

A Call For Unity

Author: Harun Yahya

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About the Author

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

His pen-name is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their people's lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to their contents.

It represents the Qur'an (the Final Scripture) and the Prophet Mohammed (May God bless him and grant him peace), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of godless ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

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

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

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for God's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works. Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of God, render an invaluable service.

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

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late. In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of God, these books will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

Introduction

We are living in an era in which the world is desperately in need of peace, friendship, and solidarity. The tensions and conflicts that so defined the twentieth century continue in this new century, and innocent people all around the world continue to suffer from them.

Despite the urgent need for solidarity and cooperation, certain circles are inciting conflict, particularly conflict between the world's two greatest and deep-rooted civilizations. This issue needs to be scrutinized, as the war of civilizations that they envisage would have disastrous consequences for humanity. One of the best ways of preventing such a disaster is to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation between these civilizations. This is not a hard task, as there are no fundamental differences between Islam and the Judeo-Christian western world. To the contrary, there is much common ground between them. Considering the current situation and the nature of the world's problems, these shared values will make the cooperation necessary for solving them possible.

Today, ideological struggles, indeed, continue to divide the world. However, Muslims are not at one pole and Jews and Christians are not at the opposing pole. In fact, one pole represents people who believe in God's existence and unity, and the other pole represents the unbelievers, who believe in such anti-religious ideologies as materialism and Darwinism. There is only one way to defeat the alliance of the various groups of unbelievers on an ideological level: eradicate the negative and destructive influences of anti-religious materialism and further the cause of a society dominated by morality, happiness, tranquility, security, and prosperity. This will be done by forming an alliance of all conscientious people, namely, sincere Christians, along with religious Jews and Muslims, who will come together and unite in this common cause.

There have been conflicts and disputes between members of these three religions in the past, but those were the result of the erroneous reasoning and evil motives of certain states, nations, and individuals who pursued their own economic and political gain instead of the central beliefs of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. One of the common aims of these divinely revealed religions is to ensure the happiness, security, peace, and tranquility of all people by opposing conflict.

Therefore, this dialogue and alliance will be based on the sincere believers' quest for justice, peace, and support for all people. The resulting dialogue will not be restricted to meetings and conferences, but will cement an alliance between people who advocate common values, fight for the same cause, and seek permanent solutions to common problems. This alliance will be one of the main contributing factors to tranquility at a time when Prophet Jesus' (peace be upon him) second coming is expected.

Chapter 1 : Muslims and The People Of The Book

This book reveals that Muslims, Christians, and Jews have common principles of faith, worship, and moral values; face common dangers; and calls on the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) to unite with Muslims as fellow believers opposed to atheism, anti-religiosity, and social as well as moral degeneration. In short, it is an invitation to spread virtue around the world, a call to all Jews, Christians, and Muslims who are sincere, conscientious, tolerant, helpful, conciliatory, reasonable, virtuous, peaceful, and fair to recognize that we believe in the same God and strive to live and extend the reach of God's morality. The followers of these three faiths believe that God created the universe and sustains all matter; created all life forms in a miraculous way; gave each human being a soul; sent Prophets to humanity throughout history, like Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace), and Prophets Jesus, Moses, Noah, David, Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph (peace be upon them all); created our lives according to destiny; and believe in the Resurrection, Hell, Paradise, and angels.

The People of the Book and Muslims also have common moral values. For example, in a world in which prostitution, homosexuality, and drug abuse, together with selfishness, greed, and hardheartedness are spreading fast, they value and seek to live by honor, chastity, modesty, selflessness, honesty, compassion, mercy, and unconditional love.

We Muslims love and respect Prophets Moses (pbuh) and Jesus (pbuh), know that they are loved and dear people in God's presence, and believe in all His Prophets. Furthermore, we respect Jewish and Christian beliefs, values, and traditions, for God commands us to invite the People of the Book to unite on a common premise:

Say: "O People of the Book! Come to a proposition that is the same for us and you - that we should worship none but God, not associate any partners with Him, and not take one another as lords besides God." If they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 3:64)

This is our call to Jews and Christians: As believers in God and His revelation, let us unite in faith, love and obey our Master and Creator, and pray to Him for enlightenment. When Muslims, Christians, and Jews unite under these premises, when they realize that they are friends and not enemies, and when they see that the real enemies are atheism and irreligion, the world will become an altogether different place. Wars, antagonisms, fears, and violence will end, and a new civilization founded on this common premise, one based on love, respect, and contentment, will emerge.

Islam Accepts Judaism and Christianity

There is a basic difference between how the members of the divinely revealed religions view each other. Judaism does not recognize Christianity and Islam, which superseded it, and Christianity recognizes Judaism but not Islam, which superseded it. Islam however, recognizes both Judaism and Christianity as divinely revealed religions that originated in God's revelation and does not view them as systems of idolatry or unbelief. Rather, it regards Jews and Christians as People of the Book and advises Muslims to accept and respect their beliefs:

Alif Lam Mim. That is the Book without any doubt. It contains guidance for those who guard against evil: those who believe in the Unseen, perform prayer, and spend from what We have provided for them; those who believe in what has been sent down to you, what was sent down before you, and are certain about the Hereafter. (Qur'an, 2:1-4)

These verses describe Muslims as people who believe in the Qur'an revealed to Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) as well as in the earlier divinely revealed books: the Pages of Abraham (pbuh), the Torah revealed to Moses (pbuh), the Book of Psalms revealed to David (pbuh), and the Bible revealed to Jesus (pbuh). However, over time these books were tampered with and therefore contain both accurate (e.g., belief in God, virtue, the Day of Judgment, and the rejection of idolatry), and inaccurate information. One verse says:

He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel, previously, as guidance for humanity... (Qur'an, 3:3-4)

Another verse states the following about the Torah:

We sent down the Torah containing guidance and light, and the Prophets who had submitted themselves gave judgment by it for the Jews - as did their scholars and their rabbis - by what they had been allowed to preserve of God's Book, to which they were witnesses. (Qur'an, 5:44)

The Qur'an reveals that some Jewish scholars and rabbis "distorted words from their proper meanings" in the Torah (Qur'an, 5:41) and falsified it: "Woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and then say: 'This is from God,' to sell it for a paltry price" (Qur'an, 2:79). Christians, on the other hand, made a grave mistake by deifying Jesus (pbuh) Qur'an, 4:171). However, God's revelation of such mistakes does not mean that the People of the Book are in complete ignorance and error, for He also reveals that some of them are deeply religious and devoted to God:

They are not all the same. There is a community among the People of the Book who are upright. They recite God's Signs throughout the night, and they prostrate. They believe in God and the Last Day, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and compete in doing good. They are among the righteous. You will not be denied the reward for any good thing you do. God knows those who guard against evil. (Qur'an, 3:113-15)

Among the People of the Book are some who believe in God and in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them, and who are humble before God. They do not sell God's Signs for a paltry price. Such people will have their reward with their Lord. And God is swift at reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:199)

Therefore, a Muslim's attitude toward the People of the Book reflects the probable existence of genuinely faithful people among them. Only God knows the hearts of people, and He reveals that some Jews and Christians have earned His good pleasure.

Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was a Haneef

God reveals that He has created a way and a method for all nations. Throughout history, He has sent Prophets to people to inform them of His laws, commands, and prohibitions. Essentially, all Prophets have invited

their nations to believe in and worship God and to abide by the limits He has established for humanity. In other words, all true religions in their original state are based on the principles of not associating others with Him and of working to win His good pleasure, compassion, and Paradise. All nations are expected to follow God's will without fail and to do good deeds in order to earn His reward:

We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you. So, compete with each other in doing good. Every one of you will return to God, and He will inform you regarding the things about which you differed. (Qur'an, 5:48)

The People of the Book were given a different law than the Muslims, but all sincere Jews, Christians, and Muslims are required to submit wholeheartedly to Him, do what is good, and compete in doing good deeds. All of them who believe in God's existence and unity and the Hereafter and do good deeds are, in reality, following the true religion revealed to Abraham (pbuh). God reveals that Adam (pbuh) was the first of a long line of Prophets, to which his descendents Noah and Abraham (peace be upon them all) also belong:

"Peace be upon Noah, among all beings." That is how We recompense the good-doers. He truly was one of Our servants who believes. Then We drowned the rest. One of his followers in faith was Abraham. (Qur'an, 37:79-83)

The Qur'an reveals that Abraham (pbuh) was a haneef, meaning one who surrenders to God's will, not compromising in any way on his religion, and being devout. In one verse, God commands Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) to abide by this religion:

Then We revealed to you: "Follow the religion of Abraham, a man of pure natural belief. He was not one of the idolaters." (Qur'an, 16:123) Abraham's (pbuh) sons, grandchildren, and other devout Muslim descendents all abided by his religion, for, Who would deliberately renounce the religion of Abraham, except someone who reveals himself to be a fool? We chose him in this world, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the righteous. When his Lord said to him: "Become a Muslim!" he said: "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds." Abraham directed his sons to this, as did Jacob: "My sons. God has chosen this religion for you, so do not die except as Muslims." Or were you present when death came to Jacob and he said to his sons: "What will you worship when I have gone?" They said: "We will worship your God, the God of your forefathers, Abraham, Ishmail and Isaac - one God. We are Muslims submitted to Him." (Qur'an, 2:130-33)

As we can see, the religion followed by Abraham (pbuh) represents the common ground among Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Love, faith, and respect for Abraham (pbuh) are just as important to Muslims as they are for Christians and Jews. However, those who follow his morality are the ones who are closest to him. He was exuberant in his faith in God, loved him deeply, followed all of His commands willingly, and thus was an example for all humanity. As God says:

The people with the strongest claim to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet, and those who believe. God is the Protector of the believers. (Qur'an, 3:68)

Therefore, all Jews and Christians, who believe wholeheartedly in God, like Abraham (pbuh) and the believers who followed him, must only turn to God and follow this great Prophet's example of virtue, sincerity, and insight. The best way to show one's love, obedience, and closeness to the Prophets is by emulating them. Muslims do not discriminate among all of the Prophets and what was revealed to them, for God commands:

Say: "We believe in God and what has been sent down to us, what was sent down to Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes; what Moses and Jesus were given; and what all of the Prophets were given by their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them. We are Muslims submitted to Him." (Qur'an, 2:136)

Chapter 2 : Muslims and The People Of The Book in History

Unbiased people who study Islamic history and the Muslims' relationship with the Jews and Christians living under Islamic rule will come across the following fact: The People of the Book have always lived in peace and tranquility under Islamic rule. Sometimes, Jews and Christians who were oppressed by their own religious or political rulers sought refuge and safety in Muslim countries. The most important reason for their enviable position, when compared to that of their coreligionists in Europe, was the Muslims' submission to the Qur'an's morality.

Islam, a religion of peace and acceptance, requires believers to treat all people with justice and respect. Devout Muslims are tolerant, forgiving, modest, understanding, gentle, genuine, and honest. In fact, God commands them to be just even when it is not in their own interests or those of their families to be so; to feed orphans and prisoners of war first, even if they are hungry themselves; and to be selfless, patient, and firm in virtue. Such Muslims are far more accepting of non-Muslims, for they know that compulsion is disallowed in religion. When dealing with non-Muslims, they do their best to show the way to the right path, address the other person's conscience, and become the means of this person's acceptance of a virtuous life, which is only possible if God grants him or her faith. The following verse reveals that God rules people's hearts and that only He can bring light into them:

Do those who believe not know that if God had wanted to He could have guided all humanity? (Qur'an, 13:31)

You cannot guide those you would like to, but God guides whoever He wills. He has best knowledge of the guided. (Qur'an, 28:56) Muslims are only responsible for relaying the truth and inviting people to believe, for belief cannot be forced upon someone. God says: There is no compulsion in religion. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false deities and believes in God has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Qur'an, 2:256)

Muslims naturally abide by the Qur'an's morality when dealing with the People of the Book. For example, the Qur'an says that Muslims are expected to respect the Christians' and the Jews' beliefs and reputations, protect them and be compassionate toward them, for they are fellow believers in God's existence and unity, His angels and Prophets, the Day of Judgment, and the necessity to abide by religious morality.

God also reveals that those Christians and Jews who believe in Him and the Day of Judgment and do good deeds will receive the fairest rewards for their virtue:

Those with faith, those who are Jews, Christians, and Sabaeans, all who believe in God and the Last Day and act rightly will have their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 2:62)

Thus, good tidings are given to all who believe in God and the Day of Judgment and do right deeds. The faithful will attain salvation and

happiness. Qur'an 5:48 states that "We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you," and they have to "compete with each other in doing good." This is a request for all sincere believers to live righteously and compete in doing good. Therefore, Muslims cannot be uncompromising and intolerant toward people who, like themselves, believe in God and are righteous. The history of Islam proves this point.

Before we analyze this history, we must point out a very important factor that determines the Muslims' attitude toward the People of the Book: Muslims' love for Prophets Moses (pbuh) and Jesus (pbuh).

Muslims Love Prophets Moses (pbuh) and Jesus (pbuh)

In all epochs, God has sent Prophets to deliver His revelations to humanity. Prophets are chosen in His presence and therefore are ennobled by Him. These role models of virtue taught His religion to their nations, advocated goodness and warned of evil, and helped people toward faith. The Qur'an gives many examples of past nations and peoples and their Prophets' lives. These narratives reveal details of their teachings about God and His religion, their ideological fight against unbelievers, and the responses they received from the people they invited to faith. The Prophets' patience, selflessness, sincerity, fine thinking, and other superior human virtues made them ideal role models. Muslims believe in all Prophets who were chosen by God to reveal the truth to humanity, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed (peace be upon them all):

He has laid down the same religion for you as He enjoined on Noah: that which We have revealed to you and which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: "Establish the religion and do not make divisions in it." What you call the idolaters to follow is very hard for them. God chooses for Himself anyone He wills, and guides to Himself those who turn to Him. (Qur'an, 42:13)

God also reveals that Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) is an ideal role model for all people who believe in God and the Day of Judgment (Qur'an, 33:21), which is why Muslims seek to acquire his morality, follow his noble path, and become people who please Him. The Qur'an's accounts of Jesus (pbuh) and Moses (pbuh), whose lives are told in some detail in the Qur'an, contain many examples of wisdom and morality for Muslims.

God reveals that Moses (pbuh) and his brother Aaron (pbuh) were His ennobled servants:

We showed great kindness to Moses and Aaron. We rescued them and their people from their terrible plight. We supported them, and so they were the victors. We gave them the clarifying Book, guided them on the Straight Path, and left the later people saying of them: "Peace be upon Moses and Aaron." That is how We recompense good-doers. They truly were among Our believing servants. (Qur'an, 37:114-22)

God sent Moses (pbuh) to the Children of Israel, then enslaved by Pharaoh, for the following reason: "Then We gave Moses the Book, complete and perfect for him who does good, elucidating everything, and a guidance and a mercy, so that hopefully they will believe in their encounter

with their Lord" (Qur'an, 6:154). The Qur'an reveals how Moses (pbuh) was chosen:

Has the story of Moses not reached you? When he [Moses] saw a fire and said to his family: "Wait here. I can make out a fire. Maybe I will bring you a brand from it, or will find guidance there." Then when he reached it, a voice called out: "Moses! I am your Lord. Take off your sandals. You are in the holy valley of Tuwa. I have chosen you, so listen well to what is revealed." (Qur'an, 20:9-13)

Moses (pbuh) fought against Pharaoh and his close allies, as well as those hypocrites and people of weak faith from among his own nation, and proved himself a universal role model by means of his submission to God and his faith, patience, courage, selflessness, intelligence, motivation, and drive. Muslims feel deep respect for him. Prophet Jesus (pbuh) is introduced as "God's Messenger and word" (Qur'an, 4:171), as well as a "sign" (Qur'an, 21:91) for people. The Qur'an reveals some enlightening information about his mission, miracles, and life. For example;

When the angels said: "Mary, your Lord gives you good news of a Word from Him. His name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, of high esteem in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near." (Qur'an, 3:45) The nature of the divine revelation given to him is described as follows:

And We sent Jesus, son of Mary, following in their footsteps, confirming the Torah that came before him. We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light, confirming the Torah that came before it, and as guidance and admonition for those who guard against evil. (Qur'an, 5:46)

As the Qur'an reveals, Jesus (pbuh) is distinguished from the other Prophets in several ways. The most significant of these is that he did not die, but was raised up to God's presence and will return. The Qur'an states that "they certainly did not kill him" (Qur'an, 4:157), but that God raised him up to His presence. The Qur'an also reveals information about his second coming and future life. Given that all of the events it foretells come true, Muslims are awaiting his return with great joy and anticipation, and are doing their best to prepare for his arrival.

Prophet Mohammed's (may God bless him and grant him peace) Exemplary Attitude

Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace), the best role model for Muslims who deal with the People of the Book, was always just and compassionate toward Jews and Christians and tried to create an atmosphere based on reconciliation and love among these three religious communities. Various agreements and guarantees allowed Christians and Jews to live as autonomous religious communities. When the young Muslim community was still suffering from the Makkan polytheists' cruelty and oppression, our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) advised some of them to seek refuge with the Christian king of Ethiopia, Negus (or al-Najashi).

The Muslims who later on migrated to Madinah with our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace), on the other hand, developed a model

of coexistence with that city's Jewish community that was to become a model for all later generations. The Muslims' acceptance of Jews and Christians during the period of Islam's expansion in Arabia entered the history books as an example of justice and acceptance.

One such example was our beloved Prophet's (may God bless him and grant him peace) reading of the verse: "Only argue with the People of the Book in the kindest way - except in the case of those of them who do wrong - saying: 'We believe in what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to you. Our God and your God are one, and we submit to Him'" (Qur'an, 29:46) after he had the following words written in the text of an agreement prepared for the Christian Ibn Harris bin Ka`b and his co-religionists: "The religion, churches, lives, chastity, and goods of all Christians living in the East are under the protection of God and all believers. None of those living by Christianity will be forced to turn to Islam. If any Christian is subjected to any killing or injustice, Muslims must help him."¹

Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) allowed the Jews to become a party to the Constitution of Madinah signed with the Aws and Khazraj clans, which permitted them to continue living as a separate religious community. The basis for this acceptance of the Jews' faith and traditions was laid down in the following article: "The Jews of Banu Awf [non-Muslim minorities] are a community along with the believers. To the Jews their religion, and to the Muslim their religion."²

As a requirement of the morality ordained by God, Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) not only showed compassion and understanding toward the People of the Book, but also taught his Companions that those Jews and Christians living under the rule of Islam must be protected. The privileges that he granted them in the settlements of Adruh, Maqna, Khaybar, Najran, and Aqaba prove that Muslims both guaranteed these non-Muslims' lives and property and recognized their freedom of belief and worship. The following articles of the agreement between our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) and the Christians of Najran need to be pointed out:

To the Christians of Najran and the neighboring territories, the security of God and pledge of His Prophet are extended for their lives, their religion, and their property - to those present as well as those absent and others besides;

No bishop shall be removed from his bishopric, nor any monk from his monastery, nor any priest from his priesthood, and they shall continue to enjoy everything great and small as heretofore... They shall not oppress or be oppressed. If anyone demands his right from you, justice will be maintained between you.

Neither you will be oppressed, nor you will be allowed to oppress others.³ In addition, according to some hearsay, our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) attended their weddings, visited their sick, and was generous to them. Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) even spread out his cloak so that the Christians of Najran who came to visit him could sit on it. Following his death, the Muslims' moral

conduct toward the People of the Book continued to be based on the acceptance that Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) had shown to them throughout his life.

Freedom of Belief and Worship

Beginning at the time of Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace), there has always been freedom of religion in Muslim-ruled lands. Muslims protected the Christians' and Jews' belief systems, rituals, churches and synagogues, and schools of religious education. Articles guaranteeing the protection of monasteries and churches have been important parts of all agreements signed between Muslims and the People of the Book. Early agreements also allowed Muslim travelers to rest in the monasteries located along the travel routes. This suggests that Muslims were attempting to base their relationship and dialogue with the People of the Book on mutual respect. Historical documents reveal that many Muslims visited monasteries to rest for the night, to enjoy a meal, or even to have a civilized conversation during their travels or campaigns.

The People of the Book often responded warmly toward Muslims. The following expressions were recorded in an agreement signed by Caliph Umar, which was presented to Abu Ubayda by the Syrian Christians:

[We imposed these terms on ourselves:]... not to withhold our churches from Muslims stopping there by night or day; to open their doors to the traveller and wayfarer; ...to entertain every Muslim traveller in our customary style and feed him... We will not abuse a Muslim, and he who strikes a Muslim has forfeited his rights.⁴

As "if God had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, where God's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed," (Qur'an, 22:40) points out, Jewish and Christian places of worship are regarded by Muslims as holy places in which God's name is remembered. Thus, as it is their responsibility to protect such places, throughout Islamic history all Jewish and Christian houses of worship have been protected so that the Jews and Christians can pray and worship in them as they please. For instance, historic documents signed during Abu Bakr's reign state that the Christians of the peacefully taken city of Tabarriya were given guarantees that their churches would not be harmed. Likewise, the agreement signed after the conquest of Damascus stated that churches would not be destroyed or occupied.

