain.

For instance, the idolaters of Quraysh once said to the Prophet ﷺ:

"Leave us and our gods, and let us be." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ raised his head and looked at the sky, then he asked them, "Do you see this sun?" They replied, "Yes, we see it." Then, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Can I prevent you

from benefiting from this sunlight?" (Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah, III, 92; Ibn Ishaq, 136)

Once, after returning from a journey, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited his daughter Fatima. After kissing the face and hands of his beloved daughter, he noticed that she was crying. He asked: "My dear Fatima, what's troubling you? Why are you crying?" She replied, "Oh Messenger of Allah, I see that your clothes have become worn, your turban is old, and you look tired and weary." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ then said to his beloved daughter, "Fatima, Allah, the Almighty, has sent your father with a religion that will reach every house and tent on this earth. It will bring honor to those who accept it and humiliation to those who oppose it. This religion will eventually reach even the darkest corners of the night." (Hakim, I, 664/1797; Haythami, VIII, 263)

Today, some people develop a negative opinion about Islam, either influenced by ill-intentioned individuals who seek to tarnish it or due to the ignorance of those who haven't fully understood or embraced Islam. Therefore, one of the most crucial responsibilities of Muslims is to present the most accurate information about Islam to benefit humanity, to exemplify Islam's warmth, elegance, and courtesy through exemplary behavior, and ultimately, to leave the choice to the free will of individuals. It is imperative for Muslims to, at the very least, rescue humanity from intentional negative propaganda against Islam. After understanding Islam correctly, the choice is left to each individual, as our Lord, who adorned humanity with capabilities like reason, perception, and contemplation, wishes them to be treated in this way for the purpose of trial.

If we can contribute even a little to these sincere efforts and services along this path, we will feel fortunate. Religion is the greatest manifestation of Allah's mercy to humanity. Describing the Prophet's ﷺ mission as "A Mercy to the Worlds"[1] is clear evidence of this. Therefore, one of the most important services is to be a means for delivering this divine mercy to people.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "I swear by Allah, if through you, Allah guides one person, it is better for you than the best of camels." (Al-Bukhari, Ashab an-Nabi, 9; Muslim, Fadhail as-Sahaba, 34)

1. Anbiya-107

"May Allah brighten the face of someone who hears my words, comprehends them, and conveys them to others. Many person carries knowledge but he himself not knowledgeable, and many person conveys knowledge to others who are more knowledgeable than he is." (Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 7/2685)

In this book, we first discussed the general characteristics of Islam and attempted to explain its principles in the areas of beliefs, worship, ethics, and transactions. Additionally, we made an effort to provide answers to questions that sometimes arise in people's minds due to either ignorance or deliberate misinformation. Finally, we briefly touched upon the life, character, and miracles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who was sent as a mercy to all worlds. Our greatest hope and wish for this work is to help dispel prejudices against Islam and the Prophet.

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the honorable Osman Nuri TOPBAŞ, who encouraged us to undertake such a project and provided all kinds of material and moral support, and who honored this work with a valuable foreword.

I extend my gratitude to the respected Ahmet Taşgetiren, Prof. Dr. Ethem Cebecioglu, and Prof. Dr. Omer Çelik for their efforts in reading and correcting the book.

My thanks go to Dr. Faruk Kanger, Selim Biçen, Abdurrahman İslam, and all other brothers who contributed to the preparation of this work.

I would also like to express my endless thanks to the administrators and staff of Altınoluk Magazine for meticulously publishing and presenting the book to readers.

May Allah accept this work as an ongoing charity for all of us and make it a means to our eternal happiness!

Ameen!

Dr. Murat KAYA
June 2009
Uskudar

COMMENDATION

Osman Nûri Topbaş

Praise and blessings to Allah, who sustains His humble servants with the joy and tranquility of faith! Salutations and peace upon the Eternal Pride of the Universe, who serves as the means to bring humanity from darkness into light!

Throughout history, Muslims who thoroughly embraced the outward and inward structures of the Qur'an and Sunnah, living Islam with love and fervor in their actions and behavior, showcased a universal civilization of virtues. Sincere believers, filled with passionate faith, became unified hearts.

Despite these blessings, during times when they deviated from Islam and immersed themselves in worldly desires, they lost divine mercy and assistance, diminishing the superiority and respect they once held.

One of the most concrete examples of the rise of Muslim generations during times when they adorned themselves with Islam is our noble ancestors, the Ottomans. They reached a splendor described as, "The envoys of the West were eager to kiss the stirrup." Unfortunately, centuries later, due to turning away from the esteemed spirit of Islam and being deceived by metaphorical affections, the situation reversed. Regrettably, this eventually desolated the realms of hearts and subjected an entire nation to severe trials of humiliation. The yearning for Western imitation, as a means to escape from their own spiritual essence, reached an extreme. The magnificent structure was abandoned, and the worldliness enslaved the souls.

In the end, while the Western world, despite being in the grip of a false religion, ascended with the utilization of the vast and elevated scientific sources of Islam, witnessing many manifestations of guidance, we, as an entire Islamic world, succumbed to the brutality of raw power, the recklessness of the ego. Religion ceased to be a driving force, a source of peace and strength for society, replaced by lifeless rituals. Monumental personalities became extinct.

Yet, with the blessings of Islam, there was a time when heroes of love and fervor, the lions of Badr, those who carried the mercy of climates like Alparslan, and the conquerors who opened new eras in human history with the glad tidings of the Prophet, emerged.

Unfortunately, the enthusiasm that nurtured them has now weakened. The solution to this weakness, unfortunately, became tied to new weaknesses. Some sought this solution in abandoning our magnificent cultural treasures, which also constitute the West, and delving into the dark and dead-end streets of the utopian, theoretical, and imaginary theories of philosophers, who, as shelters of the false, have never brought peace and happiness to humanity.

Thus, those who want to uproot Islam first from the hearts practically and then, in terms of belief, distance it from spirituality seems to have found their way. Darkness fell upon the fate of the Islamic geography.

Therefore, the heartfelt cry of Muhammad Iqbal, the spiritual founder of Pakistan, who is deeply distressed by the loss of the enthusiasm and spiritual vitality in the beliefs, worship, and transactions of Muslims, is not in vain: “Alas! The ecstasy and excitement of love are gone... Even the blood in the veins of Muslims has dried up. Look at the prayers; the rows are crooked, the prostrations lifeless, and there is no peace in the hearts! The divine attraction that comes from within is lost!”

Unfortunately, along with this loss of the joy of faith, a dreadful corruption and moral erosion have emerged in the Islamic world. To the extent that, if I may say so, continuous contaminated winds blow from the disgraceful states of every wicked nation that has suffered divine wrath from Adam until today. People representing every annihilated nation have emerged.

In societies today, there are individuals who exhibit moral degradation lower than the people of Lut; those who succumb to the arrogance and pride of the tribes of ’Ad and Thamud, inviting divine punishment upon themselves by saying, “Who is mightier than us?”; the wretched who turn fraud into an art, reminiscent of the people of Prophet Shuayb; and those who arrogate divinity like the types of Pharaoh and Nimrod. There are also those who compete with them in spreading evil, and many more from the disgraceful remnants of destroyed civilizations.

Increasingly, people are becoming estranged from the magnificent spiritual essence of Islam. Those nurtured by negative television and internet broadcasts are on the rise. Like bewildered masses carried away by a raging flood, there are growing crowds unaware of where they are being dragged.

These observations are not meant to instill despair but to help us better understand the importance and seriousness of the duties and services that lie ahead of us. Because as events and realities are understood, the effort to cultivate necessary virtues begins to revive in hearts.

As long as this effort is alive, those who feel the longing for the virtues, beauties, and magnificence of our glorious past will always exist. Those who are pained by the discord and corruption in society will persist. Those with the desire, excitement, and determination to reach the promised happy days and to transform the world into a civilization of paradise again will endure.

Therefore, today, the most crucial area where effort and attention need to be focused is in serving the faith of our people. We must feel the anguish of the generations lost in the erosion of faith and morality in our conscience. For in our time, pure natures not nurtured with the spirituality of Islam are flowing into wrong and corrupted directions.

Hence, today, honesty, truthfulness, and carrying the identity of Islam are more precious than in previous eras. Displaying virtues and beautiful ethics is more valuable. Serving with a humble heart is more acceptable, and services that will implement these and serve in the right places are more necessary. Because in the view of Islam, the revival of one individual is as valuable a service as the revival of all of humanity. The greatest service to an individual is to be a means for them to be honored with Islam.

It should be remembered that just as those serving in difficult times and dangerous places receive a deprivation allowance and sacrifice bonus, similarly, in today's challenging environment where Islamic ethics are weakened and human qualities are upside down, there are special rewards and rewards for the good deeds and services.

Therefore, we are obliged to revive the Islamic civilization that has been buried in the darkness by the layers of neglect and sin over the past few cen-

turies. We are in the season expressed in the words of the poet Mehmed Akif: "Explaining Islam to the understanding of the era, inspired by the Qur'an."[2]

Indeed, the noble Lord rewards beautiful services rendered for Him on the path to the reformation and salvation of humanity, describing it as a "good loan" and promising a multiplied reward in the eternal realm. (See Al-Baqarah 245; Al-Ma'idah 12; Al-Hadid 11, 18; At-Taghabun 17; Al-Muzzammil 20)

If someone knows the quantity of the yield they will receive, they will not magnify the sacrifice when sowing seeds. Moreover, they will regret not doing more, thinking they could have gained more profit. Similarly, on Judgment Day, this regret will be even more profound.

In this regard, during this season of gain granted to us, we are obliged to increase our efforts. Those who protect their hearts from the evil of selfish desires and live in servitude to God until their last breath are the most fortunate people in the world. Therefore, in this time of great trials, as a means to reach the spiritual ecstasy of the companions and to understand and live Islam's grandeur and greatness correctly from a spiritual perspective, we are in great need.

In this sense, we need this effort and attention for our world and our hereafter. For our minds, our hearts, and our souls. In every respect, we are in need. Because, by our creation, by our nature, we are in need. Because:

ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF FITRAH

Undoubtedly, the greatest gift of the Almighty to humanity is the blessing of "Islam" and "faith." For human nature is molded with divine truths and adorned with sacred capacities. Thus, in the depths of the heart's world of man, there is inherently a sense of truth and a strong need for belief.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expressed this truth in a hadith as follows:

"Every child is born on the natural disposition of Islam (pure and sinless, inclined towards monotheism). Then, his parents make him either a Christian, a Jew, or a Zoroastrian." (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 92; Muslim, Qadr, 22)

2. We must directly convey Islam, inspired from the Qur'an, to the comprehension of the age! (M. Akif Ersoy)

In every person's inner world, there are positive and negative inclinations. However, as a result of Allah's mercy prevailing over His wrath, humans are inherently more inclined toward truth and goodness.

On the other hand, this hadith also demonstrates how much environmental conditions and society influence individuals during childhood. The purity, clarity, and cleanliness of early childhood, if not carefully preserved, can cause the innate tendency towards truth and goodness to be pushed into the subconscious and eventually fade away.

Divine messages awaken individuals from the slumber of neglect in worldly life, turning their attention to eternal truths. Those whose innate inclination toward faith is not dulled naturally and who have not buried it completely in the subconscious accept these messages willingly. Conversely, those who have completely buried their inclination toward faith in their nature fall into destruction within the whirlpool of worldly desires.

Islam brings an unprecedented love for faith, an excitement to become friends with the Almighty, and a joy of attaining closeness to Him to this transient world. For true believers, there is no greater spiritual delight and inner peace than this.

Once faith takes root in the heart, no worldly pressure or benefit can surpass it. Hearts adorned with the blessing of faith live with the excitement of reaching God with love and eagerness, preserving the essential essence of their creation. In their commitment to safeguarding their faith, they hesitate at nothing.

Living with love for faith, the hearts of believers transcend the worldly joys or sorrows in the face of the longing for closeness to God. All worldly difficulties turn into blessings, and hardships transform into mercies. The person who attains this state radiates beauty, grace, kindness, depth of heart, and insight as evidence of their faith. All trials are meant to reveal and manifest this beauty and provide evidence of faith in the sight of the Almighty.

THE PROOF OF FAITH

It is stated in the Quran:

"Do the people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe' and they will not be tried? But We have certainly tried those before them, and Allah

will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars." (Al-Ankabut, 2-3)

It is crucial to remember that "FAITH" is the greatest cause. Every cause and claim require proof. To prove it, there is a need for evidence and witnesses. Almighty Allah tests us, His servants, in various ways in matters of faith and sincerity, asking us to pay its price and prove that we truly possess it.

If someone claims, "I am merciful, patient," but there is no manifestation of patience and mercy in their life, it is a mere verbal claim. However, if a person looks at all creatures with the compassion and mercy of the Creator, serving them to the best of their abilities, they genuinely possess mercy. Thus, one's actions become evidence of their claimed qualities.

The witness of character is the testimony of the required behaviors of that character. Almighty Allah states that one of the responsibilities of the Prophet ﷺ is "witnessing" in divine matters, the faith of the believers, the disbelief of the disbelievers, in both the worldly and the Hereafter.

In the Quranic verses:

"O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness, and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And one who invites to Allah, by His permission, and an illuminating lamp." (Al-Ahzab, 45-47)

To achieve this promise, it is incumbent upon us, the followers of Muhammad, to spend a lifetime approaching the Pinnacle Witness and concentrating on His character. This requires following His path step by step, as we are obliged to do so from every aspect. The duty and responsibility of witnessing mentioned in the verses also apply to the believers. As stated in the Quran:

"Say, 'Do [as you will], for indeed, Allah will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger and the believers.'" (At-Tawbah, 105)

"Thus We have made you an ummah justly balanced that you may be witnesses over mankind, and the Messenger a witness over you." (Al-Baqarah, 143)

In essence, Almighty Allah desires believers to be "witnesses for Allah on Earth" in matters of faith, beliefs, transactions, ethics, and, in short, every aspect of religion. To fulfill this divine desire, the first condition of faith, "Faith in Allah," must be translated into life and attested.

Faith, in its simplest definition, is "confirmation with the heart and verbal acknowledgment." The confirmation with the heart must be free from all doubts and suspicions about the principles of faith, and the heart must be in a state of satisfaction. Thus, faith is not valid if it remains mere words, does not settle in the heart, and does not manifest in actions that determine the course of life.

Through faith, a person becomes a "believer." One of Allah's 99 names is "Al-Mu'min," which means providing security and protection to those who seek refuge, trusting and relying on Him. Allah, who bestows this name upon believers, desires to manifest Himself accordingly in His servants who possess this characteristic. This manifestation serves as evidence of loyalty in faith.

Therefore, proclaiming "I believe in Allah" means having a spiritual state throughout life, questioning whether Allah is pleased with one's actions, thoughts, and feelings, and whether the Prophet ﷺ would smile or turn away. This is the essence of faith. Its perfection lies in the heart gaining sensitivity with this consciousness and awareness.

All the other essential aspects of faith, such as affirming the existence and attributes of angels, sacred scriptures, prophets, the Hereafter, destiny, and acknowledging that good and evil are from Allah, should be evaluated within the same framework. In other words, all messages received should form a high will in the faculties of understanding in mind, heart, conscience, reasoning, and, in short, in all faculties. It must control and direct one's actions in the right direction. Faith can only rise to the level of verification when it progresses from imitation to confirmation.

Otherwise, as the poet says, "The mirror shows a person's nature; words are not considered." A claim of faith that is not confirmed by actions and behaviors cannot go beyond being mere empty words. The intense zeal, worship, service for the sake of Allah, and the excitement of "spreading the word of Allah" in the era of Prophet Muhammad resulted from the rapid and clear dissemination of Islam worldwide.

The lethargy, disarray, chaos, and loss of enthusiasm in the contemporary Islamic world must be attributed to the discrepancy between what is spoken and what is felt in the hearts, moving from the level of form to the level of spirit.

Therefore, today, emphasis must be placed on the affirmation of faith with the heart. Because unless the glitches in the heart's affirmation are overcome,

the verbal acknowledgment is worthless. Consequently, without establishing a solid foundation of faith, a proper Islamic personality cannot be formed.

In parallel to this, religious education does not merely consist of storing information from books in a dry and abstract manner. That is why the Qur'an describes those who do not digest religious knowledge with their hearts, unable to reflect it in their state and behavior, as loaded donkeys of books.[3]

Because religion is, above all, a matter of love. Without sincere love, neither loyalty, submission, nor obedience is in harmony with divine consent. It is essential for the information in the lines to be felt in the hearts, intellectually and spiritually digested, and, as the most natural result, reflected in actions in the form of righteous deeds, living the life of "taqwa" (piety). And this can only happen through love. Indeed, love is the indispensable key to taqwa. Taqwa is so crucial that it is mentioned in various forms 258 times in the Qur'an. If we briefly describe the meanings intended by it in terms of context and essence:

Taqwa is the art of being a servant to Allah. Taqwa is not disturbing the balance in the face of changing conditions and the ebb and flow of life. Taqwa is to receive a share from the morality and spiritual sensitivities of the Prophet ﷺ. Taqwa is restraining carnal desires and developing spiritual abilities. Taqwa is gaining sensitivity in compliance with halal-haram standards and protecting the heart from the stains of sin. Taqwa is performing the conditions of Islam with humility and experiencing the excitement of faith. Taqwa is the transformation of hearts into a divine observatory.

In essence, taqwa, the core of servitude, is the manifestation of a harmonious integrity in faith, worship, transactions, and ethics, displaying the Islamic personality in every aspect of life. To manifest all these descriptions, it is essential to strive in worship with love and eagerness, expressing gratitude and humility for all the blessings bestowed upon us by Almighty Allah, especially making more efforts to pay the price of the blessing of faith.

PAYING THE PRICE OF FAITH

Claiming ownership of something without paying its price is a futile pursuit. To be a believer means being willing to pay any price for the sake

3. See: Al-Jumu'ah, 5.

of faith. The fundamentals of faith begin with belief in Allah. Allah, in the Qur'an, provides exemplary instances of how belief in Allah should be practiced with loyalty and submission.

For example, the magicians of Pharaoh. Faced with clear miracles, they honored Allah with belief. Pharaoh, the tyrant who claimed divinity, became furious when his magicians believed in Prophet Musa عليه السلام and his Lord. Unable to make them renounce their faith, Pharaoh resorted to severe punishment by crucifying them, cutting off their hands and feet, and hanging them on palm trunks.

However, these fortunate individuals did not waver in the face of Pharaoh's unbearable torment. They challenged him with the courage of faith, saying, "Your tyranny belongs to this world; you are free in your rule and behavior. Eventually, we will be returned to our Lord!" They did not beg for mercy from the tyrant Pharaoh, maintaining their Islamic character and dignity. They only relied on and sought refuge in Allah. Before becoming martyrs, they prayed, "O Lord! Bestow patience upon us and take our souls in a state of submission as Muslims" (Al-A'raf, 126).

In other words, after being honored with faith, they did not incline toward Pharaoh's worldly reign or heed his threats. What concerned them the most was to live the declaration of "I believe in Allah" without any compromise, without showing any human weakness or giving up their faith. Therefore, in their supplication to Allah:

"O Lord! Save us from this misguidance, forgive us this time, and forgive our souls" (Al-A'raf, 126), instead of falling into worldly panic, they said, "O Lord! Bestow patience upon us and take our souls as Muslims." In the end, they reached their Lord in the ecstasy of martyrdom.

Similarly, in the early spread of Christianity, the Romans, Greeks, and idolaters united to throw the people of faith into arenas and circuses, where they were torn apart by lions. However, those believers fought not for survival amidst the teeth of lions, but rather for the struggle to save their faith. Because for them, patience in the face of this severe injustice meant preferring the lofty reward in the sight of Allah. The taste of faith nullified all their pains.

The story of Habib the Carpenter mentioned in verses 13 to 27 of Surah Yasin is also noteworthy in this regard. Habib the Carpenter was stoned to

death by his people for being honored with faith and working to guide them. Even when he felt that he would be killed, he did not incline towards any compromise. The strength of faith he showed in patience did not create any cracks in his heart. When, at his last breath as the curtains of this world closed, the windows of the realm he would go to opened, revealing the divine favors he would attain, he exclaimed, in the words of the Quran: "…Ah, I wish my people knew how my Lord forgave me and made me one of the honored ones!" (Yasin, 26-27). In other words, even at the moment of his martyrdom, he pitied the ignorance and wretchedness of his people who had stoned him.

Again, tyrants threw the people of faith into pits filled with fire as a punishment for their faith. Yet, those sincere believers did not abandon their beliefs in the face of this oppression. Fearlessly walking towards death for the sake of their cause, they gratefully paid the price of their faith to Allah. Because those who fear Allah properly have no fear of anything else.

Islamic history is filled with countless examples in this regard. Besides the examples shown by previous nations, the lives of the Companions contain completely different illustrations. Therefore, Allah Himself presents the Companions to us as an example in the application of the "I believe" principles and praises them in the Qur'anic verse:

"The first forerunners [in faith] among the Muhajireen (emigrants) and the Ansar (helpers), and those who followed them with good conduct, Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. And He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide eternally. That is the great attainment." (At-Tawbah, 100).

It can be said that the life of the Companions, who walked in the footsteps of the Companions and followed their example, is the most detailed interpretation of this Qur'anic verse. Because they matured under the guidance of the Prophet to the extent that they lived with faith until their last breaths, generously sacrificing their lives and wealth for the sake of Allah.

Especially the first Muslims...

The hearts that turned an era of ignorance into a magnificent age of bliss, characterized by loyalty, sacrifice, and submission. Unyielding individuals, unwavering even in the strongest winds, and hearts with steadfast faith that withstand the most severe shocks.



They are the ones who, during the thirteen years from the Makkah period until the Hijra, paid the price of their faith most intensively. They faced the toughest trials: hunger, oppression, embargo, torture, migration, separation from wealth, family, and children, and ultimately, the sacrifice of their lives with profound patience and perseverance.

Before Islam, Sumayyah ﵂, who used to fear even a needle prick, after tasting the sublime pleasure of faith, showed immense tolerance when the polytheists pierced her body with hot irons. She never compromised her sincere faith, enduring tortures beyond the imagination of wild animals. She was then tied to two camels and torn apart like a beast, martyred in a gruesome manner.

Her husband, Yasir ﵁, despite being old and weak, displayed patience beyond endurance and eventually drank the cup of martyrdom. Thus, the Yasir family became the first martyrs of Islam, living their faith with love and paying its price with their lives.

The struggle for monotheism by Bilal ﵁ is also a captivating example. Despite the brutal tortures inflicted by the raging and crazed polytheists, Bilal rejected idolatry, uttering, "Ahad, Ahad, Ahad!" even as his black skin bled red. He experienced the spiritual pleasure of being a witness of Allah on Earth, surpassing pain and suffering.

During Umar's ﵁ caliphate, while conversing with Habbab bin Eret, one of the early Muslims, he asked about the tortures Habbab endured for the sake of Allah. When Habbab showed his back, Umar was astonished, saying, "I have never seen the back of a person so severely damaged in my life." Habbab continued, "The disbelievers would burn me and lay me on the coals without clothes. The fire would only be extinguished by the fat melting from my back."

In the early years of Islam, polytheists subjected believers to such tortures, but they still could not make them utter the blasphemies they desired. The excitement of faith surpassed all worldly pains.

In contrast to the desire and concern of today's humanity for a slightly more comfortable and longer life in this world, the greatest wish of the generation of companions, who made the "Amantu" principles the axis of their



lives, was to transition to the Hereafter with an effort to pay the price of their faith, with honor, conscience, and a pure heart.

For the Companions, the most enjoyable and meaningful moments of life were when they conveyed the message of monotheism—performing the duty of "enjoining good and forbidding evil." An example of this is a Companion thanking his unfortunate executioner, saying, "So, I have three minutes to convey the truth to you. Hopefully, you will find guidance."

This reflects the consciousness and depth of love among the companions who were raised under the guidance of the Prophet. They truly understood the greatness of the blessing of Islam. With this understanding and love, they knew how to open the doors of honor and dignity in both worlds. Their transient lives passed in compliance with the command: "O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims." (Ali-Imran, 102).

Thus, they achieved true and eternal life. Even during their lifetimes, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had given them the glad tidings of paradise.

They rejoiced because;

- They knew how to harmoniously use the functions of mind and heart that lead a believer to perfection. They deepened contemplation by keeping excitement and love alive. They lived with the awareness that this world is a testing ground. Their hearts became familiar with the divine majesty and power. The ignorant society transformed into a community of true knowledge and wisdom. They traveled to China, Samarkand, and later to Andalusia for enjoining good and forbidding evil.

- The generation of companions abandoned worldly comforts for the eternal salvation of humanity. In challenging conditions, they quickly spread the banner of Islam across a vast geography. Unbearable hardships never made them weary or tired.

- Because they shaped eras with the virtuous legacy they left behind, offering a century of happiness to humanity.

- Because they centered friendship around Allah and His Messenger. They directed their lives toward earning Allah's pleasure. Their hearts were



filled with the sublime excitement of, "How does Allah want us to be? How does the Prophet want to see us?"

- Because they were living examples of the miracle of the Qur'an.

- Because they placed monotheism at the center of thought and ideals, successfully discarding worldly benefits, or idols, from their hearts. Wealth and life became means. They lived a life of asceticism. Excessive consumption, gluttony, luxury, and show were lifestyles they never knew.

- Because they always understood the reality: "Tomorrow, this body's dwelling will be the grave. The real life is the afterlife!" Therefore, they avoided allocating worldly blessings to themselves and refrained from excessive use. They used blessings as a means for the guidance and happiness of humanity, with the taste and excitement of faith.

- Because, being shaped by the ethics of the Prophet, they became exceptional believers filled with Allah's compassion and mercy. Their hearts expanded with mercy, and service became a way of life.

- Because they faced all kinds of torture, oppression, and injustice, yet never compromised their values. They left their possessions, properties, and homes, migrating to uphold Allah's commandments, sacrificing everything for this cause.

- Because they knew that failing to make sacrifices and efforts to prove loyalty to faith could lead to spiritual destruction. For instance, due to the difficulty of the Tabuk Expedition, Abu Hayshima initially stayed in Medina but, upon reflection, joined the Islamic army, abandoning a luxurious meal prepared for him.

This reflection led to his repentance, and the Prophet, pleased with his action, prayed for his forgiveness. The journey for the sake of Allah was a divine selection, determining the sincerity of those who participated and revealing the insincerity of those who stayed behind. The same perspective should be applied to all efforts and services for the sake of Allah. Neglecting or being indifferent to the opportunities for service in Allah's way is an action incompatible with true faith.

Uqbah bin Nafi, a distinguished commander of the "Tabi'in" generation who followed the footsteps of the Companions, had a notable statement after



carrying the banner of Tawhid to Africa. When he conquered Kairouan, he appointed Zuhayr bin Qays as the governor and declared, "I have sold my soul to Allah. I will continue to fight against those who deny Allah until my last breath." He expressed the excitement of spreading the word of Allah, and indeed, after numerous victories, he reached the ocean.

Uqbah raised his hands in supplication, saying, "O my Lord! If there were no ocean, I would have continued to advance in the cities ahead in the struggle for Your cause."[4] Thus, he revealed the spiritual horizon of a believer living with love for faith. Similarly, the soldiers of Fatih who climbed the walls of Istanbul to attain the glad tidings of the Prophet said, "Today is our turn to become martyrs," willingly sacrificing their lives.

All these examples are just a few instances of the translation of the principles of faith, the "Amantu," into actions and the realization of life in its true sense. The better one understands the "Amantu," and the more it reflects in one's life, the more beauty, integrity, and harmony emerge in their life. In other words, a person's life is filled with the manifestations and blessings of monotheism.

ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF TAWHEED

Living the phrase «لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ» (There is no deity but Allah) is the ability to dedicate the heart solely to Allah in matters of divinity and servitude. Allah is "One," meaning there is no possibility of a second. Therefore, belief in the oneness and uniqueness (wahdaniyyah) of Allah's essence must be categorical, leaving no room for the possibility of a second existence. Islam demands and commands this. It is the first step in embracing Islam.

The first part of the Tawheed phrase is «لَآ إِلٰهَ» (There is no deity). This is a denial that encompasses all material and spiritual gods residing in the heart. The heart, where Tawheed will find its place, must first be cleansed from all opposing entities, worldly impurities, and selfish filth. This purification must be done with sincerity and devotion. In other words, the creed of Tawheed should be safeguarded from the pollution of minor polytheism known as "riya" (showing off). Riyaa involves associating a mortal being with intentions and actions that should be exclusively dedicated to Allah. Even though it might seem outwardly that a person is worshiping a single deity,

4. Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, Beirut, 1385, IV, 105-106.



in reality, they become a slave to their selfish desires and worldly interests. Unbeknownst to them, they fall into the folly of serving others besides Allah.

The greatest misfortune for a person is to abandon their Creator and become a slave to mortals and selfish desires like themselves. Indeed, the Qur'an questions: "Do you see the one who has taken as his god his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?" (Al-Furqan, 43)

The question in this verse emphasizes that the creed of Tawheed tolerates no partnership in any form. Because the One and Only Allah cannot have any mortal partner or desires turned into idolatry! Likewise, the testimony of faith is, first of all, the proclamation of this truth.

On the other hand, in the testimony of faith, after bearing witness that there is no god but Allah, we also bear witness that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the "servant" and "Messenger" of Allah. Therefore, while Allah affirms to us His most beloved servant and Messenger, He specifically emphasizes His "servitude."

Servitude...

Ascending to the divine presence, the greatest opportunity and the greatest sovereignty granted to mankind...

Those who can truly be servants to Allah with these qualities are freed from servitude to anyone other than Allah. Indeed, there has never been a greater sovereignty than servitude to Allah.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ became the sultan of the prophets as the "Servant Prophet." Thus, the pinnacle of true Tawheed, namely servitude to Allah alone, is embodied in Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. We, as the ummah of Muhammad, follow the caller to Tawheed.

He is our ultimate example in everything, especially in servitude. In terms of servitude, there is an unparalleled model in him. Hence, in the declaration of faith, when Allah says, "And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger," He wants us to acknowledge and confirm Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the greatest practical benchmark and an unparalleled exemplary personality for us, both in heart and action.



Because humans are born in need of training. They can mature in the realm of life and servitude through the teachings and lessons of the prophets and their successors, who are the greatest educators and teachers. Otherwise, they become fools who worship their desires and whims, facing divine wrath and sinking from one loss to another. In expressing this reality, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ states: "The thing that Allah most dislikes among the things of the earth is unbridled desires." (Haythami, I, 188)

Therefore, the foremost task is to purify the heart by abandoning base desires contrary to the spirit of Tawheed and by purging oneself from worldly attachments. The heart must be thoroughly cleansed so that the secret of the Tawheed phrase "لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ" (There is no deity but Allah), i.e., the perfect manifestation of Allah's beautiful attributes, can be realized.

Only then does the heart embark on the path of companionship with Allah, ultimately forming a complete Islamic character. This character elevates a person to the honor and blessedness of being Allah's representative on Earth.

In conclusion, the only way to grasp the reality of Tawheed is through spiritual training. This training is dependent on wholeheartedly submitting to the guidance of true spiritual guides, the enlightened guides of hearts. These blessed guides are the "heirs of the prophets" (*warathatu'l-anbiyâ*), the inheritors of the prophets. They are the friends of Allah, the scholars, and the mystics. They have perfected both the outward and inward, traversing the stages of the heart to achieve the pinnacle of prophetic guidance and behavioral excellence over time.

In essence, they are practical and tangible guides of virtues for those who couldn't have the honor of witnessing the Prophet and his companions. They strive to free their disciples from being entangled in worldly attachments in the stages of worldly love to dedicate the throne of the heart solely to Allah.

Because humans are born with an innate inclination to worship, if this tendency is not correctly dedicated, worldly affections begin to deify in the heart. Unfortunately, while hoping for personal benefits and comfort in a self-directed course, one finds themselves in the midst of eternal loss. This is akin to the pure and clear water of a spring, which, if not directed correctly,

ends up wasted in the wrong places, far from the fertile lands where it could nourish and grow.

What are these worldly affections that devastate and deify the human being? For some, it is wealth and possessions, for others, status and rank, for some, children, and for others, the opposite gender.

These are essentially double-edged swords for humanity. They are both opportunities for benefit and eternal disaster and loss if they are deified in the heart. Therefore, it is essential to break every kind of idol within and dedicate the heart only to Allah. Those who can achieve this become Allah's intimate friends, His "Halil." Indeed, Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام is an exceptional example in this regard.

According to a narration, when Allah made Ibrahim His friend, the angels questioned, "O our Lord! How can Ibrahim be Your friend? He has personal desires, wealth, and children. His heart inclines toward them." This led to witnessing a profound scene of trial and lesson:

When Ibrahim was about to be thrown into the fire with a catapult, the angels were excited. Some of them asked Allah for permission to help Ibrahim. When the angels inquired if Ibrahim had any wishes, he said, "Do not interfere between a friend and his friend! If my Lord wishes to save me, it is from His grace. If He allows me to burn, it is my fault. I will be patient, in shaa Allah!"

Then Gabriel came and asked, "Do you have any needs?" Ibrahim replied, "I have no need of you. Only the one who kindled the fire can extinguish it. Allah is sufficient for me; He is the best Guardian!" (See Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, II, 29; Ahmad bin Hanbal, Zuhd, p. 80; Thabari, Tarih, I, 242; Ibn Asir, al-Kâmil, I, 99)

Indeed, upon the lofty surrender and reliance of the Friend of Allah (Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him), before he even fell into the fire, Allah, the Almighty, commanded:

"O fire, be cool and safe upon Ibrahim!" (Al-Anbiya', 69)

With this command, the place where Ibrahim عليه السلام fell suddenly turned into a rose garden. There, a sweet spring started to bubble and flow.

Later, as Ibrahim عليه السلام took his son Isma'il عليه السلام to fulfill the oath he made to Allah by sacrificing him, the angels were once again stirred:

"A prophet is taking his future-prophet son to sacrifice!" they exclaimed.

Ismail عليه السلام said to his father, Ibrahim عليه السلام:

"Oh, my father! Carry out the command you have been given. Insha'Allah (God willing), you will find me among the patient. Sharpen your knife well; a quick cut will make giving life easier. Don't look at my face when you draw the knife; perhaps, with paternal affection, you might hesitate. My concern is that, by sacrificing your own child, you may never forget the pain and yearning throughout your life."

While father and son struggled in the whirlpools of submission, the angel Gabriel عليه السلام intervened, blunted the knife, and brought a ram from heaven.

Allah, in His infinite generosity, granted Ibrahim countless flocks of sheep. Gabriel عليه السلام, appearing in human form, inquired:

"Whose are these flocks? Can you sell me a flock?"

Ibrahim عليه السلام replied:

"These flocks belong to my Lord. They are currently in my possession as a trust. If you mention His name once, you can take one-third; if you mention it three times, take them all."

When Gabriel عليه السلام recited, "*Subbuhun Quddusun Rabbuna wa Rabbu al-Mala'ikati wa al-Ruh*" (Glory be to Allah, the Holy One, our Lord and the Lord of the Angels and the Spirit), Ibrahim عليه السلام said:

"Take them, all are yours."

Gabriel عليه السلام responded:

"I cannot take them, for I am not human; I am Gabriel."

Ibrahim عليه السلام said:

"If you are Gabriel, then I am the Friend of Allah (Halil). What I have given, I cannot take back."

Finally, Ibrahim sold all the flocks, bought property, and endowed it. (Bursevi, Ruhu'l-Bayan, [Al-Baqarah, 262])

In essence, Ibrahim عليه السلام underwent a severe trial involving the three most cherished aspects of the heart: life, offspring, and wealth. In each case, he



demonstrated submission to Allah. He showcased that love and submission to Allah are above all else.

Our Lord praised him as follows:

"O Ibrahim, you have fulfilled the vision! Thus do We reward the doers of good. Indeed, this was the clear trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him favorable mention among later generations: 'Peace be upon Ibrahim.'" (As-Saffat,104-109)

Thus, the friendship of Ibrahim عليه السلام with Allah was confirmed.

The reality taught by this confirmed friendship is that when the heart is dedicated solely to Allah, the hardships become inconsequential in the face of His satisfaction. One of the countless examples of this is found in the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

When the Prophet went to Ta'if to convey Islam, the ignorant and idolatrous people first ridiculed him, then began to insult him. Afterwards, they humiliated him by throwing stones along the path, while his companions shielded him with their bodies. His blessed feet became soaked in blood, and his shoes filled with blood. Zaid رضي الله عنه, who protected him from the thrown stones, also got injured.

The Light of Existence (Prophet Muhammad) returned, walking in a sorrowful state. The earth, the sky, and the angels were all in sorrow. Allah consoled His Beloved by sending Gabriel and the Angel of the Mountains. The Angel of the Mountains offered to crush the people of Ta'if between two mountains, waiting only for a command. The Prophet, however, declined:

"No, I hope that Allah will bring forth from their descendants a people who worship Allah alone and associate nothing with Him."

Even in the face of such torment, the Merciful Prophet did not curse his people; rather, he prayed for their guidance:

"O Allah! I complain to You of my weakness, my helplessness, and my humiliation before the people. O Most Merciful of the merciful! If You are not angry with me, I do not care, but Your favor is more expansive for me. I seek refuge in the light of Your face, by which all darkness is dispelled, and every affair of this world and the next is set right, lest Your anger or Your displeasure descend upon me. I desire Your pleasure and satisfaction until



You are pleased. There is no power and no might except by You." (Ibn Hisham, II, 29-30; Haythami, VI, 35)

Thus, Prophet Muhammad, like his ancestor Ibrahim عليه السلام, confirmed his heartfelt loyalty to Allah. He did not waver in the face of any suffering in the way of Allah, always praying for Allah's satisfaction.

Even at the time of his passing, he expressed a longing and eagerness to meet Allah, saying: Ala rafeeq -u' a'la- to The Highest Companion, to the Highest Companion!" He left the legacy of Islam's character and personality, summarized in the Quran and the Sunnah, as an invaluable guidance for his Ummah.

He adorned this guidance in his worship life with the most beautiful examples, demonstrating that the beauty of Islam manifests in proportion to its reflection in worship.

WORSHIP LIFE IN ISLAM

The spiritual aspect of Islam is based on the fundamental principles of faith, which we mentioned as the "Amantu." The practical aspect consists of the rules regarding worship, transactions, and law found in the Quran and Sunnah.

The elevation of faith in a believer is dependent on intentions and actions that seek Allah's pleasure, known as righteous deeds. In the Quran and Hadith, faith and righteous deeds are often mentioned together because faith does not reach perfection merely through theoretical knowledge. Its perfection occurs through understanding the truths felt in the heart and practicing the required spirituality in worship. Faith that is not adorned with worship and righteous deeds is like a light without protection, always under great danger and risk in the face of worldly and demonic storms.

Therefore, we are obliged to protect our religion and faith like a spiritual armor through worship and righteous deeds. It should be remembered that Allah is in no need of anything, including our worship. However, our need to express servitude, obedience, gratitude to Him, to attain His approval, elevate our spiritual life, obtain a pure heart, and to achieve closeness and friendship with Him requires us to fulfill the worship and righteous deeds He has prescribed. These are, in fact, divine favors bestowed upon us, more valuable



than water or air. This is because the need of the soul is more critical and essential than the needs of the body.

Rumi beautifully expresses this concept:

"Do not strive to feed and develop your body too much, for it is like a sacrificial offering that will eventually be given to the earth. Strive to feed your soul! The one who will ascend and be honored is the soul."

"Do not give your body oily and sweet things in abundance. Feeding the body leads to carnal desires, and it ultimately ends up being humiliated."

"Give spiritual food to the soul: mature thinking, subtle understanding, and spiritual nourishment so that it may go strong and vigorous to its destination."

In a Quranic verse, Allah commands, "Prostrate and come close!" (Al-'Alaq, 19) and rewards those hearts of the knowers and lovers who obey this divine command with a special closeness and friendship.

This is also expressed in a Hadith Qudsi:

"If anyone shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him. My servant draws near to Me with nothing more loved by Me than the religious duties I have imposed upon him. My servant continues to draw near to Me with Nafilah (supererogatory) deeds until I love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it." (Al-Bukhari, Riqāq, 38; Ahmad, VI, 256; Haythamī, II, 248)

In this statement, Allah informs that the way to closeness to Him is through worship and righteous deeds. Acceptable worship and righteous deeds are, in fact, divine graces reserved for us as we have a need for them. Since the need is ours, the prescribed worship and righteous deeds are commands aimed at fulfilling that need. Even more, these acts are more valuable than water or air because the need of the soul is more critical and essential than the needs of the body.

We need to keep in mind that faith does not reach its peak only with theoretical knowledge; rather, it is a result of deep understanding in the heart



and performing worship with spiritual consciousness and adherence to its etiquette. Living in this manner, worship in a state of humility requires living in a state of "ihsan" (perfection). The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ defined the state of ihsan in a hadith:

"Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not achieve this state of devotion, then consider that He sees you." (Muslim, Imân, 1)

In other words, the state of ihsan is to always be conscious that we are under the observation of divine cameras and to internalize a sense of awareness and understanding in the heart, thus being able to perform servitude in humility.

In summary, all worship must be performed with spiritual sensitivity. Undoubtedly, the foremost among worship is;

Daily Prayers

Salat (five daily prayers) which is the pillar of religion, the ascension of the believer, and the meeting with Allah. Our Lord does not accept prayer that is merely performed in form and physically, without the soul's participation. In fact, He says: "Woe to those who perform prayer, those who are neglectful of their prayers." (Al-Maaun, 4-5)

He declares satisfaction with a prayer as follows: "Certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive." (Al-Mu'minun, 1-2)

The peak of humility in prayer, as expressed by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is: "Perform your prayers as if bidding farewell to life." (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 15; Musnad Ahmad, V, 412)

Just as the body's direction in prayer is the Kaaba, the heart's direction should be Allah. A prayer performed with adherence to both outward and inward etiquette becomes a shield that protects the worshipper from errors, excesses, and transgressing limits. In a verse, it is stated: "Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing..." (Al-Ankabut, 45) This means that if a person is not properly avoiding evils while performing prayers, it indicates that the prayer offered is not accepted or, at the very least, has shortcomings.

In a hadith, it is said: "A servant may pray, and nothing of his prayer is written except one-tenth, one-ninth, one-eighth, one-seventh, one-sixth, one-



fifth, one-fourth, one-third, or one-half of it." (Abu Dawood, Salat, 123-124/796; Ahmad, IV, 321) This emphasizes that only prayers offered with spiritual feelings, humility, and tranquility have elevated rewards and prevent wrongdoing. Any deficiency in this regard results in a proportionate portion of the prayer being disregarded or wasted.

To prevent prayers from being in vain, Allah intends for His servants to lead a life of worship that culminates in reunion, involving both heart and body. This divine intention is not exclusively for the prayer but encompasses all worship, including fasting, pilgrimage, charity, etc. Each act of worship contributes different spiritual nourishments to the human soul, similar to the body requiring various vitamins. It is essential for the soul to be nourished by different acts of worship. Each has its own importance. The significance of prayer is different from fasting, and so on.

Fasting

Fasting is not merely abstaining from eating for a specific period. Fasting is not limited to the stomach; it requires the participation of all limbs in this worship. Diminishing the reward of fasting, one of the five fundamental principles of Islam, by engaging in weaknesses such as lying, backbiting, and being offensive is a great waste. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "If someone does not give up lying and deceitful actions, Allah does not care if he abstains from food and drink." (Al-Bukhari, Sawm 8, Adab 51)

Therefore, in addition to being cautious about not letting anything enter the mouth during fasting, one should also be careful not to utter a wrong expression from the mouth. A fast observed with adherence to its etiquettes leads the servant to a spiritual discipline. As a result of this discipline, feelings of compassion and kindness in the heart flourish, and a share is taken from the attribute of "the Most Merciful" of Allah.

Furthermore, fasting is a school of discipline that calms the storms of desires and excesses in the hearts and teaches the virtue of patience. Such a fast becomes a shield against Hell. A fast observed in a perfect manner makes one reflect on the value of the blessings given by Allah, encourages gratitude and praise, teaches understanding the plight of the poor, awakens echoes of mercy in the hearts in response to the cries of the needy, elevates kindness and



mercy above all mortal desires, revives the feeling of helping the helpless, and refines the soul with sublime consciousness of servitude.

Indeed, every sincere act of worship has numerous benefits that inspire enthusiasm for the performance of other acts of worship. For example, prayer encourages fasting, and fasting encourages charity.

Zakat

In Islam, wealth and property belong neither to the individual nor to society; rather, they belong to Allah. A person is only a temporary custodian of it. As stated in the Quran:

"O mankind, you are those in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy." (Fatir, 15)

Giving zakat is an expression of the awareness and consciousness that wealth belongs to Allah. A believer should use the blessings given by Allah with care, as one day they will be held accountable for it. As mentioned in the Quran: "And you will surely be asked about the favors." (At-Takathur, 8)

This reality should be a guiding principle for deep contemplation and self-reflection in the hearts of all believers, making them evaluate the numerous blessings given, such as body, soul, possessions, the world, and life. This awareness enables the evaluation of each blessing with a sense of divine trust. Consequently, it helps maintain the necessary manners and etiquette in financial worship. Just like in all acts of worship, adherence to both outward and inward principles and manners is essential in giving zakat and charity.

Allah says:

"Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by heart breaking. And Allah is Free of need and forbearing. O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders or hurting..." (Al-Baqarah, 263-264)

Therefore, boasting and hurting the needy through acts of charity due to heart diseases like hypocrisy and arrogance is to nullify the reward of the good deeds. It is as absurd as building a beautiful house and then burning it. Thus, acting in accordance with Allah's approval by eliminating the extravagance of the ego is necessary.



In the same context, a believer should make a diligent effort to give zakat to the deserving. Allah praises such individuals: "Indeed, they who [actively] give zakat are those who [heartedly] believe." (Al-Mu'minun, 4) This is a sign of sincerity and humility in the heart.

Giving zakat and charity to the deserving is a significant virtue. Conducting thorough research, recognizing the needy faces, and making it a heartfelt sensitivity are crucial. This is one of the most important commands of our Lord [5]. The heart should gain such delicacy, refinement, and kindness that it can read the suffering of the needy like an X-ray.

In essence, the places where zakat and charity are given reflect the degree of the lawfulness of earnings. This financial worship, although seemingly material, unfolds its beauty and virtue in a spiritual and ethical realm, becoming acceptable and pleasing to Allah. Just like the pilgrimage (Hajj) ritual.

Hajj

The pilgrimage, a worship that unites all believers worldwide, is like entering a shroud with pure white ihram garments. It is to partake in the submission of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Hajj and Umrah are the means to develop spiritual virtues and capacities through submission to Allah.

In the pilgrimage, neglecting the rights and justice of others, engaging in frivolities, and behaving in a way that distracts from spirituality and divine grace nullify the reward of this worship.

Like all other acts of worship, Hajj and Umrah should be performed with a heartfelt sensitivity. This worship is an effort to partake in the delicacy of the angels within the pure white ihram. Both male and female believers should protect themselves from inappropriate postures, such as revealing parts of the body, while performing the Tawaf, Sa'i, and standing at Arafat. They should avoid looking down upon others and stay away from arguments.

While in ihram, hunting should not be allowed, and animals should not be shown to hunters. Not even a single plant should be deliberately picked. Those in ihram feel the need to stay away from doubtful and forbidden things, considering the prohibition of even certain permissible things for a specified period. They develop a sense of compassion, mercy, delicacy, and, especial-

5. See: al-Baqarah, 273.



ly, an awareness of not causing harm to others and avoiding being harmed. Hearts become refined, reaching the pinnacle of kindness and elegance, representing the smiling face of Islam.

Therefore, adherence to divine commands and prohibitions is crucial, especially during the pilgrimage. Since Hajj is a financial and physical worship, the financial amount required for it should be earned from lawful sources.

In a hadith, it is stated that a person who performs Hajj with unlawfully earned money will be told during the Talbiyah, "You are not welcome; neither 'Labbayk' nor 'Sa'dayk' is for you. Your earnings are unlawful, your provisions are unlawful, and your means of transportation are unlawful. Return as a sinner without receiving any reward! Be prepared to face unpleasant consequences!" (Haythami, III, 209-210)

Therefore, those intending to perform Hajj should be cautious about not engaging in anything that contradicts this spiritual obedience. This way, they can have a pilgrimage that is true to its essence and spirit.

Rumi, providing an illuminating perspective on performing all acts of worship, including Hajj, in a way that suits their spiritual essence, summarizes the essence of the matter with the concise phrase: "Do not sacrifice the shade of the goat!" Because to forget the essence, the core, and the spirit of the matter and to be occupied only with its shadow is nothing more than an empty delusion. Performing acts of worship without spiritual depth, carelessly, and without penetrating their heart leads to the loss of expected benefits and blessings. Only fatigue remains.

Therefore, a believer should strive to perform their acts of worship in the best way possible, with a heartfelt sensitivity as if seeing Allah, in line with divine commands. One should remember that the material world we live in is temporary. Compared to the true life of the hereafter, the world is a realm of shadows, a land of dreams and illusions. In worshipping in the world, it is essential not only to stay on the surface but also to penetrate the essence, not to progress from imitation to verification; otherwise, one is prevented from reaching the intended goal.

This is similar to someone wanting to eat a walnut being obliged to break its shell to open it. Similarly, to reach the pleasure of Allah, it is essential not



to be satisfied with the mere appearance of servitude, not to be able to penetrate its essence, and to be able to penetrate its spirit.

All acts of worship hold value when performed within the heart and body, because they affect the heart, the soul, and all actions and behaviors of a person. Tremendous beauty and perfection emerge when this is done with an exquisite spiritual beauty.

TRANSACTIONS AND INTERACTIONS IN ISLAM

Transactions (Muâmalât) are one of the fundamental principles of Islam. Unfortunately, due to the negative influences of materialistic and rationalist views prevailing throughout the Islamic world for a long time, the transactional aspect of the noble Islamic religion has often been neglected. Therefore, to truly understand Islam and integrate it into every aspect of life, it is crucial to first learn the principles related to "transactions" in this religion.

Islam is not a system like the distorted Christianity that imprisons the connection between the servant's heart and Allah, having no application in other areas of life. Islam has conveyed a worldview and behavioral principles that encompass all aspects of life. It has regulated the duties, responsibilities, and rights of individuals who make up societies, from personal and daily life to family life, kinship, and neighborly relations, as well as commercial and economic activities, educational, disciplinary, and guidance services, and social order and peace-maintaining social norms, in every field, with the punitive measures to be applied in case of their violation. It has organized all aspects of life, leaving no area vacant.

A Muslim is obliged not only to live his individual life in line with Islam but also to organize his social interactions with others according to the commandments of Allah. In other words, he must dominate Islam in every aspect of his life. Someone who cannot succeed in this cannot attain the status of a righteous believer.

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"The one who possesses bad character will not enter Paradise." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 29/1946)

Umar ﷺ also said:



"Do not look at the prayer a person performs or the fasting he observes; instead,

- Look if he speaks the truth when he talks,
- Observe whether he fulfills his trust when entrusted,
- See if he considers the lawful and the unlawful while involved in worldly matters." (Al-Bayhaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, VI, 288; Shuab, IV, 230, 326)

In other words, the spiritual level of a believer is perfected through both individual life and proper social interactions.

When we talk about transactions (Muâmalât), principles such as justice, respect for the rights of others, forgiveness, cooperation, and, in short, being well-mannered in all aspects of human relations in family, kinship, and neighborhood, social and economic fields, and, in short, every stage of life, come to mind.

Now, let's briefly touch upon some of these:

Family Life: Humans, by their nature, need to establish a family and live within it. However, for the peace and happiness of the family, it is essential that family members know their rights and responsibilities and adhere to them.

Father: Should educate and provide for his wife and children, preparing them for the two worlds by raising them with the best manners. Besides material wealth, he should leave a solid character and personality legacy for his children.

Mother: Should act delicately in her duties towards her husband, take care of her home and children, avoiding extravagance and behaving with great courage in all matters. She should be the educator of her home, instilling the kindness and elegance of Islam into her children.

Parents: Should treat their children justly, providing a good upbringing as an example. They should not forget that raising a flawless child is related to being flawless parents.

Children in the family should be raised to be aware of the blessings and messages of the Quran, especially the stories of the prophets. Parents should first teach them the necessary religious knowledge and then assist them in

learning Islamic rules related to their chosen profession. Children should harbor immense respect and love for their parents, obeying them and running to serve them.

Undoubtedly, making efforts for the eternal happiness of family members is the most important responsibility. As Allah says:

"O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones..." (At-Tahrim, 6)

Therefore, we must protect ourselves from the fires of worldly selfishness so that we are not dragged into the fire of hell in the hereafter. After religious and otherworldly responsibilities within the family, worldly responsibilities come next.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned:

"Neglecting those ones is responsible for regarding their sustenance is sufficient sin for a person." (Muslim, Zakat, 40; Abu Dawood, Zakat, 45)

To ensure peace and happiness in the family, the head of the household should not embark on long journeys without informing his wife. Strangers, especially those unknown to the wife, should not be brought into the home without notice. The family should be kept away from complex environments as much as possible.

For the sake of harmony and happiness within the family, the woman's piety and guidance should encourage her husband, children, relatives, and even neighbors to goodness. A righteous wife is like a fragrant flower, spreading happiness around. As the Prophet ﷺ beautifully stated: "A righteous woman is one who, when her husband looks at her, she pleases him, fulfills his legitimate desires, and safeguards his wealth and honor in his absence." (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 5)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave glad tidings to women who beautifully uphold the rights of their husbands, saying: "A woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her will enter paradise." (Tirmidhi, Radâ', 10/1161; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 4)

An intelligent wife quickly grasps her husband's character, habits, and expected behavior. She ensures her home and herself are clean and orderly. She greets her husband with a smile, bids him farewell with prayers in the

morning, and advises him to earn his living through halal means, expressing contentment with whatever halal income he brings. She prepares meals on time and makes an effort to do things her husband likes. She practices contentment and frugality.

Believers should strive to maintain peaceful family homes, guarding against giving in to personal desires and the influence of Satan. They should make efforts to fulfill the rights of family members properly. It is clear that neglecting these rights will result in a severe punishment on the Day of Judgment, a day when everyone will try to escape from one another but in vain.

Allah warns: "On the Day a man will flee from his brother, and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children, for every man, that Day, will have enough to make him careless of others." (Abasa, 34-37) On that day, people will flee from their loved ones to avoid being asked for their rights.

In conclusion, for a harmonious family, members must prioritize feelings of love, sacrifice, kindness, and mercy toward each other. Those who prioritize their intellect over their emotions in family life can't achieve more than a dry companionship. Their homes, losing the essence of a "family nest," become mere residences surrounded by walls, based on mutual interests.

Therefore, turning that dwelling into a heavenly palace is a shared responsibility of all family members. This can only happen within the measures of heavenly conduct. When achieved, it results in sublime tranquility within the family, reflecting similarly in their broader interactions—whether among friends or relatives—creating a distinct atmosphere of peace, happiness, and beauty.

Relationship with Relatives

Maintaining relationships with relatives, showing kindness, and upholding family ties, known as "*silat ar-rahim*," is one of the essential principles highly emphasized in our religion. Allah has designated relatives as heirs to one another, strengthening the bonds between them with certain rights and duties.

The circle of relatives not only protects individuals from material and spiritual harm but also assists in performing various acts of goodness and righteousness. Therefore, a Muslim should preserve family ties to benefit



relatives in both religious and worldly matters. They should never neglect the duty of " *silat ar-rahim*."

Relations with relatives should be built on the foundations of compassion and kindness. A significant Hadith provides valuable guidance on this matter: "One who reciprocates the good done by their relatives and protects and takes care of them cannot be considered truly benevolent. The truly benevolent person continues to do good to their relatives even if they sever ties with them." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 15; Abu Dawood, Zakat, 45; Tirmidhi, Birr, 10)

Conversely, there are many warnings and threats in Hadiths for those who sever ties with their relatives: "Although the punishment for this will be given in the hereafter, among the sins most deserving of swift punishment from Allah in this world are oppression and neglecting one's relatives." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 43; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 57)

"Every Friday night, the deeds of humankind are presented to Allah. However, the deeds of those who sever ties with their relatives are not accepted." (Ahmad, II, 484)

"One who cuts off ties with their relatives cannot enter paradise." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 11; Muslim, Birr, 18, 19)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also explained the order to be followed in acts of charity and taking care of relatives: "Start by spending on yourself. Then, use the surplus for your family. If there is still anything left from your family, spend it on your relatives. Whatever remains after this, give it to those in front of you, to your right, and to your left (those in need)." (Muslim, Zakat 41; Nasa'i, Zakat 60, Buyu' 84)

The spending directive in the Hadith, extending from oneself to the surrounding area, also indicates the stages of fulfilling the rights upon us. Many people fail to recognize the rights imposed upon them amidst life's routines. Among these, the right of neighbors has almost been obliterated in today's world.

Neighborly rights

Allah, the observance of neighborly rights, has emphasized it insistently. Humans are often in closer proximity to their neighbors than their relatives. The Quran states:



"...To the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the close neighbor, the distant neighbor, the companion by your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Surely, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful." (An-Nisa, 36)

Being kind to "close neighbors," as mentioned in the verse, involves treating those with nearby homes or those who are both close neighbors and relatives, and even religious brothers and sisters, with kindness, helping them, and forgiving their mistakes with patience.

Being kind to "distant neighbors" involves reaching out to those with distant homes, without familial ties or who are not Muslims, extending a helping hand, and opening our hearts to them.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ classified neighbors based on the rights they have over us:

1. Neighbors with only one right: Non-Muslims. They have the right of neighborliness only.

2. Neighbors with two rights: Muslims. They have both the right of neighborliness and the right of brotherhood in faith.

3. Neighbors with three rights: Muslim relatives. They have the rights of neighborliness, brotherhood in faith, and kinship.[6]

Islam has regulated human interactions from close to far. Therefore, those who are closer have more rights, consistent with human nature.[7]

Considering that everyone desires to live with good neighbors, we should strive first to be good neighbors ourselves and then aim to live among righteous neighbors. Indeed, one of the things that makes a Muslim happy in this world is having righteous neighbors.[8] This is why the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Seek refuge in Allah from having a bad neighbor! When you live in a certain place, a bad neighbor makes life unbearable, and when you migrate, you will leave them behind after a while." (Nasa'i, Isti'aza, 44)

6. See: Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, Dar al-Fikr, Fuat Abdulbaki edition, no date, X, 456; Suyuti, al-Jamiu's-Saghir, I, 146.
7. See: Al-Bukhari, Adab al-Mufrad 3, Hibah 16, Adab 32.
8. See: Ahmad, III, 407.

The saying "Do not just buy a house, but also consider the neighbor" clearly illustrates the importance of living among righteous neighbors for our spiritual lives.

However, it is essential to bear with minor flaws and annoyances from neighbors. For Allah, one of the beloved individuals is someone who endures their neighbor's troubles for the sake of Allah's pleasure.[9]

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said about neighborly rights:

"Gabriel kept recommending treating neighbors with kindness until I thought he would assign a share of inheritance to them." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 28; Muslim, Birr, 140)

"Show kindness to your neighbor so that you may be a believer in complete faith." (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 2/2305; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 24) Abu Zar reported:

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'When you cook a stew, add plenty of water and then go and look for your neighbors and bring a good amount for them.' " (Muslim, Birr, 143)

According to this Hadith, fulfilling neighborly rights is not excused by poverty. Even a person with limited means should do their best to care for their neighbor. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned:

"One who sleeps with a full stomach while his neighbor is hungry is not a believer." (Hakim, II, 15; Haythami, VIII, 167)

A story from the time of the Companions illustrates their commitment to neighborly rights:

"There were seven houses, all of them poor. One person sent a sheep's head as a gift to one of the houses. The recipient, thinking that the neighbor next door was more in need, sent the head to them. The second neighbor, with the same thought, sent it to the third neighbor. This way, the head circulated among all seven houses before finally returning to the first house." (Hakim, II, 526)

This incident exemplifies the delicate, profound, and meaningful Islamic ethics that constitute a civilization of virtues. The crucial point is to live within those principles of generosity and ethics.

9. See: Ahmad, V, 176.

These teachings in Hadiths provide Muslims with guidelines and standards on how to live in accordance with the realities of life. Ignoring or being indifferent to the environment and societal realities is not possible for believers.

No one can live a completely isolated life. Everyone needs to establish connections with society to some extent. Therefore, everyone is obliged to regulate their social and communal life by considering both negative and positive aspects of the environment they are in.

Social and communal life

Allah has willed that His servants live in society, creating them in a state of interdependence. He encourages congregational prayers, giving alms to the poor, and, for those with the means, performing the Hajj pilgrimage—a sort of annual congress for the entire Islamic world. Through these practices, people are prompted to help each other in worship and mutual encouragement. Therefore, Allah has granted significant rewards for communal services.

Indeed, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to inquire of his companions:

"Who participated in a funeral prayer today?"

"Who fed a poor person today?"

"Who visited a sick person today?"

And he would say: "Whoever combines these righteous deeds will surely enter Paradise." (Muslim, Fadha'il as-Sahabah, 12)

With these questions, Prophet Muhammad emphasized the necessity for a believer not to remain confined to individual matters but to engage in communal activities—freeing oneself from selfishness and cultivating a generous and altruistic heart.

In another hadith, he stated: "One who does not share in the troubles of the Muslims is not one of us." (At-Tabarani, al-Saghir, II, 131/907; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 361)

Prophet Muhammad himself set the most beautiful example in communal worship. For instance, there was a Jewish boy who used to serve Prophet Muhammad. One day, the boy fell ill, and Prophet Muhammad visited him. The boy and his father were amazed at the kindness and care shown. Prophet

Muhammad said to the Jewish boy, "Become a Muslim." The boy, looking at his father as if seeking permission, and considering the years he had witnessed only goodness and kindness from the Messenger of Allah, replied, "O son, obey Abu al-Qasim (Prophet Muhammad)." Thus, the boy embraced Islam. As Prophet Muhammad left the sick child, he expressed immense joy, saying, "Praise be to Allah who saved him from the Fire." (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 80)

Prophet Muhammad's etiquette during visiting the sick was also very delicate. He emphasized speaking words of hope and encouragement to the sick, lifting their spirits with positive talk, and reassuring them. He said: "When you enter upon a sick person, speak good words to him about his appointed time (of death). Such words will not avert what is decreed but will make the sick person's heart feel at ease." (Tirmidhi, Tib, 35/2087)

In another hadith, Prophet Muhammad stated: "Speak good words when near a sick or dying person. Angels say 'Ameen' to your supplications." (Muslim, Janaiz, 6) From this hadith, it is evident that Islam encourages individuals to be compassionate and considerate.

Islam teaches that a person's personal salvation lies in serving others' salvation. In an Islamic society, individuals are responsible for each other materially and spiritually. A believer is entrusted to another believer. The social structure is woven with such a noble responsibility and a network of compassion.

Mercy, the greatest fruit of faith, requires sharing what one has with those in need and attempting to alleviate their privations. During the reign of Caliph Umar bin Abdulaziz, the sensitivity, depth, and strength of this compassionate network in society became so great that the rich could not find a poor person to give their Zakat to. Upon this the Caliph bought many slaves with these money and freed them. [10]

A Muslim smiling at their fellow Muslim, offering greetings, removing a stone from the road, guiding a stranger, helping someone who cannot carry a load, teaching the ignorant, earning a lawful living to support their family, being present around mourning, consoling broken hearts, giving in charity, and all similar acts of kindness are valuable communal acts and services for a believer.

10. See: Prof. Dr. M. S. R. al-Buti, Fiqh al-Sira, p. 434.

Due to the greatness of His grace and mercy, Allah has facilitated paths of goodness for His servants and promised great rewards for these services. Therefore, devout believers remain insatiable for doing good until they enter paradise.

In the Ottoman era, our ancestors understood the importance of communal services very well. Therefore, they not only put effort into meeting their personal needs but also did more to build projects for the benefit of the public. Besides the exceptional services rendered through the establishment of over 26,000 foundations, they extended their compassion even to plants and wild animals in the mountains. Unnecessary cutting of a live tree branch was prohibited, and the refinement of the heart was emphasized, preventing the killing of even an ant. Thus, a society was created where mountains, animals, wolves, and birds all lived in peace.

The high level of moral sensitivity is evident in the establishment of endowments to prevent the scolding and mistreatment of slaves and servant girls for breaking things. A vast and benevolent network was established to carry the sweet water of Damascus to the pilgrims in the Haramayn (Mecca and Medina). These courteous and graceful actions, which today's self-interested and selfish mindsets could never grasp, constitute a civilization of virtues and kindness.

In conclusion, the first fruit of a complete faith is the mercy shown to the created for the sake of the Creator. The most beautiful manifestation of mercy is service to the creation. Therefore, communal services are built on the foundation of compassion and mercy toward Allah's creatures. All the services provided for the people are, in the general sense, a form of worship to Allah. Hence, Islam has constructed commercial and economic life on the foundations of service and altruism.

Commercial and Economic Life

In Islam, ownership belongs to Allah. Unjust gain, usury, exploitation, hoarding, deceptive sales (selling at a much higher value by deceit), and sales harmful to society are prohibited.

Upon migrating to Medina, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ organized the market after establishing the principles and laws of citizenship. Once, Prophet

Muhammad encountered a man selling wheat and asked him, "How do you sell it?" While the man was explaining, Prophet

Muhammad received a revelation instructing him to put his hand into the wheat. Prophet Muhammad complied and found the wheat to be wet. He then said, "He who deceives us is not one of us." (Abu Dawood, Buyu', 50/3452; Ahmad, II, 242; Muslim, Iman, 164)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated: "The purest earnings are those of the merchants who possess the following qualities:

- They do not lie when they speak,
- They do not betray when trusted,
- They do not break their promise,
- They do not consume the goods they buy,
- They do not exaggerate when selling a product,
- They do not delay payment when they owe money,
- They do not pressure a distressed debtor." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, IV, 221)

Once, Companion Jareer bin Abdullah al-Bajali wanted to buy a horse. The seller quoted five hundred dirhams for a horse he liked. Jareer said he could pay up to six hundred dirhams and even raise the price to eight hundred dirhams because the horse's value was high, and the seller was unaware of it. When asked why he increased the price when he could buy the horse for five hundred dirhams, Jareer gave this magnificent answer: "We promised the Messenger of Allah that we would not deceive in transactions."[11]

As seen, the economic system in Islam is based on honesty, integrity, and a sense of service to both the individual and the community. Indeed, Islamic economics begins by solving human problems. Sharing, especially benefiting the needy, is obligatory.

Both capitalist and socialist systems lack room for moral virtues and conscientious values. One focuses on collective ownership, the other on individual ownership, and both are dominated by a self-serving and exploitative mindset where individuals are considered cogs in a wheel.

11. Ibn Hazm, al-Muhalla, Cairo 1389, IX, p. 454 ff.

Islam, on the other hand, considers the servant accountable to Allah in every matter, including wealth. Allah has entrusted everything to humanity. The Quran states, "You shall certainly be called to account for all the favors of your Lord that you have enjoyed." (At-Takathur, 8) Thus, wealth must be acquired within the framework of accountability and responsibility. No wrong action can have a valid excuse or intention. Especially claiming, "I am earning more to do more good later," by violating the halal-haram standards, is the most unproductive orientation and a deception of the ego. Islam does not accept the foundation of capitalism that rests on the logic of "Let it happen, let it pass!"

A believer should not be a prisoner but a master of money, achieved through obedience to the Commanding Master, with a conviction not to fall into laziness. This requires avoiding commerce that leads to wastefulness. Because extravagance, increasing comfort and luxury, leads to the ruin of both individuals and society.

Look at society: Many have gained extensive material resources, yet they remain restless. Some experience mental breakdowns. Despite the increased levels of wealth and prosperity compared to the past, crises, ambitions, and excesses have multiplied. Family lives are disrupted, divorces have increased, and the children are distressed. A generation deprived of family warmth searches for happiness in the streets and is left at the mercy of the streets. The selfish, capitalist system has not brought peace to our society.

Therefore, in a time where people are obsessed with materialism, it is essential for believers to possess a higher moral structure, act with the fear of Allah, strictly adhere to the principles of halal and haram, and maintain a sense of responsibility with awareness that they will be held accountable in the divine court.

Right and Justice

Islam has established high standards of justice and fairness both individually and socially. Justice is so crucial in Islam that it is commanded in every aspect of life. When people establish justice, they live a worshipful life that pleases Allah. In the absence of justice, discussing rights, law, fairness, and balance becomes impossible in the world.

Justice is the fundamental guide that sustains states. The saying, "Prosper with disbelief but not with oppression," has become a proverbial expression. It is emphasized that justice is the foundation of governance.

The Lord sent His prophets to end systems of oppression built on distancing people from Allah, based on interests and injustice, and to establish justice and righteousness on Earth.

In the Quran, it is stated:

"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin; and He forbids all shameful deeds, injustice, and rebellion. And He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition." (An-Nahl, 90) "Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between people, judge with justice. Excellent is that with which Allah admonishes you! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (An-Nisa, 58)

A believer should be just not only when giving judgment but also when measuring and weighing, witnessing, and, in essence, in all circumstances. They should remain just whether angry or calm. [12]

The Quran says:

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. Follow not your desires, lest you not be just." (An-Nisa, 135)

Once, a man sat before the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said:

"O Messenger of Allah! I have slaves who constantly lie to me, betray me, and rebel against me. I scold and beat them. What will happen to me because of their actions?"

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied:

"Their betrayal, rebellion, and lies against you will be calculated against the punishment you gave them. If the punishment you gave them is equal to their crime, there is neither gain nor loss for you. If the punishment is less than their crime, it will be considered a virtue for you. If the punishment exceeds

12. See: Haythami, I, 90.

their wrongdoing, you will have to compensate for the excess, which will be taken from you through retaliation."

The man stepped aside and began crying bitterly. Prophet Muhammad then said:

"Do you not read the verse: 'We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul will be dealt with unjustly at all, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account) And sufficient are We as accountant."[13] Upon hearing this, the man said:

"I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. Indeed, for me and them, there is no way other than to separate from each other. I testify that they are all free." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 21/3165)

Clearly, Islam abolished the institution of slavery gradually through its high sense of justice and fairness. Treating a slave in accordance with Islamic principles meant providing them with food, clothing, not overburdening them, and especially not engaging in oppression. Due to this sense of justice and fairness introduced by Islam, the institution of slavery, which had persisted for a long time, gradually disappeared.

A person once insulted Hajjaj, the oppressor, in the presence of a friend of Allah. The friend of Allah advised him:

"Do not go so far in insulting him! Because Allah will punish Hajjaj for the lives and wealth he took.

But it does not end there. After that, Allah takes Hajjaj's right by punishing those who violated his dignity."

In other words, if a servant is wronged and then insults the wrongdoer so much that the wrongdoer's sins reach his level, or even goes beyond that, the wrongdoer will take something from him. As a result, retaliation is done for the wrongdoing to the oppressed.[14]

Allah says:

13. al-Anbiya', 47.
14. Babanzade Ahmed Naim, Principles of Islamic Ethics, Istanbul 1963, p. 86.



"Then whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who fear Him." (Al-Baqarah, 194)

"And if you punish an enemy, punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient." (An-Nahl, 126)

Thus, Islam establishes a proportional response in the justice system. While fulfilling a right and law, introducing revenge or hatred would be exceeding the limits, constituting another injustice and violation of the law.

Irbaz bin Sariya narrates:

We descended with the Prophet Muhammad to the fortress of Khaybar. Besides his companions, there were others as well. The leader of Khaybar was stubborn and cunning. He came to the Prophet and said, "O Muhammad! What right do you have to cut our date palms, eat our fruits, and beat our women?"

The Prophet, angered, said, "O Ibn Awf, mount your horse and call out: 'Be informed, paradise is only for the believers; gather for the prayer!'" The congregation gathered, and the Prophet led them in prayer. Then, standing up, he said, "One who thinks he can dwell on his couch thinking that there are no forbidden things except those mentioned in Allah's Book deceives himself. We have recommended certain things and forbidden others, which are more than those mentioned in Allah's Book. The price of one mustache of a date palm is to be paid in gold or silver." (Abu Dawood, Haraj, 31-33/3050)

After the victory of Khaybar, Prophet Muhammad used to send Abdullah bin Rawaha there to collect the jizyah. Abdullah carefully calculated the amount of dates to be collected from them.

The Jews cultivating the lands of Khaybar became uncomfortable due to Abdullah bin Rawaha's meticulousness. At one point, they even offered him a bribe to act leniently towards them. They collected some jewelry from their women's adornments and said, "These are for you; lessen our tax, favor us during distribution, and turn a blind eye to us!"

Abdullah was furious. He said to them, "O Jewish community! I swear, among all of Allah's creation, there is no being I dislike more than you



because of many of your wrongdoings. However, my displeasure with you will not lead me to wrong you. As for the bribe you offered me, it is haram. We do not accept it."

The Jews admired Abdullah bin Rawaha's justice and integrity, saying, "It is because of this justice and honesty that the heavens and the earth stand within order." (Muwatta', Musaqah, 2)

How noble is our religion that commands such justice even against Islam's enemies! A Muslim should always act with justice, considering that even against a non-believer, he will be held accountable for injustice. In this time of the end, when non-Islamic moral values weaken people and lead society into decadence, appreciating the value of Islamic morality, knowing it thoroughly, and living by it is an indispensable necessity!

ISLAMIC MORALITY

As indicated by many Quranic verses and hadiths, Islamic morality encompasses virtues such as manners, modesty, chastity, patience, gratitude, contentment, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, truthfulness, loyalty, love, generosity, and various other virtues.

The Prophet of the Universe, peace and blessings be upon him, stated in a hadith that Gabriel conveyed to him Allah's words:

"This religion (Islam) is a religion that I have chosen and approved for Myself. It is only fitting for it to be adorned with generosity and good character. As long as you live as Muslims, elevate it with these two qualities!" (Haythami, VIII, 20; Ali al-Muttaqi, Kanz, VI, 392) As seen, good character holds such vital importance in religious life.

On the other hand, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ whom Allah has gifted to us as the best example, expressed the fundamental wisdom of his mission by stating, "I have been sent not for any other purpose but to complete good character."[15] Indeed, the entire life, qualities, and beauties of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ represent peak examples in every aspect. So much so that Allah says, "(O Messenger!) Verily, you are on an exalted standard of character." (Al-Qalam, 4), affirming this reality.

15. Muwatta', Husn al-Khuluq, 8; Ahmad, II, 381; Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, X, 192.



The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a manifestation of artistic wonder in the creation of Allah. He is the most beautiful example for the entire society, from the lowest to the highest class. For 1400 years, until the Day of Judgment, all of humanity can find solutions to all its problems by examining the prophetic life.

Prophets do not leave behind worldly inheritances. The real inheritance left to the Prophet's community is his personality, identity, and piety. To uphold this legacy, one must embrace the "prophetic morality," which is the mirror of the Islamic personality, and represent it with the dignity befitting the Prophet in all times and places. It is essential to remember that this state is a piety test for us.

Islam is not like human and philosophical doctrines, theoretical, utopian, imaginary, and impractical systems. Philosophers and theorists express their ideas, saying, "According to me, it is like this." Prophets, on the other hand, convey absolute truths that are free from all human relativities and weaknesses by saying, "Allah commands this." Therefore, to reach the truth and goodness, it is necessary to avoid drowning in the relative theories produced within the narrow boundaries of the mind and to commit to divine truths.

Allah presented the perfect human model, who pleased Him, in the personality of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He has shown us through His Prophet that we should strive to adopt His morality and take Him as our criterion. The closest to this goal were the generation of the Companions. They understood and lived the meaning of the hadith: "A person will be with those whom he loves."[16] Love requires being obedient to the one loved. If a person claims to love someone but does not resemble them, or if they contradict the commands of their loved one, it indicates insincerity in their love or inconsistency in their actions.

The sign of love for the Prophet is to strive to resemble him and take a share in his morality. The generation of the Companions made efforts to be with the Prophet in the feelings of his heart, in living according to his Sunnah, and in his morality, to be able to be together within the hereafter. In generosity, compassion, courtesy, refinement, kindness, and within their own means and abilities, they tried to resemble the Prophet.

16. Al-Bukhari, Adab, 96.



The situation of Umar ﷺ, in this regard, is a very instructive example:

During Umar's caliphate, many places were conquered, and the well-being of the believers increased. However, despite the splendor of the state and the wealth of the treasury, Umar maintained a unique sense of self-sufficiency. He lived in an exceptional state of sufficiency, delivering sermons in his patched clothes. Sometimes he borrowed money, and he sustained his life in difficulty. Because he accepted only an adequate amount from the treasury, and he struggled to make ends meet with it.

The prominent figures among the Companions were saddened by his situation. They considered increasing the caliph's allowance. However, they hesitated to propose this and instead asked Umar's daughter and Prophet's wife, Hafsa, without revealing their names. They asked her to convey the proposal to her father. Hafsa ﷺ conveyed the proposal to her father. Umar ﷺ, who had witnessed the days when the Messenger of Allah went hungry all day and could not find a single date to satisfy his hunger,[17] asked his daughter Hafsa:

"My daughter! How was the food, drink, and clothing situation of Rasulullah?"

She replied, "It was just enough."

Umar ﷺ continued his words as follows:

"Two friends (Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr) and I are like three travelers on the same path. The first has reached his destination. The second has reached him by going on the same road. The third, which is me, also wants to reach his friends. If I go overloaded, I cannot catch up with them! So, do you not want me to be the third on this road?" (See Ahmad, Zuhd, p. 125; Suyuti, Tarikh al-Khulafa', p.128; Şehbenderzade Ahmed Hilmi, Tarih-i Islam, I, 367)

Abu Qursafah narrates some of the beauty of the state and behavior of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as follows:

"When my mother, aunt, and I pledged allegiance to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and left his presence, my mother and aunt said to me, 'My dear, we have never seen anyone like him! His face is more beautiful, his clothes

17. Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musannaf, VII, 79/34334; Nasa'i, al-Sunan al-Kubra, X, 389/11806; Ahmad, Zuhd, p. 125; Suyuti, Tarikh al-Hulafa, p. 128.



are cleaner, and his speech is softer than anyone else we know. It was as if blessed light was radiating from his blessed mouth.'" (Haythami, VIII, 279-280). The Companions also endeavored to apply the Prophet Muhammad's beauty, kindness, and elegance to their own lives.

Ummu'd-Darda, the wife of Abu'd-Darda from the Companions, recounts:

"Whenever Abu'd-Darda spoke, he would always smile. One day, I said to him, 'I am afraid people will blame you!' He replied, 'When the Prophet Muhammad spoke, he would always smile.'" (Ahmad, V, 198, 199)

The Prophet, who embroidered the hearts of the Companions with ethical beauty one day, asked:

"Can one of you be like Abu Damdam?" The Companions present asked, "Who is Abu Damdam?" The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "He belonged to one of the nations before you. He used to say, 'I forgive those who insult me and gossip about me and extend their tongues in slander against me.'" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 36/4887) What a beautiful state of heart...

He openly forgave difficult offenses such as gossip, backbiting, and insult that would be said about him in advance, stating that he did this because of his deep and limitless love for Allah. He does not want the servants of Allah to be in a difficult position on the Day of Judgment because of him. Even if they are sinners, he thinks that pleasing our Almighty Lord by comforting His servants will be beneficial. In today's world, where humanity is dragged into a self-centered and egotistic life, how much we need to take a share from this morality as a society...

Not hurting, not getting hurt, and being able to forgive are distinctive qualities of Islamic ethics. Forgetting unjust and painful actions done to one-self for the sake of Allah and covering them with a veil is one of the most precious behavioral beauties that attract Allah's approval, mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

Indeed, Allah expresses the virtue of forgiveness in a Quranic verse as follows:

"Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (An-Nur, 22)



The real owner of forgiveness is Allah, the Majestic and Exalted. Therefore, a believer should strive to deserve Allah's forgiveness by forgiving. The real triumph of the soul is to forgive the mistakes and flaws committed against oneself. How can a soul unable to show the will to forgive stand with dignity and seek divine forgiveness?!

In the heart of a believer matured with Islamic ethics, there is no room for feelings of hatred and revenge. On the contrary, the heart pulsating with the love of Allah and the desire for reunion with His love, to the extent of Allah's approval, constantly instills the virtue of forgiveness to Allah's servants.

Indeed, when Mansur al-Hallaj, who has a special place in the hearts of wise people and people of divine love, was being stoned, he exhibited a great heartfelt sacrifice by pleading, "O my Lord! Forgive those who stoned me before me!"

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, who was sent to complete good character, was extremely meticulous in the moral upbringing of his companions. Aisha, رضي الله عنها, narrates one of his examples of this sensitivity as follows:

"There was no habit that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, found worse and uglier than lying. If he heard any of his companions tell a little lie about something, he would keep himself away from that companion until he learned that they had repented, and he would not want to see them much." (Ibn Sa'd, I, 378)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was extremely humble, setting the best example for his companions. Anas رضي الله عنه narrates:

"The Messenger of Allah used to visit the sick, attend funerals, go to the invitations of slaves, and ride a camel. On the day when Khaybar was conquered and the expedition against Bani Qurayza took place, he rode a camel with reins made of palm fibers. And under him, there was a saddle made of palm fibers." (Tirmidhi, Janaiz, 32/1017; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 16; Hakim, II, 506/3734)

"He would let people ride behind him on his mount, put his food on the ground and eat..." (Hakim, IV, 132/7128)

Abu Musa also says:



"The Messenger of Allah would ride a camel, wear coarse woolen clothes, sit down and milk a sheep, take care of his guests, and serve and treat them." (Hakim, I, 129/205)

Jareer narrates:

"On the day Mecca was conquered, a man came into the presence of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. The man was terrified and trembling in awe of the material and spiritual awe of the Messenger of Allah. Seeing his state, the Prophet spoke very gently and sweetly, saying, 'Calm down, don't be upset! I am not a ruler. I am the son of a woman from the Quraish tribe, who used to eat dried meat!'" (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 30; Hakim, III, 50/4366; Al-Bayhaqi, Dala'il an-Nubuwwah, V, 69)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, attached great importance to the poor companions dedicated to the path of Allah, known as the Ashab al-Suffa. The attention he paid to a sincere black slave and his compassion for him amazed even the leaders among the Ansar and Muhajireen. Thus, the Companions grew up by seeing, hearing, and feeling his morality.

One day, Hasan, may Allah be pleased with him, performed the circumambulation of the Kaaba, prayed two Rak'ahs at the Station of Ibrahim, and then leaned his cheek on the Station, crying and supplicating in this manner:

"O my Lord, Your weak and feeble servant has come to Your door. O Allah, Your helpless servant has come to Your door. O my Lord, the beggar has come to Your door. Your poor servant has come to Your door!"

After repeating this supplication several times, he left there. On the way, he encountered poor people trying to satisfy their hunger with pieces of dry bread. He greeted them, and they invited Hasan to their humble meal. Hasan sat down with the poor. The companion, who could not accept their offerings because it was not permissible to eat charity food for the descendants of the Prophet, said:

"If I had known that this bread was not charity, I would have eaten with you."

To win the hearts of the poor who could not accept his generosity, he took them to his home, fed them, clothed them, and put some money in their pockets." (Ibn Manzur, Muhtasaru Tarikhi Dimashq, VII, 25)



Thus, having instilled such a heart condition in his Companions, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, always thought about the needs, the sick, and those in difficult situations. He stated:

"I am closer and dearer to every believer than his own soul. If someone dies leaving behind wealth, that wealth belongs to his heirs. But if he leaves behind a debt or orphans, that debt is my responsibility, and taking care of the orphans is my duty." (Muslim, Jumu'ah, 43)

The Prophet Muhammad, ﷺ nurtured his companions with such a compassionate disposition. Once, after the morning prayer, he turned to his companions and asked, "Is there anyone among you fasting today?" Umar ﷺ replied, "O Messenger of Allah! I did not think of fasting last night, so I am not fasting now." Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "I thought of fasting last night and started the day fasting." The Prophet, ﷺ then asked, "Is there anyone among you who visited a sick person today?" Umar ﷺ replied, "O Messenger of Allah! We prayed the morning prayer and did not leave our places, so how could we visit a sick person?" Abu Bakr ﷺ said, "I heard that my brother Abdurrahman bin Awf fell ill. When I went in the direction of the mosque, I diverted my path to check on him." The Prophet ﷺ asked: "Is there anyone among you who fed a poor person today?" Umar ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah! We just prayed, and we have not left our places!" Abu Bakr said ﷺ, "When I entered the mosque, I saw someone expressing his needs. My son Abdurrahman had a piece of barley bread in his hand, and I took it from him and gave it to the poor." Upon hearing this, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "I give you the good news of Paradise." Umar ﷺ sighed and said, "Ah, Paradise!" The Prophet, peace be upon him, then uttered a statement that pleased Umar and said, "May Allah have mercy on Umar, may Allah have mercy on Umar! Whenever he intends to do a good deed, Abu Bakr invariably precedes him." (Haythami, III, 163-164. Also see Abu Dawood, Zakat, 36/1670; Hakim, I, 571/1501)

In the Quran, it is stated:

"When you have finished (your duties), devote yourself for worship, and turn eagerly towards your Lord." (Al-Inshirah, 7-8)

According to these verses, a believer should always finish one good deed and promptly engage in another, striving to be in a constant state of service enthusiasm until the end of their life. This is the command of our Lord, and it is the desire of the Prophet. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who guided his

companions to an exceptional spiritual horizon with numerous teachings of beautiful character, is the most beautiful example in every aspect of life for the ummah that will come until the Day of Judgment. In situations where many feet may slip from the ground of faith, such as wealth, abundance, victory, potentially leading to arrogance, pride, and extravagance, he is the best example of not succumbing to pride, arrogance, and haughtiness. Similarly, in difficult situations where patience is tested, he is the best example of not falling into rebellion, maintaining steadfastness, and preserving the states of contentment and reliance on God.

Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, during the challenging Battle of the Trench, a crucible of extreme hardships and trials involving suffering, exhaustion, hunger, cold, darkness, and their strenuous struggle against the enemy, would pray: "O Allah! Life is only the life of the Hereafter. Grant victory to the Ansar and Muhajireen!" (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 29), emphasizing the insignificance of all worldly pain and exhaustion compared to an eternal life filled with bliss, thus directing his companions towards the Hereafter. In doing so, he preached the preservation of fortitude, perseverance, contentment, submission, and reliance on God in their hearts.

The conquest of Mecca, after twenty years of torment, suffering, and oppression faced by the Muslims, was one of the greatest victories granted by Allah. However, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ entered Mecca not with the pride of a victorious commander or with signs of triumph but rather in a prostration on his camel, expressing gratitude. He prayed, "O Allah! The real life is only the life of the Hereafter!" (Al-Waqidi, II, 824; Al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 1). This exemplifies his humility and acknowledgment that genuine life resides in the Hereafter.

The state of Utbah bin Gazwan, one of the companions, further illustrates how the companions internalized the Prophet's perspective on the world and his humility:

Utbah once delivered a sermon, praising and thanking Allah, and then said, "...The world is transient and swiftly passing. What remains of it is like water at the bottom of a vessel, which its owner can finish in a single sip. Surely, you will go to a land where there is no end. Therefore, go there with the best of what you have..." Describing the situation when he was with the Prophet Muhammad, Utbah continued, "One day, we had nothing to eat but leaves from the trees. Our mouths were wounded from eating them. I found a

cloak, split it in half, and shared it with Sa'd bin Malik. We used one half as a covering and the other as a carpet. Today, each one of us is a ruler in a city. Yet, I still seek refuge in Allah from considering myself great in my eyes but small in the sight of Allah..." (Muslim, Zuhd, 14).

In conclusion, the periods of prosperity and adversity in life are always tests of faith and piety. Passing these tests and obtaining a favorable outcome depend on assimilating the character of Prophet Muhammad. Preserving human dignity and honor in this world requires spiritual progress by internalizing the values of patience, gratitude, reliance on God, contentment, and good character.

To achieve such spiritual development, as mentioned earlier, purifying and refining the inner self is essential. In the opening verses of Surah Ash-Shams, after mentioning seven divine oaths related to the creation marvels of the sun, moon, day and night, heavens, earth, and the soul, God informs us of the endless struggle within our inner selves and reveals the only way to salvation: "By the soul and the One who formed it and inspired it to understand what is wrong for it and what is right for it—successful indeed is the one who purifies it and the one who corrupts it is doomed." (Ash-Shams, 7-10). Thus, there is an eternal struggle within the human soul, between the carnal desires and transgressions on one side and the spiritual qualities and piety on the other. On one side, there is a self that wants to plunge into the mud, and on the other side, there is a soul that wishes to soar into the heavens.

Rumi explains this with a metaphor: "O traveler on the path of Truth! If you want to know the reality, Musa عليه السلام and Pharaoh did not die. Today, they live within you, hidden in your existence, continuing their battles in your heart! Therefore, you must seek these two enemies within yourself."

In order for the heart to become purified through the refinement and purification of the inner self, it is necessary to adhere to the following fundamental principles from the blessed Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad:

1. Lawful sustenance (Halal food)

Islam prescribes a dietary regimen that distinguishes between lawful (halal) and unlawful (haram) in the matter of eating and drinking, as a prerequisite for the purification of the inner self. For the purification of the soul, consuming lawful sustenance is essential.



Rumi states:

- "Morsels are like seeds. Thoughts, ideas, and intentions are its yield."
- "Knowledge and wisdom arise from lawful morsels. Love and mercy come from lawful sustenance. If heedlessness arises from a morsel, know that it is unlawful."
- "Have you ever planted wheat and harvested barley? Has a mule ever given birth to a foal?"
- "Last night, a few doubtful morsels entered my stomach and blocked the path of inspiration."

Seeking sustenance through lawful means is a necessary effort in the worldly context. A hadith states: "Allah Almighty loves to see His servant exhausted in seeking lawful sustenance." (Suyūtī, Jāmiʿu's-Saghīr, I, 65)

When Prophet Muhammad returned from Tabuk, he met Sa'd al-Ansarī, who greeted him. Upon seeing calloused hands, the Prophet asked, "Why are your hands like this?" Sa'd replied, "These are marks from a shovel and hoe. I work with them to earn a living for my family." To this, Prophet Muhammad said, "These are hands that the fire of Hell cannot touch." (Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-Ghābah, I, 424-425; Ibn Hajar, al-Isābah, III, 86) In another narration, he said, "These are the hands that Allah Almighty loves." (Sharḥ al-Sirājī, al-Mabsūt, VII, 62)

While it is essential to work and strive for lawful earnings, indulging in desires and transgressing the boundaries of halal and haram is a great heedlessness.

According to a narration, the noble wives of the companions used to caution their husbands as they left in the morning: "O master, fear Allah; do not earn unlawfully! We can endure hunger in this world, but we cannot bear the torment of Hell on the Day of Judgment!" (Abdulhamīd Keşk, fī Rihābi't-Tafsīr, I, 26)

Consuming what Allah has forbidden or nourishing oneself with money earned through illicit means not only serves as a means of eternal punishment but also disrupts the spiritual sensitivities of the heart.

Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī advises: "Eating the forbidden kills the heart, while eating the lawful revives it. There is a morsel that engages you with the world, and there is a morsel that engages you with the Hereafter. Another morsel attracts you to the Creator, the Most High."



Based on this reality, Sufyān al-Sawrī also remarked, "The piety of a person is proportional to the lawfulness of his sustenance."

The money earned by a person is like a snake; it exits from the same hole it enters. If one's pocket is filled with unlawful money, their deeds begin to deteriorate. Even if it appears righteous outwardly, their heart and inner self become corrupted, and sincerity and spirituality are lost. Therefore, with the awareness that halal has accountability, and haram has consequences, it is crucial to make every effort not to mix earnings with the haram and the doubtful. Keeping a balance and using lawful blessings in moderation is necessary.

Hearts become a source of goodness and blessings when they obey the commands of Allah. Bodies, tainted with the doubtful and the forbidden, become a source of evil. All this underscores the need for extreme caution regarding sensitivity to lawful and unlawful matters. Therefore, it is crucial to first learn what these terms entail in the most beautiful and accurate way and then never be negligent in their implementation. Our minds, hearts, and feelings should incline towards the lawful, and we should abhor the forbidden. We must be able to build strong walls in our willpower against both doubtful and forbidden matters so that their material and spiritual poisons, viruses, and microbes do not corrode our souls. For this reason, against every form of haram, from the simplest and seemingly insignificant to the most significant, we must remain vigilant in our self-assessment of who we are committing these acts against. Particularly in matters of "violating the rights of others," even if it is as small as a needle, one should be extremely cautious not to become tainted with the haram.

2. Avoiding the Violation of the Rights of Others

The possessor of forgiveness, Allah, has excluded the rights of others from His forgiveness. A believer should be aware that they cannot attain divine forgiveness without seeking forgiveness from someone whose rights they have violated. One must maintain a sense of fairness, and if they have infringed upon the rights of another human being, they should not consider themselves exempt from returning what is due and seeking forgiveness.

The beautiful example of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ perfectly illustrates this concept:



Before his passing, Prophet Muhammad addressed the believers for the last time, emphasizing the importance of settling the rights of others. At one point, he brought up the matter of the rights of others and said, "O people! Whoever has usurped the rights of another should settle them immediately, without worrying about worldly disgrace. Know that worldly disgrace is insignificant compared to the disgrace in the Hereafter." (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, II, 319; Ibn Sa'd, II, 255)

In response, a man stood up and confessed, "O Messenger of Allah! I betrayed the war booty for the sake of Allah and took three dirhams more than my share." Prophet Muhammad asked him, "Why did you commit this betrayal?" The man replied, "I was in need." Prophet Muhammad then instructed, "O Fadl bin Abbas! Give this person three dirhams from the treasury (Baytul-mâl)." (Tabarī, Tārīkh, III, 190)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, in his final admonitions to the companions before his death, stated: "Indeed, I am a human being. Some of you may have rights over me. If I have unknowingly taken something from someone's property, let my property be returned to him! Be aware that the one among you who has the highest status with me, the dearest to me, is the one who has taken his right from me or forgives me for it. Through him, I will attain purity, contentment, and ease in meeting my Lord!" (Ibn Sa'd, II, 255; Tabarī, Tārīkh, III, 190)

After the noon prayer, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ turned to the pulpit, repeated these words, and a man stood up saying, "You commanded us to give three dirhams when someone asks; I have already given them." Prophet Muhammad confirmed, "You speak the truth! O Fadl bin Abbas, give him three dirhams." (Ibn Sa'd, II, 255; Tabarī, Tārīkh, III, 190)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ further prayed:

"O Allah! I am only a human being. If I have spoken harshly to any Muslim, struck someone with a whip, or cursed anyone, make it a means of purification, reward, and mercy for them." (Ahmad, III, 400)

"O Allah! If I have spoken harshly to any believer, make that word a means of closeness to You for them on the Day of Judgment." (Bukhārī, Daawât, 34)

Anas رضي الله عنه narrated:



"We were with Prophet Muhammad during his final moments. He reminded us three times, 'Fear Allah regarding prayers.' He then emphasized, 'Fear Allah concerning those under your authority, especially two vulnerable groups: widowed women and orphaned children. Fear Allah regarding prayers.' Even when his blessed spirit departed, they continued to repeat these words inwardly." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 477)

With such high sensitivity to the rights of others, Prophet Muhammad emphasized in a hadith: "Whoever has committed an injustice against the honor, chastity, or property of his fellow Muslim should seek reconciliation with him before the Day of Judgment arrives when there will be no gold or silver. Otherwise, if he has righteous deeds, they will be taken away from him as much as the injustice he committed and given to the aggrieved party. If he lacks good deeds, the sins of the wronged Muslim will be transferred to him." (Bukhārī, Mazālim 10, Riqāq 48)

In light of these truths, Al-Ghazali advises:

"Beware of the debt owed to others! The reward of many accepted deeds is lost due to the debt owed to people."

It should be remembered that all sins, especially consuming the rights of others, pose the greatest obstacle to earning the pleasure of Allah. Whoever desires to turn to Allah, draw near to Him, and attain the bliss of both worlds must first remove these obstacles to pave the way for their ultimate goal. Only then can they perform their acts of worship with a sincere heart, reach the lofty worship that will lead to spiritual ascension, and achieve the state of humility that Allah desires.

3. Tranquility in Worship

As previously mentioned in the discussion of the Islamic life of worship, Allah does not consider the mechanical and purely formal performance of worship sufficient. Rather, He desires the soul's active participation in these acts, leading to a worship filled with tranquility and serenity within the harmony of the heart and body. Just as the physical direction in prayer is the Kaaba, Allah wishes us to worship with the awareness that the spiritual focus of the hearts is His essence. The proximity to His Sublime Being is tied to a life of worship with such understanding.



Worship, observed with attention to all its subtleties, serves as the most significant spiritual training for hearts. The success of this training undoubtedly depends on how much inspiration is drawn from the words of Allah.

4. Derived Enlightenement from the Qur'an

The Qur'an represents the divine purpose. Those who are close to Allah through the Qur'an better understand His intention. It is stated in the Qur'an:

"This Book (the Qur'an) is not to be doubted. It is a guide for those who are mindful." (Al-Baqarah, 2)

The Qur'an endears contemplation that draws one closer to Allah, encouraging thought and facilitating it. It purifies the inner world of individuals. Hearts find perfection in proportion to the extent they are filled with the grace of the Qur'an.

For one's excellence, both physical and spiritual cleanliness are essential. The ways to achieve this are conveyed to humanity by the Qur'an.

Allah desires a sound heart from us, emphasizing that the prescription for this is the Qur'an. It is stated in the Qur'an:

"Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allah and what has come down of the truth?" (Al-Hadid, 16)

To benefit adequately from our guidance, just as with all forms of worship, approaching our guide, the Qur'an, with sincerity and piety is crucial. Heart diseases hinder a person from having a correct encounter with the Qur'an. In fact, those who cannot meet the Qur'an with its mercy, healing, and guidance, suffer the opposite – contamination.

Moreover, the Qur'an unveils its secrets and wisdom to individuals in proportion to their spiritual capacity. The general public may bow before the same Quran, reciting its verses, yet each person derives his own benefit according to his heart's level.

How marvelous secrets might the Qur'an inspire in a heart free from impurities and filled with spirituality! The manner in which Umar ﷺ read the Qur'an is quite thought-provoking. The great companion said, "I completed



the reading of Surah Al-Baqarah in twelve years and sacrificed a camel in gratitude." (Al-Qurtubi, Tafsir, I, 40)

Abu Bakr ﷺ also expressed, "Explaining one verse of the Qur'an is more beautiful to me than memorizing it." (Ibn al-Anbari, Kitab al-Izahil-Waqf, I, 23)

The recitation of these esteemed companions was not merely pronouncing the words. It was reading with deep contemplation of the wisdom and mysteries of the Qur'an, understanding the divine instructions, and approaching it with a sensitive heart. Reading the Qur'an genuinely and benefiting from it properly is only possible in this way.

In essence, the benefits derived from the Qur'an vary among individuals. Some wrong themselves, losing the greatest blessing despite learning the Qur'an by not reciting it correctly or failing to act accordingly. Some are in the middle, alternating between action and negligence. Some make the Qur'an the pivot of their lives, progressing in the path of goodness with the permission of Allah and becoming close friends with their Lord.[18]

Regarding true believers, the Qur'an says:

"When the verses of Allah are recited to them, they do not fall deaf and blind to them." (Al-Furqan, 73) "The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and upon their Lord they rely." (Al-Anfal, 2)

Allah, the Exalted, desires that we establish a meaningful connection with the Qur'an by reciting it beautifully, understanding it both mentally and emotionally, and living according to its dictates. Neglecting the Qur'an, losing interest in it, and neglecting it is a severe punishment in the Hereafter.

In a hadith, it is stated: "Whoever learns the Qur'an but does not attend to it, does not look at it (does not live according to it), the Day of Judgment will come, and the Qur'an will cling to him, saying: 'O my Lord! This servant has imprisoned me. He abandoned me, kept his distance from me, and did not act according to me. Judge between me and him.'" (Alusi, Ruhu'l-Ma'ani, XIX, 14)

Therefore, Umar ﷺ advised, "If you have the ability, strive to make the Qur'an an intercessor for you rather than an opponent. Indeed, whoever the Qur'an intercedes for will go to Paradise, and whoever it accuses will go to

18. See: Fatir, 32.

Hell. Know that this Qur'an is the source of guidance and the brightest of knowledge. It is the last book that has come with the mercy, healing, and guidance through which the blind eyes, deaf ears, and locked hearts are opened..." (Ali al-Muttaqi, II, 285-286/4019)

As believers, it is essential to evaluate our relationship with the Qur'an. How close are we to the level desired by Allah and His Messenger? To what extent do we feel the spiritual essence of the Qur'an?

In conclusion, hearts that meet the Qur'an become a unique manifestation of the Creator's universe. A person living with the Qur'an experiences the peace and happiness of being a miniature universe, where this vast and magnificent creation is rolled up like a fan into a tiny world. For the person of the heart, the Qur'an is a splendid door opening to the depths of the world of contemplation. The most suitable and fruitful times to enter this magnificent door with recitation, contemplation, gratitude, standing, and remembrance are undoubtedly the early hours of the morning.

5. Observing the Pre-Dawn Hours

Allah, in His noble verses, praises those servants who spend little time sleeping at night and engage in seeking forgiveness during the pre-dawn hours.[19] This divine favor is, at the same time, a special invitation for the true lovers and knowledgeable servants of Allah. Indeed, Umar ﷺ witnessed Abdullah ibn al-Mas'ud praying at the mosque one early morning and making the following supplication: "Allah, You called, and I responded. Forgive me at this blessed pre-dawn moment!"

The serene moments of dawn, when the night is tranquil and most people yearn for sleep in their warm beds, are precious hours for the friends of Allah. During these hours, the doors of the heart open, revealing many secrets to those who are prepared.

Bayazid al-Bistami stated, "Nothing has been conquered for me without the nights turning into days."

Sheikh Sayf ad-din used to recite the entire Quran in two cycles of prayer at night and, immersed in the spiritual joy of the pre-dawn moments, would supplicate, "O my Lord, I cannot have enough; the nights are so short!"

19. See: Ali-Imran, 17; al-Zariyat, 18.

Rumi, emphasizing the significance of engaging in worship, prayer, remembrance, and seeking forgiveness during the nights, expressed the spiritual pleasure of the pre-dawn hours in his verses:

"Fill the cup again, and again, and pass it around,

Let the night stop, O friend, restrain it, please!

Strike my sleep with chains, let no moments pass,

Those who sleep won't notice, won't feel the night's essence..." [20]

According to the narration of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the mother of Prophet Suleyman, who was granted the most magnificent dominion on earth, advised him not to sleep excessively at night, saying, "My son, do not sleep too much at night, for sleeping excessively at night will leave a person poor on the Day of Judgment." (Ibn Majah, Iqamah, 174)

Certainly, to stand before the presence of Allah by interrupting sweet night sleeps and to benefit fully from the blessings of the pre-dawn moments, one must also make good use of the daytime.

Hasan al-Basri said, "Getting up for night worship is burdensome for the one overwhelmed by sins."

Ibrahim Adham advised those who desire to observe the pre-dawn hours but struggle to wake up, saying, "Do not disobey Him during the day so that He may grant you His presence at night."

Believers who aspire to have a purified heart, as desired by Allah, illuminate their nights with worship and obedience, thus reflecting the spirituality of the pre-dawn moments into their days.

6. Remembrance (Zikr)

A person remembers what he loves. One of the most beautiful expressions of loving Allah is to frequently mention His beautiful names and attributes, to glorify, exalt, and offer praise and thanks to Him incessantly from the heart. In fact, in defining the characteristics of the servants praised by Allah, it is stated, "Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying down." (Ali-Imran, 191)

20. Translated from Dīvān-ı Kebīr by Emin Işık.



As a result of remembrance, an indescribable tranquility and a state of peace emerge in the heart, and the taste of divine love buds. The perfection of faith is possible through divine love. If the power of love to open up to the ocean of divine secrets and wisdom is not present in the soul, a person will drown even in the shallow shores that reason can reach. Or, they will perish in the storms of worldly turmoil. Therefore, to escape the storms of the transient tides, to find peace and tranquility for the soul, and to experience the sublime pleasure of divine love, one needs the grace and spirituality of remembrance.

Friends of Allah, the knowledgeable servants, live with the joy and tranquility of remembrance. This is their greatest spiritual wealth and treasure of the heart. Ibrahim Adham says, "If those who possess beings knew the tastes we experience in our inner world, they would sacrifice everything to take it from us."

A believer who truly experiences the spiritual joy and taste of remembrance eagerly spreads it into every moment of his life. For instance, the believer starts every task by saying, "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful." At the end of all his actions, he says, "All praise is due to Allah." If an inadvertent bad word slips from his mouth, he says, "I seek forgiveness from Allah, the Almighty." When expressing something he intends to do in the future, he says, "If Allah wills." If someone plots against him or if he encounters a difficult situation, he says, "There is no power nor strength except with Allah, the High, the Mighty." When a calamity, small or large, befalls him or his possessions, he says, "Indeed, we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him, we will return." Day and night, at every opportunity, he continues the remembrance of "*La ilaha illallah*" (there is no god but Allah).

Anas bin Malik narrated, "The Messenger of Allah said: 'When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, avail yourselves of them.'" The companions asked, "What are the gardens of Paradise, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "The circles of remembrance (zikr)." (Tirmidhi, Duaawat, 82/3510)

7. Contemplation of Death

The meaning of remembrance (zikr) is to recall and keep in mind, and one of the most important truths that a person should never forget is death. Because everyone born into this world comes as a condemned person to death. Therefore, one of the essential reflections we must constantly engage in is ~contemplation of death~, frequently remembering death, deeply pondering



over the inevitable event of the future, and entering into the awareness of mortality are crucial steps to purify the heart and mature spiritually.

Rumi beautifully expresses the concept:

"Most people fear the death of their bodies, yet the true fear and concern should be the death of hearts."

"Real death is to be separated from Allah."

Indeed, the heart becoming indifferent to spirituality, witnessing the manifestations of divine power and greatness with a dull and heedless face, is a spiritual calamity. This disastrous state is a consequence of being captivated by the deceptive pleasures of worldly life and transient benefits.

That is why the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised: "Remember death frequently, as it cuts off all worldly pleasures." (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 4; Nasa'i, Janaiz, 3)

The inclination of the ego's essence is to rebel against mortality. The ego, desiring permanence, fears and avoids death. As mentioned in the Quran:

"The stupor of death comes in truth: 'This is what you were trying to escape!'" (Qaf, 19)

The most effective antidote to the poison of heedlessness, which leads the soul to rebellion and transgression, is to remember the reality of death.

Therefore, Allah repeatedly reminds His servants of this universally accepted truth:

"Everything on earth will perish." (Ar-Rahman, 26)

"Every soul will taste death, and you will only be given your full compensation on the Day of Resurrection." (Al-Ankabut, 57)

"Every soul will taste death, and We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us, you will be returned." (Al-Anbiya, 35)

The message that Allah wants to convey to us through these verses is the necessity of living with an awareness of our mortality.

A heart conscious of its mortality:

- Turns to repentance,
- Vigilantly avoids injustice, consuming the forbidden, and falling into heedlessness,

- Performs acts of worship with humility,
- Cultivates good moral character,
- Liberates itself from the desires of the ego.

For a believer who lives with this awareness, death is not a source of mourning but a manifestation of the joy of the "wedding night." This is the realization of the secret "Die before you die." For those who comprehend this secret, death is a door opening to eternal bliss. Friends of Allah who have understood the secret of dying before death continue to live on in hearts even after their mortal bodies are laid to rest.

Therefore, being in the company of elevated souls who have grasped the secret of dying before death and being under their spiritual guidance is a reviving breeze for hearts threatened by spiritual death. The most beautiful way to partake in this revival is undoubtedly through their companionship.

8. Spiritual Gathering

Spiritual gathering or sohbet in Turkish, the conversation or spiritual discourse, is a confirmed tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The hearts of the companions reached perfection through the gatherings of the Prophet's spiritual conversations.

All conversations that occur within the devotion are echoes of the discussions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Because the center of spiritual benefit is Him. Conversations filled with spiritual excitement are reflections of the divine light emanating from that center.

Participating in spiritual discussions is in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and thus, being in a state of devotion is necessary in those gatherings. The companions described the serenity, attentiveness, and respectful demeanor they adopted in the presence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by saying:

"As if there was a bird on our heads, and we feared that if we moved, it would fly away."[21]

Significant spiritual training and guidance are achieved through conversations, making them a special means of transmitting blessings, especially in Sufi orders, particularly in the Naqshbandi order.

21. See: Abu Dawood, Sunan, 23-24.

The great saint Shah Naqshband -may his secret be sanctified- says:

"Our path of training is based on conversation. Goodness is found in being with righteous people for the sake of Allah. Continuously participating in conversations with them leads to attaining true faith."[22]

It is essential to consider being in the company of sincere and righteous individuals, following the example of the companions and friends of God, as a great opportunity. Conversation is like a spiritual prescription. Those who come to the conversation with a sincere heart recognize their mistakes, comprehend their shortcomings, and find the opportunity to enhance their righteous deeds and morality.

In the pages of a book, intellectual contemplation predominates, while in conversations, emotional depth takes precedence. Reading stimulates thought, while listening activates understanding. Conversations bring forth refinement, elegance, and sensitivity in hearts eagerly seeking them. Therefore, for spiritual progress, conversation is the most beautiful opportunity and an essential need that cannot be fulfilled merely by reading dry texts.

However, being present in a gathering alone is not sufficient to seize this opportunity and meet this need. Just as a ship that does not set sail cannot benefit from the wind, a person who does not open their heart to the blessings and spirituality of the conversation will miss out on this spiritual rain of mercy.

Therefore, merely sitting physically and absentmindedly in conversation gatherings should be avoided. It should be remembered that without reaching the emotional depths of the heart and opening the doors of perception, the presence in the company of the righteous will not be beneficial. Thus, every second spent with them should be utilized with a heart vigilance that can manifest a century's worth of benefit and blessings. Only then can a truly fruitful companionship occur.

9. Companionship with the Righteous

Just as every substance emits energy and radiation of varying values, the human heart also emits an unseen but spiritually felt energy.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah commands:

22. Al-Bukhari, Anis al-Talibin, p. 90; Rashahat, p. 68; Abu al-Qasim, al-Risalat al-Bahaiyya, vr. 52a, 62a.



"O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true." (At-Tawbah, 119), encouraging positive influences on our hearts. In another verse, it is also commanded:

"...and do not sit with the wrongdoers." (Al-An'am, 68), instructing to protect the heart, the center of feelings, from negative influences.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expressed one of the spiritual blessings of being with righteous people as follows:

"Allah, the Almighty, averts calamities from a city with the presence of a righteous person."

He then recited the following verse:

"...And if it were not for Allah checking [some] people by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted, but Allah is full of bounty to the worlds." (Al-Baqarah, 251)

Our hearts, which do not possess free will, have love as the greatest divine capital. A believer must understand how to use it and not waste this favor of universal will.

The heart of a believer should always be in supplication, saying: "O my Lord! Make me love those You love, prevent me from loving those You dislike, and protect my heart!" Because a person follows the path of those they love. There are many examples of individuals transforming into someone entirely different, either positively or negatively, due to love.

During the era of ignorance, people became close and attached to the guidance of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and became sincere believers. Even Qitmîr, the dog of the People of the Cave, received great divine favor by partaking in the love of the righteous. Conversely, the wife of Prophet Lut and the wife and son of Prophet Nuh faced divine punishment due to their mingling with wicked and unjust people.

Abdul Qadir al-Jilani -may his secret be sanctified- states:

"Be friends with those who strive against their ego. Do not befriend those who indulge their ego. Be sincere, otherwise, you will tire yourself in vain."

Therefore, it is necessary to strive to use the capital of life in the company of righteous believers who are the sincere lovers of Allah's Messenger, ﷺ.



The adherence to such principles related to the purification and clarification of the inner self - by the grace of Allah - results in the hearts beginning to attain purity. Such hearts are now aware of the ultimate cause in the chain of events, which is the "divine will." Therefore, they live in the tranquility of compliance with wisdom. They are freed from many human weaknesses, such as panic and anxiety.

For them, there is no longer anything "absurd" in the universe. They start watching everything in the universe with admiration, love, and wonder, starting with the principle, "Accept the creation for the sake of the Creator." In the spiritual progress that begins with regard to wisdom, they observe everything filled with feelings of lesson, love, and astonishment. Hearts and eyes that deepen in wisdom do not see anything in the universe other than the divine manifestations.

For them, the entire universe is now like an open book ready to be read. They, who have surpassed the knowledge in lines and reached the wisdom in verses, begin their journey, filled with lessons, love, and astonishment. Hearts that deepen in wisdom and eyes that look with insight see nothing but divine disclosure in the universe.

Therefore, there are no longer any "absurdities" for them in the universe. Starting with the principle, "Accept the creation for the sake of the Creator," they live in the tranquility of compliance with wisdom. They are freed from many human weaknesses, such as panic and anxiety.

For them, the entire universe is now like an open book ready to be read. They, who have surpassed the knowledge in lines and reached the wisdom in verses, begin their journey, filled with lessons, love, and astonishment. Hearts that deepen in wisdom and eyes that look with insight see nothing but divine disclosure in the universe.

However, it is unfortunate for those who have not yet tasted the love, ecstasy, and joy of faith, who cannot solve the mystery of life and the universe because they have not acquired the knowledge and wisdom of life. They are deprived of understanding the silent and articulate expressions of roses, trees, wolves, birds, winds, rivers, vineyards, and gardens. How unfortunate are those naive souls that watch the mysteries of life and the universe with a dull and ignorant face, unable to comprehend the silent messages of creation!



Summary:

In the current era, characterized by numerous trials, it is crucial for us to understand Islam's essence, spirituality, and the sublime qualities of the companions, followers, and righteous believers, so that we may apply them to our lives. In a time where deliberate or heedless attempts are made to compromise the unshakable spiritual fortress of Islam, the revival of this need with the love and fervor of the era of happiness is of great importance.

Depriving oneself of the spirituality and reality of Islam damages the straight path, leading humanity into dead-end streets and trapping them in countless pitfalls of heedlessness. Thus, eternal bliss transforms into eternal disaster.

The way to salvation lies in living by faith and good morals with love. Hearts that do not harmonize with the light of revelation and the grace of tradition cannot truly experience happiness.

Ignorance in religious matters is a dreadful darkness. Straying from religion leads to spiritual deprivation and narrows the horizon of conscience. It extinguishes the light of both the apparent and the hidden. It deprives individuals of the subtle wisdom of the scriptures and traditions. It turns a person, endowed with treasures by the Creator, into a bag of skin filled with flesh and bones, making them a slave to worldly interests.

Such ignorance blinds the heart. In a life journey filled with countless trials and tribulations, this ignorance is akin to fumbling in pitch darkness to find one's way.

A world not illuminated by the sun of faith, not beautified by good morals and righteous deeds, no matter how vibrant it may seem, is pale and dull in reality.

A believer does not fall for temporary pleasures condemned to fade away; they do not submit to being a captive of their desires. Their profound love, ecstasy, and sublime enthusiasm continually lead them towards friendship with the Truth. A believer must reach the pinnacle of faith so that, one day, they may gaze upon the gardens of paradise through the window of their grave.



Therefore, as believers, it is crucial to study Islam from authentic sources, with an emphasis on spirituality and morality, in order to live by piety with the principle "knowing the truth as the truth and the false as false." In this chaotic era where spiritual values are disrupted, increasing our connection to works that lead to the love of Allah and connection to Him, such as the works of the era of happiness, is necessary for a renewed awakening.

All these truths emphasize the need for authentic works that can comprehend and convey Islam in its spiritual structure. This meticulous work by Dr. Murat KAYA, focusing on the fundamental tenets of Islam and exploring its wisdom, will achieve true success if it contributes to the readers' advancement in piety through the spirit of the companions of the Prophet. The most magnificent conquests are the conquests of hearts.

Blessed are those who turn their hearts into sanctuaries, reviving and flourishing the hearts of the needy, lonely, destitute, and those seeking guidance in their sanctuary.

May our Lord grant that the wisdom and truths expressed in this work find resonance in believing hearts and become a means for beautiful actions in the pleasing manner He desires.

Amen...

Through this occasion, I extend my gratitude to Dr. Murat KAYA, who has prepared this work with great sincerity and effort, and to Altınoluk Magazine for presenting this work to you, esteemed readers. I pray for the acceptance of their services as ongoing charity in the sight of Allah.

Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ,

Uskudar, 2009

ENTRY

1. Human and Universe

Rumi explains:

"One day, an ox arrived in Baghdad, the center of civilization at the time, and wandered through the city. However, amid all the magnificent beauty, flavors, and artistic wonders, only the melon and watermelon rinds by the roadside caught its attention. Indeed, what is worthy of the ox and donkey's gaze is either the straw scattered on the road or the meadow grass growing by the side of the road!" (Mathnawi, vol. 4, verses: 2377-2379).

Similarly, humans in this world should not only be occupied with eating, drinking, and entertainment but should also look at the magnificent art around them and contemplate. Both human beings and the universe are such magnificent entities that extensive contemplation upon them is necessary. Throughout centuries, discoveries have been made about humans and the universe, but their awe-inspiring characteristics have not been fully revealed. The universe is an incredibly delicate realm built on precise balances, and humans are the precious gems within it. Looking at their extraordinary characteristics, we can say that humans and the universe are like twin siblings, with the difference being that one is of an incomprehensible magnitude, and the other is a scaled-down model...

Therefore, humans should deeply contemplate both the universe and their own nature, investigate their intricacies, derive lessons from various perspectives, and live their lives in harmony with the universe without conflicting with it. They should utilize the universe in the most beautiful way possible without conflict.

Now, let's take a brief journey of contemplation on the universe:

When a person stops for a moment, sets aside their habits, and contemplates the objects around them, they are faced with a fascinating sight. They

wonder why they hadn't looked at this wonderful scene with contemplative eyes before.

For example, think about how the same soil, nourished by the same water, produces thousands of different plants, each yielding fruits and vegetables of different colors and shapes in perfect order and arrangement. Isn't it a phenomenon that surpasses the intellect that the same foods grown in the same soil and nourished by the same water are superior and different from each other?[23] Contemplation continues on soil, water, plants, living beings, and beyond.

Then, when one looks up to the sky, they see a magnificent and enormous system: the Sun, for instance. The distance between the Sun and the Earth is approximately 150 million kilometers. The age of the universe is estimated to be about 15 billion years, and the age of the Sun is estimated to be 5 billion years. The Sun has turned into a massive ball of fire through the combination and fusion of compressed and condensed materials. Despite being a medium-sized star, the Sun is so large in volume that approximately 1.3 million planets the size of Earth can fit inside it. Its surface temperature is 6000 degrees Celsius, and its internal temperature is 20 million degrees Celsius. It moves at an enormous speed of 720,000 kilometers per hour in its orbit. Roughly calculated, this means the Sun travels 17,280,000 kilometers in a day.[24]

Every second, the Sun transforms 564 million tons of hydrogen into 560 million tons of helium. The 4 million-ton difference is released into space as energy rays. If we calculate based on the lost mass, the Sun would lose 4 million tons per second and 240 million tons per minute. If the Sun has been producing energy at this rate for 3 billion years, it would have lost a mass of 400,000 million times million tons during this time. However, this value would only account for 5000th of the Sun's current total mass.

With its tremendous power and energy, the Sun is created to be most beneficial to all life on Earth, radiating its rays to the world in a measured manner. However, one day, the hydrogen at the center of the Sun will decrease, the Sun's core will become increasingly enriched with helium, and as the core becomes heavier, it will pull more towards itself. This marks the end of the world.[25]

23. Qur'an al Qareem, Surah Ra'd, 4th verse. (Ra'd,4)
24. Prof. Dr. Osman Çakmak, Bir Çekirdekti Kainat, p.21, 66.
25. Prof. Dr. Osman Çakmak, Kainat Kitap Atomlar Harf, p.50

This immense Sun we mentioned is just one of approximately 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy. Similarly, the Milky Way galaxy is just one of a few hundred billion galaxies visible with modern telescopes. To travel from one end of the Milky Way galaxy to the other, 100,000 light-years are required. Light travels at a speed of 300,000 kilometers per second. Earth is located in one of the spiral arms of this galaxy. To reach the center of our galaxy from Earth, we would need to travel 300,000 trillion kilometers.[26]

Earth is swiftly moving through space, never to return to the same place again. It travels rapidly in the depths of space, at a speed of 30 kilometers per second in one direction and 250 kilometers per hour in another direction. Together with everything on it, Earth covers more than 2 million kilometers in orbit around the Sun in a day.

Stars in the sky explode and scatter after a certain period, and the debris of that star forms the basis for new celestial systems. Thus, in the universe where nothing is wasted, materials are transported from one point to another through various means. The Sun, along with the planets around it, and even our Earth, emerged as a result of a star explosion that occurred in ancient times.

As a result of stars exploding and dying, neutron stars are formed. These are very small and very dense. For example, a neutron star is the condensed form of matter within a sphere with a radius of 700,000 kilometers, compressed into a sphere with a radius of only 10 kilometers. Hence, the matter of a neutron star is as much as a teaspoon, weighing 40 billion tons.

Like all the stars we see in the sky, neutron stars also rotate around their own axis. However, due to their high density, their rotation speeds are incredibly high. A typical neutron star rotates 30 times per second around its axis. There are even those that rotate more than 1000 times per second. When you think about a celestial body the size of a city and more massive than the Sun, rotating several times around its own axis in the time it takes us to blink, it is impossible not to be amazed by this splendor.

26. Prof. Dr. Osman Çakmak, Bir Çekirdekti Kainat, p.10-12.

Rain

Let's also contemplate the rain that descends from the sky. If raindrops were to fall in accordance with the law of gravity, each drop would fall to the ground at bullet speed. This would mean living beings perishing under the rain. However, each raindrop falls gently, steadily, without harming or wearing out, thanks to the lifting force and fluidity provided by the air. The effect of gravity is balanced, ensuring that the drop falls to the ground at a constant speed. As seen, the most difficult and expensive services are resolved through the most suitable and straightforward means, continuously presented to humanity—the distinguished guest of the Earth—at every moment.

Substance

Now let's turn our gaze to the ground and examine the structure of matter a bit: Matter is composed of different elements like hydrogen and carbon; elements consist of atoms; atoms consist of electrons, protons, and neutrons; and protons and neutrons are made up of quarks. Ultimately, if we go all the way, we encounter neutrino particles (or waves), which are fundamental building blocks of the universe. Considering there are approximately 100 trillion atoms on the head of a pin, assuming a square millimeter, we grasp how small atoms are in size.

An individual is 10^28 (add 27 zeros next to 10) times larger in volume than an atom. The Sun is also 10^28 times larger than a human. In this case, a human is positioned between the Sun and the atom.

The nucleus of an atom represents such a dense material structure that a teaspoonful of nuclear matter almost weighs a billion tons. Nucleus elements (protons and neutrons), being much smaller in volume compared to electrons, also have extremely high speeds compared to electrons. They move at a speed of approximately over 60,000 kilometers per second. Despite the nucleus being about a hundred thousand times smaller than the atom it forms the center of, 99.95% of the mass in the atom is concentrated in the nucleus. In this regard, an atom is almost nothing but "emptiness."