Umar's covenant to the people of Jerusalem guaranteed the protection of all places of worship. During the conquest of the Armenian city of Dabil (Dvin) in Uthman's time, the assurances given to Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians guaranteed the protection of all places of worship.⁵ Permission to restore damaged churches and build new monasteries was never withheld. For instance, the St. Sergius monastery outside of Medain was destroyed by Patriarch Mar Amme and rebuilt during Uthman's reign.

Uqba, the governor of Egypt, contributed to a Nestorian monastery, the Church of Edessa was restored during the reign of Mu'awiyya, and the Saint Marcos Church was built in Alexandria. These are just a few examples of this tradition. The continued existence of churches and synagogues in

Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq proves the Muslims' respect for the other divinely revealed religions. The Sinai Monastery with a mosque right next door is an important pilgrimage center on Mount Sinai and a symbol of Muslim acceptance.

Under Islamic rule, the People of the Book have always celebrated their religious festivities as they pleased. From time to time, the Muslim leadership even attended them. A letter by the Nestorian Patriarch Isho'yab III (650-60) reveals the Muslim leaders' compassion and acceptance toward the People of the Book: They [Abbasids] have not attacked the Christian religion, but rather they have commended our faith, honored our priests... and conferred benefits on churches and monasteries.⁶

Benjamin of Tudela, a famous twelfth-century Jewish explorer who could not conceal his astonishment when he discovered such attitudes in the Islamic world, expressed the impossibility of such religious acceptance and pluralism in Christian Europe. He also stated that Jews and Muslims prayed together in holy places and at the tombs of holy people, that mosques were built next to synagogues, and that different congregations celebrated each other's religious festivities.⁷ These historical facts reveal that, contrary to much of what we read today, Islam is a religion of peace and acceptance. Christians and Jews lived freely under Muslim rule and enjoyed the freedoms of religious belief and thought.

Tranquillity under Muslim Rule

Christians and Jews enjoyed the highest degree of freedom and tolerance under Muslim rule. During the first few centuries of the Christian era, Jews oppressed Christians; as the latter became more powerful, they began to oppress Jews and even fellow Christians belonging to other sects. The Middle Ages were dominated by the Catholic church's oppression of all Jews and Christians who did not agree with its teachings. Some non-Catholics sought refuge with the Muslims. The oppression and violence directed by Byzantium against the Egyptian Monophysite and the Jacobean Christians, the horrors endured by those Jews and Orthodox Christians who found themselves in the path of the Catholic Crusaders, and the persecution endured by the Jews of Europe, as well as by the Muslims and Jews in Spain after the reconquista, have never occurred on Muslim soil.

The Ottoman Empire set an example of acceptance. The Patriarch of Antalya, Makarios, compared the tyranny of Catholic Poland against the Orthodox population with the Ottoman administration and concluded:

We mourned the thousands of people, men, women, and children killed by those heathens. The Polish wish to exterminate people of the Orthodox faith. May God make the Turkish state eternal, because they do not interfere with the Jews or Christians, provided they pay their taxes.⁸ Jews escaping Spanish tyranny found the peace and security they sought on Ottoman soil. Driven out of Spain and faced with more hardship in other countries where they sought refuge, many died of hunger and thirst at the gates of towns and cities they were not permitted to enter. Jews who boarded Genoese ships were either exploited or sold to pirates. Sultan Bayazid welcomed the Jews into his empire and demanded that the people show them the respect and acceptance to which they were entitled.

The order proclaimed not to refuse the Jews entry or cause them difficulties, but to receive them cordially.⁹ Sultan Bayazid is known to history as a religious man, and his hospitality and acceptance were based on the Qur'an's morality.

Another example of the comfortable and prosperous lives led by Jews on Muslim soil was seen in Muslim Andalusia. This state, which founded the most advanced civilization in Europe at that time, was characterized by its acceptance of non-Muslims. Andalusia was gradually weakened due to the constant attacks of Spanish Christians. Granada was its last stronghold, and historic documents state that "those who have not seen the splendor of Jewish life do not know what splendor is." At that time, Granada was the safest place on Earth for Jews.¹⁰

Another example is Palestine, where Jewish and Christian communities enjoyed religious freedom, lived in peace and safety, and engaged in trade and crafts. The Ottoman Empire guaranteed peace and security for five centuries in the area, and such order has never been seen there since. The freedoms and acceptance enjoyed in Jerusalem and its surrounding area under Ottoman rule is described by one of Israel's ex-foreign ministers, Abba Eban, as follows:

Jerusalem and the Jewish nation suffered bloodshed and torture from the Romans and every other occupying force. Only after the conquest of Jerusalem by Sultan Yavuz Selim and its fortification by Kanuni did the Jewish nation discover what humanity, equality, and a peaceful life meant.¹¹ Throughout the Muslim world, Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived together in peace and tranquility for centuries. The People of the Book engaged in commerce and acquired property as they wished, engaged in the trade or profession of their choice, and were appointed to posts in the state administration and even in the sultan's palace. They enjoyed the freedom of thought and expression at the highest degree, and made scientific and cultural achievements that are still with us today. They were not denied their social rights, and enjoyed maximum freedoms of belief and worship.

For instance, historical sources reveal that Christian physicians in the Abbasids' palace could read the Bible with their families and staff, and no one interfered with their worship.

The importance of science and scientists in the Islamic world guaranteed the caliphs' patronage of Christian and Jewish scientists. Scientists of various religious denominations would meet at state-organized gatherings to discuss scientific matters. Jewish and Christian physicists would exchange views with their Muslim counterparts, and many medical works would be discussed in the presence of the caliph or his bureaucrats.¹² Living under the Islamic rule,

the People of the Book took part in the bustling cultural life. Muslim leaders extended their cultural patronage to the lands they conquered and imported them to Baghdad, capital of the empire, where they would be studied by Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scientists. Each of them in turn, could teach their works based on these studies alongside their own religious beliefs. At a time when Muslims supported science and freedom of thought, Europe, the center of Christianity, had Inquisition courts that burned people

at the stake for their heretical, meaning non-Catholic, thoughts or religious beliefs.

The Muslim leaders' sense of justice led many Christians and Jews to bring their cases to Islamic courts, even though they had their own courts with their own laws. At one time, the Nestorian patriarch Mar Timothee I (780-825) even circulated a decree to counteract the ever-increasing number of Christians taking their cases to Islamic courts.¹³

This unequalled acceptance and justice in Muslim lands was based on the Qur'an's morality. Muslim leaders who adopted such ethical standards always achieved security, peace, and justice in their domains. These administrations' priority was the public's happiness and prosperity; therefore, they established systems that set the standards for future generations. When these same values of compassion, mercy, justice, understanding, modesty, patience, selflessness, and devotion derived from the Qur'an's morality begin to pervade modern-day societies, it will be possible to create a world order in which all people will find peace and security.

The Non-Muslims' Legal Status

The People of the Book living within the Muslim realm were considered dhimmis, rather than prisoners of war, and therefore were guaranteed certain legal rights. For example, in exchange for paying the jizya tax, their lives and property were guaranteed, and they enjoyed freedom of religious belief and thought, were exempted from military service, and had the right to their own law courts to resolve their disputes. On some occasions, their taxes were refunded.

This tax on non-Muslims has sometimes been misinterpreted in order to portray it as an injustice. But as we have seen above, the protections that they secured after paying it were hardly insignificant. In addition, the collected money was used to protect the non-Muslims' rights and future, and to take care of their needy coreligionists. Studying the dhimmis' status and the Muslim administrators' practices in this regard reveal the truth of the matter.

Our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) said: "I am the adversary of those who wrong the dhimmis or burden them with a load they cannot carry." According to this principle, Muslims considered it their duty to protect those non-Muslims living under their rule. The Muslims' sense of justice dictates that dhimmis come under the state's protection. During the reign of Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Muslims signed an agreement with the Christians of Hira. One of the provisions stated: "If any of their men become weak and old,

or inflicted with a disease, or was rich and had become poor, the jizya shall be lifted from him, and he and his family shall be supported by the public treasury [bayt al-mal] so long as he resides in the dar al-Islam."¹⁴ This clearly reveals the attitude of the Muslim authorities toward the dhimmis. When non-Muslims could not pay their taxes, they were supported by public funds, which were an important aspect of state support. Before signing the agreement he had made with the people of Damascus, Umar revealed the sensitivity of Muslims toward the jizya and non-Muslims:

My own opinion and on the Book of Allah [citing Q. LIX, 6-8] is that you should keep what has been given by Allah to you [of the land] in the hands of its people ...If the jizya is paid by them [the dhimmis], you should require no more of them ... For if we divide the land [among us], nothing will be left for our descendants ...[If the land is left with its people,] the Muslims will be able to live on its produce.

You may therefore impose on them [the dhimmis] the jizya, never to take them as prisoners, nor to do any injustice or harm to them, or to take any of their property unless you have a [valid legal] claim to it. You must fulfill the obligations you accepted in accordance with your agreement with them.¹⁵

As we have seen, genuine Muslims who abide by the Qur'an's morality considered it their responsibility to protect the lives, property, and peace of non-Muslims. Once, during a battle with the Byzantine army, the situation became so untenable that Muslims could no longer provide the necessary protection to Christians. Thus, Mohammed, our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace), ordered the jizya to be returned to them.¹⁶ The amicable history between Muslims and Jews and Christians is an example for the present.

The Islamic code of ethics requires that non-Muslims be accepted, that their values and beliefs be respected, and that an environment in which peaceful coexistence is possible be created. Therefore, the spread of this code, as well as efforts to correct some misguided practices claiming to be Islamic, will play an important role. In addition, the Muslims' acceptance and understanding must find an appropriate response in the Jewish and Christian communities, because God also commands them to love all other people and to be the leaders in all matters of good and peace.

Chapter 3 : Uniting Against Radicalism

Radical tendencies, irrespective of their origin, are one of the most dangerous threats to world peace and security. Radicalism means to advocate fundamental and sudden changes by means of uncompromising and hard-line policies. Radicals seek such changes by employing cunning and often aggressive policies. One of radicalism's characteristic traits is the angry attitude visible in its adherents' speeches, books, and demonstrations.

Radical movements are dominated by blindly advocated taboos, instead of conscious behavior, and reflect amass psychology. This psychology, in turn, can get so out of control that people, who no longer know what they are doing or why, turn their aggression on others. In an environment where mutual acceptance and understanding have ceased to exist, people begin to feel animosity toward different ideologies or races without knowing what the other party really represents or believes.

Ignorance enables radicalism to find new recruits, even though it is a harmful and destructive movement. Misinformed or one-sidedly informed people are vulnerable to extremist movements, whose philosophical programs they adopt without careful reflection. This is why education is an essential aspect of the ideological fight against radicalism.

In our own time, radicalism has emerged among Muslims, Christians, and Jews. This situation is abused and taken advantage of by proponents of Samuel Huntington's proposed clash of civilizations theory. The scale of radicalism's threat to world peace has become apparent in the 9/11 attacks on the United States and its consequences. The fact that these attacks are widely believed to have been carried out in the name of Islam resulted in a great deal of prejudice against Muslims and misunderstanding of Islam.

Given the fact that Islam prohibits all acts of violence and aggression, most of the Islamic world condemned these terrorist attacks. Muslims prayed alongside Christians for the innocent lives lost, and American Muslims rushed to the aid of the victims. Despite this, prejudice against Muslims in the United States and some European countries has vastly increased, and incidences of violence have been reported. The arguments of those radicals who seek to divide the world into two warring factions have created an atmosphere of anxiety.

In order to eradicate radicalism and its damaging consequences, cultural and educational campaigns designed to reach all sections of society must be organized. We can list the topics and the responsibilities of various sections of society to be covered by this program, as follows:

An awareness that radicalism, an extremist tendency that is incompatible with true religious morality, must be defeated ideologically so that its claim to be acting in the name of religion can be exposed as false. People of all three divinely revealed religions must be told that they have a responsibility to be compassionate, patient, gentle, friendly, polite, and respectful. They have to be made aware that God forbids violence, aggression, and anything that harms innocent people. They must understand that it is wrong to go down that path. These efforts will ensure that all radicals will be recognized as misguided liars and thereby prevented from finding new recruits.

A program must be designed to give full and accurate information about all parties involved in the conflict, so that international dialogue becomes possible. An important step toward mutually friendly relations is the creation of an environment in which Jews, Christians, and Muslims can begin to know each other's beliefs, traditions, and rituals better. This can be done through cultural and educational programs. As people come to know each other better, they will realize that they have many things in common. This, in turn, will make reconciliation possible. Muslims, Christians, and Jews should tell one another about their respective worldviews in line with God's divine books of revelation, thereby preventing the mutual misunderstanding and radicalism caused by a lack of accurate knowledge.

The media must support the cultural activities necessary to create an environment conducive to international dialogue. They should refrain from sensationalism, which incites violence and segregation, and focus on broadcasts that encourage moderation and acceptance. Carefully prepared broadcasts by the western media will play an important role in eradicating the currently widespread anti-Muslim prejudice. Muslim media organizations, for their part, must refrain from broadcasts and opinions that incite hatred toward non-Muslims and concentrate instead on cultural and spiritual education in the Islamic world.

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious leaders and opinion makers must identify people who are bent on portraying myths and false beliefs as part of the religious code. They must teach people that God commands believers to be balanced and gentle, and that all extremism is contrary to religious morality. Political leaders must support this awareness campaign in order to prevent extremism in society and to prepare the ground for moderation. These and similar joint efforts will eradicate the conditions conducive to radicalism. In addition, believers must begin to show sincere respect for others' beliefs and values. In Qur'an 2:113, God reveals that the Jews claimed that the Christians "have nothing to stand on" and vice versa. In reality, God knows best who is right, which is why genuine believers must seek to draw closer to God instead of accusing one another.

They should concentrate on enhancing their sincerity and work to earn God's good pleasure and mercy. The following verse reveals that people who act otherwise are wrong:

The Jews say: "The Christians have nothing to stand on," and the Christians say: "The Jews have nothing to stand on," yet they both recite the Book. Those who do not know say the same as they say. God will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection regarding the things about which they differ. (Qur'an, 2:113)

Eradicating the harm caused by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim radicals is possible only if all moderate, peace-loving, civilized, and genuinely religious people cooperate and form an alliance. Such an alliance will defeat those who present war and conflict as the only option, and disprove the assertions of those who advocate a show of force as the only way to achieve security and prevent further bloodshed, tears, and material damage. Another important way to curb radicalism is to expose the movements and ideologies that promote extremism as false. In the coming pages, we will scrutinize the

errors of radical Jewish and Christian movements. But first, we need to remind people in the Islamic world to be alert against radicalism.

Qur'anic Morality Forbids Extremism

As mentioned earlier, Islamic societies have been centers of mutual acceptance and goodwill toward non-Muslims throughout history, particularly in our Prophet's (may God bless him and grant him peace) time. Islamic history is full of examples of Christians and Jews seeking and finding refuge with Muslims. Bearing this reality in mind at a time when the world so desperately needs peace, Muslims must develop a model based on the Qur'an's morality and our Prophet's (may God bless him and grant him peace) life that will set the standards for the rest of the world.

Radicalism is wholly incompatible with God's prescribed way of life. God describes Muslims as those who speak nicely, refrain from conflict and fighting, are friendly and moderate toward even the fiercest opponents, and modest, patient, compassionate, and loving. The Qur'an reveals that all of the Prophets were moderate, gentle, and accepting of others. For example, God describes Abraham (pbuh) as: "tender-hearted and forbearing" (Qur'an, 9:114) and Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) as:

It is a mercy from God that you were gentle with them. If you had been rough or hard of heart, they would have scattered from around you. (Qur'an, 3:159)

Since Muslims are only responsible for announcing the Qur'an's morality, and since they are prohibited from being bullies or enforcers and are required to be softly spoken to even the cruelest tyrant, they cannot be extremists or radicals, for such groups advocate that which violates the Qur'an's morality.

Radicalism is an ideological movement and political approach that is foreign to Islam. When radical groups are examined, it gradually becomes clear that they are, in reality, using a compilation of communist slogans and methods or that they have adopted the "fanatical rage of the Time of Ignorance" (Qur'an, 48:26). One of the common characteristics of such ideologies is their emotional force, an underlying cause of radicalism that is totally incompatible with God's commands. The Qur'an describes Muslims as people who control their anger and who are reasonable, moderate, and tolerant. They always prefer reconciliation in order to reach solutions within the framework of mutual acceptance and optimism. They show their calming and peaceful sides in all situations. One verse reveals these attributes:

Those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people - God loves the good-doers. (Qur'an, 3:134) Muslims must be polite and respectful when interacting with people of different beliefs and ideologies. They never resort to force or threats, for their responsibility is limited to teaching others about the Qur'an's morality. The rest is up to the conscience of those people. The following verse describes this approach:

Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way. Your Lord knows best who is

misguided from His way. And He knows best who are guided. (Qur'an, 16:125)

God commanded Prophets Moses and Aaron (peace be upon them) to speak with Pharaoh, and to do so softly:

"Go to Pharaoh; he has overstepped the bounds. But speak to him with gentle words so that, hopefully, he will pay heed or show some fear." (Qur'an, 20:43-44) Pharaoh was the worst denier and tyrant of his time. He rejected God, claimed divinity, and was a despot who killed and oppressed the believers (Israelites). Yet, God commanded His Prophets to speak with gentle words when they visited him. Notice that God's ordained method is to establish a friendly dialogue. Agitating words, expressions of anger, and heated protest are incompatible with His code of preaching and morality.

Therefore, all Muslims must refrain from a harsh, angry, and challenging approach, for these are contrary to the Qur'an's method and essence. Instead, Muslims must adopt the accepting, moderate, calm, and rational approach described in the Qur'an. In other words, they must be role models for humanity and earn people's admiration for the morality of Islam and themselves. Muslims should also make great progress and produce superb works of science, culture, art, and aesthetics, as well as live Islam in the best way, and thus represent it to the world.

The Errors of Radical Christians

The vast majority of Christians approach members of other religions with the acceptance, love, and respect required by the Bible. This is a very important - and very recent - development. During the second half of the twentieth century, the Christian world's conviction that all other religions are completely wrong was largely abandoned, and the view that non-Christians should not be automatically condemned gained the upper hand. Christian writers, researchers, and officials expressed this view regularly. Organizations representing Christians decided to establish a dialogue and cooperate with other religions to find solutions to the world's problems. Fundamentalism made way for acceptance.

However, it is still possible - although not often - to encounter Christian intolerance and even aggressions toward non-Christians. Some religious figures make unfounded allegations against other religions and claim that their followers are destined for Hell. Such allegations create discomfort in the Islamic world. Some Christian leaders continue to make aggressive comments about Muslims, misinterpret the Old Testament, and claim that in the near future a Muslim-Christian war will occur. Or, even worse, they claim that such a war is both necessary and unavoidable.

The Old Testament relates stories from past nations, their wars, and the consequences thereof. Most of these are specific to those times and events. Therefore, such narratives must be considered in the context of those times, and one should refrain from reinterpreting those narratives to support war and conflict.

One of the most fundamental errors of Christian radicals is their belief in Armageddon, which they think will take place before the Messiah's arrival. This unfounded belief violates the morality that Jesus (pbuh) taught to his

followers. Even a cursory reading of the New Testament shows that Jesus recommended love, peace, and friendship.

Christians should know that Muslims are also awaiting Jesus' (pbuh) second coming, for this miracle is foretold in the Qur'an and in Prophet Mohammed's (may God bless him and grant him peace) hadiths. Therefore, Muslims and Christians should make joint preparations for his arrival. The best preparation is to adopt the morality that pleases God.

After Jesus (pbuh) returns, he will defeat all atheist ideologies and idolatrous philosophies; such ideologies as fascism and racism will be eradicated; the world will be freed from ethnic violence, tyranny, and injustice; and humanity will experience peace, happiness, and tranquility. Therefore, genuinely religious people who are preparing for this great event should make the necessary preparations, try to prevent all kinds of conflict, and leave all disputes, divisions, and animosities behind.

No doubt, the Christians are the best placed to render invalid all of those opinions and attitudes that seek to prevent a dialogue based on mutual understanding and respect between the two communities. True Christians must reveal such people's errors to them, as well as to society, by reminding them that Jesus (pbuh) commanded his followers to treat all people well, love their enemies, and do good to those who hate them.

In other words, he does not call for intolerance toward non-Christians and does not support those self-proclaimed Christians who seek to turn the world into a great arena of warfare. Such a biased and hateful attitude toward non-Christians, especially Muslims, is the result of misinterpreted Christian teachings and certain irreligious ideologies. Moderate Christians must expose the radicals' views as contrary to Christian teachings so that the Christian community will not be led astray. As we stated earlier, radicalism feeds on ignorance, and Christians are morally obliged to prevent this danger. As the Bible says:

For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men... Show the proper respect to everyone. Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God... (1 Peter, 2:15-17)

All conscientious Christians must shoulder this responsibility, for the war and conflict demanded by radicals will bring great losses, tears, and suffering to both sides. It would be a grave mistake to refrain from taking the necessary steps, when an alliance of all believers could remove this probability. The tensions desired by radicals can be prevented by Muslims and Christians of common sense. Removing the prejudices and creating an alliance of believers will enable them to play a leading role in delivering world peace. In this way, Christians and Muslims will bring peace and happiness to the world, just as the morality ordained by God demands.

The Errors of Radical Jews

On 25 February 1994, Baruch Goldstein unleashed a vicious attack on the Abraham Mosque in al-Khalil (Hebron) in the West Bank. This settler, a member of a radical Jewish organization claiming to be following in the footsteps of Meir Kahane, entered the mosque and, under the protection of Israeli soldiers, walked to its center and opened fire with his M-16 assault

rifle on the 500 Muslims performing their morning prayers, repeatedly changing magazines.

Sixty-seven Muslims died on the spot; a further 300 were wounded. The Israeli administration announced that this was a frenzied attack by an individual. However, the facts that he entered the mosque with his rifle, passed Israeli soldiers protecting the mosque, and fired on the worshippers for a long enough time to empty many clips prove that this statement was questionable. If nothing else, the Israeli soldiers had given him passive support.

In reality, this was only one of the many attacks carried out by radical Jewish groups. In 1980, the same groups tried to blow up Muslim places of worship in Jerusalem (e.g., al-Aqsa Mosque and the Qubbat as-Sakhrāh) in order to rebuild the temple of Solomon. The radical Jewish settlers who walk around with their weapons and launch bloody attacks on Palestinians are members of these groups.

The most radical of them is the Kahane faction, to which Goldstein belonged. Founded by Rabbi Meir Kahane, this organization is well-organized in both Israel and America. It is totally committed to Rabbi Kahane's fanatical doctrines and operates in Israel under the name of Kach and in America under the name of the Jewish Defense League. Kahane believed that Jews are superior to all other races, which he considered to be some sort of animals (goyim), and that all Arabs in the occupied territories should be subjected to ethnic cleansing. This organization expressed its rationale as the only good Arab is a dead Arab. His organization survived his assassination in 1990 in New York, and reorganized, particularly in Israel, under such names as Kahane Chai (Kahane lives). Followers of Kahane are responsible for many more massacres besides the one mentioned above.

Another strange aspect of the al-Khalil massacre was the widespread support it received from certain sections of Israeli society. Israel Shahak, one of Israel's critical voices, wrote that Goldstein's attack received the support of "a disturbing level of approval" of Israelis.¹⁷ A poll conducted after the massacre revealed that 40 percent of Israelis supported the massacre or at least understood his motives. Among young people, 30 percent supported it and another 35 percent understood him.

Shahak also wrote that this support was not limited to the al-Khalil massacre, but that the group's doctrines received the support of a frighteningly large proportion of society. Polls revealed that 39 percent of young people totally shared Kahane's views. When his views were put to young people without mentioning his name, this number increased to a whopping 66 percent. This majority believed in forcing the Palestinians living in the occupied territories to migrate. As Shahak said, a considerable proportion of Israelis regarded the Arabs as Amalek, an Arab tribe mentioned in the Old Testament as a people who were ordered to be killed, including their women and children. It says:

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that

belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys." (1 Samuel, 15:2-3)

All of these events and attitudes prove the existence of a real danger: Jewish radicalism. We have scrutinized this radical ideology and its consequences in earlier publications. We can summarize them as follows:

There is a radical tendency in the Jewish world to promote hate and animosity toward non-Jews and advocate the harshest and most unforgiving treatment of Palestinians. This tendency has strong support within Israel and plays an important role in forming and continuing its aggressive, uncompromising, and occupying 50-year attitude against Palestinians and its Arab neighbors. No doubt, the Kahane organization and such militants as Baruch Goldstein are a small minority within the Israeli Jewish community (also among all Jews around the world). However, there is a radical culture, albeit less radical, that provides ideological support and continues to threaten Middle Eastern and world peace.

Let us state here that these radical Jews are not part of a presumed global Jewish conspiracy and that the majority of Jews, especially those outside of Israel, oppose this movement and wish to live in peace with other religions and nations. It must also be remembered that many Jews who oppose these radical Jews and their views, often with religious content, are religious themselves or are even rabbis.

The sources of this Jewish radicalism must be analyzed in order to understand this issue correctly. There are two main sources: the hostility toward non-Jews within Jewish tradition based, in particular, on the misinterpretation of some fanatical views in the Talmud; and political Zionism, which was founded in the nineteenth century and inspired by the contemporaneous Social Darwinist and other imperialist ideologies.

The first source has been comprehensively studied in Israel Shahak's Jewish History, Jewish Religion. As Shahak clearly establishes, the Jewish diaspora, beginning in the first century AD, exposed the Jews to many centuries of Christian oppression and tyranny, and gradually caused certain circles to develop a deep hostility towards non-Jews. This misplaced hostility came to be reflected in the Talmud, part of the Jewish tradition. Talmud writers often misinterpreted or distorted Old Testament passages and decreed that it was legitimate to cheat or harm non-Jews. These erroneous decrees developed into traditions that even today cause certain Jewish groups to regard non-Jews with distrust or even hatred.

The second source consists of political Zionism, a movement founded at the end of the nineteenth century to create a Jewish nation-state in Palestine. This can be considered a perfectly legitimate project, for the Jews had no homeland, were mainly treated as second-class citizens, and suffered from anti-Semitic attacks and oppression. But Zionism went beyond this legitimate right, as it became a project of acquiring the whole of Palestine by driving out all of the Arabs. As stated above, this is a consequence of the influence exerted by the Social Darwinist and imperialistic ideologies that dominated Europe at the time. In the 1920s and 1930s, Revisionist Zionism appeared on the scene. This movement was led by the fascist ideologue

Vladimir Jabotinsky, who was inspired by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and thus brought an element of fascism into Zionism.

More dangerous than all of this, however, was how certain Zionist thinkers twisted ideas that sought complete world domination and support the oppression of non-Jews in the event that this came about. Again, it needs to be made clear that the Jews are perfectly justified in wishing to live in peace with Muslims and Christians in Palestine, the land of their ancestors. If, however, that justification turns into a despotic policy that takes away from Muslims and Christians their right to live and exist in the region, then it is natural that all sincere, devout Jews, Christians and Muslims should object and engage in intellectual moves to redress the situation.

We may set out what is necessary for the revision of Jewish radicalism as follows:

1- Jewish religious figures should cleanse Jewish tradition of the fanatical, superstitious teachings of certain circles that encourage hostility toward non-Jews and replace it with the Old Testament's moral approach of love, respect, justice, and compassion. Many Jewish religious figures are working toward this end. Those rabbis who criticize Israeli state terror on the grounds that it is incompatible with the Jewish moral code are a hope for the future.

2- Zionism must be moderated in a political sense. Of course Israel has the right to exist and protect itself, but it has no right to force a whole nation to live under occupation for over 50 years. It must not be forgotten that this land is the ancestral home of the Palestinians as well, who have lived there for centuries. There are as many sites sacred to Muslims and Christians in this land as there are to the Jews. This land is sufficiently large to allow all the peoples to live together in peace. For this reason, Israel must withdraw from all of the territories that it has occupied since 1967, recognize an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, and make peace with the Palestinians as well as the Arab world by entering a friendly and constructive dialogue with them.

In addition, it is very important that religious Jews follow God's advice and invite all Jews to abide by the moral conduct ordained by Him. For this, the claim of supremacy must be dropped. The Qur'an reveals that the Israelites were at one time rewarded by God and given rule over other nations. Some of the verses in this regard are as follows:

O Tribe of Israel! Remember the blessing I conferred on you, and that I preferred you over all other beings. (Qur'an, 2:47)

We gave the Book, Judgment, and Prophethood to the tribe of Israel; provided them with good things; and favored them over all other people. (Qur'an, 45:16) However, these verses do not speak of being preferred in the sense that the Jewish radicals understand it. Many Prophets have been chosen from the Jewish nation, who at one time reigned over a large geographic area. They were granted superiority, as they ruled the worlds. With the end of Prophets Solomon's (pbuh) and David's (pbuh) rule, however, this Jewish privilege came to an end.

Radical Jews read a racial attribute of superiority into various Old Testament passages. They then developed a misguided theory of Jewish

superiority at birth, according to which the Israelites are eternally above all other races. This view led to even greater errors, for example, the above-mentioned massacre by Baruch Goldstein, who murdered Muslims while they were praying. In other words, radical Jews deduce from this claim of superiority that they should subject other nations to violence.

Often, they try to justify their views with passages from the Torah (as was the case with the Amalek tribe mentioned earlier). Accordingly, these Jews have no qualms about cheating non-Jews, plundering their property and possessions, or even killing their women and children. But God commands Jews, just like Christians and Muslims, to be just and honest, protect the rights of the vulnerable, and be loving and peaceful. Killing women, children, and the elderly is against the morality of the Qur'an, in which God reveals the promise of Jews to be virtuous and not to cause mischief:

Remember when We made a covenant with the tribe of Israel: "Worship none but God, and be good to your parents, relatives and orphans, and the very poor. Speak good words to people, perform prayer, and give alms." But then you turned away - except a few of you - you turned aside. And when We made a covenant with you not to shed your blood and not to expel one another from your homes, you agreed and were all witnesses. (Qur'an, 2:83-84)

It also must not be forgotten that radical Jewish fanaticism contradicts other passages from the Torah, such as: Who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil (Isaiah, 33:15). Fanatics have created a belief based on hate and aggression, disregarding all condemnations of violence and barbarism contained in the Torah in the belief that they will acquire world dominion in this way. In reality, no ideology that sanctions violence and aggression, and disrupts law and order, can succeed. Violence always brings only loss. Preventing such destructiveness necessitates the exposure of the fanatics' deceptions and errors, which also will prevent their influence over any other people as well as help them to see reason.

Jews who genuinely believe in God must abide by the Torah's true principles and advocate for peace in order to prevent others from embracing radicalism. Some of the Torah passages that recommend peace, love, compassion, and virtue are as follows:

Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly. Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life... Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself... (Leviticus, 19:15-18)

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. (Micah, 6:8) You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house... (Exodus, 20:13-17)

Peace-seeking citizens of Israel, as well as Jews living in other countries, must oppose radicalism and be fiercely critical of Israeli state terror. Jews of

genuine faith must bear in mind that the Torah prohibits murder, committing injustice, taking revenge, and bloodshed, and should become leaders in the ideological and cultural struggle against fanaticism in solidarity with all conscientious Christians and Muslims. The ideological warfare against Jewish radicalism is one of the most important means of finding a lasting and peaceful solution to the Palestinian issue. Only then will Jews and Muslims - as well as Christians - be able to live with each other in peace.

Tranquility, love, and peace will only grace Palestine and Israel when true religious morality is practiced. It must be remembered that both Jews and Muslims have suffered the greatest damage in their history at the hands of irreligious ideologies. The Old Testament is full of accounts of the cruelty inflicted on Jews by idolaters. The genocide and tyranny against Jews by atheists is well documented (e.g., the Nazis and Stalin's officially encouraged anti-Semitic racists, and communists). These irreligious forces hated and terrorized Jews because of their faith in God.

Muslims and Jews must join forces against these anti-religious entities and disregard the radical propaganda that could prevent such an alliance.

Chapter 4 : Common Principles Of Faith

Humanity has forever reflected on and sought the answers to such questions as What is the meaning and purpose for my life? What is the source of life? How can I find my and everything else's Creator? What does the Lord require of me? What are right and wrong, good and evil? Philosophers have developed their theories and published their ideas, but the true answers are found only in the divinely revealed religions and with divine guidance, because people's intellect and knowledge are severely limited.

God has always guided humanity by sending His Messengers to spread His revelations. Ever since the time of Adam (pbuh), the first human being, people have been informed of God's existence and commands and have found the truest and wisest answers to their questions in the divinely revealed religions.

It is necessary to reflect on an important point here. Even if true religions had different laws, according to their time and environment, they have always contained the same beliefs and morality and have transmitted the same fundamental principles (e.g., God's existence, unity, and attributes; the purpose and reason for humanity's and all other beings' creation; how to serve God; the ideal character, way of life, and conduct; the definitions of good and evil, right and wrong; and how to prepare for the eternal life in the Hereafter.)

A great part of the world's population follows Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The Jews' book of revelation, which consists of 39 books, is known as the Old Testament. The first five books are parts of the Torah revealed to Moses (pbuh). The remaining books are thought to be revelations sent to Prophets after him or accounts written about them. The Torah is often thought to comprise the whole Old Testament. This book adopts this latter view, and therefore refers to the entire Old Testament as the Torah.

The Bible is the holy book of the Christians and consists of both the Old Testament and the New Testament, which contains four books, a collection of letters, and a vision (Revelations). Judaism as well as Christianity have suffered degeneration over time, and some myths and legends have found their way into their respective scriptures. However, these scriptures still contain many principles of faith and morality in common with Islam. Identifying these will bring Jews, Christians, and Muslims closer to one another and enable them to know each other better. This will also provide the necessary framework for an alliance between genuine believers in God.

In our present era, Christians, Jews, and Muslims know each other only through hearsay acquired from family and friends or various media outlets. These sources often contain incorrect information or opinions. Of course, if one wants accurate information, he or she should consult the religion's texts: the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an. In the coming pages, we will provide each religion's principles of faith and codes of conduct in order to examine their common principles of faith. As we shall see, these common principles reveal that the real ideological battle should not be fought among the three divinely revealed religions, but between them and atheism.

God Is the Creator of Everything

Everything we see around us, from the cells of our bodies to the endless galaxies, was created by God out of nothing. The perfection in every detail of the universe, its spectacular artistry and faultless order, are proofs of His creation. The following verses reveal that God created everything without precedent and gave everything its order and measure:

He has no partner in the Kingdom. He created everything and determined it most exactly. (Qur'an, 25:2) He created all things and has knowledge of all things. That is God, your Lord. There is no deity but Him, the Creator of everything. So worship Him. He is responsible for everything. (Qur'an, 6:101-2)

The Originator of the heavens and Earth. When He decides on something, He just says to it: "Be!" and it is. (Qur'an, 2:117) The same facts are revealed in the Bible:

God, Who made heaven and Earth and sea and everything in them. (Acts, 14:15) In the sight of God, Who gives life to everything... I charge you. (1 Timothy, 6:13) The Torah also reveals that God created everything from nothing: The Maker of heaven and Earth, the sea, and everything in them - the LORD, who remains faithful forever. (Psalm, 146:6) In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth. (Genesis, 1:1)

God Is the Only Deity

Muslims believe that there is no deity besides God, Who creates everything from nothing and creates it faultlessly and perfectly, is great and supreme, knows the essence and the secrets of everything, is eternal and infinite, was neither born nor gives birth, is free from all faults and imperfections, is alive, knows everything, has power over everything, is most exalted, governs, is all powerful, and protects and forgives. Everything that exists in the heavens and on Earth has surrendered to Him and testifies to His existence. God reveals that there is no other deity besides Him:

He is God. There is no deity but Him. Praise be to Him in this world and the Hereafter. Judgment belongs to Him. You will be returned to Him. (Qur'an, 28:70)

Your God is One God. There is no deity but Him, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 2:163) God bears witness that there is no deity but Him, as do the angels and the people of knowledge, upholding justice. There is no deity but Him, the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Qur'an, 3:18)

The Torah also states this fact in many verses, some of which are given below: This is what the LORD says: "I am the first and the last; apart from Me there is no God." (Isaiah, 44:6) Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of Earth; for I am God, and there is no other. (Isaiah, 45:22) Many Biblical passages state this same fact:

... it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." (Matthew, 4:10) ... O, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.'" (Mark, 12: 29-30) You are right in saying that God is One and there is no other but Him. (Mark, 12:32)

God Is All-Powerful

All people are dependent beings with faults and shortcomings. Confined to time and space, they can continue to exist only by the will of God, Who has created time, space, humanity, and everything else. He is beyond fault and imperfection, supreme and exalted, and nothing can happen if He does not will it to happen. Unless God wills it, no leaf can fall to the ground and no woman can conceive or give birth. God knows every secret and every thing, whether visible or invisible. Given that He is above everything and therefore has infinite and supreme power, no force or thing in the heavens or on Earth can render Him helpless. The following verses reveal these truths:

God created the seven heavens and of Earth the same number, the command descending down through all of them, so that you might know that God has power over all things and encompasses all things in His knowledge. (Qur'an, 65:12) Everything in the heavens and everything in Earth belongs to God. Whether you divulge what is in yourselves or keep it hidden, God will still call you to account for it. He forgives whoever He wills and punishes whoever He wills. God has power over all things. (Qur'an, 2:284) No! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and Wests that We have the power to replace them with something better than them. We will not be outstripped. (Qur'an, 70:40-41)

The Bible reveals that God is All-Mighty:

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered... (Luke, 12:6-7) Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew, 19:26) The Torah has many passages that reveal God's Infinite Power: ... "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever. Wisdom and power are His. He changes times and seasons, sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with Him. (Daniel, 2:20-22) And God said to him: "I am God Almighty." (Genesis, 35:11)

God Knows Everything

God knows, hears, and sees everything, regardless of when or where it happens, or how secret it is. For example, He knows when and where all people are be born and die, what they do while in this world, what they strive for, when and why they laugh or cry, and what they plan and think right down to the last detail. He also knows everything that happens in the universe, the conditions of all of the countless plants and animals, all laws of the universe, and the countless other things. God says:

Do you not know that God knows everything in heaven and Earth? That is in a Book. That is easy for God. (Qur'an, 22:70) He knows what is said openly and what you hide. (Qur'an, 21:110) You do not engage in any matter, recite any of the Qur'an, or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it. Not even the smallest speck eludes your Lord, either on Earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book. (Qur'an, 10:61)

The Qur'an reveals that God creates and knows everything. In other words, nothing, regardless of how hidden or insignificant it is, is outside of His knowledge. The Bible and the Torah reveal this great truth: For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. (Luke, 8:17) You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, You know it completely, O LORD. (Psalm, 139:2-4)

God Is Compassionate and Forgiving

The Qur'an reveals that God is "the most compassionate of the compassionate" (Qur'an, 12:92). God's compassion is reflected on everything: The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the scenery we like to behold, the animal for which we feel compassion, the friends and family members we trust and love, our clothes, and our homes are just some of His gifts. God's compassion, mercy, and protection can be felt throughout one's life. Therefore, we need to show our appreciation for His countless gifts by turning to Him and earning His good pleasure. God accepts genuine repentance and guides those who sincerely turn to Him to enlightenment, for He is Most Forgiving. He answers the prayers of those who turn to Him and rescues people from their troubles and sorrows. The Qur'an reveals these truths in the following verses:

God would never let your faith go to waste. God is All-Gentle, Most Merciful to humanity. (Qur'an, 2:143) Say [from Me]: "O My servants, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of God. Truly God forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (Qur'an, 39:53)

He sends down Clear Signs to His servant to bring you out of the darkness and into to the light. God is All-Gentle with you, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 57:9)

The Bible also reveals that God is compassionate: Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven... (Luke, 1:78) ... God is full of compassion and mercy... (James, 5:11) As does the Torah: The LORD watches over all who love Him, but He will destroy all the wicked. (Psalm, 145:20) The LORD is compassionate and gracious... abounding in love. (Psalm, 103:8)

The Believers Are Monotheists

Say: "O People of the Book. Come to a proposition that is the same for us and you - that we should worship none but God, not associate any partners with Him, and not take one another as lords besides God." (Qur'an, 3:64) Bible "Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." (Matthew, 4:10) Torah Fear the LORD your God, serve Him only, and take your oaths in His name. Do not follow other deities, the deities of the peoples around you. (Deuteronomy, 6:13-14)

God Has no Partners or Helpers

He [Abraham] said: "You have adopted idols apart from God as tokens of mutual affection in this world. But then on the Day of Resurrection, you will reject one another and curse one another. The Fire will be your shelter. You will have no helpers." (Qur'an, 29:25) Your Lord creates and chooses whatever He wills. The choice is not theirs. Glory be to God! He is exalted above anything they associate with Him! (Qur'an, 28:68) Those you call on besides God are servants, just like yourselves. Call on them and let them respond to you, if you are telling the truth. (Qur'an, 7:194) Bible They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator - Who is forever praised. (Romans, 1:25) Torah But you have forsaken Me and served other deities... Go and cry to the deities you have chosen. Let them save you when you are in trouble!(Judges, 10:13-14) "I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other deities before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on Earth, beneath it or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them... (Exodus, 20:2-5) Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals... because they foresook Him and served Baal and Ashtoreths. (Judges, 2:11-13)

God Is Exalted

All might belongs to God. (Qur'an, 10:65) [He is] the Possessor of the Throne, the All-Glorious. (Qur'an, 85:15) Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High. (Qur'an, 87:1) Bible Now to the ... eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever... (1 Timothy, 1: 17) Torah Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power, the glory and the majesty, and the splendor, for everything in heaven and Earth is yours... You are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from You; You are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give You thanks and praise Your glorious name. (1 Chronicles, 29:11-13) Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. (1 Chronicles, 16:28)

God Gives Power

[Hud said:] "O My people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send heaven down to you in abundant rain, and increase you with strength upon strength. Do not turn away as evildoers." (Qur'an, 11:52) Then once again We gave you the upper hand over them, supplied you with more wealth and children, and made you the most numerous group. (Qur'an, 17:6)

Bible ... And the power of God was present for him [Jesus] to heal the sick. (Luke, 5:17) Torah ... in the LORD my horn is lifted high... (1 Samuel, 2:1)