Gravitational Force

Let's also consider this: If the weakest of the forces acting on atoms, namely "gravitational force," did not exist, we could never perceive the world we live in. This is because neither we on Earth's surface nor Earth around the

Sun would exist. If the positive and negative poles of the electric force were not balanced, gravitational force would be useless. Thankfully, these forces are finely balanced with a precision that allows for an error of one part in a quadrillion. Against this force, particles of the same pole can coexist around the nucleus, thanks to the nuclear force, which is a thousand times stronger. If the nuclear force were left unchecked, the entire universe would become a colossal atomic nucleus. However, its recognized effective range was only as much as the atomic nucleus. If the nuclear force were not balanced with the weak force, everything would turn into an atomic bomb, massive spheres millions of times larger than Earth would emerge, and the Sun would extinguish instantly.

Is the Universe Merely an Energy Wave?

Experiments conducted so far have shown that atomic particles are created from energy and make up everything around us. The particles within the atom, such as electrons, quarks, and neutrinos, resemble waves rather than bouncing balls. In conclusion, we can say that the physical universe is composed of particles or, from another perspective, waves—much like a TV broadcast. In essence, if we express the raw material of the entire universe in its most basic form, it is an "energy wave." Just as TV broadcast waves create images of apples, flowers, birds, or humans on the screen, energy waves in the universe also give rise to apples, flowers, birds, humans, and even sound. It can be said that just as a television broadcast disappears when the power is cut off, this seemingly solid universe could also vanish instantly with a command.

Einstein stated that mass and energy are two different appearances of the "same thing." If the essence of matter is super-fast energy waves, and if matter is actually energy, then what is energy? Interestingly, energy has no material body. The wood we burn in our stove turns to ash and dissipates into the air. Its mass, as kinetic energy in the form of vibrations in the atoms of the matter in our homes, turns into heat. Burning wood only vibrates the surrounding materials in return. From a scientific standpoint, if the essence of matter is formless energy waves, then all the energy in the universe could be compressed into a formless particle. Indeed, the entire universe, compressed at one point, emerged in an instant with the Big Bang. Therefore, whether it's matter, atoms, or photons, they are just different appearances on the surface of something deeper.

There's a Force Arranging Atoms in Any Way

It's important to note that, for example, the material of the brain is entirely the same as that of a stone, diamond, or coal—they all consist of electrons, protons, and neutrons. The difference between them arises from the arrangement of atoms. Therefore, we should seek the difference that the brain displays not in its substance but in something else it takes from the outside and reflects—a meaning. All observations and experiences show that there are numerous profound layers of meaning alongside matter in the universe. In other words, matter is not the source of everything.

Fluid Mechanics

When we look at nature, a fish swimming, a bird flying, or an airplane flying all occur within certain principles (fluid mechanics). Have we ever noticed how complex the movements of water are when we release our fatigue by a river or the sea? Do airplanes or flying insects apply these principles more effectively and efficiently? When designing the body of a fish, have the fluid principles been applied? These applications we see in nature, can they bring gains or will they bring gains to us in technology? Can we achieve fuel efficiency in airplanes by studying whales and swallows? Why can mosquitoes stand on the water without sinking? What feature in the legs of spiders is effective in their sudden jumps?

The heart of a fish is carefully placed where the pressure exerted by swimming on its body is lowest. Thus, as speed increases, external pressure decreases, aiming to facilitate the heartbeat. The eye of the fish is placed in a location that maintains the same static pressure, regardless of the speed of the fish. Thus, there is no pressure difference in the fish's eye whether it swims fast or slow. We have all seen flies in our homes that can make sudden accelerations and decelerations, hover in the air, flip and fly upside down, and land on the ceiling upside down. The notch in the tail of the dogfish, the broad feathers at the wingtips of vultures, and the crescent-shaped fin on the tail of a whale provide hydrodynamic or aerodynamic advantages in their movements. Wing shapes, like those of swallows and tunas, curved backward for both front and rear wings, further enhance efficiency. Humans also benefit from these designs in airplanes and ships. Small channels discovered on the skin of the dogfish provide efficiency in saltwater movement. Through analysis, it has been observed that these channels are the most ideal in structure and size

to reduce friction in water. The lubrication mechanism in human and animal joints has not been fully explained with the three lubrication types in technology to date. Fish with antifreeze living below freezing temperatures, snakes moving in hot desert sands, and fish resistant to drought in tidal regions exist. Eelpouts can dive to a depth of 1600 meters, where the pressure is 160 times that which we are exposed to. However, there are many unknowns about how deep-sea creatures continue their lives under such great pressure. Some sea snakes can expel nitrogen through their skin during long deep dives and avoid decompression sickness when they surface. However, even the most skilled divers today can only ascend to the surface from deep water after a long rest...

Everything we have conveyed so far is just a small part of the truths pointing to divine greatness and power. These alone lead a person to the existence of a Creator with infinite knowledge and power.

2. Human and the Creator

Jim Clinging from California recounts a memory that deeply influenced him as follows: "After finishing high school, I started studying pharmacy. Chemistry classes particularly caught my attention. Ammonia, which technology could only produce at 1500 degrees Celsius, was being produced by the human body at a body temperature of 37 degrees Celsius. Science couldn't explain this. I encountered many examples like this during my studies. Therefore, there must be a founder of this unfailing order. I felt the existence of God within me..." (A. Arı - Y. Karabulut, Why I Became a Muslim, p. 143)

There are numerous truths that give humans this feeling. We observe many of these in our daily lives, yet we often don't ponder over them. Human beings, born into the world in an extremely perfect and adorned state, inherently carry the belief in Allah. They strengthen this belief by looking at the magnificent harmony in themselves and the universe. Unless misled or misdirected by parents and others for various reasons, individuals generally think that all beings were created by a much stronger and more sublime being than humans themselves.

All Humans Have the Concept of God

Since the 18th century in the West, efforts have been made to determine the origin of religion, relying not only on the information provided by sacred scriptures but also on archaeological, anthropological, and paleontological

research. Results obtained from these studies and various sources have indicated that the concept of "God" is present in all religions, from primitive tribal religions to the most advanced ones.[27]

Based on the latest information about primitive tribes in Southeast Australia, Andrew Lang demonstrated that the concept of a "Supreme God" ruling over moral conduct and existing in the sky was found everywhere.

Wilhelm Schmidt, in his work "Der Ursprung der Gottesidee," provided evidence that traces of the belief in a supreme being could be found in all primitive tribes. The Vienna Ethnology School, led by Schmidt, revealed that this supreme being was conceived as merciful, compassionate, and benevolent, continuing to exist in the sky. It was explained in scientific circles that the belief in an all-powerful supreme being at the beginning of all religious developments later transformed into beliefs like polytheism and animism due to historical and cultural changes, but traces of this ancient belief still persisted.[28]

The belief in a Supreme God was a significant part of the oldest cultures of primitive tribes in Australia, Polynesia, Congo, Mongolia, Zulus, South African hunter-gatherers, and similar primitive societies.

If human perception turns its attention to the attributes and actions of the Almighty with a sound will and pure contemplation, denying His existence becomes inconceivable. Denial of the Creator begins where intellectual and emotional perception is corrupted. In other words, if the mind and heart maintain a sound nature, it is impossible for an individual to be led into disbelief. If someone who has opened their eyes in the realm of disbelief returns to faith, the possibility of salvation from disbelief is very high. The example given is the case of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, who, despite being born and raised in a polytheistic environment, reached the belief in the existence and oneness of Allah through his intellectual and emotional faculties.[29]

Therefore, absolute denial is not possible for a thinking mind. Saying no to something doesn't provide a solution. Convincing, correct evidence, and proofs are required. While finding evidence that proves the absence of Allah

27. Prof. Dr. Gunay Tumer, "Religion" article, DİA, IX, 315-316.
28. Prof. Dr. Gunay Tumer, "Religion" article, DİA, IX, 317.
29. Al-An'am, 76-79.

is impossible, there are many evidences proving His existence. Some examples that everyone easily observes include:

- The formation, birth, immediate onset of mother's milk production at childbirth, growth of the child, acquiring intellect and understanding, and most importantly, what substances the child is created from.
- The creation of the heavens and the earth in a way suitable for human life, despite people being descendants of the same parents, having different languages and colors.
- People resting and sleeping at night, making efforts during the day for livelihood, and these times being arranged in the most suitable way for the mentioned activities... The night and day, the Sun and the Moon, and the unchanging order in them.
- The occurrence of lightning, which gives fear and hope to humans, the precise descent of water from the sky, and the seemingly lifeless soil being moved and revived... (Fussilat, 37, 39)
- The sky and the earth standing in a very delicate system and the creation of countless living beings within them.
- Winds announcing rain, directing clouds to various places, the formation of lakes and seas, ships like mountains floating on the water with thousands of tons of weight, aircraft carriers, which are like small cities where hundreds of planes take off and land, moving in the oceans, different plants growing with the same water and soil...[30]
- Providing sustenance to all living beings from the sky and the earth... (Fatir, 3)
- There are many manifestations of divine power like these.

Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi says:

"O son, is it more appropriate to think that a scribe wrote the writing, or that it was written by itself?

O incapable person, tell me, is it more appropriate to think that a house has a master, an architect, or that the house came into being by itself without a master or architect?

30. Ar-Rum, 20-46; Ash-Shura, 29, 32; Ya-Sin, 33-41; Al-Baqarah, 22. Also see: Ibrahim, 32-33; Ar-Rum, 40, 48, 54; Fatir, 9; Al-Mu'min, 61, 64, 79; Al-Jasiyah,12; At-Talaq,12.

Does a beautiful work of art come from the hand of an idle and lazy person, or is it the work of a skilled, discerning, and feeling person?" (Mathnawi, Vol. 6, verses: 368-371)

"The motions of the millstone; when you see it turning, come and watch the water of the stream that turns it! You see the dust and dirt rising into the air; see also the wind that stirs and blows it! You think about the boiling of your pots; now, take into account the fire that boils them!... How long will you watch the rotation of your mill? Turn your head and see the water flowing rapidly!" (Mathnawi, Vol. 5, verses: 2900-2905)

To raise the heavens without pillars, to command the Sun and the Moon, and other great tasks, even though intelligence is the most powerful entity through the mind, is not something that humans can accomplish.[31] Nor can it happen on its own. We observe that the material objects we perceive with our sensory organs are constantly in need and subject to continuous change. Everything that depends on something else and undergoes change is not eternal but created later. Our minds, possessing the same characteristics as the objects in the universe that cannot remain in motion or at rest, accept that everything in the universe, including ourselves, is created.[32] Almost all activities within the human body, such as heartbeat, breathing, kidney filtration, communication between organs and cells, and other intra-cellular activities, along with coordination and assistance between them and other living beings, are managed by programs outside human will. If the management and control of the hundreds of biochemical reactions in just a single tissue cell in the human bodyu were left to our will and consciousness, we might not even last a few minutes.[33] Humans, starting with themselves, observe that all living things in the heavens and the earth are in constant need of Allah. A person who reflects on this realizes immediately that all living and non-living entities in the world are in great need of an entity with vast knowledge and power.

Coincidence is Impossible

Explaining the emergence of beings and their continuation in a magnificent harmony and system through "coincidence" is impossible. Prof. Dr. Edwin Conqlin says: "Claiming that life came into existence by chance is like

31. Ar-Ra'd, 2.
32. Maturidi, Kitabu't-Tawhid, pp. 11-19; Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Allah" article, DİA, II, 475.
33. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şâkir Kocabaş, Creation in the Qur'an, Istanbul 2004, p. 115.

claiming that a massive encyclopedia emerged as a result of a random explosion in a printing press." [34]

If we take ten different brands, label them with numbers from 1 to 10 sequentially, then mix them thoroughly by putting them in our pocket, and try to take them out one by one in order, putting each brand back into the pocket before the next attempt, the probability of successfully taking out the brand labeled 1 on the first attempt is one in ten. The probability of taking out brands labeled 1 and 2 in order is one in a hundred. However, the probability of taking out brands 1, 2, 3, and 4 in order, consecutively, is one in ten thousand. The probability of taking out all brands from 1 to 10 sequentially is one in ten million.

Cressy Morrison, a famous American scholar who gives this example, continues:

"The aim of choosing such a simple example is nothing but to explain how impossible the facts become in the face of coincidence."[35] The life of living beings is based on the harmonious compositions of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and various forms of other carbon gases. There is no chance, even if it's one in ten million, for these gases to randomly combine with all the required specifications for life on a specific planet. From the moment the universe was created, if all matter in space tried to randomly create only one protein, it would still be impossible. Let's take, for example, the hemoglobin protein that carries oxygen in our blood.

As you may know, proteins are formed as a result of the sequence of amino acids. During the formation of amino acids, if a single amino acid changes place, the protein ceases to be a protein and cannot perform its function. (For example, a deadly disease called sickle cell anemia is caused by a single amino acid change in hemoglobin.) There are 20 types of amino acids in the human body. A hemoglobin protein is formed by the sequence of 574 amino acids. Let's assume that the amino acids in the human body come together to form this protein in sequence: The probability of the first amino acid in the sequence forming randomly is 1/20, the probability of the second

34. The Evidence of God, P. 174; Prof. Dr. Vahiduddin Han, Islam Challenges, p. 129.
35. A. C. Morrison, Man Does Not Stand Alone, p. 21; Prof. Dr. Vahiduddin Han, Islam Challenges, pp. 130-131.

amino acid forming is 1/20x1/20. The probability of the entire protein forming is 1/20574.

Those who understand mathematics will immediately realize that this number is impossible. Nevertheless, let's try to explain why this number is impossible: The estimated number of subatomic particles in space is 10^80. This number is the largest number in the universe. The estimated lifespan of the universe is 15 billion years. If we multiply the number of particles in the universe (10^80) by the seconds in the universe (approximately 10^18), we reach a number around 10^98. (Keep in mind that 10^100 is 10^98 times 100.) This number expresses the following: If all particles in the universe (such as electrons, protons) were amino acids and tried to create a hemoglobin atom once per second, even a single hemoglobin atom could not be formed.

Moreover, this probability calculation was made without considering factors such as the existence of amino acids, all amino acids being left-handed amino acids used in living organisms, the necessity of the required three-dimensional folding of the protein, and the need to freeze the processes when the protein is formed. If all these stages were included in the probability, the already impossible would become even more impossible. However, the number at hand represents such an impossibility that it is sufficient for someone who understands mathematics. Yes, you didn't read it wrong. Our body produces billions of these hemoglobin proteins every second. Every second, and billions!

When we look at existence, we observe that each entity pursues its own purpose, goal, and benefit. There is no absurdity, purposelessness, meaninglessness, or waste in anything. However, there is no mind or perception in the material world, the plant and animal kingdoms, or in objects and events. Only by attributing this conscious operation and these wisdoms to an infinitely wise Supreme Being can we take a rational path.

3. Attributes of the Creator

When humans observe created beings and examine their characteristics, they can easily comprehend some attributes of the Creator who brought them into existence. Firstly, they understand His existence. Then, they consider that He is free from qualities inconsistent with divinity, such as helplessness, deficiency, and being created.

Reasoning further, they acknowledge that for Him to create all beings and be their sole owner, it is necessary for Him to be eternal and everlasting. In other words, His existence has no beginning, and there is no end to it. Having come into existence later implies both a deficiency and contradicts the attribute of creating all beings. Similarly, being finite is in the same manner. The Creator does not resemble the created or the finite, and His existence does not depend on anyone else.

In this case, the Creator is not manifested in any form or limited. He is not composed of quantity or volume, nor is He made up of simple or composite parts. His essence and qualities are indefinable. He does not occupy space, and time does not affect Him. Nothing is like Him, and nothing is beyond His knowledge and power. [36]

The Creator has no needs like eating or drinking. He has no need for supplication or worship. Why would the Divine need to do these things for Himself?

The existence of more than one creator or deity would require deficient attributes such as helplessness, deficiency, and being created for each, so it is necessary for Him to be the only Creator. Therefore, the existence of the Creator, who is actually present, is unique and has the unparalleled superiority of being the only one, unlike anything else.

It is impossible for there to be two deities; if there were, the creatures would hesitate in choosing between them, find no peace in their hearts, and remain in the grip of doubt. It is also evident that there is only one deity from the following: The rain that falls from the sky, the tomatoes and peppers that come from the earth, the apples and pears that grow on the branches—all are the same shape, color, and taste everywhere in the world. Regardless of how long the distances between them are, as if they are aware of each other... This indicates to humans that all creatures come from a single source.

Some people who claim to adhere to the belief in Oneness (Tawhid) are not truly committed to the correct concept of Oneness because they err in the attributes of Allah. In other words, they anthropomorphically attribute deficient qualities to Him, which leads to an incorrect understanding of Oneness.

36. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, “Allah” article, DİA, II, 488-489; Nisefi, Akaid, pp. 31-36.

Infinite Knowledge

The power that created humanity and the universe with unimaginable perfection must possess infinite knowledge:

It should know everything that enters and exits the earth, descends from the sky, and ascends to it. The possessor of that knowledge should be such that nothing escapes His knowledge in the heavens and the earth, not even an atom. Everything smaller or larger than an atom should be within His knowledge. (Saba, 2-3)

It must know what each womb contains, what it carries in its womb, and what the wombs reduce or increase so that it can create everything according to a measure. It should know the unseen and the seen. His knowledge should encompass both the one who conceals his words and the one who speaks openly, the one hidden at night and the one walking openly during the day. In other words, He should know both the hidden and the hidden within the hidden. (Taha, 7; Al-Ankabut, 69; Sad, 6; Hud, 5; Ar-Ra'd, 8-10).

To be able to reward or punish people in the afterlife by granting countless blessings in the test world, it must know what is in their hearts, the best and the worst. [37]Even if a person's deed is as small as a mustard seed, hidden within a rock or situated anywhere in the heavens or on the earth, the Creator must know it. (Luqman, 16) In essence, the Creator must possess absolute knowledge without limits or end. To illustrate with a metaphor, if all the trees on Earth were pens, and the oceans were added seven times as ink to write down the Creator's knowledge, they should be exhausted, yet the Creator's knowledge should never be depleted. (Luqman, 27; Al-Kahf, 109)

Infinite Power

In addition to having infinite knowledge, it is essential for the Creator to possess boundless power; otherwise, He could not bring forth the observed entities or sustain their existence:

- All creatures should be so small and simple in relation to His power that when creating the heavens and the earth or desiring to create anything, He should simply say, "Be," and it should be. His command should be effective

37. An-Nisa, 63; Ali-Imran, 119, 154; Al-Ma'idah, 7; Al-Anfal, 43; Hud, 5; Luqman, 23; Fatir, 38; Az-Zumar, 7; Ash-Shura, 24; At-Taghabun, 4; Al-Mulk, 13; Al-Adiyat, 10.

in a single instance, in a very short time like the blink of an eye. (Al-Baqarah, 117; Al-Qamar, 50)

- All sovereignty and dominion should belong to Him. He must be able to grant ownership to whom He wills and take it away from whom He wills, exalt whom He wills and humble whom He wills, have complete control over all goodness, and have the power to provide unlimited sustenance to anyone He chooses. (Ali-Imran, 26-27; Fatir, 41).

- Creating all humans or resurrecting them after death should be as easy as resurrecting a single person. (Luqman, 28)

- He should be independent of all humans and helpers, needing no one or nothing, while everyone is in need of Him. (Az-Zumar, 7; Fatir, 15; Al-Ankabut, 6; Al-Ikhlas, 2)

- Even the destruction of the entire cosmic order, known as Judgment Day, should occur in His power in the blink of an eye or even shorter. The event should be like a scream, and all beings should gather instantly with a single sound for judgment. (An-Nahl, 77; Ya-Sin, 48-50, 53; Sad, 15; Qaf, 42)

- In essence, He should not be a powerless being unable to create even a mosquito, and if a mosquito took something from Him, He should not be incapable of rescuing and reclaiming it. (Al-Hajj, 73)

Moreover, the Creator should hear, see, and have the power to do whatever He wills. Thus, He should possess all superior and perfect attributes while being free from any deficient or imperfect qualities. Notions like "getting tired and resting,"[38] "feeling remorse,"[39] "envying like a human,"[40] and similar anthropomorphic expressions or beliefs in the humanization of the Creator are intellectually and logically unacceptable.[41]

So, why has a Creator with all complete and sublime attributes created this immensely vast and orderly universe, elevating and dignifying humans with many blessings? What does He expect from humans? How can we learn about what the Creator desires from humans? On the other hand, humans have not found a solution to death. The world of knowledge has unequivocally lost hope in the immortality gene. In other words, every living being will inevi-

38. At-Takwir, 1-2; 3:8; 11:5.
39. Exodus, 32:14; II Samuel, 24:16; Jeremiah, 18:8, 10; 26:3, 13, 19; 42:10, etc.
40. Exodus, 20:6; 32:12; Genesis, 6:6, etc.
41. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Allah" article, DİA, II, 489.

tably taste death. No creature can escape from it. What will be the state of a person after death? These questions beyond human comprehension can only be answered by a "revelation-based religion."

4. Human and Religion

Religion is defined as the law, order, and path that regulate the relationships between humans and their Creator, as well as other beings. According to this definition, religion encompasses the knowledge taught by the Creator to guide humans in both their pre-death and afterlife.

A person coming into this world is like a traveler sitting in the shade of a tree. Just as the traveler becomes occupied in this world by sitting in the shade of the tree, a person becomes engrossed in worldly matters. The real life of a person is in the life they came from and the life they will go to. Thus, religion, while a person sits in the shade of that tree, has established certain rules for them to sit peacefully without harming anyone, abiding by justice and truth.[42] From this perspective, religion has always been a necessary institution for the well-being of individuals and societies throughout history, always needed, and never obsolete. [43]

Ramadhan al-Buthi expresses the human need for religion as follows: The Almighty has created various entities in the universe, but among them, humans hold a unique position. Humans have been made as the masters of all creatures. All creatures have been subjected to humans' command and service. Not only that, but humans have also been endowed with superior abilities such as intellect, will, knowledge, perception, ownership, and dominion that others do not possess. However, these abilities are like a sharp-edged knife with two sides. If the positive side is utilized, they bring about a sound order to the universe, abundant goodness, and blessings to humanity. If the negative side is employed, they bring about unexpected evils and lead to a dreadful anarchy, horrifying oppressions, and great wars.

The reason these qualities and abilities, endowed to humans, can lead to such dangerous and severe consequences is that they are, in reality, attributes of Lordship. For instance, knowledge, power, and sovereignty are all attributes specific to divinity and the sublime qualities of the Almighty Ruler.

42. Prof. Dr. Ali Bardakoglu and others, Youth and Religion, p. 7.
43. Hans Frayer, Sociology of Religion, p. 77.

While these attributes truly belong to Allah, their effects, manifestations, and shadows have also been reflected onto humans.

Therefore, to direct these attributes and capabilities to the right place, there is a need for another power: true religion. However, it must be remembered that Allah Almighty is not dependent on humans being religious, and adhering to divine commands will bring no benefit to Allah. Nevertheless, for human beings, not only for the happiness of the hereafter but even for worldly happiness, it is essential to live in accordance with the principles of religion. [44]

Looking at the divine religious tradition, we see that humans were created to know and worship their Creator. Hence, religion has been a universal phenomenon throughout all ages and societies. Throughout history, humans have always believed that they have supernatural bonds and have thought that they need to turn to a supreme power beyond themselves for their needs. In Ancient Greek, Sanskrit (the sacred language of Hinduism), and the languages of the Chinese and Japanese, words expressing "religion" are used. The common meaning of these chosen words in these cultures is "path, belief, tradition, connection, servitude."

French philosopher and renowned theologian Auguste Sabatier, in his book "Philosophy of Religions," describes the innate nature of the religious sense, saying, "I ask myself the question 'Why am I religious?' As soon as I ask this question, I get the answer: 'I am religious because I cannot be otherwise; being religious is a necessary need for my existence and being.' They say to me, 'This state in you was born from inheritance, education, or the influence of temperament.' I say to them, 'Indeed, I have often raised objections to myself on this path; I wanted to say that the religious feeling in me comes from my parents or has a special influence on my temperament, but I saw that if such thoughts regress the issue without solving it. In this case, the question 'Where did this feeling come from for those before me and those before them?' arises, and I cannot find an answer to it. However, despite this, I see in my personal life and hear the need for religion is stronger and the greatest force in human social life. Because even he is not behind me in taking refuge in the religion." (M. Rahmi Balaban, Science-Morality-Faith, p. 4-5)

44. Prof. Dr. M. S. R. al-Bûthi, Islamic Beliefs, pp. 71-76.

David Hume, despite vehemently criticizing concepts such as religion and miracles, did not believe in absolute atheism: "The purpose and order in the universe are clearly visible everywhere, even to the most careless and backward-minded person... All sciences lead us to the acceptance of the existence of the Creator without us realizing it." (David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, p. 77)

Voltaire also did not consider absolute atheism, expressing that the idea of a creative superior being continually existed in the human mind.

Henry Bergson says: "As in the past, there will be societies today without science, art, or philosophy, but there will never be a society without religion!" (Henry Bergson, Les Deux Sources, p. 105)

Alexis Carrel's thoughts on this matter are as follows: "In every era, humans have needed Allah as much as they have needed water and oxygen. In addition to intuition, moral feelings, the sense of beauty, and the clarity of intelligence, the religious sense ensures the blossoming of personality." (Alexis Carrel, Prayer, p. 44)

The purpose of human creation, which is servitude, is realized by the mind recognizing Allah, knowing Him, and the will turning towards and binding itself to Him. Allah, who loves His servants very much, has helped them in this matter as well, guiding and developing them with the divine revelation that directs and develops the innate feelings and consciousness within them, and has not left them to their own devices.[45] For the person created in the most beautiful form [46], Allah has sent guides and principles to lead them to live in a way befitting human dignity.

5. Benefits Provided by Religious Belief

Upon careful examination, it can be observed that religion offers many individual and societal benefits. For instance, religion serves as a factor that unites individuals around sacred feelings, common consciousness, and conscience, while also being an institution that elevates societies and facilitates their development. Religion is also a moral institution that guides individuals, enveloping and directing them more powerfully than the most perfect laws and strict regulations. The weakening of religion leads to an increase in moral

45. Al-Qiyamah, verse 36.
46. At-Tin, verse 4.

and legal offenses, eventually leading to anarchy, as without religion, there is no sanctioning power for ethics.

While being a social being, humans also have an inner world. Loneliness, helplessness, fears, sorrows, illnesses, losses, adversities, and disasters find their strongest refuge in religion, providing hope, consolation, and security in the face of these challenges. Additionally, it has been observed that religious engagements keep individuals away from unnecessary and harmful anxieties and worries, thus protecting them from psychological turmoil. True religious individuals develop ethical feelings such as respect and loyalty to parents, elders, state, and nation, love for the young, and interest and sympathy for living beings, strengthening their sense of duty.[47] An example illustrating how Prophet Muhammad instilled such feelings in his companions is as follows:

Jareer bin Abdullah, a newly converted individual and a tribal leader, came to the gathering of Prophet Muhammad. The companions, surrounding the Prophet, hesitated a bit in offering Jareer a place. Prophet Muhammad handed his own cloak to Jareer, asking him to sit on it. Jareer took the cloak, kissed it, applied it to his face, and placed it over the Prophet's blessed shoulders. Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should be generous when a leader of a people comes to him." (Hakim, IV, 324/7791; Haythami, VIII, 15)

Belief in Allah liberates humans from being slaves to other humans, connecting them to a single, all-powerful, supreme being, providing spiritual tranquility and contentment. Moreover, it prevents humans from falling captive to base feelings such as greed, ambition, selfishness, and opportunism, carrying away the spiritual and intellectual values it possesses as a guard against crude emotions. Thus, belief in Allah eliminates both external and internal factors that threaten human freedom and independence, allowing complete autonomy and freedom. All the capabilities and potentials of an individual, physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, will develop and mature within this freedom, leading to the realization of the ideal of a mature human.

The belief in the afterlife in religion, while contributing to the moral development of humans with a sense of divine responsibility, also prevents the destructive impact of the fear of death on human psychology. Belief in

47. Prof. Dr. Gunay Tumer, "Religion" article, DİA, IX, 317.

the afterlife is also significant in responding to the eternal feelings within a person. The ideal of achieving eternal peace and obtaining Allah's approval provides joy in living, resilience against the pains of the world, and endurance against the sufferings of the world. Since temporary worldly desires do not truly satisfy the human soul, religion offers the highest and sublime pleasures, providing spiritual delights. [48]

When examining the history of civilization, it is evident how religion has played a significant role in the spiritual and intellectual development of human civilization. With the divine revelation conveyed by prophets, people have been able to rise above certain customs and habits and ascend to nobler and more sublime ideas. There is no true religious doctrine that does not prioritize an ideal life to be lived in this world under these world conditions. Today, the roots of the tradition that inspires noble feelings in people, or in other words, the roots of noble feelings inspired by them, are based on the teachings and exemplary lives of prophets, scholars, thinkers, and guides who follow in their footsteps. Developments that have brought humanity to the current state in the spiritual and moral fields have been possible with religion. Religion has always been an architect of civilization, saving human societies from decay, corruption, and destruction. Only through religion has humanity been able to escape selfishness and self-worship and find the opportunity to serve humans and humanity. True religion advocates love, respect, and courtesy. Some base feelings and inclinations in certain religious individuals are actually deviations developed despite religion.[49]

Religion teaches humans mercy, honesty, justice, not infringing on the rights of others, always doing good to people, treating animals with compassion, beautifying the world, preventing evil, and being willing to sacrifice even one's life for these ideals. Thus, the world becomes a livable place. Otherwise, the world turns into a den of wolves, and all humans suffer from it.

6. Prophets Come Confirming and Announcing Each Other

It is a known fact that there has never been a society without religion and belief in Allah, dating back to the first human. So, how has divine religion been communicated to humans?

48. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 54.
49. See: Prof. Dr. Gunay Tumer, "Religion" article, DİA, IX, 317-318; Uludag, ibid., pp. 51-71.

The human mind alone is not capable of grasping every truth. Throughout history, especially when philosophers express opposing views that negate each other, saying "black" when one says "white," is this not a clear sign? This is why the Almighty has sent prophets so that people do not go astray and can easily find the truth, goodness, and beauty.

Belief in prophets is present in all divine religions despite some differences. In Judaism, the belief in prophets is a fundamental principle, affirming that Allah speaks through prophets, and the existence of prophets before and after Musa عليه السلام is a matter of belief. Christianity also accepts the prophets who came before it. Similarly, Islam confirms all the prophets and considers believing in them a prerequisite for being a Muslim.

According to Islamic belief, there is a unity and continuity among the prophets. Prophets affirmed those who came before them and announced those who would come after them.[50] In the Quran, Allah says:

"When Allah made a covenant through the prophets, saying, 'Certainly, whatever I give you of the Book and wisdom, and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you must believe in him and support him.' He said, 'Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My commitment?' They said, 'We have acknowledged it.' He said, 'Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.'" (Ali-Imran, 81)

"Remember when Isa, the son of Maryam, said, 'O children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allah to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving glad tidings of a messenger after me, whose name will be Ahmad.' But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said, 'This is clear magic.'" (As-Saff, 6)

Scholars of Islam have stated that the word "Parakletos"[51] mentioned in the Gospel of John refers to the glad tidings mentioned in this verse. According to the Gospel of John, Jesus said:

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraklet, the Spirit of Truth, to be with you forever." (John 14:15-16)

"It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Paraklet will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you." (John 16:7)

50. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" article, DİA, XXIII, 4.
51. John, 14:16-26; 15:26; 16:7.

"But when he, the Spirit of Truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." (John 16:13)

The words "hearing" and "speaking" in these statements imply specific actions. Therefore, these actions can only be expected from a being with the faculties of hearing and speaking. Thus, attributing these qualities to the Spirit of Truth is not accurate, as the Spirit of Truth is the angel of revelation and inspiration, and these faculties are not needed for inspiration. Again, according to John, Jesus says, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraklet." Therefore, Paraklet is not the Holy Spirit but a human like Jesus. The term "Spirit of Truth" in the text is a later addition. [52]

The oldest manuscripts of the current Gospels are written in Greek, while Jesus spoke Aramaic. Ibn Hisham stated that the word "al-Munhamanna" in Syriac means "Muhammad," and its Greek equivalent is "al-baraglitis."[53] Abdulahad Dâvûd also stated that the Syriac translation of the Bible uses the word "paraqleita," equivalent to "mhamada" or "hamida" in Aramaic, corresponding to "perikleitos" in Greek. He expressed that the term "paraklêtos" in the Bible is a corrupted form of "perikleitos." [54]

The Quran and Prophet Muhammad have affirmed the prophets and scriptures that came before them, correcting principles that were altered[55] by humans over time due to weaknesses inherent in human nature and differences arising in various historical and geographical contexts.[56] Whenever necessary, prophets reminded people of these principles through divine guidance.

A hadith affirming that prophets are like brothers (from same father-awlad'ullat)[57] emphasizes that all true religions[58] share fundamental princi-

52. Maurice Bucaille, The Bible, The Quran and Science, Paris 1976, pp. 108-109; Prof. Dr. Mehmet Aydın, "Heraclitus", DİA, XII, 165; Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Jesus" article, DİA, XXII, 465-472.
53. Ibn Hisham, I, 251.
54. Abdullah Davud, Muhammad in the Bible, Doha 1980, pp. 287-288.
55. Al-Baqarah,41, 89, 97, 101; Ali-Imran, 3, 39, 50, 81; Al-Ma'idah, 48; Al-Ahqaf, 12; As-Saff, 6.
56. Al-Baqarah, 37-38, 136; Ali-Imran, 95; Al-Isra, 9; Ash-Shura, 13; Al-A'la, 18-19.
57. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I am the closest of people to himself to Jesus, the son of Mary, in this world and in the Hereafter. The prophets are brothers from different mothers, but their religion is one. There is no prophet between me and him." (Muslim, Birr 145. See also: Al-Bukhari, Anbiya' 48; Muslim, Birr 143-144; Abu Dawood, Sunnah 14/4675)
58. The main characteristics of the True Religion are; being based on divine source, being conveyed by a prophet, having a book originated from revelation, including belief in the unity of Allah and the Hereafter.

ples. That is, the true religion has always remained the same in terms of faith principles and basic moral principles, from the first prophet to the last, but has undergone some changes in terms of worship styles and legal provisions. This evolutionary change, realized by the will of Allah, has progressed in parallel with the needs and cultural levels of humans. The true religion, starting with the first human, reached its most advanced form through the revelation conveyed by the last prophet.

Therefore, the religions recognized today as scriptural, such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are common in the fundamental characteristics of the true religion from the beginning. However, changes and different interpretations to the sacred texts of the first two have deviated these religions from the principles of the Abrahamic tradition. This led to the need for a new religion that would correct these deviations and clearly express the fundamental principles. In essence, the same religion over time has been distorted from its original form due to misinterpretations of sacred texts, the replacement of religious scholars' views over the sacred book, and the consideration of these views as the only valid source for understanding religion. What the Jews do not even consider a prophet, and indeed make various claims about his lineage, Jesus, is deified by Christians. According to the Gospel, while Jesus emphasizes the unity of God, in Paul's Letter to the Philippians, he is equated with God.[59]

As divine religions come from the same source, they have been called by the same name from the beginning. While the word "Islam" is the specific name of the religion conveyed by the last prophet, it is also the name of the religions preached by the previous prophets. [60]

The essence of the religion brought by all prophets from Adam to Muhammad is Islam, meaning submission to Allah is at the same time name of the religions thought by the Messengers before.[61] Neither Musa عليه السلام named the religion he brought Judaism nor did Isa عليه السلام name the principles he preached Christianity. The religion brought by Musa عليه السلام was later called Judaism after the Babylonian captivity, and it was limited to only one tribe. Similarly, the religion preached by Isa عليه السلام took the name Christianity after him, thus placing Isa عليه السلام at the center of the religion. However, Isa عليه السلام invit-

59. Al-Ma'idah, 116; Al-Hadid, 27; Mark, 12:32; Philippians, 2:6.

60. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" article, DİA, XXIII, 3, 4.

61. Al-Ma'idah, 3; Al-Baqarah, 131, 132; Ali-Imran,19, 20; Al-Ma'idah, 44; Al-An'am,14, 163; Yunus, 72; Al-Mu'min, 66.

ed his people to worship Allah and emphatically emphasized that he was also a servant of Allah. [62]

Similarities in Divine Religions

M. Iqbal states: "Essentially, revelation is one. Two times two equals four everywhere. Whether written in Aztec, Chinese, or Arabic, all these numbers always represent the same and singular truth." (Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, The Smiling Face of Islam, p. 30)

Since the true religion is one, it is certain that there will be some similarities among divine religions. For example, Islam commands prayer. In the Bible, the following expressions referring to prayer can be found:

"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." (Psalms, 95:6)

"Moses and Aaron fell facedown." (Numbers, 16:20-22)

"Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshiped." (Exodus, 34:8)

"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed." (Matthew, 26:39)

"When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown..." (Matthew, 17:6)

A Ukrainian woman named Arina, who converted to Islam, concludes that divine religions share common characteristics based on a film depicting Jesus. She says:

"The film 'Passion,' depicting the last twelve hours of Jesus, was voiced in Aramaic, the original language of Jesus. In the film, Jesus addresses the Creator as 'Allah,' just like Muslims..."

However, considering Islam as a religion entirely born under the influence of Judaism and Christianity due to some commonalities and similarities is entirely wrong. Such a claim arises from ignoring the truth that divine religions have a common source, and prophets came confirming each other. [63]

Since the essence of true religions is one, and prophets came confirming each other, a person who accepts Prophet Muhammad as a prophet also accepts all the prophets before him. Hatib bin Abi Beltaa, who delivered the letter of the Prophet Muhammad to the governor of Alexandria, narrates:

62. Maryam, 30-36;. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" article, DİA, XXIII, 3, 4.
63. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" article, DİA, XXIII, 5.

"The governor said to me, 'We have our religion, and we will not leave it unless we see

something better.' I said, 'We invite you to Islam, the religion chosen by Allah for humanity. Prophet Muhammad calls not only you but all people. The Quraish treated him the most harshly and rudely. The Jews were the most hostile towards him. The Christians, on the other hand, showed the most kindness. Just as Musa heralded Isa, Isa also foretold the coming of Muhammad. Our invitation to you to the Quran is like your invitation to those attached to the Torah to accept the Gospel. Every person must follow the prophet of his time. You belong to the time of Prophet Muhammad.[64] Therefore, by inviting you to Islam, we do not distance you from the religion of Jesus. On the contrary, we propose that you follow what is in line with his mission.'" [65]

Dr. Timothy Gianotti, a faculty member in the Department of Historical and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University, emphasizes that choosing Islam does not negate his former religion of Christianity. After repeating several times that Islam includes the goals of Christianity and describing Islam as the most comprehensive divine religion, he says, "The goal of Islam is to make not just a specific group but the entire society valuable in the sight of Allah." (A. Boken - A. Eryigit, New Lives, I, 15)

Rumi expresses that there is no difference among prophets, saying:

"There was a king among the Jews who loved oppression, an enemy of the Prophet Isa عليه السلام, and a Jew who killed other Jews. It was the time of Prophet Isa, and the prophethood was with him. But he, like a master who is cross-eyed, saw the two sincere travelers of the path of God, namely Musa and Isa, as separate from each other. Just like this master's cross-eyed apprentice... His master told him, 'Go inside and bring the bottle on the shelf!' The cross-eyed apprentice said, 'There are two bottles here, describe which one!' His master said, 'There are no two bottles there; leave the strabismus and see one as two!' The cross-eyed apprentice said, 'Master, don't scold me for this. There are two bottles here,' and when he said that, his master said, 'Then

64. Every person is a member of the community of the prophet of his time. After the sending of Prophet Muhammad as a prophet, all people are his community. However, while some of them believe in him as a prophet (Ummat al-Ijabah), others deny him (Ummat al-Ghayr al-Ijabah).
65. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, IV, 266-267; Ibn Sa'd, I, 260-261; Ibn Hajar, Al-Isaba, III, 530-531.

break one of the bottles and bring the other!' When the apprentice broke one of the bottles, both disappeared from his sight.

Humans can become cross-eyed due to deviations in their insight. When the heart is broken, it sees the One as fragmented; when it unites, it sees Him as One and attains to the unity.

Again, in a letter, Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi touches on our subject, saying:

"Since the prophets accepted each other, if you do not accept one of them, it is as if you have not accepted any. The light reaching you through each prophet, passing through various windows, is, in reality, a single light. If you do not accept part of this light, you become like a bat saying, 'I am against this year's Sun, but I accept last year's Sun.' In fact, last year's Sun and this year's Sun are not two different Suns; they are the same Sun. Seeing a difference between them arises from not experiencing last year's Sun."

The rays emitted by the Sun last year have completed their tasks and disappeared. Only some pictures of them may remain. It is impossible to grasp their nature by looking at these pictures. However, the Sun is emitting new rays this year. Those who do not accept them, desiring the old, cannot reach true light and remain in darkness.[66]

7. The Final Link of Divine Religions: ISLAM

Since Allah, who created humans and the universe, is one and sent religion as a guide to humanity, it is necessary to accept all the books and prophets He sent, confirming each other. Therefore, Islam affirms all the prophets who have come to any part of the world since the creation of humanity, as well as all the sacred books revealed in any language, at any time, and in any environment.

The last of the books sent by Almighty Allah is the Quran, and the last of the prophets is our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. To determine whether these were truly sent by Allah, a little research is sufficient.

When humanity's history is examined with fairness, the significant influence exerted by the Quran and the Messenger of Allah on people and the widespread acceptance by a large population are easily noticeable. This truth alone clearly indicates the necessity of serious research about the Quran and

66. Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, The Smiling Face of Islam, p. 94.

the Prophet Muhammad. Individuals with sound reasoning must, considering this claim, at least conduct a serious investigation to answer the question, "Is this religion truly the true religion?"

It is the right of anyone claiming to be a prophet to be asked for a miracle proving the truth of their words. However, believing in a prophet who performs miracles is a duty for all humans. In this regard, many miracles in the Quran and the life of the Prophet can be easily seen. The greatest miracle of Islam is bringing tranquility to humanity with its principles and addressing all its needs. The "Books" section and the last part mentioning the miracles of the Prophet have explanations on this matter.

However, a crucial point to be very careful about here: those seeking information about Islam and its esteemed Prophet should not rely on subjective information provided by the media and biased books. They must refer to sources written with scientific accuracy, even directly to the Quran itself.[67] While reading the Quran, it is essential to choose a correct and unbiased translation; otherwise, a wrong conclusion may be reached. We observe that truths are often distorted, and innocent minds are led away from facts due to prejudices. Many have experienced this when reading a Quranic translation or a book about Islam prepared by a non-Muslim. Reading objective, accurate, and reliable sources, on the other hand, has led them to accept Islam.

Similarly, when deciding about Islam, relying solely on the behaviors of Muslims and taking them as a basis is also incorrect. Dr. Timothy Gianotti, a faculty member at Pennsylvania State University, emphasizes:

"In a large part of the world today, there are millions of people who try to understand religions by looking at the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of the followers of existing religions instead of learning from their religious sources."

67. In the view of Islamic scholars, the scientific research method is expressed with this great and beautiful principle: "If you are transmitting, bring the authentic narration, if you are making a claim, bring your evidence." The research subject is either a transmitted news or an assumed claim. In the case of news, it is important to thoroughly investigate the status of the transmitters between the place where it first appeared and where it reached. In the case of a claim, the necessary approach is to focus on universally accepted and appropriate scientific data and try to solve the issue in light of these. The theories and views related to the nature and essence of material things cannot be based on a solid foundation without the light of experimentation and observation. As for abstract issues, numbers, psychological and spiritual matters, and logical issues, they can only be based on established laws applicable everywhere. Otherwise, relying on random evidence is not enough... (Prof. Dr. M. Said Ramadan al-Bouti, Islamic Beliefs, p. 38)

Gianotti insists that errors made in representing religion lead to many people drifting away from it. He says:

"We need to explain to the society we live in why and how religion is necessary. We can only do this by turning to the essential sources of religion, namely the Quran and the life of Prophet Muhammad."

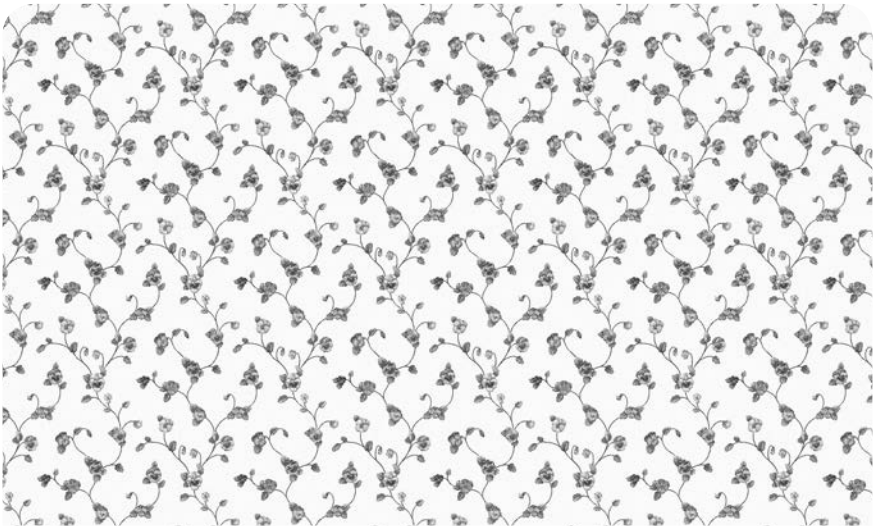
On the other hand, it is also incorrect to call Islam "Muhammadanism." Associating the true religion set by Allah with the name of the prophet who brought it or the people to whom it was initially addressed is incompatible with Islamic understanding. Such a naming is only possible for human-made religions. Although Westerners used the word "Muhammadanism" for a while to express Islam, it has largely been abandoned today, and generally, the term "Islam" is used. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, in accordance with the teaching of the Quran, did not see himself as an establisher of a religion and explicitly stated that he was "a human messenger."[68]

"Islam" is an indispensable name because it emphasizes the meaning of surrendering to Allah and His commands, submission, thus reaching salvation and well-being, and achieving social peace and tranquility, which are the fundamental principles of this religion and system. This name was given by Allah Himself to this religion.[69] This name is mentioned in many places in the Quran.

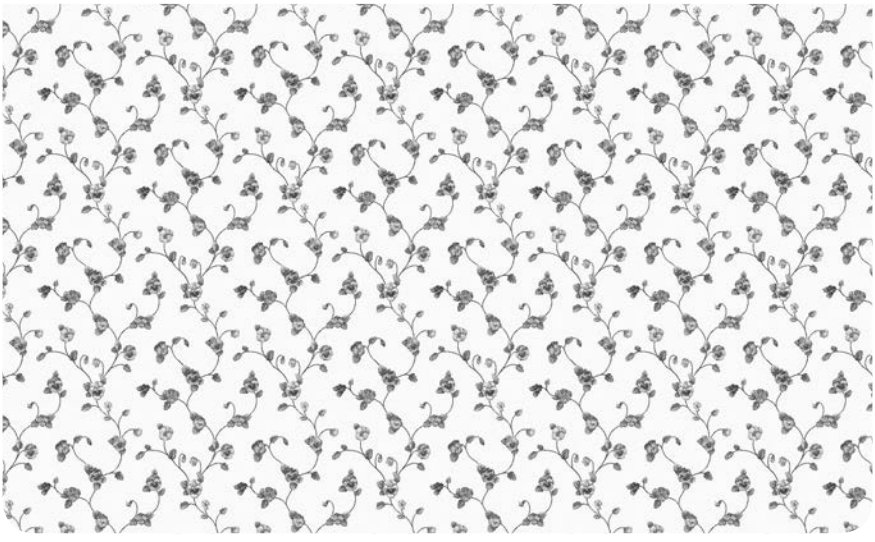
When Allah sent Islam to humanity, it is natural that other religions would become obsolete. Ahmad Hamdi Akseki says the following about this:

"It is undoubtedly expected that the things that come after something will be more perfect and more comprehensive than what came before. Indeed, the law of evolution also requires this. Claiming otherwise means denying the laws of evolution. This is why all religions, and Islam, which is the most perfect of them all, have abrogated the laws of previous shari'ahs. Just as there is no need for the light of the moon and stars after the sun rises, and they become dim and ineffective in the glow of the sun, other shari'ahs are the same concerning Islam. They were special lanterns. They will illuminate their place for a while until the sun rises. Trying to find a way with the light of stars after leaving the sun is undoubtedly a sign of error. Those who do so cannot find their goal." (A. Hamdi Akseki, The Religion of Islam, p. 19-20)

68. For example, see Al-Isra, 93; Muslim, Birr, 140.
69. See Ali-Imran, 19, 85; Al-Ma'idah, 3; Al-An'am, 125; Az-Zumar, 22; As-Saff, 7; Al-Hujurat, 17; At-Tawbah, 74.



THE FIRST PART



DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF ISLAM

1. Emphasizes Oneness (Tawhid)

Fundamentally, all divine religions teach Tawhid, the concept that Allah is the only one, without any equals or partners. Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام began explaining Tawhid, starting with his father Azar. In a gentle manner, he said:

"–O my father! Why do you worship things that neither hear nor see you and bring you no benefit? O my father! Knowledge has been granted to me that was not given to you. Follow me, and I will guide you to the straight path. O my father, do not worship Satan, for Satan has rebelled against the Most Merciful. O my father, I fear that a punishment from the Most Merciful will afflict you, and you will become a companion to Satan!" (Maryam, 42-45)

Azar, angered, replied:

"–O Ibrahim! Are you turning away from my gods? If you do not stop, I will surely stone you, so avoid me for a prolonged time!" (Maryam, 46)

However, Ibrahim عليه السلام responded to Azar with a gentle tone and grace: "–Peace [be] upon you. I will seek forgiveness for you from my Lord. Indeed, He is ever gracious to me." (Maryam, 47)

The fundamental principle emphasized in Judaism is the unity of God. According to the Torah, the first human, his children, and prophets like Nuh,[70] Ibrahim, Ishaq, Yakub, and Yusuf (peace be upon them) all invited people to the One God. The oneness of Allah is the most emphasized subject in the Ten Commandments given to Prophet Musa and other parts of the Torah[71]. In the Psalms given to Prophet David, prayers are made to the one God. Prophet Isa also emphasized in the commandments of the law that the oneness of Allah is the primary commandment (Mark, 12:28-29).

Excessive anthropomorphism in Judaism led to the portrayal of God as a human, and excessive love in Christianity led to the deification of the human

70. Genesis, 1:26-28; 4:26; 6:9.
71. Exodus, 20:2-3; Deuteronomy, 6:4-5.

Isa, resulting in the shift from Tawhid to Trinity. Islam, in this regard, clarified the confusion that had developed in the understanding of Tawhid over time and invited Jews and Christians to unite under the concept of Tawhid.[72]

Imam al-Maturidi states that Tawhid is established with historical, rational, and cosmological evidence, saying: "History has not recorded anyone seriously claiming divinity other than the Allah believed by the people of Tawhid, who performed deeds to prove divinity, or who sent prophets endowed with miracles." (Maturidi, Kitabu't-Tawhid, p. 17-23)

Rational and cosmological evidence also indicates that the Creator is one. The Quran states: "Say, 'If there had been with Him [other] gods, as they say, then they [each] would have sought to the Owner of the Throne a way.'" (Isra, 42)

"Allah has not taken any son, nor has there ever been with Him any (other) god. [If there had been], then would each god have certainly taken away what he created, and some of them would certainly have overpowered others; glory be to Allah above what they describe!" (23:91) "If there were in the heavens and the earth other gods besides Allah, there would have been chaos. So, exalted be Allah, the Lord of the Throne, above what they describe!" (Anbiya, 22)

The perfect harmony and order observed in the human body and the universe serve as the strongest evidence for the unity of the being who created them. This delicate balance and immense magnitude necessitate an infinite power.

The Quran draws attention to this in the following verse:

"(O Messenger!) Ask them, 'Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?' Declare, 'Allah.' Then say, 'Have you then taken besides Him protectors not possessing [even] for themselves any benefit or any harm?' Say, 'Is the blind equivalent to the seeing? Or is darkness equivalent to light? Or

72. Ali-Imran, 64; Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" article, DİA, XXIII, 4. Paul, who first introduced the doctrine of the Trinity, fled to the north when threatened with death by the Jews and preached Christianity based on the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity, which was rejected by many Christians at that time, was later made the official religion of Christians by Byzantine rulers influenced by the polytheistic religions of the Greeks. Fred Reed describes in detail in his book "Shattered Images" how the belief in the oneness of God in Christianity was destroyed and turned into the Trinity.

have they attributed to Allah partners who created like His creation, so that the creation [of each] seemed similar to them?' Say, 'Allah is the Creator of all things, and He, of all, is, over everything, Disposer of affairs.'" (Ar-Ra'd, 16)

"Do they associate with Allah those who create nothing and they are [themselves] created? And the false deities are unable to [give them] help, nor can they help themselves." (Al-A'raf, 191-192)

"Say, 'Are there of your 'partners' any who begins creation and then repeats it?' Say, 'Allah begins creation and then repeats it, so how are you deluded?'" (Yunus, 34)

It is impossible for a prophet who has been revealed such truths to convey anything other than Tawhid to the people.[73] The Quran states: "(O Messenger!) Indeed, you have been revealed to as well as those before you: 'If you associate [anything] with Allah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would certainly be among the losers.'" (Az-Zumar, 65)

Today, understanding Allah's unity, His omnipresence, and direct involvement with everything has become more accessible. In the quantum world, concepts of time and space like near and far have dissolved. For example, consider the phrase "Bismillah: In the name of Allah" uttered on a radio transmitter: This phrase, with its complete letters and the speaker's accent, instantly fills the entire atmosphere. The extraordinary event of a word simultaneously covering the entire space is akin to a drop of water transforming into an ocean that fills the entire Solar System. This highlights the omnipotence of the Creator who reigns over the entire universe, is present everywhere, and with the command "Be," creates everything instantly.

Shirk (Associating Partners with Allah)

According to Islam, the greatest sin among major sins is to deny the oneness of Allah, to associate partners with Him in His essence, attributes, and actions, and to attempt to share divinity with someone other than Him. Almighty Allah describes shirk as "accusing a great sin," "falling into profound error," and "committing the greatest injustice and wrongdoing."[74] This is because shirk is an utterly incorrect attitude in the face of reality. By fall-

73. Ali-Imran, 79.
74. An-Nisa, 48, 116; Luqman, 13.

ing into shirk, a person wrongs oneself and commits a great injustice by not acknowledging the right of Allah.

Associating partners with Allah implies attributing weakness to Him, while Allah is free from any weakness. Indeed, the one who is weak needs a partner and seeks assistance. However, Allah, the Almighty, is free from deficiency, weakness, and frailty.

Similarly, likening Allah to human beings and attributing offspring to Him is to deem that sublime Being - God forbid - as weak and deficient, which is not befitting His glory. Shirk is a sign of great disrespect and ingratitude towards Allah, who created the entire universe and us. Abdullah bin Mas'ud once asked the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ about the greatest sin in the eyes of Allah, and the Prophet replied: "To associate partners with Allah while He created you." (Muslim, Iman, 141)

In reality, associating partners with Allah does not harm Him at all. All the harm of shirk befalls the person committing it. Allah, out of His deep love for His servants and to protect them from sins and harms, strictly prohibits shirk.

Furthermore, psychologically, true peace can only be found in the belief in one God. Believing in two or more gods leads to confusion and unrest, making a person indecisive and uneasy. Allah illustrates this in the Quran: "So remain on the right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you [to Allah], and do not transgress. Indeed, He is Seeing of what you do." (Hud, 112)

When a person falls into shirk, each desire of their ego pulls them in a different direction, and the satanic wind, which is a destructive force, casts them into the farthest corners of hell. The fragmentation of the heart is more disastrous than the fragmentation of the physical body. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Even if you are torn to pieces or burned in the fire, never associate anything with Allah." (Ibn Majah, Fitan, 23)

Shirk also fractures a person's consciousness, turns them into a schizophrenic personality, and disrupts their psychological well-being. The situation of those who associate partners with Allah is well described in the Quran: "Allah presents an example: a man owned by quarreling partners and another belonging exclusively to one man. Can they be equal? Praise to Allah! But most of them do not know." (Az-Zumar, 29)

The condition of polytheists is miserable in this world, and in the Hereafter, it is extremely terrifying. Allah, while forgiving many other sins, does not forgive those who associate partners with Him.[75] They are the ones who lose eternal life. The Quran states: "Indeed, they who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture and the polytheists will be in the fire of Hell, abiding eternally therein. Those are the worst of creatures." (Al-Bayyina, 6)

Every prophet has emphasized the reality of shirk and warned their community against it. They directed their people to recognize Allah and warned them not to be deceived by the means but to see Allah, the Ultimate Cause. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came, people worshiped various entities. He taught them Tawhid, starting from the idolaters in Mecca to all of humanity. Although many Meccans before islam embraced faith in Allah, but they continued to worship many idols, hoping to approach Allah.[76] However, those idols were actually distancing them from Allah. But those who were afraid of losing their unjust gains and benefits, and those who did not want to give up their selfish desires, did not embrace the faith of Allah's Messenger.

The Meccan polytheists, who continued in shirk, one day came to Husayn, a highly respected person, and said: "Speak to this man on our behalf. He insults our gods and speaks ill of them." They all went to the door of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. While the polytheists sat near the door waiting, Husayn went inside. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Make room for the elder!" Husayn then asked him about what he had heard, and he replied, "You reject our gods and speak ill of them. However, your father was a wise and virtuous man." The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked, "How many gods do you worship?" Husayn replied, "Seven on earth and one in the sky, eight gods in total." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "When you are afflicted by harm, which one do you appeal to?" Husayn replied, "The one in the sky." The Prophet asked, "When your wealth is destroyed, which one do you appeal to?" Husayn replied, "The one in the sky." The Prophet asked, "When you have a request that is fulfilled by only one god, why do you associate others with Him? Do you think you satisfy them by thanking them, or are you afraid that they will destroy you?" Husayn replied, "Neither for both reasons." According to Husayn, the Prophet, peace be upon him, did not resemble anyone he had spoken to before that day. He realized that the Prophet had a very different personality. The Prophet,

75. Nisa,48;116
76. Az-Zumar, 3.

peace be upon him, then said, "Husayn, embrace Islam, and you will find salvation!" When Husayn asked what he should say to his people and relatives, the Prophet, peace be upon him, recited the supplication: "O Allah! I seek guidance from You in my affairs and ask You to increase me in beneficial knowledge." Husayn made this prayer and became a Muslim. When he wanted to leave, the Prophet, peace be upon him, told his companions, "Get up and escort him to his house." Seeing Husayn and his group leaving the door, the Meccan polytheists said, "Husayn has abandoned his religion," and dispersed without meeting him. (Ibn Hajar, Isaba, I, 337; Tirmidhi, Daawat, 69/3483)

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ invited people to Islam, he was very meticulous in avoiding any thoughts, actions, or signs reminiscent of shirk. For instance, he warned against the belief that rain falls due to the setting and rising of certain stars. (Al-Bukhari, Adhzan, 156; Tirmidhi, Daawat, 28) When someone, in addressing the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "What Allah and you wish," in matters of divine will, the Prophet corrected him, saying, "You have equated me with Allah; you should have said, 'What Allah wishes.'" (Ahmad, I, 283) Similarly, when a person used the expression "whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger," the Prophet, peace be upon him, promptly intervened and said, "You are a terrible orator! You should have said, 'whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger' to make it clear." (Muslim, Jumu'ah, 48) The Prophet's objection to the speech was due to the fear that the mention of both Allah and the Messenger in the same context might give the impression that they were at the same level. The Prophet, peace be upon him, reminded that he was a servant of Allah and that it was not appropriate to mention him alongside Allah in a way that could be perceived as equals.

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ dealt with newly converted tribes, he would initially request the destruction of idols in their regions. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 197; Al-Waqidi, III, 967-968) In summary, aside from Allah, there is nothing like Him; He is One, unique, and unparalleled. He hears and knows all. (Ash-Shura, 11)

2. Islam is a universal religion

"Islam as a Universal Religion, invites all humans and jinn towards itself." Every individual, regardless of their race, color, gender, or nationality, can become a Muslim. In Islam, which organizes humanity in terms of responsibilities and rights, only believers and non-believers are recognized as two "nations," and no third group is considered. Islam maintains justice by

balancing the rights and obligations between these two groups. Islam occasionally uses the phrase "O Son of Adam" in its addresses to express that all humans descend from Prophet Adam and have equal rights. It consistently reminds that no race or nation is superior to another.

It is illogical for a system sent by Allah, encompassing all creatures with His mercy, for the happiness and well-being of humanity, to be allocated to a handful of individuals while others are deprived of this blessing. Such a situation contradicts the attributes of Allah as the Most Merciful and Compassionate. Prophet Muhammad said, 'Show mercy to those on Earth, and the One in the heavens will show mercy to you.' (Abu Dawood, Adab 58/4941; Tirmidhi, Birr 16/1924; Ahmad II, 160). This saying does not target a specific group or even just Muslims; it commands mercy towards all living beings on Earth.

In the Qur'an, it is expressed that Prophet Muhammad was sent as a messenger to all humans: 'We have sent you as a messenger to the people, and Allah is sufficient as a witness.' (An-Nisa, 79). '(O Messenger!) Say: O people! I am Allah's messenger to all of you, the Lord of the heavens and the earth...' (Al-A'raf, 158). 'We have sent you as a bearer of good tidings and a warner to all people, but most of them do not know.' (Saba, 28). 'To be a warner to all beings, who sent down the criterion (the Qur'an) to His servant Muhammad, who has sovereignty over the heavens and the earth, who has not taken a son and has no partner in His dominion, who created everything and determined it with precise measurement. He is the Most High, the Most Exalted.' (Al-Furqan, 1-2). '(O Muhammad!) We have sent you only as a mercy to all the worlds.' (Al-Anbiya, 107)[77].

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said, 'The prophets before me were sent to their specific people. However, I have been sent as a prophet to all of humanity.' (Al-Bukhari, Wudu' 1). For this reason, Prophet Muhammad did not only convey Islam to the Arabs. While still alive, he sent envoys and letters

77. Ibn Abbas ﷺ said about this noble verse: "Those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, in this world and in the Hereafter, will fully attain mercy. Those who do not believe in Allah and His Messenger will be protected from divine punishments such as those inflicted on previous nations, such as being swallowed by the earth, transformed into monkeys, and having stones rained upon them, solely because they lived in the time of the Prophet and were part of his community. This is the worldly mercy they attain through the grace of Allah's Messenger." (Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail al-Nubuwwah, V, 486; Haythami, VII, 69)

to emperors and kings, inviting Byzantines, Iranians, Abyssinians, Egyptians, and other nations to Islam. [78]

Many verses of the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet use the address 'O people,' encompassing both humans and jinn. Similarly, in his Farewell Sermon, Prophet Muhammad addressed all humans by saying 'O people.'

Moreover, the style of the Qur'an aims to be inclusive, using various methods and styles to repeat important meanings and present fundamental topics in a way understandable to all humans.

Islam is, at the same time, inclusive of all times and places from its inception until the Day of Judgment. It is not limited to a specific time or region. Indeed, it is possible to see Muslims from every part of the world today. Especially during the pilgrimage seasons, these individuals gather around the Kaaba, as commanded by Allah, demonstrating a magnificent unity and brotherhood in Islam."

3. Meets All Needs of Humanity

Islam, aiming to regulate human life, has come with a structure capable of meeting all their needs. It is the only life and belief system that provides spiritual, physical, personal, and social rights; clarifies concepts such as life, death, God, prophet, angel, devil, world, afterlife, reward, punishment, paradise, and hell with convincing and satisfying reality.

To better understand this, it is enough to remember the following: The Quran met the needs of the first Islamic society, consisting of oppressed and weak individuals, as well as the period when Islam dominated from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, becoming the sole and magnificent state on Earth. This community always found all the information related to its beliefs, worship, social life, and other needs in this book.[79]

Islam does not regulate some issues and leave others unanswered. It establishes principles for all sciences related to human behavior, such as law,

78. The texts of these letters are available to us, and some of them can be visited in their original form at the Istanbul Topkapi Palace Museum. For photographs and analyses of the letters, see Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah's "Six Original Diplomatic Letters of the Prophet of Islam", Paris 1985 / "The Six Original Diplomatic Letters of the Prophet of Islam", trans. Mehmet Yazgan, Istanbul 1998; "The Prophet of Islam"; and his works titled "Political Documents".

79. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Qur'an, p. 23.

ethics, and economics. These principles cover all matters from the simplest to the most complex, from the concrete to the abstract. Some of them are simple and worldly issues that concern everyone, while others are profound truths and secrets that even sophisticated intellects find challenging.

Islam's ability to embrace these two opposite poles shows that it has a dynamic structure that can encompass diversities. Islam possesses this attribute because it was sent by Allah, whose knowledge and scope are infinite. Just as Allah is the creator of all beings and humans, He is, of course, the one who knows all their needs best.

While human systems try to make people happy only in worldly life, Islam ensures that they are peaceful and happy in both this world and the hereafter. Therefore, it regulates the relationships of individuals with themselves, their Lord, other humans, and even animals and inanimate beings. It addresses all the material and spiritual needs of humans from cradle to grave, aiming to perfect them in worship, transactions, and ethical behavior.

The source of all this information is the book of Allah, the Quran, and the life, words, deeds, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad, interpreted in the nature of his life.[80] Islamic scholars derive judgments from these fundamental sources using the principles of Jurisprudence. These judgments are called "ijtihad." Thanks to ijtihads, the religious needs of people from the equator to the poles are met. For this reason, Islam encourages ijtihad and even promises rewards for sincere ijtihads, even if they turn out to be incorrect.

One day, Muslims asked Ibn- al-Mas'ud about various issues, and he explained it as follows: 'Anyone who encounters any issue should judge according to Allah's book. If he encounters an issue without a solution in Allah's book, he should look at the judgments of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

If he cannot find a solution in the book of Allah and the judgments of Prophet Muhammad, he should look at the fatwas given by righteous scholars. If he encounters an issue with no answer in the Quran, the Sunnah, and the fatwas of the righteous, he should use his intellect and make ijtihad! He should not say, 'I am afraid to make ijtihad.' Because what is lawful and what is forbidden are clear, but there are doubtful and ambiguous matters between

80. Takrir: It is the acceptance of something that the Prophet saw or heard without objection. Because if the Messenger of Allah saw or heard of something being done and did not reject it, but remained silent, then this indicates his approval and acceptance of that action.

them. So, leave what makes you doubted and look at what does not make you doubted!' (Nasa'i, Qada, 11)

Saten Carr, who obtained a master's degree at the University of Texas, makes the following observation on this matter:

'We live in the age of logic and technology. The Quran is entirely logical. Everything a person needs is written in the Quran and hadiths. A person does not need to hesitate about anything.' (A. Boken - A. Eryigit, New Lives, II, 124)

It is worth noting that the miraculous structure of the Quran plays a significant role in Islam's ability to meet all human needs. The style of the Quran is a linguistic miracle. The words and expressions it uses are so literary that with very few words, it conveys many meanings. Therefore, despite its small size, it can contain judgments that will be sufficient for people until the Day of Judgment. The miraculous aspects of the Quran will be explained a bit more in the 'Books' section."

4. An Innate Religion, in Harmony with Reason

Humans share certain innate characteristics that come from their creation. Regardless of where they live in the world, these fundamental qualities never change. An Asian person can fall in love, and so can an American. An African person may feel hatred, just like a French aristocrat. These are shared characteristics of all humanity. Similarly, some desires, needs, and weaknesses are common among humans. Therefore, a system guiding people must take into account these inherent tendencies and needs that exist universally among all humans. That's why Islam, addressing all of humanity, establishes its fundamental principles based not on temporary or partial characteristics present in a particular community but on the essential, innate inclinations and needs inherent in all of humanity. Hence, Islam is a natural religion and remains timeless. In other words, human nature is an unwritten Islam or a book that needs to be read, and this book never contradicts the Quran.

On the other hand, just as humans have certain inherent characteristics, the animals we live with, other inanimate entities, and the universe we inhabit also have specific features and laws. If a person does not adapt their life to the laws and characteristics determined by the Creator in the universe, they will encounter many difficulties and conflicts, ultimately leading to unrest. The sum of the divine rules sent by Allah, Islam, is the only system that ensures

harmony between humans and the universe. After all, the same Allah who created humans also created the universe, and, naturally, Allah knows best the rules that will make these two harmonize in the best way: "Does the Creator not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?" (Al-Mulk, 14)

When Islamic rules are thoroughly examined scientifically, it becomes clear how suitable and realistic they are for human nature. Its doctrinal principles are not based on miracles but are constructed on reason and evident truths. Therefore, it never conflicts with scientific facts. Its orders regarding worship and transactions are the most suitable judgments for human nature and intellect.

When people who did not believe in the Prophet asked for miracles to believe in Allah and accept his prophethood, Allah did not approve of their request. Instead, He invited them not to seek miracles but to reflect upon and contemplate the heavens and the earth. Indeed, the majority of thinking people come to the conclusion that Islam is the true religion. An American, Kyle, says: "I attribute the majority of those who later accepted Islam to being thinking individuals." (A. Boken - A. Eryigit, New Lives, I, 113)

All the principles of Islam are in harmony with reason. There is no aspect that contradicts reason or goes against logic. In fact, the most significant characteristic that distinguishes humans from other beings is their intellect. Through intellect, humans reflect on what they see, distinguish between good and bad, and make choices between right and wrong. The Quran, for this reason, emphasizes thinking and invites people to use their intellect in nearly 750 verses.

Allah's commands are directly addressed to reason. Since intellect is the basis for responsibility in Islam, those without intellect are not held accountable for their actions. Due to the importance Islam places on reason, it prohibits intoxicating drinks and drugs that hinder its function. Being awake is more beneficial for humans than being in a stupor or intoxicated, which serves no purpose. Any reasonable person would agree that alcohol and drugs are harmful. Consider this simple example: every day, we encounter several news items in newspapers and on television reporting accidents, immorality, oppression of others, and even violence against relatives caused by someone under the influence of alcohol. Can anything be more reasonable than pro-

hibiting this substance that harms countless lives and causes immeasurable material and spiritual damage?

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, an Iranian poet and intellectual from the 11th century, narrates: "One night in my dream, I saw someone who said to me, 'How long will you continue to drink this wine that impairs people's minds? Wouldn't it be better if you were in your right mind?' I replied, 'The wise (doctors and wise men) have not found anything that relieves the sorrows and troubles of the world better than this.' He said, 'Losing consciousness and driving away reason is not comforting. Also, a person who leads people to foolishness is not called wise. Something that will increase intelligence and thought must be sought.'

When I asked, 'How and where can I obtain what you are talking about?' he only replied, 'The seeker will find!' and pointed to the direction of the qibla. He said nothing else. I woke up from sleep, and the dream was still fresh in my memory and had a profound effect on me. I said to myself, 'I must wake up now, just as I woke up from forty years of sleep.' I got up, performed ablution, and went to the mosque. I stood before my Lord and prayed. I sought help to fulfill my duties as He commanded and to avoid His prohibitions. And in this way, after forty years, I turned to Him."

As a natural consequence of being an innate religion, Islam consistently presents realistic judgments. It does not include impractical, burdensome, or unnatural rulings that would force people and go against human nature. For example, if there is no water or if it cannot be used due to illness, Tayammum (dry ablution) is performed instead of ablution. If prayer cannot be performed standing, it can be done sitting, lying down, or even with gestures. If fasting is not possible, it can either be delayed or compensated by giving charity. Zakat and Hajj are obligatory only for those who are financially capable. When conveying Islam, Muslims are only responsible for explaining it with a good manner. Apart from that, they are not obliged to bring everyone into Islam."

Prof. Dr. M. A. Draz says:

"The invitation of Islam is neither an invitation to elevate oneself and make others servants nor an invitation to rebellion and corruption. It is an invitation to light and faith, justice and benevolence. It is an invitation to a sound nature, noble morality, and wise politics. So why shouldn't it be the

invitation for all of humanity? Why shouldn't all of humanity embrace and accept it?" (Some Views About Islam, p. 16). Here, we can also provide the Prophet

Muhammad's attitude towards natural events as an example: In the era of ignorance, people interpreted natural events such as lunar and solar eclipses as signs of good or bad luck. They considered them as indications of the birth or death of an important person or ruler. When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came, he revealed the truth and eliminated such interpretations.

During the time of the Prophet, when there was a lunar eclipse, the Jews gathered, lit fires, and claimed that the moon was enchanted. Prophet Muhammad, on the other hand, dispelled these superstitions by explaining that events like the eclipse of the moon and the sun were part of Allah's laws. Instead of making irrational interpretations during such events, he advocated seeking refuge in Allah, engaging in worship and prayer, and, in some cases, asking for the removal of calamities by freeing slaves.

On the day Prophet Muhammad's son Ibrahim passed away, there was a solar eclipse. People claimed that the sun was eclipsed because of Ibrahim's death. Prophet Muhammad rejected this and clarified the reality of the situation. During solar and lunar eclipses, Prophet Muhammad sought refuge in Allah from potential disasters, led people in prayers, and emphasized the importance of turning to Allah in worship and charity.

Even when faced with natural calamities, Prophet Muhammad took preventive measures based on his trust in Allah. For instance, during the Tabuk Expedition, he warned about an upcoming storm at the Hicr location, advising everyone to secure their camels tightly and sit where they were, avoiding standing up. Indeed, a severe storm occurred that night, causing harm to those who did not heed the warning.

Prophet Muhammad's concerns were rooted in his fear of Allah. According to a narration from Aisha ﵂, when the wind blew or when he saw a black cloud in the sky, his face would change color due to fear. Sometimes, he would face the cloud, while at other times, he would turn away and enter the house. However, he felt relieved when it rained. When Aisha ﵂ asked about the reason for his reaction, Prophet Muhammad said that he feared that such a black cloud might bring punishment, similar to the people of 'Ad who were delighted at the sight of a black cloud thinking it would bring rain but instead received a painful punishment.

Prophet Muhammad's response to natural disasters serves as an example for our topic. He always took measures to protect himself from potential harm during natural disasters that could be avoided. For instance, during the Tabuk Expedition, he accurately predicted an approaching storm, and his advice to secure belongings and stay indoors demonstrated his practical approach.

Similarly, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provided guidance on protecting oneself from contagious diseases. He advised avoiding places where a plague had broken out and not entering or leaving such areas. His teachings emphasized personal hygiene, and he encouraged the use of good practices, including washing hands, during ablution. [81]

5. Islam have maintained the order between (striving for) the world and the hereafter and balance between material and the spiritual.

Islam emphasizes moderation and balance, not neglecting one aspect while focusing on the other. Both worldly and spiritual aspects are created by Allah, and addressing the needs of both is essential. The world is seen as a capital to gain the hereafter, a valuable blessing to be used in accordance with Allah's pleasure.

In this perspective, achieving success in both worlds is the goal. It is crucial to avoid extremes, striking a delicate balance between worldly and spiritual pursuits. The world should not make one forget Allah and the hereafter. The companions of Prophet Muhammad established a system of brotherhood, benefiting both worldly and spiritual aspects, ensuring a holistic approach to life.

Islam discourages separating religious and worldly matters. Daily activities such as nutrition, hygiene, sports, health, work, rest, interpersonal relations, and societal issues all have a religious significance. Similarly, acts of worship like prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, have physical and societal dimensions. Islam, by defining administrative, social, economic, and political responsibilities alongside spiritual duties, has effectively balanced worldly and hereafter considerations. The Prophet's most frequent and recommended prayer to Muslims was as follows: "Our Lord! Grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire!" (Al-Baqarah, 2:201)

81. Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Saricam, Messages of the Prophet to Our Age, pp. 139-142.

Lokman the Wise[82] advised his son: "My dear son! Take from this world what is sufficient for you, but do not delve into it in a way that harms your hereafter. Do not abandon the world entirely, as you may become dependent on others later. Fast enough to restrain your desires, but do not let it hinder your prayers! For indeed, prayer is more beloved to Allah than fasting." (Al-Bayhaqi, Az-Zuhd al-kabîr, p. 84, no: 91)

Al-Ghazali emphasizes the interconnectedness of the world and the hereafter, stating that the world is a place where those on the path to Allah sojourn, and the body is the means of transportation. Neglecting the needs of the body and worldly matters can hinder spiritual progress.

Islam values both the soul and the body. While the soul is primary, the body serves as its vehicle in this world. Neglecting physical health is discouraged, as it is a significant blessing. On the Day of Judgment, individuals will be questioned about how they spent their lives, used their knowledge, earned and spent their wealth, and maintained their health.

Islam advises against seeking hardship but encourages patience when faced with difficulties. Muslims are urged not to wish for confrontation with enemies but to seek safety from Allah. However, when faced with adversity, patience is emphasized, and fleeing from the battlefield is discouraged.

Abdullah bin Abbas narrates: Allah's Messenger ﷺ, while addressing people, saw a man standing and inquired about him. The companions replied, "He is from the Children of Israel, committed to standing under the sun, not sitting, not seeking shade, not speaking, and observing perpetual fasting." Upon hearing this, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Tell him to speak, seek shade, sit, and complete his fast." (Al-Bukhari, Aiman 31; Also see Abu Dawood, Aiman 19)

Similarly, neglecting the spiritual needs while solely pursuing physical requirements is not correct. Just as the body requires sustenance, the soul also needs nourishment, protection, and development. Therefore, after nourishing the body and ensuring adequate rest in the evenings, one engages in night prayers (Tahajjud) during the last third of the night to strengthen the soul through acts of worship such as prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, remem-

82. Luqman the Wise: In the Quran, it is stated that wisdom was given to Luqman. Whether he was a prophet or a saint is disputed. Some narrations mention that he was a black Ethiopian or Nubian. (Vehb bin Munabbih, Kitab al-Tican, p. 78; Masudi, Muruj al-Dhahab, I, 57; Ibn Kutayba, al-Marif [Sawi], p. 25; Sa'labi, Arayis al-Majalis, p. 266)

brance, and contemplation. Daytime is dedicated to periodic acts of worship for spiritual nourishment.

Islam emphasizes mercy but recognizes that excessive mercy can lead to harm. Therefore, appropriate measures, when necessary, are a manifestation of mercy. Just as a diseased part of the body may need to be removed for the overall well-being, harmful elements in society may require correction or neutralization. Islamic punishments are applied with the consideration of ensuring the welfare of society. (An-Nur, 2)

Islam advocates a balanced approach even in acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, and charity. [83]A monotonous and excessive religious life is discouraged. Allah advises moderation in spending: "Do not keep your hand tied to your neck, nor extend it fully, so that you become blamed and insolvent." (Al-Isra', 29) "The servants of the Most Merciful are those who, when spending, are neither extravagant nor miserly but follow a middle course." (Al-Furqan, 67)

Abdullah bin Amr narrates that he had resolved to fast during the day and engage in worship at night throughout his life. When the Prophet ﷺ heard about this, he advised, "Fast and break your fast, pray and sleep. Indeed, your body has rights over you, your eyes have rights over you, your wife has rights over you, your visitors have rights over you, and your children have rights over you. Fast three days of each month, for every good deed is multiplied tenfold, and this is like fasting perpetually." (Al-Bukhari, Sawm 55, 56, 57; Tahajud 7; Anbiya' 37; Nikah 89; Muslim, Sawm 181-193)

Understanding one's weakness, sincere intention, and acting with sincerity are crucial. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Adhere to moderation, hold to the middle way, for indeed, none of you will be saved because of his deeds alone." When asked if he also wouldn't be saved, he replied, "No, even I will not be saved unless Allah covers me with His mercy." (Muslim, Munafiqin 76, 78; Al-Bukhari, Riqaq 18; Marda 19)

Muslims, therefore, follow the middle path without extremism. Allah mentions in the Quran, "Thus, We have made you a balanced community..." (Al-Baqarah, 143)

83. See Al-Bukhari, Sawm 55, 56, 57, Tahajud 7, Anbiya' 37, Nikah 1, 89; Muslim, Sawm 181-193; Abu Dawood, Sawm, 55/2428.

6. Islam is a religion of justice and righteousness

The Almighty is the possessor of absolute justice, and injustice can never be attributed to Him.

One of His beautiful names (Asma-ul Husna) is "Al-Adl," which means the just and justice itself.[84]

Therefore, He demands complete justice and fairness from His servants. This desire of the Almighty is explicitly seen in the rulings of Islam, the last religion He sent. The Qur'an states:

"Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, judge with justice." (An-Nisa, 58)

Islam commands individuals to administer justice even if it is against their own or their relatives' interests. The Quranic verse says:

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do." (An-Nisa', 135)

From this, it is understood that the duty of humans is not to show favoritism but to adhere to justice as commanded. Because the Almighty is more aware of what is beneficial or harmful for His servants and is closer to them than anyone else.

With the justice concept introduced by Islam, the principle of personal responsibility for crimes has been established in society. Thus, defending a wrongdoer based solely on tribal affiliation, two tribes engaging in a feud due to the mistake of one person, and long-standing blood feuds have come to an end. Additionally, Islam transferred the responsibility of pursuing the criminal from an individual to the state.[85] This ruling was a revolutionary step in terms of the functioning of justice under the conditions of that time.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once said, "Do you know who the forerunners racing to the shade on the Day of Judgment are?" The companions replied, "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet said, "They are those who, when given their right, accept it, those who, when asked for what is due, generously give, and those who, when judging among people, act as if they are judging for themselves." (Ahmad, VI, 67, 69)

84. Tirmidhi, Supplications, 82/3507.
85. See Medina Charter, Articles 25/b, 31, 36/b, 40; Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Records, 1-7.

According to Islam, the fundamental dialectic or conflict lies between oppressors and those who advocate injustice, and the just and those who advocate justice. The Quran states, "There is no enmity except against the oppressors."[86] It is possible for a person who respects human rights, whether Muslim or not, to coexist with Muslims. However, if a Muslim commits injustice and disregards human rights, it is a duty to oppose them. Therefore, the criterion for the distinction between "us" and "others" on a social level is injustice and justice. [87]

During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, a seemingly Muslim man named Tu'ma bin Ubayrik committed theft and hid the stolen armor in a Jewish man's house. When the armor was found in the Jew's house, he claimed that Tu'ma brought it there, but the crime remained unresolved. When the Prophet Muhammad began to doubt the Jew's innocence based on Tu'ma's oath and his tribe's testimony, Allah admonished the Prophet with the following Quranic verses: [88]

"We sent down the Book to you with the truth so that you can judge among people according to what Allah has shown you. And do not be an advocate for the treacherous. And seek forgiveness from Allah. Surely, Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. Do not defend those who are treacherous. Indeed, Allah does not like the treacherous sinners. They hide from people but do not hide from Allah, and He is with them when they plot by night with words He does not approve. Allah encompasses all that they do. Look! You defended them in the life of this world. So who will defend them against Allah on the Day of Resurrection, or who will be their advocate?" (An-Nisa', 105-109)

All of these examples illustrate how sensitive the foundations of Islamic justice are. In a military unit besieged by enemies, including the companion Mikdad bin Aswad, the commander ordered that no one should let their horse graze. However, one soldier who did not hear this order allowed his horse to graze. When the commander learned of it, he beat the soldier severely. The distressed soldier, complaining that he had never been beaten so much in his life, returned to his place. On the way, he met Mikdad bin Aswad, who inquired about his miserable state. After hearing the story, Mikdad armed himself, took the soldier, and went to the commander, stating that the soldier had been wronged, and justice demanded retribution. The commander accepted and allowed the soldier to retaliate, but the soldier forgave him. Seeing the

86. Al-Baqarah,192.
87. Prof. Dr. Recep Şenturk, Human Rights and Islam, p. 22.
88. Wahidi, p. 183. See also: Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 4/3036; Hakim, IV, 426.

commander submit to justice in this way, Mikdad remarked, "I swear, now I can witness the dominance of Islam." (Abu Nuaym, Hilyah, I, 176)

Justice even towards enemies

One of the challenging aspects of being just for humans is passing judgments about their enemies. Islam commands Muslims to act justly even when thinking or deciding about their enemies. In the Quran, it is stated: "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness..." (Al-Ma'idah, 8)

This represents the pinnacle of justice. A Muslim, even when overwhelmed by feelings of hatred and anger, cannot deviate from justice and inflict injustice upon their enemies, even when presented with the opportunity to harm them. The sacred religion commands not deviating from justice, whether in anger or calmness, and promises great rewards for those who can behave accordingly. (See Haythami, I, 90; Abu Nuaym, Hilyah, II, 343; VI, 268-9)

Some historical examples illustrating this point include:

Suhayl ibn Amr was the orator of the Quraysh. In a time when words had an excessive influence, he constantly spoke against Islam, inciting people. He was captured in the Battle of Badr. Umar ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah! Allow me to break Suhayl's front teeth, so his tongue hangs out, and from then on, he can never speak against you or Islam anywhere!" Prophet Muhammad responded, "Leave him, O Umar! I cannot harm his body like that. If I did, even though I am a prophet, Allah would do the same to me. Don't be hasty; there will come a time when he will make a speech in a position that you will praise, and it will delight you."[89] (Ibn Hisham, II, 293)

Here, we witness the admirable justice of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, an example that resonates with the sense of justice that cannot be transgressed. This narration also serves as a witness to one of the miracles of Prophet Muhammad.

89. Suhayl ﷺ delivered the speech praised by the Messenger of Allah when the time came. Upon the death of the Prophet, during the tumult caused by the hypocrites in Mecca, Suhayl stood up beside the Kaaba and delivered a speech, calming the people down. When Umar ﷺ heard this speech, he remembered the words of the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I bear witness once again that you are the Messenger of Allah!" and tears filled his eyes. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 346; Al-Waqidi, I, 107; Balazuri, Ansab al-Ashraf, I, 303-304; Ibn Abd al-Barr, al-Istiab, II, 669-671; Hakim, III, 318/5228)

Muslims are commanded to be just even when at war with their enemies. Almighty Allah says, "And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient." (Al-Baqarah, 194)

Our Lord not only prohibits excessive retaliation but also recommends forgiveness by showing more virtuous behavior to His servants. "So if you punish, then punish as you were harmed. But if you are patient, it is better for those who are patient." (An-Nahl, 126)

When Prophet Muhammad heard that Muslims were damaging the animals and fruits of the opposing side during the siege of Khaybar, he strongly prohibited it. He emphasized that obedience to this command was a condition for faith and entering paradise. (Abu Dawood, Haraj, 31-33/3050)

A Beautiful Example of Justice Towards Enemies

A remarkable example of justice towards enemies is the following incident:

When Mecca was peacefully conquered through a military strategy, a general amnesty was declared for people who had been enemies until then, and no spoils were taken from Mecca. Prophet Muhammad, needing to meet the substantial essential needs of the ten-thousand-strong Islamic army that had been on the road for days, borrowed money and armor from the non-Muslim wealthy of Mecca[90]. Later, he fully repaid it using the spoils from the Hawazin tribe and said, "The repayment for a loan is gratitude and repayment." (Al-Waqidi, II, 863; Abu Dawood, Buyu', 88/3562; Muwatta, Nikah, 44)

If any other commander were in the place of Prophet Muhammad, he would severely punish those who had done wrong without an account of their transgressions and would seize their property as booty. He had the right to do so. However, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, even though facing financial difficulties with his large army, did not do this and borrowed. So, what was the result?

Let's see it in the following incident:

Safwan ibn Umayya was also one of Mecca's wealthy person. He had asked for a two-month period to think and decide about Islam. Prophet Muhammad gave him four months.[91] Once he asked him, "Safwan, do you

90. Abu Dawood, Haraj, 24-25/3023.
91. Muwatta', Nikah, 44-45.

have any weapons?" Safwan replied, "Do you want them as a loan, or do you want to take them by force?" Prophet Muhammad said, "No, not by force, I am asking for them as a loan." Upon this, Safwan lent him about thirty or forty armors. Prophet Muhammad went to the Battle of Hunayn. When the polytheists suffered defeat, Safwan's armors were collected, but some of them were lost. Prophet Muhammad asked Safwan, "We lost some of the armors. Can we pay for them?" Safwan replied, "No, O Messenger of Allah, today my heart is filled with some noble feelings that I did not feel on that day!" Safwan had lent the armors before becoming Muslim, but he had embraced Islam by then. (Abu Dawood, Buyu', 88/3563)

Observing Justice Among Children

Islam places great importance on a father maintaining justice among his children. When a companion wanted to make himself a witness by saying he had given a gift to one of his children, Prophet Muhammad asked, "Did you give the same to your other children?" Upon receiving a negative answer, he said, "Fear Allah and be just among your children!" Later, he used the following expression to emphasize the gravity of the wrongdoing: "Do not make me a witness to this incident because I cannot witness injustice!" (See Al-Bukhari, Hibah 12, Shahadat 9; Muslim, Hibah 9-18)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was also very careful about justice between genders. Once, while a companion was sitting in the presence of Prophet Muhammad, his little son came. Prophet Muhammad embraced and kissed the child, placing him on his lap. Shortly afterward, the little daughter arrived. The man seated her beside him, not on his lap. Observing this, Prophet Muhammad said, "Shouldn't you observe justice among your children?" He emphasized the need to treat the son and daughter equally and not to show preference for one over the other. (Tahawi, Sharhu Ma'ani al-Asar, IV, 89; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 468; Haythami, VIII, 156)

The justice that Islam introduced to people, derived from their religions, has been like a lifeline for all humanity, regardless of their faith. There are even examples in history of nations appealing to Muslims and saying, "Come and govern us!" For instance, Muslims had taken control of Homs. They collected a reasonable amount of tax as they protected them. Meanwhile, the Byzantine King Heraclius marched against the Muslims with a large army. When Muslims learned about the overwhelming power of their opponents,

they became anxious. They refunded the taxes they had collected from the people of Homs and said, "We are now deprived of the means to protect and defend you as we are under attack. (We took these taxes to protect you.) Now you are free to decide, and you can act as you wish." The people of Homs responded, "By Allah, your administration and justice are more beloved to us than the oppression and tyranny we were experiencing. We will defend the city together with your governor against Heraclius." The Jews also declared, "By the Torah, unless we are defeated and ruined, Heraclius' governor cannot enter the city." They locked the city gates and defended it against the enemy. They, along with the Christian and Jewish populations in other cities that had made peace agreements, acted in the same way, saying, "If the Romans and their allies prevail over the Muslims, we will return to the era of old oppression and hardship. If the Muslims prevail, we will still abide by our previous agreement with them!" When Allah granted victory to the Muslims and defeated the Romans, the Christians opened their cities to the Muslims, removed their actors, and demonstrated joy, paying their taxes. (Balazuri, Futuhu'l-Buldan, p. 187)

Islam's army implemented this practice not only in Homs but also in all the towns they had conquered and later had to withdraw from. For example, when Plevna fell, Gazi Osman Pasha returned the jizya he had taken from the Christian people in exchange for protecting them.

Bartholomaus Georgievic, a Hungarian who was taken captive by the Turks at the Battle of Mohacs in 1528, later freed and wrote a book titled "Turkish Traditions and Customs," expressed his observations about Ottoman justice. He said, "The rulers of the Turks and Christians are the same. The judges selected from among Muslims do not differentiate and apply the same justice to everyone. The killer is killed. The one who robs or forcefully takes something is hanged. Even a Janissary who drank the milk of a woman selling milk at the market and did not pay received the same punishment. I witnessed this in Damascus." As seen, Islam has never compromised on justice, and its superiority in justice has been acknowledged by everyone, friend or foe.

7. Superiority Among People Lies in Taqwa (Piety)

Islam, without any discrimination based on race, religion, gender, society, or class, considers all humans as recipients of divine revelation and members of the same human family. It encourages the understanding that, despite some differences, people share a common ancestry and these distinc-

tions should not lead to enmity but rather foster mutual goodwill. The fact that individuals come from different races and form separate societies is seen as a test regarding the blessings they received, an opportunity for humanity to strive for common ideals and collaborate.[92]

According to Islam, superiority among people is not determined by factors like race, color, or nationality, which are innate and beyond one's control. Instead, it is measured by one's proximity to Allah, their virtues, and the degree of piety achieved through their willpower and efforts. In the eyes of Allah, a believer who diligently follows His commandments, fulfills human responsibilities on Earth most effectively, and is more scrupulous about divine rules and prohibitions is superior to those who do not share these qualities. Race is a temporary characteristic of the perishable body; the body is merely a garment worn by the soul. The soul, however, is eternal and has no race, as all souls come from Allah.[93] The Quran states:

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted." (Al-Hujurat, 13)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also emphasized this concept, saying, "One's lineage does not make them superior if their deeds lag behind." (Muslim, Zikir, 38; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 17)

An enlightening incident that led to the revelation of the above-mentioned verse and reflects the Prophet's perspective on people is as follows:

One day, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited one of the markets in Medina. In that market, a black slave was being auctioned. The slave stated, "I have a condition for the person who will buy me." One of the buyers asked, "What is that condition?" The slave replied, "My obligatory prayers will not be hindered from being performed behind the Prophet Muhammad." The man accepted this condition and bought the slave. Prophet Muhammad used to keep an eye on this slave during each prayer. One day, he did not see him. He inquired about the slave's whereabouts and was told, "O Messenger of Allah, he has fallen ill." The Prophet said, "Let us visit him." They went together to

92. Ma'idah, 48; Al-Baqarah, 148.
93. Al-Hijr, 29; As-Sajdah, 9; Sad, 72; Al-Anbiya, 91; At-Tahrim, 12.

the slave and offered their condolences. A few days later, Prophet Muhammad asked the slave's owner, "How is the slave doing?" The owner replied, "O Messenger of Allah, he is close to death." Upon hearing this, Prophet Muhammad went to the slave, and when he arrived, the slave passed away. Prophet Muhammad personally took care of washing, shrouding, and burying him. The Companions were astonished by this situation. The Muhajireen (those who migrated from Mecca) said, "We left our homeland, wealth, and families to come here; none of us received the respect that this slave received from Prophet Muhammad in his life, illness, or death." The Ansar (the inhabitants of Medina) also pondered, "We sheltered, assisted, and supported Prophet Muhammad with our wealth, but he preferred an Abyssinian slave over us." In response to their thoughts, the verse from Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13) was revealed, reminding them that all humans are descendants of the same parents and emphasizing that superiority lies in piety. (Vahidi, p. 411-412)

The Prophet ﷺ, after conquering Mecca and having his greatest enemies within his grasp, addressed them with these words:

"O people! Allah, the Almighty, has forbidden you the arrogance of the pre-Islamic era and boasting about your ancestors. People fall into two categories: those who possess goodness and piety, whom Allah values, and those who are sinful, evil, and hold no value in the sight of Allah. All humans are the children of Adam عليه السلام, and Allah has created Adam from clay." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 49/3270; Abu Dawood, Adab, 110-111/5116)

In his Farewell Sermon, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated:

"O people! Be aware that your Lord is One, and your ancestor (Adam) is one. Be aware! An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; a red-skinned person has no superiority over a black-skinned person, nor does a black-skinned person have any superiority over a red-skinned person. They are superior to each other only by piety." (Ahmad, V, 411)

Piety, in Islam, means adhering strictly to all of Allah's commandments and prohibitions, being meticulous about it, and turning oneself completely towards Allah while staying away from everything that distracts from Him. The most crucial responsibility of a person is towards the One who created them, Allah. Therefore, the superiority among people is measured by their achievements in this regard, as piety is the most important provision for eter-

nal life in the hereafter. Material wealth, status, lineage, and other factors that people use as a basis for superiority are only relevant to the short worldly life. Claiming superiority over others based on these is not correct.

However, factors like race, social heritage, and nobility are also realities. Islam does not completely ignore them but rather places them under a reasonable order by giving them importance to the extent necessary.

In the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, there were all kinds of people around him: black and white, Arab and non-Arab, tribal leaders and servants, free and enslaved, rich and poor. [94]They all formed rows behind Prophet Muhammad, praying in the same lines. They held great affection and respect for each other. When they mistakenly sought superiority other than through piety, Prophet Muhammad would admonish them. Ma'rur bin Suwayd narrates:

"I met Abu Dharr in Rabazah, and he was wearing a valuable garment. His servant also had the same attire. When I asked him about it, Abu Dharr said, 'During the time of the Prophet, I criticized a person who came from a background of slavery and spoke unpleasant words about him due to his mother. When the Prophet heard about this, he said to me, 'Abu Dharr, are you reproaching him because of his mother? If so, you still have the traits of the pre-Islamic era in you. They are your servants and at the same time your brothers. Allah has entrusted them to your care. Whoever has a brother under his care, let him feed him from what he eats and clothe him from what he wears. Do not burden them with more than they can bear. If you burden them, help them!'" (Al-Bukhari, Iman 22, Adab 15; Muslim, Iman 40)

8. It Possesses Freedom of Religion and Conscience

Islamic scholars emphasize the significance of individual will and choice in accepting the concept of "religion." According to them, religion is a set

94. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ raised many black companions like Bilal the Abyssinian. Examples related to them will be given as needed. Many black scholars emerged in subsequent generations. Let's give a few examples of black scholars who have reached depth in knowledge and excelled in virtue: Ata bin Abi Rabah (27-115) was black. He was a reliable, knowledgeable scholar of jurisprudence and hadith. Imam Azam said: "I have not seen anyone more virtuous than Ata!" Qadi Rashid bin Zubayr (d. 562) was a master in many fields of knowledge and arts of his time. He was a poet, jurist, linguist, engineer, physician, musicologist, astronomer... He was black. Said bin Jubayr (d. 95), one of the great scholars of the Tabi'un, and Nafi al-Madani were also black. (Abdulfattah Abu Ghudda, Safahat min Sabril-Ulama / On the Path of Knowledge, trans. R. Orhan Ozel - Semih Yolacan, Istanbul 1432, pp. 376-378)

of divine laws placed by Allah, urging people of reason toward goodness through their own free will. The prerequisite for religion is intellect and will. Therefore, lifeless objects, plants, animals, those without reason, children, and senile elderly individuals are not held accountable in terms of religion.

According to this perspective, pressure cannot be exerted on individual consciences to adopt and live by a religion. Since belief constitutes the fundamental element of religion and belief is a matter of the heart that cannot be penetrated and enforced, it is impossible to implant any belief into a person's heart by force. Thus, a form of religiousness not based on goodwill and the choice of will, not sincerely embraced, equals "hypocrisy" in terms of religion and does not yield anything for the individual's spiritual life.[95] Insincere worship, done for the sake of "show" (riyâ), is vehemently rejected.

Allah, who created humans consciously and freely, has shown them the right and wrong but has never interfered with their freedom of will. Everyone will make choices with their free will, and they will bear the consequences of their choices. The Quranic verses state:

"If your Lord had willed, all those on Earth would have believed, every one of them. Will you then compel the people to become believers?" (Yunus, 99)

"Whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve." (Al-Kahf, 29)

"If you disbelieve, then know that Allah is independent of you. He does not need you. And He does not approve of disbelief for His servants. And if you give thanks (by believing), He approves of that for you." (Az-Zumar, 7)

"Whoever does a righteous deed, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is against it. Then to your Lord, you will be returned." (Al-Jathiya, 15)

Abu Rafi narrates: The Quraysh sent me as an envoy to Prophet Muhammad. When I saw

Prophet Muhammad, I felt the desire to embrace Islam in my heart and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I swear that I will never return to the Quraysh!" Prophet Muhammad replied, "I will not break my covenant and detain the envoys who come to me. Go back to the Quraysh now! If you continue to

95. Prof. Dr. Sayyid Qutb, The Worldview of Islam, pp. 32-33.

feel what came to your heart (the desire to embrace Islam), come back here!" Upon this, I went to Mecca, completed my envoy mission, and returned to Prophet Muhammad, embracing Islam. (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 151/2758)

Safwan, one of the prominent polytheists of Mecca, had fled on the day of the Conquest. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent his cousin's son, Wahb bin Umayr, after him, providing his own cloak as a token of trust. Prophet Muhammad invited him to Islam, urging him to come. He mentioned that Safwan could either immediately accept Islam or, if he wished, take two months to contemplate. Safwan then arrived with Prophet Muhammad's cloak, loudly announcing among the people:

"O Muhammad! Here is Wahb bin Umayr! He came to me with your cloak, inviting me on your behalf. He said I could accept Islam if I wanted to or, if not, he would give me a two-month grace period." Prophet Muhammad responded, "Let him descend from his mount, Abu Wahb!" However, Safwan insisted, "No, by God, I will not dismount until we clarify this matter!" Upon which Prophet Muhammad said, "I grant you an additional period; you have four months." Safwan, though still a disbeliever, joined Prophet Muhammad on expeditions, participated in the Battle of Hunayn and the Siege of Ta'if. A month later, he embraced Islam. (Muwatta', Nikah, 44-45)

Islam did not aim to impose its principles on people through force, avoiding coercion in all forms. Even intellectual coercion was shunned. For instance, miracles were not a central means of conveying Islam, and asking Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for miracles was not encouraged. Previous prophets were given miracles such as staff transformations, speaking from the cradle, reviving the dead, and healing the blind and ailing. However, Islam emerged during a period of human intellectual development where the Quranic miracle addressed the intellect and comprehension.

Thus, in Islam, material coercion is not accepted as a means.[96]

The clearest expression defining freedom of religion and conscience in Islam is found in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 256: "There is no compulsion in religion; the right way has become distinct from the wrong way."

Accordingly, attempting to enforce religion through coercion is not an Islamic practice. Besides being an area for affirmation through knowledge,

96. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Religion" entry, DIA, IX, 322.

consciousness, and free choice, Islam considers the world as a field of trial and choices. If coercion is employed by the Creator or the created, the alternatives toward which free will might direct itself will disappear, and in that case, the world would lose its specificity as a field of trial. [97]

The circumstances around the revelation of this verse are noteworthy: In the pre-Islamic era of ignorance (Jahiliyyah), women who did not have children would make vows like, "If my child lives, I will make him a Jew." Therefore, when the Bani Nadir, who had breached their agreement with Prophet Muhammad, were being expelled, there were among them some children (previously Jews) from Muslim families in Medina. The families said, "We will not leave our children. (We will keep them and make them Muslim by force)." Allah then revealed the verse "There is no compulsion in religion." (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 116/2682; Wahidi, p. 85-87)

Another reason for the absence of compulsion in religion is that the truth and falsehood have been clearly presented to people, leaving no room for doubt in their minds. Islam is an extremely clear and precise religion with exceptionally bright and powerful evidence.

Jihad

The term "Jihad" means exerting effort to spread the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad, usually conducted through non-combative means. Jihad, in this context, is not about imposing Islam through force but rather making efforts to remove obstacles hindering its presentation and teaching. Wars during the time of Prophet Muhammad were generally defensive actions in response to actual aggression or attempted attacks by the opposing side.[98]

According to the Quran and Sunnah, fighting is not an absolute reason for shirk (associating partners with Allah) or disbelief. The fundamental principle is preaching. Warfare is deemed legitimate when non-Muslims invade, show hostility, and obstruct the duty of preaching. In such cases, the goal of Muslims engaged in Jihad is not to forcibly convert people to Islam but to eliminate oppression, injustice, and coercion, granting them the freedom to

97. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Religion" entry, DIA, IX, 323. This subject will be elaborated in detail in the sections "Islam and Jihad" and "Islam against Terrorism."
98. . Qutb, ibid, pp. 32-33.

choose and decide. Muslims are duty-bound to eradicate any form of injustice and protect people from corruption, even if they choose to remain in their own religions.[99] The Quran states:

"To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged, and verily Allah is most powerful for their aid; They are those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, for no cause except that they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.' Had not Allah checked one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His (cause); for verily Allah is full of strength, exalted in might." (Al-Hajj 22:39-40)

Although the beginning of the verses mentions the permission to fight, the latter part emphasizes the general legitimacy of war and why Allah supports the victorious. This judgment primarily aims to secure the beliefs and places of worship of both Muslims and non-Muslims and establish goodness and peace on Earth. It's noteworthy that Allah mentions monasteries, churches, and synagogues before mosques, indicating that the protection of other religions' beliefs and places of worship is also desired. Therefore, Islam's goal is to preserve the beliefs and places of worship. Islam grants freedom of worship not only to its followers but also to adherents of other religions. [100]

For instance, when Christian delegates from Najran visited Prophet Muhammad, they stood up for their prayer in his mosque when their worship time came. Some Muslims wanted to stop them, but Prophet Muhammad said, "Leave them to their worship." The Christian delegates then turned towards the east and performed their prayers. [101]Since the time of Prophet Muhammad, agreements with non-Muslims explicitly recognized their freedom of religion and conscience, stating that they could practice their faith freely. Thus, fundamental rights and freedoms like protecting one's belief, constructing places of worship, practicing religious rituals, and providing religious education to children were acknowledged. Limitations were applied only in

99. Qutb, ibid, pp. 34-35.
100. Ibn Hisham, II, 202-207; Ibn Sa'd, I, 357; Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah, IV, 382-387; Halabi, Insan al-Uyun, III, 235.
101. See Dr. Bahauddin Varol et al., From the Age of Ignorance to Our Time: Muhammad, p. 286; Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 237.

areas related to public order. In Islamic society, Christian places of worship were treated with tolerance, and their sculptures, mosaics, paintings, bells, and crosses used in special ceremonies were left untouched, preserving their cemeteries in an atmosphere of tolerance until today.

Apostasy in Islam

Regarding the issue of "dinden donme" in Turkish" or apostasy, discussions sometimes arise assuming that those who leave the faith should be killed. However, when this matter is carefully analyzed, it is evident that apostasy, according to Islamic jurisprudence, is not an absolute reason for execution. The hadith commanding the killing of someone who changes their religion is not absolute but is linked to apostasy combined with rebellion against the legitimate order or the commission of crimes involving coercion and torture. The use of absolute wording in the hadith is often due to the fact that apostasy usually occurs in conjunction with these crimes.

The reason behind the Quranic verse concerning apostasy is the deceitful actions of a group of hypocrites who, to deceive people, entered Islam and then apostatized shortly afterward, saying, "We did not find what we sought in this religion." As understood from the verse, for apostasy to be met with legal consequences, there must be activities against Islam or efforts to undermine its reputation through rebellion or propaganda. Apostasy limited to matters of belief does not result in legal penalties.

In Islam, the essence and equivalent of "nationality" are tied to the faith rather than race, language, or affiliation with a specific country. Therefore, apostasy is naturally considered a form of political betrayal, attracting severe penalties for such a grave offense. However, history demonstrates that these penalties have rarely been enforced. Even during times when Muslims were politically weak, apostasy was surprisingly uncommon. This observation holds true not only for regions where Muslim-majority states exist but also for places where colonial powers actively attempted to convert Muslims to other religions.

Even today, Islam continues to spread among Western nations, from Finland and Norway to Italy, from Canada to Argentina, without organized missionary efforts. The notion that "there is no compulsion in religion" is a universal principle in Islam, not subject to any restrictions.

Getting Along with Members of Other Religions

Just as no one is forced into any religion, the principle in the Quran emphasizes the need to treat non-Muslims well as long as they do not cause harm:

"Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion - forbids that you make allies of them. And whoever makes allies of them, then it is those who are the wrongdoers." (Al-Mumtahinah, 8-9)

During the era of Caliph Umar ﷺ, Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah made an agreement with the Christian people of Homs. He acquired the city in exchange for protecting their lives, property, walls, churches, and mills. He exempted the Johanna church, stipulating that a quarter of it would remain as a church. When Muawiyah became caliph, he wanted to include this church in Damascus. However, he abandoned this idea due to objections. Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, for the same purpose, offered a substantial amount to non-Muslims, but they remained resistant. Finally, Walid ibn Abd al-Malik, unable to convince them, demolished the church and annexed it to a mosque. When this was reported to the later caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, he investigated and, finding the non-Muslims were justified, ordered the property's return to its owners. However, Muslim objections arose as they did not agree with converting mosques into churches. Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz negotiated with non-Muslims, granting them all the churches in Guta conquered by Muslims, thus resolving the matter amicably. [102]

When Jews lived under Islamic rule, especially during the times of Prophet David and Prophet Suleyman, they experienced some of their happiest periods in history. They had suffered persecution both under the Byzantine Empire and during the pagan era when Christianity dominated. Synagogues were being converted, and they were being compelled to convert. Once Muslim Turks arrived in Anatolia, Jews found relief. Thousands sought refuge in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. The Ottoman Empire marked the longest period

102. S. J. Shaw, The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, Macmillan, 1991, p. 32.

of prosperity in their history. Haham Isaac Tzarfati, addressing the Jews in Germany in a letter, called them to migrate to Turkiye:

"My brothers, I was born in Germany, but I was expelled from my country and arrived in the blessed Turkish lands. Here, I found peace and happiness. There is nothing to complain about here. We have great wealth; our hands are filled with gold and silver. There are no heavy taxes or obstacles to our trade. Everything is cheap, and we all live in peace and freedom. They do not force Jews to wear a yellow hat as a symbol of shame here. Wake up, my brothers, if you knew even a tenth of the blessings God has given us, you would come here at once." [103]

When Napoleon Bonaparte attacked the Ottoman Empire from 1798 to 1799 and attempted to incite the Armenians in Palestine and Syria to rebellion, the French Ambassador in Istanbul, Sebastiani, reported to Napoleon: "The Armenians are so content with their lives here that it is impossible to incite a rebellion."

Voltaire expressed his opinion on the matter as follows:

"The Great Turk rules 20 nations of different religions in peace. The Turks taught Christians how to be reasonable in peace and victory."

English historian Philip Marshall Brown wrote:

"Despite winning great victories, the Turks generously granted the peoples of all the countries they captured the right to govern themselves according to their own customs and traditions."

As seen in Islamic history, there are numerous examples of the freedom of belief and thought that Muslims granted to members of other religions. The claim that such a belief system is forcibly imposed on people is nothing more than a baseless accusation.

9. Nobody Can Intercede Between God and His Servant – No Clergy Class

Islamic scholars have stated, "The paths leading to Allah are as numerous as the breaths of creatures." This means that every individual has the freedom to establish a direct connection with Allah. Every person can pray, supplicate,

103. See http//www.atmg.org/ArmenianProblem.html

and seek forgiveness from Allah through their worship. When one turns their heart towards Allah, they will undoubtedly find Him present before them and in their hearts.

The Almighty encourages His servants in the Quran to frequently engage in prayer and repentance. He informs them of His vast mercy, assuring that He accepts prayers and forgives sins. According to Islam, the authority to accept prayers and forgive sins belongs exclusively to Allah. He is the sole possessor of power, and no created being can wield His authority. To attribute God's powers to any entity other than Him is considered "shirk," the greatest wrongdoing and sin in Islam. The Lord states that while He can forgive all sins, He will not forgive the sin of shirk.[104] The only way to be free from the sin of shirk is to abandon it and turn towards the oneness of God.

The theological matters are of a serious and delicate nature. It is highly dangerous to behave carelessly in these matters, attributing an authority of Allah to His servants or attempting to restrict it. Such thoughts can invoke divine wrath. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ narrated a significant incident to emphasize this point:

"In the Children of Israel, there were two individuals with opposing inclinations: one was a sinner, and the other was diligent in worship. The diligent one would advise the sinner to refrain from sinning whenever he witnessed him. One day, he saw him committing a sin again and warned, 'Abandon this sin!' The other retorted, 'Have you been appointed as my guardian? Leave me alone with my Lord!' The diligent one said, 'By God, Allah will never forgive you!' or he said, 'Allah will not admit you to Paradise!' Later, both of their souls were taken, and they met in the presence of the Lord of all worlds. Allah, addressing the one diligent in worship, asked, 'Do you know how I will treat My servants, or are you capable of anything under My authority?' Then, turning to the sinner, He said, 'Go, enter Paradise with My mercy.' And to the other, He commanded, 'Take him to Hell!'" (Abu Dawood, Adab 43/4901; Ahmad, II, 323; Muslim, Birr 137)

From this, it should not be inferred that committing sins is excusable. Attention must be paid to the dangerous extent of speaking ignorantly about Allah and holding false beliefs.

104. Luqman, 13; An-Nisa, 48, 116.

A significant incident further underscores the importance of this matter: During the Battle of Uhud, Prophet Muhammad faced a challenging situation. His army had dispersed, and he had been injured on the forehead, his blessed teeth broken. In his distress, he once remarked, 'How can a people who caused such suffering to their Prophet and wounded him find salvation?' At this, the Lord warned: 'This matter is not within your authority. If Allah wills, He may grant them repentance and forgive their sins. If He wills, due to their injustices, He may afflict them with punishment.' (Ali Imran, 128) (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi 21; Tirmidhi, Tafsir 3/3002-3003)

In connection with this, the saying of Prophet Isa عليه السلام is noteworthy: 'Do not speak much without remembering Allah, lest your hearts become hard. Indeed, a hardened heart is distant from Allah, yet you may not even realize. Do not look at people's sins as if you were lords. Look at your own sins appropriately.[105] People are of two types: one group has fallen into sins, and the other avoids sins. Be merciful to those tested with sins or tribulations, and praise Allah for your protection from such afflictions.' (Muwatta', Kalam 8; Ibn Abi Shayba, Musannaf, VI, 340/31879)

In Islam, there is no need for a clergy class in matters such as prayer, repentance, worship, or marriage. Every Muslim must acquire sufficient religious knowledge to meet their own needs. When Muslims gather to pray, they appoint the most knowledgeable and virtuous among them as the imam. They do not require special places for worship; any clean location is suitable for their prayers. The Prophet has stated: 'The whole earth has been made a mosque for me, pure and clean. Therefore, wherever the time for prayer comes, perform the prayer there.' (Al-Bukhari, Tayammum 1)

The duty of Islamic scholars is solely to explain and teach the fundamental religious principles, guide people on the right path through sermons and advice, and enlighten them. They do not have the authority to intervene between God and His servants, forgiving sins on His behalf or accepting their prayers. Such an understanding contradicts Islamic beliefs in Allah and the doctrine of monotheism (Tawhid). The idea of leading people astray into

105. In the commentary of Muwatta' known as Muntaqa, the following explanation is given: It is meaningless for a person to look at someone else's sins. Because they cannot forgive or punish them. Only Allah, who prohibits them, can look at sins. He may forgive them or punish them. It is incumbent upon a person to look at their own sins and try to correct them and turn to repentance.

idolatry began with the introduction of intermediaries between Allah and His servants. Idolaters claimed to worship idols to bring themselves closer to Allah.[106] Over time, they began to attribute divinity to these intermediaries. Such deviance continued to progress. Therefore, it is necessary to have a correct understanding of Allah and avoid beliefs and behaviors that may corrupt it. While contemplation plays a crucial role in reaching accurate knowledge, it is not sufficient alone. Such knowledge can only be obtained from a divine book untouched by human hands. When the historical aspects of the Quran are examined fairly, it becomes apparent that it was revealed by the Almighty and has reached us without any corruption.

10. Embracing Ease as a Principle

Our infinitely merciful Lord has always intended ease for His servants and has facilitated Islam in every aspect. This means that following a religion does not entail withdrawing from the world, enduring constant hardship, and abstaining from all pleasures. Entering Islam and living by its principles are simple enough for even the weakest individuals to handle.

First and foremost, the Almighty has repeatedly explained various examples in the Quran to make it easy for His servants to understand, comprehend, take heed, and apply these teachings in their lives. (Maryam, 97; Adh-Dhariyat, 58; Al-Qamar, 17, 22, 32, 40)

The verses state:

"Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear..." (Al-Baqarah, 285)

"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship." (Al-Baqarah, 185)

"Allah has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty." (Al-Hajj, 78)

"Allah intends to lighten for you [your difficulties]; and mankind was created weak." (An-Nisa, 28)

When the Inshirah chapter was revealed, Prophet Muhammad was delighted by Allah decreeing two easements for every hardship. He joyfully exclaimed:

106. Az-Zumar, 3.

"Difficulty can never overcome ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease." He announced this saying while addressing his companions.[107] (Al-Hakim, II, 575)

And Allah promises His servants that after every hardship, there will be an immediate ease. (At-Talaq, 7)

Allah teaches us to pray for ease, as exemplified by Prophet Musa عليه السلام saying, "My Lord, ease for me my task." (Taha, 25-28)

The Almighty emphasizes that He did not reveal the Quran through Prophet Muhammad and put difficulties on people. [108]Prophet Muhammad ﷺ describes the easements shown to humanity through him:

"They follow the ummi (illiterate) prophet who is mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel, who commands them to do right and forbids them from doing wrong, who makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and relieves them of their burden and the shackles that were upon them." (Al-A'raf, 157)

Prophet Muhammad conveys one of the principles of ease in Islam:

"Allah commands the angels, 'Do not record any evil action unless it is carried out. If it is done, record it as one evil deed. If my servant intends to do a good deed and does not do it, record it as one good deed. If he does it, record it as ten good deeds or even more.'" (Al-Bukhari, Tawhid 35; Muslim, Iman 203, 205)

Prophet Muhammad stated:

"Allah sent me as a teacher and easer, not as a harsh enforcer or one who confuses." (Muslim, Talaq 29)

Therefore, when people came to Prophet Muhammad, expressing their willingness to accept all his commands and obey them, he added the clause "to the best of your ability," making things easier for them. (Al-Bukhari, Ahkam 43; Muslim, Imarah 90; Muwatta', Bay'at 1)

107. The words 'difficulty' and 'ease' are repeated in these verses. However, 'difficulty' is presented as definite with the article 'alif-lam' while 'ease' is indefinite. According to the rules of Arabic language, repeating the definite form implies the same thing, while repeating the indefinite form implies different things. Therefore, although 'difficulty' is repeated twice, it remains as a single difficulty, while 'ease' indicates two different easements. (See Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 94)

108. Ta-Ha, 1-3.

Umayma bint Rukayqa' narrates a beautiful example of this ease:

A group of Ansar women came to Prophet Muhammad, pledging allegiance to Islam. They said: "O Messenger of Allah! We pledge allegiance to you based on not associating anything with Allah, not stealing, not committing adultery, not killing our children, not bearing false witness, and not rebelling against legitimate orders." Hearing this, the Prophet immediately responded, "To the extent of your ability and capacity." Upon this compassionate and merciful statement, the women said, "Allah and His Messenger are more merciful to us than we are to ourselves. O Messenger of Allah, let us pledge allegiance to you." They intended to shake hands as a gesture of their allegiance, but Prophet Muhammad replied, "I do not shake hands with women. My word to a hundred women is like my word to one woman." (Muwatta, Ayman 2; Tirmidhi, Siyar 37/1597; Ahmad, VI, 357)

Ease in Worship and Transactions

Islam has provided numerous facilitations both in the life of worship and in transactions. Regarding the balance in worship, it is stated: "Indeed, this religion is easy. Whoever overburdens himself with it will not be able to continue in that way. So, do not be extremists, but try to be near perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded. Gain strength by worshiping in the mornings, afternoons, and during the last hours of the nights." (Al-Bukhari, Iman 29)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ consistently preferred what was easy. This stemmed from his profound compassion for his community. The following hadith illustrates this mercy: "If I did not fear burdening my nation (or people), I would have commanded them to use the miswak (tooth-stick) for every prayer." (Al-Bukhari, Jum'ah 8, Tammanni 9, Sawm 27; Muslim, Taharah 42)

Another reason for this was Prophet Muhammad's desire to earn Allah's love and approval. As he expressed: "Allah does not like the prohibitions to be violated, just as He does not like difficulties to be imposed." (Ahmad, II, 108)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when leading a congregation, shortened the prayers considering the elderly, sick, women, and children. However, when praying individually, he prolonged them. He advised the imams to do the same.

Aisha ﵂ said: "Whenever the Prophet was given an option between two things, he used to select the easier of the two as long as it was not sinful; but if it was sinful, he would remain silent." (Al-Bukhari, Hudud 10)

Allah has facilitated spiritual avenues for His servants, a testament to His profound mercy. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "For every joint of a person, there is a charity every day the sun rises. To judge justly between two persons is regarded as a charity. To help a man concerning his riding animal by helping him to ride it or by lifting his luggage on it is regarded as a charity; a good word is regarded as a charity." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad 72; Muslim, Zakat 56)

In another narration, "to rule justly between two people" and "to help someone in removing his burden or distress" are added. (Al-Bukhari, Sulh 11; Jihad 72, 128; Muslim, Zakat 56). This hadith emphasizes that doing good is remarkably easy, and Allah considers even the smallest kindness as charity.

Just as Allah consistently shows ease to His servants, He desires them to be facilitative towards each other. Hence, Prophet Muhammad was exceptionally gentle, easy to get along with, and always showed ease. (Muslim, Hajj 137)

Abu Musa reported: "When the Messenger of Allah sent me to collect charity, he said: 'Give them good tidings and do not repel them, make things easy for them and do not make things difficult.'" (Muslim, Jihad 6; Abu Dawood, Adab 17/4835)

With his exemplary character, Prophet Muhammad encouraged his community to live a life of ease and extended glad tidings to those who facilitated for others. As stated in the hadiths: "A believer is not stung from the same hole twice." (Abu Nuaym, Hilya 8, 46). "Shall I not inform you about whom the fire does not touch? It does not touch a person who is always accessible, soft in his disposition, and gentle with people." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah 45/2488)

Islam also recommends conducting business with ease. The Quran says: "If the debtor is in difficulty, grant him time till it is easy for him to repay. But if you remit it by way of charity, that is best for you if you only knew." (Al-Baqarah, 280) . Prophet Muhammad gave glad tidings to those who made transactions easy: "Whoever gives respite to someone who is in difficulty, or alleviates him, Allah will reward him." (Ibn Majah, Sadaqah 14). "May Allah have mercy on the man who is lenient in his buying, selling, and in demanding back his money." (Al-Bukhari, Buyu'16; Ibn Majah, Tijarah 28)

In correcting the mistakes of others, it is essential to show ease. Once, a Bedouin entered the Prophet's Mosque and urinated. The companions rushed to scold him, but Prophet Muhammad intervened, saying: "Leave him alone. Pour a bucket of water over his urine. You are sent to make things easy, not to make them difficult." (Al-Bukhari, Wudu' 58, Adab 80)

Then he kindly explained to the man the importance and etiquette of the mosque. All these verses and hadiths demonstrate how Islam incorporates easy principles in its rules. Undoubtedly, this ease has played a significant role in its universal and enduring appeal throughout history.

Examples of Ease

Let's provide a few practical examples to illustrate that Islam is a religion of ease:

1. Human beings are responsible within the limits of their capabilities; they are not asked to do things beyond their capacity. They are not held accountable for things beyond their control or that they cannot achieve.

2. Islam emphasizes gradualism. Sins like alcohol, usury, and adultery, prevalent in society at the time, were not abruptly prohibited. Instead, they were gradually prohibited in three or four stages.

3. When addressing people, Allah considers not those who have mastered the intricacies of wisdom, speech, and methodological sciences, but rather focuses on individuals with ordinary intellect.

4. Islam has transformed actions that humans naturally desire into acts of worship. Thus, with both human nature and the support of intellect, these actions can be performed more easily. Practices such as perfuming and cleaning mosques, performing ablution on Friday, and applying fragrance on Fridays, as well as commendable acts like reciting the Quran beautifully and having melodious voices for the call to prayer, are all introduced for the realization of this purpose. [109]

5. While it is obligatory to perform ablution with water before prayer, in situations where water is unavailable or its use might lead to illness due to extreme cold, dry ablution (tayammum) is permitted.

6. Travelers are allowed to shorten the obligatory four-unit prayers to two units due to reasons like fatigue or time constraints.

109. For more on this topic, see Shah Waliullah ad-Dihlawi, Hujjatullah al-Balighah, I, 409-414.

7. While standing (qiyam) is obligatory in prayer, those unable to stand may pray sitting, lying down, or indicating with their eyes, depending on their condition.

8. Believers may recite any portion of the Quran that is easy for them during prayers and in their daily lives; there is no restriction on this. (Al-Muzzammil, 20)

9. There is no need for specific places for worship; believers can pray anywhere. (Al-Bukhari, Tayammum, 1)

10. Prophet Muhammad showed great ease in determining the beginning and end of the Ramadan crescent. He said, "Complete thirty days of Sha'ban if the sky is cloudy." (Al-Bukhari, Fasting, 5, 11; Muslim, Fasting, 6-9)

11. Fasting may be difficult for the sick and travelers. Therefore, they are given the freedom to choose whether or not to fast during Ramadan. If they do not fast, they can make up for it when they recover or return from their journey.

12. If there is insecurity on the journey to Hajj due to illness, war, etc., Muslims obligated to perform Hajj can postpone it until the danger is resolved.

13. Allah has shown ease in dealing with orphans, expiation for oaths, marriage, dowry, divorce, providing for the family, worship, retaliation, wills, agreements, borrowing and lending money, and in every kind of transaction. He has asked believers to act in the same way.[110]

These examples could be extended further. Faced with this immense grace from Allah, we join Prophet Muhammad in saying, "All praise is due to Allah, who made the religion spacious!" (Ahmad, VI, 167)

11. Emphasizes Optimism

Islam encourages people to be optimistic and hopeful. The Almighty says, "My mercy encompasses all things." (Al-A'raf, 156) Prophet Muhammad also stated, "When Allah created the beings, He inscribed in His Book, which is above the Throne, 'Verily, My mercy overcomes My wrath!'" (Al-Bukhari, Tawhid, 15)

This belief is sufficient for Muslims to maintain hope. Furthermore, qualities like forgiveness, mercy, patience, reliance on Allah, contentment, posi-

110. Al-Baqarah, 178, 180, 220-241, 280; An-Nisa, 6, 19, 25; At-Talaq, 2, 6, 7.

tive assumptions, and other virtues ease the life of a Muslim. The significance of afflictions lies in either serving as an expiation for sins or elevating one's spiritual rank, lightening the burdens of life. A Muslim who does everything within their means and then submits to fate, showing contentment with whatever comes from Allah, cannot be distressed. Such a person lives a content and peaceful life, finding solace in the words of Allah: "...Perhaps you dislike a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. Allah knows, while you know not." (Al-Baqarah, 216)

Muslims who embrace this understanding transform their hardships and calamities into assets for the hereafter through patience and contentment. They increase their gratitude for the blessings they receive. Prophet Muhammad stated, "The situation of a believer is admirable and praiseworthy. Every situation is beneficial for him. If something good happens, he expresses gratitude, and that is good for him. If something harmful occurs, he shows patience, and that is good for him." (Muslim, Zuhd, 64)

For non-believers and sinners, the door of repentance remains open until the signs of death or the events of the Last Day become apparent. However, as death and the Last Day can suddenly seize an individual, turning to Allah without delay is necessary. The Almighty says, "Say, 'O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return in repentance to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.'" (Az-Zumar, 53-54)

Prophet Muhammad narrates these comforting words from Allah, "Allah says, 'O son of Adam, as long as you invoke Me and ask of Me, I will forgive you for what you have done, and I do not mind. O son of Adam, even if your sins were to reach the clouds of the sky and then you would seek My forgiveness, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, even if you were to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and then you would meet Me without ascribing any partners with Me, I would certainly bring to you forgiveness nearly as great as it.'" (Tirmidhi, Daawât 98/3540)

Therefore, Muslims never lose hope in Allah's mercy and forgiveness. Prophet Muhammad beautifully illustrates the optimism in the face of Allah's mercy:

"Two men entered the Hellfire. The intensity of their cries and screams increased. Allah will say,

'Take them out!' They will be asked, 'Why are you screaming?' They will reply, 'We did it to seek Your mercy.' Allah will say, 'Your screaming for mercy has been granted.' One of them will take a gulp from the river of life, and then they will go back to where they were. The other will start to attempt but will not be able to do so. Allah will say, 'Why are you not screaming as the other one was screaming?' They will reply, 'For fear of committing a sin after being forgiven.' Allah will say, 'Release them both. They have been forgiven.'" (Tirmidhi, Jahannam, 10/2599)

No Superstition

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forbade attributing ill omens to certain things and emphasized looking at everything with a positive and favorable perspective. Once, he stated, "There is no ill omen; I prefer to interpret things positively." The companions asked, "What is interpreting things positively (tafa'ul)?" He replied, "It is a beautiful and positive saying." (Al-Bukhari, Tibb, 19; Muslim, Salam, 102)

On another occasion, the issue of ill omens was discussed in the presence of the Prophet. He said, "The best approach is to interpret things positively. Let no ill omen deter any of you. When one of you sees something displeasing, let him say: 'O Allah, You alone bring about good, and You alone repel evil. There is no power and no strength except with You.'" (Abu Dawood, Tibb, 24/3919)

During the inconclusive Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, when Suhayl bin Amr came as a representative for the idolaters, Prophet Muhammad, observing the situation with a positive outlook, remarked, "Your task has become easier." (Al-Bukhari, Syurut, 15)

Islam advises avoiding suspicion and always looking at people with good thoughts. The Quran says, "O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other..." (Al-Hujurat, 12) While being cautious, looking at people and events with a positive eye brings significant relief, saving individuals from unnecessary troubles and some sins.

Moreover, believers have a dominant understanding of "Pardon the created for the sake of the Creator." Due to their love for Allah, they approach His creation with compassion, viewing everything as a trust from the Almighty. They accept everything that comes from Him with contentment.

A Muslim, while fearing Allah's wrath, should never lose hope in His mercy. The balance between the feelings of fear and hope is expressed as "Bayna al-Khawf wa al-Raja'." A Muslim always strives to approach Allah's mercy without losing hope and positive assumptions. Prophet Muhammad emphasized this by saying, "The Almighty and Majestic Allah said, 'I am as My servant thinks I am (expects Me to be). I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself; and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.'" (Muslim, Tawbah 1, Zikir 2, 19; Al-Bukhari, Tawhid 15, 35, 55)

Especially as death approaches, the positive assumptions Muslims have towards Allah intensify. Jabir bin Abdullah reported that three days before his death, Prophet Muhammad said, "Let each of you die in a state where he presumes the best about Allah." (Muslim, Jannah 81, 82; Abu Dawood, Janaiz 13)

Looking from a material perspective, Muslims do not become pessimistic. Allah has already determined the sustenance for all humans. The Quran states, "And there is no creature on the earth but that upon Allah is its provision." (Hud, 6) Prophet Muhammad mentioned, "For each person, there are two doors. One from which good deeds ascend, and one from which sustenance descends. When a believer dies, both doors weep. Regarding disbelievers, this verse hints at this state: 'No! Indeed, there is no refuge.' (Ad-Dukhan, 29)" (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 44/3255)

Material sustenance follows an individual more closely than their appointed time of death. In other words, people will inevitably receive what has been decreed as their sustenance. Therefore, without falling into despair regarding sustenance, individuals should pursue necessary means for livelihood. After doing their best and working honestly, they should content themselves with whatever sustenance Allah provides—whether it's little or abundant—and use it in a way that pleases Allah. Prophet Muhammad advised, "The one who is a Muslim and is provided rations and water for a journey and sets out (on the

journey) by night or day is like the one who is stationed on the battlefield in the way of Allah..." (Muslim, Zakat, 125; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 35/2348)

In this way, Islam enables people to look at life in this world and the Hereafter with hope. It informs them that by adhering to Allah's religion, they can live a peaceful life both physically and spiritually and ultimately attain happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

12. Promotes Social Unity and Dynamism

Humans, by their very nature, are social beings. They cannot live in isolation and depend on others to establish connections. Additionally, being created with inherent weaknesses, they are not self-sufficient to meet all their needs. Therefore, people should live in a community, help each other, and collectively fulfill their worship to Allah. The Almighty encourages unity and togetherness in the Quran, saying, "Hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided..." (Ali-Imran, 102-103).

Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of coming together both in worship and social relations. He stated, "The prayer performed in congregation is twenty-seven times more meritorious than the prayer performed individually." (Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 30; Muslim, Masajid, 249). He also said, "Allah's help is with the congregation. Whoever separates from the congregation goes to the path of Hell." (Tirmidhi, Fitan, 7/2167). "Congregation is a source of mercy, and division is a source of punishment." (Ahmad, IV, 278).

Islamic practices such as congregational prayers, Friday prayers, holiday prayers, pilgrimage, almsgiving, charity, and humane interactions like funeral ceremonies, weddings, visiting the sick, and maintaining relations with relatives aim to encourage social unity. Of course, there are challenges in dealing with people, and tolerance and sacrifice are necessary. To encourage people to make these sacrifices, Islam promises great rewards to Muslims who live in society and bear the burdens of others. Prophet Muhammad provided numerous statements and set an example in this regard.[111]

Despite facing the hardships caused by rude and insensitive individuals, the Prophet, known for his great manners and gentleness, did not offend anyone and treated everyone kindly. His uncle Abbas, observing the difficulties

111. See Darimi, Muqaddimah, 14; Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musannaf, VII, 90; Ibn Sa'd, II, 193.

faced by the Prophet, suggested, "O Messenger of Allah! People are causing you hardship, raising dust around you. Why don't you have a special shade and address people from there?" The Prophet, a mercy to the worlds, replied, "No! I will continue to be among them until Allah takes me among them to safety. Let them step on my heels, pull my clothes, and raise dust around me!" (See Dârimî, Muqaddimah, 14; Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musannaf, VII, 90; Ibn Sa'd, II, 193).

Prophet Muhammad advised his community in the same way, stating, "A Muslim who mingles with people and endures their hardships is better than the one who does not mingle with them and does not endure their hardships." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 55/2507).

Sharing the Concerns of People

Muslims, while enduring the hardships imposed by life, also strive not to cause distress or harm to others. They are skilled in sustaining a livelihood and treating people with kindness. They care for everyone's concerns and try to heal their wounds. The Prophet ﷺ stated: "Believers are like a single body in their love, compassion, and support for each other. When one part is in pain, the whole body stays awake and suffers from fever." (Al-Bukhari, Adab 27; Muslim, Fadhail as-Sahabah 66).

"The example of a believer in relation to other believers is that of a body; when any part aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever." To illustrate this, Allah's Messenger ﷺ intertwined the fingers of both hands. (Al-Bukhari, Salah 88, Mazalim 5; Muslim, Birr 65).

The Prophet ﷺ warned against not maintaining good relationships with others: "A believer associates amicably with others, and others associate amicably with him. There is no goodness in one who does not associate amicably with others, and others do not associate amicably with him." (Ahmad, II, 400, V, 335).

"He who does not share the concerns of Muslims is not one of them." (Tabarani, al-Saghir, II, 131/907; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 361).

"Verily, Satan is man's wolf. Just as the wolf captures the stray sheep, dividing yourselves into groups will lead to the path of Hell. Do not be divided into groups! Do not separate from the congregation, society, and mosques!" (Ahmad, V, 232, 233).

Islam encourages social cooperation to help one another and protect themselves from the harms of evildoers. Prophet Muhammad urged Muslims to be concerned about each other's difficulties and problems. Once he asked his companions:

"Who fasted today?"

"Who participated in a funeral prayer?"

"Who fed a poor person today?"

"Who visited a sick person today?"

His companion Abu Bakr replied to all these questions, and the Prophet ﷺ said, "The one who combines these righteous deeds will surely enter paradise." (Muslim, Fadha'il as-Sahabah 12).

Abdullah bin Umar narrated an incident during a severe famine called the "Year of the Famine." His father, Umar, made significant efforts, using wheat and olive oil obtained from fertile areas, to help the Bedouins. Umar prayed, "O Allah, provide the sustenance of the Bedouins in the mountainous regions!" Allah answered his prayer, and Umar remarked, "Praise be to Allah! If He had not removed this hardship, I would have distributed the wealth to the homes of all believers, providing for each family, even if only with one person's meal, to save them from perishing." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, no: 562).

People used to say during those days, "If Allah had not lifted the hardship of the famine year, Umar would have surely died due to the sorrow he felt for the condition of the Muslims." (Ibn Sa'd, III, 315).

A statement attributed to Ali ibn Abi Talib emphasizes the importance Muslims attach to social service: "I have received two of my Lord's bounties, and I do not know which one is greater and for which one to be more grateful. One of them is when a person, hoping that I will meet his needs, comes to me and sincerely asks for help. The second is when Allah, through me, fulfills or facilitates what he desires. I find relieving the distress of a Muslim more lovable to me than possessing a world filled with gold and silver." (Ali al-Muttaqi, VI, 598/17049).

In a Hadith Qudsi, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated that such social services please Allah, bring the servant closer to the Lord, and lead to divine rewards.[112] If spending wealth and time for the sake of humanity is so virtuous, consider the lofty positions those who sacrifice their lives for the service of others may attain. Therefore, those who give their lives to protect Allah's servants from oppression and struggle when facing injustice attain one of the highest ranks, known as "martyrdom."

While Islam encourages people to be social, it never distances them from individual worship and contemplation. It advises performing all social activities for the sake of Allah and with the intention of worship. The principle of "solitude in the congregation" is established, urging Muslims to maintain awareness of Allah's presence even when interacting within society. In other words, they should live by the principle of "Benefit in hand, heart with the Beloved." However, during times when society has significantly deteriorated, and there is an increase in corruption, and a Muslim cannot contribute positively while facing spiritual harm, it is permissible for them to withdraw from society. In such cases, the priority should be to secure one's own hereafter. Otherwise, while engaging in physical service within crowds, one should maintain a spiritual connection with Allah.

Everyone Should Strive to the Best of Their Ability

From what has been mentioned so far, it is clear that Islam always emphasizes dynamism and activity. Passivity, laziness, and indifference are incompatible with Islam. While Islam encourages contentment in personal matters, it urges the exertion of one's full strength in the spiritual realm and in the path of Allah. Therefore, Muslims strive to earn more not for their personal pleasures but to spend in the way of Allah. They never tire of doing good, helping the needy, and seeking knowledge. (Tirmidhi, 'Ilm 19/2686).

The field for gaining goodness and reward is unlimited. Everyone should strive to the best of their ability and never consider their efforts sufficient. A Muslim, while looking at those less fortunate than them in material matters with gratitude, should always look at those more advanced than them in religious matters, recognize their flaws, and be inspired to strive harder.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

112. Muslim, Birr, 43.

"A person who, from the day they were born until the day they become old and pass away, crawls on the ground in pursuit of earning Allah's pleasure (enduring all kinds of hardship in worship, obedience, and service), on the Day of Judgment, they will find what they did very inadequate (and wish to be returned to the world for further deeds)." (Ahmad, IV, 185; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, I, 479; Haythami, I, 51; X, 225, 358).

When voluntary individual worship conflicts with communal worship, a Muslim prefers to be beneficial to society. For example, although seclusion (itikaf) is a highly virtuous act of worship, communal obligations take precedence. An instructive incident illustrates this:

One day, while Abdullah bin Abbas was in seclusion in the Prophet's Mosque, a person approached him, greeted him, and sat down. Ibn Abbas said, "Brother, I see you are sad and distressed." The conversation continued:

"Yes, O cousin of the Messenger of Allah, I am sad! I owe a debt to a certain person, but I cannot pay it off."

"Shall I speak to him on your behalf?"

"Yes, if you wish."

Ibn Abbas put on his shoes and left the mosque. The man called out to him, "Did you forget that you are in seclusion? Why did you leave the mosque?" Ibn Abbas pointed to the grave of the Prophet ﷺ and said, "No! I heard from this honorable person who lies in that grave, and my eyes were filled with tears as he spoke:

'Whoever strives to fulfill the needs of his fellow Muslim and succeeds, it is better for him than ten years of seclusion. If a person enters seclusion for one day for the sake of Allah, the Lord will create three trenches between him and Hell, each as wide as the distance between the East and the West.'" (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, III, 424-425; Haythami, VIII, 192).

Contemplating death, believing in fate, practicing trust and submission do not lead people to laziness and despair, as some might misrepresent. On the contrary, they motivate believers to be more attentive, determined, and work with peace of mind. A person who remembers death thinks that time is running out, thus becomes determined to do more and higher-quality work without wasting time on unnecessary things. They do not fall into sins that

the ego and Satan lead them into. A believer who believes in fate, understands trust and submission correctly, knows that relying on Allah without doing what is in their power is wrong. Therefore, after doing everything they can within their capacity, they entrust the results to Allah and find comfort. A person who does not believe in fate, rejects trust and submission, does not have much to do beyond that. Such individuals, who do not trust Allah, are constantly anxious about the outcome of their work, and when the result does not turn out as they wish, they experience a significant spiritual collapse. On the other hand, a believer who believes in fate, trusts in Allah, after fulfilling their responsibilities, even if they cannot achieve the desired outcome, still receives the reward for their intention and is protected from excessive sorrow. In other words, they are in profit both materially and spiritually.

Islam encourages working for sustenance, getting married and having children, spending, being the giving hand, utilizing time wisely, conveying truths to all people and guiding them away from falsehoods, defending life, property, honor, lineage, and homeland. Thus, Islam urges people to engage in social activities and lead dynamic lives. It ingrains in minds that anyone who does even the smallest good or commits the smallest wrong will undoubtedly face consequences, fostering a more attentive, lively, and vigilant life.[113]

13. Islam is the Revival of Humanity

Islam bestows upon humanity an exceptional position and honor among all creations. The Quranic verses state: "We have certainly created man in the best of stature." (At-Tin, 4). "Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea, given them for sustenance things good and pure, and conferred on them special favors above a great part of Our creation." (Al-Isra',70)

Once, a funeral procession passed by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He stood up, and when someone remarked that it was a Jewish funeral, the Prophet replied, "Is it not a soul?" (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 50; Muslim, Janaiz, 81). Here, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ shows respect even for the deceased, emphasizing the dignity due to human beings. Consequently, in Islam, the bodies of the deceased are protected from disrespectful situations, being buried with honor and reverence.

113. Az-Zalzalah, 7-8; Al-An'am, 104; Az-Zumar, 41; Fussilat, 46; Al-Jathiyah,15.

Yala bin Murra reported: "I participated in many military expeditions with the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Whenever we passed by the corpse of a deceased person, the Prophet would command for immediate burial, without inquiring about whether the deceased was a Muslim or a non-Muslim." (Hakim, I, 526/1374; Dar al-Qutni, IV, 116; Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, III, 386).

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said, "Breaking the bone of a dead person is as sinful as breaking the bone of a living person" (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 63). This high level of reverence for the deceased raises questions about the value of human life and soul. While the human body is made from water and clay, it is Allah's divine breath (the divine breath of life) that grants consciousness, conscience, and emotions to make it a sentient being.[114] Therefore, in Islamic perspective, a human life symbolizes equal value for all of humanity. Allah, in the Quran, states: "...If anyone kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he kills all mankind, while if any saves a life, it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind..." (Al-Ma'idah, 32)

Hence, Islam considers the unjust killing of a person as a major sin and imposes a deterrent punishment to keep people away from this crime. Accordingly, the one who unjustly takes a life is subject to qisas (legal retribution). Even if many individuals participate in the murder, all of them receive the same punishment.[115] Beyond harming others, even intending harm to oneself is strictly prohibited, and committing suicide is considered a grave sin. Severe consequences are articulated for such actions (Al-Bukhari, Tibb, 56; Muslim, Iman, 175).

Due to this understanding, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ made every effort to avoid conflict with his enemies. He sought peaceful resolutions, displayed flexibility to reach agreements, never initiated warfare, and only responded when attacked. Even in unavoidable conflicts, he employed wise tactics to minimize casualties. In cases like the conquest of Mecca, he often compelled enemies to surrender without shedding blood, followed by granting them amnesty.

This topic will be elaborated in detail in the "Islam and Jihad" section. In summary, Islam aims to revive and guide humanity to eternal happiness rather than taking human lives. An illustrative example is found in the narration

114. Al-Hijr, 29; As-Sajdah, 9; Sad, 72.
115. Al-Bukhari, Diyyat

by Muslim bin Haris: The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent us on an expedition. When we reached the destination, I rode ahead of my companions. Observing people in distress, I advised them to proclaim "La ilaha illallah" for their protection. Some of my comrades criticized me for prohibiting them from obtaining war booty. When I reported this to the Prophet, he commended my action, saying, "Indeed, Allah has assigned a reward for you for every person among them." Then, the Prophet continued, "Shall I write a letter to recommend you to the leaders of future Muslim communities?" Subsequently, he wrote a letter of recommendation, sealed it, and handed it to me. (Abu Dawood, Adab, 100-101/5080; Ibn Sa'd, VII, 419-420).

Allah, in His mercy, even protects sinful servants, forbidding backbiting (gossip) after their death. Mocking, ridiculing, labeling with derogatory names, mimicking, and thinking ill of others are all explicitly prohibited. Allah forgives the rights related to Himself but leaves the rights of individuals wronged by others to the judgment of the affected parties.

Everything in the Service of Humanity

One of the Quranic verses demonstrating the magnitude of the value bestowed upon humans by the Almighty is as follows: "Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth and amply bestowed upon you His favors, [both] apparent and unapparent? Yet of the people is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge or guidance or an enlightening book." (Luqman, 20; also see Jathiyah, 13)

The air standing guard right under our noses, the earth ever-present beneath our feet, the night and day taking turns delivering us, our planet Earth humbly rotating, safeguarded by its surrounding celestial bodies, and the Sun serving as both our light and heat... When we take a moment to reflect, it's not difficult to realize that all entities are in service to us. The One who created us has opened our ears to the world of sounds, placed our eyes to perceive the world of colors and light, endowed us with a brain, a heart, and a tongue. Recent cosmological studies within the framework of the "Anthropic Principle" also confirm this verdict. Essentially, the vastness and age of the entire universe with its galaxies and stars are necessary for the emergence and sustenance of conscious beings like humans on a planet like Earth within a solar system. Observing our surroundings, it's evident that humans benefit from all

living and non-living entities. Even bacteria can be used as organic chemistry reactors in pharmaceutical production.

In essence, all entities in the heavens and on earth serve humanity. Allah, in His care, has designated humans as caretakers of divine trusts on Earth, responsibilities that the heavens, the earth, and the mountains declined but were willingly undertaken by humans. As such, humans are deputies acting on behalf of Allah, conducting and managing affairs on Earth in His name, endowed with the duty and responsibility of governing the world on His behalf.

Spiritual Resurrection

Allah, who values humanity so greatly, has sent prophets to guide them on how to live both in this world and the hereafter. The Almighty desires our well-being in both realms by adhering to the principles He has set forth as a religion. Thus, even to those who commit sins and wrongdoings, He compassionately addresses, saying, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Az-Zumar, 53-54; also see An-Nisa, 97; An-Nahl, 28)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was so dedicated to freeing people from polytheism and false beliefs for their eternal salvation that he would receive divine admonitions at times, urging him not to exhaust himself to such an extent.[116] The following hadith illustrates the Prophet's determination and effort:

"My example and your example are that of a man who kindled a fire. When it illuminated its surroundings, moths and some creatures that love light began to fall into it. The man tried to prevent them, but they prevailed, and many fell into the fire. I am holding you back from the fire, but you are rushing towards it!" (Al-Bukhari, Libas, 26)

Because those who truly believe in Allah experience a genuine resurrection, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ exerted maximum effort to guide everyone towards faith. Even when his most staunch enemies embraced Islam by uttering the Shahada, he immediately forgave them and advised his companions to avoid recalling their past unjust deeds. (Al-Waqidi, II, 857-858)

116. Al-Kahf, 6; Ash-Shu'ara, 3.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not curse those who tortured him; instead, he would pray for their guidance, believing that they might change their minds or that righteous individuals might emerge from their descendants. For instance, when the angels proposed to crush the people of Ta'if, who had subjected him to severe torture and insults, between two mountains, he declined, praying for the future generations of the people of Ta'if to be blessed with guidance.[117] Eventually, a delegation from Ta'if came to Medina, embracing Islam. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 134; Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 73/3942)

Once, some companions, distressed by the malice of the polytheists, asked the Prophet ﷺ to curse them. In response, he said, "I was not sent as a curse, but rather as a mercy to all worlds." (Muslim, Birr, 87)

Even towards his most ardent enemies, his supplication was: "O Allah! They do not know; grant them guidance!" (Suyuti, Al-Jami, no: 3559)

Our Prophet prayed for the defeat of the enemy in all battles, but he did not pray for their destruction. In the Battle of the Trench, angels descended to strengthen the Prophet's heart but did not fight; otherwise, many enemy soldiers would have perished. Allah swt aided the Prophet with the Sabā wind, which, despite being cold, is gentle and unsettling to the enemy. These events demonstrate the mercy of Allah and the Prophet. The aim is not the destruction of humanity but their awakening from heedlessness and reform. Indeed, many of the polytheists who participated in the Battle of the Trench and suffered defeat later embraced Islam. If they had been killed in the trench, they would have faced eternal loss.[118]

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not easily give up on people. The value of a human being in the sight of Allah is so immense that it cannot be compared to anything else. During a Tawaf around the Kaaba, he addressed the Kaaba, saying, "How pure you are, and how sweet your fragrance! How great you are, and how exalted your sanctity! But, by the One in whose hand Muhammad's soul is, the sanctity of a believer's blood and property in the sight of Allah is even greater than your sanctity. We do not think of any but good for the believers." (Ibn Majah, Fitan, 2)

117. Al-Bukhari, Bad al-Khalq, 7; Muslim, Jihad, 111. Ibn Hisham, II, 29-30; Haythami, VI, 35.
118. Halil bin Ibrahim Mollâhâtır, Signs of Prophethood in the Battle of the Trench, Jeddah 1431, pp. 55-59.

According to Rumi, regardless of color, race, tribe, or nation, all humans were important. In his view, everyone's life was precious, and they needed to be saved from death or mischief. Once, he saved a young Roman who was about to be hanged by throwing his cloak over him. On another occasion, he reprimanded those who were ridiculing a drunkard in the assembly of the Sema, saying, "He drank the wine, but you are the ones who got drunk. A person, even if drunk, should not be scorned, because a person, no matter what, should not be despised; for a person is valuable." (Mathnawi, Vol. 3, couplets: 1000-1001)

Sheikh Galib also expressed the value Islam assigns to humanity, stating, "Look at yourself with favor, for you are the essence of the universe; you are the essence of all beings." Islam, acknowledging the great value of humans, has bestowed upon them rights that are suitable for their dignity and honor. In an Islamic state, including all individuals (including minorities), some of the fundamental rights include:

1) The life, property, and honor of all individuals are secure, and it is the fundamental duty of those holding political power to protect them from aggression.

2) No one can be prevented from using their native language.

3) Everyone is free to live according to their beliefs, without any pressure. No coercion can be applied in this regard. Individuals have the right to be judged according to the laws they believe in.

4) Except for certain regulations made to maintain public order, no one can interfere with a person's clothing.

5) Education and teaching are free, and no one can be deprived of them.

6) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression.

7) Preserving lineage is essential.

8) Muslim or non-Muslim, everyone can live wherever they want within the country. Conversely, some restrictions may be imposed only for the purpose of preserving security and public order.

9) Everyone has the right to travel and trade, and no obstacles can be imposed on these rights, except for public interest.

Islamic states considered these rights much earlier than non muslim states..[119] According to Islam, the foundation of human rights is the existence of a human being. This idea is based on the principle in Islamic Jurisprudence: "Infallibility is based on being human: immunity and basic rights are due to being human." In other words, the mere existence of a human being is sufficient reason for them to have basic human rights. Islamic jurists have adopted a comprehensive approach that never discriminates among people based on religion, race, gender, class, or citizenship.[120]

14. Values Islam Brought to Humanity

Humanity had deviated from the divine principles brought by the prophets, entangled in the claws of human desires and ambitions. While some suffered under oppression, torture, and poverty, others experienced the most terrifying aspects of wealth, extravagance, and debauchery. The rich, indifferent to religion due to luxury and comfort, neglected the afterlife and the thought of death. The poor, like farmers and workers, disregarded religion due to the harshness of life conditions, grief, and numerous hardships. Thus, the message, superior ethics, and virtues brought by previous prophets were lost in the civilized world between seductive wealth and miserable poverty.

The torches of guidance brought by the prophets before were extinguished in subsequent storms, and the remaining light weakened to illuminate not families and cities but only a few individual hearts. Religious scholars withdrew to seclusion in worship places either to save their faith in the face of trials or due to a preference for peace and comfort, or out of cowardice and weakness. Those who remained on the stage of life collaborated with rulers and capitalist-minded individuals, becoming complicit in their sins, oppression, and unjust usurpation of people's goods.

In the Roman Empire, sectarian conflicts were incessant, and unprecedented brutality unfolded between Jews and Christians. Social decline reached its extreme in both Rome and the East. The clouds of disaster upon the people were compounded by heavy taxes and high prices.

119. See Kadir Mısıroglu, Islamic Worldview, pp. 200-201.
120. Prof. Dr. Recep Şenturk, Human Rights and Islam, pp. 13, 21.

Iran became a field for famous anarchist-minded individuals. Ethical principles had eroded under various shocks and depressions for years. For instance, in the mid-5th century, II. Yezdigert, holding a highly important position like the presidency, married his own daughter and later ordered her death.[121] In Iran, a person named Mani emerged advocating celibacy and aiming to eradicate the human race. Then came Mazdek, arguing that wealth and women should be shared completely and equally, and he intended to bid farewell to humanity entirely. Sexual desires became even more rampant. The kings of Iran were deified, creating a terrible gap and imbalance between classes.

Other nations living in Central Asia and East countries like the Turks, Mongols, and Japanese found themselves caught between corrupt Buddhism and ludicrous idolatry. In India, idolatry reached its peak in the 6th century. While there were 33 gods in the Vedas, their number increased to 330,000,000 in this century. Everything considered bright, attractive, and deemed necessary for life was accepted as a deity and worshipped.[122]

In the Arab world, idolatry, alcohol, gambling, usury, adultery, tribal bigotry, and blood feuds had progressed significantly. People worshipped trees, stones, rivers, and even beings that did not benefit or harm them. Their rational faculties were corrupted, and their thought worlds were turned upside down. They deviated to the extent of burying young girls alive.

In short, misery prevailed all over the world. Humanity lost its way in the deserts of selfishness, its lips parched from thirst, unable to see ahead in darkness. It was then that the Compassionate One showed mercy and sent His final prophet. When Prophet Muhammad began his mission, he faced fierce resistance from people. The torches of divine revelation, superior morality, and virtues brought by the previous prophets had vanished amid the seductive allure of wealth and miserable poverty. The light dimmed, only capable of illuminating individual hearts, not families and cities.

Islam, first and foremost, brought true belief to humanity. People recognized the supreme power that created them and learned His attributes.

121. Historian's History of the World, Vol. 8, p. 84.
122. Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, trans. Mehmet Suslu, Istanbul 1986, pp. 60-61. The English translation of this book, titled "Islam and The World," was printed at Punjab University Press in Lahore, Pakistan.

Beliefs Brought by Islam and their Impact on Humanity

The foundations of faith brought by Islam were the sole guardians of human security, chastity, dignity, and honor. They stood like a steel armor against raging sensual desires and ambitions, even in secluded places unseen by anyone.[123] An individual who knew that Allah sees him closer than his jugular vein, records every word and action of angels, and will face a great account in the Hereafter, how could such a person commit injustice?

When Muslims captured the city of Madain, they collected all the spoils. During this, a man approached with a gold cube, handed it to the officer in charge of collecting spoils, and those present exclaimed at its extraordinary value. They asked the man who brought the gold, "Did you take anything from these?" He replied, "I swear by Allah, if it weren't for the fear of Allah, I wouldn't have brought you this cube." Recognizing his integrity, they inquired about his identity, and he responded, "I swear by Allah, to avoid personal pride and hypocrisy and to stay away from the praise of you and others, I won't reveal who I am. But I'll tell you this much: I am a servant who praises Allah and seeks nothing but His reward." As he left, someone followed him until he reached his companions. When they asked who he was, they said he was Amir bin Abd al-Qays.[124]

- Over time, people had lost knowledge of what Allah required from them, how to worship Him, and how to approach their beloved Lord. Islam taught them the most beautiful ways of worship that would bring them closer to Allah.
- The world was generally experiencing tremendous moral decay. Arab Bedouins living in the deserts possessed virtues such as chastity, keeping promises, generosity, loyalty, patience, and courage. However, these virtues had deviated in them due to excesses and deficiencies. To protect their chastity and honor, they buried little girls alive, drove their mothers to madness, destroyed essential goods to maintain their generosity, engaged in bloody wars for the sake of bravery, and continued this for many years. Islam brought about a significant change in the moral qualities of the Age of Ignorance, transforming them into their true nature.

123. Nadwi, ibid, p. 114.
124. Tabari, History, Beirut, 1407, Vol. II, p. 465.

- Islam freed people from selfishness, turning them into altruistic beings. Those who used to harm each other now wished each other well and rushed to each other's service.
- Tribalism, racism, and distinctions between rich and poor vanished. Equality among all humans was declared. The measure of a person's status became their worship of Allah. Harmful qualities like pride, arrogance, self-conceit, gossip, and envy were replaced by humility, modesty, self-awareness, and the ability to wish for others what one wishes for oneself.
- In a time when blood ties were strong, Islam taught that the bond of belief, thought, and ideas was superior. The society established by the Prophet lived this by preferring Muslim slaves and the poor over the noble and wealthy unbelievers of Mecca.
- Previously, people who had become slaves to the powerful and wealthy gained their freedom with the saying, "There is no obedience to the created in disobedience to the Creator." Humanity attained true honor and dignity.
- Humanity, which had lost love, established the "Civilization of Love" through Islam. People learned to love others, animals, plants, and even inanimate beings for the sake of the Creator and became accustomed to sacrificing themselves for the sake of their fellow human beings.[125]
- Islam founded the greatest civilization the world has ever seen. Islamic civilization contributed immensely to humanity in terms of society, trade, art, economy, architecture, and music. It taught brotherhood to humanity, instilling honesty, reliability, and diligence in traders.
- One of the most important things that Islam taught humanity is cleanliness. In the second revelation of Quran, themes of the greatness of Truth, cleanliness, purity, and the necessity of staying away from impunity and worshipping idols are touched upon.[126] While Christian figures like Saint Benedict claimed that washing was only permissible in times of necessity, and Saint Francis said, "An unwashed body is a sign of piety," Islamic revelation emphasized the greatness of Allah, the necessity of cleanliness, and the avoidance of impure and evil things.

This illustrates how lofty Islam is as a religion and what important goals it aims to achieve.

125. For this matter, refer to Prof. Dr. Raşit Kuçuk Hocaefendi's book "Civilization of Love" (Istanbul 2000).
126. Al-Muddathir, 3-5.

Islamic Values and Impact on Society

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born and raised in lands where water was as precious as gold and scarce, yet he and his companions performed ablution (wudu) at least five times a day. The Prophet ﷺ frequently recommended bathing, stating that taking a bath at least once a week was a right upon Allah's servants.[127] While emphasizing the importance of cleanliness, he also stressed the avoidance of wasting water. Believers were advised not to be extravagant even when performing ablution by a flowing river. (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 48)

Moreover, he recommended to his companions that they change into clean clothes before attending the Friday prayer since cleanliness holds great significance when all believers gather for the congregational prayer.[128]

- Islam transformed a nation, living in deserts with scarcity and limitations, lacking schools, books, libraries, and knowledge, into a society of learning and intellect. This aspect will be discussed further under the title "Islam and Knowledge."

- Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, in a remarkably short period of 23 years, guided the entire Arabian Peninsula to righteousness and established the Islamic state, one of the world's greatest and most enduring. Some states in history, like Alexander the Great's Macedonian Empire, rapidly expanded and conquered vast territories, yet crumbled upon their leaders' deaths. Similarly, Genghis Khan united the Mongols to form a mighty empire, but it disintegrated soon after his death. In contrast, the Islamic state founded by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only endured but also expanded over time. While other major states brought death, blood, tears, and oppression wherever they went, Islamic armies brought justice, mercy, knowledge, and intellect. Therefore, Muslims succeeded in conquering the hearts of people before forts and cities wherever they went. Undoubtedly, the divine principles brought by Islam form the foundation of this success.

- Islam rescued people from harmful habits. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, by Allah's command, prohibited alcohol, his companions obeyed without the slightest hesitation. Alcohol quickly disappeared from Islamic

127. Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 77; Muslim, Jumu'ah, 5-10; Nasa'i, Jumu'ah, 8.
128. Abu Dawood, Salat, 212-213/1078; Muwatta', Jumu'ah, 17; Ibn Majah, Iqamah as-salah, 83.

society. In contrast, when the United States attempted a similar ban in the early 20th century, it only led to increased interest in alcohol. Despite spending millions on propaganda through magazines, newspapers, conferences, photo exhibitions, cinemas, and other modern means of communication, and executing strict measures, the campaign failed. In 1933, the U.S. government repealed the law and allowed alcohol again.[129]

American Professor's Views on Islam

American professor Julius Hirsch states: "The Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad prohibited alcohol, protecting large masses of people from its harms for centuries. This achievement could not be attained in enlightened America, despite all kinds of propaganda and scientific advancements in the 20th century."[130]

- Islam came to the rescue of people enslaved by the burden of interest. It replaced this unjust system with virtues like benevolent loans, mutual aid, charity, generosity, and selflessness. When the time came and people could not find needy recipients for their charity (zakat), they freed slaves with the collected funds. [131]

- Islam put an end to endless wars and blood feuds born out of tribalism. It brought tranquility, dispelling the atmosphere of terror prevalent everywhere. Through Islam, a woman could travel alone from one end to the other of Arabia without fear and only relying on Allah.[132]

- Islam bestowed numerous other beauties upon humanity, and mentioning them all is both lengthy and practically impossible. The examples provided so far are sufficient.

129. Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, p. 100.
130. Alpaslan Ozyazıcı, Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco, and Others, Ankara 1996, pp. 14-16.
131. See Al-Bukhari, Zakat, 9; Prof. Dr. M. S. R. al-Bouti, The Jurisprudence of Biography, Beirut 1980, p. 434.
132. Al-Bukhari, Zakat, 9; Manaqib, 25; Ikrah, 1, Manaqib al-Ansar, 29; Ahmad, Vol. IV, 257, 377-379; Ibn Hisham, IV, 246; Ibn Kathir, The Beginning, Vol. V, 62. To clearly see the values Islam has brought to humanity, one can also look at what humanity and the world have lost with the weakening of Muslims. In short, with the decline of Muslims, humanity has become immersed in materialism and started to drown in deep materialism. It has moved away from spiritual feelings, compassion, and mercy. In the race for interests it has fallen into, there seems to be no right to life for the weak. With the decline of Muslims, European colonialism has increased, and many nations have lost their freedom and been subjected to unimaginable torture. The Quran had already informed about this situation: "And if you fail to do so, then there will be discord and great corruption on earth." (Al-Anfal, 78)

In summary, the emergence of Islam is the greatest event the world has ever witnessed. It has altered the course of history, and all the goodness and beauty in today's humanity owe a debt to it. No religion or civilization in the civilized world can claim that Islam has not influenced it to some extent.[133] Robert Briffault puts it this way: "In every field where Europe has made progress, the Islamic civilization has undoubtedly had a significant share, a noticeable influence, and a definite role."[134]

Rise, Decline, and Reasons

Muslims, after staying at the pinnacle for a long time, began to decline materially and eventually lost leadership. However, the current dire situation of Muslims should not deceive; it is not a weakness of Islam but a result of some faults among Muslims. Historically, Muslims, when adhering to their faith and not abandoning effort, made significant conquests and progress in various fields. The strength of Muslims, regardless of their specific beliefs, has always benefited all of humanity. When they deviated from Islam and pursued personal desires, they started to decline.

Another dimension of this issue is that Allah Almighty tests His servants both with prosperity and adversity. Allah examines whether His servants worship Him under all conditions by sometimes elevating them and sometimes placing them in a weakened state. Therefore, thinking, "Since Islam is a true religion, Allah should always keep it strong and superior," is misleading. If Muslims were always superior and strong, it would be impossible to distinguish between those who sincerely embrace Islam and those who pursue it for personal gain. Thus, humanity undergoes this test during Islam's difficult times, and those who seek personal gain tend to move away from it and turn to other paths.[135] Allah addressed the Muslims who suffered numerous martyrs and injuries in the Battle of Uhud as follows: "If a wound should touch you - there has already touched the [opposing] people a wound similar to it. And these days [of varying conditions] We alternate among the people so that Allāh may make evident those who believe and [may] take to Himself from among you martyrs - and Allāh does not like the wrongdoers. And that Allāh may purify the believers [through trials] and destroy the disbelievers." (Ali-Imran, 140-141)

133. See Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, pp. 151-157.
134. Robert Briffault, The Making of Humanity, p. 190.
135. See Al-Baqarah, 155; Ali-Imran, 140-141; Al-Anbiya, 35; Al-Furqan, 20; Al-Ankabut, 2-3; Muhammad, 31.

Other contributing factors include:

- Incompetent leadership,
- Emergence of pre-Islamic tendencies in administrative mechanisms,
- Neglect of useful and practical sciences,
- Emergence of various deviations and innovations,
- Moral decline,
- Stagnation in knowledge and military strategy.

Ways to Rise Again

Muslims are currently on the path to recovery by the grace of Allah. To expedite this process, every Muslim should:

- Have genuine faith, discipline their desires through it, and possess good character. - Persevere against the whims of the ego, avoid inclining towards worldly desires, maintain self-respect and dignity, and not overvalue worldly possessions.
- Contemplate the Hereafter, exhibiting unparalleled courage, resilience, and a strong work ethic.
- Abandon selfishness, emphasizing servitude to Allah.
- Excel in knowledge and research, providing direction to modern science.
- Achieve economic independence.
- Raise awareness among people.
- Embrace sacrifice and effort.

The great friend of Allah, Muhammad Es'ad Efendi, says:

"In the Hadiths, there are two points in mentioning abandoning forbidden deeds before performing righteous deeds that will earn rewards:

1. "Preventing mischief takes precedence over bringing about benefits." (That is, removing harmful things is more important and comes before obtaining beneficial things. Without living according to the Sharia, advancement in ranks is not possible.)

2. Fulfilling all acts of worship and obedience is beyond human capacity. However, refraining from prohibitions is within the capability of every individual due to their scarcity, and its benefit is more comprehensive.

In fact, I can say that the most important factor in the imagined rise and progress of the Islamic world is abandoning sins. The fact that angels, naturally deprived of the reward of avoiding sins and abandoning disobedience, cannot progress from their natural state is evidence of this statement. The spiritual advancement served by refraining from forbidden deeds should not overlook the material benefits and physical advantages. The damage caused by prohibitions to people's property, lives, honor, and fame is irreparable. This is a reality acknowledged and accepted by people of insight."[136]

The most crucial aspect is to develop outstanding individuals in society, excelling in faith, creed, action, ethics, education, refinement of the soul, noble living, perfection, and moderation. They must be vigilant in fulfilling Allah's commands and be actively involved in addressing the nation's issues. Leadership must consult and seek help from qualified individuals and replace them promptly when necessary. The history of past leaders and their memorable achievements should not hinder this. This approach will keep leaders alert, fearing public scrutiny, and ensuring constant vigilance.

Additionally, Muslims must be discerning, distinguishing between friends and foes. Treating both equally or appeasing enemies by engaging in endless disputes and conflicts with friends is foolish. Muslims should also have a strong civic and political consciousness, achieving excellence in the political arena. They need to comprehend what benefits or harms them. Assigning significant responsibilities only to reliable, competent, and capable individuals while constantly monitoring them is crucial. When their deficiencies or betrayals are observed or when they complete their tenure, stronger, more competent, and more capable individuals should replace them promptly.

Administrators, no matter how competent and skillful they may be, should still be kept under scrutiny by Muslims and should always remain vigilant. When Muslims observe weaknesses or betrayal from their administrators, or when the administrators have completed their terms and duties, they should immediately replace them with a stronger, more competent, and more capable team. Their illustrious past leadership and unforgettable successes

136. Muhammad Es'ad Efendi, Letters, Istanbul 1343, p. 37, no: 12.

should not hinder this. In this way, administrators ensure that they remain vigilant and attentive, fearing the surveillance and punishment of the people.

- Judges should rule with justice and knowledge, acting as guardians protecting the wealth and assets of Muslims.

- Importance should be given to the army, and soldiers should be trained and commanded in the best possible manner.[137]

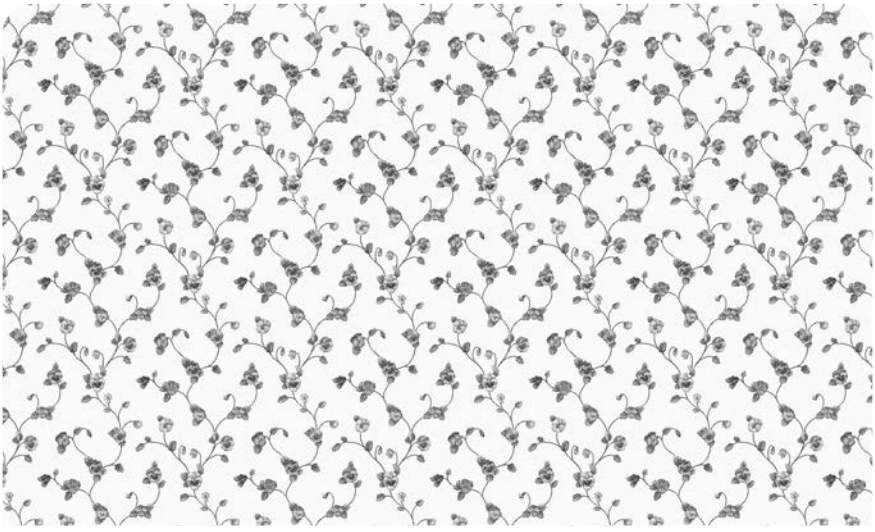
- One of the most important factors for being able to progress again is to raise people's awareness.

It is essential to remember that widespread education and eradicating ignorance are critical steps, not synonymous with being vigilant and conscious. Therefore, all the mentioned points must be implemented together. A nation without consciousness cannot protect itself or manage its affairs. People without awareness become like a feather blown by the wind in the desert, unpredictable and vulnerable to all kinds of propaganda, mischief, and entertainment. [138]

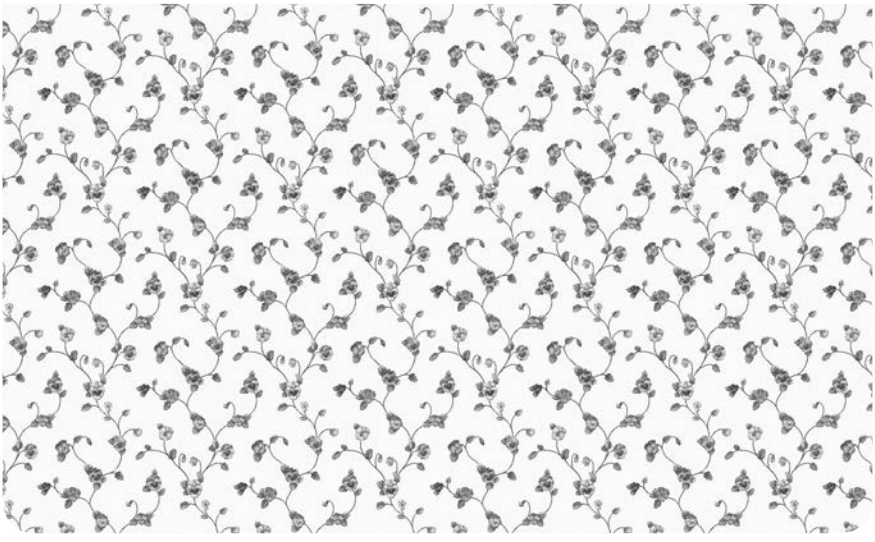
Leaving humans to themselves leads to rapid corruption. Therefore, whether a leader or a subject, every individual consistently requires education and consciousness. To keep people on the right path and motivated, there must be continuous and organized spiritual education.



137. See Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, pp. 159-160.
138. See Nadwi, ibid, pp. 334-335.



THE SECOND PART



ISLAMIC CREED

Aqeedah means "fundamental principles of the Islamic religion, essential doctrines that must be believed." Faith is defined as "affirming and believing in the prophets in matters definitively established by Allah, conveyed in the name of religion." A person holding this belief is called a believer (mu'min), and one who fulfills the requirements of his faith with complete submission is called a Muslim.

The foundational principles of divine religions, from the first prophet Adam to the last prophet Muhammad, have not undergone any changes. Only the legal codes, the practical rulings, have changed. According to the Quran, the basis of the creed preached by all prophets is the belief in the oneness of Allah (Tawhid). The Almighty says: "We did not send any messenger before you without revealing to him: 'There is no god but Me, so worship Me.'" (Al-Anbiya', 25)

The Quran indicates that the revelation to Prophet Muhammad is similar to the previous revelations sent to other prophets and that the book revealed to him confirms the earlier divine scriptures. The Quran also asserts that the fundamental concepts of Islamic creed—monotheism (Tawhid), prophethood (Nubuwwah), and the afterlife (Akhirah)—were present in past divine religions.[139] Where there is revelation and prophethood, there is no doubt that angels, as well as books, are also present.[140]

Over time, deviations from the belief in monotheism occurred, and human interventions led to distortions in the creeds of divine religions. Allah, in His wisdom, periodically sent prophets to correct these deviations and remind people of forgotten principles. The last Prophet, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent with Islam to establish the correct belief in its most perfect form and protect it. Allah promises in the Quran: "We have, without doubt, sent down the Message, and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)." (Al-Hijr, 9)

139. See Al-Baqarah, 97; An-Nisa, 163; An-Nahl, 36; Fatir, 24.
140. An-Nahl, 2; Ali-Imran, 3-4; Al-Isra, 55; Al-Hadid, 25.

The principles of faith are based on revelation, not human opinions or personal interpretations. The essential principles forming the Islamic creed are clearly stated in the Quran and hadith, leaving no room for ambiguity. The Quran contains numerous verses providing detailed information about belief in Allah, prophets, books, angels, the afterlife, and belief in destiny and divine decree. Hadith collections also include many sections related to the fundamentals of faith. Prophet Muhammad, in one hadith, enumerated the pillars of faith: "Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the bad." (Al-Bukhari, Iman 37; Muslim, Iman 1, 5; Tirmidhi, Iman 4; Abu Dawood, Sunnah 16; Ahmad, I, 97)

The creedal principles do not change with time, place, individuals, or societies. These creedal beliefs, the common message of all prophets, are both universal and timeless. They are valid for all generations and locations from the first human being to the end of time. These principles form a cohesive whole and cannot be divided; believing in some and rejecting others is not an option. (Al-Baqarah, 85)

1. Belief in Allah

The first duty incumbent upon every intellectually mature individual is to recognize and have faith in Allah, their Creator, and to worship Him. The Almighty states in the Quran:

"He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. So worship Him alone and be steadfast in His worship. Do you know of anyone equal to Him?" (Maryam, 65) Even those living in distant and unknown places, unaware of any religion, are obligated to believe in Allah, despite not being accountable for religious duties such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. This is because faith in Allah is a natural inclination of human nature. Observing the magnificent and perfect creations in the universe leads every sound intellect to conclude that there is a great Creator behind them. Every sound mind testifies to this. A scholar, an ignorant person, a young or old Muslim believes in Allah, the Lord of all worlds, as follows:

- Allah exists;
- He is One;
- He has no beginning or end;

- He is unlike any of His creations, and His creations are unlike Him;
- His existence does not depend on anything; He exists by His essence. His existence is a necessity of His essence. He is free from birth, begetting, having offspring, time, and space.
- He knows everything, hears everything, and sees everything without needing any means.
- He is the possessor of absolute life, absolute power, and absolute will. He does what He wills.
- He is characterized by the attribute of speech; He speaks without needing sound or letters. He sends books to humanity through prophets, and He has sent them.
- Opposites of these attributes cannot be thought about Allah.
- Allah is the creator of the universe without any partners or equals; He creates, sustains, kills, and will resurrect. He prepares blessings for the righteous and torment for the wrongdoers.
- When contemplating the beings created by Allah, we reflect on His power and greatness, pondering His exalted attributes, but we do not discuss His essence and reality.
- One who believes in Allah in this way cannot engage in immorality, even in a place where no one sees them. This is because they know that Allah sees and hears them and will inevitably reward their deeds, whether good or bad, accordingly.

a. Attributes of Allah

There are many names and attributes that introduce Allah to people and facilitate their understanding of Him. Although 99 of them are famous, their number is not limited to this. The Almighty says in the Quran: "...The most beautiful names belong to Him. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise." (Hashr, 24)

The intrinsic name of the Supreme Creator emphasized by the Islamic faith is Allah. In addition to this, when choosing words to remind Him, they should be consistent with the concepts describing the Divine Essence and carry elements of reverence. To fulfill these conditions, it is necessary to select names from the revealed sources and avoid attributing names to Him that are not mentioned in these sources.

According to the description of the beautiful names (Asma-ul Husna), Allah, in terms of His existence, is without a beginning (Qadeem) and without an end (Baqi). He is manifest in the existence of numerous evidences demonstrating His existence (Zahir) and hidden in terms of seeing His essence and knowing His nature (Batin). He is indivisible and unparalleled in a way that has no likeness or equal (Wahid). Allah, as the self-sufficient and free from wants, is the Most Rich (Samad); free from any imperfection (Qudus); majestic (Jalil); possessing greatness, dignity, and sovereignty beyond measure (Ali, Muta'ali); incomprehensibly vast in His essence and attributes (Azim, Kabir). Furthermore, He is the One who demonstrates His greatness and sublimity (Mutekebbir); glorious and honorable (Majid); the possessor of greatness and generosity (Zul-jalali wal-ikram).

With attributes such as eternal life (Hayy), the unconquerable and sole conqueror (Aziz, Qahhar); omnipotent, powerful (Qadir, Muqtadir, Qawi, Matin); He directs His will in every situation, improving the condition of His creations (Jabbar); all-knowing (Alim); aware of the innermost secrets (Khabir); overseeing everything (Shahid); knowing everything in detail (Muhsi); hearing (Sami'); seeing (Basir); wisely managing all affairs with precision and strength (Hakim); ensuring that all actions are accurate and reach their goals, guiding (Rashid); finding whatever He wishes whenever He wishes (Wajid); benevolent, fulfilling promises (Barr); possessing all types of virtues (Karim); deserving of praise (Hamid); forgiving, compassionate (Rahman, Rahim); merciful (Ra'uf); His knowledge and mercy encompass everything (Wasi'); bestowing peace and safety (Salam); a source of light, the origin of light (Nur).

There are also names related to the creation of nature, its functioning, and connecting it with the afterlife, regulating the belief in the beginning and end (Mabda' and Mia'd). These include: the Creator according to His plan (Khaliq), creating living beings without a model (Bari'), shaping and giving characteristics (Musawwir), creating artistically without an example or resemblance (Badi'), the First Creator (Mubdi'), the One who recreates (Muid), resurrecting after death (Bais), giving life (Muhyi), causing death (Mumit), advancing (Muqaddim), delaying (Mu'akhir), gathering and organizing for judgment on the Day of Judgment (Jami').

There are also names that indicate divine intervention in the administration of nature: the Owner of the Kingdom (Malik-ul-Mulk), the Owner of the visible and invisible worlds (Malik), the One to whom everything owes its existence and who governs the universe (Qayyum), dominating and managing the universe (Vali), overseeing and managing all the affairs of the universe (Muhaymin), preserving and watching over (Hafiz), creating and providing sustenance for bodies and souls (Razzaq, Muqit; the second name also means "Knowing and having the power to protect"), expanding or spreading sustenance (Basiṭ), holding, restricting, or taking the souls of living beings (Qabid), enriching, satisfying (Mughni), not allowing what He does not will or preventing evil (Mani'), causing harm (Darr), benefiting (Nafi').

Additionally, there are divine names that directly address humans without considering the human element as the interlocutor or responsible party: The absolutely just, not inclined to excess (Adl), the one who rules with justice (Muqsit), the one who gives the final judgment (Hakam), the exalter, giving honor and dignity (Rafi', Muiz), the humiliator, giving humility (Hafid, Muzill), watching and controlling (Raqib), punishing wrongdoers (Muntaqim), opening the doors of goodness or acting as a judge (Fattah), erasing sins in a way that no responsibility remains (Afuww), forgiving all sins (Ghafur), continually forgiving, forgiving repeated sins (Ghaffar), enabling repentance and accepting repentance (Tawwab), merciful and compassionate, meeting the needs of created beings in the finest detail and in imperceptible ways (Latif), guiding, fulfilling desires (Hadi), not acting in haste or anger (Halim), responding to supplications (Mujib), self-sufficient, or reckoning people (Hasib), giving abundantly without expecting anything in return (Wahhab), trustworthy, whose promises are trusted (Mu'min), rewarding much for a little good (Shakur), very patient (Sabur), reliable and dependable (Wakil), helper and friend (Wali), loving much and much loved (Wadud).[141]

When the beautiful names of Almighty Allah are examined, it will be seen that only two or three of them indicate divine wrath, while others directly proclaim divine mercy, love, forgiveness, generosity, and abundant rewards for small acts of goodness.

There are also certain attributes that determine the belief in Allah, referred to as "self-effacing" (salbi), such as incapacity, imperfection, and createdness,

141. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Allah" entry, DIA, II, 484-485.

which cannot be attributed to divinity. These concepts are removed from the Divine Essence (tanzih, salb) to affirm His transcendence. Self-effacing attributes describe what Allah is not, including Existence (not being thought of as nonexistent), Pre-eternity (having no beginning to existence), Perpetuity (having no end to existence), Dissimilarity to creation (not resembling created beings), Self-subsistence (not being dependent on anyone else), and Oneness (having no partner, no equal).

There are also certain concepts, known as "attributive attributes" (sifat ma'nawiyya), which are fixed by the texts but can't be directly attributed to Allah with their apparent meanings. These include words such as face (wajh), eye (ayn, a'yun), hand (yad), and actions attributed to Allah in verses and hadiths.

It is evident that heavenly religions, especially Islam, emphatically emphasize the doctrine of divine oneness (Tawhid). Thus, these expressions, also known as "ambiguous" (mutashabih), could be both a measure of the sincerity of the believer and a means of disciplining them to submit unconditionally. The Qur'an provides clear indications regarding these possibilities.[142]

These attributes, starting with what we know about the Supreme Lord, help bring Him closer to our understanding and facilitate a better recognition of Him. Islamic scholars have never attributed anthropomorphic characteristics to the Divine Essence and have acknowledged the transcendent realm beyond the material world concerning the essence and nature of divinity. Within languages, all words or groups of words that form such attributes possess metaphorical meanings. When such concepts are attributed to Allah, they depart from human understanding and indicate the truth that direction and space are not applicable to Him.[143] All concepts attributed to Allah as names or attributes do not lead to a plurality that undermines monotheism because they describe a single entity. Moreover, the attribution of some of these names and attributes to humans does not create similarity between them and the Supreme Creator, as the meanings and nature they convey are different in each context. Additionally, as beautifully articulated by Maturidi, humans lack a means of comprehension and recognition beyond the vocabulary and concepts of the realm of experience concerning the transcendent being.

142. Ali-Imran, 7.
143. See Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Allah" entry, DIA, II, 489-490.

Therefore, the words used to characterize Him are not His names but rather expressions that bring us closer to understanding. As some meanings that do not befit divinity may come to mind when naming Allah, the verse "There is nothing like unto Him"[144] is never forgotten while naming Him.[145]

The multitude of Allah's names also indicates that people give many names to beings they are constantly with, need in every respect, and value highly, according to their different characteristics.

2. Angels

Among the created beings, there are entities visible to humans, while there are also those that remain unseen. We are familiar with the impact of entities, such as electricity, in our daily lives, even though we cannot see them. Similarly, angels and jinn, whose existence is mentioned in divine scriptures and by prophets, are entities unseen by humans, but Allah can reveal them to those He chooses. [146]

Angels hold the second position in the fundamentals of faith after belief in Allah[147]. They were created by Allah before humans, are subtle and luminous beings without gender, and never deviate from obedience to Allah. They are capable of addressing Allah and conversing with Him. Angels never rebel; they obediently fulfill whatever command they receive. They are devoid of human-like needs such as eating, drinking, sleeping, fatigue, and boredom. Angels have no animalistic desires or carnal urges, feel no lust, and commit no errors or sins. They possess immense strength, power, and agility, capable of swiftly executing any task assigned to them by Allah. They can take various forms with the command and permission of Allah. However, their knowledge is limited to what Allah has taught them. [148]

Angels are fond of beautiful fragrances, kind words, listening to the Quran, and being present in places where knowledge is pursued.

Angels have numerous duties, including descending revelations from Allah to the prophets, supporting prophets and believers, increasing the

144. Ash-Shura, 11.
145. Prof. Dr. Bekir Topaloglu, "Allah" entry, DIA, II, 483.
146. Hud, 77-82; Al-Hijr, 59-69; Maryam, 17-21; An-Najm, 67, 13-17; At-Takwir, 23.
147. Al-Baqarah, 177, 285; An-Nisa, 136.
148. See Al-Baqarah, 30-34; Al-A'raf, 11, 27; Hud, 69-70; Al-Hijr, 28, 51-52; Al-Isra, 61, 92; Al-Kahf, 50; Ta-Ha, 116; Sad, 71, 73; An-Najm, 5; At-Tahrim, 6; At-Takwir, 20.

spirituality of individuals by inspiring truth and goodness, praying for and interceding on behalf of believers, executing divine punishments, managing matters related to Hell and its inhabitants, attending to matters related to Paradise and its inhabitants, carrying the Throne of Allah, recording the words and deeds of humans, holding individuals accountable in the grave, taking the souls of those whose time has come, managing natural events in accordance with Allah's will, worshiping and glorifying Allah, participating in gatherings of remembrance, congratulating and showing humility to people of knowledge, descending to listen to the recitation of the Quran, saying "Ameen" along with those who pray, declaring the loved and disliked individuals to the heavenly realm, greeting and giving glad tidings to the souls of righteous individuals, and striking the faces and backs of disbelievers and sinners.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Beware of nakedness! There are angels with you who never leave your side. They only depart when relieving oneself and approaching one's spouse. Have modesty in their presence and treat them well!" (Tirmidhi, Adab, 42/2800) "If a Muslim prays in an absent of fellow Muslim, the angels say, 'Ameen, and for you the same.'" (Muslim, Zikr, 86; Abu Dawood, Witir, 29)

Some angels are engaged solely in praising and glorifying Allah, while others are tasked with conveying salutations and blessings to the Prophet Muhammad. Some angels observe and record attendees of Friday prayers, while others enter and listen to the sermon. Additionally, there are highly honored angels known as "Mukarrabun," who are in close proximity to Allah.

Furthermore, there are four major angels, and their duties are as follows:

1. Gabriel (a.s): Acts as a messenger between Allah and the prophets.

2. Mikha'il (a.s): Manages natural events.

3. Israfil (a.s): When commanded by Allah, blows the trumpet "Sur." The first blow causes the Day of Judgment, and the second blow resurrects all the dead to be held accountable for their deeds before Allah.

4. Azrael (a.s): Takes the souls of living beings.[149]

149. For details, see Prof. Dr. A. Saim Kılavuz, Introduction to Islamic Beliefs and Kalam, p. 172-185; M. Sait Ozervarlı, "Angel" entry, DIA, XXIX, 40-42; Introduction to Islam -Knowledge of Islam for Youth-, p. 257-261.

As it is known, Allah has the power over everything. He doesn't need angels as intermediaries when creating or destroying something. Allah is the one who created angels and granted them that power. So, what is the wisdom behind assigning these tasks to angels?

Humans are beings composed of matter and spirit. In contrast, Allah is a transcendent being beyond and above the soul, invisible and beyond all material perception. With divine wisdom, Allah created beings called "angels" to facilitate communication with humans and to assign them duties in the governance of the universe.

On the other hand, the most explicit evidence indicating the existence of the Creator is the order, organization, and harmony in the universe, which is nothing but the law of causation. Looking at individual tools and devices that are not connected by a causal relationship, one would find it impossible to confirm that they were all created by a single inventor. The harmonious connection of things through the cause-and-effect relationship more quickly indicates the existence of a manipulator. If Allah had created humans and other beings in a way that did not require any causes - which He is capable of - the ways of understanding the meaning of order and harmony would be blocked for humans. Thus, one of the most explicit evidences for the existence of Allah would be lost.

However, humans are accustomed to a system where causes and means are in effect. They have reached a point where they would not consider the occurrence of any event without certain prerequisites and means. Therefore, Allah, in accordance with the system of causes, has made it possible to convey news from the unseen. Thus, humans can conceive events in the manner that their thoughts and imaginations are familiar with. Allah informed humans that He monitors all their actions and deeds and that this surveillance system is carried out through two observing angels standing on their right and left sides. Furthermore, He conveyed that the deeds of individuals are weighed on a scale and that those with more good deeds than bad deeds will be saved on the Day of Judgment. Allah informed about Hell and mentioned the angels called "*Zabaniyyah*" who manage its affairs and torture the disbelievers there. Hence, Allah desired to present His power and sovereignty to His servants in a way they are accustomed to in their thoughts and imaginations.[150]

150. Prof. Dr. M. Said Ramadan al-Buti, Islamic Beliefs, p. 293-295.

Thus, Allah teaches humans the necessity of using suitable means and tools to perform everything according to the rules. Although He is the One who provides sustenance for all living beings, He grants their sustenance through a cause and means. Therefore, He informs those who have requests to consider the causes and means, take necessary precautions, and supplicate and rely on Him.

Another wisdom in the creation of angels is to support humans against evil forces, strengthen them spiritually and mentally, and rescue them from loneliness. Allah says: "For every person, there are angels in succession before and behind him. They protect him by the command of Allah." (Ar-Ra'd, 11)

Some angels constantly glorify, purify, and sanctify Allah, serving as examples to humans in being righteous servants. Others pray to Allah for the forgiveness and elevation of the ranks of the believers, serving as a beautiful example of compassion and obedience. [151]

a. World of Jinn

The word "jinn" in language is derived from the root "j-n-n," which means "to cover, to be covered, to remain hidden." This name is given to them because they are hidden and unseen by humans, as their existence is concealed. In terminology, it refers to a type of beings that cannot be perceived by the senses, possess consciousness and free will like humans, are obligated to obey divine commands, and consist of believers and disbelievers.

The Qur'an corrected the belief in jinn existing in previous nations and defined their proper boundaries. Before Islam, the Arabs considered jinn, along with angels and demons, as beings with semi-divine characteristics, and they used to sacrifice to and worship them to ensure protection from their harm. Similar erroneous beliefs were present in other nations. The Qur'an rejected these thoughts and informed that jinn, like humans, have consciousness, perception, and free will. They are created to be accountable to Allah and to worship Him. Prophets were also sent to jinn, some believed, while others remained disbelievers. In other words, jinn also have believers, disbelievers, good ones, and evil ones.[152]

151. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom behind Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 66-67.
152. Al-Anam, 130; Al-Kahf, 50; Fussilat, 25; Al-Ahqaf, 18; Az-Zariyat, 56; Ar-Rahman, 39; Al-Jinn, 2-13.

The last prophet, Muhammad ﷺ, conveyed divine orders to both humans and jinn. Ibn Abbas mentioned, "Allah sent Prophet Muhammad as a messenger to all jinn and humans." (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 8/47; Hakim, II, 381/3335)

Jabir bin Abdullah narrated an incident: After returning from a journey with the Prophet ﷺ, they came near a garden belonging to the Najjr tribe and found a camel there. The camel attacked anyone who entered the garden. They explained the situation to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who entered the garden and called the camel. The camel immediately came forward, lowering its lip to the ground, and knelt before the Prophet. He ordered, "Bring a rope." They tied the camel with a rope and handed it over to its owner. Then the Prophet ﷺ turned to the people and said, "Except for the rebels among jinn and humans, everything between the heavens and the earth knows that I am the Messenger of Allah." (Ahmad, III, 310)

Jinn possess certain abilities superior to humans in some aspects. For example, they can travel long distances in a short time, see humans while remaining unseen by them, and know things unknown to humans. However, they cannot know the unseen. Even if they desire to eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels in the sky, it is not allowed. They marry and reproduce. Some jinn served in the army of Prophet Suleyman, contributing to the construction of temples, statues, large dishes, and cauldrons.[153]

Hadiths provide additional information about jinn. It is mentioned that every person has a jinn companion, and they try to instill doubts in the minds of believers. However, their influence diminishes when the Quran is recited. Some jinn eavesdrop to acquire information by acting as ear thieves, delivering both true and false information to magicians and fortune-tellers. These are the evil jinn mentioned as "jinns devils" [154]in the Quran. The Prophet ﷺ interacted with jinn, and there are reports of him catching a jinn trying to disrupt his prayer, intending to tie it to show his companions. In another account, the Prophet recited the Quran to a group of jinn at night and shared the details with his companions in the morning, showing them the remnants of the fire they had kindled. [155]

153. Al-A'raf, 27; An-Naml, 38-39; Saba, 12-13; Sad, 35-39.
154. Al-Anam, 112.
155. Al-Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 132; Salah, 75; Adhan, 105; Tafsir, 72/1-2; Tawhid, 7; Muslim, Zuhd, 60; Salah, 149, 150, 260; Zikir, 67; Masajid, 39; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 47; Ahmad, VI, 153, 168.

Although jinn do not have absolute knowledge of the unseen, their long lifespan and rapid movement allow them to be aware of certain things that humans cannot know. According to the interpretations of Quranic verses, jinn are creatures born like humans, consume food and drink, marry and reproduce, die, and can establish relationships with humans. They have a unique way of nourishment. Sources mention that jinn can take the form of humans and animals, including snakes, cats, dogs, and cows. They live in various parts of the world, especially in mountainous areas, ruins, seas, deserts, rubbish dumps, and graveyards.[156]

b. Human's Archenemy: Satan

In the Quran, the first devil is mentioned as Iblis. Iblis is among the jinn who, due to envy, pride, and greed, became arrogant, leading to rebellion and deviation.[157] He has helpers among the jinn and humans. Once honored among the angels, Iblis, the first and greatest devil, succumbed to pride, rebelled against Allah, and was expelled from divine mercy. Allah states in the Quran:

"We said to the angels, 'Prostrate to Adam,' and they prostrated, except for Iblis. He refused, was arrogant, and became of the disbelievers." (Al-Baqarah, 34)

"Allah said, 'What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?' [Iblis] said, 'I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.'" (Al-A'raf, 12)

Furthermore: "Shall I prostrate to one You created from clay? Look at this one You honored above me! If You give me respite until the Day of Resurrection, I will surely seize and mislead his descendants, except for a few." Allah said, "Go! For whoever of them follows you, Hell will be the recompense of you all." (Al-Isra, 61-63)

As seen, due to his disobedience, Allah did not immediately expel Satan but gave him a chance to speak, providing an opportunity for realization and repentance. However, persisting in stubbornness and disbelief led to the removal of Satan from his position. The Almighty has granted the respite

156. Prof. Dr. A. Saim Kılavuz, "Jinn" entry, DIA, VIII, 8-10; Asst. Prof. Dr. Emin Işık, "Surah Al-Jinn" entry, DIA, VIII, 10-11.
157. Al-Baqarah, 34; Al-A'raf, 12; Al-Kahf, 50.

requested by Satan,[158] who speaks with great arrogance, due to his presence in the realm of trial. However, it has been stated that he cannot harm sincere and pious servants who believe and rely solely on their Lord, as they will be protected by Him.[159]

Satan's power is limited and affects only those who befriend him and associate partners with Allah. Satan is a friend of those who do not believe.[160] He can influence those who follow him and chase their carnal desires. Allah says in the Quran:

"Do you want to know upon whom the devils descend? They descend upon every lying, sinful person. They listen stealthily, but most of them are liars." (Ash-Shu'ara, 221-223)

Other rebellious jinn, who, like Iblis, try to mislead people, and those humans who do not obey Allah and His Messenger, are also called "devils." They whisper gilded words to deceive and sow doubt.[161]

Malik bin Dinar said:

"In my opinion, human devils are more dangerous than jinn devils. When I seek refuge in Allah, the jinn devil goes away, but the human devil comes and openly leads me into sin." (Baghawi, Ma'alimu al-Tanzil, [Al-An'am, 112]; Ajluni, Kashfu'l-Khafa, no: 1577)

Since the time of Adam, Satan has been trying to lead people away from the right path.[162] Allah repeatedly expresses in various contexts that Satan is an enemy to mankind and warns, "Do not follow the footsteps of Satan!"[163] Particularly emphasizing events related to Prophet Adam عليه السلام, Allah declares that Satan's enmity toward his descendants will continue until the Day of Judgment.[164] It is mentioned that Satan and his followers see humans from an unseen angle, sit on the straight path, approach people from the right, left,

158. We do not have knowledge about whether other devils, like Satan, have been granted a long lifespan. However, the long life granted to Satan seems to be unique to him. (A. Lutfu Kazancı, Islamic Beliefs, p. 111)
159. Al-Hijr, 40-42; An-Nahl, 99; Al-Isra, 65; Sad, 82-83.
160. Al-A'raf, 27, 30; An-Nahl, 100; Maryam, 83.
161. Al-Anam, 112; 121
162. An-Nahl, 63.
163. Al-Baqarah, 168, 208; Al-Anam, 142; Al-A'raf, 22; Yusuf, 5; Al-Isra, 53; Ta-Ha, 117; Fatir, 6; Ya-Sin, 60; Az-Zukhruf, 62.
164. Al-Hijr, 34-38.

front, and rear,[165] embellish evil deeds,[166] lead to baseless fantasies with false promises,[167] incite to violate Allah's commands, and sow discord among people, causing them to fall into sin.[168] Satan's most distinct characteristic mentioned in the Quran is his expulsion from divine mercy. His primary duty is to mislead those who succumb to their desires, deviate them from the path of worship,[169] and distance them from the servitude to Allah. Satan is undoubtedly the open enemy of humans and has led many astray. Therefore, expecting good and beautiful behavior from Satan is not correct.[170]

The Quran states:

" He (satan) led me away from the remembrance (the Quran or the remembrance of Allah) after it had come to me. Satan leaves man helpless…" (Al-Furqan, 29)

"O mankind, do not let this worldly life deceive you, and do not let the deceitful one (Satan) deceive you concerning Allah. Satan is your enemy, so treat him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze." (Fatir, 5-6)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"Indeed, both Satan and the angel have an influential effect on the hearts of human beings. Satan's influence aims to prompt towards evil and deny the truth, while the angel's influence is directed towards goodness and affirming the truth. Whoever feels the influence of the angel in their heart should know that it is from Allah and should praise Allah. Whoever feels an influence trying to incline them towards evil should seek refuge in Allah from the evil of the accursed Satan."

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited the following verse:

"Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to immorality." (Al-Baqarah, 268) (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 2/2988)

Abdullah bin Mas'ud رضي الله عنه narrated:

165. Al-A'raf, 16-17, 27.
166. Al-Anam, 43; Al-Anfal, 48; An-Nahl, 63; Fussilat, 25; An-Naml, 24; Al-Ankabut, 38.
167. An-Nisa, 119-120; Al-Isra, 64; Al-Hajj, 52-53; Muhammad, 25.
168. Al-Baqarah, 169; An-Nisa, 119; Maryam, 83; Fatir, 6.
169. Al-Ma'idah, 91; Al-Anam, 121; Al-Isra, 53; Yusuf, 100.
170. An-Nisa, 76; Al-A'raf, 200-201; Al-Anfal, 11; Yusuf, 5; Al-Mumtahina, 97; Al-Mujadalah, 10; An-Nas, 4-6.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ drew a line with his hand and said, "This is Allah's straight path." Then, he drew lines to the right and left of it, saying, "These are various other paths. On each of these paths, there is a devil calling to it." Then he recited the following verse of Allah:

"Indeed, this is My straight path, so follow it. And do not follow other ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous." (Al-An'am,153) (Ahmad, I, 465, 435; III, 397; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 1)

The Prophet ﷺ warned:

"Satan comes to one of you during prayer and says, 'Remember this, think of that,' persisting until the person finishes prayer. Eventually, the individual may neglect even the recommended supplications after the prayer. Similarly, when a person goes to bed, Satan comes to him, trying to make him sleep without engaging in the recommended remembrances, and he eventually succeeds." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 25/3410; Abu Dawood, Adab 99-100/5065; Nasa'i, Sahw, 90)

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized:

"Iblis establishes his throne upon the water, then he sends detachments (to different parts of the world). The devil who comes back with the most significant temptation is the closest and most beloved to him. One of them comes and says, 'I did such and such.' Iblis replies, 'You have done nothing.' Another one comes and says, 'I stayed with a person until I caused discord between him and his wife.' Iblis brings him close, embraces him, and says, 'You are the best among us.'" (Muslim, Munafiqin, 67)

The Quran advises seeking refuge in Allah from the whispers and traps of both jinn and human devils.[171]

However, Satan should not be perceived as an irresistible force. Although Allah has granted him a respite and certain opportunities due to the requirement of the test, He has not given him unlimited power and authority. The Quran states that his plots are weak, and he does not have compelling dominion over humans.[172] The following verse clarifies this:

"When the matter has been concluded, Satan will say, 'Indeed, Allah had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. But

171. Ali-Imran, 36; Al-A'raf, 200; An-Nahl, 98; Al-Mumtahina, 97-98; Fussilat, 36; An-Nas, 1-6.
172. An-Nisa, 76; Ibrahim, 22; Al-Hijr, 42; An-Nahl, 99; Al-Isra, 65.

I had no authority over you except that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot be called to your aid, nor can you be called to my aid. Indeed, I deny your association of me [with Allah] before. Indeed, for the wrongdoers is a painful punishment.'" (Ibrahim, 22)

The word "Satan" is derived from the verb "shatana," which means "to distance." Based on this, some Sufi scholars argue that anything that distances a person from their Lord, preventing them from being with Allah in their heart, is considered Satan. If a person's own desires take hold of them, even if it is with acts of obedience, worship, and contemplation, keeping them away from Allah, then that is their Satan. In such cases, what is required is seeking refuge in Allah from the evil of the nefarious one and all evils. (Lathâif al-isyârât, Beirut 1420, II, 172)

c. The Wisdom Behind the Creation of Jinn and Satan

The Almighty has created jinn, like humans, and Satan to worship Him. However, the evil among the jinn, driven by their uncontrollable feelings of arrogance and envy, have taken it upon themselves to lead humans astray. These are referred to as Satan.

Now, why didn't the Almighty prevent their evil intentions? We can answer this question as follows: First and foremost, Allah has given beings He holds accountable intellect and free will, allowing them the freedom to use them. This is called partial free will. The devils responsible for worshiping Allah have chosen to deceive each other and humans, and Allah, in the realm of testing, has given them respite.

It's important to note that the creation of evil is not evil in itself; committing wrongdoing is evil. Sometimes, things that Allah created as good can be turned into harm by our actions. For instance, the creation of fire is not evil, but touching it with bare hands is. If humans handle fire carefully, they benefit from it; otherwise, they suffer harm.

Additionally, there may be other reasons and wisdom behind the creation of Satan. For instance, Allah, by creating beings, demonstrates His names and attributes such as creating, sustaining, forgiving, and being merciful. When these qualities exist, there must inevitably be created beings who are sustained, forgiven, and shown mercy. Indeed, you cannot conceive of a sun without light; if there is a sun, it will undoubtedly emit light.

Again, another reason is the test. When jinn, devils, and humans are subjected to a test in this realm, the good and evil that Allah has known from eternity clearly manifest, becoming known to humans. Thus, those who choose the wrong path know with their own choices that they enter Hell, and they have no grounds for objection.

Allah's bestowing intellect, free will, and freedom on His servants, subjecting them to the test, also shows how valuable they are. Otherwise, Allah could have directed all living beings as He wished, creating them as beings without will and submissive. However, He did not do so; rather, with great care, He created humans and jinn, granting them willpower and freedom, valuing them, and acknowledging them as accountable beings.

If a person uses their intellect and willpower to walk the right path, it can have value. Being responsible and accountable gains meaning. True virtue and merit lie in doing good when there is the possibility and means to do evil. Otherwise, the value of doing good would be diminished. Choosing to do good while having the possibility, motive, and desire to do evil, using one's intellect and willpower, and persistently striving to do good elevate a person beyond angels. This is why prophets and saints have become great and honorable individuals. Despite being constantly tempted and misled by Satan, they continued to live in goodness. When they made mistakes, they immediately repented and sought forgiveness, thus growing even more.

It is essential to remember that while good and beauty are the primary goal and the essence, evil and ugliness are incidental and serve as a means, providing a way to understand good and beauty. Regarding specific situations, we might say that even if they are harmful in terms of individual circumstances, they are beneficial from a general perspective. [173]

In conclusion, the Almighty allowed Satan to be tested by giving him free will, leaving him free until a certain time. Thus, the faith in the hearts of humans is tested, distinguishing the firm believer from the one in doubt, revealing everyone. Allah states in the Quran:

"Satan has no power over the believers, but only over those who follow him and those who associate others with Him [Allah] as partners. (We have allowed him this freedom) so that he may distinguish those who truly believe

173. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom behind Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 69.

in the Hereafter from those who are in doubt about it. Your Lord is the Preserver of all things." (Saba', 21)

If Allah had wished, He could have denied Satan this opportunity. In that case, the duty of leading astray would have been assumed by the human soul, and the outcome would not have changed. Satan has suffered a great deal by seeking the opportunity to mislead people. To use an expression, he will pay a very bitter price for his insolence against Allah.

d. Ways of Protection from Satans

According to Sunni scholars, it is possible for humans and jinn to influence each other. Indeed, the Qur'an mentions that those who consume usury will rise on the Day of Judgment like those whom Satan has driven to madness (Al-Baqara, 275). The Qur'an also states:

"On the Day when Allah will gather them all together, He will say, 'oh community of Jinn! You misled many humans.' The human companions among them will say, 'Our Lord, we enjoyed one another but reached the term You had fixed for us.' He will say, 'The Fire is your home, to remain in it forever, except as Allah wills. Your Lord is Wise, All-Knowing.'" (Al-An'am, 128)

In a hadith, it is mentioned that Satan circulates within the human body like blood circulates in it. (Al-Bukhari, Ahkam, 21; Bad' al-Khalq, 11).

- The first and most secure way to protect oneself from satans or evil jinn is to establish a strong relationship with Allah and His Messenger, apply the Qur'an and Sunnah to every aspect of life, and lead a modest and pure life deep within the heart.

- While doing the above, one should also avoid leaving any gap or sin window through which satans can infiltrate. An opening in our spiritual realm can provide them with a gateway. Jinns and satans enter through the breaches created by human sins and surround them entirely. These breaches must be closed to prevent their entry and protect humans from their harm. In short, every sin committed is a door and window opened to satans and malevolent jinn.

Keeping away from the gravitational field of Satan is a crucial step for self-protection. Just as distance plays a significant role in a magnet attracting iron, being close to sins makes one susceptible to them, and staying away

makes protection easier. Thus, avoiding means of sin is necessary, and if possible, eliminating them is required. This will keep a person away from satans.

In our time, some newspapers, television, illegitimate entertainment places, and internet sites function almost like the media outlets of Satan. They constantly lead people into sins, dragging them towards outlets contrary to the purpose of creation. The closer one is to these means, the more intense the trial becomes, and hours pass filled with sins or at least in an idle and useless manner.

- Another aspect is not to be alone. Human beings are prone to sin, and Satan takes advantage of this vulnerability, especially when one is alone. Other people can control themselves and help each other when together. What one cannot do in the presence of others, Satan can easily make happen when alone. Therefore, being in a group allows people to control themselves and assist each other. Of course, this companionship should be with righteous individuals, as being with wicked people only increases the number of surrounding satans.

- To protect oneself from satans, one should read the Qur'an. There is ample evidence for this practice. Abu Sa'id narrates: "Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sought refuge from the evil of jinn and the evil eye by reciting various supplications. When the Muawwidhat (Al-Falaq and An-Nas) were revealed, he began reciting them and stopped reciting the previous supplications." (Tirmidhi, Tibb, 16/2058; Ibn Majah, Tibb, 33; Nasa'i, Istisharah, 37)

The Prophet ﷺ has stated that these surahs are the best means of refuge against evil and advised them to his ummah (Ahmad, IV, 144). When a person recites Ayat al-Kursi[174] before sleeping, it is reported that Allah appoints a guardian for them, and Satan cannot approach them until morning (Al-Bukhari, Wakalah, 10). The Prophet ﷺ also said: "Do not make your houses like graves. Surely, Satan flees from the house where Surah Al-Baqarah is recited." (Muslim, Musafirin, 212)

- We should seek refuge in Allah through both actions and words. In the Quran, it is said:

"If a prompting from Satan should stir you, seek refuge with Allah. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing." (Al-A'raf, 200; Fussilat, 36)

174. Al-Baqarah, 255.

Our Almighty Lord teaches us the following prayer for protection from Satan:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ اَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ. وَاَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ اَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ

"Say, 'My Lord, I seek refuge in You from the incitements of the devils, and I seek refuge in You, my Lord, from their presence.'" (Al-Mu'minun, 97-98)

It is essential to continue the daily prayers performed by Prophet Muhammad throughout the course of life. Whether waking up in the morning, going to sleep at night, entering or leaving the house, eating, finishing meals, entering or leaving the bathroom, we should maintain a state of continuous prayer, ensuring that our connection with Allah is never severed.

- We should not be heedless of the remembrance of Allah. Allah says: "Indeed, those who have Taqwa, when an impulse from Satan touches them, they remember [Allah], and at once they have insight." (Al-A'raf, 201)

According to what Prophet Muhammad conveyed, Allah commanded Prophet Yahya to tell people: "Allah has commanded you to remember Him abundantly. This is like a person being chased by enemies who are rapidly approaching, wanting to capture him. That person can only protect himself when he takes refuge in a strong fortress. Likewise, a person can protect himself from Satan only through the remembrance of Allah." (Tirmidhi, Adab 78/2863; Ahmad, IV, 130, 202) "If a servant continues to remember Allah, he becomes better protected from Satan than this person, finding refuge in a more secure place." (Ahmad, IV, 130, 202)

Satan desires to enter a house, spend the night there, benefit from the blessings, deceive the people, and lead them into sin. What prevents this is reciting Bismillah (In the name of Allah) when entering the house. If a person recites Bismillah upon entering the house, the leader of the demons, upon hearing this, informs his companions with great sorrow that they cannot stay in that house that night. However, they wait for mealtime with the hope of benefiting from it. If Bismillah is not recited while eating in that house, the demons joyfully fill their stomachs and take away the blessing of the food. Neglecting the remembrance of Allah becomes food and sustenance for them, after which they try to deceive the people. If Bismillah is recited while eat-

ing, they realize that they cannot benefit from that house in any way and are compelled to leave. [175]

- In hadiths, it is narrated that when Satan hears the call to prayer (adhan) and the call to establish prayer (iqama), he experiences great fear and panic, fleeing away.[176] However, since Satan's duty is to mislead and lead people astray, he returns repeatedly.

- We should pay attention to maintaining ablution (wudu) and cleanliness. Jinn tend to influence humans more during states of ritual impurity (junub), menstruation, and postpartum bleeding, leading them astray in various ways and levels.

- We should seek supplication (dua) from righteous servants of Allah.

- When necessary, consulting faithful psychiatrists and physicians is recommended.

In reality, Satan cannot harm a person who remains steadfast in their intention. This is because "Satan's tactics are truly weak."[177] What empowers him is the desires and whims of the human soul. As Prophet Muhammad said: "As long as a judge does not oppress, Allah is with him. When he allows oppression, Allah leaves him, and Satan approaches him without ever leaving." (Tirmidhi, Ahkam, 4/1330)

From verses and hadiths, it is understood that Allah does not completely unleash the devils, and they are also obliged to follow certain rules. Permission for demons to participate in people's affairs is granted only when individuals forget to mention Allah and harbor ill intentions. However, for those who remain vigilant, continuously remember Allah, enter their homes with Bismillah, sit at their tables with Bismillah, and adhere to Allah's commandments, neither their homes nor their affairs are open to the benefit of Satan. Allah says: "Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - for them there is no blame concerning what they have eaten [in the past] when they were Taqwa (conscious of Allah). But whoever is a disbeliever after that - those are the transgressors." (An-Nahl, 99-100)

175. Muslim, Drinks, 102, 103; Abu Dawood, Meals, 15; Ahmad, V, 382, 397; Hakim, IV, 121.
176. Al-Bukhari, Call to Prayer, 4; Actions in Prayer, 18; Mistakes, 6; Creation of Man, 11; Muslim, Prayer, 19; Abu Dawood, Prayer, 31; Nasai, Call to Prayer, 20, 30.
177. An-Nisa, 76.

3. Revealed Books

The Almighty has revealed texts to His prophets containing beliefs, worship, ethics, and rulings related to worldly life. [178]This is confirmed by clear verses and hadiths.

It is evident that there is a need for the divine books sent by Allah, guiding the righteous path, for establishing healthy relationships among people and providing guidance about everything. After the demise of the prophets sent to show the path of guidance that leads to happiness in this world and the hereafter, it is essential for humans to have access to divine sources to learn about truth and falsehood, right and wrong, good and evil.

Allah says: "Mankind was [of] one religion [before their deviation]; then Allah sent the prophets as bringers of good tidings and warners and sent down with them the Scripture in truth to judge between the people concerning that in which they differed. And none differed over the Scripture except those who were given it - after the clear proofs came to them - out of jealous animosity among themselves. And Allah guided those who believed to the truth concerning that over which they had differed, by His permission. And Allah guides whom He wills to a straight path." (Al-Baqarah, 213)

Therefore, it is necessary to believe in the first scrolls, the scrolls given to Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Musa, the Torah, Psalms (Zabur), the Gospel (Injil), and the Quran without making distinctions among the verses they contain.[179]

a. Previous Scriptures

The Almighty granted some prophets "suhuf: pages." The Qur'an mentions the "Suhuf al-Ula: the first pages" given to the prophets.[180] It also speaks of the scrolls given to Prophet Ibrahim[181] and other prophets from his lineage, such as Ishaq, Yaqub, Sulaiman, Yusuf, Zakariya, and Yahya (peace be upon them), confirming the existence of small books in the form of scrolls.[182]

178. Al-Baqarah, 285; An-Nisa, 136; Ash-Shura, 15; Al-Bukhari, Faith, 37.
179. Al-Baqarah, 85; Ali-Imran, 3-4; An-Nisa, 163; Ta-Ha, 133; An-Najm, 36-37; Al-Hadid, 26-27; Al-Ala, 18-19.
180. Ta-Ha, 133; Al-Ala, 18.
181. An-Najm, 37; Al-Ala, 19; Ahmad, IV, 107; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, II, 414; Haythami, VII,
182. An-Nisa, 54; Al-Anam, 89; Al-Hadid, 26.

It is narrated that the scrolls given to Prophet Ibrahim were revealed on the first night of the month of Ramadan. In another narration, it is mentioned that Prophet Shith received fifty, Prophet Idris thirty, Prophet Ibrahim ten, and Prophet Musa received ten scrolls before the Torah.[183]

No scrolls have reached us directly, but it is reported that some information and principles found in the Qur'an are also mentioned in the scrolls.[184]

Various prophets were given books: the Torah to Prophet Musa, the Zabur to Prophet Dawood, the Injil to Prophet Isa, and the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad.

As observed, some prophets received scrolls (suhuf), while others received books. Thus, every religion is necessarily based on a sacred book. Even though the communities to which these texts were sent differ, the addressee is always humanity. The original scriptures given to the first human and prophet, Adam عليه السلام, are fundamentally similar to the Torah, Injil, and Qur'an. Allah revealed the Torah containing guidance and light, which was confirmed by Mary's son, Isa, and also brought the Injil as a light, a guide, and advice for the righteous. Prophet Muhammad delivered the Qur'an, confirming the previous scriptures.[185] The Qur'an encompasses all the enduring principles, rulings, and guidelines contained in the divine revelation tradition from the beginning to the time of its revelation. [186]

b. Torah

The term "Tawrat" is mentioned in 16 verses of the Qur'an. It is stated in the Qur'an that the Torah and the Injil were revealed after Ibrahim عليه السلام and that guidance and light are found in the Torah. [187]

Today, Torah is known by the name "Ahd al-Atîq: Old Testament." There are three versions of the Torah known today, accepted by Jews and Protestants: the Hebrew version accepted by Jews, the Greek version accepted by Roman and Eastern Christian churches, and the Samaritan version accepted by Samaritans. When these versions are compared, it is seen that there is no unity in terms of subject, expression, and writing. It is understood that

183. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, [An-Nisa, 163].
184. An-Najm, 36-56; Al-Ala, 18; Hakim, II, 258/2930; Haythami, VII, 137.
185. Ali-Imran, 3; Al-Maidah, 44, 46, 48.
186. Prof. Dr. Omer Faruk Harman, "Islam" entry, DIA, XXIII, 4.
187. Ali-Imran, 65; Al-Maidah, 44.

these versions underwent changes during the long and complex history of the Jews. [188]

Ahd al-Atîq, consisting of thirty-nine books, is accepted jointly by Jews and Christians. These books were not written down at a specific time; they were orally transmitted over a long historical period and were not written down until later, centuries after they were verbally transmitted.[189] The translation of these oral traditions into writing began around the 10th century BCE and ended in the 1st century CE. The oldest extant manuscript containing only the Torah dates back to 820-850 CE. The Aleppo Codex, compiled in the early years of the 10th century, is the oldest complete manuscript of the Ahd al-Atîq. The differences between the Hebrew version and the Greek translation suggest the existence of multiple versions of the Ahd al-Atîq during the period when the Greek translation was made (3rd century BCE). The first translations into Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Syriac are also important for indicating the history of the masoretic text and the changes it underwent.[190]

Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah states:

"The Torah of Musa عليه السلام was preserved in limited versions. When Babylonian ruler Buhtunassar conquered Palestine, he burned all the Torah manuscripts. According to reports, a hundred years after this incident, Prophet Ezra wrote the Torah from his memory. Later, the Romans conquered Palestine and burned all the Torah manuscripts again. But people, trusting their memories, rewrote the Torah." [191]

Although the Book of Daniel is considered a work of a prophet from the Babylonian captivity period, there are discrepancies in the text that do not match historical facts. For example, it is stated in the very first sentence that "In the third year of the reign of Judah's King Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar,

188. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, Jewish Holy Scriptures, p. 8-25; ibid., "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 495.
189. The First and Second Kings cover the events from the death of Prophet David to the Babylonian exile, including the history of Prophet Solomon and the kings of Israel and Judah. The events described in the book span approximately 400 years. For an individual to write about these events, they would need to live for more than 400 years. Additionally, the authors of the book utilized various sources. After its translation into Greek, some additions were made that are not present in the Septuagint. (See Introduction à la Bible, II, 320; Prof. Dr. O. Faruk Harman, "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 497)
190. Prof. Dr. O. Faruk Harman, "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 495.
191. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, "Compilation of Hadiths during the Time of the Prophet", tr. Nafiz Danışman, Journal of Ankara University Faculty of Theology, vol. 4, no. 3, 1955, p. 6.

the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it," which is historically inaccurate as Jerusalem was not invaded in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign (606 BCE). [192]

Genesis 6:19-20 and 7:8-9 state that Allah ordered Prophet Nuh to take two of every kind of animal and bird, male and female, while Genesis 7:2-3 mentions taking seven of each. It is clear that one of these accounts is incorrect. [193]

c. Zabur (Psalms)

Sent by Allah to Dawood عليه السلام, known as the Psalms or Zabur. Allah says: "And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants." (Al-Anbiya, 105). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentioned that a group among the people of the Book recited the Zabur. (Al-Bukhari, Tayammum, 6)

The Zabur is now included in the Old Testament as the Psalms. The current Hebrew texts of the Psalms are mostly incomplete and faulty. Numerous corrections and interpretations have been made to the texts. Furthermore, as they were used in worship, they were transcribed several times, resulting in various errors.[194]

Criticism activities regarding Ahd al-Atiq began in the Western world from the 16th century onward to determine the compatibility of the information given with historical facts. As sciences and technical research advanced, various results were achieved. As a result, it was established with historical and scientific data that the Torah was not written by a single person, Musa عليه السلام, at a certain time but was compiled by different authors at different times. Other books constituting Ahd al-Atiq were not written by the persons they were attributed to; they were written by different people in later periods, and various modifications and additions were made. The interventions during the

192. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 500.
193. The subsequent additions, deletions, and alterations to the Torah and the Gospels have been extensively addressed in Rahmatullah al-Hindi's work "Izharul-Hak" (Manifestation of Truth), which is considered the most comprehensive and reliable study on the subject (translated into Turkish by Ali Namlı - Ramazan Muslu, Istanbul 2012, ISAM publication). The French translation of this book is titled "Idharul-Haqq ou Manifestation de la Verite", tr. P.V. Carletti, Paris: Ernest Leroux, Publisher, 1880. There is also a partial English translation titled "Izhar-ul-Haq (Truth Revealed)" available. (http://www.islam4all.com/newpage71.htm) Additionally, see Prof. Dr. Şaban Kuzgun, Four Gospels - Differences and Contradictions-, Ankara 1996.
194. Prof. Dr. O. Faruk Harman, "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 498.

compilation resulted in different versions with contradictory rulings or information within the same text. Some repetitions and conflicting information about individuals and events reveal the presence of different authors. Therefore, the religious traditions claiming that the books in the Torah are related to specific individuals have lost their validity. [195]

Allah, responding to those who deny that the Qur'an is sent by Allah and discard all revelations, says the following: "They did not appraise Allah with true appraisal when they said, 'Allah did not reveal to a human being anything.' Say, 'Who revealed the Scripture that Musa brought as light and guidance to the people, which you made into pages disclosing [some of it] and concealing much? And you were taught that which you knew not, neither you nor your fathers.' Say, 'Allah [revealed it].' Then leave them in their [empty] discourse, amusing themselves." (Al-An'am, 91. See also Al-Baqarah, 75; An-Nisa, 46; Al-Ma'idah, 13, 41, 44)

d. Gospels

Allah the Almighty revealed the Gospel to Prophet Isa عليه السلام, confirming the essence of the Torah and validated by the Qur'an, also meaning "a guide, illuminator."[196] The Almighty says: "(O Messenger!) He has sent down to you the Book with truth, confirming what was before it. And He revealed the Torah and the Gospel previously, as guidance for the people. And He revealed the Furqan. Surely, those who deny Allah's revelations will have a severe punishment. And Allah is Exalted in Might, Owner of Retribution." (Ali-Imran, 3-4)

Today, Christians have various books known as the "New Testament" or "Ahd al-Jadid." The most famous among them are attributed to individuals named Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These books, written long after the time of Prophet Isa and containing contradictory information, were selected from numerous Gospel manuscripts circulating during a council held in Nicaea in the year 325 CE.

Although Prophet Isa spoke Aramaic, all the New Testament books, including the Gospels, are in Greek. It is said that only the Gospel of Matthew was originally in Aramaic, but its original manuscript is said to be lost. There are numerous manuscripts containing the text of the twenty-seven books that

195. Prof. Dr. O. Faruk Harman, "Old Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 501.
196. Al-Maidah, 46-48.

make up the New Testament. All these manuscripts are in Greek, and none of them belong to the original authors of the New Testament. The original manuscripts, written on fragile and easily perishable materials and containing texts beyond oral traditions, were not considered sacred texts by early Christian communities and were not preserved. The oldest manuscripts, written on papyrus or parchment and containing all or part of the New Testament, number over 5,000, and each one is different from the others. The oldest of these manuscripts dates back to the third or fourth century.[197]

Due to the extensive copying and translation of the Bible compared to other literary works, numerous differences and changes emerged during the transmission of the text. There is no manuscript that is exactly the same as another, and it is estimated that there were around thirty thousand differences among the manuscripts by the late seventeenth century. Today, this number has increased to around two hundred fifty thousand. It is evident that reaching the original text among these variants is impossible. [198]

Initially, early Christians did not prioritize the written word but valued oral tradition and the words of Jesus Christ. According to Christian belief, Jesus did not write or order anything to be written; he only preached. The apostles transmitted these teachings orally for a long time. Therefore, the true Gospel revealed by Allah and conveyed by Prophet Isa could not be preserved. The earliest Christian writings that have come down to us are the Letters of Paul. Paul's Letters, written before the four accepted Gospels, were primarily addressed to certain churches and individuals, dealing with local problems and needs and preaching Christianity as understood by Paul. The author of the Letter to the Ephesians collected Paul's Letters and, by writing this letter as an introduction to the corpus, attributed it to Paul. [199]

Even though the Church required the association of the Gospels with the apostles for the acceptance of books as sacred, only two of the four Gospels (Matthew and John) were written by apostles, if indeed they were written by the individuals accepted today. The other two (Mark and Luke) were not apostles. Similarly, none of the existing New Testament manuscripts are original copies of the authors of the books.[200]

197. Prof. Dr. Hikmet Tanyu, "New Covenant" entry, DIA, I, 501-502.
198. Tanyu, ibid., I, 502.
199. Tanyu, ibid., I, 502.
200. Tanyu, ibid., I, 502.

The Church, abandoning the belief that "all sacred texts were written by God Himself," accepted that these texts were compiled by the hands of the sacred text authors. Therefore, the Church also believes that these texts, in terms of content, language, style, and literary expression, belong to these authors. Also, by emphasizing that the main purpose of the Bible is related to matters of faith and morality, the Church acknowledges that, faced with contradictions and information contrary to scientific results, the authors of the text may have made mistakes. [201]

John, a British convert, after conducting extensive research on the Gospels, says the following: "While at university, I learned to read the Greek Gospels. This was an advantage for me because whenever I picked up a Gospel, I encountered different versions. I noticed something: as you go back to the old Gospels, there is more purity, more simplicity. As we move towards our time, the rate of additions or removals increases. After a while, this truth would become very important to me... The teachings of Jesus were wonderful, they touched the spiritual feelings and empowered people. But when it came to stories related to his crucifixion, the Gospels, especially the Gospel of Luke, seemed inadequate as texts. For example, the expressions written by Paul regarding the Eucharistic liturgy (bread-wine liturgy) were written before the Gospels and these were exactly incorporated into the Gospels. So the expressions were taken from Paul.[202] In fact, there was nothing about Jesus sacrificing himself for humanity in relation to his death. Paul wrote all these, and they were, in my opinion, inserted among what Luke wrote." (A. Arı - Y. Karabulut, Why I Became Muslim, p. 18-19)

An Irish convert also says: "I started researching Christian history, I wanted to find the truth. As a result of detailed research, I discovered that the presentation of Jesus in Christianity is presented with many parallels to the narratives in Greek mythology. This was possible because the Torah was based on one God, so when combined with Greek mythology, such an idea of Jesus was natural." (A. Arı - Y. Karabulut, Why I Became Muslim, p. 58)

In conclusion, the inclusion of content and claims in the current Bible that are surprising and incompatible with God, prophets, and righteous people

201. A historical document containing the confessions of St. Jerome, written in the fourth century, also indicates this: http://www.timeturk.com/Papaz-Geromeun-Itiraflari-20424-haberi.html (August 5, 2008); www.alshaab.com

202. Prof. Dr. Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, Principles of Belief in Islam, p. 222-223.

clearly proves that these are great accusations and lies.[203] Certainly, God and His prophets do not command theft, unfaithfulness to covenants, non-payment of debts, betrayal, etc. No prophet commits a sin. Especially, worshiping idols, committing adultery, unjustly killing someone, deceiving one's brother and father, jealousy, etc., are great sins that are impossible for them. If they were to commit such sins, they would not have been entrusted with the duty of prophethood. How can a sinful and evil person be an example to others?! How can people be sure that they did not fabricate lies in the name of Allah?! After all, all prophets are undoubtedly trustworthy, truthful, highly intelligent, and protected from sins, fulfilling their duty of conveying the revelation they received properly. These qualities are indispensable for prophets. Statements and claims contrary to these cannot be the real expressions of the divine book.[204]

Contradictions/Inconsistencies in the Gospels

There are many differences and contradictions in the Gospels. The same events are narrated in different Gospels and even within the same Gospel, sometimes in two, three, or more conflicting ways, which certainly contradicts the truth.

- Mark and John's Gospels make no mention of the lineage of Prophet Isa, while Matthew and Luke provide his genealogy. However, Matthew counts 40 individuals from Prophet Isa to Prophet Ibrahim, while Luke counts 55. Additionally, Luke adds 20 more individuals, extending the count to 75, going back to Prophet Adam. Matthew, on the other hand, provides no information about the genealogy before Prophet Ibrahim. Upon examining these names, it's noticeable that they are all different, with similar names appearing in different orders. (Matthew 1:17; Luke 3:23-38)

203. Prof. Dr. Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch says: "Paul's letters were written 20 to 25 years before the Gospels were first written down. In his letter to the Romans, Paul writes, 'In the eleventh year of Claudius's fourth victory, I went to visit my brothers in Jerusalem...' The date of Claudius's fourth victory was unknown. About 25 years ago, an English archaeologist wrote to a scientific society in London, stating that he had found a stele dedicated to Claudius's fourth victory in Cyprus. This stele allowed us to determine through scientific calculations that Paul's letter to the Romans was written in the 56th year during the Easter holiday, 24 years before the first draft of the Gospel of Mark was written." (Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, The Smiling Face of Islam, p. 89)
204. Genesis 9:20-29; 19:30-36; 25:29-34; 27:1-29; 31; 32:24-28; 35:22; 38:12-26; Exodus 11:1-2; 12:36; 32:1-5, 24, 35; 37:9-12, 14; Amos 7:2-6; Jeremiah 15:6; Numbers 11:4-6, 10-15; II Samuel 11:2; 12:22; 13; 16:15, 20-23; II Kings 11:1-7

- While Matthew indicates that Prophet Yahya (John the Baptist) is "Elias," John's Gospel contradicts this statement. (Matthew 11:4; John 1:21)
- There are different expressions regarding whether Prophet Yahya knew Prophet Isa. The killing of Prophet Yahya is extensively narrated in Matthew and Mark, while in John, this matter is briefly mentioned in a couple of sentences. (John 19:28-30; Matthew 27:32-56; Mark 15:33-41)
- There are significantly different explanations between John and the other Gospels about Prophet Isa's encounter with his disciples and taking them with him. (Luke 5:1-17; John 1:35-51; Matthew 4:18-22)
- When Prophet Isa came to the region of Tyre and Sidon and a woman asked him to heal her demon-possessed daughter, there are conflicting details about the nationality and homeland of the woman. According to Matthew, the woman is a Canaanite, while according to Mark, she is Greek. (Matthew 15:21-22; Mark 7:26)
- Despite being attributed with divinity in the Gospels, Prophet Isa is also referred to as the "son of man" and "servant of the Lord" in many places. (Matthew 12:17-18; Acts 3:13, 4:27-28) Furthermore, the term "sons of God" is used for other Christians as well: "Love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! So that you may become sons of your Father in heaven!" (Matthew 5:44-45, 6:1; Luke 6:35)
- "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God!" (Matthew 5:9). Allah says: "The Christians and Jews say: 'We are the children of Allah and His beloved.' Say: 'Then why does He punish you for your sins? You are nothing but human beings among those He created. He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. To Him is the final destination.'" (Al-Ma'idah, 18)
- The events on the night of Prophet Isa's arrest are narrated in detail in all four Gospels. However, the accounts are inconsistent and contradictory, displaying significant differences. (Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:13-52; Luke 22:47-53)
- The man claimed to be the husband of Mary, named Joseph, is Helin's son according to Luke's Gospel and Jacob's son according to Matthew's Gospel. (Luke 3:23; Matthew 1:16)
- According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the hometown of Prophet Isa was Galilee, while according to John, it was Judea. (Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:4; Luke 6:29; John 4:3, 43, 45)

- In Matthew and Mark's Gospels, the mission of Prophet Isa begins after the imprisonment of Prophet Yahya, while in John's Gospel, it begins before the imprisonment. (Matthew 4:12-17; Mark 1:14-15; John 3:22-26, 4:1-3)
- The Gospels provide contradictory information regarding the arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and appearances to disciples of Prophet Isa. (Matthew 27-28; Mark 15-16; Luke 23-24; John 19-20)
- On the other hand, when Prophet Isa was crucified, according to Matthew and Mark: "—My God, my God! Why have you forsaken me?" He uttered a phrase that cannot be spoken by a prophet because it implies a kind of opposition to God. (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34)
- When Prophet Isa arrived in the land of the Gadarenes, according to Matthew, he encountered two demon-possessed men, while according to Mark and Luke, he encountered one. (Matthew 2:28; Mark 5:1-2; Luke 8:27-29)
- When the Jews asked Prophet Isa for the sign of Prophet Yunus, according to Mark, it was announced that "no sign would be given to them," while according to Matthew, it was said that "the sign of Prophet Yunus would be given." (Matthew 12:38-41; Mark 8:11-12)
- Prophet Isa is shown to pray at times in the Gospels. Since Christians consider him divine, the question arises: To which God is a god praying? [205]Similar beliefs about prayer exist in Judaism as well. The following expressions depict a devout person rather than God: "God and angels work the Torah in the heavens, just as scholars do on earth. God wears phylacteries like a Jew and prays in the manner of a scholar. He performs the acts of mercy prescribed by Jewish ethics. According to a commentary on the creation myth, God looked at the Torah and created the world according to the plans in it." (Jacob Neusner, The Way of Torah, Belmont 1988, p. 81) According to Neusner, this is the true myth underlying classical Judaism.

e. The Gospel of Barnabas

In addition to the four Gospels known today, there is also the Gospel of Barnabas. However, the church is reluctant to accept this Gospel. The Gospel of Barnabas, attributed to the disciple of Jesus, Barnabas, was accepted in the churches of Alexandria until AD 325. In the first and second centuries after

205. For contradictions in the Torah and the Gospels, see Rahmatullah al-Hindi's "Izharul-Hak", tr. Ali Namlı - Ramazan Muslu, Istanbul 2012, ISAM publication; Prof. Dr. Şaban Kuzgun, Four Gospels - Differences and Contradictions-, Ankara 1996.

the birth of Jesus, it circulated through the hands of Irenaeus (AD 130-200), a writer who supported the concept of Tawhid. In AD 325, the famous Council of Nicaea was convened, and the doctrine of the Trinity was declared the official doctrine of Pauline Christianity. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were selected as the official Gospels of the church. Reading and possessing all other Gospels, including the Gospel of Barnabas, were prohibited, and their destruction was ordered. Prohibitions on the Gospel of Barnabas continued in later years. It is recorded that Damasus, who became the pope in AD 366 (AD 304-384), issued a decree not to read the Gospel of Barnabas. This decision was supported by Gelasus, Bishop of Caesarea, who died in AD 395. The Gospel of Barnabas was included in his list of apocryphal books. Apocrypha simply means "hidden from the public." The fact that the Gospel of Barnabas is included in the Pope's list of banned books at least indicates its existence. Furthermore, it is a fact that the Pope obtained a copy of the Gospel of Barnabas in AD 383 and kept it in his private library.[206]

The English translation of the Italian version of the Gospel of Barnabas, along with a lengthy introduction, was first published by Lonsdale and Laura Ragg (London 1907). This book mysteriously disappeared from the market after its publication by the Oxford University Press in 1907. Two copies of this edition were found in the British Museum and the Library of Congress. L. Cirillo, who prepared a doctoral thesis on the Gospel of Barnabas, learned that the copies belonging to this edition were destroyed after applying to the Clarendon Press.[207]

The central theme of the Gospel of Barnabas, which adopts the idea that Jesus is not the Son of God but a prophet and rejects the Trinity, was a belief present among early Christians (for example, in the Jewish-Christian community led by Jesus's brother James) long before Islam. According to this belief, the Gospel of Barnabas contains the true message of Jesus. It is also a fact that the Gospel attributed to Barnabas has undergone various additions and interventions throughout its long historical course. However, these have not eliminated the originality and antiquity of the central theme. [208]

R. Purnomo, a former Dutch-Indonesian priest, says:

206. Muhammed Ataurrahim, Jesus a Prophet of Islam, p. 39-41.
207. Cirillo, Evangile de Barnabé, Paris 1977, p. 39; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Osman Cilacı, "Gospel of Barnabas" entry, DIA, V, 77-78.
208. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Osman Cilacı, "Gospel of Barnabas" entry, DIA, V, 81.



"Besides the four Gospels, there is a Gospel named Barnabas, and unfortunately, Christian clergy forbade those under their authority to learn and read this Gospel. Do you know why? Because this Gospel gives the good news of Prophet Muhammad, with the least distortion and additions. Additionally, this Gospel contains truths that align with the Quran. In the Gospel of Barnabas, students ask the Messiah:

'—O Teacher! Who will come after you?' The Messiah, with joy and happiness, says:

'—The messenger of Allah, Muhammad, will come after me. He will gather believers under his shadow like a white cloud.' (Barnabas, Ishah, 163)

It is also stated in the Gospel of Barnabas: Andrew said:

'—Teacher, tell us some signs so that we may recognize him.' Jesus replied:

'—He will not come in your era, but after a few centuries from you. At that time, my book will be invalidated to the extent that only about thirty believers will remain. In this era, Allah will have mercy on the world, and, in this regard, He will send His Messenger; a cloud will hang over him, from which it will be known that he is a chosen servant of Allah, and he will be recognized. He will come with great power against the disbelievers and will destroy idolatry on earth. And I am pleased that with him, Allah will be known and revered, and I will be truly recognized, and vengeance will be taken from those who claim that I am more than a human. Look, I tell you, in childhood, he will put the moon to sleep, and when he grows up, he will hold it in his hands... He will come with a truth clearer than that of all prophets and will rebuke those who misuse the world. The towers of our father's city will greet each other with joy, and behold, it will be seen that idolatry is bowed down to the ground, and when he confesses that I am just like others, a human, it will be witnessed that Allah's Messenger has come.' (Barnabas, Ishah, 72) The Gospel of Barnabas mentions Prophet Muhammad ﷺ repeatedly. In fact, I found that he is mentioned exactly 45 times." (Defne Bayrak, Why Did They Become Muslims?, p. 128)

Muslims, as a principle, consider information that conforms to the contents of the previous scriptures to be correct, as long as it aligns with the Quran and hadiths. They believe that information conflicting with these two



fundamental Islamic sources emerged as a result of distortions, and therefore, it should be rejected.

Additionally, they accept that information not found in the previous scriptures but not contradicting Islamic beliefs and views may be correct. In matters where Muslims do not have definitive knowledge, they follow the guidance of the following hadith of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: Abu Hurairah reported: The People of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew and then explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to the Muslims: "Do not believe the People of the Book and do not disbelieve them, but say: 'We believe in Allah and whatever is revealed to us and whatever is revealed to you.''' (Al- Baqarah:136; Sahih Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 2/11; Itisam, 25)

In conclusion, it is obligatory to believe in each of the Scrolls and Books mentioned in the Quran separately as the "First Scrolls" and other scrolls revealed to other prophets that have not been reported to us in detail. However, we believe in them not in their current forms but in the form in which they were revealed by Allah.

4. The Holy Quran

a. Revelation and Compilation

The Holy Quran is the last divine book revealed by Allah. Allah, in His wisdom, revealed it gradually, not all at once. This method has provided many benefits and great conveniences for people.

The Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, used to hasten with Gabriel the Trustworthy to recite the verses as soon as they were revealed, desiring not to forget them. In response to this situation, the following verses were revealed: "Do not move your tongue with it, [O Muhammad], to hasten with recitation of the Qur'an.

Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation." (Taha, 114). "[O Muhammad], do not hasten with [recitation of] the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you, and say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge.' (Taha, 114). After this, when Gabriel the Trustworthy came, the Prophet Muhammad would remain silent. Once Gabriel completed delivering the divine revelation, the Prophet, peace be upon him, had memorized

the newly revealed verses perfectly and then recited them. This situation is one of the miracles of the Quran.

The Prophet had many scribes who recorded the revelations. Their number reached up to 65. When a portion of the Quran was revealed, the Prophet called the available scribes and had them write down the revelation using the writing materials of that time.[209] After finishing the writing, the Prophet read aloud what they had written, correcting any mistakes if there were any.

Then the scribes goes out and present the revelations to the people.[210]The Prophet used to recite the newly revealed verses firstly to male and after that to female companions. [211]

The placement [212]of the gradually revealed verses and chapters in the Quran was conveyed by Allah, and Gabriel described them to the Prophet.[213] It is essential to note that the first revealed verses were dedicated to praising and glorifying the "pen" and the "written lines," which are means of recognizing and understanding "the book" which encompasses written knowledge.[214] This emphasizes the importance of preserving and meticulously recording the Quran.

Muslims would memorize the revelations, and some would write them down, preserving them. Writing the Quran was widespread among the Companions. Everyone embraced this task wholeheartedly. Those who couldn't write often sought willing scribes in the mosque. [215]To avoid confusion, the Prophet initially prohibited writing the Quran and hadiths in the same place.[216]

The verses of the Quran, revealed section by section, were documented from the very beginning, even when Muslims were a struggling community under the oppression of the Quraysh tribe. Verses 11-16 of Surah Abasa

209. Prof. Dr. M. M. el-A'zami, History of the Quran, p. 106-107; ibid., Writers of the Prophet, Beirut 1398, Islamic Publishing House.
210. See Al-Bukhari, Fadha'il al-Quran, 4; Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 74/3954; Ahmad, V, 184; Haythami, I, 152.
211. Ibn Ishaq, biography, p 128.
212. Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 2/45; Abu Dawood, Salah, 120-121/786; Tirmidhi, Tefsir, 9/3086; Ahmad, IV, 218; Mehmet Fâik Yılmaz, Relations between Verses and Chapters, Ankara 2005.
213. Al-Alaq, 1-5; Al-Qalam, 1; Al-Baqarah, 2; Az-Zukhruf, 2; Ad-Duhan, 2.
214. Al-Bayhaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya 1424, VI, 27.
215. Prof. Dr. M. M. el-A'zami, History of the Quran, p. 107-108. The Prophet Muhammad carefully distinguished between his words and the words revealed by Allah, saying, "This is a revelation from Allah," or "This is my own opinion." Sometimes his companions would ask, "Is this your own thought or a divine revelation?" (See M. Hamidullah, History of the Quran, p. 15-18)
216. Ibn al-Durays, Virtues of the Quran, Damascus 1408, p. 33.

mention the existence of numerous written texts (manuscripts) of the Quran in its early years. Ibn Abbas reported that the verses revealed in Mecca were recorded in Mecca.[217] In the early years, after reading a written page of the Quran, Umar embraced Islam.[218] After participating in the Pledge of Aqaba, the Prophet, peace be upon him, delivered a Quranic text consisting of all the verses and chapters revealed so far to Rafi bin Malik. When Rafi returned to Medina, he would recite these verses and chapters to the Muslims gathered in the mosque he built, known as the first mosque in the Islamic world. Sarah Yusuf was brought for the first time to Madina by Rafi also.[219]

The revealed Quranic verses and chapters have been recited aloud and silently in the obligatory and voluntary prayers, especially in the long night prayers (Tahajjud), day and night, since the first day. A significant effort to read, write, learn, and memorize the Quran began among the Companions due to the encouragement and efforts of the Prophet. Even today, this noble effort continues to grow.

During the month of Ramadan, the Prophet Muhammad and the angel Gabriel recited the Quran to each other in a reciprocal manner. They did this twice in the last year of the Prophet's life.[220] Ibn Mas'ud reports: "One night, after Isha prayer, the Prophet did not come to us for a long time. We asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, why are you late tonight?' The Prophet said, 'I have made it obligatory upon myself to recite one thirtieth of the Quran every night. I did not want to come until I had fulfilled this obligation.' When morning came, the Prophet asked the Companions, 'How do you divide and recite the Quran?' They replied, 'We divide it into three parts, reciting the first three parts, then the next five, and finally the remaining seven, combining them to complete the Quran every seven days.'" (Al-Bukhari, Salat, 177; Muslim, Musafirin, 142)

After the recitation with Gabriel, the Prophet read the Quran to Zayd bin Thabit and Ubay bin Ka'b. In fact, the Prophet read it twice to Ubay bin Ka'b.[221] This practice has continued to the present day and still remains lively.

217. Ibn Hisham, I,. 369-371
218. See Ibn Hajar, Isaba, no: 2546 [Madina b. Malik entry]; Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, III, 152; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-Ghaba, II, 157; Qattanî, Terâtib, Beirut, n.d., I, 44; al-A'zami, ibid., p. 106; Hamidullah, ibid., p. 44.
219. Al-Bukhari, Bad' al-Khalq, 6; Fadha'il al-Quran, 7; Sawm, 7.
220. Mukaddimatân, ed. A. Jeffery, Cairo 1954, p. 74, 227; Tâhir al-Jazâ'irî, et-Tibyân, Beirut 1412, p. 26.
221. Abu Dawood, Salah, 220-222/1094.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to recite the verses and chapters revealed to him during Friday sermons. Some companions expressed that they memorized certain chapters by listening to them during these sermons.[222] Umar ﷺ also used to recite the Surah An-Nahl during sermons.[223]

When we look at the life of our Prophet ﷺ, we see that he read the Quran on every occasion. Whether he was explaining Islam to people, conversing with his companions, elucidating a matter, or engaging in night prayers, he would read parts of the Quran. He and his companions had the habit of regularly reciting one-seventh of the Quran daily.[224]

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked his Companions to recite the Quran to him occasionally. To those who hesitated, fearing disrespect, he said, "I also love to hear the Quran from others." The Prophet also stated, "Whoever goes to sleep without reciting a portion of the Quran or memorizing some part of it should complete it between the Fajr and Zuhr prayers. In this case, they will gain the same reward as if they had recited it at night." (Muslim, Salat al-Musafirin, 142)

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ arrives in a masjeed He would call people to Allah, recite the Quran to them, and warn them against the consequences that befell previous disbelieving nations. (Ibn Hisham, I, 381)

Once, when Abu Talha came to the Prophet, he saw him teaching the Quran to the people of the Suffa while standing. The Prophet, with a stone tied to his belly due to hunger, was trying to straighten his back. Thus, the Prophet Muhammad and his companions were preoccupied with understanding and learning the book of Allah, desiring to read and listen to the Quran repeatedly. (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, I, 342)

Some of the companions and righteous individuals used to recite the entire Quran from beginning to end every night.[225] Uthman bin Abdurrahman narrates from his father: "One day, I intended to spend the night in prayer at the Station of Ibrahim. After the Isha prayer, I stood for prayer at the Station. While I was praying, someone placed their hand on my shoulder. After giving the salutation, I saw that it was Uthman ﷺ. Uthman started reciting the Quran from Al-Fatiha until the end, completing his prayer. He then gave the salutation and left, taking his shoes with him." (Abû Nuaym, Hilyah, I, 56)

222. Muslim, Jumu'ah, 34, 49-52.
223. Ibn Abi Shaybah, Musannaf, I, 449/5195; I, 382/4397.
224. Al-Bukhari, Prostration of the Quran, 10.
225. Tabari, Jami al-Bayan, VI, 172 (Ali-Imran 3/155).