God Gives and Takes Life

He gives life and causes to die. When He decides on something, He just says to it: "Be!" and it is. (Qur'an, 40:68) There is no deity but Him - He

gives life and causes to die - your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers, the previous peoples. (Qur'an, 44:8) [Has he not been informed] that He brings about both death and life? (Qur'an, 53:44) Bible ... But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, Who raises the dead. (2 Corinthians, 1:9) Torah The LORD brings death and makes alive. (1 Samuel, 2:6)

God Gives Wealth or Poverty

God expands the provision of any of His servants He wills and restricts it. God has knowledge of all things. (Qur'an, 29:62) Say: "O God, Master of the Kingdom. You give sovereignty to whoever You will and take sovereignty from whoever You will. You exalt whoever You will and abase whoever You will. All good is in Your hands. You have power over all things." (Qur'an, 3:26) Torah The LORD sends poverty and wealth; He humbles and exalts. (1 Samuel, 2:7)

God Protects the Loyal

So that God might recompense the truthful for their truth and punish the hypocrites, if He wills, or turn toward them. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 33:24) Torah He will guard the feet of His saints... (1 Samuel, 2:9)

God Is Praised

Everything in the heavens and everything in Earth belongs to Him. God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy. (Qur'an, 22:64) O humanity, you are the poor and in need of God, whereas God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy. (Qur'an, 35:15) Bible "Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever." (Revelation, 7:12) With the tongue we praise our Lord... (James 3, 9) Torah I call to the LORD, Who is worthy of praise... (Samuel, 22:4) O LORD , you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name... (Isaiah, 25:1) I thank and praise You... You have given me wisdom and power... (Daniel, 2:23)

God's Path Is the Most Righteous

This is the path of your Lord - straight. We have made the Signs clear for people who remember. (Qur'an, 6:126) They have been guided to speak good words and guided to the praiseworthy path. (Qur'an, 22:24) Bible But godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy, 6:6) Torah As for God, His way is perfect. (2 Samuel, 22:31)

God Guides to the Righteous Path

By it, God guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path. (Qur'an, 5:16) Say: "My Lord has guided me to a straight path, a well-founded religion, the religion of Abraham, a man of pure natural belief. He was not one of the idolaters." (Qur'an, 6:161)

Torah God arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. (2 Samuel, 22:33) God Gives Success to His Followers As for those who

make God their friend, and His Messenger and those who believe: It is the party of God who are victorious! (Qur'an, 5:56) Bible For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. (Ephesians, 2:8) Torah And observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in His ways, and keep His decrees and commands, His laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go. (1 Kings, 2:3)

The Whole Book Is Obeyed

There you are, loving them when they do not love you, even though you believe in all the Books. When they meet you, they say: "We believe." But when they leave, they bite their fingers out of rage against you. (Qur'an, 3:119) Those who conceal what God has sent down of the Book and sell it cheap take nothing into their bellies but the Fire. On the Day of Resurrection, God will not speak to them or purify them. They will have a painful punishment. (Qur'an, 2:174) Torah Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law My servant Moses gave you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. (Joshua, 1:7)

The Believers Fear and Respect God

No doubt, fearing God is one of the common and important qualities of all believers. The Qur'an clearly describes the nature of this fear: a deep and genuine respect for God that causes them to refrain from doing things of which He does not approve and to strive to win His good pleasure and avoid His wrath. Striving to follow such a path shows the level of their fear and respect for God: Fear [and respect] God in the way He should be feared [and respected]. (Qur'an, 3:102) So fear [and respect] God, as much as you are able to... (Qur'an, 64:16) Muslims are required to contemplate God's creation in order to comprehend His infinite reason, knowledge, might, and greatness. This will increase their fear and respect for Him. Such people will be cured or protected from evil deeds and mistakes, and will avoid those things that deny them His good pleasure. As the Qur'an says:

O you who believe! If you fear [and respect] God, He will give you discrimination, erase your bad actions, and forgive you. God's favor is indeed immense. (Qur'an, 8:29)

The Bible reveals that Jesus (pbuh) stated that only God needs to be feared (and respected): I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you Whom you should fear: Fear Him Who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into Hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him. (Luke, 12:4-5) The Bible repeatedly states that people must fear (and respect) God: Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God... (1 Peter, 2:17) ... to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice: "Fear God and give Him glory." (Revelation, 14:6-7) The Torah says:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. (Psalm, 111:10) It also states that the fear of God guides people to the right path: The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. (Psalm, 19:9) Serve the LORD with fear,

and rejoice with trembling. (Psalm, 2:11) Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in His ways. (Psalm, 128:1) The LORD Almighty is the One you are to regard as holy, He is the One you are to fear... (Isaiah, 8:13)

The Believers Love God

Every beautiful thing is the gift of God and a reflection of His beauty. All conscientious and thoughtful people submit to God, the true owner of this beauty, with great joy and love. Believers love God more than anything and anybody else, for they know that He created all of the beauty and the beings they love. This love of God is the true source of the believers' happiness and inner peace. Every Muslim who loves God also fears and respects Him and makes a genuine effort to win His good pleasure. Such adds to the beauty of the world, for those who love God also love His creation, feel compassion and mercy for them, and wish to protect them and give them goodness and beauty. Those who forget God and give all of their love to His creation, instead of to Him, and those who disregard His existence and instead feel a deep love only for others, will reap sorrow, unhappiness, and discontent. The Qur'an describes the big difference between such types of love: Some people set up equals to God, loving them as they should love God. But those who believe have greater love for God. (Qur'an, 2:165)

The Torah says:

... The LORD our God, the LORD is One. Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be [placed] in your hearts... (Deuteronomy, 6:4-7) The same is stated in the Bible, as follows: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew, 22:37)

The Impermanence of Worldly Life

The worldviews of unbelievers and believers are mutually exclusive. For example, unbelievers consider living life to the full as their primary purpose, for they will not be able to enjoy anything after they die. On the other hand, believers make good use of things in their everyday lives without considering these to be an end in themselves. Rather, they regard such things as a means to be grateful to God and to win His good pleasure. Believers are very well aware of the impermanence of posh cars, grand houses, impressive gardens, valuable jewelry, beautiful people, and of everything else, for they know that the true originals are to be found in the eternal Paradise. God commands people not to be fooled by the temporary beauty of worldly things and not to become enslaved by them: To humanity the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colors: women and children, heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. The best homecoming is in the presence of God. (Qur'an, 3:14)

Know that the life of this world is merely a game and a diversion, ostentation, and a cause of boasting among yourselves and trying to outdo

one another in wealth and children: like the plant-growth after rain that delights the cultivators but then withers. You see it turning yellow, and then it becomes broken stubble. In the Hereafter, there is terrible punishment, but also forgiveness, from God and His good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but the enjoyment of delusion. (Qur'an, 57:20)

The Bible's Gospel of Mark explains that worldly worries and cravings, as well as material wealth, lead people away from God's path: Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word. But the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop - thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown. (Mark, 4:18-20) The Bible warns people not to dive into this world's temporary pleasures and that the love of this world causes hearts to harden. Various passages refer to these facts, as follows:

Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness, and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on Earth. Be always on the watch. Pray... (Luke, 21:34-36) The world and its desires pass away, but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (1 John, 2:17) ... For this world in its present form is passing away. (1 Corinthians, 7:31)

The Torah reveals that life on Earth is temporary, that the love of material wealth and devotion to the world is a grave mistake, and that believers should not let themselves be led astray:

Whoever loves money never has enough money, and whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner, except to feast his eyes on them? (Ecclesiastes, 5:10-11) We are aliens and strangers in your sight, as were all of our forefathers. Our days on Earth are like a shadow, without hope. (1 Chronicles, 29:15) Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath. (Zephaniah, 1:18)

The Believers Trust the Prophets

Throughout history, God has sent Prophets to call their people to belief in God, inform them of His religion, teach them right from wrong, and abide by the morality that wins His good pleasure. The Qur'an reveals the lives of such Prophets as Abraham, Solomon, David, Lot, Jesus, Moses, Noah, Joseph, Ishmael, and Isaac (peace be upon them all) because their lives contain important lessons for humanity (Qur'an, 12:111). Prophets were chosen by God to serve as teachers and givers of good tidings, and as role models of virtue and faith. Muslims believe in all of the Prophets and love and respect them, without preferring one over the other. The verses describe Muslims' belief and obedience to Prophets, as follows:

The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and so do the believers. Each one believes in God, His angels, His Books, and His Messengers [saying:] "We do not differentiate between any of His Messengers." They say: "We hear and we obey. Forgive us, our Lord. You are our journey's end." (Qur'an, 2:285)

The belief in Prophets is also a principle of faith in Christianity and Judaism. The Torah relates the life stories of many Prophets (e.g., Adam, Noah, Jethro, Jacob, and Joseph [peace be upon them all]), although some of the information given is not accurate. The Bible, on the other hand, points out the importance of obeying the Prophets: The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent (John, 6:29). Another verse reveals that people must follow the example set by the Prophets and work to acquire their morality and code of conduct, as follows: I have set you an example, so that you should do as I have done for you. (John, 13:15)

Many People Envy the Prophets

[Their leaders went off asking:] "Has the Reminder been sent down to him out of all of us?" They are in doubt about My Reminder. They have yet to taste My punishment. (Qur'an, 38:8) Their Prophet said to them: "God has appointed Saul to be your king." They asked: "How can he have kingship over us, when we have much more right to kingship than he does? He has not even got much wealth!" He said: "God has chosen him over you and favored him greatly in knowledge and physical strength. God gives kingship to anyone He wills. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing." (Qur'an, 2:247)

Why was this Qur'an not sent down to one of the great men of the two cities? (Qur'an, 43:31) Bible When the Sabbath came, he [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. (Mark, 6:2-3)

All Prophets Are Accused of Being Possessed

Equally, no Messenger came to those before them without their exclaiming: "A magician or a madman!" Did they bequeath this to each other? Indeed, they are an unbridled people. (Qur'an, 51:52-53) Bible When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said: "He is out of his mind." And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said: "He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons." (Mark, 3:21-22)

No Prophet Speaks on His Own

Your companion [Mohammed] is not misguided or misled. Nor does he speak from whim. It is nothing but Revelation revealed, taught to him by one immensely strong. (Qur'an, 53:2-5)

Bible By myself I [Jesus] can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but Him Who sent me. (John, 5:30) Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the Prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man. (2 Peter, 1:20-21) Torah The LORD said to me: "...I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from

among their brothers. I will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him." (Deuteronomy, 18:17-18)

Faith in Paradise and Hell

Prophets have taught people the true religion, announced the good reward of Paradise, and warned them against the punishment of Hell. Those who obey God's commands and work to earn His good pleasure will be rewarded with Paradise, and those who were called to God's righteous path but declined to follow it will face an eternal and horrific punishment in Hell. The Qur'an reveals that believers will find eternal bliss, happiness, and goodness in Paradise. Unbelievers, on the other hand, will face an eternal life of unequalled suffering and sorrow in Hell: But as for those who believe and do right actions, We will admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, forever and ever. God's promise is true. Whose speech could be truer than God's? (Qur'an, 4:122)

Those who do not believe will be driven to Hell in companies. When they arrive there and its gates are opened, its custodians will ask them: "Did Messengers from yourselves not come to you, reciting your Lord's Signs to you and warning you of the meeting on this Day of yours?" They will say: "Indeed they did, but the decree of punishment is justly carried out against the unbelievers." (Qur'an, 39:71)

People who abide by God's commands and work to earn His good pleasure will be rewarded with the most stunning homes, splendid cloths, beautiful jewelry, tastiest foods and drinks. Moreover, God will cause them to live in peace and happiness together with their friends and loved ones. But those who are ungrateful to God and rebellious will have committed the gravest sin and therefore will deserve the punishment of Hell. The Qur'an reveals that the suffering therein is incomparably horrendous, painful, and devastating. The ceaseless and eternal physical and spiritual suffering is accompanied by confinement, darkness, smoke, revolting foods and drinks, cries, burning heat, metal whips, boiling water, and other types of sufferings. The Qur'an also reveals that its inhabitants will finally admit their guilt; be debased, forsaken, and remorseful; and desire to return to Earth or to be exterminated. They will beg for help but not receive any; they will ask for their sufferings to be eased, but their request will be denied.

The Torah and the Bible reveal that good people and evil people are not equal in His presence and that everyone will get what they deserve. The Bible explains the distinction between good and bad people in the following allegory: Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew, 13:47-50)

The Bible reveals that the righteous will find eternal life (Matthew, 25:46), and that the evil-doers will be cast into the eternal fire together with Satan (Matthew, 25:41) and experience eternal punishment therein

(Matthew, 25:46). How will you escape being condemned to Hell? (Matthew, 23:33) and Fear Him Who, after killing the body, has the power to throw you into Hell (Luke, 12:5) are reminders of this severe punishment. Another Biblical passage describes the suffering, hopelessness, and remorse of those in Hell, as follows:

The time came when the beggar [Lazarus] died... The rich man also died and was buried. So he called... "have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." (Luke, 16:22-26)

The Torah states that those who do good will be rewarded with good and that those who do evil will be punished for their deeds: Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them! They will be paid back for what their hands have done. (Isaiah, 3:10-11) ... trembling grips the godless: "Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning?" (Isaiah, 33:14)

Belief in the Resurrection

God will resurrect and then judge all people according to what they did while on Earth. All Prophets have revealed this great truth, for they taught His true religion and warned their people to prepare for this day. All sincere believers conduct themselves in the full awareness of their resurrection and subsequent judgment. As for those who reject the resurrection, the Qur'an says that they will meet the following fate:

He makes likenesses of Us and forgets his own creation, asking: "Who will give life to bones when they are decayed?" Say: "He Who made them in the first place will bring them back to life. He has total knowledge of each created thing." (Qur'an, 36:78-79)

They say, There is nothing but this life and we will not be raised again. If only you could see when they are standing before their Lord. He [God] will say, "Is this not the truth?" They will say, "Yes indeed, by our Lord!" He [God] will say, "Then taste the punishment for your disbelief." (Qur'an, 6:29-30)

God can resurrect all people with great ease, for He created humanity from nothing and brings life to dry soil when it appears lifeless. Various Biblical passages speak of Jesus' (pbuh) message to people who did not believe in the resurrection. One of them is as follows: Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice... those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. (John, 5:28-29)

Belief in the Day of Judgment

Belief in the Hereafter and the Day of Judgment are central to Islam. All people will be resurrected in order to be judged on what they did in this

world. On that day, people will be held personally accountable and will find no one to help them or shoulder their sins. Believers who have done good will have an easy Day of Judgment; evil-doers and unbelievers will find that Day to be very harsh. God reveals the details of this Day. For example, nothing will remain secret, not even the smallest things, and everyone's good and evil deeds will be proclaimed and rewarded. The Qur'an reveals that:

We will set up the Just Balance on the Day of Resurrection, and no soul will be wronged in any way. Even if it is no more than the weight of a grain of a mustard seed, We will produce it. We are sufficient as a Reckoner. (Qur'an, 21:47) On that day, the unbelievers' ears, eyes, and skin will bear witness against them: When they reach it [the Fire], their hearing, sight, and skin will testify against them concerning what they did. (Qur'an, 41:20) Prophets and other witnesses will give evidence when people account for their deeds on Earth. God, Who is infinitely just, will judge each individual:

And Earth will shine with the Pure Light of its Lord, the Book will be put in place, the Prophets and witnesses will be brought, and it will be decided between them with the truth. They will not be wronged. Every soul will be repaid in full for what it did. He knows best what they are doing. (Qur'an, 39:69-70)

The following passages on the Day of Judgment are from the Bible:

Nothing in all of creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account. (Hebrews, 4:13) ... [It is God] Who will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, He will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking, who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. (Romans, 2:6-8) The accounts in the Torah also confirm the existence of this Day and reveal that humanity will be judged by God: The day of the LORD is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head. (Obadiah, 1:15)

The Day of Resurrection

... asking: "So when is the Day of Resurrection?" But when the eyesight is dazzled, the Moon is eclipsed, and the Sun and Moon are fused together, on that Day humanity will ask: "Where can I run?" No indeed! There will be no safe place. (Qur'an, 75:6-11) ... when the stars are extinguished, when heaven is split open, when the mountains are pulverized, when the Messengers' time is appointed ... (Qur'an, 77:8-11)

The Hour is coming. (Qur'an, 20:15) They will ask you about the Hour: When is it due? Say: "Knowledge of it rests with my Lord alone. He alone will reveal it at its proper time. It hangs heavy in the heavens and Earth. It will not come upon you except suddenly." They will ask you, as if you had full knowledge of it. Say: "Knowledge of it rests with God alone. But most people do not know that." (Qur'an, 7:187)

On the Day the sky is like molten brass and the mountains like tufts of colored wool. No good friend will ask about his friend. (Qur'an, 70:8-10) When heaven is split apart and goes red like dregs of oil. (Qur'an, 55:37)

Bible But in those days, following that distress, the Sun will be darkened and the Moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. (Mark, 13:24-25) No one knows about that day or hour... Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. (Mark, 13:32-33) Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness, and the anxieties of life, and that Day will close on you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on Earth. (Luke, 21:34-35)

... The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and Earth and everything in it will be laid bare... That Day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. (2 Peter, 3:10-12)

Torah

For the Day of the LORD is near... The Sun and the Moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. (Joel, 3:14-15) ... the Day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. Because of this, all hands will go limp, every person's heart will melt... pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. See, the Day of the LORD is coming - a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger - to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. (Isaiah, 13:6-10)

"The great day of the LORD is near-near and coming quickly... That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness... (Zephaniah, 1:14-15)

All People Are Tested

He created the heavens and Earth in six days when His Throne was on the water, in order to test which of you has the best actions. (Qur'an, 11:7) As the above verse reveals, one of the reasons for creating Earth was so that God could test humanity. In reality, each person undergoes a life-long trial that will end only with his or her death. After that, he or she will either be rewarded or punished.

The troubles, sorrows, and hardship experienced in this world are a means of testing. Those who are patient and trust in God while enduring hardship will have behaved in accord with God's will. People are also tried with wealth, children, beauty, health, and other gifts of God. Regardless of what gifts they receive, however, they must act in line with God's approval instead of their own selfish desires. As one Qur'anic verse states, a verbal affirmation of faith and belief is not enough, for:

Do people imagine that they will be left to say: "We believe," and will not be tested? (Qur'an, 29:2) Those who are patient are given good tidings in the Qur'an:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth, life, and fruits. But give good news to the steadfast. (Qur'an, 2:155) The Bible reveals that being tested is a positive influence that strengthens one's faith: Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you

face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (James, 1:2-4)

Everything Happens by the Will of God

People's plans can only become reality if God wills it. Believers are fully aware of this fact, and so their behavior and conversation reflect this reality. God reminds believers not to speak in absolute terms about anything, but to state that they intend to do something only if God wills it. For example:

Never say about anything: "I am doing that tomorrow," without adding "If God wills." (Qur'an, 18:23-24)

The Bible says something similar:

Now listen, you who say: "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business, and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say: "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." (James, 4:13-15)

Chapter 5 : Common Prayers and Common Moral Values

It is God, Who created humanity and has the best and most complete knowledge of each person's constitution and needs. Therefore, each person should follow the path ordained by God, Who has guided humanity since His creation of Adam (pbuh) and Eve with His Prophets and Books, and has revealed to them the values, beliefs, and code of conduct of which He approves. Those who adopt this way of life and moral code can hope to find happiness, contentment, and beauty in this life as well as the Hereafter.

Followers of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, regardless of when and where they lived, had the same moral values. Refraining from murder, theft, adultery and fornication, lying, injustice, and every kind of wrong-doing, as well as behaving in a polite and respectful manner to others, are basic values recognized by all believers. Thus, they respond in a very similar manner to events, even though there are differences in their views and practices.

This moral code is common to Christians, Muslims, and Jews. For example, members of these three divinely revealed religions are told to avoid ungratefulness, transgression, arrogance, rebellion, lies, mockery, selfishness, greed, fraud, envy, aggression, disobedience, avarice, betrayal, gossip, confrontation, tyranny, slander, lack of patience, hypocrisy, and agitation, for they are incompatible with the morality that He tells believers to follow. In fact, He clearly tells all believers to be respectful, loving, just, conscientious, compassionate, merciful, helpful, modest, honest, trustworthy, generous, grateful, selfless, gentle, obedient, and loyal.

Genuinely religious people who abide by these principles are respectable, honorable, and distinguished. They have submitted wholeheartedly to God, have deep faith and superior moral qualities, expect no reward for helping others, and desire only to earn His good pleasure. They side at all times with the right, good, true, and virtuous morality, and refrain from all kinds of evil and immorality.

Many philosophies contain teachings that contradict the morality of divinely revealed religions. For instance, those materialistic philosophies that have been so influential during the last two centuries portray individuals as selfish and unscrupulous and depict life as an arena full of people ruled by their selfish desires and thus driven to satisfy their strong desire at all costs. Since materialism rejects the existence of God's revelation, it does not recognize any absolute criteria applicable to human nature, disregards all moral values, and rejects all values introduced by the divinely revealed religions. The results of such views are clearly visible: conflict and tension; ruthless aggression directed toward a piece of land, status, or office; the ever-worsening oppression of the vulnerable and needy; and increasing injustice, immorality, and rapid degeneration in the quality of life.

In the face of this reality and for the salvation of those who have been misled by materialism, all followers of the divinely revealed religions must unite. Believing in God's existence and unity and that He has sent Prophets to guide humanity are important common points. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have much more in common with one another than with people who reject these facts.