Similarly, the Tabi'in and those who followed them would also recite the Quran extensively. Many righteous individuals among them would complete a recitation of the Quran daily. One of the elders among the Tabi'in, Ibn Abi Layla, had a library consisting only of Qurans. People engaged in Quranic recitation would gather there and seldom leave except for essential needs.[226] The righteous predecessors, for the most part, would complete reciting the Quran every three days, with the majority completing it within seven days.[227]

b. Preservation and Compilation into a Book

When Prophet Muhammad passed away, and revelation was complete, many people had memorized the entire Quran and were reciting it during prayers. However, until the last moments of the Prophet's life, the pages on which the Quranic verses were written had not been compiled into a book between two covers. Under the leadership of Abu Bakr ﷺ, a committee was formed, headed by Zayd bin Thabit, which gathered the written pages of the Quran between two covers. This committee had strict and reliable working methods. For example, Bilal would announce in the streets of Medina that anyone who possessed written Quranic texts should bring them, accompanied by two witnesses who could testify that these were the first handwritten copies imitated by the Prophet himself. The committee compared the handwritten copies brought with the Quran memorized by people and transcribed the entire Quran from beginning to end.

Even if this committee hadn't collected the written Quranic verses held by people, they already knew the entire Quran by heart. This method served as a verification, demonstrating that there was no doubt about the Quran. During Uthman's ﷺ time, another committee, led by Zayd bin Thabit, duplicated the Quranic manuscripts. According to another view, Uthman ﷺ assigned a twelve-person committee, led by Zayd bin thabit, to compile the Quran again. He compared this with the Mushaf compiled during Abu Bakr's ﷺ time and found no difference between them. This underscores that the Quran had been under divine protection from the beginning, and the methods used to compile the Quran in both eras were sound and reliable. [228]

226. Ibn Sa'd, VI, 368.
227. In this regard, it is possible to find numerous examples in Imam Abdulhayy al-Leknevî's work titled "Ikâmetu'l-hucce alâ enne'l-iksâra fî't-teabbud leyse bi-bid'a" (Aleppo 1386).
228. Prof. Dr. M. M. el-A'zami, History of the Quran, p. 131-135.

The duplicated copies by the committee were sent to specific centers.[229] Accompanying these Quran copies were qualified scholars who would teach people to recite and learn the Quran correctly, taking into account differences in pronunciation. Thus, the Quran was taught to others exactly as it came from the mouth of the Prophet, with great care. Individuals were not allowed to learn the Quran solely from written materials; it was required to learn it orally from a qualified teacher. This led to the development of the science of Tajweed, which teaches the correct pronunciation of the Quran, and it can only be learned through practical application under a teacher.

When Uthman ﷺ completed the compilation of the Mushaf, he ordered people to write Mushafs for personal use.[230] Before this, people might not have been able to write the entire Quran; they could only record some surahs and verses. After the revelation had ended, and all the verses and surahs had been compiled meticulously by a strong committee and confirmed by thousands of memorizing companions, people could now easily copy the entire Quran for their personal use.

Ubaydullah bin Abdullah reports that one of these duplicated copies, the Medina Mushaf, was preserved in the Prophet's Mosque and recited to the congregation every morning. [231]To prevent the slightest error in the Quran, additional measures were taken. Hajjaj assigned Asim bin al-Qahdari, Najiya bin Rumh, and Ali bin Asma to inspect personal Mushafs copied by people, and they were tasked with tearing out any pages with errors.[232] The owner of such a Mushaf would be fined sixty dirhams for their negligence.

These formal committees have always existed. For instance, in Turkey, there is a scientific and official institution called the "Committee for Inspecting Mushafs and Religious Works," whose main task is to prevent the emergence of writing errors. Therefore, there is no possibility of even a single letter

229. It is likely that copies of this Quran or parts of them have reached us. For example, the copies in Tashkent, Istanbul Topkapi Palace, and Istanbul Turkish Islamic Works Museum are copies duplicated by Osman or transcribed from them (Zahid al-Kawthari, Articles, p. 12-13; Salahaddin al-Munjid, Studies in the History of Arabic Calligraphy, p. 50-55). For other examples, see Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Quran, p. 87; Al-Azami, History of the Quran, p. 114, 138, 153-157, 179; Tayyar Altıkulaç, Ancient Copies of the Quran Reaching Our Day, Ankara: DIB Publications, 2022.
230. Ibn Shabba, History of Medina, Jeddah, 1399, p. 7.
231. Ibn Shabba, History of Medina, p. 993, 998, 1002.
232. Ibn Qutayba, Interpretation of the Difficult Passages of the Quran, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, p. 37.

of the Quran being changed, despite any printing errors in some Mushafs, as these would undoubtedly be corrected later.

Another point is that the Quran has its own script, a unique style of writing known as "Othmani Script" or "Istilahi Script." According to many scholars, this script is tawqifi, meaning it is based on the teachings and indications of the Prophet Muhammad. Any deviation in writing certain words is based on wisdom, subtlety, or a hidden purpose. It should be noted that Arabic grammar rules were established later and did not exist during the time of the Prophet. Moreover, a science called "Ilm al-Rasm al-Quran" has been developed to compare the Istilahi script used in Mushafs with the script taught by the Prophet. This science is one of the Quranic sciences specific to Islam, similar to the science of Qiraat. It reveals where differences exist between the script of the Mushafs and the Istilahi script and explains the wisdom behind these differences. This science focuses on the letters written in Mushafs during Uthman's ﷺ time regarding issues such as ziyaadah, hazf, ibdaal, fasl, and vasl. Since the goal and benefit of this science are very high, it is obligatory to teach and learn it.[233]

In the Islamic tradition, to teach the Quran, it is necessary to receive an authorization (Ijazah) in the presence of a well-trained master or masters. This way, it was checked whether the student learned the Quran properly and whether the Quran copy in their possession was authentic. This method has been applied until today. At the end of Quran education, the master gives the student an authorization certificate, mentioning a chain of transmission up to the Prophet Muhammad. Later, the student, as verified by the master, confirms that they have learned the Quran completely and correctly in the manner taught by their master. [234]

As seen, the Quran has been preserved through both writing and memorization, and, in addition to these, a third method has been implemented to preserve it: learning in the presence of a master.[235]

233. Omer Nasuhi Bilmen, History of Great Commentary, Istanbul 1973, I, 27.
234. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Quran, p. 87, 53-56.
235. To see how solid the methods and methodologies used by Islamic scholars in this matter are, the following works can be consulted: Prof. Dr. M. M. el-A'zami, The History of the Qur'anic Text from Revelation to Compilation: A Comparative Study with the Old and New Testaments, Leicester: UK Islamic Academy, 2003; Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Quran, Istanbul 2000 (Introduction to the Holy Quran).

c. The Campaign of the Companions in Learning and Teaching the Quran

Throughout history, Muslims have attached great importance to Quranic education because Allah and His Messenger encouraged people to gather, read, and understand the Quran. The Prophet Muhammad expressed his pleasure with such efforts,[236] stating: "When a group of people assemble in one of the houses of Allah, reciting the Book of Allah and studying it among themselves, tranquility descends upon them, mercy covers them, angels surround them, and Allah mentions them to those with Him." (Muslim, Zikir, 38; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 17)

The Prophet highly valued those who knew the Quran well and consistently gave them priority. Whether appointing someone for a public administrative duty like an imam, governor, or commander, or when asked which should be given precedence when burying martyrs, he always favored those who had a better knowledge of the Quran.[237] On the expedition to Tabuk, he assigned the flag to Umara bin Hazm from the tribe of Najjar. Later, when he saw Zayd bin Thabit, he took the flag from Umara and handed it to Zayd. Umara asked, "O Messenger of Allah, are you angry with me?" The Prophet replied, "No, by Allah, I'm not angry. But always give preference to those who know the Quran. Zayd has memorized the Quran more than you. Even a black slave with a cut-off nose who has memorized the Quran more should be preferred over others!" (Al-Waqidi, III, 1003)

He commanded the clans of Aws and Khazraj to carry their banners in accordance with those who memorized the Quran more. (Al-Waqidi, III, 1003) The Companions approached Quranic education with great reverence. Abdullah bin Mas'ud would recite (teach) a verse to someone and say, "This verse is more honorable than the place where the sun rises or anything on the surface of the earth." He repeated this statement for every verse of the Quran. (Haythami, VII, 166) Abdullah bin Mas'ud also mentioned: "When a companion entered his house, his wife immediately asked him two questions: 1) How many verses were revealed from the Quran today? 2) How much of the sayings of the Prophet did you memorize?" (Abdulhamid Kesk, Fi Rihabi at-Tafsir, I, 26)

236. Fatir, 29; Sad, 29; Taha, 124-126; Al-Bukhari, Fadha'il al-Quran, 21; Muslim, Zikir, 38; Ibn Asakir, History of Damascus, XXVII, 67.
237. Muslim, Masajid, 290, Musafirin,, 269; Fadha'il al-Quran, 2/2876; Nasa'i, Janaiz, 86, 87, 90, 91; Ahmad, IV, 218; Haythami, VII, 161; Ibn Hisham, IV, 185; Ibn Sa'd, V, 508.

The Prophet would ask the newly converted groups to stay in Medina for a while, learn the Quranic verses, understand the religious principles, and witness the application of Islam by himself. For example, when the delegation of Abdul Qais came, he asked the Ansar to host and treat them. At the same time, he instructed them to provide the necessary religious information, memorize the essential surahs for prayers, and teach them. In the morning, he inquired about their well-being and whether they were satisfied with the hospitality of the Ansar. They expressed their satisfaction. Then, the Prophet distributed them to the homes of the companions to learn more effectively. The method proved to be beneficial. Pleased with the efforts of the companions and the eagerness of Abdul Qais to learn, the Prophet personally took the time to check their memorization of Tahiyyat, Fatiha, other surahs, and the traditions they had learned. (Ahmad, III, 432)

In the 10th year of the Hijra, representatives from Kinda, numbering sixty or eighty individuals, came to the Mosque and appeared before the presence of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet declared, “Allah sent me as a Prophet with the true religion and revealed a Book to me, and nothing false can approach it from either the front or the back.” The Kinda representatives requested, “Can you recite some of it for us?” Prophet Muhammad began reciting from the beginning of Surah Saffat:

“I swear by those who stand in rows, those who push ahead, and those who recite the message, your God is truly One, the Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything between them, the Lord of the Easts.” (Saffat, 1-5)

After reciting these verses, the Prophet fell silent, standing still without moving. Tears filled his eyes, streaming down his beard. The representatives of Kinda remarked, “We see you weeping; is it because you fear the entity that sent you?” The Prophet responded, “What makes me weep and fear is that Allah has sent me on a straight path as sharp and fine as the edge of a sword. If I deviate even a little, I will be destroyed!” He then recited the verse, “Indeed, if We wish, We can take away that which We revealed to you. In that case, you will not find anyone to plead with Us for it.” Upon hearing this, the representatives of Kinda embraced Islam. (See Ibn Hisham, IV, 254; Abu Nuaym, Dalail, I, 237-238; Halabi, III, 260)

Prophet Muhammad closely engaged with delegations that came to him. When they returned, he would ask them to teach what they had learned here

in their homelands. The same attention and interest applied to individuals who came alone.[238] For instance, when Umayr bin Wahb came to Medina and embraced Islam, Prophet Muhammad instructed his companions, "Explain your religion to your brother. Recite the Quran to him and teach him." (Ibn Hisham, II, 306-309; Al-Waqidi, I, 125-128; Haythami, VIII, 284-286)

The Ashab as-Suffa both taught knowledge and continuously worked to train students and teachers. Prophet Muhammad and his successors sent many learned Companions to various centers in the Islamic world as teachers. They taught people the Quran and the Sunnah.[239] For example, when Mus'ab bin Umair was sent as a teacher to Medina, he explained Islam to people and recited the Quran at every opportunity.[240] Abu'd-Darda, who was sent to Damascus, lived there for a long time, establishing a famous circle of knowledge. The number of his supervised students exceeded 1600. He divided his students into ten groups, appointed one of the teachers he trained to each group, and monitored their progress sequentially. Those who passed this basic level had the privilege of studying directly with Abu'd-Darda and teaching the

238. Muslims have shown a similar sensitivity in learning and memorizing the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad as they have in learning the Quran. Some examples include: Abu Ayyub al-Ansari was in doubt about a hadith. Of those who heard this hadith from the Prophet, only Uqbah bin Amir survived. Abu Ayyub went from Medina to Egypt, crossing mountains and deserts on camelback. When he met Uqbah, the first thing he asked was about that hadith. Uqbah narrated the hadith: "Whoever covers the fault of a Muslim in this world, Allah will cover his faults on the Day of Judgment." Abu Ayyub said, "Okay," and immediately got back on his camel and returned. (See Ahmad, IV, 153, 159; Hakim, Knowledge of Hadith, p. 7-8; Ibn Abd al-Barr, Knowledge, p. 123) Jabir bin Abdullah ﷺ walked for a whole month just to ask Abdullah bin Unays about one single hadith. Once he traveled from Medina to Damascus, and another time to Egypt. (See Al-Bukhari, Ilm, 19; Ahmad, III, 495; Hakim, Knowledge, p. 8-9; Ibn Abd al-Barr, Knowledge, p. 127) Abu al-Aliyah, one of the leading Tabi'ns, said: "When we were in Basra, we would hear some narrations from the Companions of the Prophet that we were not satisfied with, so we would immediately get on our mounts and go to Medina and listen to the hadith from the mouths of the Companions." (See Darimi, Muqaddimah, 47/570; Hatib al-Baghdadi, Science of Tradition, Beirut 1988, p. 402-403) Sa'id bin Musayyab also said, "I used to travel day and night just to learn one hadith." (Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, IX, 106) Umar bin Abdulaziz wrote to the governor of Medina, Abu Bakr bin Hazm: "Look, search, and write down everything from the hadiths of the Prophet ! Because I fear the loss of knowledge and the departure of scholars." In this endeavor, nothing other than the hadiths of the Prophet was accepted. Scholars should spread knowledge and form open circles of knowledge so that those who do not know can learn. For knowledge, if not kept secret, will not perish. (Al-Bukhari, Ilm, 34) The Caliph sent this command to other regions as well. (Abu Nuaym, History of Isfahan, Beirut 1410, I, 366; Ayni, Essentials of the Examiner, II, 129

239. See Abu Dawood, Buyu', 36/3416; Ibn Majah, Tijarah, 8; Ahmad, V, 315, 324; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-Ghaba, III, 160.

240. Darimi, Sunan, I, 135 (ed. Dahman); Ibn Sa'd, VI, 7.

lower-level students right after fair prayer.[241] The same method was applied by other companions and tabbed in other places.[242]

Umar sent Yazid bin Abdullah to teach the Quran to the Bedouins living far from the center. To determine their levels of education, he appointed Abu Sufyan as an inspector, and also appointed three companions to teach the Quran to children in Medina, granting each of them a monthly stipend of 15 dirhams. He also ordered that five verses be taught to everyone, including adults, making it easy.[243] Ibn Abbas provided advanced Quranic education. Wherever he went, people gathered around him. When he went to Basra, he stood up, addressed the people, and recited Surah Al-Baqarah, explaining its contents. (Hakim, II, 300/3083)

Once, when Ali ﷺ heard loud voices coming from the Kufah Mosque, he asked what was happening. He was told, "Some people are reciting and learning the Quran." Ali ﷺ responded, "How fortunate they are! They were the most beloved people to the Messenger of Allah." (Haythami, VII, 162)

The saying of Abdullah bin Mas'ud is instructive in this regard: "I swear by Allah, there is no god but Him, no verse has been revealed from Allah's book that I do not know where it was revealed. No verse has been revealed from Allah's book that I do not know about whom it was revealed. If I hear that someone knows the book of Allah better than me, and it is possible to reach him by camel, I do not hesitate to set out on the road immediately."[244] (Al-Bukhari, Fadha'il al-Quran, 8)

A Taba'i named Abu Nadra expressed the importance that the Companions attached to Quranic and hadith education, stating: "When the companions of the Prophet assembled, they discussed knowledge (hadiths) and recited a Surah from the Quran." Mujahid (20-103) reported that Ibn Abi Layla established a library consisting only of the Quran and a place where people gathered to read.

241. See Al-Bukhari, Virtues of the Ansar, 46; Ibn Hisham, II, 43-46; Abu Nuaym, Dela'il, I, 307; Haythami, VI, 41.
242. Dhahabi, Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubala, Risale Institute 1405, II, 344-346
243. Balazuri, Genealogies, I, 110; Hakim, II, 240, 300; Firyabi, Fadha'il al-Quran, p. 129. Cf. Muslim, Musafirin, 280; Ibn Abd al-Barr, Al-Istiab, III, 1173/1907; Hatib al-Baghdadi, Tarih, VI, 147/2634; Waqi', Ahbar al-Qudat, II, 5 109. Serahsi, Mabsut, II, 6.
244. Prof. Dr. M. M. el-A'zami, History of the Quran, p. 127

d. The Miraculous Nature of the Qur'an

Almighty Allah, in His mercy to guide His servants, has bestowed upon them certain superior qualities. In addition, He has appointed righteous individuals with exceptional character among them as guides. These righteous individuals granted with revelation are the prophets. When Almighty Allah sends a prophet, people say, "Since you claim to be a prophet, show us a supernatural and extraordinary event (miracle)!" The coming prophet then displays an extraordinary event in the most prominent field of that time, exceeding human capabilities. The fortunate ones whose hearts are not completely veiled by heedlessness accept his prophethood. On the other hand, those whose hearts are clouded by egotistical desires denounce him with accusations of magic and falsehood, choosing the path of enmity.

Each prophet has shown many miracles according to the requirements of his era. In the time of Prophet Isa عليه السلام, the most esteemed science was medicine, and the most prominent figures were physicians. Therefore, Prophet Isa عليه السلام was granted miracles that surpassed even the capabilities of physicians, such as restoring sight to the blind and raising the dead. During the time of Musa عليه السلام, magic had reached an advanced level, and miracles were given to him that silenced the magicians. In the time of Prophet Muhammad, eloquence, fluency, skill, and literature were highly esteemed. Therefore, the miraculous gift given to him was the Qur'an. [245]

As the main distinguishing features of humans from other living beings are intellect and eloquence, the inimitability (i'jaz) of the Qur'an, being the last and most perfect book, manifests predominantly in the realms of intellect and eloquence. In addition to the continuous miracle of the Qur'an, which will endure until the Day of Judgment, Prophet Muhammad also had numerous miracles tied to time and place, similar to previous prophets. Countless works have been written on these miracles[246], and we will mention some of them in the following sections.

245. Al-Ankabut, 50-51; Al-Bukhari, I'tisam 1, Fadhail al-Quran 1; Muslim, Iman 279.
246. For example, see Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah (7 volumes), Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1985; Abu Nuaym al-Isfahani, Dalail al-Nubuwwah (2 volumes), Aleppo: al-Maktab al-Arabiyya, 1970-1972; Suyuti, Aspects of the Prophet's Miracles: al-Hasais al-Kubra (3 volumes), translated by Naim Erdogan, Istanbul: Iz Publications, 2003.

e. Miraculous Aspects

The Qur'an, with its composition, eloquence, rhetoric, profound impact on hearts, legislative qualities, and foretelling of the unseen, has left people incapable of producing anything like it. Therefore, the Qur'an is a multifaceted and magnificent miracle of Prophet Muhammad.[247]

When the polytheists did not believe in the Qur'an, Allah challenged them. They were asked to invoke the help of all creatures if they could not bring a book like the Qur'an. Despite their attempts, they were unable to produce a single surah, let alone a complete book, similar to the Qur'an.[248] Allah challenged them in the following verses: "If you are in doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a surah like these, call your witnesses other than Allah if you are truthful. But if you cannot do it - and you can never do it - then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers." (Al-Baqarah, 23-24)

The phrase "لن تفْعَلُوا (you can never do it)" in the last verse indicates such certainty and decisiveness that such a judgment could only be given by a being with unlimited, complete, and perfect knowledge and power—namely, Allah. Indeed, no one other than Allah can make such decisive judgments about the unseen future, which is uncertain and hidden from the human perspective, using such certainty and definite expressions.

The disbelievers heard these divine words acknowledging their helplessness. These words deeply affected them, intensified their animosity, but they were powerless to do anything. This verse spread their helplessness from tongue to tongue, confirmed their weakness, and virtually sealed their mouths.[249]

Unable to respond to the Qur'an's challenge, the polytheists resorted to aggressive behaviors such as denial, provocation, insults, and false accusations. Although they denied it, their actions revealed their complete defeat in the face of divine power.[250] Their incapacity has persisted to this day.

1. Eloquence, Rhetoric, and Composition

247. Prof. Dr. M. S. R. al-Buti, Min Rawai' al-Quran, p. 125.
248. Qasas, 49; Isra, 88; Taha, 124-126; Hud, 13; Yunus, 37-38.
249. Mustafa Siddiq al-Rafii, I'jaz al-Quran, Beirut 2003, p. 142.
250. Fussilat, 26.

The Qur'an is neither poetry nor prose. On the contrary, it possesses a unique style that combines the virtues of both poetry and prose. It has a beauty that is absent in poetry and music. While reading or listening to it repeatedly, one does not feel monotony; each of the changing and refreshing sounds equally affects human emotions.[251]

The Qur'an selects the most precise, powerful, and eloquent words from the synonymous (having the same meaning) words of the language.[252]

Ibn al-Atiyya the Mufasseer has declared the following in regards to rhetoric of Quran; "the Quran is such a book that if a single word to be removed from it, and then the whole Arabic language were to be turned upside down, it would still not be possible to find a more appropriate word than it"[253]

While having a distinctive and unique style different from existing literary genres, the Qur'an encompasses all these literary genres in the most perfect way. Narration, admonition, history, legislation, argumentation, debate, the afterlife, paradise, hell, and other topics are expressed with eloquence and rhetoric at the highest level, maintaining a stylistic unity.

The Qur'an has an impact on hearts. Even the fierce polytheists such as Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl, and Ahnas bin Shareek, who were vehemently against listening to the Qur'an, secretly and unknowingly, came to listen to Prophet Muhammad reciting the Qur'an while they were praying at night. When they accidentally met each other, they blamed themselves, saying:

"Let no one notice! If people become aware of our situation, we will be greatly embarrassed.

After this, we won't be able to prevent anyone from talking about it!" After condemning their actions, they made a secret pact never to engage in such behavior again.[254]

A Bedouin, upon hearing the verse of Allah: "فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَاَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ" (Hijr, 94) "So proclaim openly that which you are commanded, and turn away from the polytheists." immediately prostrated in obedience. When

251. Prof. Dr. M. A. Drâz, al-Nab' al-Azim, Dâru'l-kalem, ts., p. 102.
252. Buti, Rawai', p. 140.
253. Ibn Atiyye, Muharrar al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-Aziz, Beirut 1413, I, 52.
254. Ibn Hisham, I, 337-338; Tabari, History, II, 218-219; Ibn Asir, Kamil, II, 63-64; Ibn Sayyid, I, 99; Dhahabi, History of Islam, p. 160-161; Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, III, 47; Halabi, I, 462.

asked the reason for his action, he said, "I prostrated solely because of its eloquence!"[255]

The factors that influenced him in this verse include the word "fe'sda'," [256] which contains the meanings of explaining divine revelation most perfectly, clearly distinguishing between truth and falsehood, and boldly acting in this way; the phrase "bi-mâ tu'mer: that which you are commanded," which despite its brevity, encompasses multiple meanings; and the unparalleled melody contained in this sentence.

The Qur'an addresses people of different times, places, and varying levels of knowledge, speaking to them according to their understanding. An verse with the potential for different interpretations is understood by the early generations according to their circumstances, and subsequent generations understand it based on their scientific levels. In this regard, the eminent Arab literary figure Mustafa Sadik al-Rafi'i states: "One of the miracles of the Qur'an is its ability to conceal certain truths that cannot always be known within known words and to reveal and express them when the time comes." (Wahy al-Kalam, Kuwait, II, 66)

2. Foretelling the Unseen

The Qur'an provides information about the unseen, and these revelations demonstrate its evident miraculous nature. Despite addressing numerous scientific and technical issues, from historical events to occurrences that will happen in the future, no discovery in the last 1400 years has been able to refute it. Even today, the world's most famous encyclopedias occasionally find themselves compelled to revise and update by releasing additional volumes.

During that time, fragments of information about the destruction of the 'Ad and Thamud tribes and the Nuh's flood existed only in the form of myths. However, the Qur'an presented them to humanity in a manner consistent with contemporary historical knowledge and philosophy, later confirmed by the history and philosophy of the present day. The Qur'an has also foretold events related to the future. Let's mention a few of them:

255. Qadi Iyaz, Shifa, tr. M. Yaşar Kandemir, Istanbul 2012, I, 551; Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Stories of the Prophets, Istanbul 1976, I, 82.

256. Zamakhshari, Essence of Eloquence, Dar al-Fikr, 1409/1989, p. 351, "صدع" entry.

A war occurred between the Romans and the Persians, and the Persians emerged victorious. Wanting to take advantage of this, the polytheists said to the Muslims, "You thought you would prevail through the divine book. Here, the polytheists defeated the Romans, who are the People of the Book." In response, Allah revealed verses that would bring sorrow to the disbelievers and joy to the believers: "Alif, Lam, Meem. The Romans have been defeated in the nearest land. But they, after their defeat, will overcome within three to nine years. To Allah belongs the command before and after. And that day, the believers will rejoice. In the victory of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful." (Ar-Rum,1-5)

At that time, the Romans were so weakened that no one expected them to recover and prevail again after this defeat. However, the Qur'an strongly emphasized: "This is the promise of Allah. Allah does not fail in His promise, but most of the people do not know." (Ar-Rum, 6)

Finally, Allah fulfilled His promise. Historians unanimously agree that the Romans triumphed over the Persians in less than nine years. On that day, Muslims also experienced victory against the polytheists in the Battle of Badr and rejoiced.[257]

When Pharaoh, on the verge of drowning in the vortex of the Red Sea, tried to cling to the circle of faith out of desperation, Allah said to him: "Now? And indeed, you disobeyed [Him] before and were of the corrupters. So today We will save you in body that you may be to those who succeed you a sign. And indeed, many among the people, of Our signs, are heedless." (Yunus, 91-92)

Recent research has discovered the body of Pharaoh, which is currently displayed at the British Museum in London, still in a prostrating position, with hair and skin intact. The Qur'an also foretold events related to Prophet Muhammad's time and beyond, such as the victory at the Battle of Badr,[258] the peaceful entry into the Sacred Mosque, the conquest of Mecca,[259] the masses embracing Islam[260], the superiority of Islam over other religions,[261] the preservation of the Qur'an text, and the inability to produce something like

257. Qadi Iyaz, Shifa, I, 551; Ibn Ashur, Interpretation, I, 107; Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Stories of the Prophets, I, 82.
258. See Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 30/3191-3194; Ahmad, I, 276; Al-Qurtubi, XIV, 3.
259. Qamar, 45.
260. Fath, 16, 27.
261. Nasr, 2.

the Qur'an.[262] The Prophet's foretelling of events that were part of the unseen for him without relying on revelation is impossible.

3. Shedding Light on Scientific Discoveries

The Qur'an contains numerous verses that shed light on scientific progress and discoveries, constituting a miracle regarding the future. While the primary purpose of the Qur'an is to instill the concept of monotheism in hearts and guide people, it presents information in line with this fundamental goal in all the topics it addresses. Moreover, the details it provides in the field of natural sciences serve as lessons and are entirely consistent with truth. Let's explore a few examples:

Regarding human reproduction and embryonic development, the Qur'an offers original information that modern science has only recently been able to discover. These details are elaborately explained in Surah Al-Hajj (22) and Surah Al-Mu'minun (11-13). Prof. Dr. Keith L. Moore, in his work on embryology, compared these facts with the Quranic verses, acknowledging that the science is in complete harmony with the Qur'an, and in some instances, the Quran precedes medical knowledge with its examples and descriptions. Keith, after his research, expressed great admiration for the Quran and Prophet Muhammad and confirmed the miracle of the Quran from 1400 years ago with profound satisfaction. He added the information he learned from the Quran to the second edition of his book titled "Before We Are Born." When asked how he explains the presence of this information in the Quran, he replied, "The Quran is nothing but a revelation from God." (Gary Miller, The Amazing Qur'an, pp. 34-39)

In recent years, the discovery that the universe is expanding, with galaxies moving away from each other at incredible speeds, has been made. According to this law, which shows that the entire galaxy is under the control of an Infinite Power, galaxies move away from each other proportionally to the distance between them. For example, a galaxy 10 million light-years away moves away from us at a speed of 250 kilometers per second, while a galaxy 10 billion light-years away has a recession speed of 250,000 kilometers per second. This situation is indicated in the Qur'an as follows: "And the heaven

262. Tawbah, 33; Fath, 28; Saff, 9.

We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander." (Adh-Dhariyat, 47)

Your Almighty Lord preserves the Earth from fragments of stars that consume their lives and explode in the sky. Jupiter and Saturn, with their immense gravitational pull, act as guards preventing many celestial bodies from posing a threat to Earth. Occasionally, celestial bodies that exceed these two planets and approach our world may encounter another guardian, the Moon. The Moon, having no atmosphere, allows any meteorite falling onto its surface to impact it directly. These impacts create craters, some of which can be seen even with a small telescope.

Meteoroids that manage to bypass the Moon, if not too large, start burning upon entering the Earth's atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as "shooting stars," results in meteoroids disintegrating into tiny dust particles within the Mesosphere layer. These dust particles then become nuclei for raindrops. The atmosphere also shields the Earth from harmful radiation coming from space. The Qur'an points to these truths: "And We made the sky a protected ceiling, but they, from its signs, are turning away." (Al-Anbiya, 32)

As evident, while the Qur'an explains truths that regulate human actions and behaviors, it also draws attention to the mysteries of the universe, encouraging its exploration and uncovering its secrets.

Fourteen centuries ago, the Qur'an foretells: "We have released the winds and sent down water from the sky, providing you with water in abundance." (Al-Hijr, 22). Centuries after the revelation of this verse, it was discovered that winds play a role in the transportation of plants and clouds. Surah Ar-Rahman (55:19-20) states: "He released the two seas, meeting side by side. Between them is a barrier so neither of them transgresses." Similar expressions are found in Surah Al-Furqan (25:53). The truth mentioned in these verses is a miracle of the Quran now understood in our era. Recent discoveries at the Strait of Gibraltar, where the Mediterranean and Atlantic Oceans meet, revealed an unseen barrier preventing the mixing of their waters. Thus, the waters of the two seas do not intermingle, maintaining their original characteristics on both sides. Captain Cousteau later found similar barriers at the confluence points of all different seas.

Mr. A. Brawn, who encountered verses about the seas, tides, and related matters, asked a Muslim upon reaching an Indian coastal city, "Did your

Prophet Muhammad travel on the seas?" The Muslim replied, "No, as far as we know, he did not travel on the seas." This response convinced the English sailor that knowledge of the Quran could not have reached Prophet Muhammad except through revelation. Reflecting on the verses of the Quran about monotheism and law, which he found more accurate and meaningful than the words in the Torah and the Bible, he became a Muslim on his own. Later, he went to Egypt and consulted with scholars.[263]

Mathematics professor Gary Miller states: "Before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad, there was a theory about the atom. This theory was put forward by the Greek philosopher Democritus. Subsequently, those who followed claimed that matter consisted of tiny, indivisible particles called atoms. Now, new science has discovered that the smallest part of matter, the atom, has the same characteristics as the substance it is subject to and can similarly decompose and divide. This is a newly discovered truth as a result of developments in the last century. Remarkably, these pieces of information were revealed in the Quran 14 centuries ago with the following statement of Allah: 'Not absent from your Lord is an atom's weight within the earth or within the heaven or [anywhere] smaller than that or greater, but that it is in a clear register.'" (Yunus, 61) The verse refers to entities smaller than an atom. There is no doubt that no writer or Arab of that era could have composed such a thing. Because the smallest thing known in that era was the "zerra" or atom. This, indeed, serves as evidence that the Quran has truly not worn out over time."[264] (Defne Bayrak, Neden Musluman Oldular?, pp. 144-145)

4. Miraculous Legal System

One of the miraculous aspects of the Qur'an is its unparalleled perfection and grandeur in the field of legislation (establishing laws). The miraculous nature of the Qur'an in legislation is evident in its ability to address the needs

263. Rashid Rida, Commentary on the Wise Quran, XI, 341-342.

264. For details on the Quran and science, see Dr. Maurice Bucaille, The Bible, the Quran and Science: The Holy Scriptures Examined in the Light of Modern Knowledge, Paris: Seghers, 1980 (translated as The Bible, the Quran and Science by Alastair D. Pannell, Karachi, n.d.); Afzalurrahman, Quranic Sciences, London 1981; Prof. Dr. Omer Çelik, Single Source Two Rivers: Technological Reflections from the Quran, Istanbul 2009; Osman Nuri Topbaş, Breezes of Mercy (Expanded new edition), Istanbul 2010, pp. 293-372 (http://rahmetesintileri.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/); Imaduddin Halil, "The Quran and Modern Science: Observations on Methodology", The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 1991, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 1-13; Prof. Dr. Vahiduddin Han, Islam Challenges, Istanbul 1996.

of every era, the absence of any flaws subject to criticism by people of fairness, its ease in resolving complex issues that are difficult to address by other laws, the profound wisdom embedded in its rulings, and its ability to swiftly elevate this magnificent system to the pinnacle compared to others.

Within a nation devoid of knowledge, civilization, and culture, a perfect system suddenly emerged through a prophet who was unlettered, illiterate, and had no legal education. This system eloquently presented civil law, personal status, international law, rules of war and peace, etc. The Qur'an, while establishing such a legal system that addresses all centuries until the Day of Judgment, also managed to establish this system in a very short period. The commentator Kâsımî expressed the miraculous nature of the Qur'an in this regard, stating: "Allah Almighty nurtured and educated the Arab nation gradually in twenty-three years. Normally, such progress, under ordinary circumstances, could only be accomplished by other societies over a few centuries through social factors..." (Mahâsin at-Ta'wîl, Cairo, II, 219). What we have mentioned so far represents only a small fraction of the miraculous aspects of the Qur'an.

f. Westerners' Sentiments Regarding the Qur'an

We witness that many individuals who embrace Islam undergo a process of influence, often initiated by reading or hearing about the Qur'an. A Western academic, who adopted the name

Kerîme after becoming Muslim, states: "The Qur'an was guiding even the Prophet who brought it, occasionally advising him. If Prophet Muhammad had written the Qur'an himself, would it be like this?"

Mathematics professor Gary Miller, one day, wanting to prevail over and find fault with the Qur'an while inviting Muslims to Christianity, decided to read the Qur'an. He hoped to find an outdated book mentioning deserts and similar things, written 14 centuries ago. However, what he found inside the Qur'an astonished him. In fact, he discovered things in this book that were not mentioned in any other book in the world. He expected to find incidents in the Qur'an about Prophet Muhammad's personal life, such as the deaths of his wife, daughters, and sons, but such things were not there. On the contrary, he encountered a chapter called "Meryem Sûresi" (Mary's Chapter), honoring Maryam عليها السلام, a chapter not found in Christian books and Gospels!

There was no chapter named after Prophet Muhammad's beloved wife Aisha ﵂ or his daughter Fatima ﵂. Moreover, when he noticed that the name of Prophet Isa ﵇ appeared 25 times in the Qur'an while the name of Prophet Muhammad appeared only 4 times, his astonishment increased, and eventually, he embraced Islam.[265]

American Saalik uses these noteworthy expressions:

"When I read the Qur'an, I can see the mistakes in my life. When I read it, I understand that it is not human speech because no human can know me as well as the Qur'an does." [266]

Pennsylvanian Kowalski says:

"The Qur'an reads the human mind. When a subject comes to my mind, I can immediately find its counterpart in the Qur'an. I believe that many people also share my opinion that the Qur'an reads people's minds." [267]

Douglas Williams says: "Whenever I read the Qur'an, I find tremendous peace. Sometimes, I go to bed late and read the Qur'an until three or four in the morning. The deep meanings in the verses of the Qur'an give me great tranquility and enhance my intellectual level. I don't remember experiencing such a level in any part of my life." [268]

g. Why Was the Qur'an Revealed in Arabic?

In the Arabian Peninsula, the prevalent way of life was characterized by the influence of the geographical structure and the Bedouin lifestyle. The people, infused with courage and valor due to their surroundings and Bedouin life, displayed brilliant intellects under the bright stars of the celestial dome. They presented rich ideas, subtle expressions, and despite not having extensive knowledge, they left a lasting legacy with eloquent, fluent verses, and speeches that amazed scholars for centuries.

Especially in the times close to the Age of Bliss, eloquence flourished among the Arabs like a sea surging with high waves. Competitions in eloquence took place among the tribes, and the poems of poets who excelled

265. Defne Bayrak, Why Did They Become Muslims?, p. 138.
266. A. Boken - A. Eryigit, ibid., I, 157.
267. Ibid., I, 56.
268. Ibid., II, 16.

over their peers were written in golden ink and hung on the walls of the Kaaba, becoming a source of pride for the exquisite qualities of eloquence and rhetoric, among the finest of human virtues. Some of the odes recited in a grand literary assembly at the Ukaz Fair have survived to our day (Mu'allaqat al-Seb'a)[269]. It is evident how great masterpieces of eloquence these are.[270]

Prof. Dr. A'zami states: "For a devout Muslim, it is an undeniable fact that Allah, who repeatedly declares that He will protect His book, would never prefer a language or script prone to corruption to convey the ultimate revelations to mankind. Arabic was sufficiently developed in its literary capacity, expressive power, poetic quality, orthography, and paleography.[271] By choosing it among other languages, Allah granted a great favor to humanity." (A'zami, Qur'an Tarihi, p. 214)

Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, who speaks and knows ten different languages, says: "As is known, the Qur'an is the first book written in the Arabic language. This language has remained stable and robust for centuries in a way that will attract attention. For more than fourteen centuries, the vocabulary, spelling style, pronunciation, and even the grammatical structure have not undergone any changes. This situation, as a wisdom and decree of Allah, is an unprecedented state not seen in any language in the modern or ancient world. Thus, we can say that besides Arabic, which has these significant characteristics, which language is more suitable and appropriate for preserving divine revelations that will continue unchanged until the Day of Judgment?! Therefore, we must congratulate the Arabic-speaking nations for resisting all negative efforts and initiatives aimed at eliminating the simplicity and clarity

269. When the Quran began to be revealed, these famous poets were amazed by the literary aspect of the Quran. The poem by Imru al-Qays, which stood first on the wall of the Kaaba, was revealed by his sister, who was also a poet. (Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Stories of the Prophets, I, 83) Another famous poet, Labid ibn Rabi'a, became a Muslim, saying, "Praise be to Allah, I wore the luminous garment of Islam before my death arrived." (Ibn Abd al-Barr, al-Istiab, III, 1335) Once, Omar asked Labid, "O Abu Akil! Read me something from your poetry!" Labid replied, "Allah taught me Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Ali-Imran, and I never composed poetry again! Allah has replaced me with this Quran!" (Ibn Sa'd, VI, 33; Ibn Asir, al-Usd al-Ghaba, IV, 516) Walid ibn Mughira, one of Quraysh's most eloquent poets and orators, upon hearing verse 90 of Surah An-Nahl, exclaimed, "By Allah, a little while ago I heard such words from Muhammad that they were not human words, nor the words of jinn! There is such sweetness, such beauty in it that you cannot ask! Such a word that is ripe on top, fertile and fruitful below! It is certain that it will prevail; it cannot be overcome." (Al-Hakim, II, 506-507/3872)

270. Omer Nasuhi Bilmen, Great History of Interpretation, I, 39-40.

271. Orthography: Spelling method; Paleography: Studying the writing of a language, such as the shape of letters or the use of dots.

of this language. Despite the existing differences in dialects and accents and the different situations of the countries where this language is spoken, the written language of Arabic has been preserved exactly as it is until today. The Arabic spoken by Prophet Muhammad is the same Arabic spoken in today's radio and television or used in modern newspapers and magazines." (Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Qur'an, p. 76-77)

If a comparison is made among languages, Arabic will be seen as superior to other languages in terms of harmony, word structure and derivation, verb conjugations, and pronunciation rules. Arabic is a language that allows concise and succinct expressions without losing the smallest details. Its richness in the field of vocabulary enables this language to express any kind of idea with remarkable sensitivity and elegance. The fact that there has been no change in its rules for fifteen centuries shows that Arabic was already a stable and mature language at that time.

The Qur'an describes Arabic as an expressive, eloquent, easily understood, highly eloquent, effective, and most powerful means of expression.[272]

Today, the United Nations has accepted Arabic as an international language among famous world languages, just like English and French.

One reason for the Qur'an to be revealed in Arabic may be Allah's intention to send Islam to the Arabian Peninsula. While civilizations such as Byzantium, Iran, Greece, and India drowned in philosophical debates and superstitions, the Arabs, far from all these negativities, lived in tranquility and security in a region protected from military attacks and invasions of culture and civilization. They had never tasted the humiliation of slavery. The nature and temperament of the Arabs were like unshaped raw material, and they had not lost the purity in their disposition. Additionally, they possessed beautiful qualities such as chastity, keeping promises, generosity, loyalty, patience, and bravery.

The revelation of the Qur'an in Arabic to an unlettered community and an unlettered prophet free from philosophical debates and possessing a clean nature and temperament played a significant role in proving its divine origin.

On the other hand, the Arabian Peninsula, being in a central position where Asia, Africa, and Europe meet, had a geographical advantage in the spread of Islam while various states were in the middle. The presence of the

272. An-Nahl, 103; Ash-Shu'ara, 195; M. Hamdi Yazır, The True Religion, (Yusuf, 1).

Kaaba, a religious center that is contemporary with human history, is also one of the most important reasons.[273]

In this way, many wisdoms and reasons can be listed. However, the most important of these is Allah's intention to reveal His final book in Arabic.

5. Prophets

Prophet Adam ﷺ is the first, and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the last prophet. Many prophets, both those mentioned to us and those not mentioned, were sent. According to one narration, Allah sent 124,000 prophets, among whom 315 were messengers.[274] Some of them are mentioned by name in the Qur'an. However, without specifying the number, belief in all the prophets sent by Allah is a condition for being a Muslim. As Allah says: "Indeed, We have sent messengers before you among the factions of the former peoples. And We have related to you stories of those messengers, some of them We related to you, and some We did not. And to Musa ﷺ, Allah spoke directly—[We sent] messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise." (Al-Mu'min, 78; An-Nisa, 164).

"Say, 'We have believed in Allah and in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Ya'qub, and the Descendants, and in what was given to Musa and Isa and to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [submitting] to Him.'" (Al-Baqarah, 136)

There is no fundamental difference in the principles brought by the prophets. Each one commanded belief in the oneness of Allah, the Day of Judgment, and the divine messages brought by the prophets. Differences are only related to details that can change according to the needs and levels of societies based on the requirements of the time. This is a fact suitable for human social and psychological structures and the realities of life. While Prophet Isa ﷺ confirmed the Torah, he was sent not to abolish but to complete certain prohibitions that were forbidden to the Children of Israel.[275]

273. See Ash-Shura, 7; Dr. Sa'd al-Marsafi, The Kaaba, Beirut 2000; Muhammad Ilyas Abdulghani, History of Ancient and Modern Mecca, Medina 2001, pp. 12-13.
274. Ahmed, V, 266; Ibn Kathir, Interpretation, (An-Nisa, 163); Haythami, I, 159.
275. Ali 'Imran, 50.

Similarly, Prophet Muhammad, besides other duties, was sent to lift the burdensome provisions imposed on previous nations.[276] Each of these prophets came to teach the principles that would meet the needs of their time and people. The last prophet, Prophet Muhammad, was sent as a mercy to all worlds. His target audience is not only one community or region but all times and all of humanity. Therefore, the principles he conveyed address all of humanity and are compatible with human nature and the order of creation.[277]

After mentioning the names and attributes of many prophets in the Qur'an, it is stated, "These are the ones whom Allah has guided, so from their guidance take an example."[278] Prophet Muhammad, in terms of moral values, did not bring anything new with the religion he conveyed; he continued the universal moral principles that already existed. Except for the prohibitions related to Saturdays, the Ten Commandments mentioned in today's Torah are preserved in various forms in the Qur'an.[279] Prophet Isa عليه السلام, while affirming the commandments in the Torah, emphasized that he came not to abolish but to fulfill them.[280] On the other hand, moral principles mentioned in the Gospels are also preserved in the Qur'an.[281]

Throughout history, there has not been a community to which a prophet was not sent. Allah sent prophets to all people. (An-Nahl, 63; Fatir, 24; Yunus, 47). While there is an order not to make a distinction among the prophets in terms of belief, it is mentioned that they are superior to each other in degree.[282] Because some were given divine books, others were given scrolls; some acted upon the books sent to them before, some were sent to help another prophet. Accordingly, the last prophet, Prophet Muhammad, who brought a valuable book and a perfect religion with a miracle valid for all humanity until the Day of Judgment, is the most superior among the prophets. Later, Prophet Daud, Musa, and Isa, (peace be upon them) who were given a new book and sharia, come next. Besides them, it is reported that Prophet Nuh and Prophet Ibrahim were among the prophets who reached superior ranks. These prophets, includ-

276. Al-A'raf, 157.
277. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" entry, DIA, XXIII, 4.
278. Al-An'am, 90.
279. Exodus, 20:1-17; cf. Al-Baqarah, 224; An-Nisa, 29; Al-Ma'idah, 32, 38, 89; Al-Isra, 23; Al-Hajj, 30.
280. Matthew, 5:17.
281. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" entry, DIA, XXIII, 4.
282. Al-Baqarah, 253; Al-Isra, 55.

ing Prophet Muhammad, who endured great difficulties with determination, are called "ulul azm" (those with determination). (Al-Ahqaf, 35) [283]

It should be noted that the end of prophethood with the sending of Prophet Muhammad raises the value and dignity of humanity. This event announces that humanity has matured. It is a sign that humanity has reached a high and mature stage.[284]

a. Attributes of Prophets

Prophethood cannot be attained through effort; Allah grants this sacred duty to whom He wills.[285]

All prophets are chosen, righteous, virtuous, sincere, and the best of servants in the sight of Allah. The following attributes are unanimously accepted as present in them:

- Truthfulness (Sidq): Prophets are truthful in conveying divine commandments, orders, and all kinds of news to people. It is impossible for them to lie.

- Trustworthiness (Amanah): All prophets are extremely trustworthy, reliable, honest, and distinguished personalities. Even those who do not share their faith trust them infinitely. The attribute of trustworthiness indicates not only their trustworthiness and reliability in all matters but also their trustworthiness in delivering the revelations of Allah to people without changing, adding, or subtracting.

- Intelligence (Fathânah): Prophets are at the highest level of intelligence, wisdom, and insight among people. They possess a strong memory, high perception, powerful logic, and convincing ability.

Intelligence here is not just dry reasoning and logic but a level of comprehension beyond genius. It is the expression of the heart-bound mind, insight, and foresight. Each prophet must have such superior intelligence to fulfill their duty flawlessly and perfectly. Otherwise, they cannot present strong evidence to those to whom they are sent, nor can they convince or impose upon them.

283. Al-An'am, 83; Al-Ahzab, 7.
284. Abu'l-Hasan al-Nadwi, Belief, Worship, and Good Morals, Istanbul 2007, pp. 35-36.
285. Jumu'ah, 4.

- **Conveyance (Tablîgh):** Prophets convey divine commandments to people accurately and exactly as they were ordered. There is no addition or omission in their conveyance. Conveyance is one of the common attributes of prophets and one of their most important duties. The Qur'an says: "O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message..." (Al-Ma'idah, 67)

While fulfilling their duty of conveyance, prophets faced many difficulties, but they never compromised on their mission.

1. **Infallibility (Ismet):** Prophets are free from all kinds of sins, both hidden and open. Due to this attribute, they were protected from falling into the swamp of polytheism before and after their prophethood. Moreover, it is impossible for them to forget or make mistakes while delivering the revelations from Allah to people.

If the prophets did not have the attribute of infallibility, the accuracy of the news they provided would be unreliable. This situation would cast a shadow on their quality of being Allah's proof and witness on earth.

According to Sunni scholars, prophets do not commit major sins. Although it is possible for them to make inadvertent errors or act upon certain wisdom, they are not left in error; they are immediately corrected and warned by a verse. These so-called non-intentional human errors, known as "*ghalat*," are to prevent the prophets from experiencing weakness and to remind people that they are human beings, preventing the attribution of divinity to them.

Prophets possess a complete and superior character in every aspect. Their strong characters, powerful personalities that give confidence and trust to everyone, and solid qualities are more eloquent and concise evidence of their prophethood than the miracles they displayed. After all, reason definitively rules out the impossibility of gathering these qualities in anyone other than the prophets.

In Judaism, prophets after Malachi are not accepted, and there are claims regarding certain prophets common to all three religions that seem incompatible with the prophetic mission. Christianity accepts prophets before it but rejects those after it, and it assigns different meanings to the concept of proph-

ecy. Islam, on the other hand, rejects such unfounded claims and accurately presents the truth about prophethood.[286]

b. Wisdom Behind the Sending of Prophets

It is evident that humanity needs prophets, who are true and divine guides. While people can comprehend the existence and unity of Allah with their intellects, they cannot fully grasp certain elevated attributes specific to Him. They cannot know perfectly how to live in this world, how to worship Allah, matters related to the afterlife, responsibilities in the hereafter, and the forms of rewards and punishments there. If people were to spend time researching such information, most of their efforts would be in vain. Therefore, as an act of divine grace and mercy, Allah sent prophets to explain these matters. In short, the attainment of worldly and otherworldly happiness, as well as intellectual and moral elevation, can only be possible through divine education and training.[287]

Even in the simplest worldly affairs, humans need a teacher, master, or guide. In matters of religion and the afterlife, they have always felt the need for prophets and have been supported by them. Almighty Allah states in the Qur'an:

"We have sent you with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And there is no nation but that there has passed within it a warner." (Fatir, 24)

"...And [He sent] the Scripture in truth to judge between the people concerning that in which they differed." (Al-Baqarah, 213)

Aware from experience that people cannot find the right path on their own, Prophet Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace be upon them) prayed to Allah:

"Our Lord, send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Al-Baqarah, 129)

Prophets have taught everything necessary for life, both beneficial and harmful, good and evil. They have become complete guides for people in

286. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Islam" entry, DIA, XXIII, 4.
287. Taftazani, Islamic Beliefs, Istanbul 1991, pp. 293-295; Ahmed Hamdi Akseki, Islam Religion, p. 80.

both material and spiritual fields by showing the ways and principles of these teachings.

By sending prophets, Allah has not left any room for people to make excuses in the Hereafter. In the Qur'an, it is stated:

"Had We destroyed them with a punishment before it, they would have said, 'Our Lord, why did You not send to us a messenger so we could have followed Your verses before we were humiliated and disgraced?'" (Taha, 134. See also An-Nisa, 165)

On the other hand, if Allah had addressed each individual directly through revelation, thereby clearly stating His commands and prohibitions, it could contradict the "test mystery" in the creation of the world. In that case, the value of believing in the unseen would diminish. People who directly received commands and prohibitions from Allah would be compelled to submit to these commands and prohibitions. This would render the means of testing ineffective, as it would eliminate the possibility for humans to exercise will, choice, and effort in choosing between good and evil.

c. Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun

Prophet Musa عليه السلام is the third among the great prophets known as "ulul-azm." He is from the lineage of Prophet Ya'qub and was sent as a prophet to the Children of Israel. His name is the most mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadiths, being cited 136 times in various contexts across 34 chapters of the Qur'an.

The Qur'an narrates the birth of Prophet Musa عليه السلام, his adoption into Pharaoh's palace, his journey to Midian, his selection as a prophet, his mission to save the Children of Israel from Pharaoh, his struggle with Pharaoh, the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, the reception of divine commands at Mount Sinai, and his guidance to the Children of Israel in the wilderness. According to the Qur'an, during the time of musa's birth, Pharaoh had divided his people, oppressed the weak, and committed injustices, including the killing of male infants while sparing female infants.[288]

According to the description in the Qur'an, Prophet Musa عليه السلام is a devout and sincere servant of God. He holds the titles of both messenger and prophet,

288. Al-Baqarah, 49-61; Al-A'raf, 141-162; Ibrahim, 6; Ta-Ha, 38-40; Al-Qasas, 3-50.

chosen by Allah, distinguished among people by Allah's message and words. He has attained the honor of closeness to Allah, comparable to someone whispering, which is why Muslims honor Musa with the title "kalimullah," meaning one who speaks with Allah. Musa عليه السلام was endowed with divine love, nurtured under the watchful eye of Allah, and, upon reaching maturity, was granted wisdom and knowledge. He was a strong, trustworthy, and honorable prophet.[289]

Musa عليه السلام received the Torah as a book, along with scrolls (suhuf) and tablets (alwah) containing divine instructions.[290] The Qur'an recommends both Musa and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to uphold the religion. Musa faced similar accusations from his opponents as Prophet Muhammad did, being criticized for turning people away from their fathers' religion and accused of sorcery. [291]Allah addresses believers in the Qur'an:

"O you who have believed, be not like those who abused Musa; then Allah cleared him of what they said. And he, in the sight of Allah, was distinguished." (Al-Ahzab, 69)

Once during the distribution of wealth by Prophet Muhammad, someone claimed that the distribution lacked Allah's pleasure. Prophet Muhammad, upon hearing this, became visibly upset. Later, when informed of this, he responded by expressing how much more hardship and criticism Prophet Musa endured, yet he remained patient.[292] Prophet Muhammad said, "May Allah have mercy on Musa; he was subjected to even greater hardship." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Anbiya', 28)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ described Prophet Musa عليه السلام as a person of great modesty. He mentioned that even though the Children of Israel bathed together, Prophet Musa bathed alone, and despite fasting on the Day of Ashura, he did so discreetly. Prophet Muhammad said, "Musa was very modest, very shy, so much so that his private parts were not exposed. You have seen him taking his bath alone, and you could see him taking his bath in a separate place." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Anbiya', 28)

289. Al-A'raf, 144; Maryam, 51-52; Ta-Ha, 13, 39, 41; Al-Qasas, 26; Al-Ahzab, 69; As-Saffat, 121-122; Ad-Duhan, 17-18.
290. Al-Baqarah, 53; Al-Anbiya, 48; An-Najm, 37; Al-Ala, 19.
291. Ash-Shura, 13; Yunus, 78; Al-Qasas, 48.
292. Al-Bukhari, Ghusl, 20; Janaiz, 69; Sawm, 69; Bad'al-Khalq, 7; Ahmed, I, 296.

When Allah commanded Musa ﷺ to go to Pharaoh, Musa requested his brother Harun as his assistant, and Allah accepted this request, appointing Harun as a prophet alongside Musa. The Qur'an mentions that both Musa and Harun were sent to Pharaoh with clear signs, and when Pharaoh's magicians were defeated, they openly declared their belief in the Lord of Musa and Harun. After the Children of Israel left Egypt, Musa appointed Harun as his deputy when he ascended Mount Sinai for forty days, in accordance with divine promise. Upon Musa's return and witnessing the idolatry of the Children of Israel, he questioned Harun, who explained his fear of being accused of causing division among the Children of Israel. And Harun indeed said to them beforehand[293] "O my people! You are being tried in this, and verily, your Lord is (Allah) the Most Gracious, so follow me and obey my order."[294]

Allah acknowledges His favor upon Musa and Harun, assuring that they will always be remembered with goodness. [295]

d. Prophet Isa ﷺ and Maryam (peace be upon her)

According to Islam, Prophet Isa ﷺ is one of the five greatest prophets known as "ulul-azm." His name or attributes are mentioned in 93 verses across 15 chapters of the Qur'an, especially in the chapters of Ali-Imran, Al-Ma'idah, and Maryam. The Qur'an provides information about the glad tidings of his birth, his coming into the world, his mission, miracles, the end of his worldly life, and his ascension to Allah. [296]

In the Qur'an, Jesus is referred to as Isa, Ibn Maryam (Son of Mary), and Messiah.[297] However, the term Messiah in the Qur'an does not carry the same meaning attributed to it by Christians. Islamic sources narrate that Prophet Isa ﷺ received this title due to his extensive travels, healing the sick by touch,

293. Ta-Ha, 90.
294. An-Nisa, 163; Al-An'am, 84; Al-A'raf, 121-122, 142, 151; Yunus, 75; Maryam, 53; Ta-Ha, 29-36, 70, 85, 90-94; Al-Anbiya, 48; Al-Mu'minun, 45; Al-Furqan, 35; Ash-Shu'ara, 48; Al-Qasas, 34; As-Saffat, 114.
295. As-Saffat, 114-119. For details about Moses and Aaron, see Osman Nuri Topbas, Chain of Prophets, II, 193-370 (http://nebilersilsilesi2.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/); Prof. Dr. Omer Faruk Harman, "Moses" entry, DIA, XXXI, 207-213; ibid., "Aaron" entry, DIA, XVI, 254-256.
296. Raghib al-Isfahani, The Great Dictionary, "msh" entry; Tabari, Comprehensive Interpretation (Shakir), VI, 414.
297. In the Quran, Jesus is also mentioned as "a spirit from Allah." It is stated that he was breathed into Mary and thus came to life. The word "spirit" here is interpreted as "command, blowing, mercy, and life" from Allah.

being born with protective measures against Satan's influence, and the touch of Angel Gabriel with his wing to ensure his safety. The term "Messiah" means "Blessed." Other names and titles given to Jesus in the Qur'an include Muayyad (supported by the Holy Spirit), Ruhullah (Spirit of Allah), Kalimah (Word),[298] Wajih (Honorable), Salih (Righteous), Rasul (Messenger), Mubashir (Bearer of glad tidings), Munib (Repentant), Musaddiq (Affirming the previous scriptures and prophets), Ayah (Sign, Miracle), Marafu' (Raised by Allah), Tahir (Pure), Noor (Light), Abd (Servant), Nabi (Prophet), Mubarak (Blessed), Ilm (Knowledge), Rahma (Mercy).[299] Prophet Isa عليه السلام, like other prophets, is a creation of Allah and a servant of God. Ascribing divinity to him or considering him a deity is not correct. [300]

The Qur'an mentions that the Imran family, to which the Virgin Mary belonged, is one of the four distinguished families elevated above all worlds. According to the Qur'an, when Mary secluded herself in a dedicated place, she encountered Angel Gabriel in human form, and out of fear, she sought refuge in Allah, who assured her that he was an envoy to bestow upon her a son. When Mary questioned how she could conceive without a man, the angel explained that Allah, with His command "Be," can create whatever He wills. Then the angel blew into her sleeve, and Mary became pregnant without any human touch.[301]

The miraculous birth of Jesus without a father is indeed extraordinary, but it does not imply his divinity. Using this miracle as a basis to attribute divinity to him is refuted by Allah, who draws a parallel with the creation of Adam. Adam was created without a father and a mother, and Allah's command "Be" brought him into existence instantly. Just as Adam's unique creation did not make him divine, the miraculous birth of Jesus does not bestow divinity upon him. [302]

After giving birth to Jesus, Mary returned to her people. They accused her of an illegitimate act upon seeing her with the child. In response, Jesus, while still in the cradle, miraculously spoke, declaring himself a servant of Allah, blessed, instructed to perform prayers and give alms, honoring his

298. The fact that Jesus is "a word from Allah" is explained in various ways, such as the realization of Allah's command "Be" and his prophethood.
299. Al-Baqarah, 87; Al-A'raf, 39, 45-46, 49-50, 55; An-Nisa, 158, 171; Maryam, 21, 26, 30-31; Al-Mu'minun, 50; Az-Zukhruf, 61; As-Saff, 6.
300. Al-A'raf, 33.
301. Al-A'raf, 35-47; Maryam, 16-22; At-Tahrim, 12.
302. Al-A'raf, 45-46; Maryam, 17-22; Al-Anbiya, 91; At-Tahrim, 12.

mother, and rejecting any notion of his being a tyrant.[303]This is mentioned in Surah Maryam, verses 27-33.

To protect Mary and her son Jesus from harm, Allah granted them refuge, placing them in a safe and water-providing location, as mentioned in Surah Al-Muminun, verse 50. The exact location is subject to different narrations. [304]

According to the Qur'an, Allah gave Jesus a book and blessed him. He was sent as a prophet to the Children of Israel, inviting them to worship the One God, confirming the Torah, modifying certain aspects, and commanding them to establish prayers and give alms. Jesus never advocated for his deification.[305]

Contrary to some beliefs, the Qur'an asserts that Jesus was not crucified. Those who opposed his message conspired to kill him, and Allah transformed the appearance of one of his followers to resemble Jesus[306]. As a result, the follower was crucified in Jesus' place. Allah curses those who claim to have killed Jesus, stating that they neither killed nor crucified him but were made to perceive it that way.[307] Jesus was raised to Allah's presence, and Allah is exalted in might and wisdom (An-Nisa, 157-158).

Based on verses and hadiths, it is generally accepted that Prophet Jesus, along with his soul and body, was raised to the presence of Allah (ascended), and he will return before the Day of Judgment, at which point his soul will be taken.

As for Virgin Mary, her name is mentioned in the Qur'an 34 times, and the 19th chapter of the Qur'an is named after her. Mary is the only woman mentioned by name in the Qur'an, and her father's name is Imran. Her mother is referred to as "the wife of Imran" without mentioning her name.[308]

Imran and his wife were old and childless. The wife prayed to Allah for a child and vowed to dedicate the child to the temple (Bait al-Maqdis) if her prayer was answered. The vow indicated her expectation of a male child, as per Jewish tradition to dedicate male children to the temple. Though she gave

303. Sa'lebi, Brides of the Assemblies, Beirut 1985, p. 381; Fakhruddin al-Razi, Keys to the Unseen, XXII, 189 (Al-Anbiya, 91).
304. Al-A'raf, 59.
305. Al-A'raf, 49-50; An-Nisa, 171; Al-Ma'idah, 46, 75, 116-117; Maryam, 30-31.
306. Al-A'raf, 54.
307. Tabari, History, I, 601-605; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, I, 226-227.
308. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Jesus" entry, DIA, XXII, 470

birth to a girl, which surprised her, Allah accepted her vow. Imran's wife named the child Mary, prayed for her and her descendants' protection against expelled Satan, and Allah accepted this prayer.[309]

Hadiths also indicate the sinlessness of Mary and Jesus. The act of the mother naming the child without mentioning the father reflects the father's death before the child's birth.[310] After the events, Zakariya عليه السلام took care of Mary. He took her to his home, entrusted her to his wife, and also hired a wet nurse who happened to be Mary's aunt. When Mary reached the age of puberty, Zakariya عليه السلام took her to the temple to fulfill her mother's vow. Mary settled in a room there, and Allah treated her favorably, raising her like a beautiful plant. Angels advised her to worship and bow down in prayer with those who bow down. [311]

Mary devoted herself to worship day and night. Her piety became an example among the Children of Israel. When the time came, Angel Gabriel عليه السلام announced to her that she would have a child. Allah said, "We breathed into the sleeves of Mary" (At-Tahrim: 12). During childbirth, Mary leaned on a date-palm tree and, fearing the reaction of her people, wished she had died before this event. Allah assured her not to grieve, created a stream beneath her, asked her to shake the tree to get fresh dates, and instructed her not to speak to anyone.[312]

After the birth, people accused Mary, but she pointed to the infant Jesus, who spoke in defense of his mother. In the Qur'an, Mary's story emphasizes her piety, devotion, and unique status among women.[313]

309. Al-A'raf, 35; At-Tahrim, 12.
310. Sa'lebi, p. 284
311. Al-A'raf, 35-37.
312. Al-Bukhari, Prophets, 44; Interpretation, 3/31; Ahmed, II, 233; Tabari, Comprehensive Interpretation, III, 235; Razi, Keys, VIII, 27.
313. Mugirah ibn Shu'bah رضي الله عنه says: "When I went to the region of Najran, they said to me: 'You read in your book: "O sister of Aaron, your father was not a man of evil..." (Maryam 28) verse. However, Moses lived hundreds of years before Jesus?!' When I came to the Prophet عليه السلام, I asked him about this issue, and he replied: 'They used to name themselves after the prophets and righteous people who came before them.'" (Muslim, Adab, 9; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 19/3154) With these statements, the Prophet عليه السلام informed that Mary's brother or elder relative was named Aaron. Thus, the Aaron mentioned in the verse is not the brother of Moses عليه السلام. Some scholars, based on this expression in the Quran, have also concluded that Mary is from the lineage of Moses and Aaron. Accordingly, it is possible to refer to Mary as "the sister of Aaron." Because in Arab custom, it was famous to address someone from the Tamim tribe as "O brother of Tamim" or someone from the Mudar tribe as "O brother of Mudar".

Mary, highly praised in the Qur'an and Hadiths, embodies virtues such as chastity, purity, and piety. [314]She is referred to as "Siddiqa" (truthful) in the Qur'an (Qur'an, 5:75). Mary is described as "Batul," signifying both spiritual perfection and physical beauty, making her the most beautiful and perfect woman of her time.[315] In Surah Ali-Imran (3:42), Mary is described as pure and free from worldly and spiritual evils. The mention of her chosen status in the same verse indicates her elevated position among heavenly women like Asiya, Fatima, and Khadija.[316]

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ mentioned the most virtuous women, he included Mary, stating that the best women of this ummah are Asiya, the wife of Pharaoh, and Mary, the daughter of Imran. He said, "Mary, the daughter of Imran, was the best among the women of her time, and the best among the women of this ummah is Khadija" (Muslim, Fadha'il as-Sahabah, 69). [317]

6. Belief in the Hereafter

Allah, in His infinite wisdom, has bestowed upon humanity invaluable capabilities and countless blessings. We cannot consider these blessings to be without purpose. The Lord simultaneously requires certain things from His servants, promising rewards to those who obey His commands and warning the disobedient with punishment. This is the essence of the Hereafter – a day of tremendous accountability where Allah's promises will be fulfilled, and the consequences of actions in this world will be recompensed, even to the smallest deed, whether good or bad. Without an afterlife, everyone's deeds would remain unresolved, and the efforts of those who suffered injustice, adversity, and lived virtuous lives amidst difficulties would be in vain. Allah says:

"Does man think that he will be left neglected?" (Al-Qiyamah, 36)

"Did We create you in vain and without purpose, and that you would not be returned to Us?" (Al-Mu'minun, 115)

314. Ali-Imran, 45; Al-Maida, 75; Al-Anbiya, 91; At-Tahrim, 12.
315. Ibn Manzur, Lisān al-Arab, "بتل" entry; Hazin, Lubab al-Ta'wil, Cairo 1309, I, 273.
316. Al-Bukhari, At'imah, 25.
317. For details about Jesus and Mary, see Osman Nuri Topbas, Chain of Prophets, III, 279-393 (http://nebilersilsilesi3.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/); Prof. Dr. Omer Faruk Harman, "Jesus" entry, DIA, XXII, 465-472; ibid., "Mary" entry, DIA, XXIX, 236-242.

In this world, some people are oppressed, exploited, subjected to torture, and experience only hardship. Conversely, others live in happiness, prosperity, and abundance, often unjustly mistreating the weak. Can the life stories of these two groups come to an end with the curtain of death without a concluding phase that brings about justice and transcends oppression? Would it be acceptable for a theater group to present a play, close the curtain after the first act, leaving the events shattered, scattered, and in need of explanation, abruptly ending the performance? If such a situation were to occur, what would the spectators think – those eagerly wanting to understand the purpose and main idea of the play and the playwright? Even a wise child would find such a play inappropriate. Therefore, how can one conceive that Allah, who has created everything perfectly and is aware of every matter, would portray the grand story of the universe in such an absurd and ugly manner? [318]

Those who haven't experienced pain can't comprehend it, but consider the plight of those who have fallen victim to unknown perpetrators of a crime or who have suffered injustice and been unable to obtain their rights due to various reasons. Without the Hereafter, who will deliver justice to them?

Humans have a sense of eternity within them. The belief that unfulfilled longings and separations in this world will be satisfied in the eternal realm comforts people. Verses and hadiths related to the Hereafter respond to this eternal longing within humans, indicating that death does not mark the end of everything. Conversely, the feeling of ceasing to exist leads to stress, despair, irresponsibility, and encourages committing injustices when opportunities arise.

Terry, an American who converted to Islam, states: "Humans have a desire: to exist forever... Islam promises people paradise for such an eternal life. It describes in more detail than any other religion what is in the grave, what is in the gathering place (mahshar), and what is in paradise."

Psychiatrist Dr. Yusuf Karaçay recounts: "I will never forget; in my childhood, I asked my mother: 'Mother, what will happen to us when we die?' 'We will go to heaven, my child.' 'Okay, but what will happen after that? I mean, how long will we live in heaven?' Perhaps my mother thought, 'This child at this age won't understand eternity; let me tell him a long time to comfort him,' because she said, 'We will live for a thousand years, my

318. Prof. Dr. M. S. Ramazan al-Buti, The Great Certainties of Existence, p. 180.

child.' I was so upset; even my little mind I said, 'Whether it's 10 years or 1,000 years, in the end, we will vanish. What's the point? I want eternity; I don't want to disappear.'"

This world is imperfect and transient. The blessings here are finite and limited. However, Allah's grace and blessings are infinite, limitless, eternal, and everlasting. Therefore, regardless of how abundant they may be, divine blessings and favors are not limited to this temporary world. The Lord will complete the blessings bestowed here in the Hereafter. If the Hereafter did not complement this world, the blessings and favors of Allah would be temporary and fleeting, and this world would be incomplete and deficient.[319]

The Creator of this world, Allah, who made it so beautifully, promises the creation of another realm called the Hereafter. No one has the right to doubt this, as Allah continuously proves His capability to us. [320]

319. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, The Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 63.

320. Is There Life After Birth? Twin siblings who fell into their mother's womb were initially unaware of everything. As weeks passed, they developed. Their hands, feet, internal organs began to form. In the meantime, they began to notice what was happening around them. As they recognized the comfortable and safe place they were in, their happiness increased. They kept saying to each other, "Isn't it wonderful that we fell into our mother's womb and live here? Life is such a beautiful thing, isn't it, brother!" As they grew, they set out to explore the world they lived in. While researching the source of life, they noticed the cord connecting them to their mother. Through this cord, they realized that they were nourished and grew safely without any effort, and said, "How great is our mother's compassion! She sends us everything we need through this cord." Months passed, the twins grew rapidly, approaching "the end of the road," as it were. As they watched these changes with amazement, one day they began to receive signs that they would leave this beautiful world, and as they approached the ninth month, they began to feel the signs more strongly. One of the twins, worried about the situation, asked the other, "What's happening? What does all this mean?" The other was calmer, and moreover, the world they were in often did not satisfy him; he longed for a broader realm with his feelings: "All this means that we can no longer stay in this world. We are approaching the end of our life here!" he said. The other exclaimed, "But I don't want to go, I want to stay here forever!" His brother replied, "There's nothing we can do, besides, maybe there's a completely different life after birth." The other said, "How can that be possible after the cord that gave us life is cut? How can we survive if we have to leave here? Besides, look, others came here before us and then left. None of them returned to tell us that there is life after birth. No, this will be the end of everything," he said, adding gloomily, "Besides, maybe there is no such thing as a mother!" His brother objected, "There must be! Otherwise, how else could we have come here, how could we survive?" The other persisted, "Have you ever seen your mother? Maybe she's just in our minds. We might have made her up because the thought of having a mother comforts us." Thus, their last days in the womb passed with deep contemplation and debate. Finally, the moment of birth arrived. When the twins left their world, they opened their eyes to another world, and one started crying out of joy while the other out of embarrassment. Because the scene they saw was beyond their imagination.

Benefits of Believing in the Hereafter

Believing in the Hereafter mitigates the destructive impact of the fear of death on human psychology. Striving to escape troubles and attain eternal tranquility, achieving Allah's pleasure, leads to a sense of joy in life, providing endurance against the hardships of the world. Since temporary worldly desires do not truly satisfy the human soul, religion imparts to it the highest and sublime pleasures, spiritual delights.

Living a peaceful and prosperous life in this world is only possible through belief in the Hereafter. The belief in the Hereafter strengthens the sense of responsibility, instills a commitment to duty, and ensures respect for justice and legality. In this way, it becomes a means to a very sound moral understanding, an excellent concept of order, and a sublime sense of gratitude.

A person who sincerely believes in meeting Allah and giving an account of all words, actions, and deeds before Him, as expressed in the prayer at least forty times a day, will undoubtedly possess a high ethical standard and a profound understanding of justice. The conviction of someone who believes, "Goodness does not perish, evil is not forgotten, and the One who will hold me accountable never dies," will undoubtedly influence their actions. Prophet Muhammad said, "No servant will move on the Day of Judgment until asked about his life, how he spent his knowledge, from where he earned and where he spent, and in what activities he wore down his body."[321] A faithful believer who knows this hadith will undoubtedly pay attention to their accountability. [322]

Belief in the Hereafter contributes to the moral development of an individual. Some people refrain from evil and injustice in places where there are no laws or societal pressures because they believe they will be held accountable for their actions one day. Otherwise, it would be necessary to appoint a guardian and police for everyone.

It can be stated that without the belief in returning to Allah, real success in this life cannot be achieved.

The belief in the Hereafter, due to its importance, has been brought up in almost every surah of the Quran, often mentioned alongside belief in Allah

321. Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 1/2417.
322. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, The Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 64.

in many Quranic verses. Especially in the last three juz' of the Quran, much emphasis is placed on the Hereafter. Allah says:

"Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds - for them are the Gardens of

Pleasure. They will not be grieved therein, [and] they will not be deprived." (Al-Baqarah, 62)

The Hereafter is a new, infinite, and real life that begins after death. It is stated in the Quran:

"This worldly life is not but amusement and diversion. But the home of the Hereafter is the best for those who fear Allah, so will you not reason?" (Al-Ankabut, 64)

After the completion of worldly life, the blowing of the Trumpet by the archangel Israfil will signal the occurrence of the Day of Judgment.[323] "Qiyamah" refers to rising, standing, getting up, straightening, and resurrecting, meaning the disruption of the order of the universe, the complete upheaval and destruction of everything, and the resurrection of all deceased individuals to stand before Allah.[324] According to the Quran, the Day of Judgment will undoubtedly come. There is no doubt about it. Its signs have appeared, and its time is approaching. [325]

The Day of Judgment and What Comes After

Throughout history, the occurrence of the Day of Judgment has been universally accepted by people. Views that accept the cyclical nature of time and the continuation of worldly life based on the belief in karma-reincarnation, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, and those that accept the linear progression of time, such as the Abrahamic religions, all believe in the Day of Judgment, albeit with some differences.[326]

According to the Quran, when the Day of Judgment arrives, terrifying scenes will unfold: the sky will split open, molten metal will flow like lava, the Sun and the Moon will lose their light, stars will scatter, mountains will

323. An-Naml, 87; Az-Zumar, 68; Al-Haqqah, 14-16.
324. See Raghib, The Great Dictionary, "kvm" entry, 417-418; Lisān al-Arab, "kvm" entry; Bekir Topaloglu, "Resurrection" entry, DIA, XXV, 517.
325. Al-Hijr, 85; Al-Hajj, 7; Muhammad, 18; Al-Qamar, 1.
326. Topaloglu, "Resurrection" entry, DIA, XXV, 516.

be like wool, seas will boil and erupt, hell will be kindled, and paradise will be brought near. Eyes will be dazzled by terror, people will flee, but they will find no refuge. Due to this dreadful scene, even ten-month pregnant camels, which are highly valuable, will be set free, wild animals will gather together. No one will ask about their loved ones; due to a deafening sound and a terrible earthquake, nursing mothers will forget their infants, pregnant women will miscarry, and people will appear as if they were intoxicated. On that day, even a sinful person will seek to ransom themselves from the torment by offering their children, spouse, siblings, the entire family who supported them, and even all the people on earth.[327] The Almighty Allah says: "They did not appraise Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He, and high above what they associate with Him. The Horn will be blown, and whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth will fall dead except whom Allah wills. Then it will be blown again, and at once they will be standing, looking on." (Az-Zumar, 67-68)

This verse reminds us that the perfection of Allah's power and the great deeds that astound the minds are still small and simple in the face of His power. The verse helps us understand the issue more easily by giving an example and visualizing the event in our minds.[328]

Prophet Muhammad recommended reading Surah At-Takwir, Surah Al-Infitar, and Surah Al-Inshiqaq for those who want to feel as if they are witnessing the Day of Judgment.(Tirmizi, Tafseer, 81-3333)

Scientific studies also indicate that the Day of Judgment will be terrifying. Scientists predict the end of the Sun, a crucial part of the cosmic system, as follows:

"The Sun, a medium-sized star, will eventually reach the red giant stage. As the helium fuel diminishes, and due to the pressure of the radiation from

327. See Al-Hajj, 1-2; Al-Ma'arij, 8-14; Al-Qiyamah, 6-12; At-Takwir, 1-13; Al-Infitar, 1-5. Also, see Ibrahim, 48; Ta-Ha, 105-107; Al-Qamar, 7-8; Al-Haqqah, 14-16; Al-Muzzammil, 14; Al-Mursalat, 8-11; Abasa, 34-42; Al-Inshiqāq, 1-5; Al-Qari'ah, 1-5, regarding the magnitude of the resurrection.

328. See Zamakhshari, V, 170; Abu al-Suud, VII, 262; Yāzır, M. Hamdi, VI, 4136, (Az-Zumar, 67-68). The method of portrayal in the Quran facilitates the easy understanding of the comprehensive and universal truths by providing small glimpses that human limited perception can comprehend. (Sayyid Qutb, In the Shades, V, 3061, [Az-Zumar, 67]). In some narrations, the situation of the seven heavens and the seven earths before the divine power on the Day of Judgment is likened to a mustard seed or a walnut in the palm of the hand. (Tabari, XXIV, 32-33, [Az-Zumar, 67]).

the nuclear reactions taking place in the core and its surroundings, our star will swell, increasing its diameter by about 300 times.

Meanwhile, the Sun's surface will get closer to the Earth, perhaps even encompassing the Earth within its outer layer. With the expansion, the surface temperature of the Sun will decrease to around 3500 degrees, and it will take on a reddish appearance. Against the cooling of the Sun's surface, due to the much-increased surface area and its approach to our planet, the Earth will become uninhabitable. The pressure and temperature caused by the radiation will cause all water to evaporate, and the Earth will turn into a hot and dry rock. In the coming process, the expanded and cooled layers will contract again, and after a few 'pulsation' processes, the outer layers of the Sun will be thrown into space, forming a planetary nebula. What remains of the Sun is an extremely dense, very hot, and bright core, but as small as the Earth. This white dwarf will cool over millions of years and gradually disappear, becoming a black dwarf."[329]

Resurrection After Death

According to the teachings of the Quran, the first stage of the Day of Judgment, representing the general destruction, will be followed by the second stage when a second blow is delivered to the Sur, and all people will be resurrected, rising to their feet once again.[330] This resurrection and rising after death is referred to as "Ba'su ba'da'l-mawt" (Rising after Death). Allah Almighty unequivocally asserts to those who deny that resurrection after death will undoubtedly happen: "Say, 'Whether you conceal what is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knows it. And He knows that which is in the heavens and that which is on the earth. And Allah is over all things competent. On the Day every soul will find what it has done of good present [before it] and what it has done of evil, it will wish that between itself and that [evil] was a great distance. And Allah warns you of Himself, and Allah is Kind to [His] servants.'" (Ali-Imran, 29-30)

When contemplated, even in a body reduced to bone and dust, there are certain truths reminiscent of humanity. Iron and stone, according to them, are much farther from vitality. Therefore, this verse is a kind of challenge to those

329. http://www.biltek.tubitak.gov.tr, Universe/Solar System/The End of the Solar System.
330. Az-Zumar, 68.

who deny.[331] Allah, who created the heavens and the earth with all His glory and perfection, is certainly capable of resurrecting people who are weaker and less powerful than them.[332] As we witness every day, Allah brings the living from the dead and repeatedly revitalizes the earth after its death.[333] Similarly, He will bring people out of their graves.[334] The Almighty says:

"A man says, 'When I have died, am I going to be brought forth alive?' Does man not remember that We created him before, while he was nothing?" (Maryam, 66-67)

Narrated by Abu Razin:

"One day, I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! How does Allah resurrect the creatures? What is its worldly example?' The Prophet replied, 'Have you ever passed through the valley of your people during a dry season, and then visited there during a spring when everything was lush and green?' I said, 'Certainly.' He said, 'This is evidence of Allah's recreation. Allah will resurrect the dead in the same way!'" (Ahmad, IV, 11)

Creating and resurrecting all humans and creating and resurrecting a single individual make no difference to Allah.[335] Allah Almighty, who will resurrect humans and jinn after their deaths, will then gather them all in a place called "Mahshar." This gathering is known as "hashr." Allah Almighty describes Himself in the Quran as "jâmiu'n-nâs," meaning "The Gatherer for the Day of Reckoning."[336]

To envision the gathering of such crowds at Mahshar, the vast space that will encompass them, and the accountability for all rights and responsibilities, both towards Allah and towards one another, may seem impossible within the human imagination. However, the Quran assures us that for the Supreme Creator,[337] who has command over all the hosts of the heavens and the earth, this is an exceedingly simple matter: "Indeed, it is We who give life and cause death, and to Us is the destination. The Day the earth breaks open all around

331. Qutb, In the Shades, IV, 2233, (Al-Isra, 50).
332. As-Saffat, 11; An-Nazi'at, 27.
333. Al-Isra, 99; An-Nazi'at, 27-33.
334. Ar-Rum, 19, 24; Fatir, 9.
335. Luqman, 28.
336. Ali-Imran, 9.
337. Al-Fath, 4, 7.

them, they [emerge] rapidly upon the call. That is easy for Us." (Qaf, 43-44. See also Qamar, 50; Luqman, 28)

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, narrates:

"There was a man who had committed many sins, greatly oppressing his own soul. When death approached, he said to his sons, 'When I die, burn my body, crush my ashes thoroughly, and scatter them in the wind. I swear by Allah, if my Lord seizes me, He will inflict a punishment on me that He has never inflicted on anyone else!' When he died, his instructions were carried out. Allah commanded the earth, saying, 'Collect whatever is in him for Me.' The earth gathered everything. The man stood up, and Allah asked, 'Why did you make such a will?' The servant replied, 'Out of fear of You, O my Lord!' Allah, the Exalted, forgave him." (Muslim, Tawbah, 25; Al-Bukhari, Tawhid, 35, Anbiya', 50)

From the creation of the world to the moment when the Day of Judgment occurs, Allah, who gathers all humans and jinn together on the field of resurrection,[338] where nothing about their deeds and conditions remains hidden, addresses them as follows:

"Today sovereignty belongs to whom? (The people of the resurrection answer:)[339] To the Almighty, the sole ruling Allah!" (Al-Mu'min, 16)

"On that day, the reality of man will be laid bare, but how will it benefit him to know?" (Al-Fajr, 23)

The Prophet's words vividly describe the horror of that day:

"At the bridge (Sirat), the supplication of the believers will be, 'O Lord, grant safety, grant safety!'" (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 9/2432)

"On the Day of Judgment, the words of the messengers will be, 'O Allah, grant safety, grant safety!'" (Al-Bukhari, Adzan, 129)

On the Day of Judgment, people gather in a field and anxiously await. To be relieved from this long wait and dreadful fear, they turn to Prophet

338. Al-Hijr, 24-25; Al-An'am, 128; Ali-Imran, 9, 25, 55; An-Nisa, 87, 172; Al-An'am, 38; Al-Kahf, 47.
339. When believers give this answer, they do so with great joy and pleasure, while disbelievers give it with their heads bowed in sorrow for missing the opportunity. Because believers will attain high ranks with these words, and disbelievers will feel intense sadness and regret because they couldn't say such things while in the world. (Al-Qurtubi, XV, 300, [Al-Mu'min, 16]; Razi, XXVII, 41, [Al-Mu'min, 16]).

Adam, who sends them to Prophet Nuh, then to Prophet Ibrahim, then to Prophet Musa, then to Prophet Isa, and finally to our Prophet Muhammad, ﷺ. The prophets, too, are filled with fear and view saving themselves as a great success. Prophet Muhammad falls into prostration, praising Allah in the most beautiful way. When granted permission for intercession, he intercedes for all of humanity, particularly for his ummah, step by step.

Describing the passage of his ummah over the Bridge (Sirat), the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says: "At the Bridge, your fast ones pass like the speed of lightning... Then like the wind, then like the flight of a bird, and like the swift run of a man. They pass with the speed of their deeds. During this time, your Prophet stands at the beginning of the Bridge and continuously says: 'O Lord, grant safety, grant safety!' Until people's deeds become insufficient to carry them over the Bridge, this situation continues. Even a person comes, unable to walk, and tries to crawl. There are hanging hooks on both sides of the Bridge. They are tasked with catching the commanded individuals. Some people, who have been scratched and wounded by these hooks, manage to escape, while others are thrown into hell." (Muslim, Iman, 329)

Allah holds a severe reckoning for people at the beginning of the afterlife. In the Quranic verses, it is stated:

"Whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it." (Az-Zalzalah, 7-8)[340]

"That Day, neither wealth will be of any use nor children. Except for one who comes to Allah with a sound heart." (Ash-Shu'ara, 88-89)

A person once came to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, teach me what Allah has taught you." The Prophet sent him to one of his companions to learn the Quran. When the companion reached the end of the Zalzalah surah, where the verses state, "Whoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it," the man, deeply affected by these words, pondered and said, "This is sufficient for me." When this was reported to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

340. The good deeds of unbelievers in the world also do not go unrewarded. The Messenger of Allah said: "Indeed, when an unbeliever does a good deed, he is given a worldly blessing in return. As for a believer, Allah stores his good deeds for the Hereafter, and in this world, He provides him sustenance according to his worship." (Muslim, Munafiqin, 57, 56)

he said, "Leave him, for he has grasped the truth and gained understanding." (Suyuti, ad-Durr al-Mansur, VIII, 597)

Similarly, when a Bedouin heard the Prophet reciting these verses, he asked, "Is it even an atom's weight?" The Prophet replied, "Yes." The Bedouin, whose state changed suddenly, exclaimed, "Woe to my shortcomings!" and repeated these words many times. Later, he repeated the verses he had heard, got up, and left. Afterward, Prophet Muhammad commented, "Faith has entered the heart of this Bedouin." (Suyuti, ed-Durr al-Mansur, VIII, 595)

Just as a person in authority distinguishes between those who obey and disobey his instructions among subordinates, loves those who listen to his words, rewards them, and dislikes those who do not listen, dismissing them from their jobs, the situation is somewhat similar in the afterlife.

People gather together on the Day of Judgment and begin to wait in terror. To escape this long wait and dreadful fear, they appeal to Adam عليه السلام for intercession. He sends them to Nuh عليه السلام. He sends them to Ibrahim عليه السلام; he, to Musa عليه السلام; he, to Isa عليه السلام, and finally, he sends them to our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The prophets themselves are in fear and dread. They see saving themselves as a great success. Prophet Muhammad prostrates and praises Allah in the most beautiful way. When permission for intercession is granted to him, he intercedes for all of humanity and especially for his ummah, step by step.[341]

After the reckoning, those who believed in this world and led a beautiful life filled with righteous deeds will go to paradise, while disbelievers will go to hell. Believers who commit sins either receive their punishment in hell proportionate to their sins or, after seeking Allah's forgiveness, enter paradise directly.

When a disbeliever does a good deed in this world, Allah rewards him in this world, not leaving it for the afterlife. Prophet Muhammad said, "Indeed, when a disbeliever does a good deed, he is rewarded with worldly benefits. As for the believer, Allah stores his good deeds for the hereafter and provides for him in this world according to his worship." (Muslim, Hypocrites, 57, 56)

Allah treats the believers with grace and favor, and the disbelievers with justice. Allah has not informed His servants of when the Day of Judgment will occur, only indicating some signs. Therefore, the main issue is not when the Day of Judgment will occur, but what each person has prepared for their own personal judgment, death, and the afterlife.

341. Al-Bukhari, Al-Anbiya' 3, 9, Tafsir, 17/5; Muslim, Iman, 322-329; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 10/2434.

a. Paradise

Paradise is the abode of afterlife blessings. It is the place where those who obey their Lord, the Creator, and are bestowed with various blessings will be rewarded. Believers in paradise will dwell there eternally without the fear of losing the bestowed blessings or moving away from Allah's pleasure. They will not experience any distress and will not be expelled from paradise.

The people of Paradise eat and drink in Paradise, but they do not need to relieve themselves or blow their noses. They only emit a pleasant belch and sweat. Their sweat smells wonderfully fragrant. Their dishes and combs are made of gold and silver. They never feel tired or bored. Each of them is given extremely beautiful and pure spouses.[342] These doe-eyed women, untouched by anyone other than their destined husbands, do not pay attention to anyone else and do not go beyond their spouses' desires and wishes. The Prophet Muhammad described how beautiful they are: "If one of the women of Paradise were to look at the earth, she would fill the space between heaven and earth with light." (Al-Bukhari, Riqaq 51)"

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"When the people of paradise enter paradise, someone will call out to them: 'You will live in paradise forever; you will never die. You will always be healthy, never fall ill; you will remain young, never grow old; you will live in eternal bliss and happiness, never experiencing sorrow or distress." (Muslim, Jannah, 22)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said: "Musa عليه السلام asked his Lord: 'What is the lowest rank of the people of paradise?' Allah, the Almighty, said: 'It is the rank of the last person to enter paradise. When it is said to him, 'Enter paradise,' he will say, 'O my Lord! When everyone has taken their place and received what is due to them, where will I go?' Allah will ask him, 'If I were to give you a kingdom like that of a world ruler, would you be satisfied?' He will reply, 'I am satisfied, O my Lord!' Then Allah will say, 'You will have that, and as much again, and as much again, and as much again.' At the fifth time, the person will say, 'I am satisfied, O my Lord!'" (Muslim, Iman, 312)

342. See Al-Baqarah, 25; An-Nisa, 57; Fatir, 35; As-Saffat, 45-49; Al-Bukhari, Bad' al-Khalq 8, Prophets 1; Muslim, Jannah 15-18; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah 60, Jannah 5; Ibn Majah, Zuhd 39.

Musa عليه السلام then asked: "O my Lord! What is the highest rank of the people of paradise?" Allah replied: "They are My chosen servants. I have planted the saplings of their honor with My own hand of power. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no heart of anyone has perceived the delights that I have prepared for them." The evidence from Allah's book for this is the following verse: "They arise from their beds, calling upon their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend. And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for eyes as reward for what they used to do." (As-Sajda, 16-17) (Muslim, Iman, 312; Jannah, 5)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, outlines the path to entering paradise as follows: "If someone wishes to be saved from Hell and enter paradise, they should die as a believer in Allah and the

Last Day. They should treat others as they wish to be treated..." (Muslim, Imarat, 46; Nasa'i, Bay'ah, 25; Ibn Majah, Fitan, 9)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, once said: "Except those who refuse, all of my ummah will enter paradise." When asked, "O Messenger of Allah, who would refuse to enter paradise?" he replied, "Those who obey me will enter paradise, and those who disobey me have refused paradise." (Al-Bukhari, I'tisam, 2)

A person asked the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ how he could enter paradise. The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Worship Allah, associating nothing with Him. Establish prayers, give zakat, and maintain family ties by visiting relatives." (Al-Bukhari, Zakat, 1; Adab, 10; Muslim, Iman, 12, 14)

Furthermore, the Prophet, peace be upon him, gives the good news: "Whoever makes their last words 'There is no god but Allah' will enter paradise." (Abu Dawood, Janaiz, 20/3116; Ahmad, V, 247; Hakim, I, 503)

Of course, to be able to say "There is no god but Allah" in the final breath, it is necessary to live by it in our words, actions, deeds, and character throughout our lives. In this way, the phrase of monotheism can easily be uttered in the most challenging moment of life, the last breath.

b. Hell

Hell is the place where rebellious and unjust individuals, ungrateful to the Almighty who bestows all kinds of blessings, will be punished. The Quran continuously warns its servants not to violate "the limits set by Allah" and

emphasizes the severity of Allah's punishment. Those who persist in disobedience have ultimately deserved the most severe torment.[343] The verses of the Quran state:

"Indeed, those who deny Our verses, We will drive them into a Fire. Every time their skins are roasted through, We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted in Might and Wise." (An-Nisa, 56)

"Therein the Fire will burn their faces, and they will grin with displaced lips." (Al-Mu'minun, 104)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also provides insight:

"Undoubtedly, on the Day of Judgment, the lightest torment for the inhabitants of Hell is the person whose two sandals are set on fire, causing his brain to boil. This person will think that no one is experiencing more severe torment than him, while in reality, he is the one with the mildest punishment among the inhabitants of Hell." (Al-Bukhari, Prophets, 1; Detached Parts of the Body, 51; Muslim, Iman, 362-364)

Abu Sa'id reported:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "On the Day of Judgment, Death will be brought in the form of a ram and will be placed between Heaven and Hell. Then it will be said: 'O inhabitants of Heaven, do you recognize this?' They will raise their heads, look, and say: 'Yes, it is Death.' Then it will be said: 'O inhabitants of Hell, do you recognize this?' They will raise their heads, look, and say: 'Yes, it is Death.' Then an order will be given, and it will be slaughtered. Afterwards, it will be announced: 'O inhabitants of Heaven, there is life for you, and you will remain forever. O inhabitants of Hell, there is life for you, and you will remain forever.' He then recited the verse: 'Warn them of the approaching Day when the hearts will be choking each other, filled with suppressed agony.' (Maryam, 39)" (Muslim, Jannah, 40)

In another narration by Tirmidhi, it is mentioned: "...The ram is brought and slaughtered. If Allah had not given life to the people of Paradise due to their joy and delight, they would have died. Likewise, if Allah had not granted life to the people of Hell due to their sorrow, they would have died." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 19/3156)

343. See Ibrahim, 15-17; Al-Hajj, 19; Al-Furqan, 12-14; Al-Ghashiyah, 2-7.

c. Reincarnation and the Fallacy of Summoning Spirits

Some claim that the soul seamlessly continues its existence by transitioning from one body to another, suggesting that the souls of virtuous individuals move on to noble personalities while the souls of the wicked are transferred to animals. This belief is known as reincarnation.

This idea existed before Islam among ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and some Jews. In Islamic history, it also surfaced among certain extreme factions of Kaderites and Rafidis.[344]

Islam rejects the concept of reincarnation, as it is incompatible with faith and, especially, belief in the afterlife. The Qur'an states: "When those who disbelieve are set before the Fire, they will be restrained from it, and it will be said to them, 'Is it not true? Did there not come to you messengers from among you, reciting to you the verses of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this Day of yours?' They will say, 'Yes, but the word [of punishment] has come into effect upon the disbelievers.'" (Al-An'am, 27-28)

"When death comes to one of them, he says, 'My Lord, send me back that I may do righteousness in that which I left behind.' No! It is only a word he is saying; and behind them is a barrier until the Day they are resurrected." (Al-Mu'minûn, 99-100)

"Do they not see how many generations We destroyed before them, which We had established upon the earth as We have not established you? And We poured down on them rain from the sky in showers, and made rivers flow beneath them. Yet We destroyed them for their sins and brought forth after them a generation of others." (Ya-Sin, 31)[345]

Islam emphasizes that human souls do not return to other bodies and that summoning spirits is futile. The soul is occupied with significant matters such as being held accountable and receiving the consequences of its deeds. Allah states:

"Man, against himself, is a witness, even though he offers his excuses." (Al-Qiyamah, 14-15)

344. Baghdadi, The Distinction between the Sects, Beirut 1990, p. 272.
345. Also see Al-A'raf, 53; Ibrahim, 44; An-Nahl, 78; Maryam, 67; Al-Anbiya, 95; Fatir, 37; Al-Munafiqun, 10-11.

Believers desire to be martyred repeatedly for the sake of Allah, but Allah responds, "I have already decreed that those who die will not return to the world." Various narrations also describe angels questioning individuals in the grave and the nature of their resting place, either a garden from paradise or a pit from hell, based on their deeds.[346]

Believers in reincarnation fail to comprehend that the consequences of deeds in this world require a life much longer than thousands of years. Reincarnation cannot adequately resolve the issues of reward and punishment. Furthermore, the transmission of good and evil deeds through generations adds complexity, making it an impractical belief.

Aside from these inconsistencies, the doctrine of reincarnation cannot reasonably explain the spiritual and physical traits passed from parents to children through inheritance or the continuous population growth on Earth. People claiming to converse with spirits may be misled, and the source of information given in such conversations might be deceptive beings. The notion that an individual can recall events from a past life or visit unseen realms during summoning may result from various factors, such as communication with unseen entities or perceptions during altered states like sleep.

According to René Guénon, contrary to the claims of spiritualists and occultists, there is no evidence in nature supporting reincarnation. On the contrary, many incidents support the opposite.[347] Some claim to summon spirits and communicate with them, even establishing connections with great saints and prophets. Just as there are wicked people whose habit is to lie and deceive others, there are also jinn who behave in this way. How can one know that the being summoned during a seance is not a rebellious demon? It is known that the source of the foolishness put forward by those who claim greatness and prophethood is these demons. Satan has various methods of deception.[348] During the era of ignorance, Satan would enter idols and speak to idolaters. Indeed, after the conquest of Mecca, a being resembling an old and ugly woman emerged from the idols named Nâile and Uzzâ and appeared to some

346. Al-Bukhari, Funerals, 68, 87; Muslim, Mosques, 123.
347. See Rene Guenon, Spiritual Error, Istanbul 1996; M. Said Simsek, Contemporary Problems of Exegesis, Konya 1995; Celal Kırca, Reincarnation According to Islam, Kayseri 1986; Mustafa Çetin, Reincarnation in the Light of the Quran, Ankara 1990.
348. Buti, The Great Certainties of Existence, p. 284. 217 Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah, V, 75-76; Al-Waqidi, Expeditions, III, 873; Ibn Sa'd, Tabakat, II, 146, Azraqi, News of Mecca, I, 127; Abu'l-Munzir Hisham, The Book of Names, p. 25.

companions.[349] After Islam eradicated idols, Satan resorts to other methods to deceive people.

In conclusion, the fallacies and inconsistencies in the belief of reincarnation are evident. Islam provides a comprehensive understanding of the soul, its purpose, and its journey beyond this life, negating the need for alternative theories like reincarnation.

7. Belief in Fate (divine decree)

Allah, the Almighty, creates beings with a destiny and guides them accordingly. He creates with precision and maintains an extraordinary order. The general content of the destiny program includes the creation and management of nature within the framework of destiny, as well as the creation of humans, who occupy a special place within nature and are endowed with exceptional abilities. [350]Not even a falling leaf is outside this program. Today, we understand that even a small leaf contains a vast universe. If beings did not adhere to the destiny program, great chaos would ensue in the universe. Allah expresses this truth as follows:

"We have created everything, measured [it] precisely." (Al-Qamar, 49)

"No disaster strikes upon the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being. Indeed, that, for Allah, is easy." (Al-Hadid, 22)

Allah, in His pre-knowledge, arranges and determines events that have not yet occurred, and then, as it is predetermined, brings them into reality when the time comes. However, Allah has granted human beings partial willpower and held them responsible for their actions. Therefore, the pre-determination of destiny does not exempt individuals from accountability, nor does it serve as an excuse for laziness or negligence.

Human actions can be categorized into two types:

349. Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah, V, 75-76, Al-Waqidi, Maghazi, 3,873, İbn Sa'd, Tabaqat,2,146, Azraqi, Ahbaru makkah, 1,127, Ebul nunzir Hisham, Kitabu'l Asnam, 25
350. For the Qur'anic verses on this subject, see Ozsoy-Guler, Qur'an Index, p. 3-48. For the necessity of belief in fate, see Al-Bukhari, Iman, 37; Muslim, Iman, 1, 5; Tirmidhi, Iman, 4; Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 16; Ahmad, I, 97.

- Involuntary (beyond one's control) actions: Actions that occur without one's choice, such as birth, the environment of birth, hunger, blood circulation in the body, and hair growth. People neither earn reward nor incur sin through these actions, as they are not accountable for them.

- They continue according to the destiny that Allah has written for them.

- Voluntary (actions done by choice) actions: Actions that are within a person's choice. Here, individuals have the freedom to decide how to act. If they perform righteous deeds, they earn rewards; if they commit sinful acts, they incur sins. For example, deciding to perform prayers is within a person's free will. Allah has given individuals the choice to decide their actions in matters of faith and obedience or disbelief and disobedience. The Quran emphasizes that people will enter paradise or hell based on their deeds, and Allah treats His servants justly, without any injustice. [351]

The concepts of fate (qadr) and destiny (qada') are based on Allah's attributes of knowledge (ilm) and will (iradah), as well as His attributes of power (qudrah) and creation (takwin). Believing in these attributes means believing in fate. Allah, with His attribute of knowledge, knows the unseen, and His knowledge encompasses everything. He is aware of what is in the heavens and on the earth, the apparent and the hidden, and what people reveal and conceal in their hearts.[352] With His attribute of will, Allah does as He wishes and creates as He wills. However, Allah has informed that belief or disbelief depends on individual choice, opened the way to guidance for those who will believe, and allowed those who deny to persist in their misguidance. If He had willed, everyone would believe, but He did not will that people believe without their free will and choices; hence, He left them free.[353]

In the Quran, it is explained that different divine actions will take place concerning believers and disbelievers, depending on how they use their will and power in matters of faith and obedience or disbelief and disobedience. Allah increases the faith and guidance of those who believe and perform righteous deeds, elevates their hearts to tranquility, raises them to the level of piety, makes faith beloved to them, and shows disbelief and sin as repulsive.

351. Al-Kahf, 29; As-Sajda, 19-20; Saba, 37-38; Ya-Sin, 54, 63-64.
352. Al-Baqarah, 77; At-Tawbah, 78; An-Nahl, 19, 23; Al-Hujurat, 16, 18; At-Talaq, 12.
353. M. F. Abdulbaki, al-Mu'jam, "rvd," "shy" items.

Consequently, they cannot be misled by anyone.[354] In contrast, Allah withdraws His help from those who deny and oppose His commands. They remain lost among false paths.

Allah, in His eternal knowledge, knows all actions of His servants and all other events concerning His creation. Everything occurs as Allah knew it would when the time comes. Contrary to some people's misconception, there is no compulsion (jabr), meaning forcing people to do something, in this context. Allah, by the nature of His divinity, must know the actions of His servants and the events that will take place in His realm. Otherwise, there would be a deficiency in His knowledge.

However, this knowledge does not compel people to do certain things. Allah, with His eternal knowledge, has written down past and future events; yet, knowing is different from making happen. The calculation of a solar eclipse can be made, but it does not occur because scientists know it in advance. The sun will eclipse at a certain time; scientists research and know it beforehand. Writing down and creating something at the appropriate time when one wishes and takes action is different. A person wants to do something with their free will, and Allah, due to the test, allows them to do so freely. He creates the desired action, but He is pleased with good and right actions while not being pleased with evil deeds. Allah states:

"Indeed, Allah does not do injustice, [even] as much as an atom's weight." (An-Nisa, 40)

"Any calamity that befalls you is a result of your own deeds. (However,) Allah forgives many sins." (Ash-Shura, 30)

Therefore, if a person falls into a bad path and says, "What can I do, it's my destiny!" it is only the result of their heedlessness. To a person who wishes to pray, the Almighty grants the means to pray; to those who intend to commit sins, He does not prevent them but allows the action they desire. However, since He has already declared it forbidden, they are held accountable. Sometimes, Allah does not grant the opportunity to those who want to commit sins; this is a favor from Him. Similarly, for certain wisdom, Allah may not provide the chance for those willing to do good deeds. In such cases, Allah rewards His servant according to their intention due to His mercy and generosity.

354. Ibrahim, 27; Al-Kahf, 13-14, 17; Az-Zumar, 22-23, 37; Al-Hujurat, 7; Al-Mujadalah, 22.

A person trying to excuse themselves by blaming fate is an injustice against truth and justice.

Fate can never be an excuse for laziness, a means for transgressions, or a way to claim compulsion. A believer cannot use fate as an excuse for laziness. On the contrary, they know how to resist poverty with work, ignorance with knowledge, and illness with medication and treatment.

Believing in destiny and fate does not mean blindly surrendering to the flow of events without seeking solutions or taking action. Believing in fate means acknowledging that everything has a cause, and accordingly, one must act upon those causes. For instance, when Umar ﷺ learned about a plague in Damascus while heading there, he turned back upon remembering the Prophet's saying: "When you hear that there is a plague in a land, do not enter it. And if a plague occurs in a land where you are, do not leave, fleeing from it."[355]

Allah has kept destiny hidden, and there are many wisdoms and benefits in this concealment. For example, the unknown cure for an illness that would take a person's life allows them to remain free from anxiety until the moment of death. If a person knew the exact time of their death, they would suffer great distress and become incapacitated years before approaching death. Similarly, a mother who knew in advance that her child would die before her would mourn for them years before the actual event. Ultimately, such knowledge would disrupt the harmony and balance of life.

Benefits of Believing in Destiny

Believing in destiny shows that everything in the universe unfolds according to a sublime wisdom. When a believer faces harm, they don't immediately despair, and when success and goodness come their way, they don't forget everything and become conceited.[356] Thus, a believer, by believing in destiny, attains a balanced and moderate maturity. They reach the pinnacle of happiness and superiority in both worlds.

The French traveler A. L. Castellan depicts the Ottoman people with the following words: "The doctrine of fate and destiny is deeply rooted in the Ottoman mindset. This belief serves them in place of bravery, enhancing their

355. Al-Bukhari, Medicine, 30; Muslim, Salam, 98; Ahmad, III, 416.
356. Al-Hadid, 22-23.

perseverance and resilience. It enables them to face even visible dangers with equanimity, and they don't lose hope in life, even if they throw themselves into fires or charge into enemy spears, sustaining injuries all over, as long as they believe it is not yet their destined time."

Believing in destiny, which means having faith that everything is arranged and ordered by Allah, instills the concept of order in the human mind. It promotes the habit of explaining events through their causes, eliminating randomness and arbitrariness. It establishes the consciousness of seeing a connection between events. It emphasizes the importance of measure and proportion. Destiny implies that everything is connected to a measure, ratio, and cause. Believing in destiny imparts beautiful qualities to a person, such as resilience, courage, stability, patience, and determination. A person who believes in destiny does not falter or succumb to weakness, helplessness, feebleness, or laziness. The emphasis on believing in destiny during times of danger and adversity is due to these characteristics of destiny.

Believing in destiny teaches people to be tolerant. The belief in destiny makes a person content, obedient to justice and law. It saves them from highly detrimental diseases such as greed, avarice, and envy. A person with belief in destiny becomes pleased with Allah, earns His pleasure, and acquires beautiful qualities like reliance and submission. They gain self-confidence, are freed from illusions and obsessions, and are liberated from unnecessary worries, baseless fears, and futile concerns. In summary, the belief in destiny in the Islamic faith transforms a person into an active, dynamic, initiative, entrepreneurial, and agile individual, rather than a lazy, inactive, humiliated, lazy, and hesitant one.[357]

8. Magic and Sorcery

Magic, linguistically, means something with a hidden and covert cause. Its real meaning is to transform something from its reality into something else. In customary terms, when magic is mentioned, it refers to an influence, manipulation, deception, and inducing false beliefs upon someone else. In this context, things like deception, cunning, and obscuring the truth, which are hidden and contrary to reality, are considered magic. Magic can be divided into two parts:

357. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, The Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 70-71. For details on faith matters, see http://islamimanibadet.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/, http://www.islamicpublishing.net/

1. Exerting an influence with words and actions that are purely false and deceptive.

2. Misusing some truth to exert an influence and do something, albeit to a small extent.

In this case, when any truth unknown to everyone becomes a means to deceive and mislead people, it becomes magic. In Islam, knowledge is honorable, deserving all kinds of respect, and there is no forbidden knowledge to be learned. Even to protect oneself from its harm, learning magic is allowed. However, using knowledge for harm is strictly prohibited, and this is why practicing magic is considered forbidden and even as an act of disbelief. Unfortunately, it is widespread as a grave sin in our present time.

Magic, with its ability to influence and harm people during their absences and moments of unawareness, is an extremely sinful and heavily punishable act. Only those who do not fear Allah and have weak faith engage in it.

Allah says:

"A faction of the People of the Scripture wish they could lead you astray, but they do not lead astray except themselves, and they perceive [it] not. O People of the Scripture, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allah while you witness [to their truth]?" (Ali-Imran, 69-70)

Magic is condemned, and Allah explicitly mentions that Prophet Sulayman عليه السلام did not engage in magic. However, the devils practiced magic and taught it to people. This act of teaching magic is condemned in Islam as it involves going beyond the limits set by Allah. The devils would clarify that they were sent as a trial and would warn against using the knowledge for disbelief.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ mentioned Prophet Suleyman, and some Jewish scholars responded by claiming he was merely a sorcerer. In response, Allah revealed verses confirming that Prophet Suleyman was not a sorcerer but, in fact, righteous and a prophet. This emphasizes the seriousness of magic in Islam.

Sorcery fundamentally revolves around gaining benefits, leading those who practice it to disregard religion and sanctities. In certain situations, practitioners exploit religious texts and misuse them.

Harut and Marut, two angels sent to Babylon by Allah, were given certain delicate scientific truths. They were sent to teach the Israelites both for their

benefit and as a trial. However, they warned that the knowledge they were providing could be misused and lead people to disbelief. The angels specifically mentioned that they were sent to test people and cautioned against using the knowledge for evil purposes.

The Jews, unfortunately, learned from both sorcerers and the knowledge taught by the angels, leading to practices that could create divisions among people. Sihir, particularly in the context of dividing spouses, is emphasized as an act with severe consequences.

It's important to note that while magic may appear formidable, the true source of power is Allah. The prohibition of practicing magic is not to underestimate its potential harm, but to remind believers to fear Allah, seek refuge in Him, and hold fast to the Quran. The Almighty has informed that no matter where the magician may be or what he does, he will not find salvation, will not succeed, and will not be able to rectify the deeds of this corruptor mischief-maker.[358] The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned against seven destructive sins, and among them was avoiding magic. He explicitly stated that magic leads to disbelief. Hanging things like charms and talismans with the hope of gaining benefits contradicts reliance on Allah and can lead to hidden forms of shirk (associating partners with Allah).[359]

Scholars have varying opinions on learning and practicing magic. According to Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal, learning and practicing magic are considered acts of disbelief. Some scholars within the Hanafi school suggest that learning magic for protection might not be considered disbelief, but believing in the efficacy or benefit of magic is disbelief.

The severe consequences of practicing magic are detailed in Islamic jurisprudence.[360] Turning to insincere individuals who claim to counteract the

358. Al-A'raf, 116; Yunus, 76-81; Ta-Ha, 69; Az-Zariyat, 52.

359. In a hadith, it is also forbidden to hang items such as amulets, talismans, animal nails, and bones from the pre-Islamic era on the neck or any other place, hoping that they will bring benefits or ward off harm. Those who do such things will be deprived of help and mercy from Allah, as they rely on those things they trust. However, writing some things from the Quran and divine names and hanging them as a means of blessing is considered permissible outside of this ruling. Indeed, from the companions, Abdullah bin Amr used to put such things on children. Believing that they will attract benefits and ward off harm is also not considered correct. Because it is only Allah who gives healing and wards off evils. (Hashiyet al-Sindi ala al-Nasai, Aleppo, 1986, VII, 112)

360. See M. Hamdi Yazir, The True Religion of the Quran, I, 441-451; Kamil Miras, Translation of Tajrid, VIII, 224-235.

effects of magic is not the correct solution. Seeking refuge in Allah through supplication, worship, and charity are essential. If a knowledgeable, righteous, and trustworthy person assists those affected by magic, that can be acceptable.

Allah provides guidance on how to seek protection from the harm of sorcerers: "Say, 'I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak. From the evil of that which He created. And from the evil of darkness when it settles. And from the evil of the blowers in knots (sorcerers) and from an evil envier when he envies.'" (Al-Falaq,1-5)

9. Sin and Reward

Every action of a human being has a value and consequence. No matter how small, every deed, whether good or bad, does not go unrewarded. Those contrary to divine commands and prohibitions are labeled as "sins," leading to punishment. Actions in accordance with divine commands are referred to as "righteous deeds" or "good," and they are rewarded with "merit."

In the Qur'an, various words such as "ism" (fault), "zanb" (sin), "isyan" (rebellion), and "jurm" (crime) are used to describe sin and its consequences. These terms collectively signify yielding to one's desires, succumbing to Satan, engaging in darkness and evil deeds, suffering hardship and distress, social unrest and anarchy, engaging in ugly and vulgar behavior, disrupting balance, and exceeding limits.

Sin is the deviation, forgetfulness, imbalance, and rebellion against the boundaries set by the Creator of a person who has the potential for piety and disobedience.[361] This not only harms the sinner but often inflicts harm on others and the surrounding environment. Adherence to what Allah commands and avoiding what He forbids not only brings inner peace to an individual but also establishes social order and prevents the degradation of the environment we live in.

Factors Leading to Sin

These can be divided into two categories: the inclinations and desires inherent in human nature and external influences affecting them.

The general source of the evils people commit is often the self. The human self, if not disciplined and purified, tends to incline toward command-

361. Ash-Shams, 7-8.

ing evil (nefs-i ammârah) and continuously whispers suggestions leading to sin.[362]

Another factor leading to sin is forgetting death, immersing oneself in worldly affairs as if one will never die, and distancing oneself from concerns about the afterlife.[363] Those captivated by this psychology tend to act recklessly as if life is only about this world and easily succumb to sin under the pressure of satisfying animalistic desires. The Qur'an advises people to overcome this situation by contemplating their mistakes, abandoning them, finding peace in deeds pleasing to Allah, and disciplining and purifying their souls.[364]

Additionally, human weakness and falling for the allure of worldly blessings are mentioned as significant factors leading to sin. [365]

External factors leading to sin include the attractiveness of the deceptive worldly life,[366] following abundant bad examples, being in their company,[367] and the provocations of Satan, who has pledged to struggle against human spiritual elevation. [368]

Humans are sent to the world to be tested. Therefore, they have the freedom to choose between right and wrong. They can perform deeds that earn reward or fall into sin. For accountability, humans must be free, and the value of the reward they receive is linked to this freedom. This situation also indicates the value assigned to humans.

No Racial or Original Sin Privilege

Islam rejects beliefs invented later, such as the privilege of one race or class over others, people being born sinful and guilty,[369] and some individuals being able to forgive sins. Almighty Allah states:

362. Yusuf, 53; Qaf, 16; An-Najm, 23.
363. Al-Baqarah, 95-96
364. Al-Qiyamah, 2; Al-Fajr, 27-28.
365. An-Nisa, 28; Al-Baqarah, 155; Ali-Imran, 14.
366. Ali-Imran, 14, 185; Yunus, 23; Ar-Rad, 26.
367. Al-An'am, 116; Al-Furqan, 27-29.
368. Al-A'raf, 14-18; Al-Hijr, 36-42.
369. According to Christians, God crucified Jesus to forgive humanity's original sin. Many people wonder: 1. Why is every child born into the world with the sin that Adam committed in paradise? 2. If the Creator loves people so much, why did he require Jesus to be crucified to forgive their sins? 3. What about the people who lived before Jesus? 4. How can Jesus, who suffered on the cross and prayed to God, be considered divine? (Carol Anyway, Daughters of Another Path, Yawna Publication, 1995)

"The Children of Israel said, 'Never will the Fire touch us, except for a few days.' Say, 'Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?' No! Those who wrongfully earned evil and became encompassed by their sins—those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally." (Al-Baqarah, 80-81)

"The Jews say, 'We are Allah's children and His beloved.' Say, 'Then why does He punish you for your sins?' Rather, you are human beings from among those He created. He forgives whom He wills and punishes whom He wills. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, and to Him is the final destination." (Al-Ma'idah, 18) The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Every child is born on the fitrah (natural disposition as muslim)[370] but his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian, as an animal produces a perfect young animal: do you see any part of its body amputated?" After narrating this hadith, Abu Hurairah read the verse: "The natural disposition Allah created in people—there is no altering Allah's creation. That is the true religion, but most people do not know." (Rum, 30) (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 80; Muslim, Qadr, 22)

From the verse, it is understood that Islam, sent by Allah, is a religion in line with human nature. Human nature has not changed so far and will not change until Doomsday. Therefore, this religion is eternally valid and the only path that will bring peace to people in every era. Those who try to corrupt human nature by leading to moral degradation cannot achieve a better structure than it. Therefore, people should preserve the nature created by Allah and adhere to the most suitable religion for this, which is Islam.

According to the "Religion of Nature" (Fitrat ad-Din) of Islam, "*Al aslu bara atu al-muttaham*," meaning that a person is innocent until proven guilty. Being guilty or sinful is an exception.

No One Bears the Sins of Another

Islam declares that a person is not held accountable for the mistakes of others or for things beyond their capability. For one to be accountable, they

370. Some hadiths indicate "This religion is born" as a reference to Islam. (Muslim, Destiny, 23; Ahmad, II, 253) Al-Bukhari interprets "Fitr" as "Islam." (Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 30) Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri also explains it as "the nature of Islam." (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 80).

must have reached the age of reason (around 12 years old) and committed the act willingly. In this case, everyone is responsible only for what they have done. In Islamic jurisprudence, there is the principle that "vicarious liability is not permissible in punishments." This means that no one else can bear the punishment on behalf of another. In this regard, Islam rejects the concept of original sin from Christianity or the claim that sin passes from father to son. According to Islam, sin is personal and not passed down from generation to generation.[371]

However, just as opening a good path, leading to righteous deeds, and being a cause for them earns a person reward, causing sin, creating conditions for sin, initiating a bad tradition, and setting a bad example similarly result in the person earning sin. Therefore, taking advantage of the ignorance of some individuals to lead them astray into denial or sin is a great burden and a heavy responsibility. The Quran states that those who lead others astray by claiming that the revelation sent to Prophet Muhammad is just "tales of the ancients" will be held accountable for some sins of those they misled. Additionally, those who have the power and means to guide but mislead weak-willed individuals will also face torment.[372] The Almighty says:

"Whoever intercedes for a good cause will have a share in its reward, and whoever intercedes for an evil cause will have a share in its burden. And Allah is, over all things, an Observer of what they do." (An-Nisaa, 85)

The Prophet Muhammad said:

"Whoever initiates a good practice in Islam will have its reward and the reward of all those who act upon it without diminishing their rewards in the slightest. Whoever introduces an evil practice in Islam will bear its sin, and the sins of all those who follow it, without diminishing their sins in the slightest." (Muslim, Zakat, 69; Nasa'i, Zakat, 64) The situation is the same for those who call people to the right path or lead them astray. (Muslim, 'IIm, 16; Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 6)

One Is Not Accountable for Unintentional Actions

According to Islam, a person is not held accountable for actions done unintentionally, due to forgetfulness, or under duress. The Prophet Muhammad said:

371. Al-An'am, 164; Al-Isra, 15; Fatir, 18; Az-Zumar, 7; An-Najm, 38.
372. An-Nahl, 24-25; Saba, 31-33; Muslim, Knowledge, 16; Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 6.

"Indeed, Allah has overlooked for my Ummah their mistakes, their forgetfulness, and that which they have been forced to do." (Ibn Majah, Talaq, 16)

Similarly, a person who is insane until regaining sanity or asleep until waking up is not held accountable for their wrong actions. A person is only responsible for the actions they intentionally and willingly commit. The act of wanting and choosing belongs to the person, while the existence of the act in the material world is due to Allah's creation. Therefore, a person is accountable for their "willingness" to commit an action and the resulting "inclination." In other words, the accountability of a person is based on their willingness, direction, and acquisition. It is not because they created the means, causes, or the action itself. [373]

Mercy of Allah

A sin is not punished until it goes from thought to action. The Prophet Muhammad said: "Allah has forgiven my Ummah for their mistakes, forgetfulness, and that which they have been forced to do and what they said to themselves." (Al-Bukhari, Talaq, 11)

The following hadith al-Qudsi related to the subject demonstrates Allah's mercy and compassion towards His servants.

The Prophet Muhammad said:

"Allah has decreed the good and the bad deeds, and then explained that. Whoever intends to do a good deed but does not do it, Allah records it with Himself as a complete good deed. If he intends to do it and does so, Allah records it with Himself as ten to seven hundred times (in reward), or many more times. If he intends to do a bad deed and does not do it, Allah records it with Himself as a complete good deed. If he intends it and does it, Allah records it as one single evil deed." (Al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 31; Muslim, Iman, 207, 259)

Hastening Towards Repentance

No matter how many sins a believer commits, they should remain between fear and hope, not distancing themselves from their Lord. Allah the Almighty encourages sinners who have wronged themselves by committing sins, inviting them to hasten towards repentance and instilling hope in them with the following words: "Say, 'O My servants who have transgressed

373. Buti, The Great Certainties of Existence, p. 164.

against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return in repentance to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped.'" (Az-Zumar, 53-54)

Sinful individuals are in greater need of Allah's mercy and compassion. Zayn al-Abidin prayed: "If sinners cannot hope for Your forgiveness, O Lord, Then who will show generosity and kindness to the disobedient ones?" (Bursevi, Ruhu'l-Bayan, [Mu'minun, 101])

Yahya bin Mu'az, another great friend of Allah, prayed:

"O Lord! If You only forgive obedient servants, where should sinners seek refuge? O Lord! If You only show mercy to the righteous, who should the guilty turn to for help?" (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, II, 25-26)

While reassuring that He will forgive those who turn to Him in repentance, Allah the Almighty warns those who do not give up sin with the following statement: "Tell My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful. But also tell them that My punishment is the painful punishment." (Al-Hijr, 49-50)

If Allah wills, He can forgive the sins of His servants without their repentance and seeking forgiveness. The only sins not forgiven without repentance are "disbelief" and "polytheism," and their punishment is eternal damnation in hell. Other sins, even if not forgiven, do not necessarily entail eternal punishment. Repentance from disbelief and polytheism is simply adopting the true faith.

A believer who commits a sin or shows laxity in fulfilling obligations but acknowledges it as wrong is considered a sinful believer. However, if one accepts the sin as permissible or denies an obligation, they would be considered an unbeliever.