We will study the common moral principles between the three divinely revealed religions under their respective headings. Each of these principles makes a case for an alliance between the followers of the divinely revealed religions. It must not be forgotten that a world dominated by virtue is attainable if the believers work together.

Modesty

Modesty is a common attribute of believers, for God reveals that He disapproves of arrogant and vain people. Believers know that God gives them all they have and that He is the One and true owner of everything. Therefore they never surrender to vanity, because they know their helplessness in His presence and that reason, knowledge, beauty, wealth, status, and all other desirable commodities originate with Him, not within themselves. God reveals the believers' modesty, as follows:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on Earth and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say: "Peace." (Qur'an, 25:63) Another verse reveals that modest Muslims will be rewarded with Paradise:

Your God is One God, so submit to Him. Give good news to the humble-hearted. (Qur'an, 22:34)

The Bible reveals that modesty is important and that humble people are superior in His presence:

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians, 4:2) Likewise, the Torah states that one must refrain from arrogance and that God approves of humble people. Believers are required to be modest, and arrogant people will be humbled. For example: Hear and pay attention, do not be arrogant, for the LORD has spoken. (Jeremiah, 13:15) Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what He commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility... (Zephaniah, 2:3) You save the humble, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them low. (2 Samuel, 22:28)

Conceit

When he is told to fear [and respect] God, he is seized by pride, which drives him to wrongdoing. Hell will be enough for him! What an evil resting-place! (Qur'an, 2:206)

Bible God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (James, 4:6) Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, Who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. (1 Timothy, 6:17) Torah You warned them to return to Your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed Your commands. They sinned against Your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on You, became stiff-necked, and refused to listen. (Nehemiah, 9:29)

Ungodly Environments

It has been sent down to you in the Book that when you hear God's Signs being rejected and mocked at by people, you must not sit with them until they start talking of other things. If you do, you are just the same as

them. God will gather all the hypocrites and unbelievers into Hell. (Qur'an, 4:140) Torah Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm, 1:1-2)

Pointless Things

Those who turn away from worthless talk. (Qur'an, 23:3) Bible Avoid godless chatter... (2 Timothy, 2:16) Torah Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to Your word. (Psalm, 119:37)

Remember God at All Times

[People with intelligence are] those who remember God, standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and Earth: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Qur'an, 3:191) [There are people who are] not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of God, the performance of prayer, and the giving of the alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Qur'an, 24:37)

Torah Blessed is the man... [whose] delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm, 1:1-2) In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. (Proverbs, 3:6-8)

Trust in God

God is the believers' best friend and helper. When they encounter hardship or troubles, and when they are in safety and tranquility, they know that He is with them and so turn only to Him with absolute trust and in complete reliance upon Him. They take all possible precautions and make contingency plans, but do not forget that everything happens according to His will. Whatever the outcome, they know that there is a reason and wisdom in it. For instance, believers refrain from unhealthy things as a precautionary measure. However, if they somehow become infected with a deadly disease, they know that it is God's will. Given this fact, they do not panic or despair; rather, they remain patient and trusting. Believers are not saddened or worried by events, but live in the peace and calm that comes from trusting God.

Such trust brings a comfort and beauty to believers that no unbeliever can ever experience. One of the most fundamental causes of the stress, depression, sorrow, and suffering experienced by unbelievers is their turning away from this reality. The Qur'an reveals this truth in several verses, some of which are given below:

Whoever has fear [and respect] of God - He will give him a way out. And [He will] provide for him from where he does not expect. Whoever puts his trust in God - He will be enough for him. God always achieves His aim. God has appointed a measure for all things. (Qur'an, 65:2-3)

Say: "Nothing can happen to us except what God has ordained for us. He is Our Master. It is in God that the believers should put their trust." (Qur'an, 9:51)

Trusting in God and relying only on Him are attributes required of all devout Christians and Jews as well. The Bible reveals the futility of worrying and calls for faith in God in all matters:

But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. (2 Thessalonians, 3:3) Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear... Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn. Yet God feeds them... Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? (Luke, 12:22-26) The Torah reveals that someone who turns to God and trusts and relies only on Him will be rewarded with success: ..."Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in His Prophets and you will be successful." (2 Chronicles, 20:20)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. (Proverbs, 3:5)

God Protects Believers

He [Moses] said: "Never! My Lord is with me and will guide me." (Qur'an, 26:62) God is with those who fear Him and with those who are good-doers. (Qur'an, 16:128) My Protector is God, Who sent down the Book. He takes care of the righteous. (Qur'an, 7:196)

Torah Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified or discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. (Joshua, 1:9) Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the LORD will be your confidence... (Proverbs, 3:25-26)

Justice

Being just is one of the believers' most important qualities. God commands people to be fair with each other, even if this means going against their own interests or those of their relatives. Believers protect justice and prevent injustice, for, as the Qur'an states: God commands you to return to their owners the things you hold on trust and, when you judge between people, to judge with justice. How excellent is what God exhorts you to do! God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. (Qur'an, 4:58)

For Muslims, it is irrelevant whether the person is rich or poor or whether their decision may conflict with their personal interests. Whatever the circumstances, Muslims do not compromise on justice. This superior morality is described in the Qur'an, as follows: O you who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, God is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and

deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 4:135)

Another verse states that hatred should not cause people to be unfair:

O you who believe! Show integrity for the sake of God, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you to being unjust. Be just, for that is closer to heedfulness. Fear [and respect] God, for God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 5:8) The Torah and the Bible also call for justice. In the Bible, Jesus (pbuh) condemns those religious figures and Pharisees who disregard justice: Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices - mint, dill, and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law - justice, mercy, and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter without neglecting the former. (Matthew, 23:23)

Other Biblical passages require people to be just, as follows:

Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment. (John, 7:24) Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair. (Colossians, 4:1) When the Torah describes virtuous people, it emphasizes fairness. Furthermore, it states that just and righteous people refrain from evil, are just to others, and protect the poor. Some of the passages encouraging justice are as follows: ... "Since you have asked for... discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. (1 Kings, 3:11-12) This is what the LORD says: "Maintain justice and do what is right." (Isaiah, 56:1) Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of My people, ... and robbing the fatherless. (Isaiah 10, 1-2)

Slander and Aggression

Throughout history, Prophets have called people to righteousness, God's religion, and guided them to enlightenment. But in every era, some people turned on His Prophets and did their best to prevent them from teaching. These people believed that by slandering these individuals, whom God had chosen to serve as role models of morality, they could block their mission. When they realized that their slander had little or no effect, they resorted to exile, arrest, or even murder.

The Qur'an relates the Prophets' struggles in great detail, especially those of our Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace), who struggled against the Makkan unbelievers and hypocrites. It also reveals that those believers who faced slander and aggression never compromised; rather, they continued their struggle with the same motivation and persistence.

The Qur'an reveals that Prophets endured slanders like "mad" (Qur'an, 15:6; Qur'an, 68:51) and "lying magician" (Qur'an, 38:4). These and other slanders were used against Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace), and his people conspired to imprison, kill or expel him (Qur'an, 8:30).

Believers will experience similar hardships, for:

Or did you suppose that you would enter the Garden without facing the same as those who came before you? Poverty and illness afflicted them,

and they were shaken to the point that the Messenger and those who believed with him asked: "When is God's help coming?" Be assured that God's help is very near. (Qur'an, 2:214)

The Bible reveals that Jesus (pbuh) was accused of being demon-possessed (John, 7:20, 8:48, 8:52), as well as of madness (John, 10:20), subverting their nation (Luke, 23:2), and not living according to the traditions of the elders (Mark, 7:5). Other passages relate that Jesus (pbuh) was mocked and subjected to insults and physical attacks. No doubt, the unbelievers' ugly slanders were the product of their mediocre intellect and misguided beliefs. God has created all Prophets as role models characterized by such qualities as superior intellect, foresight, and morality. But they and their followers, as the Qur'an reveals, never relented or despaired. As the Qur'an states:

Many a Prophet has fought, when there were many thousands with him. They did not give up in the face of what assailed them in the Way of God, nor did they weaken or yield. God loves the steadfast. (Qur'an, 3:146)

The Prophets enlightened their followers and gave them this good news. Muslims who were with our Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) said, while enduring hardships: "This is what God and His Messenger promised us. God and His Messenger told us the truth" (Qur'an, 33:22). Our Lord also reveals that those who show determination and virtue will have their faith and submission enhanced. The Torah also reveals the Prophets' struggles and the hardships they endured in great detail. The Bible, on the other hand, states that sincere believers will encounter hardship and troubles and that these will be causes of joy for them:

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness... Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the Prophets who were before you. (Matthew, 5:10-12)

The Bible reveals that Jesus (pbuh) warned his followers that they would suffer injustice: You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me, you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them... Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. ... but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. (Mark, 13:9-13)

Fear and Sorrow

Those who conveyed God's Message and had fear [and respect] of Him, fearing [and respecting] no one except God. God suffices as a Reckoner. (Qur'an, 33:39) They said: "Our Lord, we are afraid that he might persecute us or overstep the bounds." He said: "Have no fear. I will be with you, All-Hearing and All-Seeing." (Qur'an, 20:45-46)

[Believers are] those to whom people said: "The people have gathered against you, so fear them." But that merely increased their faith, and they said: "God is enough for us and the Best of Guardians." So they returned

with blessings and bounty from God, and no evil touched them. They pursued the pleasure of God. God's favor is indeed immense. That was only Satan who intimidated his adherents. But do not fear them - fear [and respect] Me, if you are believers. (Qur'an, 3:173-175)

Bible But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." (1 Peter, 3:14)

Torah Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. (Deuteronomy, 31:6) The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid or discouraged. (Deuteronomy, 31:8) Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with Us than with him. (2 Chronicles, 32:7)

Those Who Plot Evil

They have the word "Obedience!" on their tongues. But when they leave your presence, a group of them spend the night plotting to do other than what you say. God is recording their nocturnal plotting. So let them be, and put your trust in God. God suffices as a Guardian. (Qur'an, 4:81)

Torah Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think: "Who sees us? Who will know?" (Isaiah, 29:15)

Pagan Religions and Traditions

God reveals that some people opposed the true religion delivered by the Prophets, for their deep-rooted pagan beliefs dominate their societies, as do their misguided religious practices and some traditions. The Qur'an refers to this as the "religion of their forefathers," and the Bible and the Torah refer to it as the tradition of the elders. In reality, the true religion in His presence is the religion taught by His Prophets. Believers will not be held accountable for these pagan beliefs and traditions, but will be judged by God's Books of revelation and his Prophets' practices. The situation of the people who follow such traditions is described in the following terms:

When they are told: "Follow what God has sent down," they say: "No, we will follow what we found our fathers doing." What! Even if Satan is calling them to the punishment of the Blazing Fire? (Qur'an, 31:21)

When they are told: "Come to what God has sent down, come to the Messenger," they say: "What we found our fathers doing is enough for us." What! Even if their fathers did not know anything and were not guided! (Qur'an, 5:104)

The Torah relates that some people who had been informed of the true religion chose to follow their forefathers' misguided religious practices. One such passage is given below: They have returned to the sins of their forefathers, who refused to listen to My words. They have followed other deities to serve them... I will bring on them a disaster they cannot escape. (Jeremiah, 11:10-11)

The Bible reveals that the Pharisees and the Sadducees accused Jesus (pbuh) and his disciples of forsaking their forefathers' traditions.

However, it would have been righteousness to abide by the true religion delivered by Jesus (pbuh) instead of following the misguided beliefs so fervently advocated by these people. Obviously, genuine believers need to abide by Jesus' (pbuh) religion in obedience to him. The Bible states that those who persisted in rejecting Jesus' (pbuh) teachings accused his disciples of forsaking their forefathers' traditions: Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked: "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?" (Matthew, 15:1-2)

Another verse reveals Jesus' reply to such accusations, as follows: So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus: "Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders?" ... He [Jesus] replied: "You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men." And he said to them: "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!" (Mark, 7:5-9)

Hypocrisy and Ostentation

One other shared moral quality of believers is sincerity. Believers are aware that God knows everything and that they will have to account in the Hereafter for all of their thoughts, speeches, and conduct in this world. They strive to earn God's approval and are sincere in their conduct. As they expect to be rewarded by God for their actions, they have no petty interests and do not behave in ways designed to impress or gain the love of other people. The Prophets' devotional behaviors, as related in the Qur'an, are examples for believers to follow. Good news awaits His sincere servants, for "Those who shun the worship of false deities and turn toward God will have good news" (Qur'an, 39:17). Other verses deal with those who show off to attract other people's notice, such as:

O you who believe! Do not nullify your charity by demands for gratitude or insulting words, like him who spends his wealth, showing off to people and not believing in God and the Last Day. His likeness is that of a smooth rock coated with soil, which, when heavy rain falls on it, is left stripped bare. They have no power over anything they have earned. God does not guide disbelieving people. (Qur'an, 2:264) So woe to those who perform prayer and are forgetful of their prayer, those who show off. (Qur'an, 107:4-6)

The Bible warns: Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them... (Matthew, 6:1). The Pharisees, supposedly men of religion, are mentioned: Everything they do is done for men to see... (Matthew, 23:5). Their hypocrisy is likened to tombs that are impressive on the outside but full of filth on the inside:

You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous. But on the inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. (Matthew, 23:27-28) Various passages in the Torah condemn those who pray to impress others and reveal that such people do not live by the morality they preach and thus are bent on evil. The situation of those who pretend to be close to God while their hearts do not appreciate Him appropriately are described,

as follows: You are always on their lips, but far from their hearts. (Jeremiah, 12:2)

Love

And [We gave John] tenderness and purity from Us - he guarded against evil. (Qur'an, 19:13) As for those who believe and do right actions, the All-Merciful will bestow His love on them. (Qur'an, 19:96) Torah Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. (Proverbs, 3:3-4) Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers all wrongs. (Proverbs, 10:12) Bible This is my command: Love each other. (John, 15:17) And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love. (2 John, 1:6)

God Guides Those Who Seek Him If My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me. They should therefore respond to Me and believe in Me so that, hopefully, they will be rightly guided. (Qur'an, 2:186) O you who believe! Fear [and respect] God, seek the means of drawing near to Him and strive in His Way, so that, hopefully, you will be successful. (Qur'an, 5:35) Torah I love those who love Me, and those who seek Me find Me. (Proverbs, 8:17) Bible Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (Matthew, 7:7) Come near to God, and He will come near to you. (James, 4:8)

Saying Nice Things

Do you not see how God makes a metaphor of a good word: a good tree whose roots are firm and whose branches are in heaven? God makes metaphors for people so that, hopefully, they will pay heed. (Qur'an, 14:24-25)

Torah Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone. (Proverbs, 25:15) The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction. (Proverbs, 16:21) Bible Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. (Ephesians, 4:29) Let your conversation always be full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians, 4:6)

Good Advice

We have conveyed the Word to them so that, hopefully, they will pay heed. (Qur'an, 28:51) What of him who spends the night hours in prayer, prostrating and standing up, mindful of the Hereafter, hoping for the mercy of his Lord? Say: "Are they the same - those who know and those who do not know?" It is only people of intelligence who pay heed. (Qur'an, 39:9)

Torah Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge. (Proverbs, 23:12) Bible Obey your leaders and submit to their

authority. (Hebrews, 13:17) Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (James, 1:22) Righteousness

People usually understand righteousness in different ways: giving some money to the poor, helping an old person cross the road, or not lying. Clearly these are all good deeds, but on their own they cannot define righteousness. God reveals the true meaning of righteousness, as follows: It is not righteousness to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, those with true devoutness are those who believe in God and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets; and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and orphans and the very poor; to travelers and beggars, and to set slaves free; and who perform prayer and give the alms; those who honor their contracts when they make them and who are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who guard against evil. (Qur'an, 2:177)

Those who are steadfast in seeking the face of their Lord, perform prayer, and give from the provision We have given them, secretly and openly, and stave off evil with good. It is they who will have the Ultimate Abode. (Qur'an, 13:22)

Believers refrain from injustice, never compromise when it comes to honesty, protect the poor, are polite and respectful to all people, and are gentle and friendly. They do good and call on others to emulate them. The Torah defines righteousness, as follows: He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes... (Isaiah, 33:15) Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right. He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery, but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. He does not lend at usury or take excessive interest. He withholds his hand from doing wrong, and judges fairly between man and man. He follows My decrees and faithfully keeps My laws. That man is righteous. (Ezekiel, 18:5-9) The Bible reveals that people can find happiness in both worlds only if they believe and do good:

[Jesus said:] "There is only One Who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied: "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" Jesus answered: "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor. ... Then come, follow me." (Matthew, 19:17-21)

Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. (Luke, 6:30-33)

Combatting Evil with Goodness

They will be given their reward twice over, because they have been steadfast and because they ward off the bad with the good and give from what We have provided for them. (Qur'an, 28:54) A good action and a bad action are not the same. Repel the bad with something better and, if there is enmity between you and someone else, he will become like a bosom friend. (Qur'an, 41:34)

Bible Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. (1 Peter, 3:9)

But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. (Luke, 6:27-29) Torah If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this... and the LORD will reward you. (Proverbs, 25:21-22)

Immorality

But do not obey any vile swearer of oaths, any backbiter, slander-monger, impeder of good, evil aggressor, gross, coarse, and, furthermore, despicable [person] simply because he possesses wealth and sons. When Our Signs are recited to him, he says: "Just myths of previous peoples!" (Qur'an, 68:10-15)

An evil generation succeeded them, [one] who neglected the prayer and followed their appetites. They will plunge into the Valley of Evil. (Qur'an, 19:59)

Bible They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, ... insolent, arrogant, and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. (Romans, 1:29-31)

Torah They would not be like their forefathers - [rather, they were] a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to Him. (Psalm, 78:8)

Suppose he has a violent son who sheds blood or does any of these other things: He eats at the mountain shrines. He defiles his neighbor's wife. He oppresses the poor and needy. He commits robbery. He does not return what he took in pledge. He looks to the idols. He does detestable things. (Ezekiel, 18:10-12) He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success. He catches the wise in their craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are swept away. (Job, 5:12-13)

Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness. Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not block justice by siding with the crowd... Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. Have nothing to do with a false charge, and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe

blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous. (Exodus, 23:1-8)

Forgiveness

People make mistakes. While in this arena of testing, they will make many mistakes and be wronged by other people. Most unbelievers are intolerant of mistakes and impatient with those who make them. If they are harmed by the mistakes of others, they often retaliate viciously. Religious morality, however, commands forgiveness and tolerance. Believers, aware of their total dependence upon God, know that they can make the same mistakes as others. Thus, they speak soothingly and are forgiving. The Qur'an reveals that God praises those who forgive:

Correct and courteous words accompanied by forgiveness are better than charity followed by insulting words. God is Rich Beyond Need, All-Forbearing. (Qur'an, 2:263) Whether you reveal a good act or keep it hidden, or pardon an evil act, God is Ever-Pardoning, All-Powerful. (Qur'an, 4:149)

Hold to forgiveness, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. (Qur'an, 7:199)

The Qur'an reveals that people who wish to be forgiven should forgive others and be tolerant:

Those of you possessing affluence and ample wealth should not make oaths that they will not give to their relatives, the very poor, and those who have migrated in the way of God. They should rather pardon and overlook. Would you not love God to forgive you? God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 24:22)

The Torah states that believers must be patient and forgiving. One must not elaborate upon another person's mistakes, and must not surrender to rage and revenge:

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. (Proverbs, 19:11) He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends. (Proverbs, 17:9) Do not say: "I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did." (Proverbs, 24:29) The Bible states that forgiving others brings forgiveness from others (Luke, 6:37). People are required to say such prayers as: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew, 6:12). Other verses request believers to be forgiving and tolerant: ... clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive, as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians, 3:12-13)

Stinginess

The Qur'an condemns stinginess. People who do not realize that God is the true owner of all property and possessions passionately cling to their material possessions, believing that these will be theirs forever or that their wealth will protect them. This belief is seriously mistaken, however, for whatever people possess ultimately belongs only to God, Who gives or removes wealth or poverty as He wills. As a result, the Qur'an disapproves

of both vanity and despair. Believers are deeply thankful to God for what He has bestowed upon them and use these gifts in His cause. If they are poor, they remain patient due to their knowledge that some good will come of it.

Many unbelievers are stingy. They show off their wealth, but do not help the needy. They forget that God is perfect and above all needs, and that people need to earn His good pleasure by using their God-given gifts wisely. The Qur'an reveals the truth of this statement:

Here you are then: people who are called upon to spend in the Way of God and then some of you are tight-fisted! But whoever is tight-fisted is only tight-fisted to himself. God is Rich and you are poor. If you turn away, He will replace you with a people other than yourselves, and they will not be like you. (Qur'an, 47:38)

People who think that wealth and property are eternal are wrong. In fact, such things have no value in His presence: We never sent a warner into any city without the affluent people in it saying: "We reject what you have been sent with." They also said: "We have more wealth and children. We are not going to be punished." Say: "My Lord expands the provision of anyone He wills or restricts it. But the majority of humanity do not know it." It is not your wealth or your children that will bring you near to Us - only in the case of people who believe and act rightly; such people will have a double recompense for what they did. They will be safe from all harm in the High Halls of Paradise. (Qur'an, 34:34-37)

The Torah states: Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left, and you live alone in the land (Isaiah, 5:8). Judaism condemns hoarding possessions and greed.

The Bible proclaims that wealth can prevent people from practicing the religion's morality (Matthew, 19:23) and that You cannot serve both God and money (Luke, 16:13) (May God forbid this). It also relates the story of a rich but stupid man who hoarded possessions to ensure his security: ... The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself: "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops." Then he said: "This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to myself: 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him: "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God. (Luke, 12:16-21)

Spending and Giving

O you who believe! Give away some of the good things you have earned and some of what the earth produces for you. Do not have recourse to bad things when you give, things you would only take with your eyes tight shut! Know that God is Rich Beyond Need, Praiseworthy. Satan promises you poverty and commands you to avarice. God promises you forgiveness from Him and abundance. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. (Qur'an, 2:267-68)

You will not attain true goodness until you give of what you love. Whatever you give away, God knows it. (Qur'an, 3:92) Those who give away of their wealth by night and day, secretly and openly, will have their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 2:274)

The metaphor of those who spend their wealth, desiring the pleasure of God and firmness for themselves, is that of a garden on a hillside. When heavy rain falls on it, it doubles its produce; and if heavy rain does not fall, there is dew. God sees what you do. (Qur'an, 2:265)

Bible Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said: "I tell you the truth. This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on." (Mark, 12:41-44) The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same. (Luke, 3:11) Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Romans, 12:13)

Practicing What You Preach

Believers encourage others to live a life of which God approves and help them improve themselves. They advise them to win God's good pleasure, whereas insincere and hypocritical people do so with profit in mind. They do not seek to serve God's religion with what they do, but pursue worthless or evil aims like status, reputation, admiration, or respectability. Such insincere people are warned in the Qur'an, as follows:

Do you order people to devoutness and forget yourselves, when you recite the Book? Will you not use your intellect? (Qur'an, 2:44) The Bible severely reprimands people who claim to follow Moses (pbuh) but do not abide by the morality he taught: ... they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. (Matthew, 23:3-4)

Thankfulness

Thankfulness means to express one's thanks and love to God for all of the gifts He gives, to declare that all we have comes from Him. Careful reflection reveals that God's gifts are countless and that we receive them due to His grace. For example, the fact that each of the 100 trillion or so cells in your body works for you continuously and without fail is only a small fraction of His gifts. Believers are thankful to God regardless of their circumstances, whereas being thankful does not even occur to unbelievers. The Qur'an requires that believers be thankful, which it considers a form of worship, and tells them to adopt this attitude wholeheartedly, as the following verses indicate:

No! Worship God and be among the thankful. (Qur'an, 39:66) So eat from what God has provided for you, lawful and good, and be thankful for the blessing of God, if it is Him you worship. (Qur'an, 16:114) The

Qur'an also states that thankful believers will receive more rewards, whereas ungrateful unbelievers will deserve His fierce punishment. [Moses said to his people:] 'And when your Lord announced: 'If you are grateful, I will certainly give you increase. But if you are ungrateful, My punishment is severe.''' (Qur'an, 14:7)

The Bible says; give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians, 5:18), and passages dealing with Jesus' (pbuh) life reveal that he thanked God for all things. All believers should follow his example. The Torah tells believers to be thankful, as follows: ...there had been ... songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. (Nehemiah, 12:46) Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. (Psalm, 100:4) I thank and praise you. (Daniel, 2:23) We give thanks to you, O God. We give thanks... (Psalm, 75:1)

Rage

Rage, which prevents people from evaluating situations correctly, undermines accurate and fair decision-making, as well as acceptance and compassion. Thus, the Qur'an urges believers not to succumb to it, for doing so only results in misguided behavior and damaged relationships with others. The Qur'an commends those who overcome their anger:

[People who guard against evil are] those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people - God loves the good-doers. (Qur'an, 3:134)

The Bible states that rage is evil and that those who are angered by others deserve to be punished: Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (Ephesians, 4:31) The Torah expresses similar sentiments: A quick-tempered man does foolish things... (Proverbs, 14:17)

Prayer

Most people pray to God at certain times for certain reasons. Almost everybody knows what praying signifies, but the believers' prayers are completely different from those of the unbelievers. Believers turn to God at all times and pray wholeheartedly. Prayers made to impress others, pursue one's self-interest, or ward off disaster may not be acceptable by God. The following verses deal with this matter:

He is the Living - there is no deity but Him - so call on Him, making your religion sincerely His. (Qur'an, 40:65)

Call on your Lord humbly and secretly. (Qur'an, 7:55)

Restrain yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, desiring His face. (Qur'an, 18:28) If My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me. They should therefore respond to Me and believe in Me, so that, hopefully, they will be rightly guided. (Qur'an, 2:186)

Both the Bible and the Torah stress the importance of prayer and provide examples of the believers' prayers. We relate some of these below: And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. (Ephesians, 6:18)

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. (Matthew, 6:5) And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans. (Matthew, 6:7) If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. (Matthew, 21:22)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Colossians, 4:2) The Torah reveals that praying is an important act of worship, how prayers should be made, and that God answers prayers: The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear [and respect] Him; He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all who love Him. (Psalms, 145:18-20) I spread out my hands to You; my soul thirsts for You like a parched land. Answer me quickly... Let the morning bring me word of Your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul. Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD, for I hide myself in You. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God... in Your righteousness, bring me out of trouble. (Psalm, 143:6-11)

Repentance

All people have faults and make mistakes. Believers need to admit their sins after committing them, make the intention to correct them, and ask God to forgive them. Even if they repent and then commit the same sin again, they should repent and seek His forgiveness yet again, for nothing is hidden from Him. Those who try to deceive God (may God forbid this) deceive only themselves. People must accept God's compassion and mercy for His servants and not delay their repentance, for a death-bed repentance may not be accepted. Many Qur'anic verses request people to repent, as follows:

Turn to God every one of you, believers, so that, hopefully, you will have success. (Qur'an, 24:31) But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and puts things right, God will turn toward him. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 5:39) Except for those who repent and believe and act rightly: God will transform the wrong actions of such people into good - God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 25:70)

According to the Bible, Jesus (pbuh) proclaimed:

I have not come to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance. (Luke, 5:32) I tell you, no! Unless you repent, you too will all perish. (Luke, 13:5)

God's Good Pleasure

People answer the question of what they have done for God in many different ways. For example, they may say: I have stilled the hunger of the poor, I have prayed, or I have worshipped. Each of these is commendable, but it is a serious error to do what God asks at certain times and then, at all other times, be oblivious of His existence and the proximity of the Day of Judgment. Those who truthfully believe do not forget that they are always surrounded by God, and so do their utmost at all times to earn His good pleasure and Paradise and to avoid Hell. The Qur'an states that the believers' prayers, life, and death are "only for the Lord of the universe, God" (Qur'an, 6:162). This means that each believer's life is dedicated to earning God's

good pleasure. The Qur'an says that those people who work only to win His good pleasure will find salvation:

Who is better: someone who establishes his building on fear [and respect] of God and His good pleasure, or someone who establishes his building on the brink of a crumbling precipice, so that it collapses with him into the Fire of Hell? God does not love wrongdoers. (Qur'an, 9:109) Solomon's (pbuh) prayer, as recorded in the Qur'an, asks God to let him do those deeds that will earn His good pleasure. Given below, it is an example for all believers:

"My Lord, keep me thankful for the blessing You have bestowed on me and on my parents; keep me acting rightly, pleasing You; and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your servants who are righteous." (Qur'an, 27:19) The Old Testament reveals that believers asked God to "teach them to do His will." This prayer is as follows:

... I hide myself in You. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God... (Psalm, 143:9-10) The Bible reveals that Jesus' (pbuh) main request of his followers was that they do their best to earn God's good pleasure. According to it, Jesus (pbuh) always did what God approves of, and thus all of his followers should emulate his behavior. The Bible reveals that believers should do everything only for God: So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. (1 Corinthians, 10:31) ... Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. (Colossians, 3:22-23)

Patience

People have been created impatient, for they want their desires to be fulfilled at once. But God has determined a time and place for everything, and no one can bring it forward or postpone it. This is why believers must remain patient. Prophets as well as believers have proven their patience to the day they died.

God commands: "Be patient for your Lord" (Qur'an, 74:7). Patience is a form of worship, and the believers' patience is a beautiful one (Qur'an, 70:5). Those who remain patient during this short life are promised the following reward: We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger, loss of wealth, life, and fruits. But give good news to those who are patient. (Qur'an, 2:155)

Patience is a moral quality that strengthens believers mentally as well as physically. The Qur'an states that at the times of our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace), 20 patient believers could defeat 200 enemies on the battlefield. This clearly demonstrates how much strength the believers gain by remaining patient. This is revealed in the following verse:

If there are twenty of you who are patient, they will overcome two hundred; and if there are a hundred of you, they will overcome a thousand of those who do not believe. (Qur'an, 8:65)

The Torah emphasizes the importance of patience and declares that such people are superior. The power of the patient is described as follows: Better a patient man than a warrior... (Proverbs, 16:32) The Bible teaches this as well: ... be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians, 4:2) ... help the weak, be patient with everyone. (1 Thessalonians, 5:14)

Thinking

The Qur'an invites people to think. God commands them to reflect on its verses, humanity's creation, natural phenomenon, His gifts, and other beings. Believers are told to think carefully when evaluating events so that they can help other people comprehend the profound evidence for God's existence and the magnitude of His creation. One verse reveals this reality:

In the creation of the heavens and Earth, the alternation of the night and the day, the ships that sail the seas to people's benefit, the water that God sends down from the sky - by which He brings Earth to life when it was dead and scatters about in it creatures of every kind - the varying direction of the winds, and the clouds subservient between heaven and Earth there are Signs for people who use their intellect. (Qur'an, 2:164) The Qur'an also reveals that believers reflect deeply while drawing conclusions:

In the creation of the heavens and the Earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are Signs for people with intelligence: those who remember God, standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and Earth: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Qur'an, 3:190-91)

Wherever people turn and wherever they are, they encounter God's infinite wisdom, unequalled artistry, inexhaustible might, greatness, and supremacy. However, before they can benefit from all of this, they must free themselves from prejudice and carefully study and observe the other beings in their environment. Genuinely reflective people will find an underlying purpose in their encounters. Learning from these encounters enables them to have a better and deeper understanding of God's providence. As a result, their love, respect, and devotion to Him will increase. The Bible states that genuine believers need to ponder and learn from their encounters, as the following passages make clear:

Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? (Mark, 8:17)

Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. (1 Corinthians, 1:26)

Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. (2 Timothy, 2:7)

The Torah also emphasizes the importance of pondering God's artistry in creation and His might, and calls on believers to contemplate these matters deeply. For example:

... and on His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm, 1:2) On my bed I remember You; I think of You through the watches of the night. (Psalm, 63:6) I will meditate on all Your works and consider all Your mighty deeds. (Psalm, 77:12)

Calling Others to Virtue

Throughout history, Prophets and believers have invited people to God's path and virtue. They told people about God, the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell, and morality, and called on them to live according to His will. One verse commands: "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair

admonition" (Qur'an, 16:125). Other verses commend those who call others to God and virtue:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Qur'an, 3:104) Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who fast, those who bow, those who prostrate, those who command the right, those who forbid the wrong, and those who preserve the limits set by God [for humanity]: give good news to the believers. (Qur'an, 9:112) The Qur'an refers to the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) who were given books of revelation by God and mentions that genuine Jews and Christians called others to virtue as well:

They are not all the same. There is a community among the People of the Book who are upright. They recite God's Signs throughout the night, and they prostrate. They believe in God and the Last Day, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and compete in doing good. They are among the righteous. (Qur'an, 3:113-14)

Jesus' (pbuh) and his Disciples' lives are a good example of this. As the Bible relates:

And will give our attention to prayer and spreading the word of God. (Acts, 6:4) My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover a multitude of sins. (James, 5:19-20)

Miracles

Throughout history, people have asked Prophets for miracles so that they would believe. As Jesus (pbuh) put it:

"Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe." (John, 4:48) The Qur'an reveals that those who persisted in their unbelief demanded that the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) perform miracles: They say: "We will not believe you until you make a spring gush out from the ground for us; or have a garden of dates and grapes through which you make rivers come pouring; or make the sky, as you claim, fall down on us in lumps; or bring God and the angels here as a guarantee; or possess a house built out of gleaming gold; or ascend up into heaven - and even then we will not believe in your ascent unless you bring us down a book to read!" Say: "Glory be to my Lord! Am I anything but a human Messenger?" (Qur'an, 17:90-93)

Conscientious and rational people do not require miracles to believe in God, because for such people of awareness everything is a proof of God's existence. Everything from atoms to galaxies, every piece of the universe, is full of His existence and creation. Those who persistently demand miracles are, in reality, only looking for an escape route. In fact, they always make allegations of sorcery or anarchy when they witness the Prophets' miracles. Such an attitude only proves their unbelief.

The insincerity of such people is exposed, as in the passage given below:

If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead. (Luke, 16:31) The Qur'an states that such people will not believe, even if they see a miracle:

Even if We sent down angels to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We gathered together everything in front of them right before their eyes, they would still not believe, unless God willed. The truth is that most of them are ignorant. (Qur'an, 6:111) They have sworn by God with their most earnest oaths that if a Sign comes to them, they will believe in it. Say: "The Signs are in God's control alone." What will make you realize that even if a Sign did come, they would still not believe? (Qur'an, 6:109)

Insensitive Eyes, Ears, and Hearts

They say: "Our hearts are covered up against what you call us to, and there is a heaviness in our ears. There is a screen between us and you. So act - we are certainly acting." (Qur'an, 41:5) God has sealed up their hearts and hearing, and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2:7) We created many of the jinn and humanity for Hell. They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7:179)

Bible

For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them. (Matthew, 13:15) [Jesus asked:] "Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?"... (Mark, 8:18-19)

Humility

Perfection and faultlessness belong to God. Believers make mistakes knowingly or unknowingly, but always repent each time wholeheartedly and try their best never to repeat the same sin. They do not try to portray themselves as free of sin and faults or exalt themselves by looking down on others. Those who arrogantly take salvation for granted through their insincere acts cannot earn God's approval and compassion:

Do you not see those who claim to be purified? No, God purifies whoever He wills. They will not be wronged by so much as the smallest speck. (Qur'an, 4:49)

The Qur'an reveals that such people's insincere efforts will not save them, and that they will be devastated: Say: "Shall I inform you of the greatest losers in their actions? People whose efforts in the life of this world are misguided, while they suppose that they are doing good." (Qur'an, 18:103-104)

The Torah reveals to believers that expecting any compliments and admiration is immoral (Psalm, 25:27). Many Biblical passages state that

those who expect exaltation in their conceit are, in reality, debased. For example:

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke, 18:14)

Wishing Others Well

Greetings or wishing well are ways to express one's best wishes for someone else when they meet. Believers do this without fail, even when they are busy or have urgent business elsewhere, when they enter each other's houses or meet somewhere. The Qur'an commands believers to reply in a similar manner, or with even nicer wishes, when they are greeted and to say suitable words of greeting when they enter another person's house: When you are greeted with a greeting, return the greeting or improve on it. God takes account of everything. (Qur'an, 4:86) And when you enter houses, greet one another with a greeting from God, blessed and good. In this way God makes the Signs clear to you so that, hopefully, you will use your intellect. (Qur'an, 24:61)

The Bible contains similar instructions, such as: As you enter the home, give it your greeting. (Matthew, 10:12) Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you!" (John, 20:19)

Envy

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of Daybreak, from the evil of what He has created, from the evil of the darkness when it gathers, from the evil of women who blow on knots, and from the evil of an envier when he envies." (Qur'an, 113:1-5)

Bible The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. (Galatians, 5:19-21)

Lying

... have done with telling lies. (Qur'an, 22:30) O you who believe! Fear [and respect] God, and speak the right word. (Qur'an, 33:70)

Bible For out of the heart come evil thoughts... false testimony... (Matthew, 15:19) Do not lie to each other... (Colossians, 3:9)

Torah Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness. Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd. (Exodus, 23:1-2)

Sexual Misconduct

And do not go near to fornication. It is an indecent act, an evil way. (Qur'an, 17:32) Torah You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus, 20:14) Bible ... What comes out of a man is what makes him unclean. For from within, out of men's hearts, come ... sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a person unclean. (Mark, 7:20-23)

Stealing

O Prophet! When women who believe come to you pledging allegiance to you on the grounds that they will not associate anything with God, or steal or fornicate, or kill their children or give a false ascription of paternity - making up lies about their bodies - or disobey you in respect of anything right, then accept their pledge and ask forgiveness for them. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 60:12)

Torah Do not steal... Do not deceive one another. (Leviticus, 19:11)

Bible Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, and honor your father and mother. (Mark, 10:19)

Tr Treating Parents Well

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him, and that you should show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "Ugh!" to them out of irritation, and do not be harsh with them. Rather, speak to them with gentleness and generosity. (Qur'an, 17:23)

Bible Honor your father and mother. (Luke, 18:20; Matthew, 19:19)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother - which is the first commandment with a promise - that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the Earth. (Ephesians, 6:1-3) Torah Honor your father and your mother. (Exodus, 20:12)

Chapter 6 : Uniting in Ideological Warfare

When humanity's present living conditions are scrutinized, the need for alliances among believers become apparent. Social ills, among them conflicts, wars, genocide, poverty, famine, social injustice, and moral degeneration, pose a serious threat to many countries. Moreover, a great number of innocent people suffering under those conditions are desperately waiting for a helping hand to be extended. Conscientious people around the world are trying to help them. Aid packages are dispatched to areas affected by famine, peace envoys are trying to protect people in war zones, and efforts are being made to curb crime and decadence. But these efforts are regional and limited to finding solutions to the most pressing issues. In fact, it is actually possible to eradicate all kinds of human suffering and to bring happiness, security, and prosperity to the world.

However, achieving this goal depends on identifying the true causes of such ills - the decline of religious morality - and eradicating their ideological basis. The fact that the law of the strong prevails throughout the world is partly responsible for this situation, for this attitude engenders a social model based upon self-interest. Even more seriously, it has replaced acceptance, love, sympathy, compassion, and cooperation with conflict, greed, and dispute. In short, it disregards humanity's obligation to serve God, view this life as a realm of testing designed to win His good pleasure, and strive for the Hereafter.

The ideological changes that took place in the nineteenth century laid the foundations for the spiritual collapse in the next century. Whereas the majority of people believed in God's existence until that time, these changes enabled atheism to become a major influence. In the eighteenth century, such materialists as Denis Diderot (d. 1784) and Baron D'Holbach (d. 1789) asserted that the universe had existed forever and that only matter existed, and this view found an ever-increasing following in Europe. In the nineteenth century, atheism expanded further with the influence of such thinkers as Ludwig Feuerbach (d. 1872), Karl Marx (d. 1883), Friedrich Engels (d. 1894), Friedrich Nietzsche (d. 1900), Emile Durkheim (d. 1917), and Sigmund Freud (d. 1939).

Charles Darwin (d. 1882) did the greatest service to atheism by devising his theory of evolution, which was designed to oppose creation. Darwinism provided a scientific answer to the question of how humanity and other life forms emerged - a question that atheists had never managed to answer until that time. He proposed that nature had a mechanism that could enliven dead matter and give rise to millions of species. Many people, unfortunately, believed this erroneous idea.

At the end of the nineteenth century, atheists had formulated a worldview that, they claimed, explained everything. They postulated that the universe was not created, but had existed since eternity and thus had no beginning. They assumed that its clear order and equilibrium was coincidental and devoid of purpose. Darwinism claimed to answer the question of how humanity and all other beings were created. Marx and Durkheim provided atheistic answers to history and sociology, and Freud did the same for psychology. These theories, however, were shown to be baseless and

without merit by the scientific, political, and social developments of the twentieth century. And, moreover, discoveries in astronomy, biology, psychology, and social behavior completely destroyed atheisms' propositions.

During this period, however, movements based on Darwinism and materialism devastated humanity. Such ideologies as communism, fascism, racism, nihilism, and existentialism caused people great sorrow and engendered countless conflicts, wars, and calamities. Their aftereffects continue to be felt today, albeit with a lesser impact, and certain circles persist in defending Darwinism as a scientific fact. We will briefly scrutinize how Darwinism is being imposed on nations and what the consequences are. But first, we want to point out an important fact.

At present, the burden of responsibility rests upon the shoulders of all conscientious believers to do something about the global situation created by all ideologies opposed to religious morality. All Christians, Jews, and Muslims should join in this effort, for they are the target of these atheistic ideologies. Therefore, the sincere People of the Book and sincere Muslims must cooperate, join forces, and tell the world of Darwinism's false worldview, which is based on materialism, not science. All of the other anti-religious ideologies (e.g., communism, fascism, racism) as well as decadence must be fought together on an ideological level so that the world can enjoy peace, tranquility, and justice in the near future. When this great task has been completed, suffering, hardship, killing, calamity, injustice, and destitution will make way for enlightenment, calmness, prosperity, wealth, health, and good fortune.

Darwinism: The Source of Corrupted Values

The theory of evolution proposes that life emerged coincidentally and then developed and evolved as a consequence of the struggle for survival. Consequently, Darwinism's underlying message is that you are not answerable to anyone; that you owe your life to coincidence; and that you must fight and, if necessary, oppress others in order to survive, as you are living in a world of self-interest and conflict. These are the moral implications of such Darwinist slogans as natural selection, struggle for survival, and survival of the fittest. Obviously, this worldview is the exact opposite of the worldview based on religious morality. Moreover, it forms the basis of the anti-religion front.