If there is corruption, unrest, or chaos in a person's soul, family, environment, or the world in general, it is due to people's mistakes and the sins they commit. The judgments set by Allah are what maintain peace in all these units. (Ar-Rum, 41)

It must be remembered that every blessing comes with a responsibility. Those who desire Paradise and the Divine Countenance must endure some difficulties and hardships, avoid sins that appeal to the desires of the soul,

and seek refuge in Allah. Believers live with the awareness of the secret of divine favor, always feeling that Allah sees them and worshipping Him as if they were constantly seen. They never forget that there is an angel on their left shoulder recording their sins.[374]

The Prophet Muhammad said:

"O Aisha! Beware of belittling deeds, even those that seem insignificant, for there is an angel with Allah who records them." (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 29; Darimi, Riqq, 17; Ahmad, VI, 70, 151)

More importantly, Allah knows and sees everything. One day, these records will be opened, and each person will find everything they did before them. Every tiny good deed and every small sin will be visible.[375] The astonishment of the sinners at that moment is expressed by Allah the Almighty as follows: "And the record [of deeds] will be placed [open], and you will see the criminals fearful of that within it, and they will say, 'Oh, woe to us! What is this book that leaves nothing small or great except that it has enumerated it?' And they will find what they did present [before them]. And your Lord does injustice to no one." (Al-Kahf, 49)

One Should Not Consider Sins Small

It is crucial for a person not to consider any sin as trivial. Bilal bin Sa'd, renowned for his asceticism and piety, said: "Do not look at the smallness of the sin, but rather at whom you are rebelling against!" (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, V, 223; Ahmad, Zuhd, p. 460)

Abdullah bin Mas'ud narrated: "The Messenger of Allah said, 'Beware of minor sins, for they accumulate until they destroy a person, just as people gather sticks in the desert to make a fire. Each stick, individually insignificant, contributes to a massive blaze when combined.'" (Ahmad, I, 402-403; V, 331)

In his Farewell Sermon, Prophet Muhammad, after advising his followers against Satan, stated:

"Tremble on your religion by avoiding acts you deem small and insignificant (sins)." (Haythami, Majma al-Zawa'id, IX, 13)

374. Qaf, 18.
375. Az-Zalzalah, 7-8.

Our scholars caution, "Minor sins lead to major sins, and major sins lead to disbelief." (Ajlouni, Kashfu'l-Khafa, no: 2317)

Because Allah loves His servants greatly, He always desires their well-being and deals with them mercifully. Therefore, Allah never wishes for His servants to fail the test by committing sins, face punishment, and most importantly, distance themselves from His Sublime Being. The Prophet emphasized:

"Allah is jealous, and His jealousy arises when a believing servant commits what He has prohibited." (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 107; Muslim, Tawbah, 36)

"There is no being more jealous for His servant than Allah. Therefore, He has made both the open and secret aspects of disgrace forbidden..." (Muslim, Tawbah, 33, 32-35)

Due to His mercy, Allah may send various calamities to awaken sinners from heedlessness or to lighten their punishments in the hereafter. These calamities are not the same for everyone but come as different warnings.[376] For example, one such warning is a reduction in sustenance.[377] Even if the destined sustenance reaches a person, they may lose it through some means due to their sins. As narrated in the Surah Al-Qalam about the owners of a garden who secretly wanted to harvest their crops without giving the poor their due, their garden was struck with a great disaster, turning black. Allah, after recounting this story for our reflection, concludes: "Such is the punishment [of this world]. But the punishment of the Hereafter is greater. If only they knew!" (Al-Qalam, 33)

Regarding "reward," it is the compensation given by our Lord for good deeds. Although this term generally encompasses the recompense for all deeds, whether good or bad, it is more commonly used to denote the reward for virtuous acts. When believers fulfill what Allah has commanded them, they anticipate receiving the "reward."

The individual's state in the Hereafter will be determined by the abundance or scarcity of their reward. Those with abundant rewards will enter Paradise, while those with numerous sins will go to Hell. (Al-Qari'a, 6-11)

376. See Ibn Majah, Fitan, 22; Hakim, IV, 583/8623.
377. Ahmad, V, 277, 280, 282; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 10; Fitan, 22; Hakim, I, 670/1814.

10. Repentance and Forgiveness

There is no notion that a person who commits sins will remain inherently bad forever. Such an individual may have erred by committing sins and suffered losses, but they have not completely lost their humanity. As the poet says, "A jewel does not lose its value by falling to the ground." Therefore, if a person recognizes their mistake, cleanses themselves of the stains of sins through repentance and seeking forgiveness, they can regain their former value.

Our Lord, who loves His servants greatly, encourages individuals to feel remorse for their committed sins and to seek forgiveness from Allah. In the Qur'an, it is stated: "Allah accepts the repentance of His servants, forgives their sins, and knows what you do." (Ash-Shura, 25)

"Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." (Al-Baqara, 222)

"Whoever does evil or wrongs himself but then seeks forgiveness will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful." (An-Nisa, 110)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encourages people to repent, saying:

"Every son of Adam makes mistakes, and the best of those who make mistakes are those who repent often." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 49/2499; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 30)

"Allah, the Exalted, stretches out His hand during the day for the one who has sinned at night, and He stretches out His hand during the night for the one who has sinned during the day. This continues until the sun rises from the west." (Muslim, Repentance, 31; Ahmad, IV, 395, 404)

Our Lord is so pleased with the repentance of His servant that it is beyond comprehension.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ illustrates this with a metaphor:

"The joy Allah feels for the repentance of any of you is greater than that of a person who loses his camel in a desolate land, carrying his provisions, food, and drink. He, having lost all hope, lies down in the shade of a tree and is overcome by sleep. When he wakes up, he finds his camel standing beside him. He takes hold of its reins and, out of boundless joy, blurts out, 'O Allah! You are my servant, and I am Your Lord!' He makes this mistake because of his extreme joy." (Muslim, Repentance, 7; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 49; Dua, 99)

Our Lord loves His servants immensely; let's reflect on this fact! For this reason, the Almighty does not immediately punish a sinner. He grants them time to repent and find the right path. In a Quranic verse, it is stated:

"If Allah were to impose blame upon the people for their wrongdoing, He would not have left upon the earth any creature, but He defers them for a specified term. But when their time comes, they will not remain behind an hour, nor will they precede it." (Fatir, 45)

According to the teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, repentance is possible until the signs of death and the Day of Judgment become apparent.[378] Once a person begins the throes of death or when the unmistakable signs of the Day of Judgment manifest, the door of repentance is closed. Everything becomes clear, and the trial comes to an end.

Our Lord has granted such a wide time frame for His servants to repent, but one should not be complacent, relying on this. The timing of death is uncertain, and when it comes, there is no delay.[379] Our Lord has repeatedly warned us about this in the Quran:

"O mankind, indeed the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver." (Fatir, 5; Luqman, 33)

Delaying repentance and persisting in sins bring great harm to an individual. This situation darkens the heart, which is the divine sanctuary reserved solely for Allah. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

"When a servant commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. If he refrains from it, seeks forgiveness, and repents, his heart is polished clean. But if he repeats the sin, the spot increases until it overcomes his heart. This is the rust mentioned by Allah: 'No! Rather, what they have earned has rusted over their hearts.'" (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 83/3334; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 29; Ahmad, II, 297)

A heart hardened by the accumulation of sins loses the remembrance of Allah and, ultimately, suffers the greatest punishment by being deprived of His love. This situation is explicitly conveyed in the Quran: "Allah does not like persistently evil and sinful people." (Al-Baqara, 276)

378. Muslim, Zikir, 43; Tirmidhi, Daawat, 98/3537. Also see Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 30.
379. Al-A'raf, 34; Yunus, 49; Al-Hijr, 5; An-Nahl, 61; Al-Mu'minun, 43; Al-Munafiqun, 11.

The necessary action is to hasten in repentance and reinforce this remorse with righteous deeds: "The repentance accepted by Allah is only for those who do wrong in ignorance [or carelessness] and then repent soon after. It is those to whom Allah will turn in forgiveness, and Allah is ever Knowing and Wise." (An-Nisa, 17)

Supporting Repentance with Righteous Deeds

It has been conveyed that the repentance of God-fearing servants, who hasten to repent and strengthen it with virtuous deeds, will be forgiven, and they are spoken of with praise. Therefore, when Dawood ﷺ inadvertently committed a mistake by hastily passing a judgment without hearing both sides, he immediately sought forgiveness from his Lord, prostrating and bowing down in submission to Allah. (Sad, 24)

In a hadith, it is stated:

"When a servant commits any sin, he rises, performs a proper ablution, offers two rak'ats of prayer, and seeks forgiveness from Allah; undoubtedly, the Lord forgives that servant." Then Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recited the following Quranic verse:

"They are the ones who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who forgives sins except Allah? - and do not persist knowingly in what they have done." (Ali-Imran, 135)" (Abu Dawood, Witr, 26/1521; Tirmidhi, Salah, 181/406; Tafsir, 3/3006; Ahmad, I, 2) Sins can be forgiven by Allah alone because sins are committed against Allah. [380]

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised a person who wanted to repent for his sins to be kind to his mother. Upon learning that the person's mother had passed away, he suggested showing kindness to the person's maternal aunt, indicating the elevated status of the aunt in terms of familial relations. (Tirmidhi, Birr, 6; Ahmad, II, 13-14)

One of the aspects highlighted in the Quranic verse is that sins can only be forgiven by Allah the Almighty. Since sins represent disobedience to Allah, no one other than Allah can forgive them.

380. See Ali-Imran, 129; Al-A'raf, 149.

The meaning expressed by repentance and seeking forgiveness from Allah is crucial. With this understanding, the servant evaluates himself, acknowledging the existence of a Merciful Lord who can take him into account and forgive his sins, accepting Allah's sublime attributes such as knowledge and power.[381] Therefore, repentance holds great significance in the sight of Allah and generally leads to forgiveness.

On the other hand, believers always remain hopeful of Allah's generosity. Abu Hurairah narrates: "A Bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, 'Who will take people to account on the Day of Judgment?' The Prophet replied, 'Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, will.' The Bedouin then exclaimed, 'We are saved!' The Prophet inquired, 'How do you understand this?'

The Bedouin said, 'If a generous man has the power to punish or forgive, he forgives.'" (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, I, 246; Ali al-Muttaqi, XIV, 628/39749)

Allah's grace and mercy are so abundant that He not only forgives those who sincerely repent in time but also transforms their sins into rewards. This situation is conveyed with glad tidings in the Quran:

"Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them, Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful. And whoever repents and does righteousness has truly turned to Allah with an acceptable conversion." (Furqan, 70-71)

A crucial point emphasized in the verses is that for repentance and seeking forgiveness to be accepted, they should not remain mere words or feelings but must be confirmed and reinforced with righteous deeds. After committing sins, engaging in righteous deeds helps neutralize their negative effects and assists in avoiding a return to sin.

Atonement

Atonement, a means of purifying oneself from certain sins, aims to cleanse the soul from the stains of sin through feeding and clothing the poor, sacrificing animals, or fasting.[382] In certain acts of worship such as the five daily prayers, Friday prayer, Ramadan fasting, and pilgrimage, avoiding

381. Al-Bukhari, Monotheism, 35; Muslim, Repentance, 29.
382. Al-Maidah, 89, 95; Al-Mujadalah, 3-4.

major sins serves as atonement, leading to their forgiveness and elevating the status of the individual who has no remaining sins.[383] The Quran states:

"Establish the prayer at the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night and the Qur'an at dawn. Indeed, the recitation of the Qur'an at dawn is ever witnessed. And from [part of] the night, pray with it as additional [worship] for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station." (Hud, 114)

The Quran mentions various ways by which sins, excluding disbelief, may be forgiven, such as repentance,[384] engaging in worship and obedience[385], avoiding major sins,[386] facing punishment in this world [387]if necessary, being under coercion,[388] attaining martyrdom[389], experiencing illness, calamities, and disasters,[390] and also through intercession or divine favors[391]. However, when it comes to the rights of others, they remain unresolved until the aggrieved party forgives, even if the wrongdoer repents.

It is a reality that refraining from committing a sinful act is easier and superior to seeking forgiveness. Umar ﷺ once stated, "Avoiding sin is easier than struggling with repentance." Even if a sinful person repents and is forgiven, they may lose a lot. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi beautifully expresses this:

"Yes, forgiveness exists, but a thief rejoices in being forgiven because he saved his life.

Otherwise, is it possible for a thief to become a vizier or a treasurer?"

In addition to repenting for their own sins, believers are commanded to seek forgiveness for the forgiveness of their fellow brothers and sisters. The Quran informs us that angels and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ seek forgiveness for the believers.[392] Ali Ulvi Kurucu Hoca, a scholar from the recent times, recounts the following incident:

383. See Al-Bukhari, Hajj, 4; Muhsar, 9, 10; Muslim, Taharah, 14, 16; Hajj, 438; Tirmidhi, Mawaqit 46; Hajj, 2; Nasai, Hajj, 4; Ibn Majah, Iqamat, 79; Manasik, 3
384. See, for example, Al-Maidah, 39; Ta-Ha, 82; Al-Furqan, 70-71.
385. Hud, 114.
386. An-Nisa, 31.
387. An-Nisa, 92; Al-Maidah, 38, 89, 95; cf. Maturidi, Book of Monotheism, p. 361; the same, Interpretations, vr. 126b.
388. Al-Baqarah, 173; An-Nahl, 106.
389. Key to the Treasures of the Sunnah, p. 259.
390. Ibid., p. 148-149, 463-465.
391. An-Nisa, 48; Yusuf, 87; Az-Zumar, 53.
392. Al-Mu'min, 7-9; Ash-Shura, 5; Ali-Imran, 159; An-Nisa, 64; Muhammad, 19; Al-Munafiqun, 5.

"In 1991, we were performing Tarawih prayers in Medina. Sheikh Ayyub was leading the prayers. An elderly father and his two sons from Jordan were praying in front of me. When the Imam started reciting Surah Ash-Shura with a very sad voice in Bayati mode:

"Hâ. Mîm. Ayn. Sîn. Kaf. [This is] a revelation from the Exalted in Might, the Wise. The heavens almost break from above them, and the angels exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on the earth. Unquestionably, it is Allah who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Ash-Shura, 1-5)

When the Imam recited verse 5, the old man in front of me suddenly fell to the ground... His two sons performed salat and salam (prayer) and brought Zamzam water from the nearby container. People in the row were worried, wondering if he had died. The old man gestured to his sons, 'Continue your prayer!' They laid him on his right side. One of them took off his cloak and placed it under his head. The old man kept crying non-stop. After the prayer, everyone said, 'Get well soon,' and left. I stayed.

The old man continued crying, softly and politely asked:

"'Get well, uncle, what happened, hopefully everything is alright.' After saying this, I gently and politely asked, 'Uncle, did you get affected by the Quranic verse?' This had happened to Umar ﷺ as well. Someone was reciting Surah At-Tur, and Umar ﷺ fainted similarly. When I said this, the old man, still crying, gave the following answer:

"'Sheikh Ayyub, while reciting the verse, 'The angels exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on the earth,' I saw Prophet Muhammad ﷺ standing in the mihrab, saying, "Shouldn't I, the Prophet, supplicate and ask forgiveness for my Ummah?" ... When he prayed like that, witnessing it so vividly, I couldn't bear it, my legs couldn't carry me anymore, and I collapsed to the ground.'"

Seeking Forgiveness for a Believing Brother

In the Quran, the concept of Muslims recognizing each other as brothers and continuously seeking forgiveness from Allah for their fellow believers is expressed as follows:

"Those who had established their homes in Medina and had embraced faith before the arrival of the emigrants love those who have emigrated to

them and find no hesitation in their hearts in favour of others. They give them preference over themselves even though poverty be their own lot. And who so is saved from his own greed, such are the ones that will prosper. And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who preceded us in faith and clear our hearts of any malice towards the believers. Our Lord, surely You are the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.'" (Al-Hashr, 9-10)

A beautiful example of believers helping each other in repentance, seeking forgiveness, and supplication is narrated by Yazid bin Asam:

"There was a strong, influential person from the people of Sham who used to visit Umar ﷺ from time to time. Once, Umar ﷺ couldn't see him anymore. He asked those around him, 'What is so-and-so doing? I haven't seen him lately.' They replied, 'O Commander of the Believers, he has given himself to wine.' Umar ﷺ immediately called his scribe and said, 'Write! From Umar bin Khattab to so-and-so. Peace be upon you! I praise Allah, besides whom there is no deity, the

Forgiver of sins, Acceptor of repentance, Severe in punishment, and Generous in bestowal. To Him is the praise, and to Him is the return.' After dictating the letter, Umar ﷺ turned to his people and said, 'Pray for your brother to turn to Allah and for Allah to accept his repentance.'

When that person received Umar's ﷺ letter, he read the phrase 'Allah, the Forgiver of sins, Acceptor of repentance, Severe in punishment' [393] repeatedly. He said, 'Allah has frightened me with His punishment and promised to forgive my sins.' He wept and sincerely repented. When Umar ﷺ heard about this, he said to his companions, 'This is how you should do it! When you see a brother deviating from the right path, entangled in sin, try to guide him back and instill trust in Allah's forgiveness. Pray to Allah to accept his repentance. Do not contribute to the devil's work by cursing him.'" (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, IV, 76; Abu Nuaym, Hilya, IV, 97-98)

11. Supplication

The word "dua" encompasses meanings such as "calling, summoning, requesting, and seeking help," primarily used to denote a request or supplication from the lower to the higher, from below to above.

393. This sentence is taken from the 3rd verse of the Surah Al-Mu'min. Therefore, the person is saying in the following statement that Allah both frightened him and relieved him with the promise of forgiveness.

Supplication involves the acknowledgment of one's weakness before the magnificence and loftiness of Allah. It is an act where the individual, in a state of love and reverence, seeks Allah's grace and assistance.

Supplication is the sincere act of turning to the Supreme Creator, remembering Him, praising Him, glorifying Him, elevating Him, and making requests and pleas. Therefore, supplication forms the general framework of various manifestations of religious feelings and orientations such as remembrance, glorification, praise, gratitude, repentance, seeking forgiveness, seeking refuge, and similar expressions.

Supplication is an effort of the limited, finite, and powerless being to establish a connection with the unlimited and infinite power of Allah. For this reason, humanity has never been detached from supplication throughout history.

According to studies in the psychology of religion, neglecting the moral and sacred inclinations of human nature leads to spiritual blindness, hindering the individual from becoming a peaceful and socially beneficial personality. In contemporary conditions, the need for prayer, which provides the necessary spiritual and physical elements for achieving inner peace, is even more crucial. Through sincere prayers, individuals can alleviate mental tension, clarify their thoughts, and find the capability to endure the challenging aspects of life that civilization has made burdensome.[394]

Since the beginning of their creation, humans have been praying, whether consciously or unconsciously, and their prayers receive responses. Both believers and non-believers are not independent of supplication. Even the most stubborn individuals involuntarily turn to prayer when faced with life's difficulties and dangers. The Almighty says:

"When affliction touches man, whether lying down or sitting, standing up or walking, he cries out desperately to Us. But when We relieve his affliction, he goes on his way as though he had never cried out to Us for help. Thus the deeds of the extravagant are made to seem fair to them." (Yunus, 12)

"When trouble touches man, he cries to Us. But when We bestow a favor upon him from Us, he says, 'I have been given this only because of my knowledge.' In fact, it is a test, but most of them do not know." (Az-Zumar, 49)

394. See Selahattin Parladır, "Prayer" entry, DIA, IX, 532; A. Carrel, Prayer, p. 9.

During times when human needs and difficulties are addressed, and one feels safe and successful, the desire for supplication weakens. In fact, in such moments, individuals tend to magnify their own strength and abilities, behaving selfishly and ungratefully, turning away from Allah.[395] To address this weakness and cultivate human behavior, Islam strives to keep religious beliefs and sentiments as lively and effective as possible in human consciousness. To achieve this, certain supplications and acts of worship are made a duty for individuals. These acts serve as a reminder to remember Allah in both times of hardship and ease. For instance, establishing prayers, which include supplication and remembrance, as a duty for believers at specific times of the day,[396] is one of the manifestations of this concept.

Allah Answers Prayers

Allah Almighty consistently answers the prayers of His servants. Prophet Zakaria عليه السلام expressed this reality with the following supplication in a hidden whisper:

"O my Lord! Indeed, my bones have weakened, and my head has filled with white, and never, O my Lord, have I been disappointed in calling upon You for whatever I needed." (Maryam, 3-4)

The following incident is also evidence of this truth:

Jabir bin Sulaim asked Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during their initial meetings, "Are you the Messenger of Allah?"

The Messenger of Allah replied, "I am the Messenger of Allah who, when you pray during distress and hardship, removes your difficulties; who, when a year of famine befalls, makes the crops abundant for you; and who, when your mount is lost in a deserted desert, returns it to you when you pray." (Abu Dawood, Libas, 25/4084)

M. Hamdi Efendi beautifully expresses this reality:

"Allah, who does not completely reject any request or plea of any creature from His grandeur and 'knows what is secret,' has not absolutely rejected even the request of Satan whom He expelled, saying, 'You are among those

395. Al-Isra, 67; Luqman, 32; Az-Zumar, 8; Fussilat, 51.
396. An-Nisa, 103.

whose terms have been extended.''' (The True Religion, the Language of the Quran, III, 2135, [Al-A'raf, 14])

Since Allah accepts the prayers of His servants, when their requests are fulfilled, individuals should not forget Him and must refrain from going against His commandments. The Quran states:

"When My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on

Me. So let them respond to Me, and have faith in Me, so that they may be rightly guided." (Al-Baqarah, 186)

Moreover, supplication is a manifestation of acknowledging the greatness and power of Allah, making it a fundamental condition of servitude. Allah the Almighty says:

"Your Lord has decreed: 'Pray to Me, and I will accept your prayers. Surely, those who are too proud not to worship Me will enter Hell, utterly humiliated.'" (Mu'min, 60)

"Say, 'What would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication?'" (Al-Furqan, 77)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized the importance of prayer with the following hadiths:

"Prayer is the essence of worship." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 1/3371)

"Nothing is more valuable in the sight of Allah than supplication." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 1/3370)

"Ask Allah for His bounty, for verily, Allah loves to be asked." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 115/3571)

"Seek all your needs from Allah, even the lacing of your shoes, for if Allah does not facilitate it, even lacing your shoes will be difficult." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, II, 41/1118)

Abdullah bin Umar, who firmly adhered to every advice of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, said:

"I pray to Allah for everything, even for the ease and comfort of my animal's walking... Thus, I encounter favorable results that please me." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, no: 628)

The Quran emphasizes the exclusive direction of prayers to Allah, strictly prohibiting the worship and supplication to anyone else.[397] Those who pray to anyone other than Allah are likened to those who open their hands towards water in hopes of reaching their mouths but find their hands empty. However, the entities people pray to besides Allah are themselves His servants and creations. Therefore, praying to anyone other than Allah is "evident misguidance." [398]

How to Pray

There are narrations about the proper way to perform prayers. In one of them, it is reported that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ heard someone praying without glorifying Allah and without sending blessings upon the Prophet during the prayer. In response, he remarked, "This person was hasty!" Then, he called the man or someone else, saying, "When any of you performs a prayer, first glorify and praise your Lord, then send blessings upon the Prophet, and after that, pray as you wish." (Abu Dawood, Witr, 23/1481)

This indicates that, after praising and sending blessings, one should pray sincerely, with a conscious understanding of what is being said.

A believer should think humbly, considering themselves more in need of divine forgiveness and mercy than anyone else. They should start by praying for themselves and then extend their prayers from near to far, covering other people. In fact, when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to mention someone and intend to pray for them, he would begin by praying for himself. (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 10/3385)

One of the crucial conditions for the acceptance of prayers is to consume lawful food and maintain one's life with lawful earnings.

The acceptance of prayers can happen in several ways. Once, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "When a Muslim prays and does not ask for anything sinful or does not wish to sever ties with relatives, Allah will surely grant one

397. Az-Zumar, 2-3, 11, 14; Ash-Shu'ara, 213; Al-Qasas, 88.
398. Ar-Rad, 14; Al-A'raf, 194, 195; An-Nahl, 20; Al-Hajj, 12, 13.

of these three things: He will immediately fulfill the request, save it for the Hereafter, or, proportionate to the prayer, avert some evils from the person." After this statement, someone present remarked, "In that case, we should ask Allah for many things." To this, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "The grace of Allah is more abundant and wider than what you ask for." (Ahmad, III, 18; Tirmidhi, Daawat, 115/3573; 9/3381)

There is also a hadith emphasizing that prayers ward off afflictions: "Guard your wealth through paying zakat, treat your sick by giving charity, and prepare your prayers to ward off afflictions." (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, II, 10; IV, 237)

It is also mentioned that prayers serve as an expiation for sins. (Muwatta', Quran, 36)

Praying for Believers in their Absence

Islam encourages Muslims not only to pray for themselves but also for their neighbors, friends, and the entire Ummah (community of Prophet Muhammad). Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Whoever seeks forgiveness for all believers, Allah will record a good deed for each and every believer." (Haythami, X, 210)

Ahmad bin Dahhaq narrates: I saw Shurayh bin Yunus in a dream, and I asked him, "How did our Lord treat you?" He replied, "He forgave me and, as a favor, built my palace next to the palace of Muhammad bin Bashir." I was astonished and said, "But you were superior and more valuable to us than him!" He responded, "Do not say that! Allah granted him a share from the deeds of all believers. When he prayed, he used to say, 'O Lord, forgive all believing men and women, all Muslim men and women, and all those among them who are alive.'" (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, X, 113)

Prophet Muhammad, in another hadith, emphasized the significance of a supplication, stating,

"There is no more beloved prayer to Allah than a servant saying, 'O Allah, have mercy on the

Ummah of Muhammad with general mercy.'" (Ali al-Muttaqi, no: 3212, 3702)

The great friend of Allah, Maruf Kerhi (may Allah have mercy on him), stated, "Whoever says ten times every day, 'O Allah, rectify the condition of

the Ummah of Muhammad; O Allah, relieve the difficulties of the Ummah of Muhammad; O Allah, have mercy on the Ummah of Muhammad,' will be inscribed among the Abdals (friends of Allah)." (Abu Nuaym, Hilya, VIII, 366)

Ibn Abbas narrated a hadith illustrating the importance of Muslims praying for one another. Once, Umar ﷺ said, "Let's go to the outskirts," and a few people including Ibn Abbas and Ubay bin Ka'b went with him. We lagged behind, and suddenly, a cloud appeared in the sky. Ubay said, "O Allah, remove any affliction it might bring from us." Later, we caught up with them, and we found that all their belongings were wet. They asked, "Did this not happen to you?" I said, "Ubay prayed to Allah to divert the calamity of the cloud away from us." Umar ﷺ commented,

"You should have prayed for yourselves as well." (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 235)

Praying for All Humanity

The prayers of Muslims are not limited to their fellow believers; rather, they pray for all of Allah's servants. Prophet Muhammad, who is a source of mercy for the worlds and a guide for all people, tirelessly strived day and night for the guidance of humanity and wished goodness for them in his prayers, both in their presence and behind their backs.

Tufayl bin Amr invited his tribe, the Devs, to Islam, but they rejected him. Tufayl, whose patience was running out, came to Mecca and said, "O Messenger of Allah! The Devs tribe has triumphed over me; they turned away from Islam and became disobedient. Pray against them!" Prophet Muhammad prayed, "O Allah! Guide the Devs." Then he advised Tufayl, "Go back to your people! Continue inviting them to Islam and be gentle with them." Tufayl returned to his people and continued inviting them to Islam until the Prophet migrated to Medina. (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 75; Ahmad, II, 243; Ibn Sa'd, IV, 239)

Similarly, Prophet Muhammad prayed for the people of Taif, who stoned him and inflicted severe harm on the Muslims, and said, "O Allah! Bestow guidance upon the people of Taif and bring them closer to us." Due to the blessings of this prayer, shortly afterward, the people of Taif embraced Islam and came to the Prophet. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 134; Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 73/3942)

Prophet Muhammad also prayed for the guidance of the people of Yemen, saying, "O Allah! Turn their hearts towards us." (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 71/3934)

Jabr narrates: "Prophet Muhammad stood on the pulpit, facing Yemen, and said, 'O Allah! Direct their hearts to Your religion!' Then he looked towards Iraq and repeated the same prayer, and he looked in all directions, making the same supplication." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, no: 482)

As evident, Prophet Muhammad and his followers pray not only for themselves but for the well-being and guidance of all humanity.

12. The Situation of New Converts to Islam

As mentioned earlier, Almighty Allah has revealed Islam in harmony with the nature and disposition of human beings. In other words, every newborn child is born with the qualities and disposition that Islam seeks to bring to humanity. Expressions like "Human and the Qur'an are twin siblings," "Islam is a natural and innate religion," or "Islam is the religion of nature" convey this truth. Disbelief, which contradicts human nature, sound reasoning, and common sense, often stems from incidental conditions such as stubbornness, arrogance, indulgence, fanaticism, ignorance, imitation, and cultural environment.[399] Therefore, Muslim parents strive to preserve the child's natural state that comes with birth, rather than trying to convert the child to Islam. This is why Islam does not have a ceremony symbolizing the entry into the religion for children reaching adolescence. This understanding in Islam also signifies that humans are born with the inherent ability to recognize Allah. Therefore, a person who embraces Islam (finds guidance) has remembered their innate nature and returned to it. Due to this perspective, many Western converts to Islam prefer the term "Revert" over "Convert" for those who change their religion, emphasizing the return to one's original state. [400]

Being a Muslim is Very Easy

The sole condition for entering Islam is to declare the testimony: "Ashhadu an la ilaha illallah, wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasuluhu" – "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger." Acceptance of the oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad is expressed by uttering these words. There is no need for this declaration to be carried out through a ceremony or in the presence of a religious institution.

399. Al-Maidah, 104; Al-A'raf, 28; Al-Kahf, 32-37; Ash-Shu'ara, 74; An-Naml, 14; Al-Fath, 26; Noah, 27.
400. Prof. Dr. Ali Kose, "Conversion" entry, DIA, XXI, 555.

A striking example illustrating how simple and easy it is to embrace Islam is narrated by Mikdad bin Aswad:

"One day, I asked the Prophet Muhammad, 'If I encounter a disbeliever and we engage in combat, and he manages to cut off one of my hands with a sword, then seeks refuge behind a tree and says, "I have embraced Islam for the sake of Allah," can I kill him after he says this, O Messenger of Allah?' The Prophet replied, 'Do not kill him.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! He cut off one of my hands, and after that (out of fear) he said those words.' The Prophet then said, 'Do not kill him; if you kill him, he would be in the state he was in before he uttered those words. Whereas, you would return to the state you were in before he said them.'" (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 12; Muslim, Iman, 155; Abu Dawood, Jihad, 95)

Usama bin Zaid narrates an incident that emphasizes the value and importance of saying "La ilaha illallah" (There is no god but Allah):

During a battle, I and a companion from the Ansar approached one of our enemies. When the enemy said, "La ilaha illallah: There is no god but Allah," my Ansari companion stopped attacking, but I thrust my spear and killed the man. When this incident reached Prophet Muhammad , he asked me, "Usama, did you kill him after he said 'La ilaha illallah'?" I replied, "O Messenger of Allah! He only said it to save himself." The Prophet repeated, "Did you kill him after he said 'La ilaha illallah'?" He repeated this question so many times that I wished I had embraced Islam that very day. (Al-Bukhari, Diyat, 2; Maghazi, 45; Muslim, Iman, 158-159)

In another narration, the Prophet said, "Did you split his heart open to know whether he said it sincerely or not?" (Muslim, Iman, 158)

Usama's thought of wishing he had embraced Islam earlier is due to the fact that, upon becoming a Muslim, all the sins committed before that moment are forgiven. It is not because he desires to remain in disbelief until that time.

Entering Islam Cleanses Previous Sins

Allah, for those who sincerely believe in Him, purifies them from all the filth of disbelief and forgives all past sins, big or small. Therefore, those who embrace Islam anew are spiritually reborn.

It was narrated that Amr ibn As, a renowned intellect among the Arabs, was on his deathbed. He turned his face to the wall and wept for a long time. His son tried to console him by saying, "Father, did not the Messenger of Allah give you the glad tidings? Did not the Prophet give you such good news?" Amr ibn As then turned his face toward us and said, "The most valuable provision we have prepared for the Hereafter is the phrase 'La ilaha illallah Muhammadun Rasulullah.' I have three periods in my life. There was a time when no one bore more enmity towards the Prophet than I did. Finding a way to kill him was what I desired the most. If I had died in that state, I would undoubtedly have been destined for hell. When Allah put the love of Islam in my heart, I went to the Prophet, saying, 'I am ready to pledge allegiance; extend your hand.' When he extended his hand, I withdrew mine. Upon this, the Prophet asked, 'What happened, Amr?' I replied, 'I want to set a condition.' 'What condition do you want to set?' he asked. 'I want forgiveness,' I said. He responded, 'Do you not know that becoming a Muslim wipes away past sins, that migration erases previous sins, and that performing Hajj eliminates former wrongdoings?' From then on, there was no one I loved more than the Prophet. No one seemed greater in my eyes. Out of respect for him, I couldn't look at him fully. If someone had asked me to describe him, I couldn't have done it because I couldn't gaze at him long enough. If I had died in that state, I might have hoped for paradise. However, we got involved in such matters afterward that I don't know what my situation will be due to that."

When I die, do not lament or light a fire after me. When you bury me, slowly throw soil on me. Then, do not leave my grave for a while. Stay there until I get used to your absence and contemplate how I will respond to the messengers of my Lord." (Muslim, Iman, 192)

The following incident is also relevant to our topic: One day, a companion came to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah! We were pagans. We worshipped idols and buried our infant daughters alive. I had a little daughter who loved me very much. When I called her, she would fly to me in joy and run to me. One day, I called her again, she came running, and I led her to a nearby well that belonged to our family. I held her hand and threw her into the well. The last words I heard from her were cries of 'Father, father.'"

Upon hearing this, the Prophet, filled with mercy, began to weep, and tears flowed from his eyes. One of those present criticized the narrator, say-

ing, “O so-and-so! You have distressed the Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet responded, “Do not blame him; he is seeking clarification about something that troubles his heart and concerns him.” Turning to the storyteller, the Prophet said, “Repeat what you said.” When the companion repeated his story, the Prophet wept again. Tears streamed down his beard. Then he said to the companion, “Allah has forgiven the mistakes made by the Muslims during the time of ignorance. Now, start your life anew!” (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 1)

In the tenth year of the Hijra, representatives of the Muharib Sons, who embraced Islam upon coming to Medina, included a person who was closely examined by Prophet Muhammad. The man said, “Perhaps, O Messenger of Allah, you recognize me?” The Prophet responded, “I think I have seen you.” The man continued, “Yes, you saw me and talked to me. However, I opposed you with harsh words. This happened during the Ukaz fair. You were touring Arab tribes, inviting them to Islam. No one among my companions treated you more harshly and wickedly than I did. Thanks to Allah, He granted me a long life to believe in you. At that time, there was no one more rigid and wicked towards you than me. All praise is due to Allah, who gave me life to believe in you. However, after that, we got involved in various matters, and I don’t know what will happen to me because of that.”

The Prophet said, “Hearts are in Allah’s control, subject to His will.”

The companion said, “O Messenger of Allah! Pray for my forgiveness.” The Prophet said, “Becoming a Muslim wipes away previous sins.” (Ibn al-Sad, I, 299)

Understanding how consistent and rational Islam is, realizing how much Allah loves those who practice it, is sufficient through this good news. Moreover, reading the Quran and Hadiths, one can keenly feel that Allah’s mercy surrounds and warms us like the air and the sun.

What Should a Person Entering Islam Do?

A person who has just embraced Islam is expected to take a full bath (ghusl) first and then learn the basic principles of the religion. Changing one’s name is not mandatory unless it evokes non-Islamic connotations. Additionally, it is advisable for men to undergo circumcision.

According to the reports of the Companions, when a person embraced Islam, Prophet

Muhammad would teach them how to perform prayers. Afterward, he would advise them to say the following supplication: "Allahumma-ghfir li wa rhamni wa-hdini wa-afini wa-rzuqni" – "O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, grant me good health, and provide me sustenance." (Muslim, Zikr, 35)

A person entering Islam is entitled to all the rights held by previous Muslims and is treated as an equal. Prophet Muhammad said, "Whoever says 'La ilaha illallah,' securing his life and property, pleases Allah." (Al-Bukhari, Iman 17, 28)

Assistance and tolerance are expected to be shown to a new Muslim for learning and practicing their religion.

The Door of Islam is Open to Everyone

Regardless of how sinful or anti-religious one may have been in their previous life, they have the right to enter Islam. Prophet said, "Allah is pleased with two persons: one who kills the other, and both enter paradise. One fights for the sake of Allah, and the other is killed. The killer later repents and becomes a Muslim, and then he is martyred while fighting for the sake of Allah." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad 28; Muslim, Imarah 128, 129)

Repentance from sins is a path to salvation for all of humanity. Anyone who seeks endless happiness and eternal bliss in the Hereafter must secure their future by repenting. If a person, even after killing a Muslim who strives to spread Islam and contribute to the world, realizes their mistake, turns to Islam, and repents sincerely, they will enter paradise along with the one they killed, and they will behold the glory of Allah.

In this context, we recall the incident: When Muslims besieged the city of Ta'if, an arrow was shot from the walls, killing Abdullah, the son of Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr came to his daughter Aisha ﵂ and said, "I am not excessively sad about Abdullah's death. I feel as if our house has lost only a sheep's ear. He was martyred for the sake of Allah, why should I grieve?" Aisha ﵂ said, "Praise be to Allah, who strengthens your heart and keeps you on the right path."

A year after the siege was lifted, a delegation from Ta'if came to Medina, accepting Islam. The arrow that killed Abdullah was still with Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr showed them the arrow and asked, "Does anyone recognize this?" Sa'd

bin Ubayd replied, "I straightened it, added the feather to it, pulled it back, and shot it." Abu Bakr said, "This arrow martyred my son Abdullah. All praise is due to Allah, who granted him martyrdom through your hands and did not degrade you through his hands. May Allah protect him!" (Hakim, III, 543/6021)

Will and Effort

Living in the test world, humans need to make some effort to attain guidance. Although some of Allah's servants may receive grace and mercy, not everyone can obtain this great blessing without paying a price. Therefore, it is necessary for humanity to be in sincere pursuit and effort, always inclined towards goodness and virtue. The act of seeking and turning is from us, while showing the path and providing guidance for a beautiful life is from our Lord. The following verses emphasize this:

'We will surely guide those who strive for Our cause to the paths leading to Us. Surely, Allah is with those who excel in good deeds.' (Al-Ankabut, 69)

'As for those who accept guidance, Allah increases their guidance and bestows on them their righteousness.' (Muhammad,17)

In the days when Islam emerged, there was a person named Hakim bin Hizam[401], who possessed beautiful morals. Even before becoming a Muslim, he was extremely generous, compassionate, and engaged in charitable deeds. During the pre-Islamic era, he emancipated a hundred slaves and, during Hajj, donated a hundred camels by sacrificing them and gave to the needy. After becoming a Muslim, he once donated a hundred camels and emancipated a hundred slaves in the path of Allah. One day, he asked the Prophet:

'O Messenger of Allah! I have some charitable deeds from the pre-Islamic era, like giving alms, freeing slaves, maintaining family ties. Will I be rewarded for these deeds?' The Prophet Muhammad replied:

'You have already been honored by Islam because of the good deeds you did before.' (See Al-Bukhari, Zakat 24, Buyu' 100, Itq 12, Iman 194-196; Muslim, Iman 194-196)[402]

401. Hakim bin Hizam (may Allay be pleased with him), born inside the Kaaba, lived for 120 years. Sixty years of his life were in the pre-Islamic era, and sixty years were in Islam. (Muslim, Buyu', 47; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-Ghabah, Beirut 1409, I, 522/1234)

402. See Al-Bukhari, Zakat, 24; Muslim, Munafiqin, 57, 56; Nasai, Iman, 10/4995; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, I, 123/24.

Hastening to Faith

While good deeds and righteous actions are crucial, benefiting from them fully depends on 'faith.' Without a true faith as desired by Allah, these deeds may not carry much meaning. Therefore, it is essential to believe first and foremost. During the Battle of Uhud, a person clad in iron armor approached the Prophet Muhammad and asked:

'O Messenger of Allah! Should I become a Muslim now and then fight, or should I enter Islam first and then participate in the battle?' The Prophet replied:

'First become a Muslim, then engage in the battle!' He became a Muslim, fought, and was martyred. Upon this, the Prophet said:

'He did little but gained much.' (Al-Bukhari, Jihad 13; Ahmad, IV, 293)

The one who embraces Islam earlier gains the opportunity to attain higher ranks in paradise. The more one worships and lives a Muslim life, the more spiritual gains they achieve. Allah says: 'For everyone are ranks according to what they have done. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do.' (An'am, 132)

'They have different ranks with Allah. Allah sees whatever they do.' (Ali-Imran, 163)

Three individuals from the Bani Uzr tribe came to the Prophet Muhammad, embracing Islam.

The Prophet asked:

'Who will take care of their needs?' Talha replied:

'I will, O Messenger of Allah!' While they were with Talha, the Prophet sent them on a mission. One of them went with the group and became a martyr. Later, another mission was sent, and the second person became a martyr. The third person passed away in his bed after a while. Talha reported:

'I saw these three people in paradise in a dream. The one who died in his bed was in the forefront, the one who became a martyr followed, and the first martyr was at the end. I was surprised, and it bothered me that the one who died in his bed was ahead of the martyrs. I immediately went to the Prophet Muhammad and told him what I had seen. The Messenger of Allah said:

'There is nothing surprising in this! A person who has lived in Islam without abandoning the tasbih(remembrance), takbeer (glorification), and

tahleel(praising)[403] of Allah is more virtuous than a believer who has lived longer without such practices.' (Ahmad, I, 163)

To die as a Muslim

More important than all these is the ability to end one's life as a Muslim, to meet Allah with faith in the final breath. In other words, dying as a Muslim is more critical than becoming a Muslim.

Allah says:

'When his Lord said to him, "Submit!" he responded, "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of all worlds."' (Al-Baqarah 2:131)

Ibrahim عليه السلام passed down this religion, as did Yakub (Jacob), who advised his sons:

'O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are

Muslims.' (Al-Baqarah 2:132)

Were you present when death approached Ya'qub? When he asked his sons: 'Whom will you worship after me?' They replied: 'We will worship your God, the God of your fathers, Ibrahim, Isma'il, and Ishaq, the One God. And to Him, we submit.' (Al-Baqarah 2:133)

The most important thing that the grandfather and the grandchildren advised to their descendants is for them to be Muslims and to give their lives as Muslims. Because Allah, who chose Islam as the religion for people, desires them to accept this religion and to die as Muslims.

The Prophet Muhammad said:

'Whoever's final words are, "La ilaha illallah (There is no god but Allah)," will enter paradise.' (Abu Dawood, Janaiz 15-16/3116; Hakim, I, 503)"

13. Islam's Perspective on Afflictions and Trials

The Almighty tests all His servants in this world through various means. Therefore, besides providing people with various opportunities and bless-

403. Tasbih is "subhanallah"; Takbir is "Allahu Akbar"; and Tahlil is mentioning Allah by saying "la ilaha illallah."

ings, He also imposes certain hardships and burdens. Afflictions, trials, and illnesses are among the means of testing, aimed at keeping individuals away from sins, purifying them from the sins they committed earlier, and providing various lessons and admonitions. In other words, all these are for the benefit of human beings. Those who fail to understand the wisdom and secrets behind these trials and rebel against them will suffer loss. On the other hand, those who seek refuge in patience, contentment, trust, and submission to Allah during hardships will attain great rewards. The Quranic verses express this matter as follows:

"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: 'We believe,' and will not be tested? We tested those before them, and Allah will certainly make known those who are truthful and will certainly make known those who are liars." (Al-Ankabut, 2-3)

"We will certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives, and crops. Give good news to the patient." (Al-Baqarah, 155)

The Almighty is not pleased with those who do not take lessons from the afflictions and difficulties that befall them. The following verse illustrates this:

"Do they not see that they are tested every year once or twice? Yet they neither repent nor take admonition." (At-Tawbah, 126)

However, our Supreme Lord advises those subjected to tests not to be left helpless, stating:

"O believers! Seek help through patience and prayer. Surely, Allah is with the patient." (Al-Baqarah, 153)

Patience and prayer are essential refuges. Allah's Messenger and other prophets, when faced with difficulties, immediately turned to prayer for help and patience. The companions, too, found solace in prayer when losing a loved one or encountering any distress, seeking patience from Allah.

To overcome trials easily, it is also advised not to overly value the world.[404] Considering the principle of opposites in creation, where things are known by their opposites, we better understand that duality is a necessary concept for humanity. If everything in the world were the same, the creation

404. Abu Dawood, Tatavvul, 22; Jihad, 162; Ahmad, IV, 333; Hakim, II, 296/3066.

of one of them would be meaningless. Absurdity is incompatible with the concept of the Transcendent (Mutaâl), the ideal and perfect being that is Allah. A person in good health, generally assuming everyone is the same, can recognize the great blessing of an intact body or a healthy life only by seeing sick and disabled individuals. Therefore, those considered as poor in our eyes, such as disabled individuals, have significant services in finding the path of salvation for humanity. Surely, if they endure, they will be rewarded greatly in this world and the Hereafter.

Moreover, everything has emerged from non-existence to the realm of existence by Allah's grace. Equality is not necessary and essential in grace. Equality is a concept related to "justice," which depends on merit. Therefore, if any being were to demand justice from Allah, its right would be nonexistence. Because it did not exist in eternity, Allah brought it into the field of existence as a result of His grace.

For this reason, a Muslim takes necessary precautions to avoid afflictions, but if any hardship comes despite that, they remember this reality: "The Giver is Allah, and the Taker is also Allah."

They surrender to the Almighty and endure. Kasım bin Muhammed D narrates the following incident:

"My wife passed away. Muhammed bin Kâ'b[405] came to offer condolences. He told me the following:

There was a pious and diligent man among the Israelites who had a righteous wife whom he loved dearly. Eventually, she passed away. This scholar was deeply saddened by her death, closed himself off from people, and stopped talking to anyone. A woman from the Israelites heard about this and insisted on asking him a question, saying, 'I have a matter to inquire about, and I need to discuss it privately with him.' When the scholar allowed her in, she asked, 'I took a bracelet from my neighbor. I wore it for some time, using it as a loan. Now they have sent a message, asking for it back. What do you think? Should I return their bracelets?' The scholar replied, 'Yes, indeed, you must return it.' The woman said, 'But I had that bracelet with me for some time.' The scholar responded, 'It doesn't matter; since you took it as a trust, they have the right to ask for it back.' Hearing this, the woman comforted the

405. Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 370-371; Abu Nuaym, Hilya, V, 10.

scholar, saying, 'May Allah have mercy on you! When Allah demands back something He entrusted to you, why do you grieve? Do you have the right to be sad? He entrusted his wife to you, then took her back. Allah has more right to keep her with Him.' The scholar found solace in the woman's words, and Allah made him benefit from her speech." (Muwatta', Janâiz, 43)

A person who reaches this level of understanding neither grieves excessively for the blessings and opportunities they missed nor rejoices excessively for the worldly possessions they acquire. They know that both are given for the purpose of testing. They begin to approach difficulties with a smile. Sultan Bahâeddin Veled, the son of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi, narrates the following memory:

"One day, a great spiritual weariness and inner turmoil came over me. Seeing me weary and troubled, my father said, 'Have you been hurt by someone to be so distressed?' I replied, 'I don't know what this state is.' My father got up and went home. After a while, I saw him wearing a wolf skin, turning it over his head, and coming towards me, scaring the children as they say, 'This! This! This!' My father's pleasant gesture made me burst into laughter, and I immediately fell to the ground, kissing his feet. My father said, 'Bahaddin! If a beautiful and delicate beloved were to be closely attached to you, always joking and frolicking with you, and suddenly changed his face and said to you, "This! This! This!" would you be afraid of him?' I replied, 'No, I wouldn't be afraid.' Upon this, my father said, 'The beloved who delights you, keeps you in joy and happiness, and the same beloved who upsets you and causes you distress—they are one and the same. He is always Him, always from Him, and always nourished by Him. So why are you sad in vain, standing in distress?'" Upon my father's gesture and words, my state immediately changed, and I blossomed like a fresh rose, feeling refreshed. Throughout my life, I never encountered another countenance of sorrow, and I did not feel sadness; the world's grief and sorrow did not come near me.[406]

Allah has bestowed various blessings upon His servants

When considering existence, one should not only think about material possessions, status, or physical beauty. Humans should be aware of the other blessings upon them and avoid harboring envy. If someone else has been

406. This person from the generation of the Tabi'in had parents who belonged to Jewish tribes. Therefore, he knew such information about the Children of Israel better than others.

granted a blessing, different blessings have surely been bestowed upon you. It cannot be known which one is more virtuous.

In this regard, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advises: 'When one of you sees someone who has been given more wealth and physical beauty, direct your attention to someone who is economically less fortunate.'

'Look at those who are less fortunate in living conditions, not those whose conditions are better than yours. This is a more appropriate behavior to prevent belittling Allah's favor upon you.'

In a verse, the wisdom of the differences among people and the superiority of Allah's mercy over everything are emphasized: 'Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who distributed their livelihoods in the life of this world and raised some of them above others in degrees [of wealth and rank] so they may make use of one another for service. But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate.' (Zuhruf, 32)

However, these divine distributions are built upon the principle of 'responsibility in proportion to the blessing.' That is, as much as a person receives from divine blessings, their responsibility in matters like charity, service, and propagation is proportional. Allah does not demand more than one's capacity, but He holds people responsible according to their capacity. The account of every blessing will certainly be given. The Quran states: 'Then on that Day you will surely be asked about the pleasures you indulged in.' (At-Takathur, 8)

However, humans generally analyze events from their own perspective, forgetting the trial they are undergoing and the accountability they will face in the hereafter. Allah describes the spiritual state of humans regarding this matter: 'Whenever Our verses are recited to him, he turns away arrogantly, as if he had not heard them, as if there was [a weight of] heaviness in his ears. So give him tidings of a painful punishment.' (Fussilat, 44)

Accordingly, whether one has many or few blessings, both situations are trials. A judgment of profit or loss for a person in either situation cannot be made. As the Prophet said: 'The true worth of deeds is measured by their consequences.'[407] The outcome will be known in the hereafter. The wealthy person who expresses gratitude and fulfills the responsibility of the blessings

407. Ahmed Eflaki, The Stories of the Saints, tr. Tahsin Yazıcı, Istanbul 1973, I, 265-266.

upon him, and the poor person who endures patiently without uttering rebellious words and deeds, will be the winners on that day. Those who become arrogant due to the blessings they have and those who rebel due to poverty will be losers.

For this reason Umar ﷺ said: 'Wealth and poverty are both like riding on animals. I do not care about which one I will ride.'

In other words, nothing should be looked at as a blessing or calamity in itself. Just as electricity serves to heat or cool depending on the user's preference, the human perception at the receiving end can turn events into either blessings or hardships. A person who has not purified their self and cleansed their heart virtually turns a blind eye to Allah's favors, turning them into harm, and transforms the bestowed blessings into debts in the hereafter. On the contrary, a person with a pure heart and noble character can profit even from seemingly harmful events through patience, gratitude, trust, and submission.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: 'The state of a believer is praiseworthy and enviable. Every state of his is a means of goodness for him. Such a trait is only found in a believer: If something pleases him, he gives thanks, and it is good for him. If a calamity befalls him, he shows patience, and it is good for him.' (Muslim, Zuhd, 64)

Let it be emphasized that every state a person undergoes is a trial, and generally, the trial of blessings is more severe than the trial of deprivation."

In what you love, there may be harm, and in what you dislike, there may be good.

People evaluate the events that happen to them based on their apparent aspects, often unaware of the underlying causes and wisdom. Therefore, it is crucial to take necessary precautions while facing difficulties with patience. One should never forget the command of the Almighty:

"What you dislike may be good for you, and what you love may be harmful to you. Allah knows, and you do not know." (Al-Baqarah, 216)

Even in the troubles created by Allah or the harms coming from certain beings, there are significant wisdom and blessings from different perspectives. Entertaining the idea that "evils containing no good or benefit harm innocent

people" is incorrect. If we contemplate a little, we understand the immense wisdom and mercy of Allah, which cannot be measured, and that everything created by Him harbors blessings worthy of gratitude. Therefore, making a superficial evaluation based on the apparent harms of some entities and events can be misleading. Thus, by considering the ultimate purpose in creation, we can describe all apparent harms as relative harms. For Allah never manifests any act contrary to wisdom and justice. Such a thing is unworthy of the divine station, and Allah is free from it.

The story of Prophet Musa and Khidr (peace be upon them) narrated in the Qur'an vividly illustrates this truth. They were traveling together when Khidr, instead of thanking a poor man who had ferried them across the river for free, damaged his boat. Although this seemed ungrateful at first glance, it later turned out to be a great good. A tyrant king was seizing intact boats, and Khidr, by making the boat defective, saved it from the king's usurpation. The poor owners, after repairing the minor damage, continued to maintain their livelihood.

Continuing their journey, they encountered a young boy, and Khidr immediately killed him. Prophet Musa عليه السلام reacted, saying: "Have you killed an innocent soul without [his having taken] a life? You have certainly done an evil thing." (Al-Kahf, 74) Khidr explained the wisdom behind this action:

"This boy would have become a source of grief and disobedience when he grew up. His parents are righteous, and we feared that he would oppress them through rebellion and disbelief. So we desired that their Lord give them, in exchange, one who is better in purity and nearer to mercy. I did not do this on my own accord. That is the interpretation of those actions about which you could not maintain patience." (Al-Kahf, 80-82)

The Reward of Patience

Another comforting aspect in the face of adversity and calamity is the promise of rewards that the Almighty has made to His patient servants. In various verses, Allah conveys His love for those who endure patiently, assuring them of His companionship and promising to reward them immeasurably.

One of Allah's beautiful names is "As-Sabûr,"[408] signifying the meaning of being highly patient. Whoever possesses patience is, in essence, a manifestation of Allah's power.

Hadiths also highlight the virtue of patiently enduring afflictions and illnesses, conveying the news that Allah will grant rewards to those who endure.[409] In a sermon to women, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "For any woman among you who loses three children before they reach puberty, those children will undoubtedly serve as a shield against Hell." When asked if the same applied to a woman who lost two children, the Prophet replied affirmatively (Al-Bukhari, Knowledge, 36; Muslim, Birr, 152).

While in Mina, Aisha رضي الله عنها encountered some young men from the Quraysh who entered with smiles. When asked why they were laughing, they explained an incident where someone narrowly escaped injury from a tent rope. Aisha رضي الله عنها responded, "Do not laugh! I heard the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ say, 'If anything smaller than a thorn pricks a Muslim, a degree is written for him, and one of his mistakes is erased'" (Muslim, Birr, 46).

For someone solely engrossed in worldly affairs, devoid of belief in the hereafter, consolation may be hard to find. However, for a believer, there are numerous points of faith-based comfort and compensation. For instance, a person who loses their sight is consoled by the Prophet's blessed announcement: "When I afflict My servant by taking away his two beloved ones (eyes), and he remains patient, I will reward him with Paradise in return for them" (Al-Bukhari, Mardha, 7).

The blessings of the afterlife are so beautiful that they make the greatest hardships in this world forgettable. Conversely, the punishments are so severe that they make the most beautiful worldly blessings forgettable. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "A person who led a prosperous life in this world among the inhabitants of hell will be brought and dipped into hell once. Then, he will be asked, 'O son of Adam, did you ever experience a good day? Did you ever receive any blessings?' The person will reply, 'No, by Allah, my Lord! I never experienced anything good.'" Similarly, the poorest among the

408. Al-Bukhari, Qadr 5; Riqaq 33.

409. The Prophet ﷺ explained this beautiful name of our Lord in a hadith as follows: "There is no one more patient than Allah when He hears a word of abuse. They attribute children to Him, but still, He continues to provide them with health and sustenance." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 71)

people of paradise will be brought and dipped into paradise once. Then, they will be asked, 'O son of Adam, did you ever face poverty or hardship? Did you ever go through difficulties?' The person will reply, 'No, by Allah, my Lord! I never faced poverty or hardship; I never went through difficulties'" (Muslim, Munafiqin, 55).

Islam teaches that enduring tribulations with patience not only elevates one's spiritual status but also serves as atonement for sins. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited Umme Saib and asked her, "What's wrong, Umme Saib? Why are you trembling?" She replied, "I am suffering from fever. May Allah not bless it!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not curse fever! It cleanses the sins of the son of Adam just as a bellows removes impurities from iron" (Muslim, Birr, 53).

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said: "Fatigue, continuous illness, grief, sorrow, distress, and suffering, even the prick of a thorn, serve as a means for Allah to forgive the sins of every Muslim" (Al-Bukhari, Mardha, 1, 3; Muslim, Birr, 49). He further stated, "Allah gives the punishment for the sin of His desired servant in this world. He does not wait for the Hereafter. The punishment for the evil of His servant, which He desires to punish in the Hereafter, is sent along with him until the Day of Judgment" (Tirmizî, Zuhd, 57/2396; Ibn al-Majah, Fitan, 23).

In conclusion, when looked at from these perspectives, illnesses and calamities should be seen as blessings for believers, serving as a means of purification and a path to eternal rewards. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "When My servant falls ill, I send two angels to him, and they say, 'Look at what he says when his visitors arrive. If, in his illness, he praises and thanks Allah, the angels convey that praise and thanks to Me, the All-Knowing, the Mighty.' Allah then says, 'If I decide to take My servant's soul, I will place him in Paradise. If I heal him, I will create something better than what he lost of his flesh and blood, and I will forgive his sins'" (Muwatta', Ayn, 5). **Amr narrates the following incident on this matter:**

"...I went to the presence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He was sitting under a tree, a mat spread out for him to sit on, and his companions gathered around him. I joined them and sat down. At one point, Allah's Messenger ﷺ began talking about illnesses and troubles, saying, 'When a believer is afflicted with an illness, and then Allah grants him healing, that illness becomes an expiation for his past sins and serves as a reminder for the rest of his life. But if a hypocrite falls ill and is then restored to health, he is like a tethered camel released by its owner, unaware of why it was tied and why it was set free.'"

One of those sitting around the Prophet ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, what is illness? I have never fallen ill." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded, "Get up! You are not one of us" (Abu Dawood, Janaiz, 1/3089).

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said: "Whether male or female, a believer will not be free from afflictions in terms of their own selves, their children, and their wealth until they meet Allah without any sins" (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 57/2399; Ahmad, II, 287, 450; Muwatta, Janaiz, 40).

The most severe trials and tribulations befall the prophets and then gradually to righteous servants. Among the prophets, the one who faced the most afflictions was the Beloved of Allah, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Abdullah bin Mas'ud narrates:

"I came into the presence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He had been afflicted with malaria. I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, indeed, you are experiencing a severe bout of malaria!' He replied, 'Yes, I am going through an amount of suffering equivalent to that which two of you might bear.' I said, 'This must be for a twofold reward for you.' He responded, 'Indeed, it is so. Allah forgives the sins of a Muslim due to a thorn that pricks him or a greater calamity that befalls him. The sins of that Muslim fall away like leaves from a tree'" (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 3, 13, 16; Muslim, Birr, 45).

Aisha رضي الله عنها said, "I have not seen anyone endure more severe pain than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" (Muslim, Birr, 44; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 57/2397).

Sa'd رضي الله عنه asked, "O Messenger of Allah, which individuals face the most severe afflictions?" The Prophet replied:

"The prophets, then, gradually, the righteous. A person is subjected to afflictions and trials according to the strength of their faith. If their religion is strong, their tribulations become severe. If there is weakness in their faith, they are subjected to afflictions according to the weakness of their religion. Afflictions cling to a person and do not leave them until they walk on the Earth free of sins" (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 57/2398; Ibn Majah, Fitan, 23).

One Should Always Seek Well-being from Allah

While enduring difficulties and hardships is a commendable virtue, it is not appropriate to ask Allah for affliction and distress. We should always seek goodness, health, and well-being from Allah. The Almighty teaches us the sup-

plication: "Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the punishment of the Hellfire!" [410] Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also advised us to seek well-being from Allah.[411] (Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 112; Muslim, Zikir, 36)

The uncle of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Abbas, narrates:

"I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, teach me something to ask from Allah.' He responded, 'Ask for well-being from Allah.' After a few days, I came to him again and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, teach me something to ask from Allah.' He replied, 'O Abbas, O uncle of the Messenger of Allah, ask for well-being[412] in this world and the Hereafter from Allah.'" (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 84/3514; Ahmad, I, 209)

Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said:

"Seek forgiveness and well-being from Allah! There is nothing more virtuous than well-being after certainty (firm faith)." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 105/3558)

In addition, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught us how to prevent afflictions. In his sayings, it is stated:

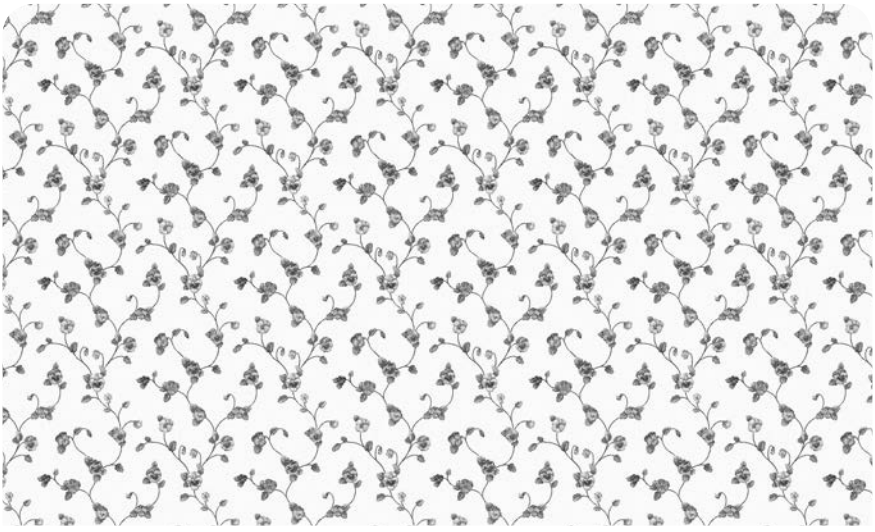
"Hasten to give charity, for certainly, calamity cannot catch up with charity." (Haythami, Majma' al-Zawa'id, III, 110)

"Small kindnesses protect the owner from severe conditions (such as fate or calamity)." (Tabarani, Al-Kabir, VIII, 261/8014)

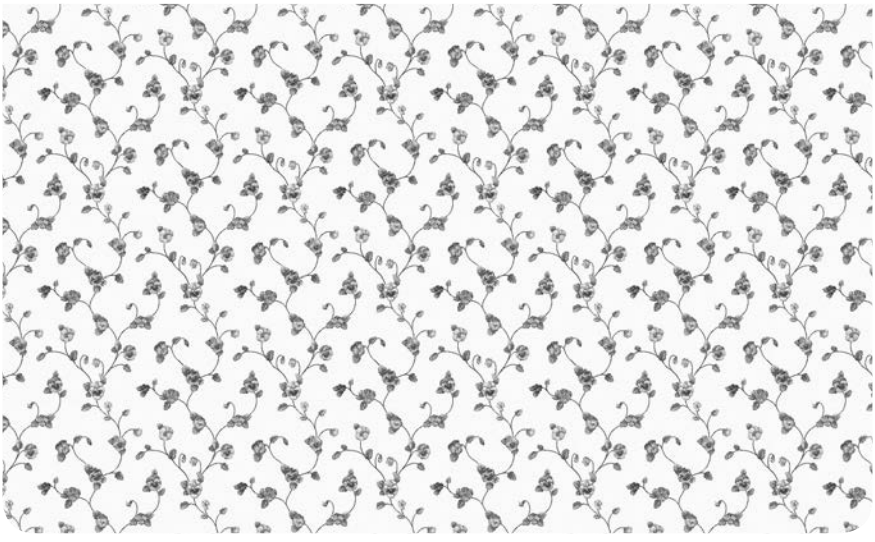
"The doors of mercy are opened for the one for whom the door of supplication is opened. Among the things sought from him, the most beloved thing to Allah is well-being. Supplication is beneficial for every kind of calamity that has occurred or has not yet occurred. Therefore, O servants of Allah, hold on to supplication!" (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 101/3548)

In summary, Islam encourages accepting the ups and downs of life, dealing with difficulties and trials with patience and contentment, and benefiting from blessings with feelings of gratitude. As Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi puts it, happiness is attained by accepting life as it is, showing contentment in the face of difficulties, and striving for improvement. (A'maq al-Hayal, p. 89)

410. Ali-Imran, 146; Al-Baqarah, 153; Az-Zumar, 10. Cf. Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VI, 314; the same, Evidence of Prophethood, VI, 291-292; Abu Nuaym, Hilya, VIII, 197.
411. Al-Baqarah, 201.
412. "Afiyet," which has very broad meanings, encompasses all goodness. It implies being free from all physical ailments, as well as from all evils concerning religion, the world, and the Hereafter.



THE THIRD PART



RITUALS AND THEIR WISDOM

1. The Significance of Worship

Allah, in His infinite care, has created humans in the most beautiful way and bestowed upon them numerous possibilities and blessings. After witnessing this, can one conceive that a person has no duty or responsibility in this world? Can we think that the state of a person with intellect is no different from that of animals and other irrational beings? How can we imagine such a person engaging in the cycles of eating, drinking, dressing, marrying, reproducing, only to throw themselves into the arms of nothingness after a certain period and be engulfed by death? The Almighty declares in the Qur'an:

"Do you think that We created you without any purpose, and that you will not be brought back to Us?" (Al-Mu'minun,115)

"I have only created jinn and mankind to worship Me." (Az-Zariyat, 56)

"Worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you." (Al-Hijr, 99)

Worship, in its broad sense, means to serve, obey, and submit, encompassing all actions, words, feelings, and thoughts of a person living within the limits defined by their Lord. For a servant to worship their Lord is not a burden or hardship but, on the contrary, a great honor. Those on the path of spiritual journey, when speaking of the age of maturity, say, "We became honored," not "We became obligated," indicating the privilege of being addressed by the divine.

Worship is an expression of gratitude for the rights Allah has over His servants and the countless blessings He has bestowed. Failing to express gratitude to Allah, who has showered us with countless gifts, kindness, and favors, while repeatedly thanking someone for a small gift, is a tremendous ingratitude.

Ultimately, the acts of worship benefit the individual. Worship liberates people from being enslaved to materialism, directs their gaze and thoughts toward higher goals, and allows them to explore broader horizons.

Another significant benefit of worship is that it solidifies and stabilizes faith in the heart.

Knowledge only increases and develops through practice and experience, becoming ingrained and turning into a skill. Unapplied theoretical knowledge is challenging to retain and offers minimal benefit. The establishment and consolidation of faith within a person, turning it into a skill, are achievable through acts of worship. When the external fortress of worship weakens, it signals the beginning of dangers for the internal fortress of faith. In other words, if faith is a lamp, worship acts like a bottle that protects it from gusts of wind and enhances its light.

In the Qur'an, the reason and wisdom behind worship are touched upon as follows:

"O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous." (Al-Baqarah, 2:21)

This implies protection from evils and the torment of hell, and approaching the presence of the Almighty.

The acts of worship have a positive impact on an individual's moral and spiritual well-being. A believer who performs their acts of worship is internally at peace, spiritually and mentally strong. Within the framework of fulfilling their duty, such a person lives a content and stable life with inner tranquility. They do not experience spiritual constriction or distress and do not succumb to stress. In the face of obstacles, difficulties, and impossibilities, they do not fall into sorrow or despair, maintaining their resilience. On the contrary, a person without worship cannot find inner peace. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"If a person falls short in performing his worship duties, meaning if he does not perform his every act of worship sufficiently, Allah will subject him to sorrow and grief." (Ali al-Muttaqi, Kenzul Ummal, no: 6788)

Humans always seek refuge in their Lord, desiring to be with Him and occasionally speaking to

Him. In such moments, they engage with the Quran, the word of Allah. Through this, their hearts find comfort, they gain spiritual peace, mental relaxation, and strengthened spirituality. They derive guidance from the verses, draw lessons from the experiences of previous individuals, and continue their journey with peace.

Allah, who created humans as superior beings, has announced that the continuity of their spiritual elevation depends on worship.

On the other hand, worship is not solely directed towards the spiritual and the hereafter; it also has material benefits. For instance, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ indicates that those who pay attention to their worship will be blessed with abundance in sustenance.[413] He also states:

"Your Lord says, 'If My servants obey Me as they ought to, I will send rain in the night, and I will make the sun rise over them during the day. I will also announce to them the sound of thunder.'" (Ahmad, II, 359; Hakim, IV, 285/7657)

As seen, Islam is a comprehensive system that does not neglect any aspect of human activities and encompasses life in all its dimensions. Similarly, Islam establishes a harmonious connection among the various fields of human activity. Therefore, while worldly actions in line with divine laws earn worship rewards, worship itself contains many material and physical benefits. However, the wisdom and subtleties in these may be comprehended by the human intellect to some extent, but many remain beyond its grasp. The essence of worship lies in sincere servitude to Allah, not in obtaining worldly benefits. However, for motivational purposes, let us briefly mention some of the benefits of worship;

2. Ablution (Wudu), Ritual Bath (Ghusl), and Their Wisdom

In Islam, while spiritual purity is paramount, external cleanliness is considered an indispensable means to achieve it. Just as reaching a goal is impossible without a means, a means that does not lead to the goal is of no value. Therefore, the Almighty desires the purification of His servants from all kinds of physical and spiritual impurities. The command for a new believer to perform ritual bathing (ghusl) [414]and for one intending to worship to perform ablution (wudu) stems from this.

Islam is a religion of cleanliness. The Almighty has commanded Muslims to perform ablution before certain acts of worship, such as prayer, circumambulation, and reading the Qur'an, and to keep their bodies, clothes, and surroundings clean. Therefore, the fundamental sources for Muslims, such as catechism, jurisprudence, and hadith books, begin with sections that discuss cleanliness. The Qur'an states:

413. Muslim, Hypocrites, 57.
414. Abu Dawood, Taharah, 129/355.

"O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of janabah (impurity), then purify yourselves. But if you are ill or on a journey or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contacted women and do not find water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and hands with it. Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful." (Al-Ma'idah, 5:6)

From the last part of this verse, we understand that there are numerous blessings and benefits provided to individuals through ablution and ritual bathing. Allah desires to complete His favors upon His servants by commanding these actions.

Cleanliness is a beautiful trait that brings one closer to angels, distances from Satan, and protects from the torment of the grave. Cleanliness assists the elevation of the soul and drawing nearer to Allah. Therefore, the Qur'an states, "Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." (Al-Baqarah, 2:222)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also emphasized the importance of cleanliness:

"Allah is pure, and He loves purity." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 41/2799)

"Cleanliness is half of faith." (Muslim, Taharah, 1)

The Prophet ﷺ promised that those who perform ablution will be purified from minor sins,[415] and those who renew their ablution will have ten good deeds recorded by Allah. (Tirmidhi, Taharah, 44/58, 59)

We can briefly touch upon some of the external benefits of ablution: Since the limbs involved in ablution are exposed, washing them five times a day not only promotes physical and mental well-being but also keeps the individual alert mentally and intellectually. On the other hand, natural openings in the body need to be cleaned several times a day to prevent contamination and eventual illnesses. Cleansing the mouth and nose, from where we take in air and food, is certainly beneficial. The pre-ablution rituals performed in the

415. Muslim, Taharah, 32; Tirmidhi, Taharah, 2/2.

restroom, such as istinja (cleansing after using the toilet), istibra (waiting after urination), and istincan (cleansing with water), also hold great importance.

The temperature of ablution water, whether warm or cold, expands or contracts the blood vessels, especially maintaining the flexibility and vitality of the distant vessels from the heart. This temperature difference ensures that nutrients accumulated in tissues due to slowed circulation are circulated throughout the body. Notably, individuals who have been performing ablution since childhood are rarely observed to suffer from vascular stiffness, circulatory disorders, or dementia. Ablution also aids in the regular functioning of the lymphatic system (the immune system). Additionally, it helps balance the body's static electricity. Normally, this electricity tightens the tiny muscles under the skin and eventually renders them ineffective, leading to premature wrinkles. The continuous balance of static electricity in those who consistently perform ablution contributes to their radiant complexion and prevents excessive wrinkling.[416]

Using a tooth-stick (miswak) during ablution is also a significant practice. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Miswak cleanses the mouth and earns the pleasure of the Lord." (Nasai, Taharah, 5/5) "If I knew that it would not be difficult for my nation, I would have commanded them to use miswak in every prayer preparation." (Al-Bukhari, Jumu'ah, 8)

The Prophet ﷺ attached importance to using the tooth-stick at other times as well. When he woke up for night prayers, he would immediately clean his teeth with the tooth-stick, perform ablution, and then pray. Also, upon entering his home, he would first use the tooth-stick to clean his teeth. (Muslim, Musafirin, 139; Taharah, 43-44)

Ritual bath (ghusl) regulates the nervous system, alleviates nervous disorders, provides peace of mind, eliminates fatigue, and enables the body to rest and refresh. From the perspective of skin and body health, the importance of ritual bath is evident. Ghusl opens and relaxes the pores in the skin, allowing the body to breathe easily.[417]

416. Mevlut Ozcan, The Ritual of Ghusl - Its Taking and Wisdoms, Istanbul 1991, p. 85-91.
417. Mevlut Ozcan, ibid., p. 12.

As seen, Islam has transformed the necessary act of cleanliness that every individual must perform into an act of worship, ensuring that individuals are in a state of worship while cleaning themselves.

In conclusion, cleanliness and refinement are the emblems of Muslims. For them, cleanliness is essential from material, spiritual, health, and religious perspectives. Performing worship properly is impossible without cleanliness. The life of a Muslim is clean, and even their death is clean. When a Muslim passes away, their body is washed, they are given a ritual bath, and they are wrapped in a clean white shroud before being entrusted to clean soil. On the Day of Judgment, prayers are offered for them to rise cleanly from there.

Dirtiness, on the other hand, is sometimes the cause of diseases that result in death, often weakening and enfeebling the body. Outbreaks of diseases affecting humans and animals are generally due to impurity. A mind in a dirty and sick body cannot think properly. The offspring of a sick, feeble, and arid generation is also unhealthy. [418]

3. Prayer and Its Wisdom

Prayer begins with the takbir (saying "Allahu Akbar") and ends with the salam (greeting), encompassing specific actions and words, making it a profound and spiritual act of worship.[419] Recognized as the pillar of religion, prayer is considered the highest form of spiritual and hereafter-focused worship. In fact, the term "prayer" is even used interchangeably with the word "religion." For instance, the people of Prophet Shu'ayb said to him:

"They said O Shu'ayb, does your prayer (i.e., religion) command you that we should leave what our fathers worship or not to do with our wealth what we please?" (Hud, 87)

One of the revered friends of God, Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan, expressed:

418. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, The Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 73.
419. Some people mistakenly believe that Muslims worship the Kaaba during prayers. This is a completely wrong assumption. Muslims never worship, prostrate to, or turn towards the Kaaba or the Black Stone while praying. The direction Muslims face during prayers is not the building of the Kaaba but the area it occupies. Even if the Kaaba were destroyed or demolished for restoration, the direction of prayer for Muslims would not change. (Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 108) Despite the spread of idolatry in Mecca and the erection of many idols inside and around the Kaaba by the polytheists, the Kaaba has never been associated with idols and has always been remembered as "Baitullah: the House of Allah." Throughout history, although people have fallen into polytheism and worshiped many stones and trees, they have never worshiped or prostrated to the Kaaba, the Black Stone, or the Station of Abraham. This is a special protection from Allah.



"Every action has a quality, and prayer encompasses all qualities. It contains the lights of reciting the Quran, glorification (tasbihat), sending blessings (salawat), and seeking forgiveness (istighfar). If the etiquettes of prayer are observed properly, the most robust and accurate states, resembling the times of the Prophet's blissful era, manifest during prayer." (Abdullah Dahlawi, Makamat al-Mazhariyye, Istanbul 2002, p. 73)

Explaining the spiritual dimension of prayer extensively would take much time. Here, we will touch upon some of the wisdom and benefits[420] of prayer:

Prayer restrains individuals from evils, ugliness, and excesses, preventing the unbridled satisfaction of desires and inclinations. The Quran states:

"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer.

Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do." (Al-Ankabut:45)

A person once came to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said:

"So-and-so prays at night but commits theft during the day." The Prophet ﷺ responded:

"If he prays sincerely, his prayer will eventually lead him away from the evil act he is committing." (Ahmad, II, 447) [421]

420. For the virtues of prayer, see Osman Nuri Topbas, Islam Belief Worship, p. 192-274 (http://www.worldpublishings.com/Deppo/Dokumanlar/fransizca_ISLAM_IMAN_IBADET.pdf); Prof. Dr. Omer Çelik, Assist. Prof. Mustafa Ozturk, Dr. Murat Kaya, Exemplary Morals from Our Prophet's Life, I, 115-156 (www.usveihasene.com); Dr. Murat Kaya, Life Standards from Our Prophet r, p. 76-118.

421. Statistics show that "the crime rate in cities where prayers are performed in mosques is much lower compared to cities where prayers are not performed." For example, the top twenty countries in terms of murder cases per capita are as follows: 1. Colombia (0.61 per thousand) 2. South Africa (0.49) 3. Jamaica (0.32) 4. Venezuela (0.31) 5. Russia (0.20) 6. Mexico (0.13) 7. Estonia (0.107) 8. Latvia (0.103) 9. Lithuania (0.102) 10. Belarus (0.098) 11. Ukraine (0.094) 12. Papua New Guinea (0.083) 13. Kyrgyzstan (0.0802) 14. Thailand (0.800) 15. Moldova (0.078) 16. Zimbabwe (0.074) 17. Seychelles (0.073) 18. Zambia (0.070) 19. Costa Rica (0.060) 20. Poland (0.056) Except for Kyrgyzstan, all these countries have predominantly Christian populations. Kyrgyzstan, with 75% of its population being Muslim, is the only exception. Worldwide, if prayers are performed in a country, the inclination towards crime tends to be lower. The world has recognized this reality. Therefore, serious scientific studies are conducted to understand why the crime rate is low in Islamic countries. (See Cordova, Ana; "An Examination of the Causes of Low Murder Rates in Islamic Societies": American Society of Criminology). In cities like London and Paris, it can be observed that the crime rate in areas with mosques, compared to the city as a whole, is similarly low. (http://www.stargazete.com/gazete/yazar/murat-birsel/namaz-sucu-engelliyor-169647.htm, February 17, 2009)



Because genuinely performed prayer endows the worshiper with spiritual maturity and fills the heart with humility[422], a person with a heart full of humility abstains from what displeases Allah and consequently becomes purified from sins. Thus, a believer, while praying for the sake of Allah's pleasure, also guards against evils and the desires of the self, thereby reforming both worldly and hereafter life.

The most exceptional of acts of worship, prayer, is also the most distinguished refuge to seek closeness to Allah, especially when faced with difficulties, distress, afflictions, calamities, hardships, and divine wrath. This is a sunnah (commendable practice) frequently observed in the life of the Prophet.

The essence of prayer is to establish a more vibrant, closer, and more effective connection with

Allah. No other action carried out for this purpose can substitute for prayer. However, during this experience of approaching and being with Allah, the mind, consciousness, and body must cooperate. By raising our hands, we cast aside worldly matters and concerns and, with the words of Allah, begin to converse. This conversation arouses a sense of longing, eagerness, and desire for union, leading us to bow before the divine presence to satisfy this longing. This movement intensifies our eagerness, and we want to prostrate even further. This prostration is the closest a servant can be to Allah; it is where the ascension takes place. Finally, we sit and recite the tashahhud (testification), much like the night of ascension when Allah and the Prophet exchanged greetings. In other words, through prayer, we ascend to the heavens, and in the testification, we seem to meet and greet our Supreme Lord.

When a person reaches the state of prostration, they face themselves, providing an opportunity to turn inward. A friend of mine living in Europe once shared this experience: When inviting some non-Muslim friends to pray together, I used to say, "Come, join us in prayer! After all, you believe in God too!" Later, one of these friends, who had become a Muslim, told me:

"When I prayed with you that time, I truly faced myself for the first time when I prostrated. I had never experienced such a pleasant moment in my life..."

422. Khushu: The state of tranquility and humility in the heart during the performance of worship, especially during prayers, as an expression of respect for Allah.

When a person, after making a wrong move, stands in prayer and presents themselves before the presence of Allah, they can better see what truly matters and gain the strength to rectify their mistake. The more time one dedicates to prayer, the more opportunity they have for self-reflection.

On the other hand, prayer is the most effective remedy that frees a person from the psychology of loneliness. In an age where people are growing apart, and individualism is becoming dominant, loneliness has become an ailment of civilization. Whether performed individually or in congregation, prayer dispels the feeling of loneliness at least five times a day. Even when prayed alone, it reminds the individual that they are not alone, as prayer leads them to the presence of Allah. When performed in congregation, it not only connects the person with Allah but also gathers them with others. Particularly, congregational prayer holds greater importance and effectiveness in this regard.

Today, psychosomatic diseases occupy a significant place in medicine. In these diseases, the impact of negative mental states on the body is evident. When there is improvement in the mental state, it positively affects the disease. Dr. Rose Halferding from Boston Hospital says:

"One of the healing remedies for spiritual depression is for the patient to confide in someone they trust. When patients describe their complaints in detail, mental instability disappears from their minds. Just the disappearance of complaints is healing for the disease."

Dr. Nevfel says: "Mental health professionals advise us to choose someone to share our troubles with. Not everyone can be confided in. It is not necessary for the person to whom we confide to be a doctor, lawyer, or clergy. What is more important is to feel that this person is someone who listens, understands, and helps. How does the state of a servant who turns to Allah, hearing, seeing, and the owner of all things and goodness, in such a situation? Does not a person get rid of all these ailments by praying?"

Prayer is not only the spiritual nourishment for the soul but also a remedy for the physical body. Since it sets conditions such as cleanliness of the body, clothes, and the prayer area, prayer is the most crucial guardian of health. Moreover, prayer provides vitality to the body by allowing various parts to move, joints to bend, and muscles to stretch and relax.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to Abu Hurairah, who had a stomach-ache:

"Get up and pray! Indeed, there is healing in prayer." (Ibn Majah, Medicine, 10; Ahmad, II, 390, 403)

If one observes carefully, there is a complete harmony between the movements in prayer and the way a human is created. It is as if a person has been created to perform prayer, or prayer is the most suitable worship for human nature. Unlike other creatures, none of them are created in the form of a human; hence, they cannot perform the movements in prayer precisely.

a. Wisdom in the Five Daily Prayers

The Almighty says in the Quran: "Indeed, the prayer is obligatory upon the believers at specified times." (An-Nisa,103)

Each of the five obligatory daily prayers holds distinct value and significance. The distribution of these prayers throughout the day encompasses myriad benefits and wisdom for both the spiritual and physical well-being of individuals.

Islam has enjoined the five daily prayers to instill in the minds that Allah is the sole sovereign of the earth, ensuring that humans feel this consistently. The repetition of prayers at specific times throughout the day makes them more impactful on the soul, more effective in restraining desires, and more encouraging towards righteousness and uprightness. This instills in individuals the habit of always keeping Allah in mind.

Initiating the day, taking a break from work fatigue, concluding the day, and retiring for rest—the most beautiful form of worship to remember Allah in these moments and express gratitude for His distinct blessings is through the prayer.

These prayers allow us to momentarily distance ourselves from all worldly concerns to express feelings of submission and gratitude towards our Creator. In doing so, they provide moments of relief from the monotony of personal engagements throughout the day.

The division of a day into five parts with the announcement of these prayer times serves as a beautiful time management system that compels

individuals to be punctual, attentive, and disciplined. A Muslim's time management encompasses daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, and lifelong planning. Prayer guides the believer in daily planning, Friday prayers in weekly planning, fasting in monthly planning, almsgiving in yearly planning, and pilgrimage in lifelong planning. This way, a person enters a diligent and disciplined working life. Human life is precious, and time is a valuable asset. Time can be gained with money, but time cannot be gained with wealth. One who guards specific time intervals from dawn to dusk and prepares for tasks during these periods is undoubtedly not sluggish or lethargic but active and agile. The swearing by time in the chapter Asr (103) emphasizing that humans generally incur loss in this regard is profoundly meaningful. [423]

On the other hand, performing the five daily prayers is a minimal and easily achievable duty for individuals. It is not even an hour in twenty-four hours that one would set aside worldly matters to stand before Allah. Yet, the benefits one gains from this practice are numerous.

b. Wisdom and Benefits of Congregational Prayer

Islam places great importance on performing prayers in congregation. Even in the midst of battle, the detailed instructions on how to perform congregational prayers are explicitly mentioned in the Quran by the Almighty. (An-Nisa, 102)

Congregational prayers bring people together, fostering camaraderie, friendship, faith, and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood. It enables individuals, irrespective of race, color, language, status, or position, to come together in worship to Allah, promoting unity, solidarity, cooperation, and social accountability. In an environment where a congregation shares common thoughts and goals, differences among individuals are significantly overcome, instilling a sense of equality and brotherhood in hearts, leading to a religious fervor.

Congregational prayers draw attention to the importance and benefits of collectively undertaken tasks and activities. Following a leader, maintaining straight and disciplined rows, and performing actions with complete discipline are crucial both spiritually and socially. Muslims gathering in the mosque

423. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom of Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, pp. 78-79.

discuss common issues, make joint decisions, engage in personal interactions, address knowledge gaps, and stay informed about developments.

In essence, the mosque is a school, and the imam is a teacher. The congregation's knowledge and cultural level are elevated here. The mosque is a family, and the imam is a compassionate family leader, where people learn manners and discipline. The mosque is a hospital, and the imam is a doctor, where material and spiritual distress are treated. The mosque is a barracks, and the imam is a commander, instilling a sense of discipline and order. The mosque is a courtroom, and the imam is a just judge and arbitrator, dispensing justice to people. In short, the mosque is the heart and fundamental pillar of Islamic society. [424]

c. Why Should Prayer Supplications Be Recited in Arabic?

Every language possesses unique expressions and stylistic characteristics exclusive to itself. Therefore, no translation can fully replace the original, especially when dealing with a literary marvel like the Quran. The disparity between the Quran and its translations can be likened to the distinction between the Creator and the created or between the rose and its image. One represents the superior discourse of the Almighty Allah, while the other conveys the expression of a fallible and imperfect human understanding. Consequently, Islamic scholars unanimously agree that a translation of the Clear Quran cannot be considered Quran, and its status cannot equate to that of the Quran. Even if expressed in Arabic, a translation is not the Quran.

For instance, if we dissect a seed, tamper with its essence, and then plant it in the soil, it will not sprout because it loses its distinctive qualities. Similarly, the verses, words, and letters of the Quran are like seeds, and when translated into other languages, they lose their unique characteristics, ceasing to be the Quran. Therefore, regardless of the language, reciting a translation of the Quran in prayer is not permissible.

Translating the Quran entirely into another language or accurately writing and reading it in a different script is impossible. The Arabic letters of the Quran have specific features that are absent in the alphabets of other languages. While some letters may sound similar, their points of articulation (the places in the mouth where sounds originate) are distinct. For example, the

424. Uludag, ibid, pp. 84-85.

Arabic letter "ض: Dhâd" has no equivalent in other languages, leading to the designation "Lughat ad-Dâd" for Arabic. This unique letter cannot be expressed in another language.

Aside from translation, even pronouncing Arabic expressions using a different script is challenging. For instance, in Turkish, there is only one "h" sound, whereas in Arabic, there are three variations: "ha: ح," "kha: خ," and "he: ه." Although they may look the same in writing, their articulation and meanings differ. A person reading Arabic words in Latin script may not discern these nuances, potentially misinterpreting verses, such as those discussing Allah's acts of creation.

Furthermore, Arabic includes three "ze" letters: the thin "ze: ز," the velar "ze: ذ," and the thick "za: ظ." In contrast, Turkish has only one "s" sound, while Arabic has three: "se: س," "sa: ص," and "peltek se: ث." Additionally, Arabic features a unique letter, "ayın: ع."

In essence, an individual unfamiliar with Arabic letters would struggle to read the mentioned letters when written in Turkish, leading to a misunderstanding of the words and verses as they cease to be Quranic expressions.

Islam is a universal religion encompassing the entire world. If it were specific to a particular region, race, or nation, the language used in common worship, such as prayer, would be limited to theirs. However, a religion with believers residing in every part of the world, speaking hundreds of different languages, necessitates distinct practices. For instance, a Turk unfamiliar with Chinese, when in China, would hear Chinese sounds on the streets without understanding. If these sounds were translations of the call to prayer (azan), they would go unnoticed, causing the individual to miss Friday prayers or congregational prayers. Similarly, a Chinese Muslim passing through Turkey would share minimal commonalities with fellow believers. Therefore, a universal religion requires shared principles and symbols[425], referred to as "shi'ar." These symbols, when seen or heard, indicate that a person, thing, or region is associated with Islam.

Islamic symbols include the Basmala, greetings, religious days and festivals, call to prayer (azan), qibla, congregational prayers, Friday prayers,

425. Prof. Dr. M. Hamîdullah, Introduction to Islam, pp. 324-325.

mosque, minaret, Quran, Kaaba, Safa and Marwa hills, pilgrimage, sacrifice, and the practices of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

The Quran mentions some of these, emphasizing the preservation and reverence of Islamic symbols.[426] Since these symbols belong to all Muslims and are not specific to a particular community, their preservation is linked to the conservation of language and form. Altering the language or form changes the symbols, making them the property of a particular group. Changing the language of worship, such as the call to prayer or prayers, would result in the loss of their symbolic significance and their connection to the entire Muslim community.[427]

This situation is analogous to international congresses and meetings today, where participants use a common language for the general benefit, sacrificing individual interests.

Moreover, a crucial point is that unlike other religions, Islam is the only one that has the original revelation sent to its prophet. The books of other religions are translations and compilations. The requirement to recite the Quran in its original form during prayers ensures its widespread learning, memorization, and frequent repetition. This has a significant impact on preserving the Quran in its original state.

It's essential not to confuse the recitation of the Quran in one's native language during personal prayers or supplications with the practice of reciting the Quran in its original Arabic form during formal prayers. Personal supplications are an individual matter, while prayers are collective and communal worship. Therefore, when participating in prayers with other believers, consideration should be given to their needs. Praying in congregation is strongly encouraged, and although individual prayers are permissible, they are never the preferred choice.

Furthermore, learning to read and memorize the Quran is relatively easy, as evidenced by the millions of people from diverse nations who have learned it, even if Arabic is not their native language. The portion of the Quran that needs to be memorized for prayers is minimal and includes expressions like "Allahu Akbar," "Subhana Rabbiya'l-azim," and "Subhana Rabbiya'l-a'la,"

426. Bakara, 158; Mâide, 2; Hajj (The Pilgrimage), 32, 36.
427. [URL: http://www.hayrettinkaraman.net/yazi/hayat/0020.htm]

as well as the Fatiha Surah and two short Surahs. These expressions are known by most Muslims, and they can be learned effortlessly along with their meanings.[428]

Another point is that a person who reads the Quran, even if they don't understand it, still benefits from it and earns reward. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ delivered the glad tidings that for each letter of the Quran, ten rewards would be granted:

"Whoever recites a letter from the Book of Allah, he will be credited with a good deed, and a good deed gets a tenfold reward. I do not say that Alif-Lam-Mim is one letter, but Alif is a letter, Lam is a letter, and Mim is a letter." (Tirmidhi, Fadha'il Quran, 16/2910)

This can be likened to a person who has lost the ability to taste but continues to benefit from the nutrients in the food they eat. Similarly, reading the Quran, even if one doesn't grasp its meanings, has a spiritual impact on a person. However, the most beautiful and rewarding way is undoubtedly to read and live by it with understanding.

4.Fasting and Its Wisdoms

Fasting is an act of worship performed by abstaining from eating, drinking, and sexual desires from dawn to sunset. This worship is observed continuously for 29 or 30 days during the lunar month of Ramadan every year.

Fasting is a worship that purifies an individual both physically and spiritually. Its fundamental goal is to engage in constant worship awareness, to struggle against the ego, and to keep its influence to a minimum by controlling it.

Observing fasting for the sake of Allah instills a sense of tranquility that is a spiritual pleasure, incomprehensible, unexperienced, and even unexplainable to others. Sacrificing for Allah gives a unique joy that no other worship offers. In fasting, one exhibits an extraordinary loyalty to Allah, eating upon His command and refraining when commanded not to. The joy, peace, and happiness during the breaking of the fast (iftar) for Muslims are indescribable. One might fast just to experience this moment. However, the reward for the fasting person is not limited to this; there is also the joy[429] at the moment

428. See Prof. Dr. M. Hamîdullah, Introduction to Islam, pp. 322-330.
429. Al-Bukhari, Sawm, 9; Muslim, Sawm, 163.

when they present the reward of their fast before their Lord in the hereafter, an experience impossible to comprehend in this world.

Within a person, feelings of goodness and evil constantly clash and struggle. When the ego gains strength over the spirit, base desires and negative feelings prevail. Conversely, when the spirit gains strength over the ego, lofty aspirations and positive feelings become dominant. Just as material food nourishes the body and the ego, acts of worship such as prayer, charity, pilgrimage, remembrance of Allah, recitation of the Quran, and fasting nourish and grow the soul and spirituality.

Fasting weakens and disciplines the ego, contributing to the strengthening of the spirit. Thus, fasting achieves the training of qualities crucial in the struggle of life, such as patience, willpower, and distancing from carnal desires, cultivating virtue. It acts as a protective shield for an individual against the never-ending desires of the ego for food, drink, and lust, preserving one's honor and dignity. Fasting also cultivates moral virtues such as determination, perseverance, contentment, accepting destiny, resilience, and patience. By making us taste deprivation and hunger, it reminds us to appreciate the blessings bestowed upon us. Fasting fills our hearts with gratitude and mercy towards Allah and His creation. In this way, fasting serves as the most effective remedy for negative feelings such as envy, jealousy, and animosity that disturb the peace of society. Therefore, fasting is not only prescribed for this community but also for previous nations. Allah says in the Quran:

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous." (2:183)

For fasting to be spiritually beneficial, it must be observed with the unity of body and soul. This means that while the physical body fasts, the heart, ego, and other organs should also fast, refraining from all kinds of forbidden and undesirable acts. The purpose of fasting is to elevate oneself spiritually in the face of Allah's commands and prohibitions. Therefore, a fasting person must refrain from behaviors such as lying, slander, gossip, profanity, fighting, and all kinds of evil deeds and sins. A fasting believer should also respond to provocations and insults with patience and restraint. An accepted fast is not only about abstaining from food and drink but also distancing oneself from immoral and sinful acts.

Fasting contributes to physical health by helping individuals maintain a healthy weight. If someone is overweight, they shed excess weight during fasting, and the digestive system, overworked by continuous activity throughout the year, receives partial rest. Proper nutrition is crucial for maintaining physical health and treating diseases. The discipline of fasting enhances the mental and emotional faculties of individuals. As the wise Lokman Hakim advised his son, "When the stomach is full, thoughts fall asleep, wisdom is silent, and the organs fall behind in worship." Fasting imparts the habit of discipline in eating and control over one's appetite. It prevents gluttony, excessive eating, and ultimately protects against illness.

Medical experts note that fasting for less than thirty days is ineffective, and fasting for more than forty days may not bring the expected benefits of intermittent fasting. Contrary to the misconception that fasting in cold climates is harmful to health, observations indicate that wild animals, when unable to find food in snowy conditions, spend the winter in a form of fasting until spring. Trees also lose their leaves in winter and go into a type of hibernation, unable to absorb water until the thaw. Some minerals even require fasting for regeneration. The pause in the functioning of engines and machines after prolonged operation allows them to regain their former strength. In modern medicine, a new treatment method involves using long or short-term fasting to cure chronic illnesses, depending on the patient's condition.[430]

Dr. Victor Pauchet, renowned for his books on mental and physical health, advises, "Fast like Muslims during specific times of the year." Professor Dr. Pierra Moulin explains the rationale for this recommendation, stating, "One of the most beneficial institutions in the Islamic world is fasting. Fasting is both a physical and spiritual rest for the body. It cleanses tissues and removes accumulated toxins and poisons. Thus, Muslims rest their bodies for a month each year. The absence of fasting in Christianity is a significant loss."

However, let us never forget that we observe fasting not for health but for the purpose of worship. The benefits of fasting without the intention of worship are minimal, as indicated by a study conducted at Erzurum University. According to the results, there is a significant difference between fasting for the purpose of worship and hunger strikes carried out for protest. Despite the same action being performed, the intentions and emotions differ, resulting in

430. Prof. Dr. M. Hamîdullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 104.

entirely different effects on the human body. While fasting positively influences hormone function, hunger strikes are entirely destructive and harmful.

There are wisdoms behind the collective observance of fasting during the month of Ramadan. One of them is the demonstration of Islamic unity, as all Muslims fulfill this religious duty simultaneously. Additionally, communal activities are easier for people and are carried out in a festive atmosphere. Thus, a seemingly difficult act of worship is performed with exceptional vitality and love.

Furthermore, the significance of the month of Ramadan rotating through all seasons of the year holds another wisdom. This allows Ramadan days to coincide with the various temperatures and durations of days throughout the year, enriching every day of the year with the blessings of fasting at different intervals. This circumstance also indicates that believers obey Allah under all conditions.

It's important to note that the purpose of fasting is not to inflict pain or hardship on the body. Therefore, Islam, as in all matters, has advocated moderation in fasting. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recommended having a pre-dawn meal (sahur) and not rushing during the iftar (breaking of the fast)[431]. Thus, the ultimate goal of fasting is to fulfill the duty of servitude to Allah, discipline oneself to attain piety, and create a peaceful environment that pleases Allah by developing individuals and society.

5. Zakat, Charity, and Their Wisdoms

Zakat is the giving of 2.5% of one's wealth above a certain amount to the poor, needy, those collecting zakat, those whose hearts are to be warmed to Islam, those attempting to buy their freedom from slavery, debtors, those striving in the path of Allah, and those stranded on the way. (At-Tawbah, 60)

Livestock and agricultural produce are also subject to zakat, with each having separate calculations. Agricultural produce's zakat is referred to as "ushr." While the terms charity and spending are sometimes used interchangeably with zakat, they mostly signify voluntary assistance given to those in need.

431. Al-Bukhari, Sawm, 45; Muslim, Sawm, 48; Tirmizî, Sawm, 17/708.

The differentiation and gradation among individuals such as strong-weak, healthy-ill, knowledgeable-ignorant, rich-poor are necessary for the establishment and harmony of societal order. However, wealth is not a source of pride, and poverty is not a humiliation; they are divine allocations, manifestations of wisdom and benefits in destiny. All of these serve as a means of testing for humanity. What matters most is the devotion of the heart to Allah. Just as the divisions among people vary, so do the responsibilities, ensuring that social balance is established most perfectly. Zakat, charity, and spending play a crucial role in achieving this social balance.

Zakat and spending prevent the wealthy from becoming arrogant due to their wealth and guard against negative tendencies such as envy and resentment among the needy towards the rich. They connect individuals to each other with brotherhood and love, minimizing the gap between the rich and the poor. By reducing the number of poor individuals to almost none, it prevents many unpleasant incidents. For instance, Caliph Umar ibn Abdulaziz sent a zakat officer to African countries who returned without distributing the funds as he couldn't find anyone eligible.

In response, the Caliph used the money to purchase and emancipate numerous slaves.[432]

Zakat serves as a bridge that connects people of different levels and integrates society. Hence, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "Zakat is the bridge of Islam." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, III, 20, 195; Haythami, III, 62) This hadith also indicates that zakat is a bridge established for the Hereafter. According to a narration by Qatada, "Zakat is a bridge between Hell and Paradise. Whoever pays their zakat crosses the bridge and attains Paradise." (Abd al-Razzaq, Musannaf, IV, 108)

Let's look at an example illustrating how charity serves as a bridge among different individuals in society:

While walking, Caliph Umar ﷺ noticed an elderly and blind beggar in front of a door. Approaching from behind, he touched his arm and asked, "Which class of the People of the Book do you belong to?" The elderly person identified himself as a Jew. Umar ﷺ then asked, "What has led you to this

432. See Bûtî, Fiqh of the Seerah, Beirut 1980, p. 434.

state?" The blind Jew replied, "Being subjected to jizya (tax) and being in need, coupled with my old age, have brought me to this condition."

Umar ﷺ took the blind Jew by the hand and brought him to his own home. He gave whatever he could find in his house to the Jew. Later, he summoned the head of the treasury and instructed him, "Pay attention to people like him! I swear by Allah, if we take advantage of him during his productive years and leave him in such a wretched state when he becomes old and feeble, we will not have acted justly." Following this incident, Caliph Umar ﷺ abolished the jizya for the blind and similar cases.[433]

Excess wealth, in this manner, is gradually transferred to the disadvantaged in society. This ensures balance, justice, and social harmony in the community. The wealth of the rich is purified, and the possessions become entirely lawful.

Zakat, which brings joy to the disadvantaged in society, provides greater benefits to the givers. The term "zakat," representing cleanliness, purity, increase, and blessing, purifies individuals from certain spiritual ailments and ensures the purification and blessing of wealth.[434]

Zakat and charity represent an expression of gratitude owed by the wealthy to the divine blessings they have received. Allah promises an increase in blessings when gratitude is shown, and severe punishment when ingratitude is displayed.[435]

In a hadith, it is expressed that those who willingly pay their annual zakat from their wealth, distinguishing it from the lower quality possessions, will taste the sweetness of faith. (Abu Dawood, Zakat, 5/1582)

The act of giving zakat disciplines one's feelings of ownership and personal benefit.

Islam played a significant role in abolishing the chains of slavery, a reality of the past. Indeed, Islam, through institutions like zakat and charity, has been effective in emancipating slaves and showing generosity and kindness to them.

433. Abû Yûsuf, Book of Harâj, Dâru's-Salâh, n.d., pp. 259-260
434. Tawbah, 103; Saba, 39; Abû Dâwood, Zakat, 21/1619.
435. Ibrâhîm, 7.

Zakat ensures the continuous circulation of national wealth, making it productive, invigorating the market, and revitalizing trade. Additionally, zakat supports many individuals striving in the path of Allah, contributing to the initiation of righteous deeds. It assists in the education of students, laying the groundwork for the advancement of knowledge and science.

Zakat encourages giving rather than receiving. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "The hand that gives is better than the hand that receives. Start by supporting those whom you are responsible for." The best charity is that given from surplus wealth. Whoever refrains from asking others, Allah will not make them dependent on others. Whoever is content, Allah will enrich them. (Al-Bukhari, Zakat 18; Muslim, Zakat 94-97, 106, 124)

Therefore, Muslims aspiring to elevate their condition strive to work diligently and earn so that they can be contributors. In the end, people rid themselves of laziness and gain the determination to work and earn.

When zakat is not given, all these benefits are reversed, resulting in significant harm to individuals and society.

One who covets and hoards Allah's given wealth, practicing miserliness, and eventually falling into ethical weakness, will find no peace in this world or the Hereafter. The disease of miserliness, untreated by zakat and charity, not only leaves one in distress in this world but also exposes them to the venom of snakes in the Hereafter. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "If someone is given wealth by Allah, and they do not pay its zakat, the wealth will appear on the Day of Judgment as a venomous snake with two black spots on its cheeks. That fierce snake will coil around the neck of its owner, biting him, and say, 'I am your wealth, I am your treasure!'" The Prophet ﷺ supported this statement with the verse, "Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but moderate between the two." (Ali-Imran, 180) (Al-Bukhari, Zakat, 3; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 3/3012)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned that when zakat is neglected, communities will be deprived of rain, and even if they have livestock, rain will not be sent down for them. In other words, when zakat is abandoned, prosperity and abundance are taken away from society.[436] Rain and sustenance are granted for the sake of bowed-down worshippers, innocent people, and animals. Over

436. Tirmizi, Fitan, 38/2210, 2211.

time, societal order is disrupted, leading to deep divides between the rich and the poor. This situation pushes many needy individuals toward wrongdoing. In the end, neither the wealthy nor the poor find peace.

6. Pilgrimage and Its Significances

Hajj is an act of worship performed by able-bodied Muslims once in their lifetime, during specific days, by visiting the Kaaba in Mecca, performing certain rituals. The Almighty says: "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all people who can make their way to it." (Al Imran, 97) Hajj is a worship filled with symbols that evoke thoughts of Allah, the afterlife, and the memories of past prophets. It holds great importance in various aspects such as Islamic consciousness, the excitement of worship, and a sense of unity. Each ritual has profound meanings. During Hajj, people undergo a profound training of worship, prayer, and remembrance. They remember Allah in every action, implanting His love in their hearts.

Pilgrims, by reflecting on the states of prophets, truthful ones, martyrs, and righteous individuals, draw inspiration from the sacred times and places associated with them. Immersed in significant spiritual influence, they take steps toward moral excellence. Qualities such as humility, a sense of nothingness, patience, submission, cooperation, sincerity, discipline in time and movement, preparation for death and resurrection, not harming any plant or creature, and thinking well of others are acquired. The outward symbols of Hajj contain various spiritual exercises and diverse behaviors in different places. Therefore, everyone benefits from one or more aspects of Hajj.

As pilgrims approach Mecca, they remove their regular clothes at specified places (miqat locations) and dress in two pieces of cloth called ihram. Ihram is a tangible expression of sincerity and devotion. Simultaneously, it signifies the relinquishment of all pleasures, comforts, and worldly habits, surrendering to Allah. It symbolizes turning towards Allah with a state of destitution and need, enduring fatigue, and getting covered in dust for His sake.

Arafat symbolizes the rise from graves to the morning of resurrection and the gathering at the crowded field of judgment. All servants stand before Allah, weak, needy, and hopeful, seeking His forgiveness. Hearts and eyes are moistened with tears of repentance, and sincere pleas ascend to the Almighty. Clean pages open in the book of life, and pledges are made to live

in obedience to Allah for the rest of one's life. Thus, Arafat presents a scene resembling the Day of Judgment. Some aspects of the Day of Judgment are experienced there, with heads uncovered, barefoot, wearing upper and lower cloths, feeling the heat. It is as if no one has the ability to look at another.

Wearing seamless garments during Hajj and abstaining from various worldly activities symbolize cutting ties with the world. It signifies turning completely towards Allah with a state of poverty and need, abandoning all claims of wealth and ownership. This situation conveys the conviction that "I came to this world with nothing, and I will leave in the same state. Therefore, clinging to material possessions, striving for them at the expense of injustice to others, and deviating from ethical principles would be highly detrimental."

Hajj directs people towards spiritual life, as this delicate worship is filled with manifestations of compassion, mercy, and love. It prohibits activities such as hunting, showing the prey to the hunter, killing even a fly, plucking a green leaf, and causing harm to Allah's creation.

While in the state of ihram, harmful and indecent speech, fights, noise, and disputes are prohibited. Love and kindness towards the created beings for the sake of the Creator prevail.

Avoiding causing harm is essential. Thus, people experience a training of harmlessness.

Muslims performing Hajj come together in the same time and place, forming a spiritual alliance. They listen to each other's concerns, convey messages to distant brothers, and engage in a mutual connection. Mecca is known as Umm al-Qura, meaning the mother of settlements, as it reflects the reality of all believers being one nation under the banner of Islamic brotherhood. There, leaders, strangers, rich, poor, ignorant, knowledgeable, rulers, and subjects stand together in the same clothes, at the same square, and in the same row. That blessed city is an embrace of safety, peace, love, grace, abundance, and mercy.

7. Qurban (Sacrifice) and Its Wisdom

The word "qurbân" in Arabic encompasses both material and spiritual closeness. In terminology, it refers to the act of approaching Allah with something personal, specifically by sacrificing certain types of animals at a

designated time for the purpose of worship. Wealthy individuals with a certain amount of property are required to sacrifice an animal during the days of Eid al-Adha. The meat from the sacrificed animal can be consumed by the household and distributed to relatives and the less fortunate. Sacrifice serves as a reminder of the submission and superior devotion of Prophet Ibrahim and his son Isma'il, teaching the proper utilization and benevolence of the blessings bestowed by Allah.

Islam encourages the act of sacrifice but also prohibits extravagance and cruelty to animals, even specifying an age limit for sacrificial animals. Prophet Muhammad advised against cruel actions during the sacrifice and emphasized the importance of a swift and precise process.

The act of sacrifice helps individuals overcome greed and material attachment, fostering feelings of brotherhood, mutual assistance, sharing, and bringing joy to the less fortunate. It strengthens bonds among people through love and compassion, enabling everyone to benefit from Allah's blessings.

Sacrifice is a form of devotion to Allah, representing the complete dedication of material possessions to His will. The historical sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim and his son Isma'il aimed to redirect humanity's focus from material constraints to new intellectual and spiritual horizons. This shift in perspective has led to numerous discoveries, inventions, and the foundation of modern science.[437]

Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son was driven by his love for Allah, sparing him from the actual act. Today, our sacrifices symbolize offering secondary or tertiary affections, such as money and possessions, to reach the divine love we lack. This illustrates that through effort, dedication, and sacrifice, any love can ascend to the highest form of divine affection. Otherwise, the value of the sacrificed animals lies solely in enhancing our love and devotion to Allah. [438]

When Allah announced the creation of mankind, angels questioned the potential for mischief and bloodshed on Earth. This inquiry serves as a reflection on the challenges and responsibilities associated with human existence. (Baqarah, 30)

437. Prof. Dr. Ali Murat Daryal, Psychological Foundations of Sacrifice, pp. 261-262.
438. Daryal, ibid, p. 259.

From this, we understand that there is a high propensity for bloodshed in humans. Sacrificing an animal, therefore, satisfies this instinct in humans and provides solutions to many issues within society originating from human nature. At the very least, it prevents and guides numerous evils.[439]

Hence, in societies that practice animal sacrifice, incidents like killing and injuring are extremely rare. Interpersonal relationships are not dominated by harsh attitudes that lead to the early death or disability of individuals. Those who perform sacrifices do not succumb to tension as they satisfy the instinct for bloodshed. This harmony and flexibility within society contribute to people leading healthier, more peaceful, and longer lives.[440]

Sacrificing animals not only prevents social and financial problems but also non-pathological mental illnesses stemming from conflicts. Mental illnesses arise when the existing tension in an individual surpasses a certain level due to conflicts.[441]

The benefits of the act of sacrifice extend beyond social and financial assistance. Since each worship has distinct meanings and wisdom, replacing sacrifice with another worship, such as distributing the money meant for sacrifice or providing food aid to the poor, is not permissible. Each worship holds its unique significance.

8. Wisdom in Reciting the Quran, Supplications, and Remembrance

Recitation of the Quran, supplications, and remembrance enable the soul to find peace, tranquility, and a sense of security. Almighty Allah states:

"Know that hearts find tranquility in the remembrance of Allah." (Ar-Ra'd, 28)

"Has the time not come for the hearts of those who believe to submit to the remembrance of Allah and the truth revealed?" (Al-Hadid, 16)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said:

439. Daryal, ibid, p. 274.
440. Daryal, ibid, p. 244.
441. Daryal, ibid, p. 245.

"The difference between the one who remembers his Lord and the one who does not is like that between the living and the dead." (Al-Bukhari, Daawat, 66)

This emphasizes that the revival and tranquility of the human heart are only possible through the remembrance of Almighty Allah. Furthermore, remembrance aids in purifying the soul, fostering maturity, erasing sins, and increasing virtuous deeds.

The Impact of the Quran

Reciting the Quran is also a form of remembrance. The Quran, being the word of Allah, exerts an indescribable and mysterious influence on its reader, regardless of whether they know Arabic.

This is due to the eloquence of the Quran and its supernatural harmony in sound and melody. Indeed, it is widely accepted today that there is a strong connection between eloquence and the science of psychology. Undoubtedly, there exists a profound link between the art of language and the human soul, and the Quran plays a significant role in this connection.

When the melody of the Quran reaches the ears, the heart turns towards it with pure sincerity, experiencing great pleasure and sweetness. As one progresses, feelings of love and humility immerse the heart. Some verses bring joy, soften the heart, provide comfort, and strengthen faith, while others evoke fear and awe, trembling hearts. Many non-Muslims have acknowledged this impact. [442]

The following verses explicitly illustrate the influence of the Quran on hearts:

"If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from the fear of Allah." (Al-Hashr, 21)

"The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allah." (Az-Zumar, 23)

Professor Dr. Jeffrey Lang, a convert to Islam influenced by the Quran, describes his emotions as follows:

442. See Mâidah, 83; Anfâl, 2; İsrâ, 107-109; Zumer, 23; Abdulkadir Atâ, Majesty of the Qur'an, Beirut 1984, p. 87.

"As many converts to Islam will tell you, you do not have to be a Muslim to feel this power of the Quran. Many people have chosen Islam after experiencing this kind of effect of the Quran. Likewise, many non-Muslim scholars engaged in Islamic studies have expressed the same phenomenon. Arabic expert Arthur J. Arberry, who produced one of the best English translations of the Quran, describes how the Quran supported him during a challenging period in his life. Frederick Denny, a non-Muslim author, shares his experience of feeling an 'mysterious, sometimes eerie state' and occasionally having an 'extremely frightening experience' while reading the Quran. The reader often feels that it is not they who are reading the Quran, but rather, the Quran is reading them."[443]

In recent days, scientific research has been conducted on the effects of faith, prayer, Quranic recitation, and other remembrances on individuals. For example, Dr. Ahmet al-Kadi conducted research on "The Quran and Stress" and presented his findings at the Islamic Medical Congress held in Istanbul in 1984. He concluded that the phonetic characteristics of Quranic words reduce stress.[444]

Benefits of Prayer and Remembrance

Prayer and remembrance have a profound impact on the spiritual dimension of a person. Attaining spiritual maturity and acquiring ethical virtues are closely linked to constantly remembering and contemplating Allah, living with the awareness that He sees one everywhere and at all times. A person who consistently maintains this state cannot approach wrongdoing and cannot refrain from engaging in acts of kindness and righteousness. As a result, love for Allah is instilled in the hearts of both the heavens and the earth.

Various effects of remembrance have been observed, including findings from a research group consisting of 30 professors specializing in different fields of medicine, working at different universities. They conducted a laboratory study to examine whether there was any difference between meat from animals slaughtered with the Basmala (saying "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful") and those slaughtered without it.

443. Prof. Dr. Jeffrey Lang, Even Angels Ask, trans. S. Levin İçten, Istanbul 2004, p. 190; Frederick Denny, Islam, New York: Harper&Row Publishers, 1987, p. 88.
444. [URL: http://www.thehealthnews.org/tr/news/05/11/10/dua.tedavi.iyilesme.html], (23.04.2007)

Providing information about the methodology, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy at the

University of Damascus, Prof. Dr. Nebil Şerif, stated that meat slaughtered with the Basmala took on an open bright red color, while samples of meat slaughtered without it tended to be a dark red, close to black.

Prof. Şerif also mentioned that they did not find any microbes in the meat slaughtered with the Basmala, whereas in the diagnosis of meat slaughtered without it, they identified continuously increasing, largely harmful microbes and bacteria. While inflammatory white blood cells and red blood cells were detected in the tissues of meat slaughtered without the Basmala, no such result was found in the tissues of meat slaughtered with the Basmala, according to his observations.

According to statements from Prof. Fuad Nima, a professor in the Department of Meat Hygiene at the same university's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, in many countries around the world, the process of stunning animals before slaughter causes blood to remain in the body, leading to faster spoilage of such meat. However, the impact and excitement caused by reciting the Basmala and the takbir (saying "Allahu Akbar") at the moment of slaughter contribute to the optimal expulsion of blood and reduce the suffering of animals.[445]

Dr. Masaru Emoto is conducting a noteworthy study related to the impact of remembrance. A graduate of Yokohama University with a degree in Social Sciences, Dr. Emoto discovered that the crystals formed in frozen water undergo changes when specific thoughts are intensely directed toward them. He began photographing these crystals using a special technique.

During a seminar in Turkey, Dr. Emoto explained how thoughts and emotions influence physical reality. He demonstrated, through photographs, the impact of kind words, beauty, and positive emotions on water crystals. Additionally, he displayed the crystals of Zamzam water, which is continuously exposed to remembrance and worship, and the crystals of water with the Basmala (In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful)

445. For details, see http://us.moheet.com; http://www.gidaraporu.com; http://www.tercuman.com.tr/v1/yazaryazi.asp?id=47&yazitar=18.01.2005&yaziid=10286 (18.01.2005).

inscribed. The audience expressed admiration for both displays. Dr. Emoto says:

"Words have certain vibrations, carrying an energy charge. Uttering the word 'apple' imparts a different energy, producing either positive or negative vibrations. It is this energy that affects water."

Dr. Emoto, who follows the Shinto religion in Japan, observed astonishing results when he exposed water to the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah (Asma-ul Husna), teachings found in the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad. He states:

"The crystals formed when we displayed the 99 names of Allah were very beautiful. Shapes formed just as I had envisioned."

Currently, Dr. Emoto is preparing to release a book illustrating the impact of the Beautiful Names of Allah on water.[446]

This implies that not only reciting but even looking at the names of Allah has positive effects. In Islam, considering it virtuous to face the Quran reinforces this concept in a way.

The wisdom and benefits of worship are not limited to what we have discussed. There are many secrets in worship that we may not comprehend, and some of them may become apparent over time, while a significant portion will be understood in the hereafter.

Apart from what we have mentioned, there are other forms of worship, each with numerous wisdom and benefits. Undoubtedly, when Muslims engage in worship, they do not think about such worldly and simple benefits. They perform their acts of worship for the sake of Allah's sublime pleasure. However, the mentioned benefits are also a favor and grace bestowed upon Allah's servants. Knowing and contemplating them brings a distinct enthusiasm and excitement to an individual.[447]

446. İpek Durkal, "Crystals Exhibiting Allah's 99 Names", Sabah Newspaper Gunaydın Supplement, 28.03.2009. For the interview, see [URL: http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2009/03/28/gny/haber,E-64927875AE84F09B4896D9955C9BE15.html]

447. For details on the virtues of worship, see Osman Nûri Topbaş, Islam Belief Worship, pp. 192-418 (http://www.worldpublishings.com/Deppo/Dokumanlar/fransizca_ISLAM_IMAN_IBADET.pdf); Çelik-OzturkKaya, Exemplary Conduct, I, 110-221 (www.usveihasene.com); Dr. Murat Kaya, Life Measures from Our Prophet, pp. 62-307.

9. Turning Life into Worship

When we briefly look at the mentioned acts of worship, we see that Islam is intricately intertwined with all aspects of life. Islam is not a religion that can be confined to a day or specific times; it encompasses life in its entirety, from birth to death, and even beyond death.

In Islam, there is no separation between religion and the world; rather, they are seamlessly integrated into a magnificent balance. The practice of completely separating the affairs of the body from the affairs of the soul is not considered in Islam. Worship, which needs to be constantly represented in all aspects of human life, constitutes the true meaning of life. When life is divided into two parts, material and spiritual, it is impossible to achieve this goal. Therefore, these two aspects of life must come together in a regular whole in our activities and consciousness.

From these expressions, one should not assume that Muslims spend all their time in acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage. The intention and perspective of the individual are so crucial that, in this way, even the worldliest task can turn into an act of worship. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "Actions are judged by intentions. A person will get what he intended..." (Muslim, Imara, 155; Al-Bukhari, Bad al-Wahy, 1; Iman, 41)

For example, a person starts preparing to pray, takes ablution, goes to the mosque, prays, recites supplications, and returns home. Although he has spent only ten minutes praying, and half an hour in total for preparation and going back and forth, Prophet Muhammad announced that during all the time he was engaged in preparing for prayer, and even planning how he would perform the next prayer until that time, he would be considered as if he had prayed. (Al-Bukhari, Salah, 87; Buyu', 49; Bad' al-khalq, 7; Muslim, Taharah, 41; Hakim, I, 331)

Similarly, a believer who practices his profession and thinks of earning halal sustenance for his family and raising them with Islamic upbringing receives reward for his efforts as an act of worship. Likewise, someone who aims to maintain his health and continue his worship life by eating also earns reward according to his intention.

On the other hand, sincere feelings of goodwill are, in themselves, a form of worship. Due to human limitations, it is not possible to perform every good deed in a perfect manner. In such situations, "sincere intentions" come

into play and bring significant rewards to humankind. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "The intention of a believer is better than his action..." (Haythami, I, 61; Suyuti, Jami, II, 194).

Moreover, Islam has greatly facilitated the ways of doing good and earning rewards. Let's consider the following statements of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

"Your smiling in the face of your brother is charity. Commanding good and forbidding evil is charity. Your giving directions to a lost person is charity; your seeing for a man with bad sight is a charity; your removal of a rock, a thorn, or a bone from the road is charity; your pouring what remains from your bucket into the bucket of your brother is charity." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 36/1956)

"If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person, or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (sadaqah) for him." (Muslim, Musaqah, 7)

Some poor companions once said, "O Messenger of Allah! The rich take away all the rewards. They perform prayers and fast like us, and additionally, they give charity from the surplus of their wealth." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded, "Has Allah not made things for you to give in charity? Truly every tasbih (saying 'SubhanAllah'), every takbir (saying 'Allahu Akbar'), every tahmid (saying 'Alhamdulillah'), and every tahlil (saying 'La ilaha illallah') is charity. To command a good action is charity, to forbid a bad action is charity, and in the sexual act of each of you, there is a charity." (Muslim, Zakat, 53; Masajid, 142)

In other words, when a person's intention is to earn Allah's pleasure, even the smallest things he does become acts of charity and goodness. Even smiling at a fellow believer... Furthermore, if a person is unable to perform the good deed he intended due to various reasons, Allah still rewards him as if he had done the act of kindness. In this way, almost every action of a Muslim becomes an act of worship, and every moment is spent in worship. A believer who lives Islam properly constantly attains the blessing of being in the presence of our Supreme Lord.

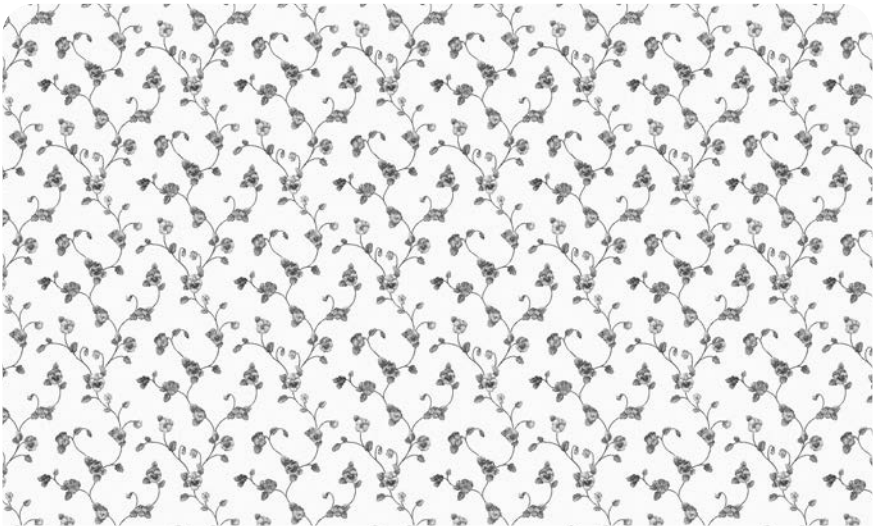
Before the statements of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, people did not even know that good could be done to animals. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only taught humanity all the beauties but also instructed them to do good to other living beings, plants, and even inanimate objects. One day, Prophet Muham-

mad ﷺ narrated the story of a man who found a well and quenched his thirst. Later, he noticed a dog, sticking out its tongue from thirst, licking the wet soil. The man thought to himself, 'This dog is as thirsty as I was.' So, he descended into the well, filled his shoe with water, and quenched the dog's thirst. Allah was pleased with this act, and He forgave the man's sins. The companions were astonished and asked, "O Messenger of Allah! Is there reward even for us concerning the animals?" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "In every living being, there is reward for charity." (Al-Bukhari, Musaqah, 9; Mazalim, 23; Muslim, Salam, 153)

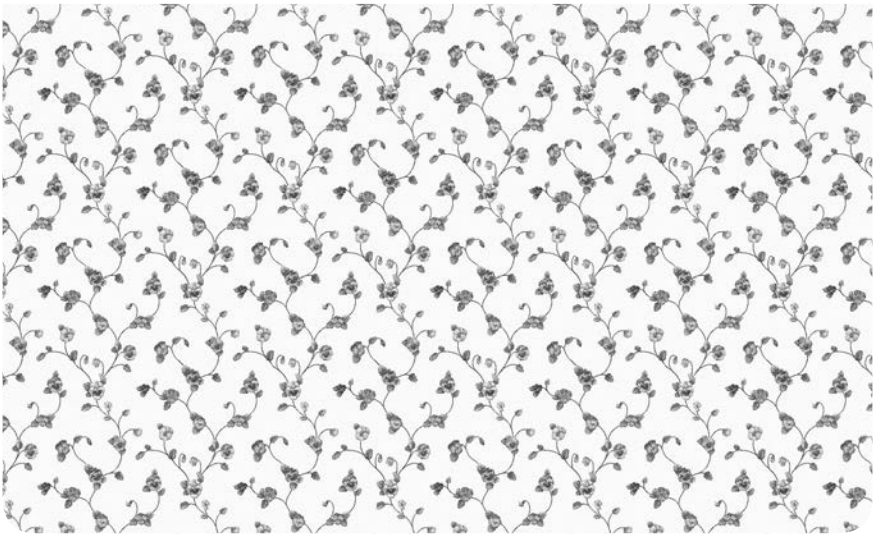
Every part of the earth is a place of worship. One does not need to seclude oneself in a specific place to worship, putting aside daily tasks. A person can be in a state of worship at any time and any place.

Allah is very generous to His servants. Therefore, He always facilitates their affairs and forgives their mistakes. When His servants sincerely turn to Him, He accepts even their small deeds generously and rewards them abundantly. Just as a fruit seed planted in the soil grows into a large tree, yielding billions of fruits for His servants, similarly, Allah will bestow such great rewards in the hereafter for the sincere acts they perform in this world.





THE FOURTH PART



MORALITY

Good character is a potion that completes faith, brings excellence to perfection, beautifies life, draws its owner closer to Allah's pleasure, and captivates people to it. It is the shadow of the attributes of the Almighty on humans and the divine reflections that manifest from these attributes to the servant. Therefore, being adorned with good character is a sign of closeness to Allah, while bad character is an indication of moving away from Him and heading towards destruction.

Good character is not only crucial for individuals but is also essential for society. A society in which morality has decayed is doomed to disintegration and destruction. History bears witness that many nations that were defeated by enemies later managed to strengthen themselves and achieve independence, prevailing over their adversaries. However, a nation defeated by immorality, indulgence, oppression, and injustice has never been able to recover and strengthen itself; it is impossible. Dissipation has wiped many nations off the historical stage. Examples of this are abundant, including Rome, Andalusia, and the Persian Empire. For instance, in ancient Rome, virtuous behavior flourished, establishing affection among both rulers and the public.

They were extremely cautious about debauchery and immorality, valuing virtuous living as an honor. Their women and youth were highly chaste. However, when Alexander conquered Greece, the immorality and debauchery in them began to invade Rome. The beautiful character and virtue were replaced by immorality. Family life deteriorated. The magnificent Roman Empire collapsed and vanished from the historical scene. Neither their laws nor their wealth could save them from ruin. Morality brings about a peaceful and secure environment in society, which is the first step towards material and spiritual progress.

For this reason, Islam attaches great importance to morality. Considering that the two main themes contained in the chapters revealed in Mecca are faith and morality, understanding the value Islam places on morality in the Qur'an becomes clearer. Faith signifies the connection with Allah, while

morality constitutes the foundation of social relations. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "I was sent to perfect good character." (Ahmad, II, 381; Muwatta, Husn al-Khulq, 8; Hakim, II, 670) He also narrated that Gabriel informed him that Allah said, "This religion (meaning Islam) is a religion chosen and approved by Myself. Generosity and good character befit it. Elevate it with these two qualities as long as you live as Muslims!" (Haythami, VIII, 20; Ali al-Muttaqi, Kenz, VI, 392) In another narration, the Prophet stated, "Allah has divided your sustenance among you. Similarly, He has divided your character among you. Just as Allah gives the world to those He loves and those He does not love, He gives religion only to those He loves." (Ahmad, I, 387) In this hadith, we see that character is equated with religion.

The entire life of the Prophet is a supreme example of good character. Allah indeed said, "You are truly upon a great moral character." (Al-Qalam, 4). Muslims learn how to sit, stand, walk, eat, drink, address people, sleep, wake up—essentially how to conduct their daily lives—from the detailed example set by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He taught humanity the most beautiful character, and his exemplary conduct alone is sufficient to demonstrate that he is the greatest human being to have ever lived.

The Prophet ﷺ encourages his community to possess good character, stating, "The believers with the most complete faith are those with the most excellent character." (Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 15/4682; Ibn Hibban, Sahih, IX, 483)

He emphasizes the weight of good character in the balance on Judgment Day, saying, "In the scale of the believing servant on the Day of Judgment, nothing will be heavier than good character. Allah dislikes the ill-mannered and those who speak foully." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 62/2002). He affirms the priority of good character by saying, "The first thing to be weighed in the balance will be good character." (Tabarani, Kabir, XIV, 253-4/647; XXV, 73/178)

The Prophet ﷺ advises believers that material possessions alone cannot satisfy people, but they can be contented by your smiling face and good character, stating, "You will not be able to please people with your wealth. Try to satisfy them with your smiling face and good character." (Hakim, I, 212/427). He regularly supplicated to Allah, saying, "O Allah, just as You have beautified my creation, beautify my character." (Ahmad, I, 403; VI, 68, 155). Now, let's explore a few examples of the beautiful character taught by Islam after this introduction.

1. Compassion

Islam teaches people to show compassion, mercy, to protect them from harmful things, to alleviate their pains, to bring joy and peace to their hearts, and to love them. It strongly commands to treat orphans, children, women, the elderly, those under our authority, and animals with compassion and kindness.

The Almighty Allah frequently mentions in the Qur'an that He is forgiving and merciful, even stating that He is "the Most Merciful of those who show mercy,"[448] and that His mercy encompasses everything[449]. The Qur'an begins with the names of Rahman (the Most Compassionate) and Rahim (the Most Merciful). Muslims recite Surah Al-Fatiha, where these attributes are mentioned, at least 40 times daily in their prayers. Moreover, the Basmala, recited by Muslims at the beginning of every task and constantly on their tongues throughout the day, always reminds them of Allah's attributes of mercy and compassion.

Everything in the universe is nothing but a manifestation of divine mercy. All manifestations of mercy in creation are a reflection of Almighty Allah's boundless mercy. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Allah has divided His mercy into one hundred parts, and He retained with Him ninety-nine parts, and sent down to earth one part. Because of that one part, creatures are merciful to each other, so that even the mare lifts up its hoofs away from its baby animal, lest it should trample on it." (Al-Bukhari, 73, 40)

The Prophet's most prominent characteristic was mercy, and Allah sent him as a mercy to all worlds.[450] Therefore, Allah blessed the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with the names Rauf (the Kind) and Rahim (the Merciful), names that were not bestowed upon previous prophets. (At-Tawbah:128; Al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, Volume 7, Page 192)

In various addresses, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would say: "O people! I am the prophet of mercy gifted to all worlds." (Sunan al-Darimi, Muqaddimah, 3)

Encouraging his followers to be merciful, he stated: "Those who show mercy will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Show mercy to those on

448. A'raf, 151.
449. A'raf, 156.
450. Al-Anbiyâ, 107.

the earth, and the One above the heavens will show mercy to you." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Birr, 16/1924). He also emphasized the reciprocal nature of mercy, saying: "He who does not show mercy to people, Allah will not show mercy to him." (Muslim, Fadha'il, 66; Al-Bukhari, Adab, 18)

Anas bin Malik ﷺ narrates: The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was an extremely compassionate person. Whenever someone approached him with a need, he would respond positively, make promises, and if the requested item was with him, he would give it immediately.

One day, while the call to prayer (adhan) was being recited, a Bedouin came, grabbed him by his garment, and said:

"I have a small need, and I want to address it immediately for fear of forgetting it." Allah's Messenger ﷺ stood with him until his need was fulfilled. Then, he turned and led the prayer. (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 278)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"He who does not show mercy to our young ones and recognize the honor due to our elders is not one of us." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Birr, 15/1920; al-Haythami, Majma' al-Zawa'id, VIII, 15)

Anas ﷺ also said: "I have not seen anyone more merciful to his family and children than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." (Sahih Muslim, Fadha'il, 63)

The Prophet ﷺ declared that a person who supports the needs of three orphan children will receive rewards equivalent to a person engaged in night worship, fasting during the day, and striving in the way of Allah, sacrificing everything. (Sunan Ibn Majah, Adab, 6)

Abdullah bin Mubarak (died 181/797), one of the prominent scholars of the generation after the companions, was a wealthy hadith scholar. Once, during a pilgrimage journey with his friends, he saw two orphan girls living in a hut. Witnessing these children, without any relatives, trying to eat a piece of dead bird out of hunger near their hut, he decided to abandon the pilgrimage journey and give up twenty dinars of the thousand dinars he had for the pilgrimage. When asked by his companions why he did this, he replied: "What we did here is more rewarding than our pilgrimage this year." [451]

451. M. Said Hatiboglu, "On the Understanding of Hadith/Sunna of the First Sufis" İslâmiyat, volume 2, number 3, July-September 1999, p. 13.

General Mercy

Regardless of one's faith, treating all people with kindness and mercy is a human duty. Therefore, in the lands where Islam prevailed, followers of different religions were treated with tolerance, and they were never subjected to oppression. For instance, when the Quraysh, who opposed Islam and subjected Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to severe torture, faced a severe famine for a year, their leader, Abu Sufyan, went to the Prophet and said: "O Muhammad, among the principles you have brought is maintaining family ties (silat ar-rahim), and now your people are in a state of perishing. Now, pray to the Almighty Allah!" The Prophet ﷺ prayed, and God granted them abundant rain for seven days and nights. When people started complaining about the excessive rain, the Prophet prayed, "O Allah, let it rain around us, not upon us!" The clouds in the sky immediately dispersed, and rain started falling in the surrounding areas. (Al-Bukhari, Al-Istisqā, 13)

In the Battle of Badr, Muslims and polytheists faced each other, making final preparations for war. A group of polytheists came to the Muslims' water well to drink. When Muslims attempted to prevent them, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let them drink!" They came, drank, and returned to their ranks. (Ibn Hisham, II, 261)

The mercy introduced by Islam is not limited to humans. Other creatures have also benefited from its mercy. Once the Prophet ﷺ stated: "I swear by the One in whose hand my soul is, you will not enter Paradise until you show mercy to one another." The companions said, "O Messenger of Allah, we are all merciful." The Prophet ﷺ clarified, "The mercy I mean is not only mercy among yourselves as you understand. Rather, it is a comprehensive mercy embracing all creatures, yes, a mercy embracing all creatures!" (Al-Hakim, IV, 185/7310)

Once, while walking on the road, the Prophet ﷺ encountered people who were sitting on their riding animals, talking and chatting. He advised them: "Ride your animals gently without tiring them, and when you are not using them, let them rest properly. Do not make them a pulpit for your conversations on roads and streets! There are animals ridden by you that are better in the sight of Allah and are remembered by Allah more than the riders." (Ahmad, III, 439)

Bayazid al-Bistâmî once stopped in Hemedan while coming from Mecca and bought some coriander seeds. When he reached his hometown Bistam, he found a few ants in the coriander seeds. He said, "I have separated these ants from their places," and got up. He took them back to Hemedan and released them where he had bought them. (Farid ad-Din Attâr, Tazkiratu'l-Awliyâ, I, 176)

One day, Rumi requested his student to buy a large amount of food. The student bought the food and brought it to Rumi. Without uttering a single word, the master took them, covered them with a cloth, and walked away. The curious student followed him from a distance. Rumi entered a ruin where there was a newly born dog. The master placed all the food in front of this female dog. The student was stunned in the face of this profound compassion and mercy.

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi noticed his student and said:

"This poor animal hasn't eaten anything for seven days. She couldn't leave this place because of her puppies. Allah made her whining reach my ears and ordered me to alleviate her pains." (Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, The Smile of Islam, p. 91-92)

Institutionalized forms of Islamic compassion and benevolence, such as charitable foundations (waqfs), have served humanity and other creatures throughout history. Muslims have established thousands of foundations for the poor, needy, sick, elderly, travelers, students, and animals. The manifestations of kindness and mercy in these places could fill volumes of books.[452]

2. Forgiveness

Islam encourages individuals to forgive mistakes made against them, recognizing that no one is without fault. People inevitably make mistakes, and when they realize it, they quickly repent. Subsequently, they seek the concealment of their mistakes and forgiveness. Therefore, a person should also know how to forgive mistakes made against them.

Anas ﷺ narrates: The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sitting among us, and we saw him smiling until his back teeth became visible. Umar ﷺ asked, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! What makes you smile like this?" The Prophet ﷺ explained: "One of my

452. See Osman Nûri Topbaş, Endowment - Spending - Service, Istanbul 2002.

Ummah will fall on his knees before our Lord. One of them will say, 'O my Lord, settle my right with my brother.' Allah Almighty will say, 'How can I settle your right with your brother when he has no good deeds left?' The person will say, 'Then let him bear some of my sins.'" At this point, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ began to cry, tears flowing from his eyes, and he continued, saying: "The Day of Judgment is such a great day that, on that day, people are extremely in need of transferring their sins to others."

Then he continued with these words:

"Allah will say to the person demanding his right, 'Look up and see the gardens of Paradise!' When he looks up, he will say, 'O my Lord, I see cities made of gold, adorned with pearls. For which prophet, truthful person, or martyr are they prepared?' Allah, the Almighty, will say, 'You can own them if you forgive your brother.' The person will say, 'O Lord, I have forgiven my brother.' Upon this, Allah, the Almighty, will say, 'Take your brother's hand, and lead him to Paradise.'" (Hâkim, IV, 620/8718)

After narrating this incident, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Be conscious of Allah and strive to rectify your relationships. As you can see, Allah Almighty is reconciling among the Muslims." (Hâkim, IV, 620/8718)

The compassion and mercy of Allah and His Messenger towards the believers are immense. In this situation, it is our duty as Muslims to avoid oppression and injustice, protect ourselves from bankruptcy in the Hereafter, forgive the mistakes made against us generously, and reconcile among our fellow believers.

Our Lord, who is abundant in mercy, mentions the mistakes made by the believers in the Battle of Uhud in Surah Ali-Imrân,152. After warning them, He quickly forgives their mistakes so that they would not be overly distressed. Later, in verse 155, He repeats this, and in verse 159, He orders the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to forgive the believers and seek forgiveness for them from Allah. This illustrates how forgiving and forbearing Allah is. The verse says:

"Through Allah's favor, you dealt gently with them. Had you been harsh, hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, ask for forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs. Once you make

a decision, trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who trust [in Him].” (Âli-Imrân, 159)

In another verse, Allah says:

“Take the way of forgiveness and enjoin what is good and turn away from the ignorant.” (Al-A’raf, 199)

If Allah did not forgive the sins knowingly or unknowingly committed by us, what would our state be? Are we aware of standing upright due to the infinite mercy of our compassionate Lord? The following verses highlight this:

“If Allah were to impose blame on people for their wrongdoings, He would not have left upon the earth any creature, but He defers them to a named time. When their specified time comes, they cannot delay it an hour nor can they bring it forward. Indeed, Allah is Aware of His servants.” (Fatir, 45; An-Nahl, 61)

Allah continuously forgives His servants and provides them with time to reflect and mend their ways. (Al-Baqarah, 52)

The Prophet Always Forgave

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ consistently forgave people. Individuals who had attempted his life, subjected him to various forms of torture, insulted him, caused the death of his children, or led armies against him came seeking forgiveness, and the Prophet ﷺ forgave them all. For example, after the conquest of Khaybar, a Jewish woman had poisoned the food served to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. When he put the meat in his mouth, he detected the poison. Even though the woman admitted to poisoning the food, the Prophet ﷺ forgave her. (Al-Bukhari, Tibb, 55; Muslim, Salam, 43)

When Sumâma bin Usâl, the leader of Yamâmah, embraced Islam, he severed all commercial ties with the idolaters of Mecca who used to mock him, declaring that no grain would come to them from Yemâma until permitted by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Despite Mecca relying on Yamâmah for various supplies, facing famine and hardship, the Meccans had to turn to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for help. In response, the Prophet ﷺ sent a letter to Sumâma, instructing him to continue his trade[453]. Despite the previous three

453. Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 70; Muslim, Jihad, 59; Ibn Abdi’l-Barr, al-Istîâb, I, 214-215; Ibn Asir, Usd al-Ghaba, I, 295.

years of economic embargo imposed by those idolaters, the Prophet ﷺ did not inflict hardship on them but forgave them.

Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, had hired a slave named Wahshi to kill the Prophet's uncle, Hamza. Not stopping there, she mutilated Hamza's body, cutting open his abdomen and removing his liver. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ saw this, he was deeply saddened, and his liver was torn apart. However, when the perpetrator, Hind, came to ask for forgiveness, he did not hesitate to forgive her. Hind came to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ along with other women, concealing her face and changing her appearance to avoid being recognized. Fearing for her life and keeping a distance from the Prophet ﷺ, she finally spoke up:

"O Messenger of Allah! Praise be to Allah who has chosen and elevated His religion above all others. Certainly, your mercy will reach me as well. O Muhammad! Now, I am a woman who has believed in Allah and affirmed Him!" she said. Then she unveiled her face and continued, "I am Hind bint al-Utba! Allah forgives past sins. Forgive me so that Allah may forgive you!" The Prophet ﷺ smiled, summoned Hind, and said:

"Are you Hind bint al-Utba?" She replied, "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Welcome, and greetings to you!" Hind said, "By Allah, O Messenger of Allah! Until yesterday, there was no one in the world I wished to suffer humiliation and disgrace more than your family and supporters. However, when I woke up this morning, there was no one I wished to attain honor and dignity more than your family and supporters!" The Prophet ﷺ responded:

"Your condition will improve further; your faith will strengthen, and your love for Allah and His Messenger will increase even more!" (See Muslim, Akdiya, 8; Al-Waqidii, II, 850; At-Tabari, XXVIII, 99; Az-Zamakhshari, VI, 107; Diyarbekri, II, 89)

Later, Wahshi, who had directly committed this atrocity, also came and sought forgiveness. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forgave him too but said:

"Can you stay away from my sight?" (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 23; Ibn Qutaybah, al-Marif, Istanbul, n.d., p. 227)

Prophet Muhammad, himself forgiving people, advised his community: "Anyone who apologizes and comes to you, whether they are right or wrong,

accept their apology! Otherwise, they cannot come to me at the Pool of Kevser in heaven." (Hâkim, IV, 170/7258)

After conquering Mecca, despite having all his enemies in his power, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forgave them, declaring it a day of mercy[454], and even sought out the sons of his greatest enemy, Abu Lahab. He asked his uncle Abbas ﷺ: "Where are the two sons of your brother Abu Lahab, Uthbah and Muattib? I haven't seen them!" Abbas ﷺ replied, "Perhaps like some Quraysh polytheists, they might have fled." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Find them and bring them to me!" Our Prophet not only forgave those who approached him but actively pursued those who hadn't, aiming to bring them to peace as well. Abbas ﷺ found and brought Abu Lahab's sons, informing them that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was calling them. They immediately went with Abbas ﷺ to the presence of Prophet Muhammad. When the Prophet invited them to Islam, they embraced it instantly.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was overjoyed at their acceptance of Islam. Taking them to Multezem[455], he prayed to Allah for them and returned with great joy on his blessed face. Abbas ﷺ remarked, "O Messenger of Allah! May Allah keep you delighted! I see great joy on your blessed face." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "Yes! I prayed to my Lord for the forgiveness of my uncle's sons, and He granted forgiveness!" Uthbah and Muattib never left the side of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They participated in the Battle of Hunayn with him, remaining steadfast even during a moment of setback. Muattib, defending Prophet Muhammad, was struck in the eye that day. [456]

The Virtue of Forgiveness

The Almighty says: "Those who spend [in Allah's cause] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people. And Allah loves the doers of good." (Ali-Imran, 134)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated: "As a person forgives the mistakes of others, Allah increases his honor." (Muslim, Birr 69; Tirmidhi, Birr 82)

454. See Ibn Hisham, IV, 32; Wakidi, II, 835; Ibn Sa'd, II, 142-143.
455. Multezem: The portion between the door of the Kaaba and the Black Stone. The Prophet placed his chest, face, arms, and palms on the wall of the Kaaba at Multezem, stretching out his arms and hands, and prayed. In a hadith, it is also stated: "Between the Black Stone and the Station of Abraham is Multezem. Patients who pray here find healing." (Haythami, III, 246)
456. See Ibn Sa'd, IV, 60; Suyuti, al-Khasais al-Kubra, II, 82; Halebi, Insan al-Uyun, III, 48.

Observing carefully, we find that those who forgive those who wrong them and patiently endure their difficulties ultimately come out ahead. While those who don't forgive may seem to gain momentarily, their losses become apparent over time. This situation has been experienced repeatedly.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gives good news to those who love forgiveness: "Whoever swears an oath contrary to Allah's will and judges accordingly, Allah denies him; whoever pardons, Allah forgives him; whoever forgives, Allah pardons him; whoever endures a calamity patiently, Allah rewards him; whoever suppresses anger, Allah rewards him with goodness." (Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah, VI, 291-292)

The virtue of forgiving mistakes arises from its difficulty. Therefore, those who possess this beautiful trait should be hailed as "heroes." In a hadith, it is stated: "The true hero is not the one who defeats his opponent in a wrestling match; the real hero is the one who conquers his anger when provoked." (Al-Bukhari, Adab 76; Muslim, Birr 107, 108)

Qatadah, a companion, mentioned about a person named Abu Damdam who, every morning, used to say, "O Allah! I forgive those who insult me and damage my dignity through backbiting." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 36/4886)

People should forgive others abundantly so that Allah forgives them. After all, each one of us has numerous mistakes awaiting forgiveness, both towards Allah and fellow beings.

Abu Bakr ؓ used to regularly assist a poor man named Mistah from his relatives. When Mistah was accused among the slanderers during the Ifq Incident against Aisha ؓ, Abu Bakr ؓ, upon seeing him involved, vowed not to assist him anymore. Subsequently, Allah revealed the following verse: "And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah, and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (An-Nur, 22) Upon hearing this, Abu Bakr declared, "Indeed, I wish for Allah's forgiveness," and continued to assist Mistah as before, vowing never to cease his help. (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi 34; Muslim, Tauba 56; Tabari, Tafsir, II, 546)

Ali ؓ wrote a letter to Malik bin Harith, whom he appointed as governor of Egypt, containing a remarkable expression of humanity and virtue: "Do

not look at people as a beast looks at its herd. Harbor love, compassion, and kindness in your heart towards them! Because without exception, all people are either your brothers in religion or your equals in creation. People may err, face difficulties. Extend your hand to help the fallen; if you seek Allah's forgiveness for yourself, forgive others, be lenient and forgiving. Never defy Allah! Never regret forgiving, and never rejoice at imposing a punishment!"[457]

Jafar al-Sadiq had a servant who accidentally splashed water on him while pouring. Jafar al-Sadiq looked at the servant with a bit of annoyance. The servant, citing a verse from the Quran, said: "Those who restrain their anger." Jafar al-Sadiq then said, "I have restrained my anger." The servant continued, "And those who pardon the people." Jafar al-Sadiq responded, "I have forgiven you." The servant concluded with the verse, "And Allah loves the doers of good." Hearing this, Jafar al-Sadiq said, "Go, you are free for the sake of Allah, and here is a thousand dinars for you." (Ibn al-Jawzi, Bahru'd-Dumu', p. 142; Compare with Al-Qurtubi, IV, 207, [Ali-Imran, 134])

The Profit of Responding to Evil with Goodness

Beyond forgiving mistakes and flaws, being able to treat evil with kindness and even praying for the guidance and reform of someone who has wronged you was a distinctive characteristic of Prophet Muhammad. His example in Taif, where he faced stoning, and in Uhud, where his blessed teeth were broken and his face wounded, refraining from cursing them and instead praying for their guidance, serves as a sufficient example. His approach has been a means of salvation for many misguided individuals. The Almighty beautifully states: "Good and evil are not equal. Respond to evil with what is better; then the one between whom and you there is enmity will become as if he were a devoted friend." (Fussilat, 34)

However, it's essential to note that forgiveness and pardon apply to personal offenses. If a crime concerns the community, then efforts should be directed towards rehabilitation, acting justly, and revealing the truth. For such a wrongdoer, forgiving might lead to greater injustices. Aisha ﵂ says: "I swear by Allah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never sought revenge for personal reasons. However, when disrespect was shown to Allah's prohibitions

457. Muhyiddin Seydi Çelebi, Principles of Governance in Bukhari, ed. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Erdogan, Istanbul 2000, p. 47.

and divine prohibitions were violated, he never compromised in implementing Allah's judgment." (Al-Bukhari, Hudud, 10)

Getting angry when forgiveness is appropriate can lead to harm, and on the other hand, not getting angry when necessary is a moral weakness that produces the same result. Prophet Muhammad stated that loving for the sake of Allah and being angry for the sake of Allah are signs of faith. (Al-Bukhari, Iman, 1; Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 15/4681)

This signifies that expressing anger over crimes against the rights of society, spiritual and national values is also a manifestation of the nobility of faith.

Concealing Faults

A believer is not someone who eagerly investigates the faults of others but rather someone who, by chance, covers (conceals) the faults and mistakes they happen to witness. Because, for some flaws, it is said, "It is worse for the faults to become known." That is, it is more harmful for them to spread. For this reason, the Almighty Allah strongly prohibits the spreading of faults and evils. In the Quran, it is stated: "Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter..." (An-Nur, 19)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said: "Whoever conceals the fault of his brother, Allah will conceal his faults on the Day of Judgment. Whoever exposes the fault of his Muslim brother, Allah will expose his fault, even if it is inside his home." (Ibn Majah, Hudud, 5)

"If anyone accuses his brother of a sin, before he dies, he will not leave this world without committing it himself." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 53/2505)

3. Truthfulness and Reliability

Truthfulness (sidq) means being honest, upright, just, and walking within the circle of religion and reason. Truthfulness is not only in speech but also in intention, willpower, determination, and actions.

Islam has given a special place to being truthful, avoiding falsehood, and being on the path of righteousness. Allah and His Messenger encourage people to be truthful, honest, and reliable in their intentions, thoughts, words, actions, commercial transactions, oaths—basically, in every aspect of their

lives. The qualities of prophets and righteous individuals primarily include truthfulness and reliability.

One of the fundamental pillars for finding peace in worldly life is for people to be truthful. If falsehood replaces truthfulness, life becomes unbearable, and all people suffer from this situation. Therefore, truthfulness is an indispensable treasure for all people in the world.

On the Day of Judgment, when everyone is in desperate need of help, and no one can benefit anyone, truthfulness will be the most precious capital. Those who live with this quality in the world will receive their true rewards there and will attain salvation through the loyalty that comes to their aid in their most difficult moments. Allah describes that day as, "...This is the day when their truthfulness will benefit the truthful..."[458] (Ahzab, 24). As stated in the Quran, on that day, "Allah will reward the truthful for their truthfulness..." (Ahzab, 24). Furthermore, Allah promises forgiveness and great reward for truthful men and women. (Ahzab, 35)

The Best Amongst People

Our beloved Prophet, whom Allah has presented as the most beautiful example for us, was the best among people. Even his most vehement enemies had to admit this.[459] Nothing but the truth ever came out of his mouth, and he remained truthful even when joking. For this reason, even his enemies in Mecca would entrust him with their valuable belongings. When he had to migrate from Mecca, he left Imam Ali behind to return all entrusted items, including jewelry and valuables, to their rightful owners. Everyone admired his honesty.[460]

The following incident illustrates the Prophet's unwavering reliability:

Narrated by Tarik bin Abdullah al-Muharibi:

After the strength of Islam and the migration of the Prophet ﷺ to Medina, we set out with a group from Rebaza. We stopped near Madina. We had a woman with us, a relative of ours. While we were sitting, a person wearing two white garments approached, greeted us, and we responded to his greeting.

458. Ma'idah, 119.
459. Al-Bukhari, Bad' al-Wahy, 6; Muslim, Jihad, 74; Tabari, Tafsir, VII, 240; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidaya, III, 113.
460. Ibn Hisham, II, 95, 98.



"Where is this group coming from?" he asked. We replied, "From Rebaza." We had a reddish camel with us. He said, "Will you sell me this camel?" We agreed.

"How much?" he inquired. We stated, "For this amount of dates." He didn't ask for a discount. He said, "I have taken it," and took the reins of the camel. When he entered Medina and disappeared from our sight, we started blaming each other, saying, "We gave the camel to someone we don't know." The woman among us said, "No need to blame each other. I saw his face, and he is definitely not someone who would betray you. I have never seen a face like his, resembling the fourteenth night's moon!"

In the evening, a man came to us and said, "Peace be upon you. I am the Messenger of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He has sent you these dates. He instructed you to eat until you are full and measure the full amount for your camel's fee." We ate the dates until we were satisfied and received our due compensation. (Darqutni, III, 45/186; Hakim, II, 668/4219; Ibn Hibban, Sahih, XIV, 517/6562)

It seemed as if his beautiful character reflected on his blessed face. People who saw him naturally trusted him. Abdullah bin Salam ﷺ said, "When I first saw the blessed face of the Prophet, I understood that his face could not belong to a liar." (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 1; Iqamah, 174; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 42/2485)

Haris bin Amr ﷺ also said, "I came to the Prophet in Mina or Arafat. People surrounded him. Bedouins would come, and when they saw the blessed face of the Prophet, they couldn't help saying, 'This is indeed a blessed face.'" (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 1148)

The Importance of Truthfulness

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Truthfulness leads to goodness, and goodness leads to Paradise. A person continues to speak the truth until he is recorded with the truthful. Falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to Hell. A person persists in telling lies until he is recorded with Allah as a liar." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 69; Muslim, Birr, 103-105)

"As a person continues to lie, a black spot is placed on his heart. Then this spot grows, and eventually, his entire heart turns pitch black. Such a person is eventually recorded among the liars' in the sight of Allah." (Muwatta', Kalâm, 18)



"Promise me concerning six things, and I shall be your guarantor for Paradise: Speak the truth when you talk! Fulfill your promises when you make them! Be trustworthy in matters of trust! Safeguard your chastity! Guard your eyes from the forbidden! Keep your hands away from what is forbidden!" (Ahmad, V, 323)

Those who are truthful and inspire trust in others are loved by Allah and His Messenger. One day, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed ablution, and the companions began taking the water from his ablution to put on their faces and eyes. The Prophet asked, "Why are you doing this?" They replied, "Due to our love for Allah and His Messenger." Upon hearing this, the Prophet said: "Anyone who desires the love of Allah and His Messenger or wishes to be loved by them should speak the truth when talking, fulfill entrusted responsibilities with excellence—meaning not to betray the trust of those who rely on him—and treat those around him as good neighbors." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, II, 201; Tabrizi, Mishkat, III, 81)

The following narration, narrated by Abdullah bin Amir ﷺ, illustrates the importance of being truthful in all matters:

"One day, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was at our home. During that time, my mother called me, saying, 'Come; I will give you something.' Allah's Messenger asked my mother, 'What did you intend to give him?' She replied, 'I wanted to give him a date.' Then, the Prophet said, 'Know that if you had not given him anything, a lie (sin) would have been recorded against you.'" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 80/4991; Ahmad, III, 447; II, 452)

For the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, nothing was worse and more repulsive than falsehood. If he ever sensed someone indulging in even a minor lie, he would keep his distance until that person repented and avoided seeing them too often. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 378)

The Truthfulness of the Companions

It is certain that the Companions of the Prophet who were raised under the delicate guidance of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were the farthest from falsehood and deception.[461]

Anas ﷺ states:

461. Muslim, Zakat, 134.



"I swear by Allah, everything we have told you, we did not hear directly from Allah's Messenger

ﷺ (since we also learned his sayings from each other). However, we never told lies to each other." (Haythami, I, 153)

Even the enemies of Muslims admired and trusted this noble character. After the Battle of Uhud, the leader of the enemies, Abu Sufyan, called from a distance to Umar ﷺ, saying:

"O Umar! I am asking you sincerely, swearing by Allah, did we kill Muhammad?" Umar ﷺ replied, "No, by Allah, you did not kill him! Now, he is listening to what you are saying!" Abu Sufyan commented, "In my view, you are more truthful and better than my own man who claims to have killed Muhammad!" (Ibn Hisham, III, 45; Wāqidī, I, 296-297; Ahmad, I, 288; Haythami, VI, 111)

The Truthfulness of the Heart and Tongue

The heart is the ruler of the kingdom of the body. When the heart is sound, the other limbs also follow the right path. The tongue is the interpreter of the heart, and its truthfulness or falsehood affects the other limbs. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"When a person wakes up, all his limbs turn to the tongue, supplicating (almost pleadingly) and saying, 'Fear Allah concerning us. We are only following you, and we are dependent on you. If you are righteous, we will also be righteous. If you deviate, we will also deviate.'" (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 61/2407)

"A person's faith will not be correct unless his heart is honest, and his heart will not be honest unless his tongue is honest." (Ahmad, III, 198)

If a person does not refrain from lying, their faith cannot be complete, and having complete deeds is not to be expected. The Prophet also warned about fasting, saying:

"Whoever does not give up false speech and acting upon it, Allah has no need for him to give up his food and drink." (Al-Bukhari, Sawm, 8)

All of these emphasize the need for Muslims to be very cautious in the face of falsehood. Even in jest or humor, one should not approach falsehood.



The Prophet engaged in various jokes with his companions, but in all of them, he spoke the truth[462]. Some of his guidance in this matter includes:

"A person cannot be considered to have perfect faith unless he gives up lying even while joking and avoids arguing, even if he is right." (Ahmad, II, 352, 364; Haythami, I, 92)

"Woe to that person who speaks lies to make people laugh! Woe to him, woe to him!" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 80/4990; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 10/2315)

Therefore, holding on firmly to truthfulness is necessary. When a person adheres to truthfulness, Allah rectifies their state and forgives their sins. Our Lord, who loves to forgive His servants, commands:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true." (At-Tawbah, 119) The Prophet also gives the glad tidings:

"I guarantee a house in the middle of Paradise for the one who abandons lying, even if joking." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 7/4800; Tirmidhi, Birr, 58/1993; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 7)

The most effective and concise way to habituate oneself to truthfulness is to spend time with truthful individuals. Allah says: "O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true." (At-Tawbah, 119)

In conclusion, truthfulness is at the essence of Islam. Sufyan bin Abdullah ﷺ once said to the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah, describe Islam to me in such a way that I will not need to ask anyone else after you." The Prophet replied, "Say, 'I have believed in Allah,' and then remain steadfast." When asked about the most important thing to be cautious about, the Prophet pointed to his tongue. (Ahmad, III, 413; Also see Muslim, Iman, 62; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 61; Ibn Majah, Fitan, 12) Thus, Islam provides clear guidance on the benefits of being truthful and reliable, the ways to attain it, and the harms of falsehood. Everyone who wishes to find ease in this world and the Hereafter should adhere to this advice. Those who engage in lying and deception harm themselves.

4. Generosity and Compassion

Humans and the possessions they have ultimately belong to Allah. Therefore, it is incumbent upon individuals to be in a state of gratitude to Allah for

462. See Çelik-Ozturk-Kaya, Exemplary Conduct, I, 426-430.

the blessings they possess and to manage them in a way that pleases Allah. Otherwise, either these blessings may be taken away over time, or the person may be deserving of punishment in the Hereafter for unaccountable actions.

The Almighty has ordained that people live in a societal manner and assist each other, gaining reward by doing so. Regarding the virtue of generosity, the Quranic verses state:

"Whatever good you spend is for yourselves, and you do not spend except seeking the face of Allah." (Saba, 39)

"The example of those who spend their wealth in the Way of Allah is like that of a grain that sprouts seven ears, and in every ear there are a hundred grains. Thus Allah multiplies the action of whomsoever He wills. Allah is Munificent, All-Knowing." (Al-Baqarah, 261)

"Before death comes to any one of you, he says, 'My Lord, send me back, so that I may do some good in the things I neglected.' No! It is just a word that he utters. Behind them is a barrier until the day they are resurrected." (Al-Munafiqun, 10-11)

"O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from what We have produced for you from the earth. And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, to spend from that while you would not take it except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy." (Al-Baqarah, 254)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Whoever relieves a believer's distress in this world, Allah will relieve his distress on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever makes things easy for someone in difficulty, Allah will make things easy for him in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever conceals a Muslim's fault, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah helps a servant as long as he helps his brother." (Muslim, Zikr, 37-38; Abu Dawood, Adab, 60; Tirmidhi, Hudud, 3; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 17)

Therefore, Muslims, even to strangers, extend their help with the mindset that "He is also a servant of Allah," being generous and compassionate towards them. Generosity is foremost one of the beautiful attributes of Allah.

He is described as "Generous" (Karim), "Most Generous" (Akram)[463], and "Bestower" (Wahhab, Latif)[464] in hadiths:

"Indeed, Allah is Pure, and He loves purity; Allah is Generous, and He loves generosity." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 41/2799)

It is the duty of Muslims to strive to adopt the character of Allah. The Prophet, sent as the finest example to all of humanity, possessed the highest qualities of generosity and compassion. Once, his family slaughtered a sheep, and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked:

"What remains of it?" Aisha ﷺ replied, "Except for a shoulder piece, it has all been distributed." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ then said, "All of it remains except the shoulder piece." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 33/2470)

This indicates that the true wealth of humanity is what they spend in the manner prescribed by Allah to earn His pleasure.

According to a narration by Jabir ﷺ, when something was requested from the Prophet, he never said, "No." (Muslim, Fadha'il, 56) When there was nothing at his disposal, he would make a promise that when he had something, he would give. (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 12)

Rubayyi' Bint Muawwidh narrates: "I presented fresh dates and cucumbers to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In return, Allah's Messenger ﷺ gave me two handfuls of jewels, saying, 'Use these as ornaments!'" (Ahmad, VI, 359; Haythami, IX, 13; Ibn Sa'd, I, 394)

When the month of Ramadan began, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would release all the captives and provide for anyone who asked him for help. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 377)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ consistently praised generosity and condemned stinginess. In some of his sayings, he mentioned: "A generous person is close to Allah, close to paradise, and close to people; far from the hellfire. A miser, on the other hand, is distant from Allah, distant from paradise, distant from people; and close to the hellfire!" (Tirmidhi, Birr, 40/1961)

463. Al-Infithar, 6; Al-Alaq , 3

464. Wahhab: One who constantly bestows various blessings, giving abundantly at all times, in all places, and to all, without expecting anything in return. Latif: One who knows the finest details of all things, creates the finest things that cannot be understood how they are made, and provides for the needs of creatures to the finest point through imperceptible ways.

"A true believer does not have two qualities: miserliness and bad character!" (Tirmidhi, Birr, 41/1962)

Îsâr (Preference of Others Over Oneself; Altruism)

The Companions nurtured in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ received a great share of generosity and altruism. The Emigrants (Muhajireen) had left their possessions, homes, and wealth for the sake of their faith, migrating to Medina. This significant sacrifice met the great generosity of the Helpers (Ansar). Each Emigrant family was taken in by a Medina family, establishing a brotherhood agreement where they would work together and share their earnings. The Ansar even offered their surplus land to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for distribution among the Emigrants, and they went further: "O Messenger of Allah! Share our date palm groves with our Muhajir brothers!" they proposed. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ declined, the Ansar said to the Muhajireen, "Take charge of the care and irrigation of the trees, and let's share the produce." Both parties accepted this proposal, saying, "We hear and obey." (Al-Bukhari, Hasr, 5)

When they harvested the dates, the Ansar would divide them into two piles, one with plenty and the other with fewer dates. Later, they would put date branches under the smaller pile, making it appear larger. Then, they would say to the Muhajireen, "Choose whichever you prefer." The Muhajireen, wanting the larger pile to go to the Ansar, would take the smaller one, and thus, most of the dates went to the Muhajireen. (Haythami, X, 40)

One day, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ invited the Ansar first to distribute the lands of Bahrain among his companions. Displaying an incomparable level of sacrifice and selflessness, the Ansar said, "O Messenger of Allah! Do not give us anything until you have distributed at least the equivalent for our Muhajir brothers." In response, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "O Ansar! If you do not want to take for yourselves by preferring the believers over yourselves, then be patient until you meet me at the Pool of Kauthar. Because after me, there will be a time when others will be given preference over you." (Al-Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 8)

The beautiful character displayed by the Ansar was an advanced level of generosity. They preferred their brothers over themselves (îsâr), even when they had their needs, and this quality is praised by Allah in the Quran: "The

forerunners [in faith] among the Muhajireen and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct – Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. And He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment." (Al-Hashr, 9) Not only the Ansar but other believers also shared this noble quality. Allah praised them as well. (Al-Insan 76:8-11)

Another act of kindness narrated by Huzayfah ﷺ carries an exceptional level of nobility: "We were in the Battle of Yarmouk. The intensity of the battle had subsided, and the Muslims, wounded by arrows and spears, began to die on the hot sands they had fallen upon. In the midst of the dying, I struggled to find my cousin's son. After searching among the wounded taking their last breaths, I finally found him. Unfortunately, he could barely speak due to his severe injuries. I showed him the water container I had prepared earlier, asking, 'Do you want water?' He clearly did but had no means to answer. I opened his mouth, and as he was about to drink, I heard a distant 'Ah!' from another wounded person. Upon hearing that, my cousin's son, using eye gestures, asked me to give the water to the other person immediately. Rushing towards him, I found out he was Hisham bin As. I asked, 'Do you want water?' He nodded. Just as he was about to drink, another wounded person nearby exclaimed, 'Ah, ah!' Hisham signaled to give the water to him. When I reached him, he had already become a martyr. Returning to Hisham, offering the container, I was astonished to find that he, too, had become a martyr! I stood among the three martyrs with a full water container in my hands."[465]

Generosity is indeed such a beautiful virtue. It transforms a person and gives them an entirely different spiritual state. The heart of someone accustomed to generosity expands, and they find tranquility. They feel the fulfillment of goodness and altruism covering their entire being. This noble quality covers their flaws and sins in the eyes of people. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explained this with a metaphor:

"The example of the miser and the generous person is like that of two people wearing armor from the breast down. The armor of the generous person covers all of his body, even his fingers. The miser's armor is so tight that it constricts his chest and he can hardly breathe. The generous person's armor expands to cover him completely, even his toes, and it erases his foot-

465. See Al-Qurtubi, XVII, 28; Zeylaî, Nasbu'r-Rayah, II, 318; Hakim, III, 270/5058.



prints. However, no matter how hard the miser tries, his armor remains tight." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad 89, Zakat 28; Muslim, Zakat 76-77)

Describing the inner worlds and spiritual states of the generous and the miser, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explained that even those with limited means would find relief and tranquility through generosity and encouraged people to be generous according to their capabilities.

However, it is crucial to understand that generosity is not about reckless spending. It is about giving to Allah's servants thoughtfully, moderately, and at the right time. Allah has set this balance: "Do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed [and insolvent]." (Al-Isra 17:29)

Generosity in the Spiritual Realm

Generosity and altruism are not limited to material possessions but extend to spiritual aspects as well. The act of generosity from Aisha رضي الله عنها, the mother of believers, is truly magnificent:

During a moment when Umar رضي الله عنه was fatally stabbed and awaiting death covered in blood, he instructed his son Abdullah as follows:

"...Go to the Mother of the Believers, Aisha, and say, 'Umar sends his greetings to you.' Do not say, 'The Commander of the Believers' because I am no longer their commander today. Tell her, 'Umar bin Khattab requests permission to be buried with his two friends.'"

Abdullah رضي الله عنه continues the story:

"I sought permission, greeted her, and entered. Aisha was crying for my father's condition. I told her, 'Umar sends his greetings. He requests permission to be buried with his two friends.' Aisha responded, 'I had reserved a place next to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for myself, but today, I prefer Umar over myself.' (The Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr were buried in the room of Aisha. She wanted to be buried there as well, desiring to be with her husband and father.)

When I returned to Umar رضي الله عنه, they informed him, 'Abdullah has come!' With great excitement and curiosity, Umar رضي الله عنه said, 'Lift me up!' He stood with the help of a person and asked me, 'What news do you bring?' When I said, 'Your wish has been granted; Aisha رضي الله عنها has given permission,' he



responded, 'Alhamdulillah! There was nothing more important to me than this. When my soul departs, take me there!' When they reached the door, he said, 'Greet Aisha again and say, "Umar seeks permission!" If she permits, bring me inside; if not, take me to the Muslim cemetery.'"

When his soul departed, they took him and walked to the room of Aisha ﵂. Abdullah ﵁ greeted her and said, "Umar seeks permission!" Aisha ﵂ replied, "Bring him inside immediately." He was buried next to his two honorable friends. (Al-Bukhari, Ashab an-Nabi, 8; Janaiz, 96; Jihad, 174; Tafsir, 59/5; Ahkam, 43)

This magnificent act of altruism by Aisha ﵂ and the manners, finesse, and politeness of Umar ﵁ are beyond expression, presenting a sublime level of nobility.

In doing good deeds, making prayers, and similar spiritual moments, individuals are encouraged to prioritize their brothers and sisters.

Avoiding Extravagance

The material and spiritual resources bestowed upon humanity by our Almighty God are entrusted, and their proper use is guided by divine instructions. Everyone will be held accountable for the blessings they received in the hereafter. Therefore, Muslims strive to utilize all their possessions in ways that please Allah. They refrain from extravagance, such as wasting resources on alcohol, gambling, immorality, bribery, luxury, and showiness. Islam prohibits all forms of extravagance, even the excessive use of permissible resources beyond necessity is considered a form of waste.

Worldly possessions enable individuals to secure their essential needs, leading to a life of worship without having to ask others for help. Those who squander resources eventually become dependent on others. Therefore, Muslims are commanded to strike a balance in their spending, whether for personal needs or for charitable purposes, avoiding both stinginess and excessive spending. Allah says:

"They [are those who] do not invoke with Allah another deity and do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated—Except for those who repent,

believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful." (Al-Furqan, 67)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said: "He who avoids extravagance will not become needy." (Haythami, Musnad al-Firdaws)

Therefore, a Muslim should spend their wealth where it is due and in a measured way. They should not fall short in charitable giving but also not let their enthusiasm lead to excessive spending, which might render their family in need. The Quran advises moderation in spending:

"And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful." (Al-Isra, 26-27)

An example of moderation in spending is seen in the actions of Aisha رضي الله عنها. Even though she was very generous, she practiced frugality in her personal life, thus increasing her ability to give in charity.

In the Ottoman era, there was a famous scholar named Nureddin Hamza Efendi (d. 948/1541), known for being extremely thrifty. Despite being called "The Money-Loving Hodja" by the public, he used his money frugally, refraining from riding horses and being content with old clothes and shoes. He built the Three Heads Medrese and later the Three Heads Mosque in Fatih Karagumruk with the money he saved, dedicating many endowments for scholars and the poor. When asked about his spending habits, he humorously replied: "My dear friends, you are right. I love money a lot. That's why I couldn't bear to keep it in this world; I sent it to the Hereafter before myself."

Avoiding Extravagance in Eating

In today's world, with increasing material wealth, one of the most common forms of extravagance is excess in eating and drinking. Humans should eat to sustain life and be able to worship, not live merely for the sake of eating. Consuming more than necessary is both a waste of resources and a squandering of health and time. Excessive eating leads to various illnesses. While some people suffer from overeating, others are starving. If those who consume excessively gave the surplus to those in need, both themselves and their needy brothers would find peace. Regarding this, Allah says:

"O children of Adam! Take your adornment at every masjid and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess." (Al-A'raf, 31)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also advised: "Eat, drink, dress, and give charity without falling into extravagance and pride." (Al-Bukhari, Dress, 1; Ibn Majah, Dress, 23) He further emphasized, "Eating whatever your desire craves is undoubtedly extravagance." (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 51)

Once the Prophet ﷺ said, "Certainly, Allah will question the one who unlawfully kills an animal as small as a sparrow." When asked about its rights, he replied, "The one in need should slaughter it and eat it, not sever its head just for pleasure." (Nasa'i, Sayd, 34)

Umar ﷺ warned against stuffing one's stomach with food and drinks, as it harms the body, causes diseases, and makes a person lethargic in prayers. He advised following a moderate path in eating and drinking, as it is more beneficial for the body and keeps one away from extravagance. He mentioned, "Allah disapproves of a fat scholar. A person will not perish unless they prioritize sensual desires over their religion." (Ali al-Muttaqi, XV, 433/41713)

Extravagance in Every Aspect

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has mentioned various forms of extravagance, saying, "There will come a group from this ummah who will exceed the limits in cleanliness and prayer." (Abu Dawood, Taharah, 45/96)

Akil bin Abi Talib ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "For ablution, a handful of water, and for a full bath, one "sa'" is sufficient."[466] Someone present remarked, "This amount of water is not enough for us." In response, Akil ﷺ referred to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said, "This amount of water was sufficient for someone better than you, with better hair." (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 1)

Extravagance should be avoided even in supplication. Trying to make words rhyme, arranging sentences like poetry, shouting loudly, and asking for unnecessary things are not considered appropriate sincerity in prayer. Ibn Abbas ﷺ said, "Avoid affectation in supplication! During the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions, they refrained from such behaviors." (Al-Bukhari, Daawat, 20)

466. One sa' equals 4 mud. Therefore, four times the amount of water used for ablution can be used for bathing. The mentioned measure in the hadith is 832 grams, and a sa' is 3,328 kilograms.

Another area of extravagance is the time, which people are most deceived by. In this world, which is visited for a test, one of the most significant blessings is time. It is necessary to use it wisely and spend it on the most beneficial deeds. Allah says:

"By time, indeed, mankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience." (Al-Asr, 1-3)

Those who do not spend their time on righteous deeds, advising others on truth and patiently working honestly are wasting their lives. Teaching knowledge to those who are not qualified or have ill intentions is also a great waste. This situation is likened to giving jewels, pearls, and gold to pigs, as stated in the following hadith:

"Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim. The one who teaches knowledge to someone unworthy is like giving pearls, jewels, and gold to pigs." (Ibn Majah, Mukaddimah, 17)

Jalal al-Din Muhammad Rumi states: "Teaching knowledge and science to a corrupted person is like giving a sword to a highway robber. Giving a sword to a rude and drunkard is better than informing someone who is not a human being. Knowledge, wealth, high position, and leadership given to bad people become a source of turmoil for society. Fighting is obligatory for believers so that the swords in the hands of the insane are taken away." (Mathnawi, Vol. 4, lines: 1436-1439)

However, it is essential not to confuse extravagance with generosity. Extravagance is unnecessary or excessive spending, while generosity is abundantly giving where necessary. Some individuals, following their desires, may act generously towards themselves or loved ones while being excessively stingy towards the needy. This behavior is nothing but a misunderstanding of generosity.

Islam advises people to be wise and moderate, choosing the middle path. It recommends the most beautiful way of everything, exemplifying it in the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, learning and applying the Prophet's life and traditions in the most beautiful way is the shortest path to avoid extravagance and stinginess.

6. Brotherhood in Religion, Affection, and Visiting

Islam encourages people to treat each other like brothers, fostering deep affection among them, and sees this as a prerequisite for reaching the pinnacle of faith. To achieve this, people are advised to spread greetings among themselves, regularly visit each other, and exchange gifts.

Allah, the Almighty, says in the Qur'an: "The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy." (Al-Hujurat, 10)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"A believer is a mirror to his fellow believer. A believer is a brother to a believer; he supports him financially and protects him from behind." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 49/4918)

Just as a mirror, without any hidden agenda, silently shows the true reflection, a believer behaves similarly to his brother. He sincerely communicates everything he observes. If he sees something good, he acknowledges it without inducing pride and encourages improvement. If he notices something wrong, he advises appropriately to correct it. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Allah, on the Day of Judgment, will say: 'Where are those who loved each other for the sake of My pleasure? Today, I will shade them in the shadow of My Throne when there is no shade but Mine.'" (Muslim, Birr, 37; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 53. Cf. Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 36)

The Prophet ﷺ used to inquire about a fellow Muslim if he didn't see him for three days. If the person was far away, he would pray for him; if he was at home, he would visit him, and if he was sick, he would go to say "get well soon." (Haythami, II, 295)

Of course, this brotherhood we are discussing is the brotherhood during challenging and difficult times. Being a brother to a believer only during good times and cutting ties when they are in distress is not true brotherhood.

Brotherhood of Muhajireen and Ansar

The "brotherhood" established by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ between the Muhajireen (Emigrants) from Macca and the Ansar (Helpers) from Medina is a unique example in history, reflecting extraordinary wisdom, insight,

and ethical standards. This brotherhood agreement has provided Muslims with significant religious, social, and political benefits, such as unity, cooperation, and love. The Prophet's efforts in fostering this brotherhood were not limited to times of peace but extended to times of war. When the Prophet ﷺ set out on a journey, he would take one brother into his army and leave the other in Medina to meet the needs of both families and defend the city.[467]

Strengthening Brotherhood

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"You cannot enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not truly believe until you love one another. Shall I not guide you to something that, when you practice it, will foster love among you? Spread greetings among yourselves!" (Muslim, Iman, 93; Abu Dawood, Adab, 131)

Another aspect that strengthens brotherhood is exchanging gifts. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Exchange gifts, and you will foster love among yourselves." (Muwatta, Husn al-Khuluq, 16; Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 594; Muni, III, 271)

"Give gifts to each other, for gifts remove hard feelings in the hearts. Let not the wives of one neighborhood look down upon the gifts sent by the other even if it is the hooves of sheep (as gifts)." (Tirmidhi, Wala', 6/2130)

"If someone gives you a gift, give something back to him; if you cannot find anything, pray for him until you feel that you have reciprocated." (Ahmad, II, 96)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had a companion named Zahir from the desert people who used to present him with the produce of the desert whenever he came to visit. When Zahir intended to leave, the Prophet would fill his bag with whatever he needed, saying, "Zahir is our desert, and we are his city." (Ahmad, III, 161)

The Prophet ﷺ never neglected to give gifts to delegations and other people. Even during his final illness, he ordered the giving of gifts to arriving delegations. In one of his last pieces of advice before his passing, he said,

467. M. Ali Kapar, Relations of Prophet Muhammad with Polytheists, Istanbul 1987, p. 145.

"Give gifts to those who come to you as I used to give." (See Al-Bukhari, Jizya, 6; Muslim, Wasiyya, 20)

Anas bin Malik ﷺ used to advise his children, saying, "My little ones, show kindness to each other and exchange gifts, as this is the strongest influence that increases love among you." (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 595)

Another aspect that strengthens brotherhood is visiting one another. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ narrated a story:

"A man set out to visit his brother in another village for the sake of Allah. Allah, to observe him, sent an angel to watch over him. When the traveler arrived, the angel asked, 'Where are you going?' The man replied, 'I am going to visit a brother of mine in this village.' The angel asked, 'Do you have any personal gain or business with him?' The traveler said, 'No, I love him for the sake of Allah and am visiting him only for that reason.' The angel said, 'I am a messenger sent by Allah to inform you that just as you love him for Allah's sake, Allah loves you.'" (Muslim, Birr, 38; Ahmad, II, 292)

One of the ways to increase love is to express it. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once held the hand of Mu'adh and said, "I swear by Allah, Mu'adh, I truly love you." Mu'adh responded, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! I also love you very much!" Later, the Prophet ﷺ told him, "O Mu'adh, never forget to say in your prayers after every prayer, 'O Allah, assist me in remembering You, expressing gratitude to You, and performing beautiful worship to You.'" (Ahmad, V, 244-245; Abu Dawood, Witr, 26; Nasa'i, Sahw, 60; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 30)

Once, in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, a man stated that he truly loved another person who was passing by. The Prophet asked, "Did you inform him?" When the man replied, "No," the Prophet advised, "Go and tell him." The man immediately caught up with the person and said, "I love you for Allah's sake." The man responded, "May Allah, for Whose sake you love me, love you too." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 113/5125)

Sharing and Sacrifice

Brotherhood in faith is not established merely by verbal claims; it requires sharing and sacrifice to prove this assertion. During the Battle of Uhud, many Muslims became martyrs, and there weren't enough shrouds to

cover them. Zubair bin Awwam ﷺ describes a remarkable scene of brotherhood during that time:

"My mother Safiyya took off two shirts she had brought with her, saying, 'I brought these to make shrouds for my brother Hamza.' Taking the shirts, we went to Hamza, who had another Ansari martyr with him, and there was no shroud for him yet. Feeling embarrassed to leave the Ansari without a shroud, we decided that one shirt would be for Hamza and the other for the Ansari. Since one shirt was larger than the other, we drew lots to determine who would get which." (Ahmad, I, 165)

Ali ﷺ said:

"Gathering a few of my brothers and providing them with a meal or two is dearer to me than freeing a slave by going to the market." (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 566)

When people drift away from sincere feelings and begin to prioritize the world over the Hereafter, the sense of brotherhood weakens. However, this path is not a positive sign; it leads people towards severe accountability and punishment. Ibn Umar ﷺ said: "We witnessed times when none of us thought he was more worthy of gold and silver than his Muslim brother. Now we are in a time when gold and silver seem more beloved to us than our Muslim brother. I heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'On the Day of Judgment, there will be neighbors who will complain to Allah that their neighbors shut the door on their faces, withholding kindness, favor, and assistance.'" (Al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, no: 111; Haythami, X, 285)

Behaviors Damaging Brotherhood

To preserve brotherhood, one must be cautious, avoid being hurtful, and refrain from inappropriate conduct. Allah advises for the preservation of brotherhood:

"O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdoers." (Al-Hujurat, 11)

"O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of Repentance and Merciful." (Al-Hujurat, 12)

Engaging in unnecessary arguments should be avoided to maintain brotherhood. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Retire from what gives you doubt to what does not give you doubt." (Tirmidhi, Birr 58/1994) Prophet Suleyman عليه السلام advised his son:

"Abandon dispute and argument, for it brings little benefit. Moreover, it fuels enmity among brothers." (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 29/309)

Imam Abu Hanifa, despite occasionally engaging in discussions about principles and beliefs, prohibited his students and relatives from such debates. Once, he saw his son Hammad involved in a dispute over a theological matter and persuaded him to refrain. When asked why he discouraged them while he himself engaged in discussions, Imam Abu Hanifa explained: "When we debate, we are like someone with a bird on their head, cautiously acting as if there's a bird up there. But you, when you debate, want your friend to make a mistake. The one who wishes to make his friend stumble wants him to fall into sin and error, pushing him towards disbelief. The one who wishes to declare his friend a disbeliever first falls into disbelief."[468]

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prohibited extending a dispute or coldness between brothers beyond three days, encouraging reconciliation as soon as possible, emphasizing that the one initiating peace gains more reward. (Muslim, Birr, 36; Abu Dawood, Adab 47/4910-4916) People who have fallen out may find it challenging to reconcile, requiring assistance and mediation from other Muslims. In fact, those who lie to reconcile people, intending to promote goodness, will not be considered liars. (Al-Bukhari, Sulh, 2)

Once, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ addressed Abu Ayyub al-Ansari:

"O Abu Ayyub, shall I tell you about an act of goodness that is beloved to Allah and His Messenger?" Abu Ayyub replied, "Certainly, inform me, O Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "When people fall out, you recon-

468. Ibn Bezzazî, Menâkib-i Imam-i A'zam, I, 121; Muhammad Abu Zahra, Imam Abu Hanifa, tr. Osman Keskioglu, Konya 1959, p. 29.

cile them, and when someone distances himself from another, you bring them together." (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 490; Haythami, VIII, 80)

Sahl bin Sa'd ﷺ narrated:

There was a conflict among the people of Kuba, even reaching the point of throwing stones at each other. When this incident was reported to the Prophet, he immediately said, "Let's go and reconcile them!" (Al-Bukhari, Sulh, 3)

Once, a dispute arose among the sons of Amr. The Prophet heard about it and, along with a group of his companions, went to reconcile them, staying there for some time until they reached an agreement. (Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 48; Sulh, 1; Muslim, Salah, 102)

On another occasion, there was a disagreement between Sa'd bin Muaz and Sa'd bin Ubadah. The Prophet Muhammad, holding the hand of Sa'd bin Muaz, along with some of the Ansar, went to the house of Sa'd bin Ubada to reconcile them. After discussions and talks, the host offered food, and they all ate together. A while later, the Prophet, holding the hand of Sa'd bin Ubada, along with some Hazrajites, went to the house of Sa'd bin Muaz. They talked and ate together, and then dispersed. (Al-Waqidi, II, 435)

In Islam, we are not only advised to treat our brothers and sisters kindly but also to forgive the mistakes made against us. The religion encourages resolving conflicts, fostering a spirit of love and mercy among people, ultimately creating a bond that surpasses even blood relations.

7. Chastity and Modesty

Chastity involves moderation in eating, drinking, and sensual desires, leading a virtuous life by restraining excessive and base desires, placing them under the command of religion and reason. Allah desires His servants to lead a chaste life. Acting with modesty liberates a person from being enslaved to their own desires, granting them true freedom. It is rightly said, "The real slavery that humiliates a person is the slavery to sensual desires."

Chastity is a distinctive quality specific to humans; other creatures are not concerned with such matters. Thus, modesty is the characteristic that distinguishes humans from other creatures. Losing it means losing human dignity, falling to the level of other creatures. Preserving chastity is mostly

achieved through a sense of modesty. Modesty is one of the fundamental moral qualities.

In the sayings of the Prophet:

"Modesty is part of faith, and the one who has modesty is in paradise. Shamelessness is a sign of hardness of the heart, and a hard-hearted person is in hell." (Al-Bukhari, Iman, 16)

"Allah is modest and conceals faults. Therefore, He loves modesty and concealment. So, when any of you takes a bath, cover yourselves." (Abu Dawood, Hammam, 1/4012)

"Modesty and faith are together; if one is gone, so is the other." (Tabarani, Awsat, VIII, 174; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VI, 140; Al-Bukhari, Adab, no: 1313)

The virtue of modesty can prevent a person from all kinds of immoralities and selfish thoughts contrary to ethics. The influence of modesty and decorum in safeguarding the believer from vices surpasses the impact of hundreds of laws and police forces. Saying to a person with chastity and modesty, "Aren't you ashamed?" is sufficient to keep them away from evil.

Our Supreme Lord presents two individuals who have reached the pinnacle of chastity and modesty as examples to the believers. These are Yusuf عليه السلام, whose story is mentioned in Surah Yusuf as the most beautiful of narratives, and Maryam رضي الله عنها praised in the Quran at 34 different places.

In the Quranic verse, it is stated:

"(We have also pointed to Mary) as an example of virtue and chastity. So, We breathed Our Spirit into her, and she testified to the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was of the obedient ones." (At-Tahrim, 12; Al-Anbiya, 91)

When a beautiful woman offered herself to Yusuf عليه السلام with all the possibilities at her disposal, he immediately sought refuge in Allah and distanced himself rapidly, saying, "I seek refuge in Allah; indeed, he (your husband) is my master and has made good my residence." When faced with the choice between prison and immodesty, he firmly stated, "Prison is more beloved to me than what they invite me to." Allah, in turn, protected his chastity. (Yusuf, 23-25, 33-34)

Another example of chastity is Sarah رضي الله عنها, the wife of Ibrahim عليه السلام. In Egypt, which was ruled by the Pharaoh family, a foreign and beautiful woman

entering the city would immediately be reported to Pharaoh. If she was married, her husband would be killed, and if she had a male relative, she would be demanded from him. When Ibrahim عليه السلام entered the city with Sarah رضي الله عنها, the news reached the palace. In a hadith, it is narrated: "When Sarah entered the palace, she immediately performed ablution and stood before the Divine Presence to pray two rakats. After finishing her prayer, she supplicated: 'My Lord! If I am Your believing and modest servant who has preserved my chastity solely for my husband, do not subject me to this infidel!'"

Pharaoh, trying to approach Sarah رضي الله عنها, suddenly found himself breathless and paralyzed. This situation repeated several times. Eventually, out of fear, Pharaoh released her, even presenting his servant Hagar as a gift to her. (Muslim, Fadha'il, 154)

Our Prophet and his wives also serve as the most beautiful examples of chastity for us. Allah says: "O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you fear (Allah), then do not be too complaisant in speech, lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech. And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. Establish prayer, give zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity (of sin), O people of the household, and to purify you with (extensive) purification." (Al-Ahzab, 32-33)

When Aisha رضي الله عنها read these verses, she wept until her headscarf became wet. Presumably, these verses reminded her of the Battle of Camel (Jamal) and the sorrow she felt for being involved in that incident.

To Saudah رضي الله عنها, who rarely left her house:

"Why don't you perform Hajj or go for Umrah like your other sisters?" She replied:

"I have already performed Hajj and Umrah. Allah commands me to stay in my house. So why should I go out?!"

The narrator of this incident says:

"I swear by Allah, she did not leave her room until her funeral was taken out." (Al-Qurtubi, al-Jami, [Al-Ahzab, 33])

One of the personalities who reached the peak of chastity and modesty is Uthman ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ reported that even the angels were modest in front of him. (Ahmad, I, 71; VI, 155)

Uthman ﷺ said:

"I swear by Allah, I have never committed adultery, neither in the era of ignorance nor in the Islamic era. I despised it in the era of ignorance, and after becoming a Muslim, I never approached adultery due to my chastity." (See Abu Dawood, Diyaat, 3/4502; Ahmad, I, 163)

Modesty in Gaze and Speech

Modesty, decency, refinement, and courtesy should prevail between men and women. Illicit connections and love between men and women start with the "gaze." Therefore, Muslim men and women are commanded to refrain from unnecessary glances. When speaking, they are also instructed to lower their heads: "Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do. And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests… And do not stamp your feet to make known your hidden ornaments. And repent to Allah all, O believers, that you might succeed." (An-Nur, 30-31)

When this verse was revealed, the female companions in the mosque immediately cut off excess parts of their clothes, properly covering their heads and necks, without waiting to go home. (Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 24/12; Abu Dawood, Libas, 31-33/4102)

Men returned home and recited these verses to their wives, daughters, sisters, and all female relatives. In response, all the women covered themselves properly from head to toe. They thus demonstrated their immediate affirmation of the rules revealed by Allah and their wholehearted belief in them. During the morning prayer, they stood neatly covered behind the Messenger of Allah. Due to the black veils they wore, it seemed as if crows were perched on their heads. (Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, [An-Nur, 31])

Jareer ﷺ said: I asked the Prophet about the ruling on seeing something that is prohibited to see suddenly: "Turn your eyes away immediately," he said. (Muslim, Adab 45; Abu Dawood, Nikah, 43; Tirmidhi, Adab, 28)

Because looking leads to the adultery of the eyes and is sinful. Similarly, listening is the adultery of the ears, speaking is the adultery of the tongue, touching is the adultery of the hand, walking is the adultery of the feet, and desiring is the adultery of the heart and soul. (Al-Bukhari, Isti'zan 12, Qadar 9; Muslim, Qadar 20-21; Abu Dawood, Nikah, 43)

The Prophet ﷺ expresses how harmful unnecessary glances are for the heart:

"Looking at something forbidden is one of the poisonous arrows of Satan. Whoever abandons it due to the fear of Allah, Allah bestows upon them an act of worship that they will feel the sweetness of in their hearts." (Al-Hakim, IV, 349/7875)

"Whoever's eyes are drawn to the beauty of a woman, and they immediately look away, Allah grants them a reward for an act of worship that they will feel the sweetness of in their hearts." (Ahmad, V, 264; Haythami, VIII, 63)

Looking at forbidden things is prohibited, and so is applying perfumes and scents in a way that attracts attention from others. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Every eye commits adultery. When a woman applies perfume and passes by (a gathering of men), she is considered to have committed adultery." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 35/2786; Abu Dawood, Tarajjul, 7/4173; Nasa'i, Zinah, 35)

"If a woman applies perfume, she should not join us in the Isha prayer." (Muslim, Salat, 143; Abu Dawood, Tarajjul, 7; Nasa'i, Zinah, 37,38)

The Importance of Preserving Modesty

Almighty Allah places great importance on the chastity of His servants and alludes to it in many verses of the Qur'an.[469] In one such verse, it is stated: "Let those who find not the means for marriage keep themselves chaste until Allah enriches them from His bounty... And do not compel your slave girls to prostitution, if they desire chastity, seeking thereby the temporary interests of

469. For example, see An-Nisa, 25; Al-Maidah, 5; Al-Anbiya', 91; An-Nur, 4, 23; At-Tahrim, 12.

worldly life. And if someone should compel them, then indeed, Allah is [to them], after their compulsion, Forgiving and Merciful." (An-Nur, 33)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to take pledges of fidelity from women, especially emphasizing the preservation of their chastity. (Al-Mumtahinah, 12)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised those who seek the chastity of their wives not to behave immodestly towards the wives of others. (Al-Hakim, IV, 170/7258)

The Reward of Preserving Modesty

In the Qur'an, when Allah speaks about His servants to whom He has prepared forgiveness and a great reward, it is mentioned, "Men and women who preserve their chastity..." (Al-Ahzab, 35) Similarly, when the qualities of the believers who will enter the eternal paradise, stay there forever, and be generously treated in the gardens of paradise are listed, "those who preserve their chastity" are also included. (Al-Mu'minun, 5-11; Al-Ma'arij, 29-35)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

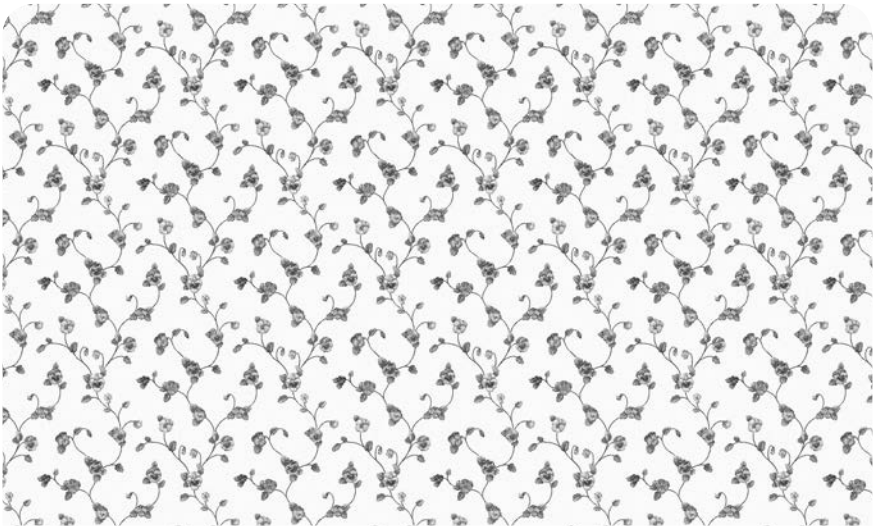
"Whoever promises me to protect their modesty and chastity with the part between their two jaws (the tongue), I also promise them paradise." (Al-Bukhari, Libas, 23)

"There are three people whose eyes will not see the Hellfire: those who stand guard in the way of Allah, those who cry out of fear of Allah, and those who restrain themselves from Allah's prohibitions." (Haythami, V, 288)

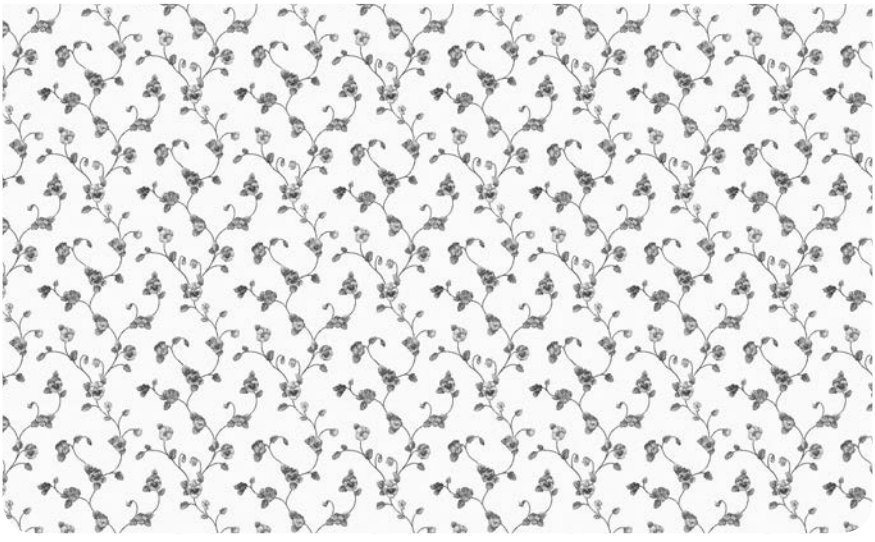
On the distressing day of judgment when there is no shade except Allah's Throne, one of the seven groups of people whom Allah will shade and honor with generosity is:

"A young person who grows up in a clean life by worshiping his Lord," and another is; "A brave person who, when approached by a beautiful and high-ranking woman, responds, 'I fear Allah.'" (Al-Bukhari, Adhan 36; Muslim, Zakat, 91)

These are the honors and rewards that modest and chaste individuals will achieve in the afterlife. The worldly blessings of modesty and chastity are also immense. (Al-Bukhari, Buyu', 98; Muslim, Zikir, 100)



THE FIFTH PART



TRANSACTIONS

"Muâmalât" encompasses the entire jurisprudence of Islamic Law outside of worship in its broad sense.

The religion bestowed by Allah upon His servants is comprehensive enough to address all their needs. Allah Almighty has provided His servants with the most beneficial rules by showing mercy and offering help in every aspect of life. If our Lord had not revealed the most beautiful rules regarding various aspects of social life, mankind would have to discover them through costly trials and errors.

Therefore, when we mention "Islam," we should not only think of the principles of faith and worship. While these are the foundation of the religion, another significant part is transactions. In this section, how a person should interact with other humans, even with animals, plants, and belongings, is explained.

While the principles of faith constitute the theoretical part of the religion, worship, and transactions serve as the evidence, validation, and reinforcement of that belief. Believing and continuing worship are relatively easy and do not require much sacrifice. However, transactions require greater attention and sacrifice. For example, dealing with people with honesty, integrity, and justice in transactions might entail making decisions against one's own interests and making material and spiritual sacrifices. In this area, duties and responsibilities are more extensive. Therefore, true adherence to Islam manifests itself in the direction and efforts in transactions. As the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Whoever mistreats the people under his command and those around him cannot enter paradise." (Tirmidhi, Birr 29/1946; Ibn Majah, Adab 10; Ahmad, I, 7)

A person was praising someone in the presence of Umar. Umar ﷺ asked him, "Have you ever traveled with the person you are praising?" The man said, "No." Umar ﷺ asked, "Have you had any social interaction with him, like buying and selling?" Again, the answer was "No." Umar ﷺ then said, "Have you been neighbors with him day and night?" The man replied, "No."

Upon these answers, Umar ﷺ said, "I swear by Allah, you don't know him." (Al-Ghazali, Ihya Ulum al-Din, III, 312)

Societies that value transactions prosper and succeed in all areas. An example of this is the following: Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked the newly converted Bani Haris tribe, who were unaware of defeat:

"During the times of ignorance, you always used to defeat the people you fought against. How did you achieve this?" They replied, "O Messenger of Allah! We would always be victorious in our fights. Because we did not talk too much, did not tarnish our honor, did not waste, did not behave jealously towards each other, did not cut off help from each other, and endured difficulties during times of war and hardship. We always remained united and never dispersed. We never initiated oppression or injustice against anyone!" Prophet ﷺ said, "You have spoken the truth!"[470]

Hence, religion reaches perfection not only through individual life but also by having proper social interactions. Now, let's touch on some fundamental points on this matter:

1. Rights of Others (Hukuk al ibaad)

Just as there are rights of Allah upon individuals, there are also rights of fellow humans. The Almighty has bestowed upon each person certain rights and blessings. Any injustice towards these rights does not go unanswered and requires the consequence of punishment. For instance, causing harm to someone's life or property, tarnishing their honor and dignity, causing distress or fear even as a joke, deceiving, giving or taking bribes, delaying the payment of debts, and wasting someone's time unnecessarily are all violations of the rights of others. The Creator warns against infringing upon the rights of others, saying:

"Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]." (Al-Baqarah, 188; An-Nisa', 29)

470. See Ibn Hisham, IV, 264-265; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabe, III, 245; Tabari, History, III, 157; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidaya, V, 98-99.

The most dangerous form of violating the rights of others is wrongfully seizing and using common rights, such as state and foundation property. This injustice is more perilous than individual rights, as seeking forgiveness from all rightful owners may not be possible even if remorse is felt later.

Umar ﷺ was very meticulous about state property. One day, while the treasurer of the public treasury was cleaning, he found a dirham and gave it to one of Umar's children. The caliph, upon learning of the situation, immediately summoned the treasurer and rebuked him harshly, saying, "On what grounds did you do this?[471] Do you want to make me accountable on the Day of Judgment with the followers of Muhammad for one dirham?"

After the four caliphs, Umar bin Abdulaziz distinguished himself with justice and adherence to the truth and was deemed worthy of the title of the 5th caliph. When common goods belonging to the public were being weighed in his presence, he covered his nose to avoid smelling more than others, saying, "The benefit comes from taking its scent anyway." (Al-Ghazali, Ihya Ulum al-Din, II, 168)

Especially those in the position of passing judgments and managing people among humans must be extremely careful regarding the rights of others. Similarly, the person claiming their rights before a judge should carefully consider whether they are truly justified. Because the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"I am just a human. You come to me to be judged. Maybe one of you is more skillful in presenting evidence than the other, and he can express his intention better. I will rule in favor of the one whose case I heard better. If I take the right of a person and decide in favor of someone else, I would have separated him from a share in Hell." (Al-Bukhari, Shahadat, 27; Muslim, Aqdiyah, 4)

Islam has given so much importance to such rights that our Almighty Lord has distinguished the rights of others from sins and mistakes committed against Him. The right of others is left to the will of the oppressed. Therefore, if someone is to repent for any violation of the rights of others, it is a prerequisite to first seek forgiveness from the person whose right was violated. If this is not done, the sin will not be forgiven, and it will be left for the Hereafter.

471. Suleyman Muhammed al-Tammawi, Hazrat Omar and Modern Systems, trans. M. Vesim Taylan, Istanbul 2005, p. 80.

The Hereafter is a very tough day. On that day, even a hornless sheep will take its right from the horned sheep that harmed it, and no one's right will remain with anyone. [472]

Not Dying with the Rights of Others

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Whoever has committed an injustice concerning his brother's honor, dignity, or property should reconcile with him before the Day of Judgment arrives, a day when there will be neither gold nor silver." (Al-Bukhari, Mazalim, 10; Riqaq, 48)

One day, the Prophet ﷺ asked his companions, "Do you know who the bankrupt person is?" They responded, "The bankrupt person among us is someone who has no money or possessions." Upon this, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Verily, the bankrupt among my community is one who comes on the Day of Judgment with prayers, fasting, and charity. However, he has insulted this person, accused and slandered that person, consumed the wealth of another, shed the blood of someone, and beaten another. Due to these injustices, his good deeds will be taken away and given to those he wronged. If his merits are exhausted before the rights of others are fulfilled, their sins will be transferred to him, and ultimately, he will be thrown into hell." (Muslim, Birr 59; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah 2; Ahmad, II, 303, 324, 372)

Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ was deeply concerned about his followers going to the grave with the rights of others. To save his community from dying with the rights of others, he took serious measures. One of these measures is narrated by Abu Hurairah:

"When a deceased was brought to the Prophet ﷺ with outstanding debts, he would ask, 'Has he left behind any wealth to settle his debts?' If it was confirmed that there was enough to pay off the debt (or if a Muslim gave a strong assurance of clearing it)[473], he would perform the funeral prayer. Otherwise, he would instruct the Muslims, 'You perform the funeral prayer for your companion.' Later, when Allah expanded the financial means, he started leading the funeral prayers for believers who had no means to pay their debts.[474] After

472. Muslim, Birr, 60; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 2; Ahmad, II, 235, 323, 372, 411.
473. Tirmidhi, Janaiz, 69/1069; Nasa'i, Janaiz, 67.
474. Al-Bukhari, Fitan, 15; Muslim, Zakat, 14.

this, he used to say, 'I am the advocate and guardian for every believer in this world and the Hereafter. If you wish recite the following verse-The Prophet is nearer to believers than their own self!-[475] If a believer dies leaving behind some wealth, his heirs should take it. If he left behind a debt or someone in need, they should come to me, for I am his guardian.'" (Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 33/1, Kafalat 5, Faraid 4, 15, 25; Muslim, Faraid, 14)

Narrated by Sa'd bin Atwal:

"My brother passed away, leaving behind three hundred dirhams and a needy family. I wanted to spend the money on his family. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Your brother is in prison due to his debts; pay them off.' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I have paid off his debts. There are only two dinars left that a woman claims but cannot provide evidence for.' The Prophet said, 'Give those two dinars to the woman because she is telling the truth.'" (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 20)

Islam places such importance on the rights of others that even martyrdom, the highest rank for Muslims, is not sufficient to absolve one from them. (Muslim, Imarah, 119) Muhammad bin Jahsh narrated: One day, we were sitting with the Prophet ﷺ. He raised his head towards the sky, then placed his hand on his forehead and said, 'Glory be to Allah! What a severe revelation has come to me!' We became very frightened and remained silent. The next day, he said, 'O Messenger of Allah! What was the heavy revelation that came down?' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'I swear by the Almighty, in whose hand my life is, if a person is killed for the sake of Allah, then resurrected, killed again, and this continues until he has settled a debt, he will not enter paradise until his debt is paid.' (Nasa'i, Buyu', 98/4681)

Narrated by Umar:

It was the day of the Battle of Khaybar. Some of the Prophet's companions came and said, 'So-and-so is a martyr, and so-and-so is a martyr.' Then they passed by a man, and the Prophet said, 'No, I have seen him in a cloak of usurped goods in Hell.' The next day the Prophet said, 'Go and announce to the people: None will enter Paradise but a believer, and indeed, the believer can obtain Paradise. Verily, a man may do the deeds of the people of the Fire while in fact he is among the dwellers of Paradise. Another may do the deeds

475. Al-Ahzab, 6.

of the people of Paradise while in fact he is among the dwellers of the Fire.' " (Muslim, Iman, 182)

One of the harms of consuming the rights of others is the negative impact it has on a person's spirituality. Those who do not pay attention to the forbidden and doubtful in their consumption and actions cannot engage in sincere and righteous deeds. Indeed, finding solace and tranquility in worship, performing acts with pleasure and tears while fulfilling Allah's command, and living an honorable life free from the rights of others are interconnected.

Prophet's Meticulousness Regarding the Rights of Others

When consuming the rights of others is so dangerous and harmful, undoubtedly the one furthest from it would be the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Let's consider a few examples of the Prophet's attention and meticulousness in this regard:

Usayd bin Hudayr ؓ was known for his playful nature. Once, while addressing a gathering and entertaining them, his jokes went a bit too far. Sensing this, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gently touched his chest with a stick to caution him. In response, Usayd said, "O Messenger of Allah, I demand retribution!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "Alright, let's proceed with retribution." Usayd then added, "But you have a shirt on, and I don't." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ raised his shirt. Upon this, Usayd immediately embraced Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, started kissing his chest, and said, "O Messenger of Allah, this is what I wanted!" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 148-149/5224) Before the Battle of Badr began, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ instructed the fighters with his bow, aligning them and counting their numbers. During this, he touched the abdomen of Sa'd bin Gaziyye, who had stepped forward from the ranks, and said, "O Sa'd, align yourself!" Sa'd ؓ responded, "O Messenger of Allah, you hurt me! I demand retaliation!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ uncovered his shirt and said, "Let's proceed with retribution." The Ansar, worriedly, tried to bring Sa'd to his senses, saying, "O Sa'd, he is the Messenger of Allah!" However, Sa'd replied, "In justice, there is no superiority of one man over another." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ repeated, "Let's proceed with retribution." Sa'd kissed the blessed body of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "O Sa'd, why did you do this?" Sa'd replied, "As you can see, we are preparing for war. I wished that the last moment I touch should be the

moment I touch you!" Upon this, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed for him. (Ibn Hisham, II, 266-267; Wakidi, I, 57; Ibn Sa'd, III, 516)

Before his demise, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ addressed the believers for the last time, saying: "I am just a human being! The rights of some among you may have been unintentionally overlooked by me. If I have taken anything from someone's wealth without realizing, let that person come and take their right! Know that the dearest among you to me, if there are any rights he holds against me, is the one who claims it or forgives it. For, my meeting with my Lord, being forgiven and meeting Him with a tranquil heart, can only happen through this. No one can say, 'I fear resentment and enmity from Prophet Muhammad.' Know that harboring resentment and enmity is never my character. I find no need to repeat these words standing among you." After performing the Dhuhr prayer, he turned towards the pulpit, repeated these words, and added, "Allah, whatever harsh words I may have said to a believer, let those words be a means of proximity to You on the Day of Judgment for the person they were said to!" (Al-Bukhari, Dua, 34)

Meticulousness of the Noble Companions

Those who were nurtured under the sensitivity of our Prophet ﷺ also displayed unparalleled examples of virtue in adhering to the rights of others. The grandson of Ubadah bin Samit ﷺ narrates:

"When my grandfather Ubadah ﷺ was about to pass away, he said, 'Gather the slaves I have freed, my servants, my neighbors, and anyone who has come to me, and bring them to me.' Once they were assembled, he said to them, 'I believe today is my last day in this world, and tonight will be my first night in the hereafter. I do not know; perhaps I may have struck one of you with my hand or said something. Therefore, if I have hurt anyone, let them come for retaliation before my soul departs, and apply to me the same action I applied to them. I swear by Allah, who holds my soul, that there is retaliation on the Day of Judgment.' They replied, 'You were like a father to us; you taught us manners.' In fact, my grandfather had not spoken a harsh word even to a servant. He asked them, 'Have you forgiven what I have done to you?' They answered, 'Yes.' After my grandfather said, 'May Allah bear witness,' he stated the following, 'Since you are not seeking retaliation, then remember my will: I do not forgive those who will weep for me after my death. When my soul departs, perform a thorough ablution, enter the mosque,

and pray. Seek forgiveness for both me and yourselves. For Allah Almighty says: "O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer..."[476] (Al-Baqarah, 153). Then take me swiftly to my grave. Do not come to my grave with torches; do not place narcissus under me!'"

As seen, Islam teaches Muslims to live considering the Day of Judgment and refraining from violating anyone's rights. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ succinctly expressed this by saying, "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe..." (Al-Bukhari, Iman, 4-5).

2. Halal Food

Islam places great importance on the food one consumes to preserve both the material and spiritual well-being of individuals. It introduced a dietary regimen for the first time in human history, explaining what to eat and how to eat it. Additionally, Islam emphasizes the significance of food being halal (lawful). The qualities of food, both chemically and spiritually, play a role in the spiritual inclinations and willpower of those who consume it. Even the food eaten by a parent, whether halal or haram, can influence the will and choices of the child born from them.

The status of earned wealth and consumed foods as halal or haram not only affects an individual's emotions and actions but also shapes the course of their life. There is a peculiar characteristic in wealth: halal wealth does not lead to forbidden paths, just as forbidden wealth does not contribute to a lawful and beneficial path. This is why it is said, "Money is like a snake; it comes out of the hole it entered."

When Allah created Prophet Adam and Mother Eve in paradise, He instructed them to freely eat from the fruits except from one tree. However, Satan, through whispers, made this prohibition seem appealing to them. By promising them high spiritual rewards, such as becoming angels and eternal life in paradise, Satan deceived them into violating Allah's command.[477] Similarly, in this world, Allah Almighty has made numerous provisions lawful for Muslims, while forbidden ones are limited. However, desires and Satan tend to make forbidden things attractive by promising various benefits such

476. Al-Baqarah, 153.
477. Al-Baqarah, 35-36; Al-A'raf, 19-22.

as earning more and doing good, deceiving many people. Allah refers to these realities in the Quran:

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy." (Al-Baqarah:168)

"Eat from the good things with which We have provided you and do not transgress [or oppress others] therein, lest My anger should descend upon you. And he upon whom My anger descends has certainly fallen." (Al-Maidah:88. See also Al-Nahl:114; Al-Anfal:69)

According to the Quran, the People of the Cave, who lived among the previous nations, were a beautiful example of concern for halal food. When they woke up after centuries of sleep, before anything else, they thought about Allah's command:

"Now, send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the city, and let him look for the [food of the] cleanest of it and bring provision from it..." (18:19)

Hence, a beautiful example of sensitivity regarding halal food was set. It is evident that a person must earn through lawful means for both themselves and those they are responsible for. Rafi ﷺ, a freed slave of the Prophet, reported:

"I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! Do children have rights over their parents?' He said, 'Yes, they do: to give them a good name, teach them good manners, and provide them with lawful sustenance.'" (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VI, 401; Ali al-Muttaqi, XVI, 443)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Whoever eats pure food, follows the Sunnah in his deeds, and people are secure from his harm, he will enter Paradise." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60/2520; Hakim, IV, 117/7073)

The most halal sustenance is what a person earns with their own efforts. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ returned from Tabuk, Sa'd al-Ansari greeted him. Upon handshaking, the Prophet noticed Sa'd's calloused hands and asked, "Why are your hands like this?" Sa'd replied, "These are marks from using the shovel and hoe. I work with them to earn a living for my family."

Pleased with his condition, the Prophet said, "These hands will not be touched by the Fire." (Ibn al-Asir, Usd al-Ghaba, I, 424-425; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, III, 86)

In another narration:

He (the Prophet) said, "These are the hands that Allah Almighty loves." (Sarahsi, Mabsut, VII, 62)

On the other hand, a body nourished by haram is worthy of becoming firewood for hell. Therefore, Muslims adhere to the principle: "Pay attention to what goes into your mouth and what comes out of it."

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ had a servant to whom he used to give a portion of his earnings, and the servant would consume it. One day, the servant brought something he had earned. Abu Bakr ﷺ took a bite of it. Upon this, the servant said, "Every evening, you used to ask me about the nature of my earnings, but you didn't ask tonight!" Abu Bakr ﷺ replied, "I was very hungry, I forgot to ask. Alright, tell me how you earned it?" The servant said, "During the era of ignorance, I deceived someone by practicing fortune-telling, even though I did not understand it at all. Today, I met him, and he reciprocated by offering me this food I gave to you." Hearing this, Abu Bakr ﷺ put his finger in his throat and vomited out everything he had eaten despite the hardship. Turning to the servant, he said, "Woe to you! You almost destroyed me." To those who asked, "Was it worth going through so much trouble for just a bite?" Abu Bakr ﷺ replied, "If I had known my life was at stake, I would have vomited that bite again. Because I heard from the Prophet Muhammad: 'A body nourished by haram is more deserving of hell.'"[478]

Following this incident, Allah praised Abu Bakr ﷺ and those like him, stating: "Whoever fears the standing before his Lord and restrains the soul from [evil] inclination, then indeed, Paradise will be his refuge." (Nazi'at, 40-41; Al-Qurtubi, XIX, 135)

Once, Umar ﷺ liked the taste of the milk he drank. He inquired about where the milk came from. The person who brought the milk said, "I went to the riverside, and I saw they were watering some of the zakat animals there! The shepherds let me have some of their milk. I put it in my container and brought it to you." Upon hearing this, Umar ibn al-Khattab immediately put

478. See Abu Nuaym, Hilya, I, 31; Al-Bukhari, Virtues of the Ansar, 26; Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Tabari, Riyad al-Nadra, II, 140-141.

his hand into his throat and vomited out the milk he had drunk, despite the hardship. (Muwatta', Zakat, 31)

Musa Efendi narrates the following about Mahmut Sami Ramazanoglu:

"The esteemed teacher's first questions to those who came to visit him for advice and guidance were about their occupations and whether they paid attention to halal and haram. After that, they would obtain other information and provide the necessary advice to their interlocutors."[479]

When a person pays attention to the halal nature of what they earn and turns away from earning haram, contrary to some people's beliefs, they do not become poor. On the contrary, Allah grants blessing to their earnings. The Prophet Muhammad, warning against unwarranted concerns about sustenance, said, "O people! Be mindful of Allah and treat your requests for sustenance with good conduct! Because no one dies without acquiring their due sustenance in full. Even if sustenance is delayed, it will eventually be attained. So, fear Allah and act beautifully in seeking sustenance; take what is lawful and leave what is unlawful." (Ibn Majah, Tijarah, 2)

On the other hand, the pursuit of halal and clean earnings brings an inner joy to a person. Such individuals, even if their incomes are modest, always live in peace. Allah also loves them. Indeed, the following good news is given in a hadith: "Allah loves to see His servant tired from seeking halal." (Suyuti, al-Jamiu's-Saghir, I, 65)

Clean and Unclean Are Not the Same

Halal, no matter how little, is immensely valuable. Islamic scholars have stated: A halal as small as a grain of wheat is more acceptable and beloved to Allah than worlds filled with haram. This is because haram is impure and rejected by Allah, whereas halal is good and pure, accepted by Allah.

Once, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Allah, the Strong and Exalted, has forbidden you to worship idols, to consume alcohol, and to condemn people based on lineage. Pay attention; those who drink, those who produce it, those who distribute it, those who sell it, and those who benefit from its money are cursed."

479. Sâdiq Dânâ, Sultan of the Knowers Shaykh Mahmud Sami Ramazanoglu, Istanbul 1412/1991, p. 25.

Upon hearing this, a bedouin stood up, approached the Prophet, and asked:

"O Messenger of Allah, I used to trade in alcohol. I have accumulated some wealth from this business. If I spend this wealth in obedience to Allah, will it be of any benefit to me?" Prophet Muhammad replied:

"Even if you were to spend that wealth in Hajj, Jihad, or charity, it would not have the worth of a mosquito's wing in the sight of Allah. Because Allah only accepts what is pure."

In response to this incident, Allah revealed the following verse: "Say: The impure and the pure are not equal, although the abundance of the impure might impress you. So, O people of understanding, fear Allah that you may succeed." (Al-Ma'idah, 100)

In a hadith, it is stated: "If a person earns from haram and spends it, it will not be blessed. If they give in charity, it will not be accepted. What they leave behind will only draw them closer to the fire. Allah does not erase evil with evil but eradicates it with goodness. Indeed, the wicked cannot eliminate wickedness."(Ahmad 1,387)

The tranquility in worship and spiritual advancements are also tied to consuming halal. Prophet Muhammad mentioned: "Allah is pure, and He only accepts what is pure. He commanded His messengers, saying: 'O messengers, eat from the pure things and perform righteous deeds.' [480]He commanded the believers: 'O believers, eat from the pure things We have provided for you.'" [481]

Someone who embarks on a long journey for the sake of Allah, raising their hands to the sky in supplication, while their earnings, food, and drink are all tainted by haram, how can their prayer be accepted?

Prophet Muhammad explained that performing Hajj with halal earnings would be accepted beautifully, while Hajj done with haram wealth would be harshly rejected, and the person might face punishment.

Mawlana Rumi also emphasized the importance of halal sustenance, stating:

480. Al-Mu'minun, 51.
481. Al-Baqarah, 172.



"First, wean your soul-child from the devil's milk, then make it a companion to the angels! Know, as long as you are murky and dense, realize that you are far from Allah and a milk-sibling to the devil!"

The maturity and radiance of a person's soul depend on the purity of their sustenance. If you observe envy, deceit, ignorance, or negligence emerging from a morsel, know that it is tainted with haram. Did you ever see wheat planted and barley sprout? Did a mare ever give birth to a foal?

A morsel is like a seed, and its harvest is your thoughts. It is also like a sea, and its pearls are lofty concerns. From the halal morsel, a desire to serve elders and an eagerness for the hereafter arise.

Therefore, while striving for halal food, we should also seek help through prayer. Prophet Muhammad taught the following supplication: "O Allah, spare me what is unlawful, and enrich me with Your grace beyond anyone else." He would also pray after the morning prayer: "O Allah, I ask You for beneficial knowledge, good sustenance, and accepted deeds."

3. Avoiding Doubtful Matters

Islam advises believers to stay away from doubtful matters to protect them from haram in the best possible way. Haram is like a burning fire for believers, and those who cross the boundaries set by Allah find themselves in the midst of this fiery danger. The safest way to protect oneself from this danger is to stay away from doubtful matters between the halal and haram. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Whoever leaves what makes him doubt for what does not make him doubt, he will have avoided falling into the haram. But whoever falls into doubtful things falls into what is clearly haram." (Al-Bukhari, Buyu', 2)

Living with the fear of committing a sin, it is easier and more profitable to avoid doubtful matters. The Prophet also warned: "The halal is clear, and the haram is clear. Between them are doubtful matters that many people do not know. Whoever avoids doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor. But whoever falls into doubtful matters falls into what is clearly haram. Just as a shepherd who grazes his flock around a forbidden area risks entering it, be aware that every king has a forbidden territory. Remember, Allah's forbidden territory consists of what He has declared haram. Know well that there is a small piece of flesh in the body; if it becomes good, the whole body becomes good, and if it becomes corrupt, the whole



body becomes corrupt. That piece of flesh is the heart." (Muslim, Musaqah, 107, 108; Al-Bukhari, Iman, 39; Buyu', 2; Abu Dawood, Buyu', 3/3329)

Here, it is understood that the guide to navigate through doubtful matters is one's heart. Wabisa bin Mabad ﷺ narrates that he came to the presence of the Prophet, who asked:

"Did you come to inquire about goodness?"

"Yes," Wabisa replied. Then the Prophet said:

"Consult your heart! Goodness is what gives you peace of mind and what your heart is at ease with. Sin, on the other hand, is what troubles your soul, even if people give you their opinion." (Ahmad, IV, 227-228; Darimi, Buyu', 2. See also Haythami, X, 294)

Therefore, preserving the spiritual health of the heart is crucial. To achieve this, it is necessary to nourish the body with halal sustenance. The heart's ability to distinguish between good and evil, doubtful matters, and the haram depends on it. A heart fed with haram loses its purity over time, becomes cloudy, and eventually hardens, losing its sensitivity.

Rumi beautifully illustrates the importance of being cautious in the face of doubtful matters: "A little bird, seeing a seed, checks from front, back, right, left a hundred times to ensure there is no trap. The bird's fear of unknown dangers is greater than its love for the food. Similarly, true and sincere seekers examine what they gain, ensuring it is not tainted or trapped by the desires and whims of the ego. They say, 'It is not worthy to fall into a trap or be deceived by its intoxicated gaze because there may be a spy behind the scenes, ready to pounce on my throat.'"

Moreover, avoiding doubtful matters allows one to live a more peaceful life. Hasan bin Ali ﷺ said: "I memorized this saying of my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, when I was young: 'Leave what makes you doubt for what does not make you doubt. Verily, truth brings peace of mind, while lies are a source of doubt.'" (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60/2518. See also Al-Bukhari, Buyu', 3)

Being a pious servant depends on avoiding doubtful matters. The Prophet stated:

"A servant cannot reach the level of the truly pious until he abandons certain permissible things out of fear of falling into forbidden things." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 19/2451; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 24)

Therefore, the Companions, especially the righteous Caliph Umar ﷺ, were extremely cautious about doubtful matters. Umar said: "For the fear of falling into usury, we abandoned nine permissible things out of ten." (Ali al-Muttaqi, IV, 187/10087)

Subsequent generations of Muslims also paid great attention to this matter. For instance, the great Islamic jurist Imam Abu Hanifa was a wealthy merchant but, due to his engagement in knowledge, entrusted his trade affairs to a representative, making sure they were conducted within the halal boundaries. He was so meticulous that, on one occasion, he sent his partner Hafs bin Abdurrahman to sell fabric, advising him about certain defects in the goods and instructing him to inform the buyer. Although Hafs sold the fabric at the specified price, he forgot to mention the defects to the buyer. Upon learning this, Imam Abu Hanifa distributed the entire profit of thirty thousand dirhams as charity and parted ways with his partner.[482]

The renowned hadith scholar Imam Nawawi in Damascus abstained from eating locally grown fruits because he believed that the management of the orchards was not meticulous enough, sharing a partnership that was not conducted in a legitimate manner, causing these fruits to be mixed with haram. He survived on the food brought by his father, only consuming the figs his father had brought.

Imam Nawawi, who said, "The greatest worship is to learn halal and haram with a sincere intention," received no money from anyone throughout his life. He would buy books with the stipends he received from the medreses where he taught, then donate the books back to the same medrese. His life illustrates the great importance he placed on the concept of halal.[483]

While avoiding doubtful matters, it is essential to stay on the path of moderation and avoid unnecessary doubts that can lead to baseless suspicions, thus causing distress for Muslims. Muslims, guided by insight, adhere to the middle way in every aspect of life. (Al-Bukhari, Buyu', 5)

482. Shihab al-Din Ahmad bin Hajar al-Haythami, The Miracles of Imam Azam, trans. Abdulwahhab Ozturk, Ankara 1978, p. 82.
483. Prof. Dr. Yaşar Kandemir and others, Gardens of the Righteous, I, 49.

4. Relations with Non-Muslims

The Almighty desires human beings to be free in matters of religion, choosing the true faith willingly. Therefore, one who claims to be Muslim while not believing in their heart is termed a hypocrite, which is considered one of the ugliest conditions in Islam. However, Allah has tasked Muslims only with presenting and conveying Islam to others. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not force his own uncles to embrace Islam; he merely implored them. As a result, some accepted Islam, while others did so much later.

On the other hand, Muslims cannot act according to their desires in areas where Islam has set standards. How they should believe, view events, and behave has been determined by divine standards, known as the Book and Sunnah, and implemented in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, Muslims strive to understand the Quran and Sunnah in detail and continue their lives by following the path shown to them.

Allah commands Muslims as follows:

"Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes and aid in your expulsion - [forbids] that you make allies of them. And whoever makes allies of them, then it is those who are the wrongdoers." (Al-Mumtahanah, 8-9)

"If any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know." (At-Tawbah, 6)

Islam prohibits Muslims from maintaining intimate relationships with non-Muslims who harbor enmity towards Islam, mock their beliefs, or wage war against them. However, Islam does not prohibit establishing good relations with those who do not harbor enmity. Therefore, Islamic scholars have considered any human relationship that does not indicate respect for disbelief, its manifestations, signs, and symbols permissible as a principle.[484] Abu Basra al-Ghifari ﷺ provides an example:

484. Ahmet Ozel, "Non-Muslim" article, DIA, XIII, 423.

"When I migrated, I came to the Prophet ﷺ before I became a Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ allocated a small sheep from his family's daily sustenance for me. I drank all its milk. When morning came, I embraced Islam. The Prophet's family said, 'We can sleep hungry tonight just like yesterday.' Upon this, the Prophet (ﷺ him) milked the sheep for me again, and this time, I drank a little." (Ahmad, VI, 397)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ exchanged gifts with non-Muslims, which he emphasized as a way to dispel animosity[485]. Umar ﷺ sent a silk garment that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had gifted him to a non-Muslim friend in Mecca who hadn't converted yet. (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 9)

Islam's commandments regarding kindness to neighbors[486] encompass both Muslims and non-Muslims[487]. When categorizing neighbors, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ affirmed that non-Muslims also have rights of neighborliness.[488] Therefore, in daily life, Muslims have not lagged behind in societal relationships, such as visiting non-Muslim patients, attending their funerals, offering condolences, as well as congratulating them on occasions like marriages and births.[489] Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited a Jewish child who served him during his illness. (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 80)

When a lamb was slaughtered for Abdullah bin Umar ﷺ, he asked his family if they had sent a gift to their Jewish neighbor. Upon receiving a negative response, he said, "Send some to them. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, Gabriel insisted so much on the rights of neighbors that I thought he would make them heirs.'" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 122-123/5152; Tirmidhi, Birr, 28/1943)

Islam's directives to show kindness to relatives and maintain relations are applicable to both Muslims and non-Muslims[490]. As Muslims' beliefs

485. Abu Dawood, Haraj, 33-35; Tirmidhi, Siyar, 23/1576; Ahmad, I, 96. Some hadiths indicate that it is permissible to accept gifts from polytheists, while others indicate that it is not permissible. These hadiths are compiled as follows: It is not permissible to accept the gifts of polytheists who want to win the hearts of Muslims and bind them to themselves with their gifts. It is permissible to accept the gifts of polytheists whose intentions are known and whose gifts are expected to warm the hearts to Islam when accepted.
486. An-Nisa, 36; Muslim, Iman, 76-77.
487. Al-Qurtubi, V, 184, 188; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, II, 417-418.
488. Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, Dar al-Fikr, Fuat Abdulbaki edition, X, 456; Suyuti, al-Jami al-Saghir, I, 146/3656.
489. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, II, 200-205; Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Non-Muslims in Islamic Society, Beirut 1412, p. 45-46.
490. An-Nisa, 1; Muhammad, 22.

and perspectives are within this framework, it is certain that they will always strive to get along with all people and prefer peace. Muslims offer kindness to others as long as non-Muslims do not engage in harmful behavior. However, if non-Muslims engage in actions that could harm Muslims, then necessary precautions are taken.

In Islam, the only acceptable distinction among people is based on belief. Many verses in the Quran express that the preference in the afterlife will be significant and that believers and non-believers will not be treated the same before Allah[491]. Nevertheless, in worldly life, regulations have been established to ensure that believers and non-believers, whether within different societies or in the same society, can live together.[492]

For international relations to continue in peace and be based on sound principles, mutual trust and respect for rights are of great importance. Therefore, Islam commands Muslims, both in private and international relations, to avoid behaviors that would undermine mutual trust, to treat everyone justly without discrimination, and to refrain from committing injustice and oppression due to hatred and enmity.[493]

The Quran emphasizes strengthening human ties on Earth, bringing societies closer together for humane purposes, and establishing mutual cooperation in beneficial matters. Muslim scholars have stated that Islam does not prohibit Muslim states from making trade, peace, friendship, etc., agreements with non-Muslim states. However, military collaboration and alliances are permissible only in cases of necessity and with certain conditions.[494]

Recognized Freedoms

Islam allows non-Muslims living within a Muslim society the freedom of belief, and ensures their lives and property safety. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

491. See for example Hud, 15-24; Fussilat, 40; Al-Jathiyah, 20-35.
492. The idea of international community, which is the most important source of international law, was first expressed in the Qur'an, and since the time of the Prophet, intercommunity relations have been based on legal principles. Developed within the framework of the basic principles set forth in the Qur'an and Sunnah, this international law, which has evolved over time, was applied in the relations of Muslim states with non-Muslim communities, while in the Western world during the Middle Ages, arbitrariness prevailed in international affairs, and state law, which began to emerge in Europe in the 18th century, began to be applied to non-Western and non-Christian states only from the late 19th century onwards.
493. Al-Maidah, 1, 2, 8; An-Nahl, 91, 92, 94; An-Nisa, 58.
494. Ahmet Ozel, "Non-Muslim" article, DIA, XIII, 420.

took the first step towards this by making a covenant known as the "Constitution of Medina" or "Medina Charter" immediately after the Hijra in Medina with the polytheistic and Jewish communities. This marked the first example of a society model where various religious and cultural groups could coexist. In the subsequent years, through treaties with Christian communities such as Ayla, Azruh, Dumat al-jandal, and Najran, and Jewish communities like Maqna and Tayma, as well as partially with the Zoroastrians in Hajar and Bahrain, non-Muslims gained the opportunity to live securely within the Islamic society, preserving their cultural identities based on religious and legal foundations. This practice, continuing throughout Islamic history, reached its broadest and most developed form in the Ottoman State's millet system.[495]

The following expressions in the Medina Charter are noteworthy:

"The religion of Muslims belongs to them, and the religion of Jews belongs to them."

"The Jews are a community with the Muslims (in alliance)."

"Among them, there will be kindness and justice." (Article: 25, 37)

Non-Muslims, through a pact known as the "zimma"[496] contract, also have the right to life and property security similar to Muslims. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated: "Be cautious! If anyone wrongs a non-Muslim citizen (zimmi) or diminishes his rights, or burdens him beyond his capacity, or takes

495. See Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Documents, no. 19, 30-33, 57, 93-95, 190-192; Ahmet Ozel, "Non-Muslim" article, DIA, XIII, 420; Dr. Osman Guner, Prophet Muhammad's Relations with the People of the Book, Ankara 1997; Ismail Hakki Atçeken, Prophet Muhammad's Relations with the Jews, Istanbul 1996; M. Ali Kapar, Prophet Muhammad's Relations with the Polytheists, Istanbul 1987.

496. Zimmi refers to those who have the right to reside permanently in Islamic countries by making a treaty; this treaty is called the zimmi pact. Depending on their situation, dhimmis pay personal tax (jizyah), land tax (haraj), or a kind of trade tax (ushur) to the Islamic state. These taxes are collected in exchange for ensuring the essential condition of the dhimmi pact, which is the security of life and property, or exemption from country defense. However, jizyah is not collected from every dhimmi: Jizyah is collected from men who have reached the age of puberty and are financially capable. Women, children, elderly, disabled, slaves, and the poor who do not have the capacity to fight are exempt from it. Those who volunteer for military service are also exempt from this tax. In addition, it is observed that some duties, benefits, and services deemed appropriate by the state are exempt from jizyah for dhimmis. Furthermore, in some schools of thought, jizyah is not collected from non-Muslim clergy or farmers who are unable to work. Jizyah debt is forgiven in cases such as the inability of the state to fulfill its protection duty, death, or the conversion of the dhimmi to Islam.

something from him against his will, I will be his adversary on the Day of Judgment!" (Abu Dawood, Tax, 31-33/3052)

The Prophet ﷺ also mentioned that whoever unjustly kills a non-Muslim citizen will be deprived of the fragrance of Paradise from a distance of forty years. (Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, IX, 205)

Once, Hisham bin Hakim saw in Hims some non-Muslim peasants who were forced to remain under the scorching sun to pay jizya. When he asked about it, he said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, 'Surely, Allah torments those who torment people in this world.'" (Abu Dawood, Haraj, 30-32/3045; Muslim, Birr, 117-119)

As is known, in Islam, honoring commitments, that is, keeping a promise, is highly significant. In fact, it is a command in Islam to fulfill the promise, even if the one who made the promise is an unbeliever. However, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, especially emphasized the rights of treaty-bound non-Muslims, urging Muslims to protect their rights as long as they adhere to the terms of the agreement, ensuring that their property, lives, and honor remain untouched. Thus, in the atmosphere of peace and security provided by Islam, non-Muslims have led a comfortable life throughout history, making progress in various fields such as knowledge, culture, art, and trade.

Muslims do not insult the beliefs of non-Muslims who are bound by treaties. Even gossiping about a non-Muslim or making false accusations against them is prohibited. In such cases, it is the duty of non-Muslims to obey the laws, show respect for the beliefs and customs of Muslims, and refrain from behaviors contrary to public order and general morality. Non-Muslims in Islamic countries have equal rights to residence and travel freedom as Muslims.

Freedom in Employment for Non-Muslims

Concerning freedom in employment, there are no restrictions for non-Muslims, and they can engage in various activities within the fields of work and commerce. Abdullah, the son of Abu Bakr ﷺ, narrates the following:

Once, we were a group of one hundred and thirty people in the company of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He asked, "Does anyone have any food with them?" We quickly investigated and found one person with a small bag containing a "sa'" (a measure) or a similar amount of food. We ground some

wheat from it and made dough. Then, a disheveled, tall polytheist appeared with a flock of sheep. Allah's Messenger ﷺ asked him, "Are you selling the sheep, or did you bring them as a gift or charity?" The polytheist replied, "No, they are for sale." Upon this, the Prophet ﷺ purchased a sheep from him. The sheep was slaughtered, and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ordered us to fry the liver first. I swear by Allah that the Prophet ﷺ distributed a piece of the liver to each of the one hundred and thirty people who were present. For those who were not present, their portions were kept, and they were given when they came. Then, the Prophet ﷺ cooked the sheep by placing it in two pots. Despite all the people on the journey eating from it and being satisfied, there was still some food left. We loaded this remaining food on a camel and took it with us. (Al-Bukhari, Hibah, 28; Al-Bukhari, Buyu' 99)

Moreover, non-Muslims have the right to benefit from public services and social security benefits, similar to Muslims. When Umar ﷺ saw a non-Muslim begging due to poverty and old age, he ordered that person to be granted a stipend from the treasury. Before his death, Umar ﷺ requested the subsequent caliph to safeguard the rights of non-Muslims and take care of them.[497] Khalid bin Walid, in the treaty he made with the people of Hira, stated that those who were weak would not be subject to the jizya (tax) and that their livelihood would be provided from the treasury.[498] Umar bin Abdulaziz also instructed the authorities to grant stipends from the state treasury to those in such situations. [499]

Many Islamic jurists state that charity can be given to non-Muslims. Additionally, it has been deemed permissible for non-Muslims to establish endowments among themselves, and even Muslims can establish endowments for them under certain conditions.[500]

In an Islamic country, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, citizen or foreigner, all individuals are subject to the state's judicial system and laws. However, as a consequence of the religious freedom granted to non-Muslims by Islam, they have been given judicial and legal autonomy in matters closely related to religious beliefs, such as family, personal, inheritance, and debt laws.

497. Abu Yusuf, Book of Land Tax, p. 258-260; Abu Ubaid, al-Amwal, Cairo, 1393, p. 57.
498. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, Documents, p. 280-281, no. 291.
499. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Rules of the People of the Covenant, ed. Salahaddin al-Munjid, Damascus 1381/1961, I, 38.
500. Ahmet Ozel, "Non-Muslim" article, DIA, XIII, 421.

Non-Muslims have the right to bring their legal disputes to their own courts or open cases in Islamic courts, where Islamic law is applied. In such cases, Islamic law is implemented[501]. However, in matters considered legitimate by their beliefs, such as dealings with items they consider lawful like pork and wine, they are subject to different rulings.[502]

Islam's emphasis on peace in relationships with non-Muslims is evidenced by allowing Muslims to marry women from the People of the Book (Jews and Christians). Allah states in the Quran:

"Today, all good things have been made lawful for you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them. So are chaste Muslim women and chaste women from the people who were given the Scripture before you, provided you give them their dowries and take them in marriage, not in adultery, nor as mistresses. The deeds of anyone who rejects faith will come to nothing, and in the Hereafter, he will be one of the losers." (Al-Ma'idah, 5)

However, muslim woman can in no way get married to a fire-worshipper nor with idolaters[503] and also it is prohibited for a Muslim woman, regardless of whether the man is from the People of the Book, to marry a non-Muslim man.[504]

Regarding the slaughter of animals, it is permissible to consume the meat of animals slaughtered by the People of the Book, as long as no name other than Allah's is mentioned during the slaughtering process. If it is known that a name other than Allah's is mentioned, eating such meat becomes prohibited. Moreover, the animal must be slaughtered according to the prescribed method; if it is killed by strangulation or any other means, its meat is not permissible to eat.

5. Islam and Women

The concept of gender is not applicable to Allah and His angels. The division into male and female is valid for other creatures. Both man and

501. Al-Maidah (The Table Spread), 42, 44, 48.
502. Ozel, ibid., XIII, 422-423. In fact, Prophet Jesus (pbuh) did not eat pork, and devout Jews today do not eat it either. So, it is not understandable why today's Christians eat it and consider it lawful!
503. Al-Baqarah, 221.
504. Al-Baqarah, 221; Al-Mumtahina, 10.

woman are created by Allah and are His servants. Therefore, it is impossible for Islam, the just religion sent by Allah, to be unjust between women and men. Allah, with wisdom, created humans in different genders, assigning different duties and rights to each. He does not hold them responsible for circumstances beyond their control; rather, He informs them that they will be accountable only for their thoughts and actions based on their own will. The Quranic verses state:

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed, Allah is ever, over you, an Observer." (An-Nisaa, 1)

"Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer, those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged, [even as much as] the speck on a date seed." (An-Nisaa, 124)

The Almighty values the rights of His servants and prohibits them from infringing upon each other's rights. He emphasizes the responsibility of the powerful to protect and care for the weak. These rights are preserved when people have true faith and fear Allah. However, when people lose their true faith and distance themselves from Allah, the rights of the weak begin to be neglected. Women become the greatest victims of this injustice. Prophets, with divine messages, have emphasized the value of women, mothers, and daughters. Yet, when people abandon these teachings, extremes and neglect toward women prevail, and generally, women are condemned to oppression. Therefore, we can say, "The fear of Allah is the beginning of everything." When people are deprived of the fear of Allah, they become capable of all kinds of injustice and oppression.

Mehmed Âkif beautifully expresses this:

"Neither knowledge elevates ethics, nor conscience;

The sense of virtue in humans is from the fear of Allah."

a. Pre-Islamic Women

In Judaism, a woman's primary duty and purpose were to bear children[505] and take care of the home. The woman was a source of happiness for her

505. Genesis, 3:16.

husband and children[506]. She held a special position as a mother and deserved respect[507]. However, as the religion got corrupted, the view of Jews towards women also deteriorated. They still recite in their daily morning prayer: "O Lord, I thank You for not creating me a woman!"[508]

In the early days of Christianity, women were highlighted for their silence, chastity, benevolence, and their role as devout prayers. However, later concerns were voiced. Church fathers accused women of seducing angels and leading the human race into evil. Mother Eve was blamed for introducing desire and death into the world. Their words regarding women seem to evoke hostility towards the female gender. For instance, St. Augustine depicted women as filled with evil, jealous, indecisive, and inconsistent, presenting them as the source of all disputes, conflicts, and injustices. He even viewed legitimate marital relations as a sin. In the marriage ceremony of the Catholic Church, a prayer is recited, stating, "I have fallen into sin in my mother's womb; my mother conceived me in sin." This perspective distanced people from marriage, leading to the emergence of institutions like the "order of sacred virgins," "nunneries," and "women's monasteries." According to their understanding, the nuns who enter monasteries will become the wives of Jesus, symbolizing purity. Jesus is a symbol of cleanliness, as the Virgin Mary gave birth to him without engaging in sexual relations. Therefore, the only thing to do is to remain pure and chaste, like the Virgin Mary[509]. As Christians consider Jesus as God, these nuns will be the wives of God, and eventually, God will have many wives. This belief demonstrates the extent of their absurdity.

In the medieval Christian world, women and marriage were criticized to such an extent that the Council of Macon (585) debated whether women had souls. From the twelfth century onwards, witch hunts began in the West, and many women were burned at the stake or drowned, claiming they had connections with demons.[510]

506. Proverbs, 31:28.
507. Exodus, 20:12; Leviticus, 20:9.
508. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 84.
509. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 85. Lecky, in his book "History of European Morals," narrates many bitter stories about this. Abu'l-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, p. 205.
510. A Saxon ruler boasted of having read the Bible 53 times and having condemned 20,000 witches to death in the process. Historians estimate that the number of witches burned was around 2,000,000 (two million).

Later, in contrast to this extreme, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was highlighted and presented as the mother of God. In the modern era, as a reaction to these extremes, feminism emerged, defending women's rights. [511]

In the pre-Islamic era, women suffered all kinds of torture and humiliation. They were deprived of their rights, their wealth was plundered, and they were left without inheritance. After divorce or the death of the husband, they were forbidden from marrying a man they loved.[512]

As seen, when humanity deviates from divine guidance, it cannot escape extremes and neglect. These extremes contrary to human nature cannot bring any benefit. Islam, on the other hand, has brought the most accurate guidance in every aspect, including the status of women. The Almighty has granted women and men, created with different biological structures, the most appropriate rights and duties.

b. The Value Islam Attributes to Women and the Rights Granted

The Quran regards women as equal beings to men in terms of their human nature. Allah created humans in pairs, male and female, to lead a more peaceful and prosperous life.[513] In Islam, there is no original sin doctrine, and consequently, there is no negative view towards women. The Quran tells the story of Adam and Eve being jointly deceived by Satan.[514] Every child, whether male or female, is born without sin; they become accountable for their actions after reaching maturity.

Women are considered equal to men in their servitude to Allah. The Almighty says: "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted." (Al-Hujurat, 13)

"I will not waste the work of any worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another..." (Ali-Imran, 195)

511. Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 86.
512. Al-Baqarah, 231, 232; An-Nisa (The Women), 3, 19, 139; Al-An'am (The Cattle), 139. Abu'l-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, p. 77.
513. An-Nisa, 1; Ar-Rum , 21
514. Al-Baqarah, 34-36; Ta-Ha, 121.

"Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer, We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do." (An-Nahl, 97) [515]

"The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." (At-Tawbah, 71)

The Quran emphasizes the role of women as mothers, underscoring the importance of showing kindness to parents after worshiping Allah. It specifically mentions that even saying "uff" (expressing displeasure) to them in their old age is inappropriate. (Al-Isra, 23)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ elevated the status of women by stating, "Paradise lies at the feet of righteous mothers!"[516]

In his other sayings, the Prophet further emphasized the significance of righteous and virtuous women:

"The world is a temporary benefit. The best worldly benefit is a pious and virtuous woman." (Muslim, Radâ, 64; Nasa'i, Nikah, 15; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 5)

"The most complete in faith among believers are those with the best character, and the best of you are those who are kindest to their family members." (Tirmidhi, Iman, 6/2612; Ahmad, VI, 47, 99)

Treating Women Well

The Almighty commands His servants:

"Treat women kindly, deal with them honorably!" (An-Nisa, 19)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ consistently advocated treating women with kindness, expressing affection towards them, showing leniency, forgiving their mistakes, setting an example through his own life. Aisha رضي الله عنها narrates:

"When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was alone with his wives, he was the gentlest and most cheerful of people." (Ali al-Muttaqi, Kenz, VII, 222) One day, Shurayh bin Hani asked Aisha رضي الله عنها:

515. Also see An-Nisa, 124; Al-Mu'min, 40; Muhammad, 19.
516. Nasa'i, Jihad, 6; Ahmad, III, 429; Suyuti, I, 125.



"Can a woman have a meal with her husband while she is menstruating?" At that time, there were certain beliefs among non-Muslims that isolated menstruating women from life. Aisha ﵂ replied:

"Yes, while I was menstruating, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would invite me, we would eat together. During this time, he would take a piece of meat with a bone, hand it to me, and swear for me to start first. I would take it, take a bite, then hand it to him, and he would place his mouth where I had bitten. If he wanted something to drink, when it was brought, he would swear for me to drink first. Then, I would take the cup, drink a bit, and leave it. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would take it, placing his mouth where I had put mine and drink." (Nasai, Taharah, 177)

The following saying of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provides insight into the depth of affection he had for his wives:

"I asked my Lord to allow each woman I married to be with me in Paradise, and He granted me that." (Hakim, III, 148; Haythami, X, 17)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrated great love and loyalty throughout his life towards his mother, foster mothers (Suyyab, Halima), nursemaid (Umm Ayman), milk-sister (Shayma), Abu Talib's wife, his own wives, daughters, relatives, and the selfless women who embraced Islam early on. Our hadith and seerah books are filled with examples of this.[517]

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ treated not only his relatives but all women with utmost kindness. He protected their rights, addressed their issues, mediated in conflicts with their husbands, and instructed his Ummah to do the same. During a journey, a maid named Anjasha was reciting melodious poetry to speed up the camels. The Prophet expressed concern about the possibility of the ladies atop the camels getting hurt and, with a graceful analogy, said, "O Anjasha, be careful, don't let the crystals break!" (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 95; Ahmad, III, 117)

There was a black woman who used to clean the Prophet's Mosque. One day, the Prophet did not see her and asked about her. When he learned that she had passed away, he expressed his surprise, saying, "Shouldn't you have

517. See Osman Nuri Topbaş, Civilization of Virtues, I, 515; http://www.worldpublishings.com/katalog/indir.asp?id=106&yol=../Deppo/Dokumanlar/eng_FAZILETLER MEDENIYETI 2 ING 15 X 21.pd



informed me?" Later, he went to her grave, performed the funeral prayer, and supplicated for her. (Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 67)

When a companion asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What are the rights of our women upon us?" he replied, "Feed them when you eat, clothe them when you clothe, do not strike their faces, do not say ugly things about their work or appearance, and do not curse or insult them." (Abu Dawud, Nikah, 40-41/2142; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 3)

Consulting with Women

According to Islam, marriage is a mutual contract, and during this contract, a woman expresses her consent freely. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: "A widowed woman cannot be married without her consultation, and a virgin girl cannot be married without her permission." (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 41; Muslim, Nikah, 64)

The Prophet ﷺ consulted with his wives, seriously considered proposals from them, and did not object as long as they were reasonable and lawful. For instance, the marriage of his daughter Zaynab to Abu'l-Âs was proposed by Khadija رضي الله عنها. The narrator mentions, "Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not oppose Khadija رضي الله عنها." (Haythami, IX, 213)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ advised: "Consult with women regarding your daughters." (Abu Dawood, Nikah, 22-23)

Islam not only encourages consulting with women in marriage but also commands consultation in other matters. The Quran states: "…If both parents desire weaning through mutual consent and consultation, there is no blame on them..." (Al-Baqarah, 233)

Assisting Women

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to assist his wives in various tasks. When Aisha رضي الله عنها was asked about the Prophet's activities at home, she replied, "He would engage in the service of his family, and when the prayer time came, he would go for prayer." (Al-Bukhari, Adzan, 44, Nafaqah, 8; Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 45)

Upon returning from the Battle of Khaybar, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ensured the comfort of his wife Safiyya رضي الله عنها by placing a cloth on his mount's back and sitting next to his camel so that she could easily mount. (Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 102; Buyu', 111; Muslim, Nikah, 464)

Once, Aisha ﵂ mentioned, "My father, Abu Bakr's family sent us a sheep's trotter one night. Allah's Messenger ﷺ held the meat while I cut, or I held it, and he cut." When someone asked, "Were you doing this in the dark without a lamp?" Aisha ﵂ replied, "If we had enough oil for a lamp, we would have surely used it and eaten by its light. Sometimes a month would pass, and the family of Muhammad couldn't find any food or have a pot boiling on their stove." (Ahmad, VI, 217; Ibn Sa'd, I, 405)

Not Raising Hands to Women

Hadith and biography books unanimously affirm that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never raised his hand against his wives. Aisha ﵂ explicitly states that the Prophet never raised his hand against his wives or servants. (Muslim, Birr, 79; Abu Dawood, Adab, 4; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 51)

Ibn Sa'd compiled reports under a specific heading confirming that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never harmed women, and he discouraged Muslims from doing so. (Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 204-205)

Once, when Abu Bakr ﵁ sought permission to enter the presence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he overheard Aisha ﵂ speaking loudly to the Prophet. In response, he attempted to slap his daughter, saying, "How dare you raise your voice against the Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet intervened and jokingly said to Aisha ﵂, "See how I saved you from your father's hand?" A few days later, Abu Bakr ﵁ sought permission again, and upon entering, he found that the Prophet and his daughter had reconciled. Abu Bakr ﵁ humorously requested to be included in their peace, to which the Prophet responded, "Accepted, we have included you in our peace." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 84/4999)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned those who would mistreat their wives in various ways and consistently expressed his disapproval. He said, "Only the wicked among you would beat women." (Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 204) He also advised, "A believer should not harbor hatred against his wife. If he dislikes one of her qualities, he may be pleased with another." (Muslim, R, 61)

Huzayfah ﵁ recounted seeking guidance from the Prophet about his excessive behavior towards his family. The Prophet advised him to seek forgiveness by saying Istighfar seventy times a day for the forgiveness of this shortcoming. (Ibn Majah, Adab, 57)

Women's Freedom and Endowments

A woman is legally an independent individual, just like a man. Any property she possesses, whether acquired before or after marriage, is under her ownership and control. Neither her father, husband, nor son has any supervision or control rights over her in this regard.[518]

The verse, "Men shall have a share of what they have earned, and women shall have a share of what they have earned,"[519] emphasizes not only the spiritual rights but also the material rights of both genders. Women have an equal legal standing with men in conducting legal transactions. According to most jurists, as long as they have full legal capacity, women can freely perform acts such as making donations and establishing endowments that might be against their own interests.

Abu Sa'id al-Hudri ﷺ narrated a hadith encouraging people to give charity, saying, "The women who gave the most charity were often mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ." (Muslim, Eydayn, 9)

Ibn Hazm reported that Abdullah bin Umar ﷺ, Fatima ﷺ, and other companions left numerous endowments in Medina, a well-known and widely recognized matter. (M. A. Yemani, Fatimat al-Zahra, Beirut 1996, p. 330)

Throughout Islamic history, many endowments have been established by women. In the Istanbul Endowments Registry of 953/1546, out of 2517 registered endowments, 913 (36%) were established by women. In Aleppo's legal records, endowments established by women accounted for 6.5% in the 16th century, 26% in the 17th century, 37% in the 18th century, and 44% in the first half of the 19th century. These figures indicate that women were able to use their legal and financial capabilities comfortably. Notably, some of these endowments were allocated for dwellings where widowed or divorced women could reside. Women often managed the endowments they established themselves.[520]

518. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Qur'an, p. 31-32.
519. An-Nisa, 32.
520. Markizi, al-Hitat, II, 454; Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 88. The Prophet (pbuh) always encouraged his ummah to help such people: "One who helps widows and the needy is rewarded like one who fights in the cause of Allah." "That person is like one who prays all night and fasts all day." (Al-Bukhari, Nafaqat 1, Adab 25, 26; Muslim, Zuhd 41)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ accepted the trusts and protection given by women. Examples include his daughter Zaynab and Ummu Hani رضي الله عنها.[521]

c. Women in Social Life

It is undeniable that Islam brought about significant changes in the social status of women. The statement of Umar رضي الله عنه, "Certainly, in the era of ignorance, we did not value women, until Allah revealed verses about women and granted them many rights," is evidence of this transformation.[522]

During the era of happiness (Asr as-Saâdah), women actively participated in social life. Their participation in worship activities at the Prophet's Mosque, their involvement in significant events such as celebrations and weddings, illustrates this. For instance, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ once visited the mosque and, noticing a congregation of women, greeted them by signaling with his hand. (Tirmidhi, İsti'zân, 9)

Women in that period were not hesitant to assert their rights when necessary. Ummu Umarah رضي الله عنها approached the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I notice that the Quran frequently mentions men, but women are not spoken of as much." In response, a verse was revealed emphasizing the responsibilities of Muslim men and women separately. (Al-Ahzab, 35) (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 33/3211)

Khawlah bint al-Tha'labah, whose marital relationship was terminated by her husband, persisted in bringing the matter to the attention of the Prophet until it was rectified. Consequently, verses were revealed, beginning with "Allah has heard the speech of the woman who debates with you concerning her husband." (Al-Mujadalah, 1-4)

One day, Umar رضي الله عنه climbed the pulpit of the Prophet and stated, "I do not know if the dowry has ever exceeded 400 dirhams." A woman from the Quraysh objected to Umar رضي الله عنه, saying, "O Leader of the Believers, did you prohibit people from giving more than 400 dirhams as dowry?" Umar رضي الله عنه replied, "Yes." In response, the woman cited a verse from the Quran: "And do not take from it [the dowry] anything."[523] Realizing his mistake, Umar رضي الله عنه said, "O Allah, forgive me! Everyone is more knowledgeable than Umar."

521. Al-Bukhari, Jizyah, 9; Al-Waqidi, II, 553-554; Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 32-33.
522. Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 91.
523. An-Nisa, 20.

He then climbed back on the pulpit and said, "O people! I had prohibited you from dowries exceeding 400 dirhams. Now, everyone can give as much dowry as they wish." (See Haythami, IV, 284; Ibn Hajar, Matâlib, II, 4, 5)

While women were considered suitable for household chores, during the era of happiness, some were also engaged in external work. Kayla bint al-Ummi Anmar narrated an incident during an Umrah pilgrimage when she told the Prophet that she engaged in trade. The Prophet advised her, "When you want to buy something, offer its normal price. You may either buy it or not. When you want to sell something, ask for its regular value. You may either sell it or not." (Ibn Majah, Tijarah, 29) Khawlah binti Tuwayt is known as a female companion who sold perfume in Medina. (Ibn Hajar, Al-Isabah, IV, 278)

Regarding women's participation in battles during the era of happiness, the combatant class primarily consisted of men. Women's participation in warfare was not their primary duty. Aisha ﵂ once asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, can we not go with you for Jihad?" The Prophet responded, "The best and most beautiful Jihad for you is the well-performed Hajj." Aisha ﵂ continued to perform Hajj consistently since hearing this statement from the Prophet. (Al-Bukhari, Jazâ as-sayd, 26; Jihad, 62)

When Ummu Sulaym ﵂ expressed her desire to participate in war, the Prophet clarified that Jihad is not obligatory for women. However, Ummu Sulaym ﵂ mentioned that she could treat the wounded, prepare medicine for eye ailments, and carry water to the warriors. The Prophet then said, "In that case, it would be good if you joined the expedition." (Haythami, V, 324)

Some women, in accordance with the permission of our Prophet, treated the wounded in battles, sewed torn and ripped garments, carried water, cooked meals, and even personally participated in battles when necessary.[524]

Based on Islamic legal scholars' perspectives, women's involvement in public duties, except for positions such as state leadership and judiciary, has not been widely rejected. Hanafi scholars asserted that women can act as judges in cases other than those requiring corporal punishment and retaliation. However, practical examples of women serving as judges are scarce.[525]

524. Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 65-68; Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 425; Ibn Majah, Jihad, 37; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabe, IV, 396, 479.
525. Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 90.

As seen, while Islam advises women more towards their homes and families, it does not forbid them from activities outside their homes. On the contrary, it has even commanded them to pursue knowledge. Islam has not restricted them from engaging in trade or choosing professions that align with their natural qualities. It has even deemed it more appropriate for women to take on responsibilities such as educating and caring for young children and dealing with women's health issues in medicine.

However, Muslim women must always adhere to Islamic boundaries. It is incorrect for them to work in jobs or places that Islam does not approve. Work environments should be in line with Islamic principles. In both work and social life, women should avoid lightness and excess in speech and behavior, and they should dress with modesty and dignity. The Quran, for instance, describes one of the daughters of Prophet Shuayb as approaching with utmost modesty when coming to call Prophet Musa. (Al-Qasas, 26)

Nations that do not submit to these natural rules and excessively make women work under the guise of "equality" have always suffered losses. Women have been oppressed, family institutions have crumbled, and populations have steadily declined. Motherhood has been belittled in their eyes. They have preferred professions such as sales, modeling, nursing, secretarial work, and cleaning over the duty of motherhood. Women have been disconnected from their families and children.[526]

d. Women and Education

Islam emphasizes the education of all individuals, regardless of gender. The Quran encourages all believers to read, contemplate, inquire, and strongly advises the use of the pen, books, and writing without making a distinction.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was actively involved in the education and upbringing of his wives. Every morning after leaving the mosque and after the afternoon prayer, he would visit his wives one by one, engaging in short conversations with them.[527] In the evenings, all family members would gather around his wife's room to benefit from the wisdom of the Prophet. Later, everyone would retire to their rooms. (Muslim, Radâ', 46; Ahmad, VI, 107, 157)

526. Alija Izetbegovic, Islam Between East and West, trans. Salih Şaban, Istanbul 1993, p. 211.
527. Abu Dawood, Nikah, 38; Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 85.

He ensured that they also benefited from female tutors. Shifa bint Abdullah narrates: While I was with Hafsa, the Prophet ﷺ came to us and said, "Can you teach her the art of healing with moistening as you taught her writing?"[528] (Abu Dawood, Tibb, 18/3887)

In a society where having a daughter was considered a source of shame, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ showed that raising them was a path to paradise: "Whoever cares for and raises three daughters or sisters, provides them with a good upbringing, marries them off, and continues to treat them with kindness and generosity, that person will be in paradise." (Abu Dawood, Adab, 120-121/5147; Tirmidhi, Birr, 13/1912; Ahmad, III, 97)

In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Whoever raises and nurtures two daughters until they reach adulthood, on the Day of Judgment, I and that person will be like this," and he joined his fingers together. (Muslim, Birr, 149; Tirmidhi, Birr, 13/1914)

When you educate a man, you educate an individual. When you educate a woman, you educate a family, and indeed, a significant portion of society. Conversely, a woman who is not properly educated can cause great harm to society and lead many around her into immorality.

Once, a woman came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, men always benefit from your words. If you allocate one day for women, we could gather and learn from what Allah has taught you." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded, "Sure, gather on this day at this place." The women gathered, and the Prophet went and taught them from what Allah had revealed to him. (Al-Bukhari, Itisam 9; Muslim, Birr, 152)

When the Quran was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, he recited it first to men and then to women. (Ibn Ishaq, p. 128)

During the Eid sermon, the Prophet ﷺ would command men to fear Allah, remind them of divine truths, and then go to where the women were and address them in the same way. (Muslim, Eydayn, 4)

Female companions always had the opportunity to consult Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for solutions to the problems they encountered and answers to

528. The word "namlah," meaning "ant," mentioned in the hadith, refers to a kind of sore that appears on a person's sides or other parts of the body.

their questions. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ valued them, responded to their questions, and addressed their problems. (Muslim, Fadha'il 76; Abu Dawood, Adab 12)

Aisha ﵂ said:

"The women of the Ansar are excellent women. Their modesty did not prevent them from delving deep into religious matters." (Muslim, Al-Haid, 61)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ appointed his wives, including Aisha ﵂, and other pure wives, for the education of women. Thus, women could not always easily ask the Prophet about matters they felt shy about. In such cases, they would use the Prophet's wives as messengers. When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave witty answers to some of the questions they asked due to his deep modesty, they would still receive detailed explanations from their mothers.[529]

As a result, among the companions and subsequent generations, knowledgeable female scholars were raised who learned and transmitted many religious rulings, excelling in areas such as hadith. Many women, including the wives of the Prophet, excelled in conveying hadiths, jurisprudence, poetry, genealogy, and medicine.[530] For instance, Aisha ﵂, our mother, is one of the seven most prolific narrators (mukthirat) of hadiths.[531] Moreover, she was an expert in jurisprudence, poetry, genealogy, and medicine. (Ibn Hajar, Al-Isabah, IV, 360)

Therefore, women played a crucial role in the intellectual and cultural life of Islamic history. The informal structure of education in the Islamic world, where attachment to the teacher rather than the school was essential, facilitated women's access to education from local scholars. Among the master tutors whom Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī learned hadith from, 19 were women. Suyuti learned from 33 women, Ibn Hajar from 53, and Ibn Asakir from 80.[532]

529. See Al-Bukhari, Haid, 13, 14; Muslim, Haid, 60; Abu Dawood, Taharah, 107; Darimi, Wudu', 75; Nasa'i, Ghusul, 21; Muwatta', Taharah, 105.
530. In the narration of hadith, besides Aisha ﵂, some of the most famous female companions are: Fatima, Umm Salama, Umm Habiba, Asma bint Abi Bakr, Sawda bint Zam'ah, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Umm Haram, Fatima bint Qays, Umm Farwa, Safiyya bint Abd al-Muttalib. (Tayyib Okiç, Women's Education in Islam, p. 24)
531. Iraqi, Fath al-Mughis, p. 350.
532. It is known that women scholars, mystics, and poets have emerged in the Islamic world from very early periods. Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845), et-Tabakat al-Kubra; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, al-Durar al-Kamina; Ibn Abd al-Barr, al-Istiab; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-Ghaba; Abu Nuaym's Hilyat al-Awliya; Zahabi, Siyar; Abd al-Qadir al-Qurashi, al-Jawahir al-Mudiya; Sahavi (9th/15th century), al-Daw' al-Lami; Ibn al-Imad, Shajarat al-Zab. These biographical works contain the lives of thousands of female companions, scholars, hadith scholars, jurists, and artists. There are also separate works dedicated solely to women. (Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 92)

e. Women and Veiling

Veiling, a distinctive feature peculiar to humans among all living beings, has been perceived throughout history in various societies as a symbol of modesty and decency. All divine religions have commanded veiling, evident in the veiling of nuns. However, individuals and societies have, over time, developed different measures and understandings regarding veiling due to factors such as culture, climate, fashion, social disintegration, alienation, and moral decay.

Islam introduced specific regulations regarding privacy between individuals of the same and opposite sexes, veiling in the presence of relatives and strangers, the interaction of women with men, and certain aspects of private life such as touching and looking. The Quran advises women to cover themselves (wear a jilbab) when leaving their homes, encourages men and women to lower their gazes and preserve their modesty, instructs women not to display their adornments, and to cover their headscarves over their chests. (Al-Ahzab, 59; An-Nur, 30-31, 60)

Women should cover their entire bodies except for hands, face, and feet, while men should cover from the knee to the navel. Clothing should not be so thin as to reveal private parts or so tight as to outline the body. Apart from that, each man and woman can dress according to personal and local preferences, culture, and available resources, as long as they cover their private parts.

Modest Muslims pay careful attention to their attire, understanding that clothing is worn not for show or arrogance but to conceal intimate areas from strangers and to present a refined appearance. The Almighty says:

"O children of Adam! We have provided you with garments to cover your bodies and for luxury. But the best garment is the garment of piety." (Al-A'raf, 26)

"O Prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful." (Al-Ahzab, 59)

Upon seeing Aisha's sister, Asma' ﵂, wearing a thin garment, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ turned away and said, "O Asma'! After reaching

maturity, it is not appropriate for women to reveal anything except this and this," pointing to her face and hands. (Abu Dawood, Libas, 31/4104)

Once, Aisha and her sister Asma' ﵄ were sitting together when the Prophet entered. Asma' ﵄ was wearing a wide-sleeved Sham garment. As soon as the Prophet saw Asma', he left. Aisha told her sister to leave, saying that the Prophet did not like what he saw. When Asma' left, the Prophet returned. Aisha ﵄ asked him about his behavior, and he explained, "Can't you see the situation? A Muslim woman should only show this much," and he covered his body with his hands up to his fingers, then he covered his forehead with his hands, leaving only his face uncovered. (Haythami, V, 137)

The Prophet ﷺ used the term "dressed yet naked" for those who wear revealing and attention-grabbing clothes, dressing in an alluring and conspicuous manner. He stated, "There are two groups among the dwellers of Hell whom I have not yet seen. The first is a group that whips people with tails like the tails of cattle. The second is a group of women who will be dressed yet appear to be naked (showing parts of their bodies, wearing thin and tight clothes, not thanking Allah despite being surrounded by His blessings, teaching others the evil they commit and walking with pride and arrogance with heads like the humps of camels). These women will not enter Paradise, and they will not even smell its fragrance from a distance." (Muslim, Jannah, 52)

Dihya ﵁ reported that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was given finely woven fabric from Egypt, which he gave to Dihya. He instructed him, "Cut it into two pieces. Use one to make a shirt for yourself and give the other to your wife to make a head covering. But tell her to wear another garment under this thin fabric that does not reveal her body." (Abu Dawood, Libas, 36/4116; Muwatta, Libas, 6)

As a symbol of modesty, Fatima ﵄ expressed her discomfort with the way women were washed during funerals. When she was on her deathbed, she told Asma' bint Umays, "I don't like what they do to women during their funeral washings. They cover a woman with a cloth, which reveals her body lines." Asma' replied, "O daughter of the Messenger of Allah! Let me tell you something I saw in Abyssinia." She requested fresh date palm branches, bent them like bows, and threw a garment over them, creating a makeshift tent. Upon seeing this, Fatima remarked, "This is a beautiful thing; men and women cannot be distinguished. When I die, you and Ali wash me, and do not

let anyone else see me!" When Fatima passed away, Aisha ﷺ came to enter, but Asma' told her not to. Aisha ﷺ complained to her father, Abu Bakr ﷺ, saying, "This woman from the Hasham tribe has come between me and the daughter of the Prophet, doing something like making a bride out of her and washing her." Abu Bakr ﷺ went and stood at the door, asking Asma' about the reason for placing the Prophet's daughter and the wife of Ali in such a way. Asma' ﷺ explained, "Fatima had ordered me not to place anyone beside her when washing her. While she was alive, I showed her what I was going to do (the makeshift tent), and she instructed me to do the same for her." Abu Bakr said, "Do what she told you to do," and left. Ali and Asma' washed Fatima, and her request for a private burial was honored.

Particular attention should be paid to modesty in public places. This is especially important in public baths, pools, and beaches. A group of women from Damascus once visited Aisha ﷺ, and she remarked, "You must be from the region where women enter public baths (without paying attention to veiling)!" The women confirmed this, and Aisha ﷺ said, "But I heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'Any woman who uncovers her dress outside her home has surely torn down the curtain between her and Allah.'" (Abu Dawood, Ghusul, 1/4010; Tirmidhi, Adab, 43/2804)

Regardless of the location, observing modesty between unfamiliar men and women is essential. This caution and sensitivity apply specifically to places where only women are present. Muslims maintain veiling even when working or engaging in sports. (Muslim, Haid, 78)

Islam prohibits men and women from dressing similarly. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned that those who dress like the opposite gender would be distant from divine mercy. (Al-Bukhari, Libas, 61; Abu Dawood, Libas, 28)

In this regard, Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah states: Rather than trying to attract foreign glances, a Muslim woman is obliged to dedicate her charm and beauty exclusively to her husband. Expressing the benefits of veiling for women without considering other advantages is enough to state the following: The difference between women working in the fields and those not exposed to the sun, for instance, is well known. The same applies to a bird's inner and outer feathers. Indeed, a veil preserves the beauty and freshness of the skin for a long time. When a person compares the skin of the face and hands with the skin covered by clothing, they reach a conclusive opinion on this matter.

Veiling is by no means a sign of seclusion and isolation; it simply diminishes allure in the presence of strangers. Arguing that veiling causes leprosy is nothing but an abuse of people's innocence. According to the latest research findings, this disease is prevalent not only in Sub-Saharan Africa but also in the highest echelons of society, from Finland to Italy, where women never veil. (Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 143-144)

The purpose behind Islam commanding modesty is to maintain reasonable balance in relations between genders and people, prevent lineage mixing, preserve the purity of generations, and avoid breaking kinship ties. It aims to ensure that individuals establish a sexual and family life befitting their dignity while safeguarding and elevating women. Islam places great importance on preserving the values that sustain both the family and society.

On the other hand, Islam directs both men and women with the same tone and precision to follow commands such as veiling, preserving modesty, and averting the eyes from the forbidden. The society is also entrusted with the responsibility of taking necessary measures in this regard.

f. Woman's Testimony and Right to Divorce

Essentially, men and women, originating from the same essence and generally possessing equal rights, sometimes become subject to different rulings due to representing different genders. This is because they exhibit certain psychological and physiological characteristics that differ. The Quranic verses state:

"…But the male is not like the female." (Ali-Imran, 36)

"And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask

Allah of His bounty. Indeed, Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing." (An-Nisa, 32)

"Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth…" (An-Nisa, 34)

In these Quranic verses, our Almighty Lord points to the differences in the creation between man and woman, both in terms of inherent capacities

and qualities, and in the physical aspect. While men excel in characteristics like patience, resilience, composure, caution, moderation, justice, courage, and physical strength, women are created superior in qualities such as compassion, mercy, excitement, emotional sensitivity, modesty, kindness, finesse, and physical grace.

However, this difference, occurring entirely beyond the will of men and women, is not considered a means of superiority before Allah. Superiority lies only in piety. Both genders complement each other as each possesses strengths in different aspects; it is not possible for one gender to be superior in all aspects. The institution of family and marriage arises from this natural need between genders, ensuring their survival.

Due to these specified characteristics, women are given tasks such as raising children and household chores that are lighter but require more affection and attention. Men, on the other hand, are entrusted with the more demanding tasks of protecting and providing for the family. Thus, a natural division of labor and task distribution is established. Islam emphasizes that this work and task distribution should be established, functioning, and evolving in harmony with nature. Islam does not approve of women adopting a masculine attitude or men taking on feminine roles.[533]

In terms of fundamental rights and freedoms, both genders being in the same position, and subject to specific rulings according to the gender and body differences, is both a matter of wisdom and beneficial for both parties. Therefore, topics like a woman's testimony, the right to divorce, and her share in inheritance should be evaluated from this perspective.

The Quran instructs that in matters of debt, the testimony of two men or one man and two women should be considered.[534] The requirement of two women is due to reasons such as forgetfulness, confusion, and the intention to ensure the fairest and most just outcome. It is well established through scientific knowledge and experience that social conditions, physiological and psychological factors, and the influence on mental power and function differ between individuals. As medical experts point out, the tension syndrome experienced by women before and during menstruation involves nervousness, quick fatigue, trembling, stress, and depression, significantly affecting their

533. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom of Orders and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 175-178.
534. Al-Baqarah, 282.

impulsive and emotional behaviors. While distraction and forgetfulness are not directly related to intelligence and reasoning, it is known that one of the most important causes of forgetfulness is emotionality, and another is indifference. Moreover, unfounded fears and doubts often affect women more than men. A woman, whose emotionality overpowers her logic and reasoning, can often interpret and narrate the incident she experienced by interpreting it. However, what is essential in testimony is to narrate the incident as it occurred. Interpreting and deciding belong to the judge.

One must evaluate Islam's ruling regarding women's testimony in light of their emotional structure and duties. Compassion and sensitivity, superior virtues in family and child rearing, may appear as weaknesses in the field of justice. Due to these inherent structures, women may have a likelihood of mercy towards both the guilty and the victim, potentially causing a delay in the manifestation of justice.

From a legal perspective, some accept the verse as a general regulation, asserting that in any dispute, the testimony of two women should replace one man. The majority argues that, based on the expressions in verse 4 of Surah An-Nur, only men can testify in cases of hadd (prescribed punishments) and qisas (retaliation). However, they claim that women's testimony is not valid. Yet, in situations such as virginity, widowhood, childbirth, and women's health conditions, the testimony of only two women, or even one woman in necessity, is deemed sufficient. [535]

It should be emphasized that the ruling on women's testimony does not diminish their status. It is merely a realistic stance that aligns with reason, logic, and nature.

Another point to note is that in the periods before Islam, people did not grant women such rights. For example, in Judaism, a woman's testimony is not considered valid.[536] Islam, upon its arrival, granted everyone their rights fully, without injustice to anyone.

535. Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 91; Majalla, article 1685; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zekeriya Guler, "Is Woman Deficient in Intellect and Religion?", Mehir, issue 2, Summer 1998, p. 18-19.

536. EJD., XVI, 586; Encyclopedia of Judaism, p. 321; Prof. Dr. O. F. Harman, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 84.

Some people raise questions about divorce rights. The general rule in Islam is that the right to divorce belongs to men. Divorce, whether serious or in jest, is a very important matter. A woman, given strong feelings for the task of motherhood, may decide to divorce easily in a simple argument. She may regret it later, but the deed is done. However, it is not the same for a man.

Nevertheless, in some cases, women also have the right to seek a divorce. Measures have been taken to prevent a man from dominating, oppressing, or abusing his wife based on his strength and leadership rights:

1) The woman's consent is a condition for the marriage contract.

2) In case of incompatibility and injustice, the woman has the right to appeal to the judge and end the unjust acts. (An-Nisa, 35)

3) During the marriage contract, the woman can obtain the right to divorce by specifying this right for herself.

4) If the husband tells the wife, "You can divorce me if you want!" (tefviz), the woman has the right to divorce based on this statement.

5) If insanity, severe illness, or the inability to fulfill family duties occurs in the husband, the woman can apply to the court with a request for divorce. If the judge finds the request justified, he can rule for a divorce.

As seen, neither does a man have the arbitrary right to divorce his wife, nor is the woman deprived of the right to divorce in situations where she may be harmed or unable to protect her personality. [537]

g. Woman's Share in Inheritance

One of the institutions that Islam reformed and rectified is the "inheritance" law. Chinese, Japanese, and Roman laws, as well as the pre-Islamic Arabs, completely deprived women of inheritance. A daughter had no rights in her father's property, as inheritance went directly to male offspring. In Judaism, too, a woman could not inherit if she had a husband or a male brother (Numbers, 27:8-11).

In Islam, women were granted the right to inherit, and their shares were determined separately based on their roles as mothers, grandmothers, wives,

537. See Uludag, op. cit., p. 179; Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Qur'an, p. 31-32.

daughters, or sisters.[538] Despite exceptions, a woman's share in inheritance is half of that of a male in the same position. While this may seem unfavorable to women at first glance, considering the financial responsibilities imposed on men by Islamic law and the husband's responsibility within the family, the fairness of this rule becomes evident. When it is understood that the entire family's livelihood rests on the husband, who provides the dowry to the wife during marriage and participates in social assistance programs such as "akile" in criminal law, where only men contribute, it becomes clear that the net share distributed to both genders is somewhat equal.[539] After all, while a man consistently spends, a woman's wealth continuously accumulates.

Let's say parents pass away, leaving behind a daughter and a son. The daughter will be entitled to half of what her brother inherits. However, she can dispose of her allocated share as she wishes, without any obligations. In contrast, her brother is obligated to provide alimony when needed. At the same time, he is duty-bound to assist other needy family members. Therefore, it is not unjust for the sister to receive twice the share of her brother.[540]

In Islamic law, marriage is always based on the principle of keeping the wealth of husband and wife separate. If the husband faces bankruptcy, the wife is not obliged to share the burden, and no one can touch her property. If a woman works or receives inheritance or gifts, she can use these opportunities as she sees fit. In a way, a woman is more independent than a man.

According to Islam, a girl is not obliged to work or earn. This is a result of the kindness and mercy shown to her. As long as a girl is in her father's house, her needs are covered by her father and his male relatives. After marriage, her sustenance, alimony, and needs become the responsibility of her husband. A woman cannot be forced to spend her wealth for the household's needs. It is the husband's duty to provide for a woman's food, drink, clothing, and all other necessities. If a husband neglects the household or behaves miserly, failing to spend according to his wealth, the wife has the right to complain about her husband.

However, it should be remembered that the measure of two for men and one for women is applicable only in the case of inherited wealth obtained

538. An-Nisa, 11-12.
539. Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 90.
540. Prof. Dr. Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, The Smiling Face of Islam, p. 110-111.

without exerting effort. When it comes to wealth earned through effort, whether in trade, agriculture, industry, or any other profession, women and men receive equal pay. If a man and a woman are partners in the same company, they are entitled to an equal share of the profit according to their shares. Unfortunately, in today's capitalist society, taking advantage of a woman's vulnerability, she is often seen as cheap labor.

Examining the wisdom behind this command of the Quran from the perspective of the social structure, responsibilities within the family, obligations, and psychological factors of men and women, the reasons for this instruction become better understood.

On one occasion, our mother Umm Salama said: "Men go out for jihad in the way of Allah, earning great rewards, while women cannot participate in warfare. Additionally, we receive half the inheritance compared to men." Upon this, the Almighty revealed the following verse:

"Do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. Ask Allah of His bounty. Indeed, Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing." (An-Nisa, 32) (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 4/3022; Ahmad, VI, 322)

h. Limits in Male-Female Relations

The Almighty has instilled love and attraction between men and women for the establishment and continuation of the family, yet, to prevent chaos, He has also regulated their coming together through specific principles and conditions such as marriage. When these conditions are not met, the concept of family disappears, generations become confused, and society undergoes disintegration. On the other hand, without attraction between men and women, families would not be formed, would not endure, and no one would want to deal with the troubles of family and children. In the end, the human race would be depleted. Therefore, there is a delicate measure and balance here, and it is necessary to adhere to these principles.

Khalwat (seclusion)

Islam encourages modest behavior between unrelated men and women in human interactions. Being alone in a closed space (halwa) with a woman for whom there is a possibility of religiously permissible marriage but with



no existing marital bond is prohibited to prevent situations that may lead to haram. This prohibition aims to avoid compromising the chastity and honor of the parties involved.

Once, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "No man should be alone with a (non-mahram) woman! No woman should travel without her mahram!" A man stood up and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have enlisted for such-and-such battle, and my wife has set out for Hajj." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Go and perform Hajj with your wife." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 140; Muslim, Hajj, 424)

On another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ warned, "Avoid entering the presence of (non-mahram) women!" A man from the Ansar asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What about the male relative of a husband?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Being alone with them is like death." (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 111; Muslim, Salam, 20)

In other hadiths, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Beware! When a man is alone with a (non-mahram) woman, the third among them is the devil." (Tirmidhi, Rada', 16/1171; Ahmad, I, 18, 26) He also stated, "Beware of being alone with (non-mahram) women! By the One in whose hand my soul is, when a man is alone with a woman, the devil indeed becomes the third between them. Rubbing shoulders with a pig covered in mud is better than a man rubbing shoulders with the shoulder of a woman who is not permissible to him. (Haythami, IV, 326. Cf. Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, IV, 368) "Being poked in the head with an iron rod is better than touching a woman who is not permissible to him." (Haythami, IV, 326)

Therefore, it is necessary to be meticulous about being alone with women for whom there is no mahram present, such as a husband, mother, father, son, brother, aunt, or breastfeeding sister. If a man is with his sister, daughter, maternal aunt, or paternal aunt, they are considered as if the woman has a mahram. Similarly, women should be cautious about being alone with unrelated men.

Being alone with a woman who has sexual desires toward another woman or a man who has such desires toward another man is also considered haram. The ruling changes if there is another person present. The rules for engaged couples are similar to those for unrelated individuals being alone together.

If a woman seeks information or presents her complaint to a trustworthy man in a manner that does not constitute halwa, for example, in a place where entry is not restricted, visible to others, yet spoken words cannot be heard,



there is no religious objection. (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 111; Ayni, Umdatu'l-Qari, XX, 214)

Intermingling

Islam discourages men and women from being together in a manner that exceeds the prescribed limits and boundaries (ikhtilat). It emphasizes maintaining a distance between men and women in social life and insists on regulating their interactions within certain measures and disciplines. This is because various evils, including major sins like adultery, can arise from their intermingling, potentially causing harm to family and societal life. Islam, as a principle, not only prohibits wrongdoing but also forbids situations and behaviors that may lead to it, thus creating a significant gap between people and evils.

While Islam attaches great importance to congregational Friday and obligatory prayers, it exempts women from attending these prayers in the mosque to prevent their intermingling. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "The best mosques for women are the corners of their homes." (Ahmad, VI, 297)

When women expressed their desire to attend the mosque, the Prophet ﷺ did not prevent them but advised that they pray at the back rows after men and children. He emphasized that the front rows were most virtuous for men and the back rows for women. After the prayer, he waited for a while to ensure men and women did not intermingle before leaving. Especially during the Fajr prayer, conducted before full daylight, women would quickly leave after offering salutations, and sometimes they could not recognize each other. (See Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 162-166)

Regarding one entrance of the mosque, the Prophet ﷺ remarked, "If we allocate this entrance to women!" After this, male companions never passed through that entrance. (Abu Dawood, Salat, 53/571)

Women would attend the Eid prayers, but there were specific places allocated for them in the prayer area. After completing the sermon for men, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would go to the women and offer advice. (Al-Bukhari, Eydayn, 7-8)

Once, when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ noticed men and women intermingling while leaving the mosque, he called out to the women, "Withdraw! Do

not walk in the middle of the road; walk on the sides!" (Abu Dawood, Adab, 167-168/5272)

During the Umayyad period, when Aisha ﷺ observed men and women intermingling, she remarked, "If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had seen this, like the Israelite women were banned from the mosque, he would have banned them too." (Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 163) A narration from Ummu Salama ﷺ illustrates the high level of sensitivity regarding intermingling: "I was with the Prophet ﷺ, and Maymuna was there too. The blind companion Ibn Umm Maktum came. This incident occurred after the command of veiling. The Prophet ﷺ said to us, 'Retire behind the curtain.' We said, 'He is a blind man and cannot see us or recognize us.' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'Are you also blind? Can't you see him?'" (Abu Dawood, Libas, 34)

When non-mahram men and women need to ask for something or discuss matters, they should handle it behind doors or curtains whenever possible.[541] After completing necessary tasks following recognized norms, they should promptly separate, avoiding being together in one place.

People should not enter each other's homes without permission. Even family members should seek permission before entering each other's rooms. Allah emphasizes modest behavior in all circumstances, considering it better. (An-Nur, 58-60)

A man once asked Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, "Should I take permission from my mother before entering?" The Prophet replied, "Yes." The man continued, "But I am her constant servant." The Prophet said, "Take permission. Would you like to see her naked?" The man replied, "No." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ repeated, "Take permission, then." (Muwatta', Isti'zan, 1)

While women are allowed to go to the market to meet essential needs, there are regulations on how they should dress and conduct themselves. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ compared a woman who walks adorned and swaying between non-mahram men to darkness on the Day of Judgment. He emphasized that such a woman would have no light or brightness. (Tirmidhi, Rada', 13/1167)

All these guidelines indicate that mixed-gender gatherings, conversations, and sitting together are not in accordance with Islam. The restrictions

541. Al-Ahzab, 53.

mentioned here aim to prevent mischief, incitement, and immoderation in relations between men and women. However, numerous examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions demonstrate that he interacted and conversed with women of various ages. Women are free to meet and talk with men for normal and routine needs such as trade, education, travel, social and human relations after covering the necessary parts. However, when the proximity and interest between men and women in social life take on a dimension that may lead to illicit relationships or evil plans, these interactions are prohibited due to the potential harm they may cause. In summary, following the path of caution and taking precautions in male-female relations is the safest way.

I. Islam's Permission for Polygamy

Polygamy has been a societal reality throughout human history for various reasons. The Bible mentions that prophets such as Ibrahim, Ya'qub, Daud, Sulayman, and many others were polygamous. In various cultures and nations, polygamy has been permitted or encouraged without imposing limits. As expressed by Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Islam is the first and only religion that restricts polygamy. Neither Musa nor Isa limited the number of wives. (Kur'an-ı Kerîm Tarihi, p. 32)

Islam fundamentally recommends monogamy, insisting on justice and considering it the most suitable choice to ensure financial support for the family. However, under certain necessities, Islam permits polygamy with specific conditions, with the upper limit set at four.[542] This may be allowed to prevent the breakup of families due to reasons like war, illness, disability, or prolonged separations, ensuring that women do not become unprotected and unsupported. For example, a man married to a woman unable to bear children or facing biological challenges may marry a second woman without divorcing the first one, minimizing the material and spiritual harm resulting from the collapse of a family.

In a country that has experienced war, allowing polygamy could become a necessity for compensating a decreasing population and preventing immorality. Examples of this can be seen in the past in countries like Germany and may arise in the future. Such permissions contribute to easing life and main-

542. An-Nisa, 3, 129; Tirmidhi, Nikah, 33; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 40; Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, VII, 184.

taining its natural course. This flexibility demonstrates that Islam is always capable of meeting vital needs in any time and place.

Individuals who find themselves obliged to marry multiple women due to personal, family, or societal reasons must ensure justice among their wives and fulfill the material and spiritual needs of each. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "If a man has two wives and does not treat them equally, he will come on the Day of Resurrection with one side of his body tilted." (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 47)

Despite this theoretical possibility, polygamy has not become widespread in Islamic society. The conditions set regarding this matter practically advise Muslims not to engage in multiple marriages.[543] The great Islamic scholar Az-Zamakhshari in his work, "*Nawabigh al-Kalim*," expressed, "I wonder who is more unfortunate – those who struggle with waves in the sea or those who have multiple wives."

Research on Ottoman inheritance records reveals that the rate of polygamous marriages varies between 5-9%, depending on whether one lives in urban or rural areas. These cases mostly involve second marriages. A more accurate determination of the rate of polygamous marriages can be obtained from recent population records. In Istanbul in 1885, the rate of polygamous marriages was 2.52%, and in 1907, it was 2.16%.[544]

Travelers to the Ottoman Empire noted in their writings that polygamy was not widespread among the people and was even rare among the poor. It appears that the issue has been exaggerated over time. [545]

Regarding this matter, Cat Stevens remarked, "Islam granted women rights 1400 years ago that many people cannot even dream of today. Currently, 99% of Muslim men worldwide are monogamous, while it is uncertain how many mistresses Western men have..." (Speeches on Islam, p. 6)

Engaging in relationships with multiple women appears to be more common in societies than is commonly thought. If this issue is not addressed legally, the second wife may suffer various rights violations, social pressures, and other disadvantages, while the first wife may face difficulties being married

543. M. Sadik Vicdani, Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Many Times, p. 41-42.
544. Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 89; Kevser Kamil Ali - Salim Ogut, "Polygamy" article, DIA, VIII, 368.
545. S. Faroqhi, Ottoman Culture, trans. Elif Kılıç, Istanbul 1998, p. 116-117; Dr. Gursoy Şahin, Ottoman Society and the Image of Turks in English Travelogues, Istanbul 2007, p. 287.

to a man involved in illegitimate relationships. Furthermore, children born in such relationships can lead to various problems for the family and society. To prevent these harms, Islam has legalized polygamy, considering it a solution and a kind of "social security" that can be used under certain conditions and constraints. [546]

Another point is that women who do not desire their husbands to engage in polygamy can stipulate this condition during marriage according to the Hanbali school of thought, and it becomes binding. This condition is recognized as valid and binding in the 38th article of the Ottoman family law of 1917. [547]

Engaging in multiple marriages without any compelling reasons is not encouraged, considering various drawbacks. The difficulty of ensuring justice among wives, the jealousy women may feel, and the emergence of various problems within the family all indicate that monogamy is healthier. The Quran mentions the issue of polygamy, calling for a social contribution and sacrifice by believers at times of social wounds and needs.

Without considering the divine purpose in creation, having multiple husbands for a woman might seem reasonable from a purely logical perspective, but this is never true. In such cases, the lineage of the child becomes ambiguous, and it is unclear to whom the child should be attributed. Therefore, no religion, not even non-religious legal systems, permits this form of marriage known as "fujur." Moreover, Islam, due to its sensitivity regarding lineage determination, requires women to wait for a certain period after divorce before entering into a new marriage. [548]

II. Reasons for Prophet Muhammad's Multiple Marriages

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ accepted the proposal of Khadija رضي الله عنها when he was twenty-five years old, marrying her despite the fifteen-year age difference, and lived a happy life until his fifties. In a society where polygamy was common, he represented the bliss of monogamous marriage. After the death of Khadija رضي الله عنها, out of respect for her cherished memory, he lived alone

546. Kevser Kamil Ali - Salim Ogut, "Polygamy" article, DIA, VIII, 368.
547. Prof. Dr. Hayreddin Karaman, Comparative Islamic Law, Istanbul 1996, I, 290; Prof. Dr. M. Akif Aydın, "Woman" article, DIA, XXIV, 89; Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, History of the Qur'an, p. 32.
548. Osman Nuri Topbaş, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh), I, 140.

for approximately 2.5 years and then married Saudah ﵂, a widow of the same age as Khadija ﵂ . His simultaneous marriage to two wives occurred in Medina, after marrying Aisha ﵂, when he was around 54 years old. At that time, Saudah ﵂ handed over her turn to Aisha ﵂, saying, "O Messenger of Allah! I have no worldly desire, but I wish to receive the reward given to your wives on the Day of Judgment when they are gathered and receive the same reward." (Abdurrâzâk, Musannaf, VI, 238)

It is essential to note that in warm climates, it is a universally accepted and experienced reality that women mature very early and step into old age at a young age.[549]

These stories indicate that Prophet Muhammad preferred monogamy. He even secured promises from his sons-in-law, Abu'l-As and Ali, that they would not marry anyone else over his daughters, and he strongly opposed Ali's desire for a second marriage.[550]

However, some reasons and wisdom necessitated Prophet Muhammad to marry more than once towards the end of his life. Some of these can be expressed as follows: The Islamic state established in Medina required agreements and sincere relations with many tribes and states to strengthen itself and spread Islam worldwide. Teaching and conveying Islam to women necessitated the existence of many female students with different backgrounds who were close to Allah's Messenger. Indeed, most great prophets had multiple wives for a similar reason. Additionally, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as the protector of his community, was in a position to assist those in distress. All these and similar reasons led the Prophet Muhammad to marry more than one wife. Allah allowed considerable flexibility to His Messenger on this matter and even commanded him to marry Zainab bint Jahsh, one of his wives. The limits set for other believers did not apply to the Prophet ﷺ. (Al-Ahzab, 37, 50)

A narration that demonstrates that the Prophet Muhammad's marriages were by the command of Allah is as follows: The Prophet ﷺ said to Aisha ﵂:

"In my dream, you were shown to me for three consecutive nights. An angel brought you to me wrapped in a piece of silken cloth and said, 'This is your wife; unwrap her.' I unwrapped her, and behold, you were her. 'If this

549. M. Sadik Vicdani, Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Many Times, p. 55.
550. Al-Bukhari, Ashab an-Nabi, 16; Muslim, Fadha'il as-Sahabah, 96.

dream is from Allah, He will cause it to come true.'" (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 9, 35; Muslim, Fadha'il as-Sahabah, 79)

Spreading Knowledge

The fact that Prophet Muhammad's multiple marriages coincided with the Medina period, where Islamic regulations were continuously revealed and applied, indicates its strong connection with his mission of prophethood. The Sunnah in family life was established and disseminated mainly with the active involvement of his wives. Among them, Aisha ﵂ played the most active role. She was young, intelligent, perceptive, and alert. Considering that Aisha ﵂ transmitted 2210 hadiths, we can confidently say, "If it were not for Aisha, many crucial aspects of Prophet Muhammad's life would not have reached us." Aisha ﵂, who could recite hundreds of poems by heart, became one of the most important helpers of Prophet Muhammad in the duty of conveying the message. (Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 73)

Aisha ﵂ was well-versed in the Quran, permissible and forbidden matters, jurisprudence, medicine, poetry, Arabic stories, and genealogy. Whenever the Companions disagreed on a matter, they would immediately consult her. Even the prominent Companions sought her advice on issues they couldn't resolve.[551] For instance, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari ﵁ stated: "Whenever we found any difficulty in a reported hadith, we used to ask Aisha ﵂. We always found that she had a clear explanation for it." (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 62)

The renowned scholar Zuhri said: "If the knowledge of all people and Prophet Muhammad's other wives were combined, the knowledge of Aisha ﵂ would still surpass them all." (Hakim, IV, 12). People from distant regions would send letters with questions, and Aisha ﵂ would respond to them in writing. [552]

Prophet Muhammad's other wives also narrated numerous hadiths. Moreover, they served as mentors to all relatives and women in the commu-

551. Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah, IV, 360. Aisha ﵂ corrected misconceptions held by the companions. Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi, Imam Zurqani, and Suyuti compiled separate books containing narrations on this subject. As seen in these works, Aisha corrected even the great companions such as Umar ibn al-Khattab, Ali, Abu Hurairah, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Said al-Khudri, Abu ad-Darda, Bara ibn Azib, and Jabir ibn Abdullah, in matters where they misunderstood or lacked understanding, and presented the true nature of events as she learned from the Prophet (pbuh). See Suyuti, Ayn al-Isaba fi Istidrak Aisha ale al-Sahaba, ed. Abdullah Muhammad Dervish.

552. K. Kamil Ali - Salim Ogut, "Polygamy" article, DIA, VIII, 368.

nity, contributing to the upbringing of many individuals around them. For instance, the children of Umm Salama, another wife of the Prophet, became distinguished scholars in hadith and jurisprudence. Hasan Basri, who served under his mother Umm Salama, was nurtured in this center of knowledge and became one of the most famous figures among Islamic scholars. (Ibn Sa'd, VII, 161; Suhaylî, I, 248)

Political Relations

One of the considerations that Prophet Muhammad took into account when getting married was political relations. Through marriage, kinships were established, gaining the friendship of many tribes, and as a result, numerous people embraced Islam. For example, the Prophet's marriage to Juwayriya ﷺ resulted in the unconditional release of around seven hundred war captives from the Bani Mustaliq tribe, leading to the conversion of hundreds of people. Muslims released their captives, saying, "These are now relatives of Allah's Messenger!" Aisha ﷺ said, "We did not see a woman bring more blessings and goodness to her people than Juwayriya; because of her, a hundred families from Bani Mustaliq were freed." (Abu Dawood, Itq, 2/3931)

This marriage had another aspect: in that era, women captured in war were either sold as slaves or kept as servants. Female slaves were considered property, and marrying them was highly frowned upon. Prophet Muhammad corrected this misconception with this marriage, elevating the honor and dignity of women who had fallen into the status of slaves. He taught how to treat captive women and how to help someone in a difficult situation.[553]

Prophet Muhammad married Safiyya ﷺ, the daughter of Huyay, one of their prominent figures, to reduce hostilities and develop friendly relations between Jews and Muslims. One goal of this marriage was to free a woman from the descendants of the Prophet Harun from captivity, elevating her to the position of a wife of a Prophet greater than her great-grandfather, thus reaching the rank of mothers of the believers.[554]

Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad's marriage to Umm Habiba ﷺ, the daughter of Mecca's leader Abu Sufyan, softened the hearts of the Meccans towards Islam.

553. Prof. Dr. M. Mahmut Savvaf, The Pure Wives of the Messenger of Allah and the Wisdom of His Multiple Marriages, trans. Ali Aslan, Ankara 1966, p. 46-47.
554. Tirmidhi, Birr, 63; M. Sadik Vicdani, Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Many Times, p. 65

By marrying Maymuna ﷺ, who had many sisters, each married to influential figures, Prophet Muhammad established numerous kinships and friendships. His marriage to Umm Salama strengthened ties with the powerful Mahzum Tribe.

Through these wise actions and marriages, approximately 120,000 Muslims participated in the Farewell Pilgrimage about ten years later. The exact number of those who couldn't attend is known only to Allah.

His marriage to Maria had a profound impact on the Mukawkis and the Copts, providing significant ease during the later conquest of Egypt.[555]

Prophet Muhammad, utilizing the institution of marriage, established kinship not only with polytheists but also with many Muslims, thereby creating a tightly bonded society. He married the daughters of Abu Bakr and Umar ﷺ, gave his daughters in marriage to Uthman and Ali ﷺ, thus creating strong family ties with the prominent companions and nurturing the four main pillars of the future caliphate.

Preservation and Support

The mentioned wives were often in challenging situations, vulnerable, and many of them were also relatives. Therefore, one of the reasons for Prophet Muhammad's marriages was his compassion, mercy, and boundless loyalty to his community. Examining his blessed life, it becomes apparent that he harbored a unique affection for those who suffered hardships in the early years of Islam, served in the propagation of the religion, and participated in the migration. He always maintained gratitude, thankfulness, and loyalty towards them. When these selfless individuals later became unprotected and needy, Prophet Muhammad extended his hand to them. He either married them to one of his companions or personally undertook their marriage. Among the fortunate individuals who received this care were. Saudah, Ummu Salamah, Zaynab bint Huzaymah, Ummu Habiba, Hafsa, and Maymunah ﷺ. When these women's husbands passed away, and they found themselves helpless and in need, Prophet Muhammad took them under his protection. When their tribes pressured them to renounce their faith, he helped them. For instance,

555. Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, Tales of the Prophets, I, 394-397; M. Sadik Vicdani, Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Many Times, p. 73-76.

Saudah, Ummu Salamah, Zaynab bint Huzaymah, Ummu Habibah, Hafsa, and Maymunah ﷺ found themselves in this vulnerable position.

Another aspect is that many of the wives whom the Prophet married for their protection were widowed relatives and needy women left behind by their milk brothers. For example, Abu Salama, the previous husband of Umm Salama, was both the nephew and the milk brother of Prophet Muhammad. Abdullah bin Jahsh, the previous husband of Zaynab bint Huzaymah, was also both the nephew and the milk brother of the Prophet. Ubaydullah bin Jahsh, the previous husband of Umm Habiba, was likewise the nephew of the Prophet. These marriages aimed to protect and support relatives and close ones, especially their vulnerable widows and orphans.

Additionally, some of these wives had orphaned children. For instance, Umm Salama had four children, while the other wives had one or two small children. Prophet Muhammad told each of his wives, "Your child is my child," thus raising these young ones and nurturing them to become future scholars of Islam.

Correction of Misguided Beliefs

One of the reasons for Prophet Muhammad's marriages was to correct certain misguided beliefs prevailing in society. Freed slaves were referred to as "mawali." Due to their slave origins, there was a social status difference between the mawali and the free people during the pre-Islamic era. Prophet Muhammad married Zaynab bint Jahsh, the daughter of his paternal aunt Umayma, to his freed slave and adopted son Zayd, despite her initial reluctance. Through this, he put an end to the distinctions between "rich-poor" and "noble-slave," declaring the equality of all people, as stated in the Quran: "And [mention, O Muhammad], when you said to the one on whom Allah bestowed favor and you bestowed favor, 'Keep your wife and fear Allah,' while you concealed within yourself that which Allah is to disclose. And you feared the people, while Allah has more right that you fear Him. So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them." (Al-Ahzab, 37)

Later, various discomforts arose, and despite Prophet Muhammad's advice on patience and piety, Zayd ﷺ was forced to divorce. In response, Allah intervened by marrying Zaynab bint Jahsh to Prophet Muhammad, thus

ending many pre-Islamic practices related to marriage, adoption, divorce, inheritance, family privacy, and other legal issues.

It is essential to note that when Prophet Muhammad initially proposed the marriage of Zaynab and Zayd, Zaynab hesitated and considered herself superior. In response, the Quran revealed the following verse: "It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error." (Al-Ahzab, 36) When their conflicts increased, leading to a potential divorce, verse 37 of Surah Al-Ahzab was revealed. Thus, divine revelation intervened not only in the establishment of this marriage but also in its dissolution by marrying Zaynab to the Prophet. This divine intervention aimed to fulfill Allah's command to change a powerful custom prevalent in the Arab society. The divine guidance was crucial for expediting this transformation.

Through marrying Zaynab, Prophet Muhammad also eliminated the societal perception that women divorced from their husbands would be looked down upon. He rescued divorced women from the life-long stigma they might face in society. This action, therefore, took another step towards elevating the status of women in society. [556]

Setting an Example in Every Aspect

One of the reasons for Prophet Muhammad's multiple marriages was to serve as an example to his followers in every aspect. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provided the most beautiful example for humanity through his long period of contentment with a single wife, his fair and loving treatment of multiple wives, and his harmonious relationships within his marriages. His considerate and supportive approach towards his wives, always thinking about their well-being and assisting them, showcased the ideal model for humanity.[557]

When Allah set the limit of four wives in marriage, Prophet Muhammad advised his companions who had more than four wives to choose four and release the others.[558] However, Allah exempted him from this rule, granting him a unique permission. This exception could be due to the following wis-

556. M. Sadik Vicdani, Why Did Prophet Muhammad Marry Many Times, p. 161-162
557. Prof.Dr. Abdullah Ulvan, Polygamy in Islam and its Wisdom,1985 p.85
558. Tirmidhi, Nikah, 33; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 40; Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, VII, 184.

dom: divorced wives among the believers could remarry, but the Prophet's wives, being considered the mothers of the believers, could not marry anyone else after him. Since they were the mothers of the believers, if Prophet Muhammad divorced them, they would likely face hardship. Therefore, Allah allowed Prophet Muhammad to keep more than four wives, providing a unique concession to address potential difficulties.[559]

It's worth noting that the Quranic restrictions on multiple marriages were revealed towards the end of the Medina period, approximately two years before the Prophet's passing. Prior to this, the prevailing custom in Arabia did not have any such limit, and people were free to marry as many wives as they wished. Prophet Muhammad also practiced polygamy within the existing customs. Therefore, when evaluating his marriages, one should consider the political, social, and cultural conditions of that time. None of his contemporaries, friends, or foes criticized him for this practice.[560]

If Prophet Muhammad had married solely for lust, he would not have spent his later years with an older widow. In his subsequent marriages, he consistently preferred younger wives. However, except for Aisha ﵂ , all his other wives were widows. When he migrated to Medina and his resources expanded, many beautiful daughters of both the Emigrants (Muhajireen) and the Helpers (Ansar) were available for marriage. Muslims regarded offering their daughters in marriage to Prophet Muhammad as an honor, and the daughters aspired to become the Prophet's wives. As Abu Barza expressed, "Whenever a girl among the Ansar reached the age of marriage, she was not given in marriage until Allah's Messenger asked her hand in marriage, and if he remained silent, none of them would give her in marriage because they esteemed it a privilege." [561]

However, Prophet Muhammad did not marry any woman from the Ansar because, during the early days of Islam, the Muhajireen, rather than the Ansar, were the ones who faced the initial hardships and needed to be brought together.[562]

559. Al-Ahzab, 50, 53; K. Kamil Ali - Salim Ogut, "Polygamy" article, DIA, VIII, 368.
560. Prof. Dr. İbrahim Sariçam, Messages of the Prophet to Our Age, p. 29-30.
561. Ahmad, IV, 422, 425; Haythami, IX, 367-368.
562. When listing those whom the Lord Almighty allowed the Prophet to marry, the condition "those who emigrated with you" was specified. (Al-Ahzab, 50) Ibn Abbas ﵄ said: "The Prophet was forbidden from marrying women other than the emigrant believers." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 33/17-18)

The Simple Life in the Blessed Home of Our Prophet

The life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his family unfolded in utmost simplicity. They had no inclination towards the adornments of this world. From the lowest state of helplessness, such as orphanhood, to the pinnacle of power and authority, like rulership, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ maintained the same humility and simplicity. He preserved the demeanor of his orphanhood throughout every stage of his life. Not even the most alluring things could captivate him for a moment. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his family spent many nights without a proper meal, chimneys remained cold for days, and they sustained themselves with dates and water. The reason behind this was their commitment to spending their possessions for the benefit of the poor. Can a person living such a life become enslaved to certain desires?

The Muslims' migration to Medina and the wealth acquired from the spoils of war after the Battle of Badr increased their prosperity. However, there was one place where this change had no effect: the home of the Prophet ﷺ. His wives naturally harbored a desire to enjoy the general prosperity. They wanted to benefit from the affluence that had come to everyone. For this reason, they appealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Let us listen to the response he gave, as mentioned in the Quran:

"O Prophet, say to your wives, 'If you should desire the worldly life and its adornment, then come, I will provide for you and give you a gracious release. But if you should desire Allah and His Messenger and the home of the Hereafter, then indeed, Allah has prepared for the doers of good among you a great reward.' O wives of the Prophet, whoever of you should commit a clear immorality, for her the punishment would be doubled two-fold, and ever is that, for Allah, easy. And whoever of you devoutly obeys Allah and His Messenger and does righteousness, We will give her her reward twice; and We have prepared for her a noble provision. O wives of the Prophet, you are not like anyone among women. If you fear Allah, then do not be soft in speech to men, lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech. And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity, O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification. And remember what is recited in

your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom. Indeed, Allah is ever Subtle and Acquainted [with all things].” (Al-Ahzab, 28-34)

These verses clearly show that the home of the Prophet ﷺ was not a place where worldly pleasures and desires were satisfied; instead, it was a place of knowledge, worship, contemplation, charity, and righteous deeds. One day when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ entered his house, he found Zaynab bint al-Jahsh praying and sincerely supplicating to Allah. The Prophet ﷺ remarked, “Indeed, she is devoted.” (Tabarani, Al-Kabeer, XXIV, 39). The term ’devoted’ here means ’praying with humility and earnest supplication.’ Zaynab, like the other wives, engaged in activities to earn money and contribute to charity. (Muslim, Fadha’il as-Sahabah, 101).

Other women were also inclined to worship and charity in this way. For example, one of the most important qualities of Saudah رضي الله عنها, the mother of believers, was generosity and nobility. Indeed, those who had frequent contact with the Messenger of Allah always acquired good qualities. Therefore, his wives also had more beautiful morals than anyone else. One day, Umar رضي الله عنه sent a purse to Saudah. Saudah رضي الله عنها asked what was inside the purse. When she learned that there was money in it, she immediately ordered it to be distributed to the poor. Examples like this were abundant in the blessed household of the Prophet.[563]

Therefore, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his family were not occupied with the luxuries of the world or worldly desires. They had more sublime duties: learning and living Islam, conveying it to others, and nurturing future scholars. Hence, they were required to abandon the alluring aspects of life and focus on these noble objectives, dedicating their entire beings to them. [564]

In summary, the fact that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ experienced multiple marriage periods during both his old age and the era when Islam spread to distant regions clearly indicates that these marriages were not driven by personal desires but were divinely ordained, aiming to spread Islam to broader audiences, assist the helpless, introduce religious rulings, and achieve lofty goals.[565]

563. Mevlânâ Shibli, The Era of Bliss, II, 140.
564. Mevlânâ Shibli, The Era of Bliss, II, 167-169.
565. For the topic of multiple marriages, see Osman Nûri Topbaş, Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh), I, 130-140 (http://hazretimuhammedmekkedevri.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/); Çelik-Ozturk-Kaya, Usve-i Hasene, II, 392- 405 (www.usveihasene.com).

When we look at the judgments and commands of Islam regarding women, we always see that it safeguards and protects women. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ fought for this cause throughout his life, even until his last breath. (Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, VII, 477)

6. Family Life

According to the laws of creation, men and women are endowed with feelings, desires, and inclinations towards each other.[566] Therefore, by nature, humans need to establish a family and live within that family. Any life outside of this is far from providing happiness and tranquility. However, the fulfillment of this need should not be arbitrary; it should be within the framework of marital principles.

The natural sustenance of love and affection between a man and a woman takes on a different meaning and dimension through marriage. An ayah (verse) expresses that marriage is a means for the creation of love and mercy between spouses:

"He (Allah) creates mates for you from your own kind, so that you might find tranquility in them. And He has created affection and mercy between you. Surely there are signs in this for those who reflect." (Ar-Rum, 21)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated, "There is nothing that increases love in marriage like marriage itself for those who love each other." (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 1)

Religious Life

Marriage is an institution crucial for an individual to live and safeguard their religious life in the most beautiful way. Therefore, it is imperative to choose religious, morally upright spouses and strive to establish a religious family. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expressed this matter as follows:

"A woman is married for four reasons: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religious commitment. Choose the one who is religiously committed, and you will prosper." (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 15; Muslim, Radâ, 53)

"The world is a temporary provision, and the most beneficial thing in it is a pious woman." (Muslim, Radâ', 64)

566. Ali-Imran, 14.



"Seek the one who is good for your seed (future generations)!" (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 46)

"Whoever gets married has completed half of his faith; let him fear Allah for the remaining half!" (Haythami, IV, 252)

According to the Quran, women and men are seen as complementary beings who fulfill each other's deficiencies and weaknesses, protect each other from sins, and complement each other psychologically and morally as well as biologically. The Quranic verse states:

"They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them." (Al-Baqarah, 187)

The most beautiful aspect of a family is the heartwarming fruits, the children. The family home, where a person lives a peaceful life with their spouse and children, is like a corner of paradise.

Encouragement for Marriage

Islam places great importance on marriage. Our Almighty Lord encourages marriage with the following command:

"Marry those among you who are single, and those of your male and female slaves who are fit for marriage. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing." (An-Nur, 32)

Allah, in addition to providing material comfort to those who marry, also grants them affection, companionship, and a wealth of blessings in terms of new relatives, expanding their social circles.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ used to support married individuals and help them as much as he could. When spoils of war came to him, he would distribute them promptly, giving double shares to the married and a single share to the unmarried. (Abu Dawood, Haraj, 14/2953)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encouraged marriage by stating:

"O young people! Whoever among you is able to marry should marry, as it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty. Whoever is not able to marry should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power." (Al-Bukhari, Sawm, 10)



"Marriage is a part of my tradition, and whoever does not follow my tradition has nothing to do with me. So get married, for that is the tradition of the Prophet ﷺ, and whoever does not follow my tradition is not from me. Get married, for I will boast of your great numbers before the other nations on the Day of Judgment. Whoever has the means, let him get married, and whoever does not, then he should fast, for fasting will diminish his desire." (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 1)

While inviting his followers to moderation in all matters, he said:

"Be aware that I am the most God-fearing among you and have the most piety among you. However, I sometimes fast and sometimes break my fast; I perform the night prayer and sleep. I also marry women. Whoever turns away from my tradition is not of me." (Al-Bukhari, Nikah, 1; Muslim, Nikah, 5; Nasai, Nikah, 4)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encouraged facilitating marriages and acting as intermediaries by saying:

"If someone whose religion and character you are pleased with comes to you, propose marriage to him. If you do not do so, there will be turmoil in the land and widespread corruption." (Tirmidhi, Nikah, 3/1084)

"O Ali! Do not delay three things: the prayer when its time comes, a funeral when it is ready, and marrying a woman when you find her suitable." (Tirmidhi, Salah, 13/171; Ahmad, I, 105)

"One of the best forms of intercession is facilitating the marriage of two people." (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 49)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to a companion who did not marry despite having the means:

"If you can afford to marry, then you are a brother of the devils if you do not marry. If you were among the Christians, you would have become a monk. Our tradition is to marry. The worst among you are those who are unmarried, and the worst among your dead are the unmarried ones. Are you distracting yourself with Satan? Satan is unable to harm married people. They are pure and far from indecent speech and actions. O Akkaf! Woe to you! Women were the trial for Job, David, Joseph, and Cursive. They became a means of trial for them." Upon this, Bishr bin Atiyye asked, "Who is Kursuf, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "He was a man who worshipped

Allah for three hundred years on the seashore, fasting during the day and praying at night. He then denied Allah due to his love for a woman, fell into disbelief, and abandoned the worship he used to perform. Later, Allah, due to some of his good qualities, returned him to his former state and accepted his repentance. Woe to you, O Akkaf! Get married, or you will be among those who are perplexed!" (Ahmad, V, 163-164; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, IV, 381-382)

Both men and women have superior qualities. The outstanding virtues of both sides are combined under the roof of a family, ensuring both the needs and happiness of the family.

Responsibilities

Islam, while instructing three people to appoint a leader when they embark on a journey, has not left the family without leadership.[567] Since men are more advanced in terms of strength and power, the Almighty has primarily assigned the responsibility of the family to them. The Quranic verse states:

"Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard..." (An-Nisa, 34)

This verse conveys both the authority of men and the value and virtue of women. The term "qawwam" mentioned as a characteristic of men in the verse is interpreted as "those who meet all the needs of women, protect them from harm and distress, and perform the heavy tasks outside the home." It is also understood as "those who educate their wives, support them in matters they need to do for the sake of Allah or for their own personalities, and follow up on their affairs."

However, the leadership of a man is not in the form of dominating his wife but rather in protecting and caring for her. It is not absolute; it is conditional and limited. A man must consider and respect the rights and legal status of his wife. A Muslim man should treat his wife just as Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did, showing love, appreciation, assisting in household chores, and meeting her needs.

567. Abu Dawood, jihad, 80-2609

It is essential to note that Muslim women consciously or unconsciously seek traces of the beautiful qualities of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in their husbands. To the extent they find these qualities, they become happy, and to the extent they do not, they become unhappy.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"Neglecting those under one's responsibility for their sustenance will be enough to bring one to sin." (Muslim, Zakat, 40; Abu Dawood, Zakat, 45)

While the head of the family is the man, the woman also has certain responsibilities in the functioning and preservation of this institution. Since the home is a shared space, the rights and duties related to it are also shared. Therefore, Islam has asked women to obey their husbands in response to the responsibilities that men have taken on and considered this obedience as an act of worship. If a man fulfills his duties, treats his family kindly, and the woman shows the necessary love, respect, and obedience, family order and harmony will be achieved.

Rights

In the family, fathers, mothers, and children have rights over each other. Fathers take care of their wives and children, ensuring their education and development, providing for their needs in a lawful manner, and preparing them for the afterlife. Mothers, in turn, behave sensitively towards their husbands' duties, take care of their homes and children, exercise intelligence, foresight, patience, and contentment, and avoid extravagance. Parents treat their children with love and justice, avoiding discrimination. Children, filled with deep respect and love for their parents, obey them and do not fall short in serving them.

The dwelling provided by the father should be spacious enough to comfortably accommodate family members and ideally located in a good neighborhood with pleasant neighbors.

Parents should be forgiving and gentle within the family, emphasizing feelings of love, compassion, and mercy. If one makes an oath in anger and later realizes its undesirability, they should not insist but immediately retract the oath and provide compensation. (Al-Bukhari, Iman 1, Kaffârât 10; Muslim, Iman 7, 26)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gives glad tidings to a woman who fulfills her husband's rights:

"A woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her will enter Paradise." (Tirmidhi, Radâ' 10/1161; Ibn Majah, Nikâh 4)

Parents also have rights over their children. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

"Allah has named some of His servants 'Abrâr' (righteous) because they have shown goodness and kindness to both their parents and their children. Just as your parents have rights over you, similarly your child has rights over you." (Haythami, VIII, 146)

When Allah blesses a family with a child, it is the primary duty of parents to give the child a beautiful name, reciting the call to prayer (azan) in the right ear and the iqama in the left ear.[568] If circumstances permit, they should perform the Akîka sacrifice one week after birth, thanking Allah. They should also shave the child's head, giving silver equal to the weight of the hair in charity to the poor. (Al-Bukhari, Aqîqah, 1, 2; Muwatta', Aqîqah, 2, 3)[569]

From this perspective, claims that Islam advocates the "enslavement of women to men" are entirely incorrect. In Islam, women live a more comfortable life than men. While men are obligated to provide for women's maintenance, women are exempt from this responsibility, and instead, they are given the enjoyable duty of "child-rearing." What is now presented as women's freedom has only led to their misery. Islam, on the other hand, protects their chastity and modesty, preserving their honor and dignity.

7. Rights of Parents

In Islam, after love and obedience to Allah and His Messenger, love and obedience to parents hold great significance. Our parents, by bringing us into existence from non-existence, raising us, and teaching us our faith, have countless rights over us. The Almighty emphasizes treating parents well after mentioning His own rights:

"Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther

568. Abu Dawood, Adab, 61, 106, 107.
569. Osman Nûri Topbaş, Civilization of Virtues, II, 417-428; http://faziletlermedeniyeti2.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/b-aile-hakki

away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful." (An-Nisâ, 36)

"We have enjoined upon man goodness to his parents. His mother carried him with hardship and gave birth to him with hardship, and his gestation and weaning [period] is thirty months. [He grows] until, when he reaches maturity and reaches [the age of] forty years, he says, 'My Lord, enable me to be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents and to work righteousness of which You will approve and make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed, I am of the Muslims.'" (Lokmân, 14)

An incident demonstrating Prophet Muhammad's respect for his parents and other relatives is a beautiful example for us:

Once, while the Prophet was sitting, his foster brother came. The Prophet showed great respect by spreading part of his garment on the ground and having him sit on it. Later, his foster mother came, and the Prophet, for her, spread the other side of his garment and had her sit on it. A bit later, his foster sister arrived, and the Prophet stood up for her, having her sit in front of him. (Abu Dawood, Adab, 119-120/5145)

A person came to Prophet Muhammad asking, "Who deserves my best treatment?" The Prophet replied, "Your mother." The companion asked again, "Then who?" The Prophet repeated, "Your mother." When asked a third time, the Prophet replied, "Your mother," and only after that, he said, "Your father." (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 2; Muslim, Birr, 1) In another narration, the Prophet said, "Your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father, then your closest relatives." (Muslim, Birr, 2)

On another occasion, someone came to Prophet Muhammad with an elderly person. The Prophet asked, "Who is this with you?" The person replied, "My father." The Prophet advised, "Do not walk ahead of him, do not sit before him, do not call him by his name, and do not let him be angered." (Haythami, VIII, 137) If a person insults or mistreats another's father, the same may happen to his own father, thus causing the child to wrong his own father. The pleasure of Allah is tied to the pleasure of parents in Islam. Prophet Muhammad reported, "To earn the pleasure of Allah, make your parents happy. To incur the wrath of Allah, anger your parents." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 3/1899)



When children seek permission and approval from their parents while doing something, it brings great joy to the parents. Hence, Prophet Muhammad encourages Muslims to behave in this way. A companion had migrated from Yemen to Medina and came to the Prophet, seeking permission to join the jihad.

The following conversation ensued:

Prophet: "Do you have anyone in Yemen?"

Companion: "Yes, my mother and father."

Prophet: "Have they given you permission?"

Companion: "No, they haven't."

Prophet: "Go back to Yemen and seek their permission. If they permit, return and join the jihad. If not, strive to please your parents." (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 31/2530)

Another companion came to Prophet Muhammad and said, "I left my parents crying and came here to pledge allegiance to you for the sake of migration." The Prophet advised him, "Go back to them. Make them smile, just as you have made them cry." (Abu Dawood, Jihad 31/2528; Nasa'i, Bay'at 10)

The Prophet's glad tidings and prayers for one who is kind to their parents are immense: "Fortunate is the one who does good to his parents. May Allah extend their life!" (Haythami, VIII, 137)

If children live far away, they should visit their parents, cherish them, and seek their prayers. Especially as parents age, serving them, speaking kindly, and showing respect are the children's greatest duties. Almighty Allah does not permit even the slightest displeasure towards parents.

The Qur'an instructs:

"Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him and that you be kind to your parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, 'My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.'" (Al-Isra, 23-24)



Regarding the phrase, "lower to them the wing of humility," Zubayr explained, "Do not refrain from doing anything they like or want!" (Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, no: 9)

Abu Hurairah used to stay at Zulhulaifa. When he intended to leave his house, he would stand at the door and say, "Let the mother of Abu Hurairah and the mother of so-and-so come out," and names of persons were mentioned. When the elderly women had come out, he would say to them, "What I have done is in order to propitiate my hostile wife, and I have nothing in common with them. But I want to go out, and I make them come out so that I may get out." (Al-Bukhari, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, no: 12, 14) [570]

Serving Parents

Providing service to parents is a virtuous and righteous act. Abu'l-Hasan Harakani narrates the following story:

"There were two brothers and their mother. One would spend the night in alternating shifts serving their mother, while the other engaged in worship. The brother engrossed in worship was content with his state and said to his brother, 'Can you give up your night of worship for me?' His brother agreed, and the worshiping brother, that night, bowed his head in prostration and had a dream. A voice said, 'We have forgiven your brother and you for his sake.' Perplexed, he asked, 'But I am engaged in worship, and he is serving our mother. Am I forgiven through his deeds?' The voice responded, 'Yes, because Allah does not need your worship, while your mother relies on your brother's essential service.'" (Farid ad-Din Attar, Tazkiratu'l-Awliyâ, II, 250)

Those who miss the opportunity to earn abundant rewards by serving their parents are in great loss. Prophet Muhammad, in a stern warning, said: "Woe to the one who, during the old age of either or both parents, fails to enter Paradise through their service. Woe to him, woe to him, woe to him!" (Muslim, Birr, 9, 10)

Prophet Muhammad also foretold that on the Day of Judgment, Allah would not look at those who disobeyed their parents, and they would not be admitted to paradise. (Nasa'i, Zakat, 69)

570. Osman Nûri Topbaş, Civilization of Virtues, II, 403-416; http://faziletlermedeniyeti2.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/

Even if the parents are non-Muslims, Allah commands to treat them well, obey their commands, fulfill their every wish, but not to follow them in associating partners with Allah or committing sins. (Luqman, 15)

The daughter of Abu Bakr, Aisha ﵂, narrates:

"My mother, who had not accepted Islam, came to me during the time of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. I asked him, 'Should I treat my mother well and take care of her since she came to visit me?' Prophet Muhammad replied, 'Yes, treat your mother well.'" (Al-Bukhari, Hibah, 29; Adab, 7-8; Muslim, Zakat, 50)

Those who do wrong to their parents often find themselves subjected to similar treatment by their own children – a common scene of admonition.

The prayer of parents is accepted. One should seek their good prayers and refrain from their curses. Prophet Muhammad said: "There are three prayers that are undoubtedly answered: the prayer of a father for his child, the prayer of a guest, and the prayer of an oppressed person." (Abu Dawood, Witr, 29/1536; Tirmidhi, Birr, 7/1905)

"The prayer of a father for his son is like the prayer of a prophet for his nation." (Suyuti, II, 12/4199)

The prayer of a mother is even more effective than that of the father; therefore, it wasn't explicitly mentioned in the hadith.

After the parents pass away, their children should engage in virtuous deeds on their behalf, take care of their relatives and friends, and fulfill any outstanding wishes. When asked what good charity can be done on behalf of his deceased mother, Prophet Muhammad advised: "Dig a well." So, Sa'd had a well dug, saying, "This is for Sa'd's mother." (Abu Dawood, Zakat, 41/1681; Nasa'i, Wasaya, 9; Ibn Majah, Adab, 8; Ahmad, V, 285; VI, 7)

Once Abdullah, son of Umar ﵄, was traveling to Mecca. He had become tired of riding his camel, so he sat down to rest, covering his head with a turban. A Bedouin approached him and asked, "Aren't you the son of Umar?" When Abdullah confirmed, the Bedouin gave him his camel and said, "Ride this!" He also handed him his turban, saying, "Wear this on your head!" Abdullah's companions questioned the wisdom of giving such valuable items to the Bedouin, to which Abdullah replied: "I heard Prophet Muhammad say, 'The best deed after the death of a father is for the son to take care of the fam-

ily of his father's friend.' This man's father was a friend of my father, Umar." (Muslim, Birr, 11-13; Abu Dawood, Adab, 120)

8. Islam and Jihad

a. The Meaning and Types of Jihad

Jihad derives from the root "jahd," which encompasses hardship, effort, striving, and using all available means with good intentions to achieve a noble goal for the sake of Allah. It involves an individual or community employing all material and spiritual resources sincerely for the path of Allah to reach a higher purpose.

Jihad includes purifying oneself through self-discipline, diligently following Allah's commands, avoiding forbidden acts, advising fellow Muslims, and explaining Islam to non-Muslims with evidence.[571] Additionally, struggling to protect one's religion, honor, life, homeland, and possessions, spreading Islam, and removing obstacles to it constitute jihad.[572]

Jihad can be conducted through various means such as heart, tongue, hands, wealth, life, culture, economy, and weaponry. Therefore, perceiving jihad solely as warfare is incomplete and inaccurate concerning the true meaning and context given in the Quran and Sunnah.

Interestingly, Islam lacks the concept of a "holy war," as found in Christian tradition. In Islam, war is never considered holy; it is either legitimate or illegitimate. War is not desired, and Prophet Muhammad said, "Do not wish to meet the enemy; ask Allah for well-being. But when you meet them, be patient." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 112; Muslim, Jihad, 20)

Islam regards the greatest jihad as the effort to improve oneself spiritually, restrain unnecessary and harmful desires of the soul, and elevate one's spiritual life. Prophet Muhammad, addressing returning warriors, stated, "You have returned from the lesser jihad to the greater jihad!" When asked about the greatest jihad, he replied, "A servant's struggle against his desires." (Al-Bayhaqi, Az-Zuhd al-Kabir, p. 198/374; Suyuti, Jami, II, 73/6107)

571. Tirmidhi, Jihad, 2; Nasa'i, Hajj, 4; Ahmad, III, 456.
572. See An-Nisa, 95; Al-Anfal, 72; At-Tawbah, 20, 41, 44, 81, 88; Al-Bukhari, Mazalim, 33; Muslim, Iman, 226; Abu Dawood, Sunnah, 29

Another aspect of jihad is engaging in combat with an enemy. Throughout history, no state has sustained its existence without engaging in either war or peace. Although wars may have different purposes and objectives, war and peace remain fundamental aspects of human reality. Islam acknowledges this reality and, rather than ignoring conflict and war, regulates them to minimize destruction.

Moreover, despite its name implying peace ("salaam" and "silmi" meaning peace and tranquility), Islam can confidently declare that its ultimate goal is universal and comprehensive peace. Human prosperity and happiness can only be achieved through peace. True brotherhood and mutual understanding thrive within a peaceful environment.

In Islam, disbelief alone is not considered a reason for war and death. Until death, every individual has the opportunity for faith and repentance. Killing someone simply because they are an unbeliever denies them the chance to embrace Islam. According to the prevalent view among Islamic scholars, the reason for war is the aggression, oppression, obstruction of Islamic propagation, and resorting to force by non-Muslims. Therefore, those who do not participate in war are not harmed simply because they do not embrace Islam.[573]

Islam also rejects the idea of people being forced into the religion. Imposing faith through coercion is deemed invalid. Thus, it is inaccurate to claim that Islam spread by the sword. A historical example of this is the Mongols, who initially devastated the Muslim world in 656 AH (1258 CE) but later, in large numbers, embraced Islam without any force. [574]

Additionally, regions under Islamic rule for centuries preserved the religions and existence of non-Muslims. In contrast, non-Muslims in some areas, such as Spain (Andalusia) and Bosnia, were intolerant of the Muslim population in their regions.

Therefore, defining jihad in Islam as a means of ensuring the safety of Muslims' lives and property, preventing attacks on Islam and Islamic countries, protecting the rights of Muslims, and indirectly contributing to the influence of Islam on hearts and minds is more accurate.

573. Prof. Dr. M. S. R. al-Buti, Jihad in Islam, Beirut 1997, p. 94 ff.; Muhammad Abu Zahra, The Concept of War in Islam, trans. Cemal Karaagaçlı, Istanbul 1985, p. 40-41.
574. M. Huseyin Fadlallah, Logic of Islam and Power, trans. Vahdettin İnce, Istanbul 1997, p. 216.

Islam has never spread by force. Prophet Muhammad, a mercy and compassion to the world, had the opportunity to kill the people of Macca when he conquered it. However, instead of oppressing them, he gave them the option to embrace Islam, saying, "If you believe, I will forgive you." He even granted numerous prominent polytheists prolonged periods and assigned large shares from Zakat to them under the category of "muallafat'ul kulûb" (those whose hearts are inclined towards Islam).

b. Peace is the Main Objective

Islam, above all, prefers peace. During the first fourteen years of Prophet Muhammad's twenty-three-year preaching life, warfare was strictly forbidden. Muslims were encouraged to resolve their issues through dialogue, understanding, and peaceful means. The Quranic verses emphasize:

"O you who have believed, enter into peace completely and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy." (Al-Baqarah, 208)

"...Indeed, continuous peace is best..." (An-Nisa, 128)

"The retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it. But whoever pardons and makes reconciliation, his reward is [due] from Allah. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers." (Ash-Shura, 40)

Therefore, Prophet Muhammad always advocated for peace and refrained from engaging in war unless compelled. During the Battle of Badr against the Quraysh, he sent envoys several times to propose peace. However, Abu Jahl incited the polytheists to fight, saying they wouldn't return until they avenged themselves after being given the opportunity. (Al-Waqidi, I, 61-65)

To secure peace in Hudaybiyyah, Prophet Muhammad made significant sacrifices, stating, "I swear by the One who holds my soul in His hand, whatever difficult conditions the Quraysh demand concerning the sacred things prohibited by Allah (such as shedding blood, fighting, and violating family rights), I will certainly accept for peace." (Al-Bukhari, Shurut, 15; Ahmad, IV, 323-324)

However, the Quraysh violated the Hudaybiyyah agreement through treachery within two years. Prophet Muhammad ordered preparations for an expedition. Desiring a significant victory without bloodshed, he took strategic measures:

Firstly, he kept the destination secret, not disclosing his intention[575]. Even his closest confidant, Abu Bakr, didn't realize they were heading to Macca. When asked by his daughter and Prophet Muhammad's wife, Aisha ﵂, he replied, "I don't know. Maybe he wants to go to Bani Sulaym, Sakif, or Hawazin!" (Ibn Hisham, IV, 14)

Praying to Allah, Prophet Muhammad sought to keep the Quraysh unaware of his movements and supplicated, "O Allah! Keep the Quraysh's spies and messengers blind and deaf until they suddenly find themselves before me when they reach their homes." (Ibn Hisham, IV, 14)

To prevent suspicions about Medina's activities, he sent a detachment towards Syria. When setting out from Madina,[576] he visited allied tribes in the opposite direction, creating uncertainty about the expedition's purpose.[577] Prophet Muhammad consistently followed this approach, maintaining secrecy about the journey by not entering ihram at the designated place of Zul-Hulayfa.[578] Upon nearing Macca, he lit multiple fires to create the illusion of a large army. As a result, the leader of Macca, Abu Sufyan, was shocked to unexpectedly face a sizable force. After some hesitation, realizing the impracticality of preparing for war, he accepted peace despite opposition from the Maccans. Thousands of lives were thus spared.

Prophet Muhammad, the mercy to all worlds, implemented a compassionate policy during military expeditions, avoiding unnecessary bloodshed. He personally participated in 29 expeditions, with 16 having no active conflict, resulting in agreements. In the 13 expeditions with combat, around 140 Muslims were martyred, and about 335 enemies died according to authentic reports.[579]

Prophet Muhammad's approach involved binding numerous regions to the Islamic state without initiating warfare, using insightful political wisdom. He attracted people with justice and mercy, avoiding combat whenever possible. Combining diplomacy with intelligence, he often succeeded in dissuading

575. Ibn Sa'd, II, 134.
576. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, The Messenger of Islam, I, 264-265.
577. Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 102.
578. Nebî Bozkurt, DIA, "Mecca" entry, XXVIII, 557. Because those who want to go to Mecca must enter into ihram there.
579. See Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Wars of the Prophet, Istanbul 1991; Dr. Elshad Mahmudov, The Wars of the Prophet Muhammad in Terms of Cause and Effect, Istanbul 2005.

enemies from war, minimizing bloodshed. To ensure positive outcomes, he selected commanders from the affected regions and sometimes preferred commanders from opposing tribes.[580]

Comparing this understanding of Prophet Muhammad with the actions of other believers, during the Crusades, Jerusalem witnessed the massacre of 70,000 Muslims, including those who surrendered, while Salahuddin Ayyubi, upon retaking Jerusalem in 1187, refrained from killing a single prisoner and completely prohibited looting.[581]

Godefroy de Bouillon, who led the Crusaders and was the king of Jerusalem, wrote in a letter to the Pope: "If you want to know what has been done to the enemies in Jerusalem, know that in the tunnels of the Temple Mount and in the Temple (Al-Aqsa Mosque), our men were riding through the Arabs' blood, and the blood had reached the horses' knees."[582] However, Saladin, when he reconquered Jerusalem in 1187, did not allow a single prisoner to be killed from the Christian army, and he did not permit looting at all. Instead of killing the prisoners, he released most of them without taking a single penny as ransom.[583]

Moving closer to the present, during the 4-year-long World War I initiated by supposedly civilized nations, out of 21 million wounded, 7 million died. An article published in an English newspaper in India on January 31, 1943, stated that in World War II, 37,513,886 were wounded, with 8,543,515 fatalities.

In contrast, when Prophet Muhammad's 23 years of prophethood are compared to these numbers, it is clear who approached Allah's servants with greater mercy and love. Another practice of Prophet Muhammad was to refrain from launching night raids and wait until morning. (Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 6; Muslim, Salah, 9)

All these aspects demonstrate Prophet Muhammad's strong aversion to war and discord, his tremendous efforts to establish peace and tranquility, and

580. For details on this matter, see Elshad Mahmudov, The Wars of the Prophet Muhammad in Terms of Cause and Effect, Istanbul 2005.
581. Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, II, 670; Prof. Dr. A. Reşid Turnagil, Islam and International Law, p. 196.
582. Prof. Dr. A. Reşid Turnagil, Islam and International Law, p. 196.
583. Turnagil, op. cit., p. 196-197, 201.

the indication of robust character and profound spiritual balance through the pursuit of peace. The pursuit of peace reveals the strength of an individual's character and spiritual balance. Subsequent Muslims also followed Prophet Muhammad's tradition, offering peace and granting respite to the opposing party. (Tirmidhi, Siyar, 1/1548)

c. Islamic Law of War

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was unable to secure peace and had to engage in war, he instructed to fight within specific principles, emphasizing never abandoning humanity. Before sending any military unit to battle, he advised the commander to be mindful of Allah, to be beneficial and kind to fellow Muslims, and then said:

"In the name of Allah, fight for the cause of Allah! Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah! Fight but do not be treacherous, do not commit injustice, do not mutilate, and do not kill children!" (Muslim, Jihad, 3; Ahmad, V, 352, 358)

In other narrations, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"Do not kill children, those devoted to worship in their places of worship[584], women[585], the elderly[586], and those hired for non-combat purposes![587] Do not burn down churches, and do not uproot trees."[588] Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expressed his disapproval when he heard that some children were killed in a battle:

"What has happened to some people that they have gone to excess today and have reached the extent of killing children?!" One of them asked, "O Messenger of Allah! But they are the children of the polytheists." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded:

"Are not the best among you those who are innocent? Be cautious! Do not kill children! Be cautious! Do not kill children! Every child is born on the fitrah (natural disposition inclined towards Islam), and then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian." (Ahmad, III, 435)

584. Ahmad, I, 300; Tabarani, al-Kabir, XI, 224/11562.
585. Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 148; Muslim, Jihad, 24, 25.
586. Tabarani, al-Awsat, I, 48/135.
587. Ibn Majah, Jihad, 30; Al-Waqidi, III, 912.
588. Abdurrazzak, Musannaf, V, 220.

Islamic soldiers, during warfare, cannot strike as they wish and are forbidden from committing cruelty and injustice. They are obliged to act within a certain discipline and specific rules. Here's an example:

When Mehmed the Conqueror finally reached the heart of the city, Istanbul, after overcoming the formidable walls, he stopped suddenly. He addressed those around him: "O valiant mujahids! Thanks and praises be to Allah! From now on, you are the 'Conquerors of Constantinople.' You are the blessed ones mentioned by the Prophet who said, 'Constantinople will surely be conquered. How beautiful will be the commander who conquers it, and how beautiful the army that conquers it!'[589] Congratulations on your victory! Certainly, do not betray the spoils, do not act unjustly, do not commit mutilations, and do not kill children! Live up to the honor bestowed upon you by the Prophet!"

Afterward, he dismounted his horse, turned towards the qibla, prostrated to the ground thanking Allah for this grace, and then got back on his horse. He continued towards the Hagia Sophia. The people in the city were frantically looking for places to hide, thinking that the Turks would wreak havoc like wild animals, and the city would be destroyed with everyone in it. How could they not fear, considering the atrocities committed by the crusaders when they plundered Istanbul two and a half centuries earlier?

The people were not expecting such a thing; they were very surprised. They couldn't believe it, but as days passed, no one interfered with anyone's religion or freedom. The sun of justice bestowed its sweet warmth on hearts, keeping everyone in peace. After a while, hundreds of people were accepting this religion that commands justice every day, becoming Muslim without facing any pressure.[590]

The Muslims, instead of burning and destroying the cities they conquered, on the contrary, renovated them and provided material and spiritual assistance to the non-Muslim population living within them. The reason for this is Islam's continuous encouragement towards charity, goodness, and kindness. A clear example of this occurred after the conquest of Istanbul:

589. Ahmad, IV, 335; Hakim, IV, 468/8300.
590. Mustafa Runyun - Osman Keskioglu, Knowledge and Scholars in the Age of the Conqueror, p. 21-23.

Following the conquest of Istanbul, Sultan Fatih's mentor, Akşemseddin, addressed the soldiers as follows:

"O brave soldiers of Islam! How fortunate you are to be praised by the Prophet! Allah has also granted you many spoils. Do not squander the spoils you have obtained; spend them on goodness and good deeds! Show generosity to the people of this land! Listen to the Sultan's words and obey him!"[591]

Some of the soldiers who listened to the words of this great scholar and mystic built schools, madrasas, libraries, and mosques; some built fountains, baths, and soup kitchens; while others made great donations to the poor. Istanbul, which had been ravaged by the plundering of the crusaders, revived again through the charitable efforts of the Muslims and became even more beautiful than before.

Islamic jurists began compiling and classifying legal rulings related to warfare from the early periods. The writing of independent books on this subject, called Siyer, dates back to the 2nd century AH. These works are among the earliest examples in world literature. Imam Muhammad wrote Kitâb as-siyar as-saghîr, based on the views of Abu Hanifa, regarding the subject. Later, considering some criticisms, he wrote a more detailed work named Kitâb as-siyar al-kabir.[592] Many commentaries were written on these two works as they were the fundamental references of the Hanafi school. During the Ottoman period, Muhammed Munîb Efendi translated and commented on Siyar al-kabir, and had it printed in 1244 AH. This work was taught and explained to officers and soldiers by muftis and battalion imams at appropriate times.[593]

The mayor of Hiroshima, in a radio speech on August 20, 1949, stated that the number of Japanese killed by a single bomb in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, ranged between 210,000 and 240,000. When we compare the number of people killed during Prophet Muhammad's 23-year prophethood with these figures, it becomes clear who approached Allah's servants with greater mercy and affection. Prophet Muhammad's practice included avoiding night raids and waiting until morning before starting any offensive. (Al-Bukhari, Adhan, 6; Muslim, Salah, 9)

591. Mustafa Runyun, ibid., p. 18-19.
592. Ahmet Yaman, International Relations in Islamic Law, Ankara 1998, p. 38
593. Bursalı Mehmed Tahir, Ottoman Authors, Istanbul 1333, II, 35.

All these actions and teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ underscore his aversion to war and disputes, and his efforts to secure peace and tranquility. The pursuit of peace demonstrates a person's strong character and profound spiritual balance. Later Muslims, following the Prophet's example, continued to offer peace proposals and provide opportunities for reconciliation before resorting to force. (Tirmidhi, Siyar, 1/1548)

d. Treatment of Prisoners

In ancient times, with the absence of legal customs and treaties regulating international relations during wars, arbitrariness prevailed. The victorious side considered it legitimate to destroy its enemies without distinguishing between combatants and civilians, men and women, adults and children, subjecting prisoners to severe treatment.[594] For instance, in the Talmud, not only combatant prisoners but also women, children, and captured animals were sentenced to death. [595]

Given that war and captivity would persist as long as humanity exists, Islam, adopting a realistic approach, did not outright abolish captivity but instead regulated its conditions, making it a burdensome responsibility. In numerous places in the Qur'an, it is commanded to treat prisoners and slaves with kindness.[596] The Almighty states:

"They [the believers] give food, despite their love for it, to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, saying, 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone, and we seek neither recompense nor thanks from you. We fear the Day of our Lord—a woefully grim Day.'" (Al-Insan, 8-10)

Commenting on this verse, scholars emphasize the great reward in providing food to non-Muslim captives. (Al-Jassas, III, 471; Ibn al-Arabi, IV, 1898)

In another verse, it is stated: "...When the war is over, release them, either by an act of grace or against ransom, so that the burden of war may be lifted..." (Muhammad, 4)

594. Ahmet Ozel, "Slave" entry, DIA, XI, 382.
595. Ali Mansur, Islamic Sharia and International Law, Cairo, 1390, p. 331; Abdussalam bin Hasan al-Adghiri, The Judgment of the Captive in Islam, Rabat 1405, p. 44-57; Ahmet Ozel, "Slave" entry, DIA, XI, 382.
596. An-Nisa, 36; An-Nur, 33; Al-Insan, 8-11; Muhammad, 4.

Prophet Muhammad also advised Muslims: "Treat prisoners with kindness." (Haythami, VI, 86)

Due to these divine commands, Muslims, when capturing enemies who subjected them to various forms of oppression, do not inflict similar cruelty or torture upon them.

Kind Treatment of Prisoners

Prophet Muhammad, through various instructions, recommendations, and practices, emphasized treating prisoners well, forbidding torture and oppression, even discouraging putting pressure on prisoners to obtain information.[597] Islamic jurists also affirm that torturing prisoners, such as depriving them of food and water, is not correct, as it does not yield any benefit. (Kasani, Badaiu's-Sanai, 1406; Darul Kutubi'l-Ilmiyye, VII, 120)

The brother of Mus'ab bin Umayr, Abu Aziz, who was the flag-bearer of the polytheists in the Battle of Badr, was taken captive by the Muslims. He described the kindness he received from the Ansar (Medinan supporters of Prophet Muhammad):

"In the Battle of Badr, I was captured and handed over to a group of the Ansar. On the way back from Badr, during the morning and evening meals, they would give me bread while they sustained themselves with dry dates. This was because the Prophet ﷺ had advised treating prisoners kindly. If any of them got hold of a piece of bread, they would immediately bring it to me. I felt embarrassed and returned the bread to one of them, but he insisted on giving it back to me without touching it." (Ibn Hisham, II, 288; Haythami, VI, 86)

Captives Abu'l-As bin Rabi and Walid bin Walid also reported similar good treatment. Walid added, "They would put us on animals, and they would walk themselves." (Al-Waqidi, I, 119)

Prophet Muhammad did not gather the captives taken in the Battle of Badr in one place but distributed them among the Companions, advising them to host and honor them. (Ibn Hisham, II, 288)

After consulting, the captives were released for ransom, and those who could not afford it were released without compensation. However, those among them who were literate were each assigned the task of teaching ten

597. Ibn Hisham, II, 255; Wakidi, II, 514.

Madinan children to read and write. This way, they repaid their ransom. (Ahmad, I, 247; Al-Waqidi, I, 129; Ibn Sa'd, II, 22)

Prophet Muhammad released around 6,000 captives without compensation, and an additional 24,000 camels, 40,000 sheep, and 4,000 uqiyya (475 kg) of silver were returned as part of the spoils. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 135; Al-Waqidi, III, 943, 950-954)

Prophet Muhammad often chose to release prisoners through various means.[598] For example, when the month of Ramadan arrived, he would release all prisoners and provide for anyone who asked him for help. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 377)

According to Islamic principles, close relatives among the captives should not be separated. (Ahmad, V, 422; Tirmidhi, Buyu', 52/1283)

It is forbidden to mistreat prisoners, and even before captives taken in battle are given a legal status, engaging in any sexual relations with captive women is considered prohibited.[599]

Torture is Absolutely Forbidden

Islam prohibits not only torturing humans but also all living beings. Prophet Muhammad prohibited his soldiers from torturing enemy corpses. When some insisted on torturing some fierce enemies, Prophet Muhammad said, "I will not do this to him! If I were to do such a thing, despite being a prophet, Allah would punish me in the same way." (Ibn Hisham, II, 293; Al-Waqidi, I, 107)

When it was necessary to kill an enemy or a harmful animal during Prophet Muhammad's time, he commanded it to be done quickly and easily, stating[600], "The most merciful to people in killing is the believer." (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 110/2666)

In the case of the head of a patriarch killed in Hunayn Battle being sent to Medina, Prophet Muhammad disapproved of it. He stated, "Am I supposed to

598. See Muslim, Jihad, 132, 133; Abu Dawood, Itq, 2/3931; Ibn Hisham, IV, 32; Wakidi, II, 559, 560, 835; Ibn Sa'd, II, 88, 142-143.
599. Ahmet Ozel, "Slave" entry, DIA, XI, 385.
600. Muslim, Sayd, 57; Tirmidhi, Diyat, 14/1409; Abu Dawood, Idhahi, 11-12/2815.

follow the example of the Persians and the Byzantines?" (Al-Bayhaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, IX, 132; Suyuti, Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 99)

Islamic scholars have also emphasized that Muslims should not kill non-Muslim hostages in retaliation for the killing of Muslim hostages. (Ibn Abidin, Raddul Muhtar, Cairo 1386, IV, 265)

Muslims have historically disliked killing war prisoners. Always upholding the principle that after signs of conquest and victory, killing is not permissible in any way. It is essential to take captives. There are benefits in capturing them, while killing may lead to new deaths. The appreciation of the blessing of conquest and victory is through forgiveness! [601]

In Islamic state law, alongside material sanctions, there is also spiritual accountability for both administrators and soldiers. Every Muslim will be held accountable in the afterlife. Furthermore, the Quran emphasizes persistent instructions that hatred and animosity towards the enemy should not lead to unjust behavior.[602] All these principles form the basis for Muslims throughout history to offer the most humane treatment possible to captives.

9. Islam's Perspective on Slavery

It is not possible to pinpoint a specific starting date for the institution of slavery. At times, societies advanced to such an extent that, for example, during the Roman era, the number of slaves reached three times that of free individuals. There are even records of Paulus Aemilus selling 150,000 slaves in a single transaction. [603]These slaves, treated like commodities, were subject to absolute ownership by their masters.

When Islam emerged, the condition of slaves was deplorable. Islam, deeply integrated into social life, did not abruptly abolish slavery but opted for a gradual elimination. Given the circumstances at the time, this method was more pragmatic. If slavery were abolished abruptly, people might have resisted and found it difficult to accept. Indeed, the Quran describes freeing slaves as an arduous uphill struggle, criticizing those who, despite being shown the

601. Defterdar Sarı Mehmet Pasha, Advices to Statesmen / The Statesmen's Advice, trans. Huseyin Ragıp Ugural, Istanbul 1987, p. 34; Dr. Nihat Engin, Slavery in the Ottoman State, p. 65-67. For other examples of treating captives kindly, see Osman Nûri Topbaş, OSMANLI with Its Monumental Figures and Institutions, p. 59, 250.
602. Al-Maidah, 2, 8.
603. Ahmet Ozel, "Slave" entry, DIA, XI, 382.

right path, failed to achieve it and highlighting the magnitude of the difficulty in the reward for emancipating slaves.[604]

Furthermore, social and economic life was based on the existence of slaves. The sudden abolition of slavery would lead to various social and economic problems. Slaves, who had never experienced freedom, might be bewildered upon sudden liberation, perhaps seeking to return to their former masters and desiring to become slaves again.

However, Islam, during this process, regulated the institution of slavery by establishing serious rules to prevent its exploitation and misuse.

Closed the Doors of Slavery, Opened the Doors of Freedom

Firstly, Islam prohibited the arbitrary enslavement of individuals. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated:

"Allah the Almighty has declared, 'I am the adversary of three persons on the Day of Judgment: one who makes a covenant in My name and then breaks it, one who enslaves a free person and consumes the price, and one who employs a laborer and takes full work from him but does not pay him his wages.'" (Al-Bukhari, Buyu' and Ijarah, 106; Hira, 10; Ibn Majah, Ruhun, 4)

Secondly, Islam consistently encouraged and recommended the liberation of slaves from its early days. There is no Quranic verse allowing the enslavement of people, but the emancipation of slaves is repeatedly promoted and commanded. Almighty Allah declares:

"They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, [saying], 'We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude.'" (Al-Baqarah, 177) [605]

Even before his prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ freed Zayd bin Harithah. The Prophet, understanding the value of freedom, freed all slaves that came into his possession through various means. His sayings on freeing slaves constitute significant and numerous sections in our hadith collections.

604. Al-Balad, 10-13; Al-Bukhari, Kaffarah, 6; Ransom, 2; Muslim, Itq, 22-23; Iman, 136.
605. For other verses, see An-Nisa, 92; Al-Maidah, 89; At-Tawbah, 60; Al-Mujadalah, 3; Al-Balad, 11-13.

In one hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever frees a Muslim slave, Allah will free for each of his limbs a part from the Fire." (Al-Bukhari, Kaffarat, 6; Muslim, Itq, 22-23; Tirmidhi, Nuzur, 14)

Regarding the question of which slave to emancipate, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded that it is the one owned by the master and has the highest value and price. (Al-Bukhari, Itq, 2; Kaffarat, 6; Muslim, Iman, 136; Ibn Majah, Itq, 4)

In the story of Sa'd, a servant of Abu Bakr, the Prophet instructed Abu Bakr to free him. Though Abu Bakr hesitated, the Prophet assured him that freeing Sa'd would lead to more servants and blessings. (Ahmad, I, 199; Al-Hakim, II, 232/2848; Haythami, IV, 241)

One day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw a slave girl crying on the road and asked, "Why are you crying?" The girl replied, "O Messenger of Allah! The family I work for sent me to buy flour with two dirhams, but I lost the money!" The Prophet ﷺ gave her the last money he had with him. As she turned to leave, he saw that the girl was still crying. He called her back and asked, "Why are you still crying, didn't you receive the dirhams?" The girl replied, "I'm afraid they will beat me because I'm late!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went with her all the way to the house where she served, and greeted them. Although the people in the house recognized the Prophet's voice, they did not respond until the third greeting when they came out with great joy, saying, "And upon you be peace!" The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Did you hear the first greeting?" They replied, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah, but we wished for more greetings from you to bless us. What brought you here, may our parents be sacrificed for you?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "This girl feared your punishment." The owner of the slave girl immediately said, "Since you have honored her by coming here with her, and since you have become the reason for her coming here, she is now free for the sake of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ rejoiced at this and gave them glad tidings of goodness and paradise. Then he said, "... All praise is due to Allah! He is the One who has bestowed all these blessings upon us with His power." (Haythami, IX, 13-14)[606]

606. One of the fine examples of this vast mercy in Islamic history is as follows: Bezmiâlem Valide Sultan, a member of Sultan Mahmud II's family, established an endowment in Damascus, and one of the provisions of her endowment was to compensate for the unintentional damages caused by the working servants or the losses given unknowingly. The aim is to prevent them from being humiliated, their hearts from being broken, and their dignity from being offended.

During the siege of Ta'if, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ announced that those slaves who joined him would be liberated. As a result, around 20 slaves embraced Islam, gained their freedom, and were assigned to prosperous Muslim families to learn the Quran and the Sunnah. (Al-Waqidi, III, 931-932)

The Prophet said, "If someone's share is found in a slave he co-owns, and he liberates his share, he must free the entire slave if he can afford it. If the liberator does not have enough wealth, the slave works to earn the amount needed for the liberation." (Al-Bukhari, Syirkat, 14; Itq, 4) Islam emphasizes the great reward of emancipating slaves, likening it to the enormity of certain righteous deeds.[607]

It is recommended for seeking forgiveness for a grave sin, and during eclipses or natural disasters, the liberation of slaves is suggested to bring relief and blessings. (Al-Bukhari, Itq, 3; Muwatta, Itq, 13, 14)

Learned from the teachings of Islam that the act of freeing slaves is a means to escape from hell and lead the liberator to paradise, the companions of the Prophet raced to emancipate slaves. In the early years of Islam, Abu Bakr, known for his affluence, freed many slaves. (Ibn Hisham, I, 341; Tabari, Tafsir, XXX, 279 [Layl, 5-7]; Suyuti, Lubab, p. 257-258)

Ibn Hajar, in Sharhu'l-Minhac, reports through authentic sources that Abdurrahman bin Awf freed a total of thirty thousand slaves, liberating eight thousand in a single day.[608]

Following the Prophet's advice, Umar bin Khattab donated his most valuable lands for the benefit of people, emphasizing the condition of "freeing slaves" in the endowment. (Al-Bukhari, Shurut, 19; Wasiyyat, 28; Ayman, 33; Muslim, Wasiyyat, 15)

In 1547, Russian writer Ivan Peresvetov narrates a remarkable practice of Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II. Ordering the destruction of slave registration records and documents, the Sultan declared, "Only Allah has authority over us, and we are all His servants and slaves." [609]

607. Abu Dawood, Adab, 100-101/5077; Nasa'i, Jihad, 26; Ahmad, II, 3; II, 360
608. See Ibn Allan, Delilu'l-falihin, IV, 159.
609. Altan Aykut, "Ivan Peresvetov and the Legend of Sultan Mehmet", Belleten, Ankara 1983, XLVI, no. 184, p. 866.

In the Atonement, the Priority is Freeing Slaves

Islam not only encourages the emancipation of slaves but has, in many instances, made it obligatory. For example, if someone commits a mistake leading to the accidental killing of a person, Islam prescribes freeing a slave as the first atonement. It is understood from this that a person being a slave is almost equivalent to death, and freeing them is akin to being brought back to life. Similarly, if a Muslim makes an oath, engages in Zihar (a form of divorce)[610], or breaks a fast, the atonement requires freeing a slave as the first step.[611]

Additionally, Islam commands allocating a portion of state revenues and zakat funds for the emancipation of slaves.[612]

Mukataba: Agreement with the Master

If a slave wishes to attain freedom by reaching an agreement (Mukataba) based on a specified amount, they can apply. In this case, the master is expected to accept the request and even provide financial assistance when paying the agreed-upon amount.[613] The Quran says: 'And those who seek a contract [for eventual emancipation] from among those whom your right hands possess - then make a contract with them if you know there is within them goodness and give them from the wealth of Allah which He has given you.' (An-Nur, 33)

For instance, the redemption amounts for Salman al-Farisi and Abu al-Muammil were covered through the help of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the companions. The redemption amount for Bariyya, totaling 9 uqiyah (40

610. Zihar: It is the likening by a husband of his wife to one of the women to whom he is forever forbidden to marry, such as her back, abdomen, thigh, etc. This analogy is called "zihar," because it is often made with reference to the back, which is "zahr" in Arabic. In the pre-Islamic era, zihar was considered a kind of divorce. Islam prohibited this type of divorce and demanded that those who practiced zihar make expiation and reconcile with their wives. (Al-Mujadalah, 3)
611. An-Nisa, 92; Al-Maidah, 89; Abu Dawood, Talaq, 16-17/2213.
612. At-Tawbah, 60.
613. The mukataba contract grants the slave/concubine, while remaining the property of the master, the right to work in their own name, make legal transactions, own property, and travel for the purpose of earning a living, starting from the moment the contract is concluded. The master's authority over them ends, and he cannot use them as collateral, make them work for wages, force them to serve or work as laborers, and the concubine cannot demand release until she compensates for the harm she has caused to property or life. If the mukatab becomes able to engage in legal transactions such as buying, selling, leasing, or mortgaging, his limitations regarding acts such as donation, bequest, or endowment and marriage continue until he pays the agreed-upon amount in full. (Prof. Dr. Fahrettin Atar, "Mukataba" entry, DIA, XXXI, 533)

dirhams) of gold annually, was paid by Aisha ﵂, and the redemption amount for Juwayriya bint al-Harith was paid by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.[614]

Islam introduced the principle that the child of a free woman born to a slave is free. All these principles represent significant developments considering the socio-political conditions of that era.[615]

Islamic scholars even considered forced, intoxicated, or jokingly freeing of slaves as valid. Another noteworthy point is that since freedom is inherent in human beings, if an individual claims to be free by appealing to a judge and there is no one to contradict this claim, the judge, without requiring evidence, immediately rules for their freedom.[616]

The insistence on the emancipation of slaves and the significant rewards attached to it underline the importance of humanity in the sight of Allah, emphasizing the liberation of a person created as a servant to Allah from servitude to fellow human beings."

Ordered to Treat Slaves Well

Islam closed the path to slavery, exerted great efforts to liberate those who were slaves before and, despite all this, reformed the conditions of those who remained as slaves. Islam strictly prohibits mistreating slaves, subjecting them to heavy labor, and overworking them. It mandates the retrieval of the rights of those killed through the avenue of qisas, and it commands the marriage of unmarried slaves.[617] Islam constantly reminded slave owners to provide for their slaves, saying, 'Feed them from what you eat, clothe them

614. Al-Bukhari, Mukataba, 3, 4; Muslim, Itq, 6; Abu Dawood, Itq, 2; Ahmad, V, 443, 444; Ayni, Umde, XIII, 116.

615. The marriage contract is a contract between a free man and a free woman, made in accordance with their conditions, concerning establishing a family and benefiting from each other sexually. The contract and authority over a concubine (acquired through purchase, inheritance, war booty, or donation...) is also a legal transaction, and this legal transaction, while granting the right to live together like husband and wife, is stronger and more comprehensive than the marriage contract, and it replaces it. Therefore, the assertion "Sexual relations with concubines were done without marriage" stems from a distortion intention or ignorance. (http://www.hayrettinkaraman.net/yazi/hayat2/0269.htm)

616. See I. Hakkı Izmirli, Response to the Anglican Church, ed. Fahri Unan, Ankara 2004, p. 109-110.

617. Al-Baqarah, 178; An-Nur, 32. A man had married his male and female slaves. Later, he forced them to divorce. The slave reported the situation to the Messenger of Allah. Upon this, the Prophet intervened and prevented this injustice. (Ibn Majah, Talaq, 31; Tabarani, al-Kabir, XI, 300)

from what you wear, and do not burden them beyond their capabilities, especially when they are fasting.'

Islam introduced rights for slaves that, when observed, made acquiring a slave almost akin to being a slave. Allah says: 'And be good to those in your possession.' (An-Nisa', 36) Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also emphasized treating slaves with kindness, stating, 'They are your brothers; treat them as you would treat yourselves.' (Muslim, Iman, 36-38) He further instructed that when a servant brings your meal, at least invite them to share the table or provide them with a few bites or some food if they decline.

Islam advocated treating slaves with generosity similar to how one treats their children, saying: 'Show kindness to them as you show kindness to your children.' (Ibn Majah, Adab, 10) The Prophet also highlighted three rights of a slave over their owner: not hurrying them during prayers, not making them go hungry, and ensuring they are well-fed. (Haythami, IV, 237)

Prophet Muhammad himself engaged with slaves, servants, and the poor, spoke with them, responded to their invitations, visited the sick among them, and participated in their funerals. He even accepted invitations to meals with slaves, not belittling them. (Haythami, IX, 20)

The Prophet's mercy towards slaves was to the extent that he disliked terms like 'my slave' or 'my maid'; instead, he encouraged addressing them as 'my son' or 'my daughter.' (Muslim, Alfâz, 13-15) Even slave women, who were neglected in the pre-Islamic era, could approach Prophet Muhammad, present their grievances, and request private meetings. (Al-Bukhari, Adab, 61)

The abolishment of the status distinction between freed slaves (mawali) and the freeborn was an essential step taken by Prophet Muhammad. He arranged marriages that broke these distinctions. The Prophet let Zayd to marry his cousin Zainab and Zayd's son to a Qurayshi daughter Fatima binti Kays.[618] He also established brotherhood alliances (mu'ahat) between Muhajireen (emigrants) and Ansar (helpers), eliminating the difference between freed slaves and the freeborn. He assigned Bilal to Abdullah bin Abdurrahman[619], Salman to Abu ad-Darda[620], Salim to Muaz bin Maiz[621], and Ammar

618. Muslim, Talaq, 36; Tirmidhi, Nikah, 38; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, I, 564.
619. Ibn Sa'd, III, 233, 234.
620. Al-Bukhari, Adab, 67.
621. Ibn Abdul-Barr, II, 567.

to Huzayfah al-Yamani[622] as brothers. At that time, the pagans objected, questioning if the slaves could be equal to them, leading some to turn away from Islam.

Prophet Muhammad even appointed former slaves to high positions in the state. Zaid and his son Usama were appointed as commanders at different times.[623] Bilal, the freed Abyssinian slave of Abu Bakr, not only served as the muezzin but also held responsibilities like hosting and providing for guests in the Prophet's house.[624] This reflects the Prophet's emphasis on meritocracy. The lives of these companions, marked by the blessings of Islam, transformed from slavery to leadership, echoing the story of Prophet Joseph, 'from slavery to kingship.

Muslims also engaged in the education of servants and slaves. Their exemplary behavior led to the emergence of many scholars from among servant and slave backgrounds. Figures like Salman al-Farsi, Bilal, Ikrimah, Nafi, Mujahid, Hasan al-Basri, Ibn Sirin, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, Kafur al-Ikhshidi, Grand Vizier Mahmud Pasha, and Yaqut al-Hamawi are among them.[625] Ibn Abbas, a prominent companion, tied his slave Ikrimah to a post to force him to learn, elevating him to a respected scholar.

Islam instilled an understanding that Muslims, when traveling with servants or slaves, would share mounts equally. For example, during his journey to Jerusalem, Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab practiced this approach, and later, Ibrahim Hakki Erzurumi followed suit.

Strictly Prohibited Ill-Treatment of Slaves

Prophet Muhammad never desired anyone's heart to be hurt, regardless of their social status. He declared, 'One who mistreats slaves and servants will not enter paradise.' (Tirmidhi, Birr, 29/1946; Ahmad, I, 7) Once, the Prophet witnessed Abu Zer mistreating his slave, and he admonished him, saying, 'Are you still following the practices of the pre-Islamic era? Do not harm what Allah has created! If it does not fit with your temperament, then set it free. Do not overburden it, and if you do, help it.' (Al-Bukhari, Iman, 22; Muslim, Iman, 38; Abu Dawud, Adab, 123-124)

622. Al-Hakim, III, 435.
623. Al-Bukhari, Ashab an-Nabi, 17; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, I, 564.
624. Ibn Sa'd, I, 246, 294, 298, 323; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, I, 165.
625. See I. Hakkı İzmirli, Response to the Anglican Church, p. 109.

A companion narrates that Abdullah bin Amr and he were sitting with their teacher, Abdullah bin Amr. A servant came, and Abdullah asked him if he had provided the servant's food. When the servant's reply was negative, Abdullah advised him to immediately give the food, citing the saying of the Prophet: 'Neglecting the sustenance of your slaves is enough sin for you.' (Muslim, Zakat, 40)

Islam emphasizes not forgetting the human side of weak individuals, including slaves and servants. The principle is, 'They may be in a servant position now, but we could have been in their position. Therefore, treat them as you would want to be treated.'

Prophet Muhammad instructed his companions to forgive the mistakes of their servants continually. When asked, 'How often should we forgive our servant's faults?' he replied, 'Seventy times a day.' (Abu Dawud, Adab, 123-124/5164; Tirmidhi, Birr, 31/1949)

The Prophet sternly warned against beating or slapping a slave without reason, declaring, 'If someone beats their slave or servant for a sin they did not commit, the expiation is to set the slave free.' (Muslim, Aymân, 30, 32)

One incident illustrates the Prophet's concern for the welfare of slaves. Abu Mas'ud al-Badri was beating his slave when he heard a voice saying, 'O Abu Mas'ud, know that...' However, in his anger, he couldn't identify the speaker or comprehend the complete message. When he approached, he found Prophet Muhammad, who said, 'O Abu Mas'ud! You have the power to do this to your slave, but know that Allah's power over you is greater. From now on, I will never beat a slave again.' Abu Mas'ud then added, 'For the sake of Allah, I have freed this slave.' The Prophet responded, 'Look, if you hadn't, you would either have faced the fire or been enveloped in the flames of hell.' (Muslim, Aymân, 34, 35)

Prophet Muhammad, until his last moments, considered the rights of the weak, especially slaves. Umm Salama, his wife, reported that one of his final admonitions was, 'Guard your prayers, guard your prayers. Pay attention to the rights of those under your authority.' (Ahmad, VI, 290, 315)

In conclusion, Islam, with its guiding principles, bridged the gap between slave and master, minimizing the distinctions. It made slaves nearly indistinguishable from free individuals. Islam played a pivotal role in gradually

eliminating the institution of slavery, which had become a form of oppression. The mercy and compassion advocated by Islam towards slaves transformed the perception of slavery in society.

The presence of rules governing slaves in Islam has a significant purpose, considering the reality that, as long as humanity exists, wars leading to prisoners will occur. Due to Islam's emphasis on compassion and mercy, it aims to elevate the status of war captives to that of free individuals. Islam provides a refuge for those who have become prisoners during conflict and cannot return to their homeland. The goal is also to educate these individuals and create the best conditions for cultural advancement. Islam does not seek to exploit such people; rather, it strives to help them become productive members of society. Without doubt, Islam's intention is not to oppress people but to ensure justice and freedom.

It is a bitter truth that, in many parts of the world today, there are still hungry, homeless, unemployed, and powerless individuals, some of whom are treated similarly to how slaves and servants were in the past. Humanity, despite having eliminated slavery in one aspect, is still falling short. Islam's objective is to establish freedom and justice for everyone worldwide. Therefore, it persistently encourages charity, generosity, and support. Until poverty is eradicated, Muslims carry a significant responsibility. Even those who do not believe in Islam should feel a moral obligation concerning unjust bloodshed, tears, and suffering.

In essence, Islam has taken all necessary measures to abolish slavery, turning it into a human ideal. It closed the gates to slavery as much as possible, opening avenues for the freedom of slaves at every opportunity. The mercy and compassion instilled by Islam have rendered the institution of slavery obsolete over time. Many companions, particularly Umar ibn al-Khattab, struggled to eradicate slavery and took various measures, such as dismissing officials who neglected the welfare of slaves. Umar would personally intervene by helping slaves working in difficult conditions.

Umar even went further, ensuring that no one in places like Egypt and Iraq experienced the treatment of slaves. Once, when informed that Islamic soldiers had brought slaves from Egypt, he released them and sent them back. Umar, being aware of the relationships between some Muslims and Egyptian slaves, demonstrated that all Muslims had mutual familial ties, eliminating

distinctions. Eventually, through Umar's efforts, slavery was entirely eradicated in Arabia. [626]

In this regard, we can say that Islam has taken all necessary measures to abolish slavery, employing every possible means and elevating it to a humanitarian ideal. It has closed the entrance gates of slavery as much as possible, left the exit gates wide open, and consistently encouraged the emancipation of slaves at every opportunity. Additionally, Islam has established a legal framework for slaves. This development is crucial, not only as the first and unique occurrence in human history but also for successfully asserting that slaves are humans with rights, a realization that remains significant even in today's conditions where the importance of such matters should never be underestimated.

One wisdom behind the existence of rules regarding slavery in Islam is its recognition that as long as humanity exists, the elimination of war and its natural consequence, prisoners of war, is virtually impossible. Due to Islam's distinctive quality of compassion and mercy, it seeks to elevate war captives to the level of free individuals. It provides a shelter for those who have become prisoners during conflicts and cannot return to their homeland. Another aim is to educate these individuals and create the best conditions for them to enhance their culture. Islam's goal is not to exploit people, similar to us, but rather to ensure justice and freedom.[627]

It is a bitter reality that in many parts of the world today, there are still hungry, homeless, unemployed, and powerless individuals, some of whom are treated similarly to how slaves and servants were treated in the past. Therefore, humanity has only accomplished a small part of what should be done by abolishing slavery. Islam's objective is to establish freedom and justice for everyone worldwide. Therefore, it persistently encourages charity, generosity, and support. Without doubt, until poverty is eradicated, all Muslims bear a significant responsibility. Even those who do not believe in Islam should, at the very least, feel the sting of conscience due to unjustly spilled blood, tears, and the suffering of innocent people.

626. Ramazanoglu Mahmud Sami, Hazreti Omer al-Faruq - may Allah be pleased with him -, Istanbul n.d., p. 158-160.
627. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 115.

10. Islam has come to eliminate terrorism

Islam, which carries meanings of peace and safety in its name, has taken a stance against all forms of terrorism and anarchy from its inception. It consistently emphasizes the respect for the rights of all beings, whether humans, animals, plants, or even inanimate entities, whether they are believers or non-believers. Allah, who loves His servants greatly and desires a life in paradise for them in both worlds, places significant importance on individual rights, life, and property security, as well as the establishment of peace and order in society. Causing corruption on Earth, violating environmental and public order, and engaging in banditry are strictly prohibited, and various religious, moral, and sometimes punitive measures are prescribed for such actions. As stated in the Quran: 'Do not desire corruption on Earth. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.' (Al-Qasas, 77) Therefore, it is necessary for a Muslim to stay away from environments dominated by discord and turmoil and refrain from playing any role in such places. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, 'In the future, there will be such trials that, at that time, the one who sits will be better than the one standing, the one standing will be better than the one walking, and the one walking will be better than the one running.' Upon hearing this, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! If a man enters my house to kill me and extends his hand, what do you advise me to do?' The Prophet replied, 'Be like the son of Adam (Habeel).' Meaning, in a situation where a Muslim finds himself as either an oppressor or oppressed with no alternative, he should choose to be oppressed and should never incline towards injustice. The incident referred to by the Prophet Muhammad is narrated in the Quran: 'Recite to them the truth of the story of Adam's two sons. Each of them offered a sacrifice, and it was accepted from one but not from the other. The latter said, 'I will surely kill you.' The former replied, 'Indeed, Allah only accepts from the righteous. If you should raise your hand against me to kill me, I shall not raise my hand against you to kill you. Indeed, I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds.''' (Al-Ma'idah, 27-29) According to Islam, outside of a state of war, even if one is a non-believer, the life, property, and honor of individuals are sacred. According to the judgment brought by the Quran, killing an innocent person is as great a crime as killing all of humanity. The rights of a single individual are as sacred and honorable as the rights of all humanity."