Studying society's values is enough to expose Darwinism's destructive nature. When we look at present-day societies, we see that most people live for self-preservation, a good job, material wealth, more money, entertainment - in other words, for success in the struggle for survival. Such people naturally seek a good and happy life. However, religious morality also requires people to take care of the needy, cooperate with each other, and avoid selfishness. Darwinism does not concern itself with other people; in fact, it teaches its adherents that if any benefit can be had from the hardship of others, so be it.

Especially among the young people, luxurious houses and cars, unlimited financial means, fame, wealth, and power have become ideals. Not wondering about the purpose of their existence and hardly ever pondering

God's existence and might, they consider themselves to be independent beings who have no responsibilities toward our Creator. They would rather not be reminded of death, which is a reality for all beings, resurrection, and the Day of Judgment.

But such willful ignorance does not affect the truth. Even if they ignore such questions until death comes for them or turn away from all reminders of truth, they remain nothing more than created and feeble servants who will die one day and be brought to His presence for judgment. These people often are not even aware of Darwinism's influence on their lives. Worse, great number of them believe that Darwinism is a subject matter of biology and therefore none of their concern. Even if they are not aware of the theory of evolution's influence, their continued exposure to it deeply affects their worldview.

People who consider themselves to be highly evolved animals reflect their corrupted worldview in their behavior and decision-making: They are selfish, greedy, ruthless, and cruel, and oblivious of the need to practice compassion, mercy, devotion, and modesty. This attitude naturally gives rise to social disorder and causes social as well as moral collapse.

Another undesirable side effect is the ensuing belief that one's personal self-interest is the only thing that matters. Within such societies, altruism, love, respect, and compassion have all been forgotten. Such conditions push people into loneliness and despair. Out of these conditions come stress, discontent, unhappiness, and worry, all of which make many people's lives living nightmares. The resulting spiritual void drives some people to alcohol, drugs, gambling, suicide, or other disastrous courses.

Decadence continues to spread rapidly in societies whose people have abandoned spiritual values. The rising levels of homosexuality and prostitution, sexual crimes, rape, and sexually transmitted disease are important indicators of decadence. Prostitution destroys families and people's self-respect. Homosexuality and other sexual practices that all divinely revealed Books have condemned are now considered normal in many parts of the world, and people who oppose such immorality are accused of being out of date. It is certainly no sign of progress that homosexuals can get married officially in some countries, coordinate their efforts at the international level, and display aggressive behavior against religious morality.

Decadence is also widespread in the political realm. The twentieth century was characterized by the most horrific and destructive wars in human history. Countless people were killed, injured, or disabled in terrorist or anarchist attacks. Such cruelty is perpetrated by anti-religion ideologies (e.g., communism, fascism, and racism), all of which are offshoots of Darwinism. Regional wars, conflicts, and bloody acts of terror continue to erupt in many parts of the world.

At present, vast numbers of people live in destitution and hardship. Statistics reveal that famine, destitution, and the gap in wealth distribution have reached alarming levels. These negative developments are the natural consequences of a world order based on selfishness, self-interest, and other materialistic values.

Social degradation is also reflected in the increasing number of crimes committed. Throughout the world, illegal activities are increasing and the scope of criminal activities continues to expand. These are the natural consequences of abandoning spiritual and moral values. People far from religious morality consider all types of crimes (e.g., theft, fraud, robbery, and blackmail) to be normal and do not believe that such practices can ever be eradicated.

This gloomy picture is the result of the increasing penetration of materialist philosophies over the past two centuries. Beginning in Europe, it has now spread around the world. This product of rejecting belief in God, which features such lies as you are not answerable or you are highly evolved animals that struggle for survival in the jungle, has proven to be remarkably resilient.

Two Choices

Having presented and explained the reasons for humanity's current deplorable state, we now must ask the following question: What is the best and most appropriate thing to do about the prevailing conditions?

For anyone who sees the destructiveness of immorality, injustice and degeneration, there are two options: either ignore it or mobilize to fight it. Those who choose the first option remain passive and uninterested in what is happening around them. They fool themselves by asking rhetorically: Am I going to save the world? or What could I do, anyway? In conversations, they express their sorrow over the sad state of affairs and donate some time or money to various charities, but make no effort to eradicate these evils. Such people should remember that those who remain silent in the face of suffering, hardship, and evil, or who do not do their utmost to combat them, share in the responsibility for their continued existence.

The second option, mobilizing all means in an ideological struggle to save the world from its present condition, is the one that all sincere believers choose. They never give up the struggle and continue to contribute as best they can. Sincere, reasonable, conscientious, and responsible people must choose this second option. Since the evil and immoral tyrants present a united front against religious morality, sincere People of the Book and sincere Muslims must unite against this alliance of evil, pool all of their mental and material resources, and then fight this ideological war together. All sincere Jews, Christians, and Muslims are responsible for doing their utmost in this regard. By embarking on this path, they ensure the gradual emergence of honest, respectful, loving, accepting, sensitive, and virtuous people who will live together in an environment of peace, tranquility, security, happiness, and prosperity.

In the present environment of hardship and troubles, sincere Jews, Christians, and Muslims must be even more accepting, conciliatory, complementary, and respectful of each other. They should not forget that unity, togetherness, and cooperation bring success, and that dispute, argument, and conflict bring nothing but weakness. The current situation demands the immediate formation of such an alliance. Besides the ideological warfare against the enemies of religious morality, all believers

must prepare for the most celebrated era in human history: the second coming of Jesus (pbuh).

Chapter 7 : The Second Coming Of Jesus (PBUH) The Messiah

In this chapter, we will examine the revelation of Jesus' (pbuh) second coming, as described in the Bible and the Qur'an. Like all other Prophets, Jesus (pbuh) is a distinguished and celebrated person who was blessed by God with superior moral qualities and sent to guide his people to the righteous path. However, certain other qualities set him apart from the other Prophets: He was born without a father and will return to Earth at some point in the future. The Qur'an, Prophet Mohammed's (may God bless him and grant him peace) hadiths, and the works of Muslim scholars all confirm this fact.

All of the information we have indicates that Jesus' (pbuh) second coming is imminent. The time of his return, expected for centuries by both Christians and Muslims, is on the verge of being fulfilled (God knows best.) What we need to do now is to learn how to best prepare ourselves and our world for his arrival. For genuine believers in God, the best way is to join together in order to establish his teachings in our societies and attain the honor of being counted among his supporters.

Jesus' (pbuh) Return in the Bible

The Bible describes Jesus' (pbuh) second coming in detail. However, it also states that only God knows the time and place of his arrival (Matthew, 24:36; Mark, 13:32-33) and that he will come unexpectedly, which is why people must be aware and ready (Matthew, 24:44, 25:13; Mark, 13:35-37; Luke, 12:40).

The circumstances and telltale signs of his return that are known are given below: Anarchy and chaos will increase in the End Times (the final period of the world); wars and conflicts will be commonplace; decadence will be widespread; love and trust between people will be lost; treachery, infidelity, and cruelty will increase; and most people will be far from religious morality. One other indication will be the large number of false Prophets or Messiahs that will appear. The Bible describes this era as follows:

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming: 'I am Jesus,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All of these are the beginning of birth pains... At that time, many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false Prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew, 24:4-14) It also depicts the situation of the societies before Jesus' (pbuh) second coming, as follows:

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the Last Days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive,

disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. (2 Timothy, 3:1-5)

According to the Bible, when these developments are taking place, Jesus' (pbuh) return will be imminent (Matthew, 24:33). One further telltale sign will be the widespread denial that he will really come. The Bible reveals this, as follows:

First of all, you must understand that in the Last Days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say: "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." (2 Peter, 3:3-4)

Jesus' (pbuh) Return in the Hadith

The signs of the End Times as described in the hadiths of Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) are very similar to those described in the Bible. Our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) also related in detail the circumstances and condition of the world in this time, and revealed that Jesus (pbuh) would be sent back to Earth during that period. Some of these signs are given below:

When anarchy prevails throughout the world, mischief appears, roads are cut, some attack others, the elder do not show mercy for the younger, and the younger fail to be polite toward the elder...¹⁸

The Hour will come when one kills his own brother.¹⁹

The Hour will come when the evil ones become successors in your world.²⁰

The Hour will come when violence, bloodshed, and anarchy become common.²¹

The unlawful things become lawful... is one of the signs of the Hour.²²

Large cities perish, as if they never existed.²³

In the End Times, such people will appear who will trade their religion in return for worldly benefits. To appear clement, they will wrap around sheep skin; their tongues will be sweeter than candy, but their hearts will be as hard as a wolf's heart.²⁴ There are two great events before the Day of Judgment... and then years of earthquakes.²⁵ Deceiving years will pass by. During those years... people will trust the traitorous person, and the honest person will be deemed traitorous.²⁶ People will not respect the elderly or show mercy to the young ones. Adultery will become widespread... to such an extent that people will commit adultery in the middle of a street.²⁷ Hunger and the high cost of living will become widespread.²⁸

The Hour will become near when people cease to do good deeds, and do not enjoin good deeds and forbid bad deeds...²⁹ The increase in the number of evil ones, deeming liars as honest and honest ones as liars, deeming traitorous ones as reliable, and reliable ones as traitorous... are among the signs of the Hour.³⁰

Those who pay attention to what is going on in the world, both in their own area and more further a field, can see that these signs are taking place one after the other in our own time. We receive almost daily news of

conflict from different parts of the world; people are troubled by corruption, injustice, and other social ills; and dishonesty, fraud, cheating, fornication, and sexual license are rising by the day. Disregard for moral values prevents true love and compassion between people, and an atmosphere of distrust and anxiety eventually engulfs everyone. The numbers of devastating famine, earthquakes, and other natural disasters are increasing, and shocking events are clearly happening all around us. Of course such events have taken place in the past, but never have these signs occurred so clearly and comprehensively as they are right now. This situation is a clear sign, God willing, of Jesus (pbuh) the Messiah's imminent return, a truly historic event and a cause for excitement and joy for all believers. Over the next few pages we will examine the evidence for Jesus' (pbuh) return in the Qur'an and our Prophet's (may God bless him and grant him peace) hadiths.

Jesus' (pbuh) Characteristics According to the Qur'an

The Qur'an contains a great deal of information about Jesus (pbuh). For example, he was born without a father, following the good tidings that an angel revealed to Mary, and performed miracles, by God's will, such as speaking with people while still an infant. Throughout his life, he was an exemplary servant of God and called people to become genuine servants of God. The following are some of Jesus' (pbuh) features:

Jesus (pbuh) is the word and Messenger of God:

O People of the Book! Do not go to excess in your religion. Say nothing but the truth about God. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God and His Word, which He cast into Mary, and a Spirit from Him. (Qur'an, 4:171) He was given the name Jesus (pbuh) the Messiah:

When the angels said: "Mary, your Lord gives you good news of a Word from Him. His name is the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, of high esteem in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near." (Qur'an, 3:45) He is a sign for humanity:

... and she [Mary], who protected her chastity. We breathed into her some of Our Spirit and made her and her son a Sign for all the worlds. (Qur'an, 21:91)

His mother Mary was chosen and preferred by God above all other women:

And when the angels said: "Mary, God has chosen you and purified you. He has chosen you over all other women." (Qur'an, 3:42) He spoke with people while still in the cradle:

[The angels said:] "He will speak to people in the cradle and also when fully grown, and will be one of the righteous." (Qur'an, 3:46) He performed many miracles by God's will:

As a Messenger to the tribe of Israel, saying: "I have brought you a Sign from your Lord. I will create the shape of a bird out of clay for you and then breathe into it, and it will be a bird, by God's permission. I will heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead to life, by God's permission. I will tell you what you eat and what you store up in your homes. There is a Sign for you in that, if you are believers." (Qur'an, 3:49)

Remember when God said: "Jesus, son of Mary, remember My blessing to you and to your mother, when I reinforced you with the Purest Spirit so that you could speak to people in the cradle and when you were fully grown; and when I taught you the Book and Wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel; and when you created a bird-shape out of clay by My permission and then breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission; and healed the blind and the leper by My permission; and when you brought forth the dead by My permission; and when I held back the tribe of Israel from you, when you brought them the Clear Signs, and those of them who did not believe said: 'This is nothing but downright magic.' "(Qur'an, 5:110)

He preached the Bible sent as guidance and confirmation of the Torah (errors, myths, and legends entered the Bible at a later date):

And We sent Jesus, son of Mary, following in their footsteps, confirming the Torah that came before him. We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light, confirming the Torah that came before it, and as guidance and admonition for those who guard against evil. (Qur'an, 5:46)

Then We sent Our Messengers following in their footsteps and sent Jesus, son of Mary, after them, giving him the Gospel. We put compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. They invented monasticism - We did not prescribe it for them - purely out of desire to gain the pleasure of God, but even so they did not observe it as it should have been observed. To those of them who believed We gave their reward, but many of them are deviators. (Qur'an, 57:27)

He was supported with Purest Spirit:

We gave Moses the Book and sent a succession of Messengers after him. We gave Jesus, son of Mary, the Clear Signs and reinforced him with the Purest Spirit. Why, then, whenever a Messenger came to you with something your lower selves did not desire, did you grow arrogant, and deny some of them and murder others? (Qur'an, 2:87)

These Messengers: We favored some of them over others. God spoke directly to some of them and raised up some of them in rank. We gave Clear Signs to Jesus, son of Mary, and reinforced him with the Purest Spirit. If God had willed, those who came after them would not have fought each other after the Clear Signs came to them, but they differed. Among them are those who believe and among them are those who do not believe. If God had willed, they would not have fought each other. But God does whatever He wills. (Qur'an, 2:253)

His Disciples assisted him:

O you who believe! Be helpers of God as Jesus, son of Mary, said to the Disciples: "Who will be my helpers to God?" The Disciples said: "We will be the helpers of God." One faction of the tribe of Israel believed, and the other disbelieved. So We supported those who believed against their enemy, and they became victorious. (Qur'an, 61:14)

He was a role model for the Israelites:

He [Jesus, son of Mary] is only a servant on whom We bestowed Our blessing and whom We made an example for the tribe of Israel. (Qur'an,

43:59) The unbelievers conspired to assassinate him, but God foiled their plots and raised him up to His presence:

They planned, and God planned. But God is the best of planners. When God said: "Jesus, I will take you back, raise you up to Me, and purify you of those who do not believe. And I will place the people who follow you above those who do not believe until the Day of Resurrection. Then you will all return to Me, and I will judge between you regarding the things about which you differed." (Qur'an, 3:54-55)

Jesus' (pbuh) Second Coming According to the Qur'an

The Qur'an reveals that Jesus (pbuh) did not die and was not killed. Rather, he was raised up to God's presence and will be returned to Earth at a time of His choice.

This part of the book will examine the Qur'anic evidence for this. (For detailed information, see Harun Yahya, The Glad Tidings of the Messiah, Global Publishing, [Istanbul: 2003].) 1. Those who sought to kill Jesus (pbuh) failed. Thus, their claim to have killed him is based only upon their assumption: And [on account of] their saying: "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Messenger of God." They did not kill him and they did not crucify him; rather, it was made to seem so to them. Those who argue about him are in doubt about it. They have no real knowledge of it, just conjecture. But they certainly did not kill him. (Qur'an, 4:157)

2. Jesus (pbuh) did not die, but was taken from the dimension of human existence to the presence of God:

God raised him [Jesus] up to Himself. God is Almighty, All-Wise. (Qur'an, 4:158) 3. Jesus (pbuh) is a sign for the Hour:

He [Jesus] is a sign of the Hour. Have no doubt about it. But follow me. This is a straight path. (Qur'an, 43:61) This verse signals Jesus' (pbuh) return in the End Times, because Jesus lived approximately six centuries before the Qur'an's revelation. Therefore, we cannot understand his first life as a sign of the Hour or, in other words, a sign of the End Times. Given this interpretation, Jesus (pbuh) will return in the End Times, and that this is a sign of the Day of Judgment. (God knows best.) 4. Jesus' (pbuh) followers will be preferred over unbelievers until the end of time:

When God said: "Jesus, I will take you back and raise you up to Me, and purify you of those who do not believe. And I will place the people who follow you above those who do not believe until the Day of Resurrection. Then you will all return to Me, and I will judge between you regarding the things about which you differed." (Qur'an, 3:55)

God says that Jesus' (pbuh) true followers will be superior to the unbelievers until the Day of Judgment. He only had a few followers while he was alive on Earth and, after his ascension to God's presence, the true religion revealed to him was gradually falsified. During the next two centuries his followers were persecuted ruthlessly, for they did not have any political power. Therefore, we cannot say that the early Christians dominated the unbelievers and, therefore, that they were the subject of this verse. Today, Christianity is far from its original state as the real religion taught by Jesus (pbuh). In this situation, the expression I will place the people who follow you above those who do not believe until the Day of

Resurrection, takes on a clear meaning: A community of Jesus' (pbuh) followers will live until that time. This community will emerge on Jesus' (pbuh) second coming and be preferred over the unbelievers until the Day of Judgment. (God knows best.)

5. All People of the Book will believe in Jesus (pbuh) before he dies:

There is not one of the People of the Book who will not believe in him before he dies; and on the Day of Resurrection he [Jesus] will be a witness against them. (Qur'an, 4:159)

This verse contains three promises in relation to Jesus (pbuh), all of which have not yet been fulfilled: first, Jesus (pbuh) will die like all other human beings; second, all People of the Book will believe in him before he dies. (Both of these prophecies will be realized when he comes again); and third, Jesus (pbuh) will be a witness over the People of the Book on the Day of Judgment. (God knows best.) 6. Jesus' (pbuh) second coming is proclaimed in Surah Maryam:

[Jesus said:] "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised up again alive." (Qur'an, 19:33) When this verse is considered together with Surah Al 'Imran 3:55, an important fact emerges, for this latter verse states that Jesus (pbuh) was raised up to God's presence. This verse contains no reference to his death or killing. However, Surah Maryam 19:33 speaks of the day that Jesus (pbuh) will die. This second "death" is only possible with Jesus' (pbuh) return to Earth to live among humanity for a certain number of years. (God knows best.) 7. The following verse indicates his return to Earth:

He will teach him [Jesus] the Book and Wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel. (Qur'an, 3:48) When we look at other verses to understand the meaning of Book in this verse, we realize the following: As it is used in conjunction with the Bible and the Torah in the same sentence, it must stand for the Qur'an, as the verse below suggests:

He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel. (Qur'an, 3:3) Many other verses state that wisdom and the Book were revealed to Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace). The following is one such verse: God has sent down the Book and Wisdom to you, and taught you what you did not know before. God's favor to you is indeed immense. (Qur'an, 4:113) As the book revealed to Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) was the Qur'an, the Book referred to in Surah Al 'Imran 3:48, which Jesus (pbuh) will be taught, is most probably the Qur'an. Given that Jesus (pbuh) knew the Torah and the Bible, obviously he will learn the Qur'an on his second coming. (God knows best.)

8. Surah Al 'Imran 3:59 states: "The likeness of Jesus in God's sight is the same as Adam." This verse points out similarities between the two Prophets. For example, both Adam (pbuh) and Jesus (pbuh) did not have a father. Moreover, it could be indicating that Jesus (pbuh) will be brought down to Earth in the End Times, just as Adam (pbuh) was brought down from Paradise. (God knows best.)

9. The word kahlaan, in Surat al-Ma'ida 5:110 and Surah Al 'Imran 3:46 is further proof for Jesus' return to Earth. These verses are as

follows: Remember when God said: "Jesus, son of Mary, remember My blessing to you and to your mother, when I reinforced you with the Purest Spirit so that you could speak to people in the cradle and when you were fully grown." (Qur'an, 5:110) [The angels said to Mary:] "He [Jesus] will speak to people in the cradle and also when fully grown, and will be one of the righteous." (Qur'an, 3:46)

The dictionary meaning of kahlaan, which denotes the adult stages of Jesus' (pbuh) life, is between 30-50 years of age, at the borderline of youth and old age. Islamic scholars agree that this word denotes that part of a person's life that begins after one becomes 35 years old. Islamic scholars base their view on the hadiths, transmitted by Ibn `Abbas, that Jesus (pbuh) was raised up to the heavens at the beginning of his thirtieth year and that he will live for another 40 years on his return. Scholars say that his old age will occur after his return to Earth. Therefore, this verse is a proof for Jesus' (pbuh) return.³¹

All Prophets spoke with people, invited them to religion, and taught religion at a mature age. But the Qur'an does not use this word for any other Prophet. Thus, kahlaan indicates Jesus' (pbuh) miraculous return to Earth, as the expressions of while in the cradle and when fully grown come one after the other in the verses, indicating the two miraculous times.

Jesus' (pbuh) speaking from the cradle was a miracle, for such a thing had never happened before. This suggests that the expression when fully grown, which appears immediately after the other, is also a miracle. If this expression indicates Jesus' (pbuh) life before he was raised up to God's presence, Jesus' (pbuh) speech would not have been a miracle. This is why the verse points out two miraculous times: when he was in the cradle (the first) and when fully grown (the second). Therefore, the expression when fully grown most probably indicates the miraculous time following his miraculous return to Earth, when he will speak with people again. (God knows best.)