Punishment for Terrorism

The most severe crime for which Islam imposes punishment is banditry, highway robbery, armed looting, and aggression (hirabah). Since the establishment of public order, security, and peace, the protection of individuals' lives, properties, and freedom of movement are among the fundamental objectives of Islam, those who commit such crimes are commanded to be punished with the severest worldly penalties, and it is foretold that their punishment in the hereafter will be even more intense. (Al-Ma'idah, 33)

The effective, preventive, and deterrent nature of the applied punishment is aimed at preventing potential crimes in society, along with other measures, to reduce the number of offenders. In other words, Islam's goal is not only to punish criminals but to ensure that people live in safety and peace by preventing the formation of a criminal environment in society. Therefore, the verse indicates that those who voluntarily abandon banditry before being captured will be forgiven.

Expressing this crime as "waging war against Allah and His Messenger" in the Quran emphasizes the severity and wickedness of this sin. Not only is causing harm to others prohibited in Islam, but self-harm is also strongly forbidden[628].

Since the life given by Allah is a trust to humans, no one other than Allah has the right to take it. Interfering in this matter provokes the wrath of Allah. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated: 'Whoever throws himself down from a mountain to commit suicide will continue to throw himself down in Hell forever. Whoever drinks poison to commit suicide will take the poison in his hand and drink it in the eternal fire of Hell. And whoever kills himself with a piece of iron will take that piece of iron in his hand and thrust it into his stomach in the eternal fire of Hell.' (Al-Bukhari, Tibb, 56; Muslim, Iman, 175; Tirmidhi, Tibb, 7/2044-2045)

This hadith emphasizes the eternal nature of the punishment for one who commits suicide with three consecutive emphases, representing a very rare and serious threat.

628. An-Nisa, 29, 93; Al-Baqarah, 195; Al-Bukhari, Janaiz, 84, 182; Maghazi, 38; Qadar, 5; Adab, 44, 73; Ayman, 7; Muslim, Iman, 175-178.

Even cursing others is not tolerated in Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Those who curse much will not intercede or testify on the Day of Judgment.' (Muslim, Birr, 85, 86; Abu Dawood, Adab, 45) 'It is not appropriate for a person with strong faith to curse a lot.' (Muslim, Birr, 84)

The Prophet ﷺ consistently advocated gentleness and mercy, condemning violence, rudeness, and tyranny. He said: 'Allah has created me as a generous and good-mannered servant, not as a tyrant and stubborn oppressor.' (Abu Dawood, At'imah, 17/3773) 'Allah has not sent me as a person who uses violence; instead, He sent me as a teacher and facilitator.' (Ahmad, III, 328) 'Anyone who carries a weapon against us is not one of us.' (Ahmad, II, 185)

Actions like holding a weapon towards others or making jokes with weapons are known to be harmful. The Prophet ﷺ strongly prohibited such reckless actions. Without any necessity, carrying weapons in crowded places, markets, or during festivals is dangerous and wrong. Hadiths state: 'Let none of you point a weapon at his brother, for he may not know; perhaps Satan would cause the weapon to drop from his hand, and he would fall into the pit of Hell.' (Al-Bukhari, Fitan 7; Muslim, Birr 126) 'If a person points to his brother with iron, the angels will curse him until he lets it go. This applies even if he points to his own father or brother.' (Muslim, Birr, 125; Tirmidhi, Fitan, 4) 'When someone with arrows passes through our mosques or marketplaces, he should hold the iron tip of the arrow in his hand to prevent any harm to Muslims.' (Al-Bukhari, Salah, 66; Fitan, 7; Muslim, Birr, 120-124) Jabir ﷺ reported: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prohibited passing a drawn sword from hand to hand.' (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 66; Tirmidhi, Fitan, 5)"

Islam Prohibits the Use of Force

Forcing people to embrace Islam goes against its nature and character in the effort to spread it. In many verses of the Quran, it is explicitly stated that the duty of the Prophet and other prophets is only to convey a clear message.[629]

The verses state:

"(O Messenger), remind, for you are but a reminder. You are not over them a controller." (Al-Ghashiyah, 22)

629. Ali-Imran, 20; Al-Maidah, 92, 99; Ar-Rad, 40; Ibrahim, 52; An-Nahl, 35, 82, etc.

"(O Messenger!) If your Lord had willed, all those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So will you (O Muhammad) compel the people until they become believers?" (Yunus, 99; cf. Ar-Ra'd, 31)

Throughout history, Muslims have never compelled anyone to enter Islam; they even released the captives in this matter. Ziyad bin Jaz', who participated in the conquest of Egypt, narrates: "...We gathered the Egyptian war captives, and those on the Christian side also came. We set the captives free to choose Islam or Christianity. When someone chose Islam, they would proclaim the declaration of faith louder than what we brought during the conquest, and we would accept them among us (granting them the same rights and responsibilities). When someone chose Christianity, we would release them, and the Christians would take them with shouts; we would then collect the jizya from them. However, we felt very sorry, as if one of our own had joined them..." (Tabari, History, Beirut 1407, I, 512, [20th Year])

Toynbee states:

"If Western Christians had dominated Asia instead of Arabs and Turks, there would be no trace of the Greek Church today. And they would never show the tolerance to Christianity that Muslims have shown there." (Arnold Toynbee, Religions in History, Istanbul 1978, p. 285)

Allah commands even speaking gently to a tyrant like Pharaoh with a soft tongue. (Taha, 43-44)

Therefore, it is not possible for Muslims to participate in terrorist activities stemming from their religion. If some individuals portray terrorist activities as a command of Islam, it is either a deliberate betrayal to slander Islam or a crime committed out of ignorance."

Islam Forbids Excess

In Islamic jurisprudence, it is a requirement that the means to achieve a goal must also be legitimate. Therefore, the Quran clarifies how believers should behave when compelled to engage in warfare and establishes strict guidelines on this matter. The Quran states:

"Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah does not love transgressors." (Al-Baqarah, 190)

The phrase "those who fight you" in the verse refers to those in a belligerent status. This means that those not engaged in hostilities, those not in a combat status, will not be fought against. Legally, to permit the killing of a person, regardless of their belief, it is necessary, during active combat, that the person has the intention to cause actual harm and possess the status of a combatant. (Merginani, Hidaya, Istanbul 1986, II, 138)

The battles led by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were either to repel attacks against Muslims or to disrupt attack preparations identified through intelligence. The intention of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the first major battle, the Battle of Badr, was not war. It was to intercept a caravan carrying the wealth of the Muslims who had migrated, which had been seized, and to stop a caravan being prepared against the Muslims. The caravan changed its route and escaped. However, the polytheist army, which had traveled 400 kilometers from Mecca and camped near Medina, refused peace offers multiple times. Therefore, they were reluctantly forced into battle and emerged victorious. (Al-Waqidi, I, 61-65)

The battles of Uhud and the Trench (Khandaq) were defensive battles fought in the date orchards near Medina. The polytheists were adopting an aggressive stance, amassing armies from various directions to obliterate the Muslims. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ conducted a defensive war in Medina. He minimized casualties by having a trench dug around the city.

The battles of Mu'ta and Tabuk were defensive wars conducted to seek justice for the martyred envoy and to ward off a potential attack. In fact, in Tabuk, there was no engagement in combat; after making certain agreements, they returned. The conquest of Mecca happened due to the polytheists betraying the agreement. Another reason for war was to reclaim the rights of the migrating Muslims that had been usurped. Other wars were similarly conducted to stop an attacking or preparing-to-attack enemy.

Even in a state of war, Islam does not permit the killing of women, children, the elderly, and non-combatant men. How could Islam allow the killing of innocent people during times of peace?!"

Personal Responsibility in Crime

One of the principles introduced by Islam is that an individual cannot be held accountable for the sins of another. Allah has reiterated this judg-

ment multiple times: “No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.” (Al-An’am, 164; Al-Isra, 15; Fatir, 18; Az-Zumar, 7; An-Najm, 38)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also emphasized this by stating, “A child should not be killed for the sins of his father.” (Darqutni, III, 45/186; Al-Hakim, II, 668/4219; Ibn Hibban, Sahih, XIV, 517/6562)

Once, the Prophet ﷺ appointed a group of ten, led by Asim bin Thabit from Medina, for guidance and intelligence. The Lihyan tribe martyred eight of them, took Hubayb and Zayd bin Dathina as captives, and sold them in Macca. Haris bin Amir’s sons, who had killed Hubayb in the Battle of Badr, bought him. Hubayb remained in captivity until the day they martyred him.

During these days of captivity, Hubayb asked Haris’s daughter for a razor to shave. She handed the razor to her three-year-old son, saying, “Take this to the captive!” Describing the incident, the woman says, “The child took the razor to the captive. In my panic, thinking ’Yaa Allah, what have I done!’ I ran after the child. When I arrived, I saw the child sitting on Hubayb’s lap, chatting with him, and I screamed. Hubeyb looked at me and said, ’Are you afraid I will kill the child? I would never do such a thing! Taking a life unjustly is not our way and honor. Are you the ones who would kill me?’” (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 28, 10; Jihad, 170; Ibn Hajar, Isabah, I, 418)

In legal terms, punishments and crimes are individual. Therefore, Islam strongly prohibits massacres where both oppressors and the oppressed are killed. Indeed, Allah prevented Muslims in a dominant position from engaging in war to avoid unknowingly harming innocent people and delayed the conquest of Macca for two years. (Al-Fath, 24-25)

Compassion and Mercy towards Living Beings

Not only towards humans but also towards animals, Islam preserves their rights. The Quran recounts how Prophet Suleyman’s magnificent army avoided crushing ants. (An-Naml, 18)

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came to Madina, people were cutting the humps of live camels and tearing the meat from sheep’s thighs. Observing this, the Prophet ﷺ said, ’Whatever is cut from an animal while it is still alive is carrion and cannot be eaten.’ (Tirmidhi, Sayd, 12/1480)

Once, Aisha ﵂ rode a stubborn camel. To calm the animal, she harshly moved it back and forth. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, 'Be gentle with the animal! Gentleness beautifies wherever it is. Any act without gentleness is ugly.' (Muslim, Birr, 78, 79)

He also said on another occasion, 'Whoever kills a sparrow for mere amusement, it will beseech Allah on the Day of Judgment, saying, 'O Lord! That person killed me without any reason, not for any benefit.' (Nasai, Dahaya, 42)

Once, when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was on his way to Mecca in the state of ihram, he saw a sleeping deer between Ruwaysh and 'Arc. He instructed one of his companions to wait by the deer until everyone passed, ensuring that no one disturbed or alarmed the animal. (Muwatta, Hajj, 79; Nasai, Hajj, 78)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ strictly forbade aiming at and shooting live animals. (Al-Bukhari, Zabah, 25; Muslim, Sayd, 59)

Not only animals but even plant life received the mercy and consideration of Islam. Preserving the natural cover and not harming fruit-bearing trees were mentioned in the Prophet's and the first caliphs' wartime instructions. (Al-Waqidi, III, 1117)

During Hajj, Islam prohibits arguing with people, hunting animals, plucking any leaf from a plant or tree, and even intentionally pulling a single strand of hair or beard. It encourages Muslims to adopt a completely harmless way of life.

While this is the case, some individuals associate Islam, the religion of forgiveness, mercy, and peace, with the term terrorism, one of the catastrophes of today's humanity. How can Islam, which rejuvenates humanity in every aspect, coexist with terrorism and anarchy, founded on heartlessness and consciencelessness, which have devastated humanity and know nothing of noble sentiments such as ethics, compassion, and mercy? If those who make this mistake are truly seeking justice and truth, they should place their hands on their consciences and reconsider. If they are not fully aware of Islam, if they are acting based on hearsay and prejudices, they should realize that this is a greater negligence and mistake."

11. In Islam, Environment, Cleanliness, and Water

a. Environment

Allah Almighty informs us that everything around us has been made available for the benefit of humankind. To express proper gratitude, we must approach our environment with a sense of trust and responsibility. Misuse, destruction, and waste of the environment are acts of ingratitude that will ultimately harm ourselves. Allah says:

"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned, so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] that which they have done, that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]." (Ar-Rum, 41)

Yet Allah also commands: "And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you not transgress within the balance." (Ar-Rahman, 7-8) Ignoring this divine order brings harm upon oneself.

A Muslim reflects the tranquility and beauty in their hearts onto nature, treating humans, animals, plants, and even inanimate objects with kindness, being careful not to harm any being. One day, as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ passed by a funeral, he said, 'He has found relief or has been relieved of the troubles of this world.' When the companions asked about the meaning, he explained, 'When a believing servant dies, they find relief from the fatigue and troubles of the world and attain Allah's mercy. On the other hand, when a sinful and wicked person dies, people, towns, trees, and animals are relieved from their evil, finding comfort.' (Al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 42; Nasa'i, Janazah, 48; Ahmad, V, 296, 302, 304)

This indicates that even seemingly lifeless entities possess consciousness. Therefore, people should strongly avoid anything disturbing to others, such as littering, spitting, obstructing roads, or placing materials that make it difficult for people to pass, in any place or circumstance.[630] The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized this in other sayings:

"Be cautious about praying and staying in the middle of roads, for they are the pathways of snakes and predatory animals. Also, be cautious about

630. Muslim, Iman, 58.

relieving yourself along the way, as these behaviors will leave you exposed to curses." (Ahmad, III, 305; 381)

"Avoid three actions that will expose you to curses: relieving oneself at the source of water, in the middle of the road, and in the shade where people rest." (Abu Dawood, Taharah, 14/26; Ibn Majah, Taharah, 21)

In these magnificent teachings of the Prophet, it is evident that not only human but also the integrity of nature and wild life is preserved with great delicacy and care. Islam, which values living beings so much, also places great importance on trees and the green environment. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, 'If the Day of Judgment begins while you have a sapling in your hands and you can plant it, you should do so immediately!' (Ahmad, III, 191, 183)

Once, Abu ad-Darda رضي الله عنه was seen planting trees in Damascus.

Someone approached him, expressing surprise, 'Are you, a close companion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, occupied with planting trees?' Abu ad-Darda responded, 'Wait a moment before making hasty judgments about me! I heard Prophet Muhammad ﷺ say, "If someone plants a tree and any human or creature benefits from its fruit, it will be considered charity for the one who planted it."' (Ahmad, VI, 444. See also Muslim, Musaqah, 7)

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned, 'Whoever cuts down a lotus tree (without a valid reason), Allah will extend his head into the hellfire.' (Abu Dawood, Adab, 158-159/5239) He also stated, 'There is no plant on the earth that an angel does not protect, flapping its wings over it. This protection continues until the plant is harvested. If someone tramples and crushes this plant, the angel curses them.' (Ali al-Muttaqi, Kenz, III, 905/9122)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ declared the areas around Mecca, Medina, and Taif as sacred, forbidding cutting down trees, destroying plant life, and hunting.[631] He said, 'The trees in the protected area of Allah's Messenger should not be struck with sticks or cut down. However, if there is a need, they can be gently shaken to remove leaves for the animals to eat.' (Abu Dawood, Hajj, 95-96/2039)

631. Abu Dawood, Manasik, 96; M. Hamidullah, Prophet of Islam, I, 500; ibid., al-Wasaik, p. 236-238, 240.

He also instructed the Haris tribe regarding grazing lands, 'If anyone cuts down a tree here, they must plant another tree in its place.'[632] Therefore, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ consistently advised preserving the environment, creating a society respectful and considerate to all creatures. A speech made by the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, to his army preparing for a campaign further illustrates this:

"Do not betray, do not deceive regarding war spoils, do not oppress, do not mutilate (ears, nose, etc.), do not kill children, elderly, or women. Do not kill cattle except for food. Do not cut down fruit-bearing trees, do not cut down a tree except if it is for something useful. Avoid all forms of cruelty. Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ orchard is among you; do not harm it. And if you encounter those who have secluded themselves in monasteries, let them worship in peace."

In Islam, environmental consciousness, cleanliness, and the responsible use of resources are deeply ingrained. The teachings emphasize the interconnectedness of all beings and the duty of humans to preserve and protect the environment. This holistic approach promotes balance, sustainability, and a respectful coexistence with nature.[633]

b. Cleanliness

Islam encourages both material and spiritual cleanliness, teaching how these should be maintained. In verses and hadiths, it is conveyed that Allah loves cleanliness and those who keep themselves clean.[634]

Throughout his life, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ paid meticulous attention to all forms of cleanliness. For instance, he emphasized wearing clean and beautiful clothes when going to the mosque, appearing in public, applying pleasant fragrances, and avoiding things that could disturb others, such as onions and garlic.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was known for his delightful fragrance during the night. (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 10) Islam establishes a system based on principles of cleanliness, neatness, and politeness. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Clean-

632. Balazuri, Conquests of Lands, p. 17; Ibrahim Canan, Islam and Environmental Health, Istanbul 1987, p. 59-60.
633. Tabari, History, Beirut 1387, III, 226-227; Ali al-Muttaki, Kenz, no: 30268. Cf. Al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-Kubra, IX, 85; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, Beirut 1987, II, 200.
634. Al-Baqarah, 222; Tirmidhi, Adab, 41/2799.

liness is half of faith," [635]underscoring the significance of cleanliness. Therefore, fundamental Islamic books often commence with detailed explanations of the importance of cleanliness and how it should be practiced.

As a basic principle in Islam, certain acts of worship are not considered permissible and acceptable without bodily and environmental cleanliness. For instance, great importance is placed on toilet etiquette, urging Muslims not to splash filth on their clothes and to perform cleansing thoroughly. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "Much of the punishment in the grave is due to not properly protecting oneself from filth." (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 26)

Islam commands Muslims to wash and keep clean body parts that are in constant contact with filth and germs, such as hands, mouth, nose, face, head, ears, neck, and feet, through ablution (wudu). Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "The key to Paradise is prayer, and the key to prayer is cleanliness." (Ahmad, III, 340)

Another aspect that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized is oral hygiene.

Therefore, he recommended using a tooth-cleaning twig (miswak) especially before ablution and at various times.[636] Muslims are encouraged to wash their hands before and after meals to bless their food. (Tirmidhi, At'imah, 39/1846)

Additionally, trimming nails, shaving pubic hair, cutting nails, cleaning armpits, and trimming beards and mustaches are practices taught by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as part of cleanliness and manners. (Al-Bukhari, Libas, 63-64)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ paid attention not only to the cleanliness of his clothes but also to their order and arrangement. Once, a man with disheveled hair and beard entered the mosque. The Prophet ﷺ gestured for him to tidy his hair and beard. (Muwatta, Sha'r, 7; Al-Bayhaqi, Shu'abu'l-Iman, V, 225)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was particular about pleasant scents and disliked unpleasant odors. "Feeling a foul smell on himself was extremely burdensome for him." (Al-Bukhari, Hiyal, 7) Once, after sweating and detecting a woolen smell on his clothes, he immediately took them off. (Abu Dawood, Libas, 19/4074)

635. Muslim, Taharah, 1.

636. Al-Bukhari, Jumu'ah, 8; Tamanni, 9; Sawm, 27; Muslim, Taharah, 42.

The companions of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were known for being self-reliant individuals. They worked until just before the Friday prayer, ensuring they left their work to attend the congregational prayer. One Friday, the mosque had an unpleasant smell, prompting the Prophet to advise them to wash before coming to the mosque. (Al-Bukhari, Jumu'ah, 16, Buyu, 15; Muslim, Jumua'h, 6)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advocated for the cleanliness of the paths people walked, places they rested, shaded areas, under trees, and along the walls.[637] He strictly prohibited littering these areas.

Muslims have built various structures, waterways, and fountains in every corner of their homeland to ensure perfect cleanliness. Muslim homes are exceptionally clean, prohibiting entry with shoes. Every area is spotlessly clean to the extent of being suitable for prayer. Keeping animals inside homes is not a common practice. Prominent scholars like Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and other Islamic figures insisted on daily sweeping of their homes, ensuring there was not even a straw of hay to be found. (Ibn Abi Shayba, V, 264/25921-2)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ even emphasized the cleanliness of animals, urging their owners to clean the dirt and dust off them. (Haythami, IV, 66-67)

Islam assigns special importance to the cleanliness of places of worship. Jabir narrates an incident when the Prophet ﷺ visited their mosque and saw a spit mark on the qibla side. He wiped it away with a branch and then said, "Bring me saffron." A young man brought some, and the Prophet applied it to the tip of the branch. With it, he cleaned the spot of saliva, saying, "This is how you should apply saffron to your mosques." (Muslim, Zuhd, 74; Masajid, 52; Al-Bayhaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, I, 255)

In another hadith, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "I was shown the deeds of my Ummah, both good and bad. Among the good deeds, I saw the removal of something harmful from the road. Among the bad deeds, I saw not cleaning the spit inside the mosque." (Al-Bayhaqi, As-Sunan al-Kubra, 8757) [638]

637. Abu Dawood, Taharah, 14/26; Ibn Majah, Taharah, 21; Ahmad, I, 299; III, 305; 381; Al-Hakim, I, 273/594.

638. Muslim, Masajid, 58. At that time, mosques did not have carpets, rugs, or similar displays, and the floor was covered with sand. That is why it occasionally happened that new converts to Islam spat there.

The above instances illustrate Islam's comprehensive teachings on cleanliness, incorporating personal hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and the sanctity of worship spaces.

c. Water

The most essential means for beautifying the environment and ensuring cleanliness is "water." Furthermore, the continuation of life depends on water, as it is the essence of all living beings. In the Qur'an: "Allah created every living creature from water" is stated. (An-Nur, 45; Al-Anbiya', 30)

The Qur'an frequently refers to "water." It explains the formation of rain, the stages of clouds turning into rain, the delicate measure of rain descending to revive dead soil, underground waters, the cycle of water, and the purification of dirty waters.[639] It emphasizes how significant these are as great blessings for humans and gives the name "mercy" to rain.[640]

Muslims who truly understand the value of water pray, "Be as dear as water!" to those who offer them water. Therefore, they attach importance to water services, especially considering it a great honor and important duty to offer water and sherbet to pilgrims near the Kaaba:

The uncle of the Prophet, Abbas ﷺ, had a vineyard in Taif. Before and after Islam, he used to transport dried grapes from there, mix them with Zamzam, and offer them to the pilgrims. His sons and grandsons continued this practice. (Ibn Hishâm, IV, 32; Ibn-i Sa'd, II, 137; Al-Waqidi, II, 838)

After sacrificing his animal during Hajj, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ rode his camel to the Kaaba. He led the noon prayer in Mecca, and then went to the location where water and sherbet were offered in the Sacred Mosque to request a drink. Abbas ﷺ said to his son:

"Fadl, go to your mother and bring the special drink for Prophet Muhammad from there!" Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ said, "No, give me the drink that everyone else is having." Abbas ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, sometimes people touch the place." The Prophet replied, "No matter, give me from the place where people are drinking." He drank the beverage offered by Abbas ﷺ. Then Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came to the Zamzam well. Abbas's ﷺ fam-

639. An-Nur, 43; Az-Zukhruf, 11; Az-Zumar, 21; Al-Waqiah, 68-70; An-Naziat, 31; Al-Furqan, 48.
640. Al-A'raf, 57; Ash-Shura, 28.

ily drew water from the well and offered it to the pilgrims. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "O sons of Abdulmuttalib, draw water! You are performing a righteous deed!" He then added, "If people were not crowding around you, I would have descended from my camel, placed the well's rope here, and drawn water like you." During this, he gestured towards his blessed shoulder. (Al-Bukhari, Hajj, 75)

Once, a Bedouin came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and said, "Can you tell me an action that will bring me closer to paradise and keep me away from hell?" The Prophet asked, "Are you doing these actions for these reasons?" The Bedouin replied, "Yes." The Prophet advised, "Always speak with justice, act justly, always speak the truth, talk appropriately as needed, and spend your wealth in the way of Allah beyond your needs." The Bedouin said, "I don't always have the strength to speak with justice, and I can't spend my surplus wealth!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded, "Then feed the hungry and spread greetings!" The Bedouin said, "This is also difficult." The Prophet asked, "Do you have camels?" The Bedouin replied, "Yes." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ continued, "Choose one of your camels, take a water container, and then fulfill the water needs of a family struggling to obtain water. It is hoped that paradise will be obligatory for you before your camel dies or your water container wears out!" The Bedouin left with the takbir and indeed, the water container was worn out, and the camel was martyred before its death. (Haythami, III, 132; Mamer bin Rashid, Al-Jâmi, I, 456; Al-Bayhaqî, Shu'abu'l-Iman, V, 64) Prophet Muhammad ﷺ narrated the virtue of offering water to people, saying, "On the Day of Judgment, a person who is destined for hell will meet a resident of paradise and say, 'O so-and-so! Do you remember that you asked me for water, and I gave you a sip?' The person will seek intercession in this way, and the believer will intercede for them. Another person, destined for paradise, will meet someone else from paradise and say, 'Do you remember that I gave you ablution water one day?' seeking intercession. That person will remember and intercede. Similarly, a person destined for hell will say to someone from paradise, 'O so-and-so! Do you remember the day you sent me on a task? I went for you on that day.' The one from paradise will intercede for him." (Ibn Majah, Adab, 8)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited a sick person from the Ansar. He placed his hand on the person's forehead and asked, "How are you feeling?" The sick person did not respond. Those around said, "O Messenger of Allah! He

did not notice you." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Then leave me alone with him!" People went out, and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ raised his hand. The sick person signaled, "Place your hand again." The Prophet said, "O so-and-so, how are you feeling?" The sick person replied, "I feel good. Two people, one black and one white, came to me." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "Which one is closer to you?" The sick person replied, "The black one is closer to me." The Prophet said, "Then good deeds are few, and bad deeds are many." The sick person said, "O Messenger of Allah, pray for me so that I can benefit!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed, "O Allah! Forgive most of his sins and complete the rest!" Then he asked, "What do you see?" The sick person replied, "May my parents be sacrificed for you! I see good. I see that goodness has increased, and evil has decreased. The black one has moved away from me." The Prophet said, "Which of your deeds is supporting you more?" The sick person replied, "While I was alive, I used to distribute water..." (Haythami, II, 322, 324)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ paid attention to the cleanliness and sweetness of the water he drank, preferred wells with sweet water, and prohibited the pollution of water.[641] Similarly, Islam requires cleanliness for the water used for ablution; it prohibits drinking and using waters whose taste, color, and smell have changed.

Another important issue to mention here is the prevention of wasting nature, the environment, and water. Almighty Allah says:

"It is He who produces gardens trellised and untrellised, date palms, crops of different shape (and taste). (He produces) olives, similar (in kind) and different (in taste). Eat of their fruit when ripened, but pay (attention to the rights on the harvest day, and do not waste. Indeed, He does not like those who waste." (Al-An'am, 141)

"Give the relative his right, and also the needy and the wayfarer. Do not squander wastefully. Indeed, the squanderers are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful." (Al-Isra, 26-27)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited Sa'd, one of his companions, who was taking ablution and using water abundantly. The Prophet asked, "What is this extravagance?" Sa'd رضي الله عنه replied, "Can there be extravagance in ablution?"

641. Al-Bukhari, Wudu', 68; Ibn Hajar, Isaba, III, 615.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Yes, even if you are taking ablution by a flowing river!" (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 48; Ahmad, II, 221)

If even during ablution for worshiping Allah, water should not be wasted, it is evident that extravagance is strictly forbidden in all situations. The teachings of Islam emphasize the conservation of resources, including water. The faithful are encouraged to use resources responsibly, avoid wastefulness, and treat the environment with care. As a fundamental element of life, water is not only appreciated for its physical properties but also for its symbolic and spiritual significance in Islamic teachings.

In conclusion, Islam underscores the vital role of water in sustaining life, emphasizes responsible use and conservation of resources, and encourages acts of kindness and charity, such as providing water to those in need. These principles reflect a holistic approach that integrates environmental consciousness with ethical conduct in the Islamic tradition.

12. Prohibitions and Harms in Islam

The Almighty has permitted His servants to benefit from what is good and pure, while admonishing those who seek to prohibit them. Then, Allah indicates that He forbids only things harmful to humans and refrains from restricting what is beneficial. He states: "Say, 'My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.'" (Al-A'raf, 33)

Sins and prohibitions act as poisons that lead individuals to destruction both materially and spiritually. However, Satan and the ego decorate them, making them appear sweet and pleasant to people. Those who are deceived by this ultimately ruin their spiritual lives. Yet, there are more abundant and beneficial lawful provisions in the world. As the saying goes, "The default in things is permissibility." In other words, if there is no strong religious evidence that something is forbidden, it is considered permissible. Therefore, prohibitions and forbidden things are exceptions.

Islam allows the temporary violation of some prohibitions in the face of necessities, unexpected conditions, compulsion, and vital dangers, but only to the extent of the need. Allah says: "Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood,

the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death], and those which are sacrificed on stone altars, and [prohibited is] that you seek decision through divining arrows. That is grave disobedience. This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion." (Al-Ma'idah, 3. See also Al-Baqarah, 173; Al-Ma'idah, 60; Al-An'am, 145; An-Nahl, 115)

However, determining and assessing necessity and need should rely on legal and objective criteria, not individual and subjective opinions.

The purpose of the prohibitions set by Islam is to protect individuals both individually and socially from all kinds of deviations and mistakes, ensuring that they live in peace and present themselves with a clean face before their Lord. Therefore, the prohibitions of Islam are a natural consequence of its nature as a religion of mercy.

On the other hand, Islam presents its doctrinal, moral, and legal principles in an interconnected manner, offering a reasonable integrity and balance. It supports its doctrinal and moral principles with legal sanctions when necessary. Thus, Islam's declaration of something as forbidden or unlawful encompasses both belief, the afterlife, morality, and legal aspects.

Trickery, indirect methods, changing the name of something forbidden, or the fact that the majority is engaged in an activity does not make it permissible. Ignorance is not an excuse in this matter, and acting with good intentions is often not sufficient. Means, like goals, must also be legitimate. It is necessary to avoid things that lead to the forbidden and any business or profit that carries a suspicion of being forbidden.

There are many wisdoms and reasons behind the prohibitions of Islam, whether we know them or not. Complying with these prohibitions is, first and foremost, a serious test of a person before their Lord. Additionally, adhering to a religious prohibition provides many worldly and otherworldly benefits to individuals. It is appropriate to mention a few forbidden things and their harms as an example of Allah's mercy and compassion towards humanity in this regard.

a. Usury

Usury, which is based on the principle of gaining wealth without reciprocation, may seem beneficial to some on the surface, but in reality, it serves no purpose other than exploiting the helplessness of those in difficult situations. Therefore, it is a significant violation of human rights. It is a malignant tumor that extinguishes religious and moral feelings and corrodes the core of the economy. It leads to the empowerment of the rich and the further oppression of the needy, creating deep divides within society. Yet, according to economists, the society that economically performs best is the one that zeros out inflation and interest rates.

Furthermore, usury has many harms, such as causing artificial price increases, weakening moral feelings like altruism, mutual aid, solidarity, love, mercy, and compassion, and fueling selfishness and the desire to gain wealth and influence.

Usury keeps people away from working, earning, and engaging in production. People accustomed to usury abandon fundamental earning methods such as agriculture, craftsmanship, and trade. What remains is gaining money with money, which is a harmful situation that reduces production.

Usury leads to great disputes and never-ending animosities. There is nothing like usury among contracts that causes enmity and animosity. The worst aspect of usury is that once a person is addicted to it, they find it hard to break free. Although earning money with ease through usury may appeal to some, it is detrimental to individuals and society. In the long run, it turns against those who consume usury since it disrupts labor-capital relations in society.

In the Quran, it is mentioned that Allah and His Messenger declared war on those involved in usury.[642] In another verse, it is stated: "Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, 'Trade is

642. Al-Baqarah, 278-279. Also, in Surah Al-Maidah, verse 33, a similar expression is used for those who spread mischief on earth and obstruct the path: "The recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive upon earth [to cause] corruption…". The Prophet also mentions a third group whom Allah has declared war against. They are those who show enmity to the friends of Allah. (Al-Bukhari, Virtues of the Companions, 38) No other rebellious or sinful person has been threatened with such severity

[just] like interest.' But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest." (Al-Baqarah, 275)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also mentioned that the worst earnings are those gained through usury.[643] He cursed those involved in usury, those who feed it, officials engaging in usurious transactions, and witnesses to such agreements. He emphasized that all are equal in sin.[644]

The Prophet's curses upon those assisting usury convey a clear message in the Islamic society that there is no place for usury, and no one should engage in it. This is done to shut all doors to evil and corruption.

Usury is considered a sin prohibited in all religions (An-Nisa, 160-161).

Thinking that an interest-free economy is impossible in today's world is incorrect. An interest-free economy is quite possible, and there are societies that have achieved this. Islam strongly prohibits usury and, in contrast, recommends partnership methods to grow wealth. This method is beneficial to everyone. In addition, Islam encourages lending for the sake of Allah (benevolent loans) to the extent possible and considers lending to someone in need as more virtuous than charity. On the other hand, by prescribing zakat and charity, Islam establishes complete economic stability and order in society.

b. Alcohol and Drugs

Alcoholic beverages and drugs are harmful substances entirely contrary to human nature. The essence is for humans to be sober and alert. Being in a state of intoxication, lethargy, and laziness is not commendable. The consequence of abandoning alertness is generally falling into deviance. Therefore, those who perceive and embrace alcohol and drug substances are inevitably prone to deviate.

Alcohol is a significant cause of corruption for both individuals and society. Consuming alcohol harms intellectual faculties. However, all benefits for this world and the hereafter can only be achieved through intellect. When intellect diminishes, a person falls into unimaginable errors. Just as a spark falling into a pool of alcohol quickly ignites, igniting the fire of evil within the brain and heart of an alcoholic is equally easy.

643. Ibn Abi Shayba, VII, 106/34552; Wakidi, III, 1016; Ibn Kathir, Bidaya, V, 13-14.
644. Muslim, Musaqah, 105-106. See also Al-Bukhari, Buyu', 24, 25, 113; Abu Dawood, Buyu', 4/3333; Tirmidhi, Buyu', 2/1206; Ibn Majah, Tijarah, 58.

Alcohol, gambling, and other things that cause material and spiritual intoxication are the most effective weapons in the hands of Satan, the eternal enemy of humanity. It is impossible for a person to attain salvation as long as they do not stay away from these. Satan, through alcohol and gambling, sows discord, enmity, and hostility among people, causing them to turn away from the remembrance of Allah, prayer, and worship, making them impoverished in the hereafter.

Those who lose in gambling are driven by the desire to win, leading to various personal and social disturbances. By looking into fortunes, people are deceived with information from the unseen, sidelining one of the most precious gifts, the intellect. In short, these bad habits ruin both the worldly and the eternal lives of individuals. Therefore, the way to escape ruin in both worlds is to abandon the sins that Allah has forbidden (Al-Ma'idah, 90-91).

Russian professor Rachinsky warns with the following insightful words:

"Satan waits inside the bottle and takes everything the alcoholics have in their hands and pockets. He even takes their last shirts and the last morsels of their children's food. Furthermore, the devil in the bottle takes the health, chastity, conscience, joy, prosperity, and happiness of the people he enslaves. It breaks their spirit to work and their feelings. Think about how much food, drink, and effort are wasted to produce so many types of alcoholic beverages. If all the billions of kilograms of bread, plums, figs, and grapes scattered recklessly into the alcohol swamp by people were gathered together, there would never be hunger or food shortages in the world. Let alone humans, every kind of food to feed animals until they are full could be found."

The budget of the devil in the bottle is not precisely known. Those who follow the devil pay the taxes on the alcohol they use promptly. However, the same individuals never pay the debts they are obliged to pay to others. The devil always collects his receivables on time and in full. Even if these people do not have the money to pay, they either steal or kill, or sell their and their families' honor and virtue, they somehow pay the devil's tax.

The lives of thousands of valuable and distinguished people have been ruined due to alcohol. They have lost all their values. Alcohol and alcoholism have harmed the health of millions of great individuals. Just as solid and large buildings cannot be built on a swampy ground, it is not possible to establish a permanent order and a peaceful life in a nation addicted to alcohol

and debauchery. Therefore, reform activities should begin by waking up and sobering up an entire nation from this disastrous situation.[645]

According to the latest research reports of the World Health Organization covering thirty countries, 85% of crimes (60-70% within the family), 50% of rapes, 50% of violent incidents, 70% of those who beat their spouses, 60% of those who do not go to work, and 40-50% of mental illness cases are caused by alcohol. Mental disabilities in children born to alcoholics are in the 90s. The risk of an alcoholic woman having a disabled child is as high as 35%. Because alcohol hinders growth in the womb and post-birth development, causing intellectual retardation, short stature, and behavioral disorders in children. Children of alcohol addicts, living in a constant atmosphere of conflict and violence, are at high risk of emotional breakdown and behavioral disorders. Therefore, most of these children fail in school and life.[646]

Traffic accidents, suicides, incitement to crime, family breakdown, disruption of work life, loss of profession, and various economic losses are also among the commonly seen damages of alcohol. Alcohol, which stupefies the mind, distorts a person's vision and thoughts, and destroys their property.

According to an official report of the British Government, the burden on the British economy due to alcohol consumption, leading to fights, injuries, hospital expenses, and other situations, is around £20 billion (approximately $30 billion) annually.[647]

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

"Never drink alcohol because it is the key to all evils." (Ibn Majah, Ashribah, 1)

"What intoxicates in large quantities, a small quantity of it is also forbidden." (Abu Dawood, The Book of Drinks, 5/3681; Tirmidhi, Ashribah, 3/1865)

Therefore, one should not be deceived by those who say, "There is nothing wrong with drinking as long as you don't get drunk." Islam aims

645. Grigory Petrov, The Ideal Teacher, Istanbul 2005, p. 48-52.
646. Musa Tosun, "Alcohol" entry, Encyclopedia of Diyanet Islam, XXI, 463.
647. The Guardian, Saturday March 27 2004, "Sobering thoughts about a claim", Sean COUGHAN. Due to the excessive consumption of alcohol in British society, medical scientists constantly warn the British government to curb the increasing rate of alcohol consumption. The harms of alcohol to the economy and the human body are emphasized in government reports. Efforts are being made to make the sale of alcohol more difficult by reducing the working hours of places that sell alcohol, moving alcohol bottles from shelves to behind counters, and preventing promotions.

to completely close the paths leading to sin, preventing evil in the best way possible. It establishes prohibitions with great wisdom to be deterrent and gives the most suitable punishments to those who violate them. This situation shows how much Islam values human beings, embracing them with infinite compassion and mercy.

What is said about alcoholic beverages is also applicable to drugs. Narcotics such as morphine, opium, cocaine, heroin, and cannabis are also forbidden. Narcotics used for medical purposes and under the supervision of a doctor are exceptions. Those who use narcotic substances cannot use Allah's greatest blessing, their mind and will, cannot control themselves, and do not know their profits and losses.

c. Adultery

Adultery has always been a behavior considered entirely wrong and ugly by human reason, moral and legal systems, and all divine religions. Adultery leads to the mixing of lineage, the dissolution of the family, and the breakdown of bonds such as kinship, neighborliness, and friendship, shaking the fundamental spiritual and moral values of society. It enslaves humans to physical pleasures, trampling their dignity and honor.

Prostitution leads to the widespread of the trade of women, their use as a means of livelihood, and the emergence of female traffickers. It tarnishes the honor of motherhood. When adultery spreads in a society:

1. Generations become mixed, and children either do not exist or are left fatherless.
2. Children with unknown fathers are left unprotected, without support and care, deprived of a healthy and comfortable life. Children raised without proper parental guidance become spoiled individuals harmful to society.
3. Since the father of children is unknown, it cannot be known who will inherit the wealth, resulting in the loss of rights and justice.
4. Only women are left to care for children who are the joint product of a woman and a man. This is a great injustice to women.
5. When the family institution collapses, social life is largely paralyzed.
6. When the family falls apart, the spiritual and emotional needs of men, women, and children cannot be adequately met. People who are not provided with needs such as love, being loved, showing respect, being respected, trust-

ing, seeking refuge, sharing troubles, and helping each other become psychologically distressed.

7. The uncertainty of generations leads to dangers such as brothers and close relatives unknowingly marrying each other.

8. The institution of kinship disappears. People can only recognize their mothers and grandmothers, and sometimes even that may not be possible. Therefore, the new generation loses the closest affection and trust within the society.

9. Adultery, casual unions, and sexual contacts, inherently arousing jealousy in humans, lead to conflicts and fights ending in death. This destroys personal safety. Marriage prevents such conflicts and fights.[648]

On the other hand, adultery has many health harms. Many communicable diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea are observed in people trapped in the swamp of adultery. In today's world, the deadly disease AIDS, which medical science cannot cure, is largely transmitted through adultery.

Therefore, exchanging the happiness of marriage for the filthiness of adultery is nothing but foolishness and ignorance! Allah, who loves His servants very much, never wishes them to fall into such ugliness. Therefore, not only committing adultery but also approaching it is forbidden, as Allah commands:

"Do not approach lewdness, open or concealed!" (Al-An'am, 151)

"Do not approach adultery, for it is indeed a shameless and evil way." (Al-Isra, 32)

According to these divine orders, one should not approach any way or means that paves the way for adultery. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ expresses how harmful looking at the forbidden is to the heart:

"Looking at the forbidden is like one of Satan's poisoned arrows. Whoever gives it up due to fear of Allah, Allah bestows on him an iman (faith) in his heart that he will continue to feel sweetness in." (Al-Hakim, IV, 349/7875; al-Haythami, VIII, 63)

For this reason, Islam takes preventive measures such as men and women covering themselves as described by the religion, avoiding behaviors that

648. Prof. Dr. Suleyman Uludag, Wisdom behind Commands and Prohibitions in Islam, p. 171-172.

might provoke each other, not allowing a woman and a stranger man to be alone together, and preventing openness and obscenity in society. It condemns words, looks, and intimate relationships that might provoke people. Islam goes beyond that and entrusts individuals and families with the duty of educating children, not delaying marriage unless necessary, facilitating marriage, and keeping religious and moral values alive in society. In other words, Islam acts on the principle of "preventing it from happening" rather than "punishing the sin." Indeed, throughout Islamic history, the punishment for adultery has been very rare.

However, if Islam punishes a person who still commits a sin despite all these precautions, it is truly justice and mercy for both the individual and society.[649] Through the punishment, the individual is saved from ruining their eternal life and falling into greater distress in the hereafter. Others in society are protected from the harm of the committed sin, and they learn from the punishment to stay away from wrongdoing.

On the other hand, Allah ~jallah jalaluhu~, by giving some worldly troubles to the sinners, wants to warn them and protect them from greater harms and eternal torment. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

"When adultery and fornication become widespread in a nation, and they commit these sins openly, plagues and diseases that have never been seen before spread among them." (Ibn Majah, Fitan, 22; Al-Hakim, IV, 583/8623)

In a narration from Ibn Abbas, it is stated:

"If adultery becomes widespread in a society, deaths among them increase." (Muwatta', Jihad, 26; Ibn Majah, Fitan, 22)

Adultery, which causes so much harm in this world, also humiliates and exposes the individual to bitter torment in the hereafter. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

"Tonight, in my dream, two beings (Gabriel and Michael) came and lifted me, saying, 'Let's go.' I went with them… We reached a structure like an oven. In there, incomprehensible screams and cries mixed with each other. We understood that there were many naked men and women inside. As flames rose from below them, they screamed and cried. When I asked the angels who

649. An-Nur, 2.

they were: 'Adulterous men and women,' they said." (Al-Bukhari, Ta'bir, 48; Janaiz, 93; Tirmidhi, Ru'ya, 10/2295)

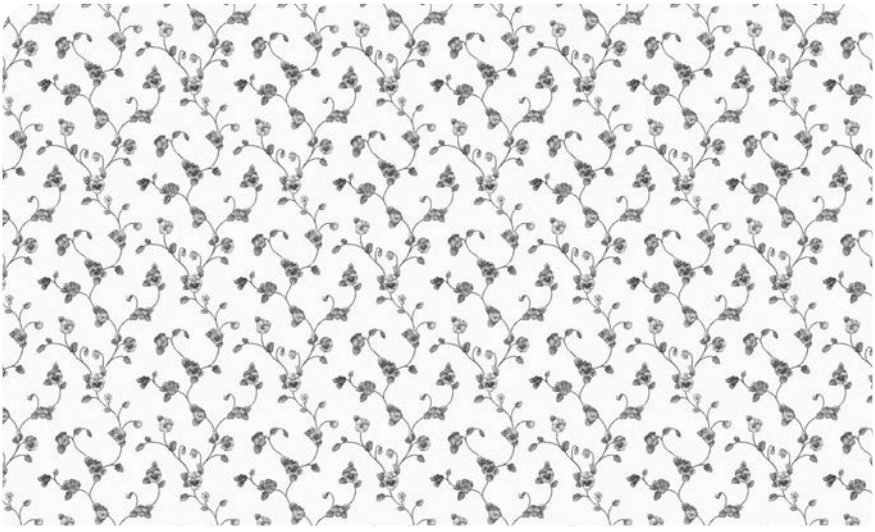
"... During the Miraj (ascension), Gabriel ﷺ and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encountered a group in torment. In front of the people, there were deliciously cooked meats and raw and rotten meat. They left the beautiful food and ate the dirty and rotten meat. When the Prophet asked who they were, Gabriel ﷺ said: 'They are the men who go to the forbidden women, leaving their legitimate wives, and the women who go to forbidden men, leaving their husbands.'" (al-Haythami, I, 67, 68)

Acts like sodomy and lesbianism are considered as great sins, just like adultery. Anyone with sound reason understands how bad and harmful these actions are.

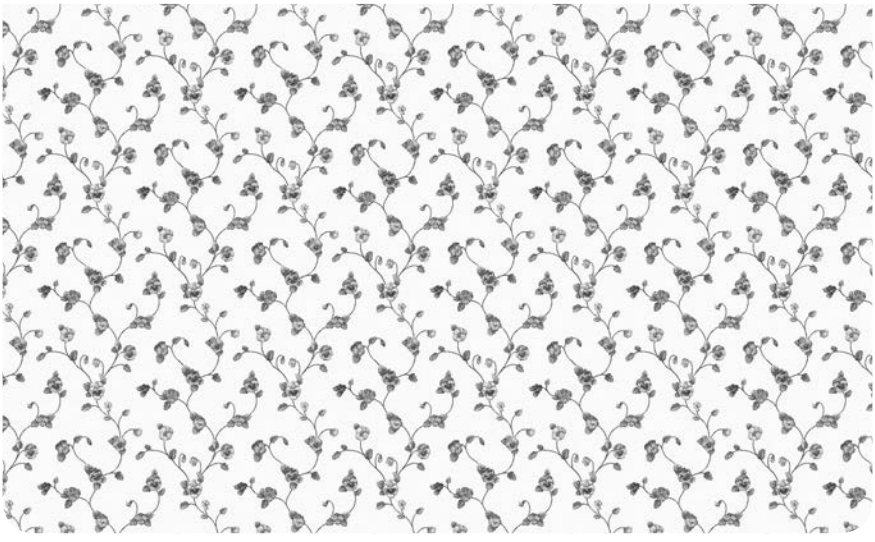
In addition to these sins mentioned here, Islam strongly prohibits other major sins that are harmful to humanity in many ways, such as murder, practicing magic, making false accusations of adultery, disobedience to parents, consuming the wealth of orphans, fleeing from the battlefield during war, lying, oppression, betrayal, speaking behind people's backs (backbiting), false accusations, theft, committing sins in the sanctuary of Mecca, etc.[650]



650. Al-Bukhari, Shahadah, 10; Wasaya, 23; Muslim, Birr, 55, 56; Abu Dawood, Adab, 35/4875; Ahmad, III, 154, 135. For details, see Dr. Murat Kaya, Life Standards from Our Prophet, Istanbul 2007, p. 308-458.



THE SIXTH PART



ISLAM AND KNOWLEDGE

1. Islam Encourages Knowledge

Islam has never had any conflict or dispute with "knowledge." On the contrary, Islam not only does not hinder knowledge but strongly encourages it and makes learning obligatory for all Muslims. Furthermore, scientific discoveries have never contradicted Islamic principles; rather, they have consistently affirmed them. Why would they contradict? Knowledge explores the principles set by Allah upon the creations He has made. Islam is a divine religion sent by Allah, preserved in its original form. Therefore, the source of knowledge and Islam is the same. As knowledge advances, the limitless power, might, and wisdom of Allah become more evident, increasing people's faith in Him. Hence, knowledge is an integral part of Islam.

The first command of Allah Almighty to the Prophet is "Read!" Following this command, the attention of believers is drawn to the creation of man, encouraging research in this direction. Then, the command "Read!" is repeated, emphasizing the generosity of our Lord who teaches with the pen and instructs mankind in things unknown, indicating that He will bestow many favors upon His servants who read and investigate. (Al-Alaq, 1-5)

Subsequently, in the revealed verses, oaths are taken by the pen and what is written, the word "book" is repeatedly emphasized, and praise is given to knowledge, scholars, reasoning, contemplation, and reflection.[651] Therefore, reading, writing, education, teaching, research, contemplation, and reasoning have become fundamental characteristics of this religion.

Allah, who possesses knowledge and is aware of everything hidden and manifest, is indicated by many beautiful names. Thus, humans should strive to attain a share from Allah's attribute of knowledge, as knowledge is the greatest treasure and the most significant power. Numerous verses and hadiths encourage people to seek knowledge. Here are some examples:

651. Qalam, 1; Zukhruf, 2; Dukhan, 2; Luqman, 27; An-Nisa, 127; Az-Zumar, 1; Al-Mu'min,

"Allah bears witness that there is no deity but He, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (Ali-Imran, 18)

"Allah increases those who have been guided, in guidance." (Al-Mujadalah, 11)

Say: 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge.'" (Ta-Ha, 114)

"…If you do not know, ask those who possess the knowledge." (Al-Anbiya, 7)

"Indeed, We present these examples for the people, but none understands them except those of knowledge." (Al-Ankabut, 43)

"Allah elevates those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, in degrees." (Al-Mujadalah, 11)

In the Quran, it is narrated that for Muslims to take as an example, Zulqarnain ﷺ built a strong barrier by melting masses of iron and pouring molten copper over it [652], Allah softened iron for Dawood عليه السلام, who then made wide and measured armor [653], Allah caused molten copper to flow like a river for Sulayman عليه السلام, who then made temples, large pools resembling basins, and vessels that were difficult to carry [654], Daud and Sulayman (peace be upon them) understood the language of animals and formed armies from them, and a knowledgeable person who possessed knowledge from the scripture brought the throne of Queen Bilqis from far distances in the blink of an eye [655].

Allah has sent the prophets as guides and leaders for humanity in every aspect. He gave each of them different miracles and made them masters not only in matters of the Hereafter but also in worldly discoveries. The pioneers of today's material and spiritual progress, advancements in science and art, are the prophets. For example, Nuh عليه السلام, who stayed on the water for a long time with the ship he built and established the shipbuilding industry; Ibrahim عليه السلام, who turned the place into a garden when thrown into the fire and showed that non-burning clothes could be made; Yaqub عليه السلام, who sensed the smell of Yusuf عليه السلام from far away and indicated the transfer of scent; Musa عليه السلام, who made water gush from the stones he struck with his staff and showed that we

652. Al-Kahf, 95-96.
653. Saba', 10-13; Al-Anbiya, 80.
654. An-Naml, 16-18, 22-26, 40.
655. Al-Ankabut, 48.



could do the same with drilling machines; Sulayman عليه السلام, who rode the wind and traveled a two-month journey in one day; Isa عليه السلام, who temporarily saved the patients he treated from death; Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who ascended to the heavens in one night and had his heart opened and filled with knowledge, faith, and wisdom. These miracles are repeatedly mentioned in the Quran for the believers.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emerged as an illiterate prophet in a society where reading and writing were not widespread. He had neither read a book before nor written anything. The wisdom behind this is to show people that the Quran was revealed by Allah and not from himself.

Islam establishes a strong connection between the pursuit of knowledge and faith. The first command given to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was "Read." This command was followed by drawing attention to human creation, encouraging research in this direction. The subsequent repetition of the command to read emphasized Allah's immense generosity in teaching humans with the pen and revealed that those who read and investigate will be rewarded with many favors. (Al-Alaq, 1-5)

The Quran repeatedly mentions the virtues of writing, reading, education, research, contemplation, and reasoning. Allah praises knowledge, scholars, and the act of contemplating. Therefore, reading, writing, education, and contemplation have become fundamental characteristics of this religion.

In the Quran, true scholars are mentioned alongside Allah and angels, signifying an unmatched honor. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encouraged his followers to seek knowledge:

"Acquiring knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim." (Ibn Majah, Mukaddimah, 17)

"If someone embarks on a path to seek knowledge, Allah will guide him to a path leading to Paradise. Angels spread their wings over the seeker of knowledge, pleased with what he is doing. Everything in the heavens and the earth, even the fish in the water, seeks forgiveness for the scholar. The superiority of the scholar over others is like the full moon among the stars. Scholars are the heirs of the prophets. Prophets do not leave behind gold or silver; they leave behind knowledge. Whoever takes hold of this inheritance receives a great share." (Abu Dawood, Ilm, 1/3641; Tirmidhi, Ilm, 19/2682)



"The most superior form of charity is for a Muslim to learn knowledge and then teach it to his Muslim brothers." (Ibn Majah, Mukaddimah, 20)

"Blessed are those who accompany the knowledgeable and wise, while avoiding those with low character and sinful nature." (Abu Nuaym, Hilyah, III, 202-203)

"A believer does not satisfy his appetite for good (knowledge) until he reaches Paradise." (Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 19/2686)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ appointed literate companions in Medina to teach writing to Muslims. Abdullah bin Said, Ubadah bin Samit, Hafsa bint Omar, Shifa bint Abdullah were among those companions assigned to teach writing. (Introduction to Islam -Youth's Knowledge of Islam-, p. 109)

The great Islamic scholar Fudayl bin Iyaz stated: "A scholar, an active practitioner of knowledge, and a teacher are referred to as 'Great' in the heavens." (Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 19/2685)

According to Islamic understanding, there are three essential books to be read:

a) The Quran. Derived sciences include theology, jurisprudence, exegesis, hadith, recitation, tajweed, etc.

b) The Universe. Derived sciences include physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, astronomy, botany, geography, engineering, etc.

c) Human. Derived sciences include medicine, psychology, sociology, history, anthropology, etc.

Therefore, in Islam, there is no distinction between religious and non-religious knowledge. The Quran encourages studying human beings and the entire universe. All sciences, in their attempt to understand the verses, lead to turning towards Allah. Thus, the sciences related to understanding the Quran, human beings, and the universe should be pursued collectively.

In conclusion, religion and knowledge are external to human beings and independent of them. Humans cannot create them; they can only discover or comprehend them.



2. The Passion for Knowledge Among Muslims

The Prophet Muhammad, during the Battle of Badr, requested the teaching of reading and writing for ten children as ransom from the captives.[656] Just as he beautifully taught everything to his companions, he also instructed them to treat well those who came to learn.[657] Abu Harun al-Abdi narrated: "We, the young ones, used to go to Abu Sa'id to learn. When he saw us, he would say, 'Welcome, the ones entrusted by Prophet Muhammad. He said, "People will follow you, coming from all corners of the world to learn the religion thoroughly. When they come, treat them carefully and kindly.'" (Tirmidhi, Ilm, 4/2650; Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 17, 22)

The Prophet's grandson, Hasan ﵁, would gather his own children and his brother's children, saying, "My children, my nephews, you are the youth of today, but very soon you will become elders. Therefore, you must learn knowledge. Whoever cannot memorize what he learns, let him write it down at home." (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 43/517)

When the Prophet passed away, his cousin Abdullah was around thirteen years old. Through the Prophet's supplication, he later became a great scholar. (Al-Bukhari, Wudu', 10)

His efforts on the path of knowledge, as he expressed, were as follows: "When the Prophet passed away, I said to one of the Ansar (helpers), 'Let's go to the companions of the Prophet and ask them about things we don't know. They are many today, but they will decrease tomorrow.' He replied, 'I am amazed, Ibn Abbas, when among the companions of the Prophet, and you think people will need you?!' He refused to accompany me. I then started chasing and questioning the companions to learn from them. When I heard that someone had a particular Hadith, I would immediately go to his house. If it was noon, he might be resting. I would use my clothes as a pillow, lean on his door, and wait for him to come out for the noon prayer. Sometimes the wind would blow dust in my face. If I asked to wake him up, they would do so promptly. However, if I wanted him to narrate the Hadith comfortably,

656. Ahmed, I, 247; Wakidi, I, 129; Ibn Sa'd, II, 22.
657. For rich examples on this subject, see Osman Nuri Topbaş, The Profession of the Prophet: Human Education (Education Guide 2), Istanbul 2009.



and I to listen comfortably, I wouldn't disturb him until he came out on his own. When the companion came out and saw me, he would say, 'O Prophet's cousin! Why did you bother? You could have sent a message, and I would have come to you!' I would reply, 'It is more appropriate for me to come to you after meeting all your needs,' and then I would ask him about the Hadith." (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 47/573-576)

Ibn Abbas described how eagerly he pursued even the minutest details, saying, "I had a strong desire to know which two wives were addressed in the 4th verse of the Surah Tahrim. I wanted to ask Umar so much that I used to wait for an opportunity and occasionally went with him in the hope of asking him, but I could not find any chance to ask him." (Al-Bukhari, Mazalim, 25)

Ubadah bin Walid narrates, "My father and I went to the area where the Ansar lived to gain knowledge before they passed away. The first person we encountered was Abu al-Yasar[658], a companion of the Prophet, accompanied by his servant carrying a bag full of sheets. After learning some information from this companion, I visited other companions and narrated the information I learned from them in detail." (Muslim, Zuhd, 74)

Examples like these abound. Indeed, our hadith books have dedicated sections specifically for "Knowledge."

Muslims, by adhering to the commands of Allah and His Messenger, have been meticulous in matters of reading, learning, and teaching. The Prophet's mosque in the back, known as Suffa, became the first residential university for Muslims. There, the Prophet trained the Companions, who became the happiest students in history. Following in the bright footsteps of the Prophet, Muslims, after establishing or conquering cities, built schools, libraries, bath-houses, and soup kitchens next to mosques. In these schools, besides religious sciences, various other sciences such as medicine, geography, mathematics, and astronomy were also studied. Astronomy and geography were necessary for determining the Qiblah and prayer times, and strong mathematics was needed for zakat and inheritance division. Knowledge of sciences like history

658. His name is Ka'b bin Amr. He was present at the Pledges of Al-Aqaba and the Battle of Badr at the age of 20. He was the last of the participants of the Battle of Badr to pass away among the Companions. He passed away in Medina in the year 55 AH. May Allah be pleased with all of them!

and geography was essential for researching the mentioned peoples in the Quran. Therefore, Muslims engaged in all beneficial knowledge. [659]

Our ancestors, who knew the value of knowledge well, held deep respect for scholars. When Sultan Mehmed ascended to the throne, he appointed his teacher Molla Gurani as Vizier, but Gurani (d. 893/1487) declined, choosing to engage in scholarly pursuits as a judge. Later, Sultan Mehmed assigned him as the judge in Bursa. At one point, a relative of the Sultan brought a proposal against Islamic rulings. Gurani was so angered by this that he tore up the Sultan's order and beat the officer who brought the document. Gurani, fearing that the Sultan's invitation was for him, gave him advice without hesitation, even if it was harsh. Sultan Mehmed did not shy away from confronting Sultan and ministers by name, and he would not bow to anyone.[660] Daily allowances for most officials were two or three akçe according to the conditions of the time, while Sultan Mehmed allocated fifty akçe per day for scholars. He assigned two hundred akçe per day for some scholars like the astronomer and mathematician Ali Kuşçu, and he granted generous stipends to all of his family and relatives. Sultan Mehmed assigned varying amounts to students based on their ranks. According to historian Latifi, Sultan Mehmed sometimes visited the scholars' homes to encourage them to study and listened to the lectures. On some nights, he would tour the madrasas with the scholars, urging students to study. In the intellectual gatherings he established at the palace, he organized debates in four or five languages with intelligent people from Europe and Asia.[661]

Sultan Mehmed often organized debates for scholars. Additionally, he frequently attended the scholars' sessions and listened to their lecture notes. Once, he attended the class of Alauddin Ali Tusi (d. 887/1482) in the Zeyrek Mosque. The Shah and his vizier Mahmud Pasha sat on either side of the teacher. The teacher easily handled difficult expressions and solved the most intricate issues with such skill that Sultan, overwhelmed with satisfaction and joy, could not sit still and appeared as if he would fly. After the lesson, Tusi was rewarded with a robe, and ten thousand dirhams. Each student also received five hundred dirhams.[662]

659. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 243-264.
660. Mustafa Runyun - Osman Keskioglu, Scholars of Knowledge in the Era of Fatih and That Era, p. 9.
661. Mustafa Runyun, ibid., p. 6-7, 13, 18.
662. Mustafa Runyun, ibid., p. 10-11.

3. The Muslims' Contributions to Knowledge

Throughout history, various civilizations emerged in different regions, influencing each other and advancing scientific knowledge. Muslims, with humility, assimilated knowledge from previous civilizations, expressed gratitude, and, after developing this knowledge, made significant contributions to the world by disseminating it globally. The Quran's encouragement and the Prophet's saying, "Wisdom is the lost property of the believer; he has the most right to it wherever he finds it,"[663] served as motivators for Muslims in this pursuit.

Muslims, raised with a conscientious understanding of knowledge from an early age, competed to collect the scientific heritage of past generations. Soon, the most important books and eminent scholars worldwide began to flow into Islamic countries. Muslims translated these works into Arabic, rectified errors, and, after accepting the truths, went on to produce advanced-level books. For instance, Galen's Anatomy Book, considered the greatest medical text until then, was translated by Islamic scholars. They meticulously examined its contents, corrected inaccuracies, and enhanced it.

Emir Celebi argued that simply transmitting previous works without adding personal experiences to one's own writings is incorrect. He emphasized the importance of tailoring medicine to specific locations due to variations in climate and plant growth, using Ibn Sina's Canon as an example.

Muslims approached scientific research with a sense of worship. They initiated astronomical observations around the year 800 with Ahmed al-Nihavendi and later established large observatories. They improved the astrolabe to measure the heights of the Sun, Moon, stars, and other planets, as well as time, mountain heights, and well depths. Through their studies, ancient fixed stars were corrected, new star catalogs were prepared, and numerous discoveries were made, connecting the movement of fixed stars with planets, achieving significant progress in calculating planetary movements.[664]

Muslims contributed greatly to various fields, including Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, and Pharmacy. For example, Ibn Sina, with his discoveries in 29 different subjects, led European scholars. In mathematics, Al-Khwarizmi laid the foundations of

663. Tirmidhi, 'Ilm, 19/2687; Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 15.
664. Prof. Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Science, p. 113-134.

algebra with his book "Al-Jabr and Al-Muqabala." Musa's sons accurately measured the Earth's circumference. Al-Biruni proved that the Earth revolves both around itself and the Sun, and they even measured the Earth's diameter. The laws Al-Biruni formulated in this regard were later recognized in Europe as the "Al-Biruni rule." Battani calculated the solar year within 24 seconds of the modern calculation. Muslim scholars were pioneers in many scientific fields, leaving an indelible mark on human progress. [665]

These examples underscore how Muslims engaged with knowledge consciously and productively, making significant contributions to humanity. Muslims conducted scientific research not arbitrarily but with a clear purpose, aiming to know Allah better and serve His creation to earn His pleasure. As a result, they avoided engaging in useless knowledge and refrained from using science to the detriment of humanity.

In contrast to the contemporary claims of non-Muslims, who assert adherence to ethical principles in scientific research and application, these principles are often overlooked, as evidenced by their misuse of wealth and scientific superiority for global exploitation. Muslims' approach to knowledge, marked by a balance between material well-being and spiritual values, offers valuable lessons for the world to consider in its pursuit of scientific and technological advancement.

4. Reasons for the Decline of Muslims in Knowledge

In the darkest era when humanity lived in ignorance, Islam emerged, teaching people all the necessary true principles, leading to a scientific advancement. As a result, a period of intellectual elevation began, and humanity quickly reached the pinnacle of material and spiritual progress. During that time, Muslims effectively utilized their time, sacrificing sleep, comfort, and basic needs to embark on extensive journeys in pursuit of knowledge. They traversed cities, spending time and resources to acquire knowledge tirelessly. Children were given rigorous education from a young age, instilling a strong

665. For rich resources and examples on this subject, see the following works: Prof. Dr. Fuat Sezgin, Science and Technology in Islam I-V, Frankfurt, 2004 (Islam in Science and Technology I-V, Ankara 2007) and other books; Prof. Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Islamic Science, An Illustrated Study, World of Islam Festival Pub. Co. Ltf., England, 1976 (Islam and Science, Istanbul 1989); Dr. Sigrid Hunke, Allah's Sun over the Occident - Our Arabic Heritage, Germany 1960 (Islam Sun Rises over Europe, Istanbul 1991); Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 243-264; http://www.1001inventions.com

passion for learning. They reached a point where they were engaged in intellectual pursuits continuously. For instance, Ali Kuşçu, on his way to Sultan

Mehmed II, wrote a mathematical book and presented it to the Sultan, naming it "Risâle-i Muhammediye" after him. Similarly, on a journey with Mehmed II towards Uzun Hasan, he wrote a work on astronomy named "Risâle-i Fethiye."[666]

After centuries of such endeavors, despite Islam maintaining its principles, Muslims began to regress in science and technology. The reasons for this decline should be sought in factors beyond Islam's fundamentals.

- Firstly, Muslim intellectual and cultural centers, notably Baghdad, fell victim to the brutality of Mongols, and Cordoba-Granada succumbed to Christian barbarism. Libraries, along with hundreds of thousands of manuscripts, were set ablaze. Scholars were not spared from massacres, and the works developed over centuries were destroyed in a matter of days. Rebuilding this lost wealth would require centuries of effort, substantial budgets, and knowledge of the works and methods of those who previously built that civilization. Noble characters and great minds are not readily available; they are also a grace and favor from Allah. [667]
- The enlightened individuals, after a while, shifted their focus from metaphysical and theological philosophy, borrowed from the Greeks, to practical sciences based on experience. They neglected their intellectual prowess in favor of fruitless theological debates, devoid of any tangible results. Although Muslims made progress in positive sciences, such as medicine, it was not as profound as in other fields, and the expertise in positive sciences was not cultivated to the same extent.[668]
- Over time, people drifted away from Islam, and incompetent individuals assumed leadership roles, leading society into decadence. Consequently, the seriousness in scientific pursuits diminished, giving way to personal interests.

Despite these challenges, success is achievable by adhering to certain principles. Allah has established immutable laws in the universe. Those who

666. Mustafa Runyun - Osman Keskioglu, Scholars of Knowledge in the Era of Fatih and That Era, p. 13. The voluminous work of Abdu'l-Fattah Abu Ghudda, entitled Safahat min Sabri al-Ulama ala Shadidi al-Ilm wa al-Tahsil, describes the hardships and efforts endured by Muslim scholars in pursuit of knowledge and the solid methods they employed to acquire knowledge.
667. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, p. 259
668. Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi, What the World Lost with the Decline of Muslims, p. 166-167, 182.

comply with these laws achieve success. For example, qualities like knowledge, integrity, diligence, and organizational skills directly influence the outcome of business. If a non-Muslim possesses these traits and a Muslim lacks them, it is normal for the non-Muslim to be wealthier. The consequences of obeying or disobeying divine laws in nature are generally witnessed in this world.

Indeed, while preparing for the conquest of Istanbul, Fatih Sultan Mehmed relied on spiritual forces to reach his goal, yet he never refrained from gathering material resources and resorting to all means. While inventing cannons never seen before and building fortresses, and taking all apparent measures, he also sought the prayers of the saints and himself prayed and supplicated to Allah. Two days before entering Istanbul, on Sunday, May 27, he commanded his soldiers to fast, preparing for the conquest with spiritual purification and to become worthy of the praise of Prophet Muhammad, the unique leader of humanity.[669]

Sometimes, even when a person fulfills all conditions, they may still be defeated. At such times, while continuing to do what is required, one should also consider this as a hidden manifestation of Divine mercy.

Said Halim Pasha evaluates the matter as follows: Muslim nations found a fresh life by entering Islam and reached a high civilization they had never seen before. With Islam, they bestowed more justice, equality, and knowledge upon humanity. After establishing a high civilization that also contributed to the development of Western civilization, they gradually regressed and almost returned to their lives before Islam. The failure to completely rid themselves of the influence of their pre-Islamic cultures played a significant role in this regression, as they misunderstood and misapplied the rulings of religion. Although the reasons for the decline of each Muslim nation may be different, since this situation occurred at the same time, people mistakenly thought that Islam was the cause of their decline.

The second reason for the decline of Muslims is the intense and unceasing hostility that arose between the Islamic world and Western Christian nations. Endless wars resulting from this enmity visibly hindered the progress and development of Muslim nations. Furthermore, this mutual hatred prevented Muslim nations from recognizing and benefiting from the rapidly developing civilization in other worlds.

669. Mustafa Runyun - Osman Keskioglu, Scholars of Knowledge in the Era of Fatih and That Era, p. 21.

The culmination of the progress made by rising nations today will be the moral, social, and political principles brought by Islam. Therefore, the development of Muslims can only be achieved through the principles and foundations of Islam. This rule is as certain and solid as the laws of physics.[670]

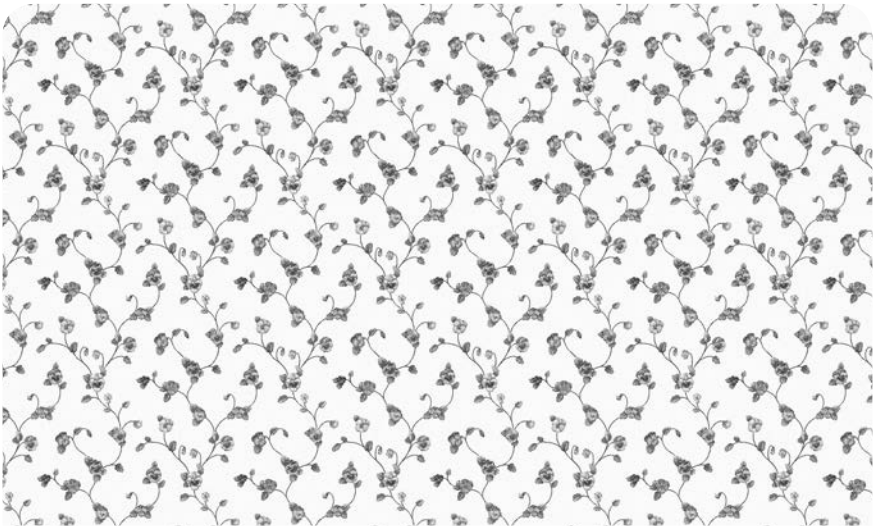
According to Said Halim Pasha, intellectuals in Muslim countries have distanced themselves from their religion and clashed with the people, thus they could not bring any significant innovations despite all their knowledge, logic, and thoughts. According to him, it is necessary to establish "unity of purpose," which is essential between the people and the intellectual class.[671]

Said Halim Pasha, who says "there is never any doubt that the only salvation is found in Islam," believes that every Muslim, a good Muslim, and even the best among Muslims, should aim to be the most mature among Muslims. Because the best among Muslims means the best among people, so this is the noblest goal that people can aspire to. As a nation, it is necessary to live in complete solidarity with other Muslim nations, respect their freedom and traditions, help them develop and rise, and save those who are under the rule of foreigners or are in such danger. For the unity of Islam is a counterpart of the unity in the universe, where countless forces, elements, and factors exist in perfect harmony. All greatness and truth arise from this state.[672]

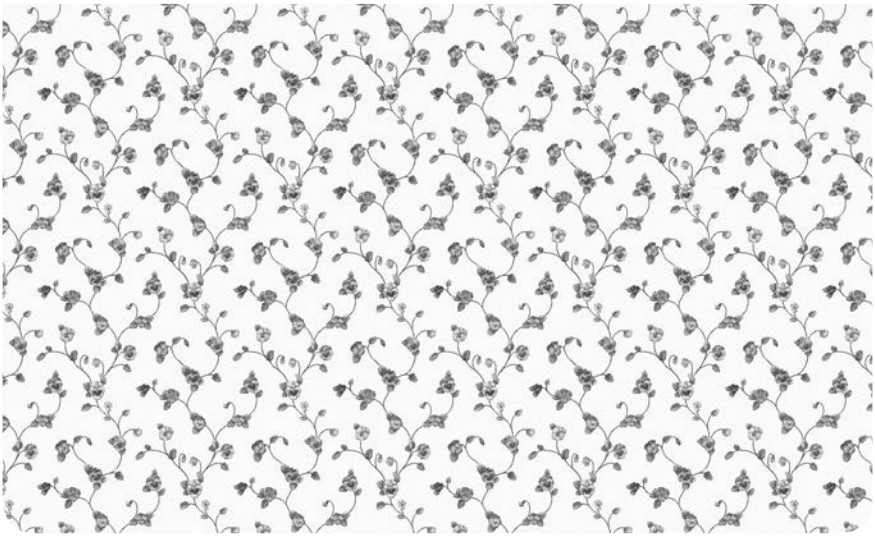
Furthermore, Muslims need to understand that the pinnacle of progress lies in the moral, social, and political principles brought by Islam. Deviating from these principles results in regression. Unity among Muslims is vital, respecting the freedom and traditions of other Muslim nations, assisting them in development, and rescuing those under foreign rule. The unity of Islam is akin to the unity in the universe, where countless forces, elements, and factors coexist harmoniously, creating magnificence and truth.

In addition to understanding the cunning of enemies and disrupting their schemes, enlightening the populace, breaking free from personal interests, and focusing on noble goals, appointing honest, diligent, and capable individuals to administrative positions, emphasizing education for all, allocating more budget for research and development, and teaching people the value of time and effective utilization are essential for resurgence.

670. Said Halim Pasha, Our Crises and Last Works, ed. M. E. Duzdag, Istanbul 2009, p. 162-164, 177, 179.
671. Said Halim Pasha, ibid., p. 168-169.
672. Said Halim Pasha, ibid., p. 180-182.



THE SEVENTH PART



1. His Childhood and Youth

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Chosen One, graced our world in Mecca on the Monday morning of the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal, corresponding to the 20th of April in the year 571 AD, just before sunrise. His noble lineage traces back to Adnan[673], the most honorable descendant of Ishmael. The Prophet ﷺ belonged to the Quraysh tribe and was a member of the purest and most prestigious family, both on his father's and mother's side.

His revered father, Abdullah, had gone to Syria for trade purposes and passed away in Medina, two months before the birth of the Prophet. To ensure a healthier upbringing in a region with better climate conditions and to foster eloquence in Arabic, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was nurtured by the fortunate woman Halima Hatun until the age of four. At the age of six, his mother, Amina, accompanied by their servant Umm Ayman, took the Prophet to Medina to visit his father Abdullah's grave. On their way back, Amina fell ill and passed away in the village of Abwa, where she was buried. Thus, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ returned to Mecca as an orphan from both parents. He was now in the care of his grandfather, but at the age of eight, his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, also passed away. Subsequently, his uncle Abu Talib took him in and took care of him with great sacrifice.

The Prophet's childhood and youth were characterized by great gentleness and nobility. He worked as a shepherd for a while and later engaged in trade.[674] Known for his honesty and fairness in business transactions, he gained recognition from everyone and earned respect and esteem, acquiring the title "Al-Amin: The Trustworthy." Trustworthiness became almost synonymous with his name. By the age of 25, he was simply called Al-Amin

673. Al-Bukhari, Virtues of the Ansar, 28; Ibn Hisham, I, 1-3; Ibn Sa'd, I, 55-56.
674. Al-Bukhari, Rentals, 2; Abu Dawood, Etiquette, 17, 82; Hakim, III, 200.

in Mecca[675]. The polytheists, instead of trusting their own allies, relied on "Muhammad al-Amin" and entrusted him with their valuable possessions.

During the reconstruction of the Kaaba when there was a dispute about placing the Black Stone (Hajar al-Aswad), all parties unanimously agreed to accept the arbitration of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. With his sagacity, he prevented a major conflict.

Before his prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was already the most noble in terms of morality, lineage, and kindness among his people. He was the epitome of virtue, the most honorable in lineage, and the most beautiful in character. He excelled in observing the rights of neighbors, possessing the highest level of forbearance and sincerity. He was the foremost in providing safety and trustworthiness, and he remained far from harming or tormenting anyone. There is no record of him blaming or arguing with anyone. (Ibn Hisham, I, 191; Ibn Sa'd, I, 121)

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached the age of 25, the noble and dignified lady of Mecca, Khadija رضي الله عنها, became enamored with his honesty and proposed to him. Khadija رضي الله عنها, the mother of believers, was fifteen years older than the Prophet, a widowed and motherly woman. The Prophet ﷺ established an exemplary and peaceful family life with her.

2. Prophethood Period

Finally, when he reached the age of forty, Allah, the Most High, bestowed prophethood upon him. On the days when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ first announced his invitation, he stood on the high rock of Safa Hill and addressed the people of Quraysh, saying:

"O Quraysh community! If I were to tell you that there are enemy cavalry at the foot of this mountain or in that valley, ready to attack you and seize your possessions, would you believe me?" Without hesitation, they replied, "Yes, we would believe you! We have always found you truthful, and we have never heard you speak a lie."

Upon this, the Prophet ﷺ declared that he was a warning prophet sent by Allah. He passionately conveyed the message that those who believe in his words and lead a life as Allah desires would attain beautiful rewards in the

675. Ibn Sa'd, I, 121, 156.

afterlife, while the disbelievers would face severe punishment. Therefore, it was crucial to prepare well in this world for the eternal life to come. However, turning people away from their false beliefs proved to be quite challenging. (Al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 26/2; Ahmad, I, 159, 111)

Despite all the hardships and afflictions he faced from his people, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never refrained from inviting them to the Truth. He went door to door, visited the pilgrimage caravans and marketplaces, and consistently called people to guidance. He never grew tired or weary, even explaining the same truths repeatedly to those who showed the utmost hostility. He made it clear to people that he sought no reward for his efforts except the pleasure of Allah, saying: "I ask of you no payment for this. My reward is only from Allah." (Sad, 86)

After that day, despite facing all the hardships and opposition from his tribe, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ continued tirelessly to call his people to the path of Allah. He visited homes, attended gatherings, and preached wherever there was an opportunity. Yet, the stubborn disbelievers kept demanding miracles. Allah, the Almighty, addressed this by saying: "...Say, 'Exalted is my Lord! Was I ever but a human messenger before you?'" (Al-Isra, 93-95)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was an unlettered person, like many others of his time, and did not possess the ability to read or write. Therefore, it was impossible for him to learn and narrate the things he spoke from any book or person. An unlettered person suddenly starting to deliver profound knowledge with the highest eloquence and clarity at the age of forty could only be possible through divine revelation. This fact was acknowledged and accepted by all his contemporaries, even those who were his enemies. Allah says: "You did not recite before it any scripture, nor did you inscribe one with your right hand; otherwise the falsifiers would have had [cause for] doubt." (Al-Ankabut, 48)

Despite acknowledging the moral excellence of Prophet Muhammad, the idolaters were not willing to abandon some worldly gains and carnal pleasures they had unjustly acquired. On one occasion, the relentless enemy, Abu Jahl, and his associates admitted to the Prophet: "O Muhammad! We do not deny that you are extremely truthful and trustworthy in our midst. However, we reject the verses you bring..." (Vahidi, Asbab an-Nuzul, p. 219; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 6/3064)

The idolaters exerted significant efforts to dissuade the Prophet from his mission. They even involved his beloved uncle, suggesting various proposals,

such as making him their king, collecting money among themselves to make him the wealthiest, and marrying him to the most beautiful women. The Prophet ﷺ categorically responded:

"None of the things you mention is in me. I did not come to seek your wealth, to gain great honor and fame among you, or to rule over you. Rather, Allah has sent me as a prophet and revealed a Book to me. He has commanded me to deliver the message to you. If you accept what I bring, it will be your provision and reward in this world and the hereafter. If you reject it, I will patiently endure all difficulties in fulfilling Allah's command until Allah judges between us." (Ibn Ishaq, Seerah, p. 179; Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidayah, III, 99-100)

3. Migration to Abyssinia and the Spread of Islam to Africa

The polytheists, unable to extract any concessions from the Prophet, resorted to intimidation. They intensified their persecution and torture against the Muslims. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised the Muslims that they could migrate to Abyssinia, as there was a just ruler there who did not oppress his people. Consequently, a group of Muslims migrated, marking Islam's presence in Africa before Medina. In an attempt to bring back the migrating Muslims, the polytheists sent envoys with valuable gifts. Listening to their false accusations, the Christian ruler of Abyssinia, Negus, allowed the Muslims' representative, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, to speak. Ja'far رضي الله عنه delivered a compelling speech, reciting verses from Surah Maryam and others. As they listened, hearts softened, tears flowed, and Negus acknowledged: "What I heard is like what was revealed to Prophet Isa عليه السلام." The Negus then turned to the Quraysh envoys and said, "I will never hand them over to you. By Allah, they are free to stay here." Necasi, who had embraced Islam, wrote affectionate letters to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, expressing his respect, and they exchanged gifts.[676] After approximately 15 years in Abyssinia, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه returned to Medina in the 7th year of migration. Necasi had sent 70 Africans, including the best church scholars, with him. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recited Surah Yasin to them, and moved by its beauty, they embraced Islam, recognizing its similarity to the teachings of Jesus.[677]

676. Ibn Hisham, I, 358-360; Ibn Sa'd, I, 258; Tabari, Tafsir, VII, 4, (Al-Ma'idah, 83); Hamidullah, al-Wasa'ik, p. 100, 104-105.
677. See. Tabari, Tafsir, VII, 4 (Al-Ma'idah 82); Qastalani, Mawahib, I, 292; Diyarbakri, II, 31.

Upon Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ inquiry about his experiences in Abyssinia, Ja'far ﷺ shared a remarkable incident. A day they were sitting, an old Christian woman passed by carrying a large water jug. A young man pushed her from behind, causing her to fall and break the jug. The woman got up, looked at the young man, and said, "O oppressor! When Allah establishes the throne of justice, gathers all humanity, and they confess to their deeds, and Allah takes the rights of the oppressed from the oppressors, you will see what happens to our case!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ smiled and commented, "The woman spoke the truth. Indeed, she spoke the truth. A society where the rights of the weak are not taken from the strong, how will Allah purify it!" After the Battle of Tabuk, Negus passed away.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ informed his companions about Negus's death and led a symbolic funeral prayer for him. During the time of Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ, Islam continued to spread in different regions of Africa. Under Uthman ibn Affan's ﷺ command, commanders were instructed to cross Africa through the Strait of Gibraltar and enter Al-Andalus. This strategy aimed to ease the conquest of Constantinople from the west. Uthman wrote to the expedition members, "Only Al-Andalus can conquer Constantinople. If you conquer it, you will share the reward of those who conquer Constantinople at the end of times."[678] This marked the completion of North African conquests, and plans to pressure the Byzantines from the west were implemented. Uqkba bin Nafi later was sent to South Africa during the reign of Muawiya bin Abu Sufian who has done incredible efforts for spreading of islam in Africa.[679]

678. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidayah, VII, 144; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, III, 93; Muhammad Hamidullah, "The Conquest of Andalusia (Spain) during the Caliphate of Our Master Uthman in the 27th Hijri Year", Istanbul University Journal of Institute of Islamic Studies, Istanbul 1978, VII, 221-225.

679. Uqbah bin Nafi's supplication was accepted. When he went to Africa, he arrived at the place where the present-day city of Kairouan is located. This place was a dense forest, filled with stones, snakes, scorpions, and predatory animals. Uqbah prayed to Allah and three times loudly said, "O people of the valley! God willing, we will settle here. Leave this place!" All the trees and stones were seen to leave, carrying the offspring of snakes and other predatory animals on their backs and in their arms. Uqbah descended into the valley with those around him and said to them, "Settle here in the name of Allah!" Thus, the city of Kairouan was founded. Many of the local people (Berbers) who witnessed this event became Muslims. (See. Dhahabi, History of Islam, I, 601; Ibn Abdilber, Al-Istiab, I, 331; Ibn Kathir, The Beginning, VIII, 45) Uqbah had stopped and camped at a place. There was no water there. People were so thirsty that they were almost on the brink of destruction. Uqbah performed two rak'ahs of prayer and supplicated. Uqbah's horse was digging the ground with its front legs. Suddenly, water began to gush out from under its feet. Uqbah called the people. They dug and enlarged the area with their hands and turned it into a source of water. Then they drank from that water to meet their needs. That water was called "Ma'ul-Fares: Horse Water". (Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, IV, 106)

Toward the end of the 19th century, European powers, seeking economic gains, began entering Africa. In the 17th century, competition for exploiting Africa intensified among European nations. They transported valuable goods like gold, ivory, spices, and palm oil to Europe while enslaving Africans and selling them. Local resistance was violently suppressed.

In the late 18th century, companies were established to explore Africa's inner regions and its riches. Backed by states, explorers meticulously examined every corner. Following explorers, missionaries, supported by the Church, spread throughout Africa. In the 19th century, driven by rapid industrialization, European countries aggressively intensified colonization in Africa to secure cheap raw materials and new markets. They rapidly occupied and divided Africa among themselves.

Africa began gaining independence in the 1950s. However, European powers had economically tied Africans and left behind issues like artificial borders, minorities, and individuals raised with Western culture, contributing to internal conflicts.

During the colonial period, Africa witnessed many Islamic jihad movements and Sufi activities, ensuring Islam's survival. Until the 1950s, France's colonial governorship in Africa saw several Islamic jihad movements and Sufi efforts. These played a crucial role in establishing genuine Islamic beliefs and lifestyles among the locals. Hajj (pilgrimage) has also played a significant role in islamic awakening.[680] The spread of Islam increased the cohesion between tribes, leading to the formation of states, and resulted in advancements in education, culture, trade, arts, and agriculture.

Islam primarily flourishes in urban centers in Africa. Therefore, there is a significant need for sincere and dedicated local missionaries to bring Islam to rural areas and villages.

4. Boycott and Journey to Taif

After the migration to Abyssinia, the polytheists imposed a complete boycott on Muslims, the Hashemites who protected them, and severed all civilized transactions such as trade and marriage. They formalized this with a treaty and displayed it on the wall of the Kaaba. This boycott and embargo

680. Diyanet Islam Encyclopedia, "Africa" article, Istanbul 1988, I, 418-439.

persisted with full intensity for three years, causing significant hardships for the Muslims. They endured hunger, resorting to eating tree barks and leaves. The cries of hungry children echoed from afar. Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ﷺ recalls, "During the days of the boycott, one night, I went out due to hunger. My foot touched something wet, and I immediately put it into my mouth. To this day, I don't know what it was." (Suhayli, ar-Rawdu'l-Unuf, Beirut 2000, III, 216).

Finally, the boycott came to an end. However, during those days, the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, and his wife, Khadija, passed away. Subsequently, hostile attacks reached a ferocious level. The enemies aimed to exhaust the Prophet's strength. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, accompanied by Zayd ibn Harithah, went to the city of Taif, located 160 km from Mecca, where some of his relatives lived. He stayed there for ten days. Initially, they mocked him, then insulted him, and later subjected him to humiliation by having their slaves line the sides of the streets and pelting him with insults. Despite the Prophet ﷺ being covered in blood from the brutal treatment, he did not curse anyone. Instead, he prayed, fearing any lapse in fulfilling his duty:

"O Allah! I complain to You of my weakness, helplessness, and humiliation in the eyes of the people. You are the Most Merciful. If You are not angry with me, I don't care about the afflictions and troubles I endure. O Allah! Guide my people; they don't know. O Allah! I will keep praying for Your forgiveness until You are pleased." (Ibn Hisham, II, 29-30; Haythami, VI, 35).

The Prophet's only goal was to please Allah and fulfill the duty given to him in the best possible way. Even the most severe torture and difficulties he faced for this cause did not seem to him.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ described his return from Taif:

"...I returned, walking in deep sorrow. I couldn't compose myself until I reached the Karnu's-Sealib location. When I lifted my head there, I saw a cloud shading me. Upon closer inspection, I noticed Gabriel within the cloud. He said to me, 'Allah heard what your people said and how they rejected your protection. To do as you wish, He has sent the Angel of the Mountains to you.' The angel greeted me, repeated Gabriel's words, and said, 'What would you like me to do? If you wish, I can crush them between these two mountains!' At that moment, I replied, 'No, I wish for Allah to bring forth from their descendants those who worship Allah alone without associating any partners with Him!'" (Al-Bukhari, Bad' al-Khalq, 7; Muslim, Jihad, 111).

During those days, a group of Muslims arrived from Medina. They started spreading Islam in Medina and requested a teacher from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Mus'ab bin Umair and Ibn Ummi Maktum ﷺ were assigned to this task. Thanks to their efforts, Islam rapidly reached every household, and eventually, the Muslims invited Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to come to Medina, promising to protect him.

5. Migration and the Medina Period

When the polytheists' torture became unbearable, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ instructed his companions to secretly migrate. Learning of this plan, the polytheists plotted an assassination against the Prophet. A young man from each tribe was supposed to attack simultaneously, ensuring that if the Prophet's relatives claimed their right, they would find all tribes against them. Meanwhile, Allah commanded the Prophet to migrate. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ called upon Ali to hand over the entrusted belongings, leaving him as a representative. In Mecca, everyone trusted the Prophet with their valuable items due to his honesty and integrity.

That night, the polytheists surrounded the house, but Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, with unwavering trust and submission to Allah, had no hesitation, fear, or panic. He took a handful of soil, sprinkled it over the attackers, recited the opening verses of Surah Yasin, and slipped through them unnoticed.

Thus, after thirteen years of guiding efforts in Mecca, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ migrated to Medina. He declared the Ansar (Medinan Muslims) and the Muhajireen (Emigrants from Mecca) as brothers. The Ansar generously offered to share their wealth with the Muhajireen, saying, "Here is my wealth; take half of it!" In response, the Muhajireen, whose hearts became treasure troves of contentment, displayed maturity by saying, "May your wealth be blessed, my brother. Just show me the way to the market, and that's enough!" (Al-Bukhari, Buyu' 1).

During this time, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ drafted a constitution in Medina, known as the "Constitution of Medina," regulating the responsibilities of the Muhajireen, the Ansar, and the Jewish community towards each other and the new Islamic state. This document was the world's first written constitution. [681]

681. Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, The First Written Constitution in the World, Lahore 1975.

Due to the clear hostility from the polytheists and frequent breaches of agreements by neighboring Jews, some battles occurred. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, sent as a mercy to the worlds, pursued a policy of mercy in military campaigns, preventing excessive bloodshed despite swiftly gaining control over the entire Arabian Peninsula. He consistently preferred resolving problems through peaceful means.[682]

6. Examples of His Unmatched Morality

Compassion and Mercy

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was filled with boundless compassion and mercy for all of humanity. Allah says: "Verily, there has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves; grievous to him is your suffering; anxious is he over you, to the believers, he is kind and merciful." (At-Tawbah, 128)

He and his followers were merciful even to their enemies:

"You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient." (Ali-Imran, 110)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ displayed immense compassion towards animals and plants. When the polytheists betrayed their agreement and chose war, he marched towards Mecca with a magnificent army of ten thousand soldiers. While passing through the Arc region towards Talub, he noticed a dog nursing its puppies on the road. Immediately, he called Jua'yl bin Suraka from his companions and appointed him to guard over these animals, preventing any disturbance from the Islamic army. (Al-Waqidi, II, 804)

One day, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visited the garden of a man from the Ansar. A camel present there, upon seeing the Prophet, groaned, and tears flowed from its eyes. The Prophet approached the camel, gently caressed behind its ears, and it calmed down. Then Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "Whose camel is this?" A young man from Medina came forward and said, "It is mine, O Messenger of Allah!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ then said, "Do you not fear Allah concerning this creature? It complains to me that you starve and overwork it." (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 44/2549)

682. See Prof. Dr. M. Hamidullah, Wars of the Prophet, Istanbul 1991; Elshad Mahmudov, The Wars of the Prophet, Istanbul 2005

Passing by a camel with a bloated stomach, he warned: "Fear Allah regarding these speechless animals! Ride them when they are healthy, and eat them when they are healthy." (Abu Dawood, Jihad, 44/2548)

One of the prophet's companions ﷺ narrated this wonderful example of subtlety and mercy: "I went to the presence of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to ask for something. He asked for three to ten camels to be given to me. Then he advised me: 'When you return home, tell your household to take good care of the animals and feed them properly. Also, command them to trim the animals' hooves to avoid hurting the udders while milking.'" (Ahmad, III, 484; Haythami, V, 168, 259, VIII, 196)

Once, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encountered a man milking a sheep and advised him, saying: "O so-and-so! Leave some milk for its young one when you milk it." (Haythami, VIII, 196)

One day, Abu ad-Darda ﷺ came across people who overloaded their camels to the point where they couldn't stand. The camel couldn't get up due to the weight. Abu ad-Darda ﷺ immediately removed the excess load from the camel and helped it stand up. Then he said to the owners: "If Allah forgives the sins you have earned by mistreating these animals, He has shown great mercy to you. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'Allah commands you to treat these mute animals well. If you pass through fertile land, allow the animals to graze a bit. If you pass through a dry place, move quickly, do not linger, and do not cause distress or harm to the animals in such places.'" (Ibn Hajar, al-Matalibu'l-Aliya, II, 226/1978)

Forgiving Nature

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, despite having the power to punish those who committed many wrongs against him, chose to forgive them. He did not even bring up their sins through words or gestures. This is because the Prophet ﷺ did not desire the harm of anyone, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. He treated everyone with great courtesy and morality.

When he peacefully conquered Mecca without shedding blood, those who had been hostile for twenty-one years gathered, awaiting his verdict. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked them, "O people of Quraysh! What do you think I will do to you now?" The people of Quraysh replied, "We expect nothing but goodness from you! You are an honorable brother, the son of an honorable

brother." Upon hearing this, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "I say to you what my brother Joseph said to his brothers: 'There is no blame upon you today. May Allah forgive you; He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.'" (Yusuf, 92) He added, "Go, you are free!" (Ibn Hisham, IV, 32; Al-Waqidi, II, 835; Ibn Sa'd, II, 142-143) He declared that it was the "Day of Mercy" (Yawm al-Marhamah).[683]

On that day, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ forgave even those who had committed grave offenses, such as Wahshi, who martyred his uncle Hamza during the Battle of Uhud, and Hind, who had mutilated Hamza's body.[684] He even extended this profound forgiveness to Habbar bin Aswad, who caused the fall of his daughter Zainab from a camel, leading to her death. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only forgave Hebbar but also prohibited insulting him or blaming him for his past actions. (Al-Waqidi, II, 857-858)

When Mecca was conquered, Abu Jahl's son, Ikrimah, fled. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ set aside all the wrongs Ikrimah had committed earlier, granted him asylum, and invited him to come. When Ikrimah was persuaded to come back by his wife, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ approached the situation with a miracle and extraordinary finesse, saying to his companions, "Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl is coming to you as a believer and an immigrant. Do not insult his father! Even if a person is a wicked man, insulting the dead only upsets their living relatives and does not reach the deceased." (Al-Hakim, III, 269/5055; Al-Waqidi, II, 851)

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ saw Ikrimah, he joyfully stood up and said three times, "Welcome, O immigrant cavalryman!" Ikrimah responded, "By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, I will spend at least twice as much as I spent in opposing Islam in the way of Allah (the Almighty)!" (Al-Hakim, III, 271/5059; Al-Waqidi, II, 851-853; Tirmidhi, Isti'zan, 34/2735)

Throughout his life, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrated numerous instances of forgiveness. This is because Allah sent him as a mercy to all of humanity.

Humility

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was an extremely humble person. On the day of the Conquest, when he appeared most powerful in the eyes of the people, he

683. Waqidi, II, 822; Ali al-Muttaqi, Kenz, no: 30173.
684. Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 23; Muslim, Aqdiyah, 9.

comforted a person who approached him trembling with fear by mentioning a parable from a time when his means were weakest, saying:

"Calm down, my brother! I am not a king or ruler. I am the son of a woman from Quraysh who used to eat dry bread." (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 30; Al-Hakim, III, 50/4366; Al-Bayhaqi, Dalail an-Nubuwwah, V, 69)

He did not allow people to exaggerate about him, instructing them to address him as "Allah's servant and Messenger." (Al-Bukhari, Anbiyâ, 48) He consistently added the term "abduhû: Allah's servant" especially and emphatically at the beginning of the affirmation of his prophethood. This was to prevent his community from falling into the danger of deifying him as had occurred with people in past societies.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not hesitate to walk with a widow, a poor person, or an unfortunate individual to fulfill their needs until their requirements were met, displaying humility and avoiding arrogance. (Haythami, IX, 20; Nasa'i, Jumu'ah, 31)

He led an extremely simple and humble life. Our mother Aisha ﵂ narrates: "A drink was brought to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ containing milk and honey. He said: 'In one drink, two blessings, and in one cup, two types of sustenance! I do not need this, but I do not consider it forbidden. I am only afraid of God holding us accountable for worldly excesses on the Day of Judgment. I show humility for the sake of God. Whoever shows humility for the sake of God, God elevates him; whoever shows arrogance, God lowers him. Whoever acts with moderation, God makes him rich; whoever remembers death frequently, God loves him.'" (Haythami, X, 325)

Aisha ﵂ also says:

"Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never saved leftover food for the evening if it remained from the morning, or for the morning if it remained from the evening. He never had two sets of clothes; neither two shirts, two mantles, two loincloths, nor two pairs of shoes. It was never observed that he remained idle at home. He would either repair the shoes of a poor person or sew the garment of an orphan." (Ibn al-Jawzi, Sifatu's-Safwa, Beirut 1979, I, 200)



Cleanliness and Gentleness

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was an extremely clean and virtuous person. He never uttered any bad or coarse words that people commonly used. He used to say: "On the Day of Judgment, there will be nothing heavier in the scale of a believing servant than good character. God Almighty dislikes those who engage in vile actions and speak foul words." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 62/2002)

When he heard an unpleasant word about himself from someone, he would not say, "What's wrong with so-and-so for saying such things?" Instead, he would say, "What's wrong with some people that they say such things?" displaying courtesy. (Abu Dawood, Adab, 5/4788)

Generosity

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was extremely generous. Safwan ibn Umayya, an elite among the Quraysh polytheists, accompanied him in the battles of Hunayn and Ta'if even before he embraced Islam. When Safwan showed admiration for some of the herds during a tour of the booty collected in Jirana, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked:

"Do you like them so much?" Upon receiving an affirmative answer, he said, "Take them all, they are yours." Unable to contain himself, Safwan testified: "No heart other than that of the Prophet could be this generous," and he embraced Islam. When he returned to his tribe, he said: "O my people! (Hurry,) embrace Islam! For Muhammad is bestowing immense generosity without fear of poverty or need." (See Muslim, Fadhail, 57-58; Ahmad, III, 107-108; Al-Waqidi, II, 854-855)

In short, the virtues of his character cannot be fully described. Ibn Hazm, the Andalusian scholar, says: "Whoever wants to attain eternal happiness, worldly dominion, a peaceful life, all moral beauties, and all virtues should take Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a role model! Because Prophet Muhammad ﷺ excels in all virtues. God Almighty praised his character, gathered all virtues in him in the most perfect form, and purified him from all kinds of flaws." (Ibn Hazm, al-Ahlâk wa's-Siyer, Cairo, 1962, pp. 19-20, 50)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ passed away on Monday, the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal, in the 11th year of the Hijra, corresponding to June 8, 632 AD. May Allah reward him according to His exalted status and grant us his intercession! Amen!



"May Allah reward you with the best of rewards that He has ever given to a prophet on behalf of his nation."

Allah sent him to confirm the previous revelations, purify them from distortions they suffered throughout history, complete the missing aspects of religion[685], and remove the heavy responsibilities incurred by previous nations due to their deserved punishments and sent as a mercy to the world.[686]

We bear witness, along with the companions' testimony in the Farewell Sermon, that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ fulfilled these duties properly.

Upon migrating to Medina as a refugee, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, with the permission of Allah, established the supremacy of Islam over the entire Arabian Peninsula, from Oman to the Red Sea, from southern Syria to Yemen, within only ten years. Thus, for the first time in history, unity was achieved in Arabia. Lamartine says: "Who dares to compare the greatness of the goal, the smallness of the means, and the magnitude of the results with the genius of Muhammad ﷺ?" (Histoire de la Turquie)

7. Infinite Love Towards Him

The companions, may Allah be pleased with them, loved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ more than their own lives. When addressing him, they would say, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! You are my everything." They were willing to sacrifice their lives to prevent even a thorn from pricking his foot. Zayd bin Dathina رضي الله عنه and Hubayb رضي الله عنه, who were captured by the polytheists, were being martyred through torture. Before surrendering their souls, each of them was asked, "Would you like your Prophet to be in your place and save your life?" Both of them, with compassion for the one posing this unfortunate question, looked at him and replied, "Far from wishing my Prophet to be here in the midst of my family, even if he were here, I would not be content with him experiencing the prick of a thorn where he stands." Witnessing this unique scene of love, Abu Sufyan, astonished, said, "Indeed, amazing! I have never seen any community in the world love their leaders as much as Muhammad's companions do." (See Al-Waqidi, I, 360-362; Ibn Sa'd, II, 56)

685. Al-Baqarah, 75, 101; Ali-Imran, 81; As-Saff, 6; An-Nisa, 46; Al-Ma'idah, 13, 41.
686. Al-Ma'idah, 3; Al-Baqarah, 286; Al-A'raf, 157; Al-Anbiya, 104.

On the day of Uhud, Medina was shaken by a piece of news: "Muhammad ﷺ has been killed!" This announcement echoed through the city, cries reaching the heavens. Everyone rushed to the roads, trying to get news from those who were coming. Sumayra, a woman from the Ansar, was informed that her two sons, father, husband, and brother were martyred. Despite this news, she paid no attention to it, but with great concern, she inquired about the matter that worried her the most: "Has anything happened to the Messenger of Allah?" The companions replied, "Praise be to Allah, He is alive just as you wish!" Sumayra said, "I won't find peace until I see him with my own eyes. Show me the Messenger of Allah!" When shown, she immediately went and took hold of the hem of his garment, saying, "May my parents be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! Now that I have seen you safe and sound, I care about nothing else!" (See Ibn Hisham, III, 51; Al-Waqidi, I, 292; Haythami, VI, 115) While returning from Uhud, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was on horseback, and the reins of the horse were held by Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ. Sa'd's mother, Kabsha bint Ubayd, approached Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Sa'd said, "O Messenger of Allah! This is my mother." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Greetings to her!" When the woman came close to Allah's Messenger and looked at his blessed face, she said, "May my parents be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! Now that I have seen you safe and sound, all calamities are insignificant." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, after offering condolences for her son Amr bin Mu'adh ؓ, who had become a martyr, said, "O Sa'd's mother! I give you glad tidings! All those who died as martyrs from your tribe have gathered together in paradise—they were twelve martyrs. They were also granted permission to intercede for their family members." The woman said, "We are pleased, O Messenger of Allah! No one will weep for them from now on!" After that, she requested, "O Messenger of Allah! Please pray for the possessions left behind by the martyrs." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed, "O Allah! Remove the sorrow from their hearts, and bestow the reward for their tribulations. Take care of those who remain in the best way!" After this prayer, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ set out on the journey. The companions were following him in succession. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to Sa'd, "There are many wounded from your tribe, and their injuries are severe. On the Day of Judgment, all of them will come bleeding from their wounds; their color will be like the color of blood, but their fragrance will be like the fragrance of musk. Tell them to go home and treat their wounds! Let no one follow us! Convey this as a strict order to them!" Sa'd said, "This is the Messenger's

strict order. None of the wounded from the Beni Eshel tribe will follow us!" All the wounded involuntarily turned back. Throughout the night, they lit fires and treated their wounds. There were thirty wounded from this tribe. (See Al-Waqidi, I, 315-316; Diyarbekrî, I, 444)

The last group of emigrants who had previously migrated to Abyssinia arrived by sea to meet Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during the conquest of Khaybar. Among them was Asma' bint al-Umays. One day, she went to visit Prophet Muhammad's wife Hafsa. Shortly after, Umar ﷺ came to his daughter Hafsa. When Umar ﷺ saw Asma', he asked, "Who is this?" She replied, "Asma' bint al-Umays!" Umar, in a gentle manner, asked, "Is she the one from Abyssinia? The woman who participated in the sea voyage?" Asma' replied, "Yes." Upon this, Umar ﷺ said, "We surpassed you in emigration. Therefore, we have more right to be close to the Messenger of Allah than you." Asma', feeling hurt by these words, responded, "No, by Allah! You are mistaken, O Umar! You were with the Messenger of Allah, who fed your hungry and taught your ignorant. We, however, lived in difficult conditions among foreign and unbelieving people in Abyssinia, all for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. I swear by Allah, I will neither eat nor drink until I tell the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ what you have said. I will not lie, deviate from the truth, or add anything to what happened. I will report the incident exactly as it occurred." When the Prophet ﷺ came, Asma' said, "O Messenger of Allah! Umar said such and such." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked her, "What did you say to him?" She replied, "I said such and such." Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "He has no more right over you than you have over him. You, O ship passengers, have made two migrations with your Prophet, whereas they only made one!" Asma' states, "The Companions who came with me from Abyssinia, such as Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, were coming to me in groups and asking me about this hadith. In the world, nothing made them happier than the words of the Prophet ﷺ in this hadith. Especially Abu Musa al-Ash'ari used to insist on hearing this narration repeatedly, finding immense joy in listening to the words of the Prophet ﷺ about them." (Al-Bukhari, Maghazi, 36; Fadha'il as-Sahabah, 169)

The companions' intense love for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is vividly demonstrated in their profound respect and attention when narrating his sayings. When the companions reported a hadith of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, they trembled to avoid unintentionally saying something wrong. Amr bin Maymun recounts: "I never missed the Thursday night gatherings of Ibn Mas'ud. In

these gatherings, I never heard him using an absolute expression like 'Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said...' One evening, he began with, 'Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said...' but could not continue. He lowered his head, and after waiting for a while, I looked at him. His shirt buttons were undone, tears streamed down his eyes, his cheeks were swollen, and he was standing in that state. After a while, he completed his sentence: 'Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said something like this or close to it.' (Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 3)

These stories of the profound love, respect, and sacrifice of the companions for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ portray the extraordinary bond they shared with him. Their actions demonstrate a unique connection based on love, devotion, and unwavering loyalty to the Messenger of Allah.[687]

8. Some of His Miracles

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed numerous miracles, with the foremost being the Qur'an, which challenges the ages, and the pure life and sublime ethics of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ as we touched upon earlier. Indeed, when one examines the blessed life and noble character of the Prophet ﷺ, it becomes evident how great these miracles truly are.

Among the countless miracles of the Prophet ﷺ beyond these are a few notable ones:

When the people of Mecca demanded a miracle from him, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed to his Lord, and the moon split into two, visible from all directions. As the moon divided, one part was seen near Mount Abu Qubays, and the other near Mount Quayqian. The polytheists asked caravans coming from distant places if they had witnessed such an event, and they confirmed having seen the moon split.[688]

Notably, the renowned French astronomer Lefrançois de Lalande was compelled to accept the authenticity of this miracle while studying the past movements of the moon.[689]

687. For extensive examples of the profound love for the Prophet throughout history, see Osman Nuri Topbas, Civilization of Virtues, I, 223-265; http://faziletlermedeniyeti1.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/, http://www.worldpublishings.com/katalog/indir.asp?id=106&yol=../Deppo/Dokumanlar/eng_FAZILETLER MEDENIYETI 2 ING 15 X 21.pdf
688. Al-Qamar, 1-3; Al-Bukhari, Manaqib, 27, Manaqib al-Ansar, 38, Tafsir, 54/1; Muslim, Al-Munafiqin, 43, 47, 48; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 54/3286; Ahmad, I, 377, 413.
689. Zekai Konrapa, Our Prophet, Istanbul 1987, p. 110.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had a dry date palm trunk in the mosque against which he used to lean while delivering sermons. As the number of Muslims increased, there arose a need for a pulpit for sermons. When the Prophet ﷺ ascended the new pulpit, the dry trunk began to make a yearning sound. When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came down and caressed the trunk, the sound ceased, finding tranquility. He then said, "It cried because it missed the remembrance of Allah due to my separation."[690]

During the captivity of Abbas, the uncle of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, among the Bedouin prisoners brought to Medina after the Battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ instructed him: "O Abbas! Pay the ransom for yourself, your nephew Akil, Nawfal bin Harith, and your ally Utbah bin Amr. You are a person of wealth." Abbas responded, "O Messenger of Allah! I was a Muslim, but the Quraysh compelled me to join them by force." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Allah knows whether you are truly a Muslim. If what you say is true, then Allah will undoubtedly reward you. However, outwardly, your situation was against us, so you must pay the ransom." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ then took hold of the 800 silver dirhams found with Abbas as war booty. Abbas pleaded, "O Messenger of Allah! At least consider this as charity instead of ransom!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "No, this is the war booty that Allah has granted to us through you." Abbas lamented, "O Messenger of Allah! Are you going to force me into begging for the rest of my life?" In response, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "O Abbas! What about the gold you gave to your wife Umm Fadl?" Surprised, Abbas asked, "Which gold?" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "On the day you were about to depart from Mecca, in the presence of no one but Allah, you handed Umm Fadl a certain amount of gold, saying, 'I do not know what will happen on this journey. If I face any calamity, this portion is for you, this portion for Ubaydullah, this portion for Fadl, this portion for Qusam, and this portion for Abdullah.' These are the gold pieces you mentioned." Upon hearing these words, Abbas, bewildered, asked, "Who informed you of this?" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "Allah informed me." Astonished, Abbas, now composed, said, "I swear by Allah, besides whom there is no deity, that apart from me and Umm Fadl, no one else

690. See. Al-Bukhari, Manaqib, 25, Jumu'ah, 26; Tirmidhi, Jumu'ah 10, Manaqib 6; Nasa'i, Jumu'ah, 17; Ibn Majah, Iqamah, 199; Darimi, Muqadimah 6, Salah 202; Ahmed, I, 249, 267, 300, 315, 363. Many more miracles are mentioned in these sources.

knew about this. Undoubtedly, you are the Messenger of Allah." (Al-Bukhari, Jihad, 172; Ahmad, I, 353; Ibn Sa'd, IV, 13-15)

Umayr, the son of Umayr bin Wahb, had become a captive among the Muslims after the Battle of Badr. Umayr was known among the Quraysh polytheists for his cunning mind and bravery. In Mecca, he had caused much trouble for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his companions. One day, while sitting in Hira with Safwan bin Umayyah, discussing the deaths and hardships faced by those who were killed in Badr, Safwan remarked, "By Allah, there is no meaning in living after they have reached this state!" Umayr responded, "Indeed, you speak the truth! If it weren't for my children, whom I fear would die of hunger after me, I would surely go and kill Muhammad. I even have a plausible excuse ready; I would say, 'I came for my captive son.' From what I've heard, he roams around the marketplaces." These words pleased Safwan, who said, "The debt is mine. As long as your children are alive, I will take care of them like my own." Umayr then sharpened and poisoned his sword, while Safwan prepared his mount and provisions.

Umayr arrived in Medina, tied his camel at the mosque's gate, and girded his sword. When Umar ﷺ saw him, he said, "This is Umayr, the enemy of Allah! He has surely come for evil. Wasn't he the one who, on the day of Badr, estimated the number of Quraysh for the Meccans, causing discord among us?" After saying this, he approached Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and informed him, "O Messenger of Allah, Umayr, the enemy of Allah, has come with his sword!" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ responded, "Send him to me." Umar returned, tightly holding the strap of the sword around Umayr's neck, and warned the people around, "Go in and sit with the Prophet. Protect him from this wicked man because he is not trustworthy." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "O Umar, release him. Umayr, come close to me." He asked Umayr why he had come. Umayr replied, "I have come for my son who is your captive. Please show kindness to him." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked, "Then, what is the purpose of this sword around your neck?" Umayr said, "May Allah curse these swords! What benefit did they bring us?" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ asked again, "Tell me the truth, why have you come?" Umayr replied, "I have come only for my captive son, nothing else." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ inquired, "What was the condition you set when you ran to Safwan in Hira?" Afraid, Umayr said, "What condition did I set?" Prophet Muhammad ﷺ recounted their conversation word for word, saying, "Allah has intervened in

your plans, obstructing your way." Hearing this, Umayr feared and said, "I swear by Allah, you are undoubtedly the Messenger of Allah! O Messenger of Allah! We used to deny you regarding the divine revelation. But this matter was known only to me and Safwan. By Allah, only Allah could have informed you of this. Praise be to Allah who guided me to Islam and brought me here!" After declaring his testimony of faith, he said, "O Messenger of Allah! In the past, I tried to extinguish the light of Allah and tortured the Muslims severely. If you permit, I will go to Mecca and invite the polytheists to Allah, His Messenger, and Islam. Perhaps Allah will guide them." Prophet Muhammad ﷺ granted him permission.

Meanwhile, Safwan bin Umayyah, unaware of what had happened, kept telling the Meccan polytheists, "In a few days, you will receive news that will make you forget the pain of Badr." He repeatedly inquired about the news from the arriving caravans. Finally, a rider informed him that Umayr had embraced Islam. When Umayr bin Wahb ﷺ came to Mecca, he began inviting people to Islam. Many people converted to Islam through his efforts. One day, Umayr met Safwan bin Umayyah near the Kaaba and said, "You are one of our elders! Don't you see that we worship stones and sacrifice for them? Is this a religion? I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah!" Safwan couldn't utter a word and remained silent. [691]

Jabir bin Abdullah ﷺ narrates:

"... One day, we were walking with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and eventually, we descended into a wide valley. The Prophet ﷺ went to relieve himself, and I followed him with a water container. He searched but couldn't find anything to conceal himself. Two trees at the edge of the valley caught his eye. He went to one, held a branch, and said, 'By Allah's permission, submit to me!' The tree bent towards him, resembling a trained camel. Then, he went to the other tree, held a branch, and said, 'By Allah's permission, submit to me!' It, too, bent like the first one. When he reached the middle of both trees, he brought them together and said, 'By Allah's permission, cover over me!' Immediately, they closed over him. Concerned that if the Prophet ﷺ sensed my proximity, he might go further, I quickly ran away. Sitting down, I began contemplating. When my eyes shifted slightly, I suddenly saw the Prophet ﷺ approaching. The two trees had separated, each standing straight again. I

691. See. Ibn Hisham, II, 306-309; Wakidi, I, 125-128; Ibn Sa'd, IV, 199-201; Haythami, VIII, 284-286.

noticed the Prophet ﷺ pause for a moment, motioning to the right and left. Then, he walked toward me. When he reached me, he asked, 'O Jabir, did you see where I stopped?' 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah,' I replied. 'Then, go to those two trees, cut a branch from each, and when you reach where I stopped, plant one on the right and the other on the left side.' Immediately fulfilling his request, I approached him and asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, I've done what you said, but why did we do this?' The Prophet ﷺ explained, 'I passed by two graves experiencing torment, and I wished for their punishment to be lightened as long as these branches remain alive through my intercession.'

Later, when the caravan reached a resting place, the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Jabir, is there any ablution water? Call out to the people!' I called out several times, 'Is there anyone with ablution water?' Then, I informed the Prophet ﷺ, 'O Messenger of Allah, I couldn't find a drop of water among the people.' An Ansari man used to cool water for the Prophet ﷺ in an old leather water container and hang it on a date palm branch. The Prophet ﷺ sent me to him, and there was nothing left in the container except a small amount of water at the bottom. If I were to pour it out, it would disappear in the dry part of the container and wouldn't drop to the ground. I brought this to the Prophet ﷺ, who took it, read something I couldn't understand, and squeezed it with both hands. Then, he gave the container back to me, saying, 'O Jabir, go and call for a big container!' I quickly found a large container, brought it, and placed it in front of him. The Prophet ﷺ placed his hands on the bottom of the container and said, 'O Jabir, take the leather container, pour water over my hands, and say Bismillah (In the name of Allah).' I poured the water, and water began to flow from between his fingers, filling the container. He said, 'Jabir, call people to drink!' People came and drank until they were satisfied. I asked, 'Is there anyone still in need of water?' but no one responded. Then, the Prophet ﷺ raised his hands, and the container remained full to the brim.

After a while, people complained about hunger. The Prophet ﷺ reassured them, 'InshaAllah, Allah will satisfy you!' Soon, we reached the seashore, and the sea surged, casting an animal ashore. We made a fire next to it, cooked and grilled its meat, ate until we were full, but we couldn't finish half of it..."
(Muslim, Zuhd, 74)

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prayed for someone, the impact of that supplication was witnessed throughout their lifetime. Examples include the

Prophet praying for Abu Hurairah not to forget any knowledge he hears, for Anas bin Malik's life, wealth, and children to be blessed, for Bashir bin Akra to attain blessings, and for Abu al-Yasar to have a long life benefiting the Ummah. Let's highlight two instances to illustrate this:

- Abdullah bin Hisham ﷺ approached the Prophet ﷺ with his mother Zainab bint Humayd to pledge allegiance to Islam when he was just six years old. Zainab said, "O Messenger of Allah, take the pledge of allegiance from my son for Islam." The Prophet ﷺ remarked, "He is still too young." He then stroked Abdullah's head and made a supplication for him. Later in life, Abdullah would go to the marketplace to buy food. When Ibn Umar and Ibn Zubair saw him, they would say, "Make us partners in this wealth because the Prophet ﷺ prayed for blessings for you." Abdullah would agree, and sometimes he would earn a profit equivalent to the load of a full camel, which he would send home. (Al-Bukhari, Syirkat, 13)
- Saib bin Yazid, at the age of ninety-four, demonstrated robust health. When asked about it, he attributed his well-being to the supplication of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He recounted that in his childhood, his aunt brought him to the Prophet ﷺ during an illness. She said, "O Messenger of Allah, my nephew is sick. Please supplicate for him." The Prophet ﷺ wiped his head and made a comprehensive supplication for Saib's well-being in various aspects of life. Years later, Saib reflected on the blessing of the Prophet's prayer, which contributed to his strong health even at such an advanced age. (See Al-Bukhari, Birr, 21-22)

Another incident narrated by Abu Hurairah ﷺ involves a journey with the Prophet ﷺ. As the army ran out of provisions, some suggested slaughtering their riding animals for food. Umar ibn al-Khattab suggested that the Prophet pray for blessings on whatever food they had left. The Prophet complied, and miraculously, the available food became so abundant that everyone filled their containers. Witnessing this, the Prophet declared that whoever dies with certainty in Allah and His Messenger and without any doubt will enter paradise.[692] (Muslim, Iman, 44)

692. Extensive information about the life, morals, and miracles of the Prophet Muhammad can be obtained from the following sources: Osman Nuri TOPBAŞ, The Prophet Muhammad Mustafa the Elect I-II, The Exemplar Beyond Compare Muhammad Mustafa, Civilization of Virtues I-II, (http://islamicpublishing.net/) http://www.islamiyayinlar.net http://rahmetesintileri.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/ http://hazretimuhammedmekkedevri.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/ http://hazretimuhammedmedinedevri.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/ http://hazretimuhammed.darulerkam.altinoluk.

AFTERWORD

A person with understanding must contemplate fundamental questions in the face of the splendor of the universe, such as: "What is existence? Who is its owner? Who am I, and what is my duty in this world? What is the essence of life and death?" Islam has provided the most satisfactory answers to these questions, and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has exemplified these answers in a tangible and magnificent way during his 23 years of prophetic life.

When looked at with reason, conscience, and a sense of justice, it becomes easily apparent that Islam is the only true religion humanity possesses today. Those who consider their material and spiritual well-being in this world, along with their eternal life, must sincerely investigate Islam and be willing to endure certain sacrifices on this path. If they do so, it is certain that they will benefit. Otherwise, Islam has nothing to lose or gain; it is already under the protection and guarantee of Allah. As stated in the Quran:

"Unbelievers would like to put out Allah's light with their mouths, but Allah will complete His light, though the disbelievers detest it. It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion to make it prevail over all other religions, even though the polytheists detest it. O you who believe! Shall I tell you about a trade that will save you from painful punishment? Have faith in Allah and His Messenger and strive in the Way of Allah with your wealth and yourselves. That is better for you if you only knew!" (Al-Saff, 8-10)

All that we observe, the universe, humanity, and Islam, all belong to Allah. Allah will establish the truth, causing falsehood to decline into humiliation. As stated in the Quran:

"He sends down water from the sky and river-beds flow according to their capacity. The torrent carries with it an increasing layer of foam. In the

com/ http://faziletlermedeniyeti1.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/ http://faziletlermedeniyeti2.darulerkam.altinoluk.com/ Ibn Ishaq (150/767), The life of Muhammed, Karachi: Oxford University, 1967; Mevlana Shibli al-Nu'mani, The Life of the Prophet, Lahore: Kaz Publications, 1979; Afzalurrahman, Encyclopaedia of Seerah: Muhammed, London: The Muslim Schools Trust, 1982; Abdulahad Dawood, Mohammad in the Bible, Doha: A Publications of Presidency, 1980; A. H. Vidyarthi, Mohammad in world scriptures, New Delhi: DeepDeep Publications, 1988.

same way, from what they heat up in the fire, seeking to make ornaments or tools, (there arises) foam like it. In this way Allah makes the false the true and the true the false. As for the foam, it passes away as scum, but what is of use to mankind remains behind on the earth. In this way Allah makes the false the true. The judgment of Allah is most firm. Have you not seen that ships sail on the sea by Allah's blessing so that He can show you something of His Signs? There truly are Signs in this for every steadfast, thankful person." (Ar-Ra'd, 17)

The struggle between truth and falsehood has always ended in this way throughout history. When divine religion is corrupted by people, and false beliefs mix with it, Allah rejuvenates them by sending prophets to guide them, separating the useful ore from the useless dross. In other words, all divine laws and prophets are interconnected like links in a golden chain, emanating from the same source. The final link in this chain is the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

In this book, we have attempted to provide concise information about Islam, akin to a drop from the vast ocean. We shared the experiences of people who, after studying and researching Islam, converted to the faith. Many individuals, through their investigations, have concluded that Islam is the only uncorrupted, final divine religion. The number of people who embrace Islam as a result of in-depth research is increasing day by day. The accumulation of these experiences leaves no room for doubt; the result derived from countless experiences is undoubtedly correct. [693]

Upon deeper investigation, Islam reveals many more beauties beyond what we have conveyed. Unfortunately, Islam is intentionally or unintentionally taught incorrectly today or covered up. What befits an intelligent person is to learn Islam free from preconceptions and bias, after examining it in its entirety from correct sources.

May Allah bestow worldly and eternal happiness upon all of humanity! May He grant us all the wisdom to find the right path before the end of our worldly life and enable us to make the most productive use of the test period given to us! May this work also be one of the means and tools on this path!

Ameen!

"Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honor, above what they attribute. And peace be upon the messengers. And all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds." (As-Saffat, 180-182)

693. At-Tawbah, 33; As-Saff, 9. Al-Anbiya', 107.

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