Recognizing Jesus (pbuh)

People are curious about how Jesus (pbuh) will be recognized on his second coming and what features will reveal his true identity. As a person of superior knowledge, intellect, body, and virtue, he will have an expression of Prophethood on his face. His strong fear and respect of God and deep faith will enlighten his face. This enlightenment on his face will be so revealing that people who encounter him will know that they are dealing with a superior human being.

God reveals that he is "of high esteem in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near" (Qur'an, 3:45). Thus, Jesus (pbuh) will be recognized by his respectability, honor, and superiority, just as all other Prophets were. Those who see him will know him instantly, and their hearts will have no doubts; those who have denied his return will realize their error straight away. Jesus (pbuh) will be recognizable by the qualities of Prophethood, but other signs will also make him recognizable, such as that he will have no family or relatives, and no one will have known him from an earlier period in his life.

No One Will Know Jesus (pbuh) When He Returns

How will we recognize Jesus (pbuh)? Surely he will have all the attributes of a Prophet, which will enable believers to recognize him. Moreover, no one will have seen or known him before, and no one will know his past. No one will know his physical qualities, face, or voice. Even if some people make such claims, they cannot prove them, for everyone who knew Jesus (pbuh) has been dead for approximately two thousand years. Mary, Zachariah (pbuh), his Disciples, the Jewish leaders of that era, and those who were taught by Jesus (pbuh) have all died. As we explained earlier, Jesus (pbuh) was created without a father, by God's command Be! Centuries later, he has no known relatives. In fact, God compares Jesus' (pbuh) creation to Adam's (pbuh):

The likeness of Jesus in God's sight is the same as Adam. He created him from earth and then He said to him: "Be!" and he was. (Qur'an, 3:59)

No doubt, this situation removes the threat of false Messiahs. On his second coming, no one will be able to cast doubt on Jesus (pbuh) as the Messiah, because he will be instantly recognizable by this fact: No one will be able to say that he or she knows him. Besides, Jesus (pbuh) will have all the attributes of His chosen Messengers: virtue, pureness, wisdom, convincing speech, foresight, and modesty. Naturally, these will set him apart from false Messiahs and enable true believers to recognize him in the light of faith and to believe in him.

Jesus (pbuh) will remove all of Christianity's false beliefs and practices, free both the Christian and the Islamic worlds from their errors, and call all people to live by the true religion and superior morality. One Qur'anic verse states that all People of the Book will believe in Jesus (pbuh) (Qur'an, 4:159). Thus, Jews will also believe in Jesus (pbuh) as the Messiah and enter the alliance of all three divinely revealed religions in the pursuit of delivering peace, tranquility, and justice to the world.

Islamic sources contain a great deal of information on the new world order to be established under Jesus' (pbuh) leadership. Many hadiths also give the good tidings about his return. A few of them are given below:

I swear, the son of Mary [Jesus (pbuh)] will perform hajj or umra or perform both.³² The Hour will not come until you see ten signs: the smoke, the Dajjal, the Beast, the Sun rising from the West, the descent of Jesus (pbuh) son of Mary...³³

By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, son of Mary [Jesus (pbuh)] will shortly descend among you people [Muslims] as a just ruler...³⁴ Hadiths reveal that a Golden Age era will begin after Jesus' (pbuh) return, a time in which wealth, tranquility, peace, happiness, and ease of life will rule. It will see new developments in art, medicine, communication, manufacturing, transport, and many other fields, completely unlike what we have seen in any other time. In addition, morality will define the lives of people. The hadiths describe this era, as follows: Earth will fill with union of faiths, just as a bowl is filled with water. No enmity will remain among people. And all enmities, struggle, hostility, and jealousy will disappear.³⁵

People will have so many possessions that no one will accept any.³⁶ Earth will fill with justice, just as a bowl is filled with water. Everyone will

worship God. No strife or war will remain... Earth will be like a silver table; it will grow its plants, just as it was in the time of Adam. A bunch of grapes will satisfy a person. A group of people will feed on a single pomegranate. An ox will be very cheap, just as a horse will be very cheap.³⁷

Awaiting Jesus (pbuh)

For us Muslims, Jesus' (pbuh) second coming is of utmost importance. Born as a miracle of God, he invited the Israelites to the righteous path, performed many miracles in their presence, and is the Messiah and God's word (Qur'an, 4:171). When he returns, the differences between Christians and Muslims, who actually share the same values and have the same belief in God, will be resolved. According to the Qur'an, Christians are the closest to Muslims in terms of affection. Once their differences have been resolved, Muslims and Christians will unite, and the Jews will believe in Jesus (pbuh) and find enlightenment (Qur'an, 4:159). Thus, these three divinely revealed religions will merge into one religion based on belief in God and obedience to Jesus (pbuh), and will then ideologically defeat all anti-religion philosophies and idolatry, thus finally ridding the world of war, conflict, racism, ethnic hostility, tyranny, and injustice. People will live in a golden age of peace, happiness, and tranquility.

This will be one of the most significant events in world history. The merger of the three divinely revealed religions will mean that both North and South America, Europe, the Islamic world, Africa, Russia, and Israel will form an alliance under a common religion, something that has never been witnessed before.

Jesus' second coming is one of the greatest miracles in human history. God's chosen Prophets, by His will, performed various miracles. By His grace, 2,000 years ago in Palestine Jesus (pbuh) revived the dead, cured lepers and the blind, and gave life to lifeless objects (Qur'an, 5:110), all by God's will.

It will be a great miracle to witness Jesus' (pbuh) return to begin life once again without parents and as an adult. He will also perform new miracles so that existing materialist philosophies, already weakened to the point of collapse on a scientific as well as philosophical level, will be destroyed. People will see clear proof of God's existence and might.

Based on the signs revealed in the Qur'an and the hadiths, as well as the scholars' opinion, we believe that this event is imminent. We Muslims are excited about this and are doing everything we can to prepare ourselves and the world for the arrival of this celebrated guest. We call on Christians to be sensitive, conscientious, and passionate about this too.

Is Christendom Ready for Jesus' (pbuh) Return?

The love of Jesus (pbuh) made Christians virtuous throughout history. God describes Christians in the following terms: You will find the people most affectionate to those who have faith are those who say: "We are Christians." That is because some of them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant. (Qur'an, 5:82)

Another verse speaks of the Christians' positive morality:

Then We sent Our Messengers following in their footsteps, and sent Jesus, son of Mary, after them, giving him the Gospel. We put compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. (Qur'an, 57:27)

Throughout history Christians endured much tyranny, withdrew from the world's pleasures, and made many sacrifices. All of these are proof of their sincerity, but at a time when Jesus (pbuh) return is imminent, this sincerity needs to be reaffirmed. The New Testament states repeatedly that Jesus (pbuh) will return. For example, it says that he [Jesus] will appear a second time, ... to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him (Hebrews, 9:28). Since this promise is certain, all Christians are obliged to make this the basis of their worldview, be ready and waiting at all times, and act accordingly wherever they may be.

Many Christians are convinced that Jesus (pbuh) will return soon, because most of the prophecies related to the Messiah's arrival have been fulfilled already. The expansion of religious morality across the world, the near collapse of materialist philosophies, and the fact that people are turning to the belief in God are important signs. It would be there inappropriate for Christians to remain impassive about this event.

Since his second coming is imminent, this must become the most important issue on Christendom's agenda. Since Jesus (pbuh) will unite all believers, the differences between Christians will soon be rendered meaningless and therefore, the separations, disputes, and animosities must be abandoned. As all Muslims and Christians will unite under one common belief when he arrives, it is necessary to begin working on overcoming the bias and distrust between them straight away.

The last chapter of the Bible says:

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of Jesus [Messiah], and He will reign forever and ever. (Revelation, 11:15) Come, let us prepare together for Jesus' (pbuh) imminent arrival. Knowing that he will teach us the truth, let us respect our differences in faith. Let us try to bring the peace, brotherhood, compassion, love that he envisages to the world. Let us fight together the ideological war against the philosophies and ideologies that oppose him and deny God. Come, let us await one of the world's greatest miracles together.

Chapter 8

All of the truths revealed thus far show that the People of the Book and Muslims have very similar beliefs and worldviews. Followers of all three divinely revealed religions believe in God's unity, that He created the universe and all living beings from nothing, and that people should order their lives according to divine revelation. The moral code and ideals of social life contained in the parts of the Bible and the Torah are very much like those of the Qur'an.

Sure, there are some fundamental differences in terms of faith that have become the subject of disputes and even wars between the three divinely revealed religions. But at a time when anti-religion and atheist ideologies dominate the world, it is necessary to accentuate the similarities among the three religions.

Putting our differences aside is not something impossible. Consider what happens when we learn of rescue efforts launched to help the survivors of earthquakes or large-scale floods. Something in common draws our attention to such images, and soon people of different countries, nations, and religions mobilize themselves and their resources to cooperate with one another in order to save the affected people. Even countries that hate each other drop their mutual hatred at such times of hardship and rush to the help of the affected country without a second thought. This is what humanity should do anyhow. It is an act of grave indecency to bring up past problems, conflicts, disputes, arguments, and prejudices when people are desperately waiting to be rescued from the rubble of their homes or from the threat of drowning.

Let us visualize the situation of the world's nations: The global activities of atheist and materialist ideologies, social degeneration, decadence, poverty, famine, increasing evil, disintegrating families, spiritually starved people, crime, murder, fights, conflicts, wars, and troubles... No doubt, these and other evil acts are dragging the world at alarming speed toward spiritual as well as physical destruction. Atheistic materialism and other destructive ideologies are threatening people's lives here and in the Hereafter. All of this shows that the billions of people are, in reality, no different from the victims of natural disasters awaiting rescue.

It is the duty of all faithful, sincere, conscientious, and rational Christians, Jews, and Muslims to cooperate against evil, join forces in the ideological battlefield, and work together in unity and harmony. This unity must be based on the principles of love, respect, acceptance, and cooperation. The urgency of the situation must be remembered, and disputes, arguments, and all other human-made (and therefore artificial) barriers between people must be abandoned.

When we look at the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Qur'an, we see that they all recommend using friendly words and conducting oneself properly and with dignity. The Christians' attitude toward others is described, as follows, in the Bible:

... always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. (1 Thessalonians 5:15) ... to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate,

and to show true humility toward all men. (Titus, 3:2) The Torah states that Jews must treat people well:

Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say He is. Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts... (Amos, 5:14-15) In the Qur'an, God states the importance of virtue, righteousness, and responding to evil with goodness and commands Muslims to approach Christians and Jews in the appropriate manner.

The Qur'an clearly states that the People of the Book are closer to Muslims than idolaters or atheists. Even though some Jewish and Christian beliefs and practices no longer accord with the original divine revelations, their revealed books still contain moral values based on divine revelation and a code of good and evil, which is why their food is halal (lawful) for Muslims. Likewise, Muslim men are allowed to marry Jewish and Christian women, for:

Today all good things have been made halal [lawful] for you. The food of those given the Book is also halal for you, and your food is halal for them. So are chaste women from among the believers and chaste women of those given the Book before you, once you have given them their dowries in marriage, not in fornication or taking them as lovers. But as for anyone who rejects faith, his actions will come to nothing, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers. (Qur'an, 5:5)

These rules show that Muslims and the People of the Book can establish good relations among themselves through marriage and the sharing of food, both of which enable the formation of warm human relationships and tranquil togetherness. It is inconceivable that Muslims could have different views when the Qur'an advises moderation and acceptance. Therefore, Muslims must approach Christians and Jews with respect and politeness and inform them of the Qur'an's call to unite under a common word. The secret of such an alliance is found in this call:

Say: "O People of the Book, come to a proposition that is the same for us and you - that we should worship none but God, not associate any partners with Him, and not take one another as lords besides God." (Qur'an, 3:64)

Come, Let Us Unite in Proclaiming God's Existence and the Reality of Creation

The universe is full of evidence that disproves the unbelievers' misguided and erroneous philosophies. All people who listen to the voice of their conscience and study the universe and nature in a sincere and unbiased manner will find the evidence of creation wherever they look. Everything, whether alive or lifeless, contains messages that teach us God's superior art of creation. Thus, we are surrounded by the signs of His existence and unity.

In order to destroy the unbelievers' claim that everything evolved accidentally, it is necessary to examine and inform others of the evidence for creation in the light of modern science. Conscientious people, who come to see the spectacular structures and perfect design of living beings, will realize that these could not have been the result of coincidental

developments, but that they are the creation of God. In this way, the coincidence lie will be destroyed. The evidence for creation covers God's existence and oneness, as well as His supreme might, wisdom, and art. They will lead people to notice God's existence and to turn to Him.

One of the most effective ways to remove the people's unawareness of this truth is to display the many proofs of creation and its perfection in great detail. This will cause people to think about those things that they have always taken for granted. For example, each person's body is a great proof of creation. Our eyes are more complex and superior to the most advanced cameras in the world. All of our bodily functions work in harmony and in equilibrium with each other, and chemical processes that could otherwise be reproduced only in huge chemical plants are carried out perfectly well in our relatively small internal organs. God created countless foodstuffs for us, all of which grow in the same soil and yet have different delicious tastes, smells, appearances, vitamins, and the minerals we need to stay alive and healthy. All of the fruits, vegetables, and other sources of food present evidence for God's creation. At this time and age, most people consume God's gifts without ever pondering this reality and so never think to thank Him for them. In order to end such unawareness, sincerely religious believers must join forces.

Many verses of the Qur'an invite people to ponder such facts and to witness and understand these proofs for God's existence and greatness. Among them is the following passage:

Do you not see how He created seven heavens in layers, and placed the Moon as a light in them and made the Sun a blazing lamp? God caused you to grow from the soil and will return you to it and bring you out again. God has spread Earth out as a carpet for you so that you could use its wide valleys as roadways. (Qur'an, 71:15-20)

The subjects mentioned in these verses are so detailed that scholars could - and have - written volumes about them. For instance, the seven strata of the heavens and their effects on and benefits to the world's ecological systems and life on Earth; the Moon and the Sun's influence on the seasons, the climate, day and night, and over the life of people - when people think about such things, their worldview is broadened and their faith is strengthened. The slightest changes to these systems are similarly awe-inspiring, especially when the dangers of such changes are considered. The whole universe is full of such details, and yet most people hardly ever ponder these wonders in their daily lives. Telling people about these proofs of creation and their ramifications on their own lives will lead them to contemplate and thus recognize God's power and might.

Naturally, people who admit God's existence will find their lives, morality, and general behavior greatly affected, for they will do their best to obey His commands and live by His morality. This, in turn, will increase the number of people who are gentle, modest, accepting, understanding, patient, loyal, selfless, compassionate, brave, open-minded, honest, and just, and the world will become a beautiful place due to the expansion of His morality.

Therefore, come and let us investigate the reality of creation; let us research them and announce them to all people; let us invite them to love

God, be thankful to Him, live by the morality He prescribes, and worship Him in order to earn His good pleasure.

Come, Let Us Unite against Darwinism

As we stated earlier, atheist, materialist, and other anti-religion power centers are waging an unprecedented war against religious morality. They have been working systematically across the world to divert people from God's path, have them deny God's existence and unity, and annihilate religious morality.

Amazingly, they claim to be following a scientific system that has all the answers: Darwinism. However, this system only leads people into atheism by encouraging them to reject His existence and creation. They portray the world as an arena in which only the fittest survive and seek to distance people from religious morality, and thereby turn them into selfish and merciless animals. The famous atheist evolutionist, Prof. Richard Dawkins, sums up the theory of evolution's mission as follows: "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist."³⁸

In reality, the theory of evolution does not make this possible for them, because the theory is in clear conflict with recent scientific discoveries. Many sciences (e.g., paleontology, biochemistry, genetics, comparative anatomy, and biophysics) prove that the creation of life cannot be explained through natural processes and natural selection, as evolutionists claim. In short, evolution is defended not by science, but in spite of science.

However, the leading positions of power in the scientific world and in the media are filled by people who continue to assert that the theory of evolution is absolute truth. Seeking to keep this theory alive at all costs, they have no qualms about concealing or twisting those scientific discoveries that refute it, or belittling or disparaging those discoveries that expose its falsity or those scientists who criticize it. This inquisition causes many scientists and researchers to conceal their true views so that they will not be excommunicated by having their funds cut off or their reputations destroyed.

All people who believe in God must join forces to resist and, ultimately, overthrow the Darwinist dictatorship ruling the world of science and thought. Therefore, come let us unite; let us use the scientific and technological means of the twenty-first century to tell the world that Darwinism is nothing but a sham, and that the true source of life is creation.

Come, Let Us Unite for Peace

God commands believers to make peace with each other and to defend it against those who conspire to make war without justification (i.e., not for self-defense or protecting the innocent), and curses those who create disorder and kill innocent people. Believers who abide by God's prescribed morality have a duty to work for peace and security and to provide a world in which all people can live in peace and tranquility. Wars fought to acquire more land, prove the supremacy of one's nation or race over another, and dominate other nations leave nothing behind but dead innocent people, cripples, orphans, mentally disturbed individuals, destroyed cities, devastated civilizations, destitution, fear, and hunger. These losses, which

affect all parties involved in warfare, take many long years - even generations - to replace.

The lack of religious morality is the source of all wars, skirmishes, and bloodshed. Sometimes, people claiming to act in the name of religion can manipulate other people who are not sufficiently well-informed about religion to commit crimes that are completely incompatible with religious morality. Those who believe that disagreements and problems should be resolved through violence tyrannize people with their despotism and oppression. Believers must join forces against them and oppose their efforts to legitimize their tyranny.

Therefore, let us unite; let us eradicate all causes of conflict and fighting by telling people about the true morality of religion. Let us prove to people that there is absolutely no cause for conflict between different religions by our united efforts and actions. Let us tell people about the love of God in order to spread love, acceptance, and compassion.

Conclusion

The true friend, helper, guardian, and protector of believers is God. He knows everything and has power over everything. In addition, He eases the believers' burdens and makes them strong and superior. This is why believers never succumb to hopelessness, despair, sorrow, carelessness, or surrender. God promises in the following verse that He will help those who follow His path:

Those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying: "Our Lord is God." If God had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which God's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. God will certainly help those who help Him - God is All-Strong, Almighty. (Qur'an, 22:40)

The Qur'an also conveys the following good news: Irrespective of the indestructible appearance of the unbelievers' rule and conspiracies, their efforts will come to naught and they will not achieve the results they desire. Every conspiracy and scheme to disseminate evil and immorality will eventually fail, and the schemes of those who organize evil and immorality will turn against them, for the Qur'an states:

They concocted their plots, but their plots were with God, even if they were such as to make the mountains vanish. Do not imagine that God will break His promise to His Messengers. God is Almighty, Exactor of punishment. (Qur'an, 14:46-47)

It only increased their aversion, shown by their arrogance in the land and evil plotting. But evil plotting envelops only those who do it. Do they expect anything but the pattern of previous peoples? You will not find any changing in the pattern of God. You will not find any alteration in the pattern of God. (Qur'an, 35:42-43)

The duty of all believers is clear, whether they are Muslims, Jews, or Christians: to unite and join forces in order to establish societies dominated by peace, tranquility, prosperity, morality, goodness, happiness, and security. If we coordinate our efforts for such a pure undertaking, God will give us success. Every believing Christian, Muslim, and Jew is responsible

to do whatever he or she can in this respect. Given that they believe in the One and Only God, try to win His good pleasure, have submitted to Him wholeheartedly, praise Him, and advocate essentially the same values, it is only natural for them to join together to fight their common foe.

Jews, Christians, and Muslims must permanently end all of their historical disputes, prejudices, misunderstandings, and conflicts caused by bigotry and intolerance. They must not forget that we have not even one day to waste. Followers of all three divinely revealed religions must accept each other, for what matters most is to point out their common ground and make things easier for everyone, to be constructive and complimentary, and to unite.

The prejudices caused by ignorance or by the agitation of those who oppose the morality of religion must be eradicated. All of the walls that have been erected over the years among and against the followers of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism only help the unbelievers undermine and lead people further away from religious morality. In this book, we have called upon the People of the Book: Let us join forces in the ideological fight against all ideologies that promote immorality and irreligion, especially Darwinism. Let us pool our technological resources and knowledge, our experience and efforts. Let us announce the errors of the followers of Darwinism, evolutionism, and materialism in the light of current scientific research. Let us move together to tell all people that Almighty God created the universe and all things therein, whether alive or lifeless, along with all of the supporting evidence and its miracles.

No doubt, those who call to goodness, recommend doing good and avoiding evil, and work together in this holy cause can expect salvation and eternal happiness. The unbelievers will be at a loss, whereas the believers will receive an eternal reward: By the Late Afternoon, truly man is in loss - except for those who believe and do right actions and urge each other to the truth and urge each other to steadfastness. (Qur'an, 103:1-3)

7

The Deception Of Evolution The Deception Of Evolution

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of clear "design" in the universe and in living things. In this way, science confirmed the fact that God created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science.

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists.

In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the concept of intelligent design to account for the origin of life. This "intelligent design" is a scientific expression of the fact that God created all living things.

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

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

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

Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

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

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

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

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

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes From Life"

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

Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye. Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."³⁹

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

Inconclusive Efforts of the Twentieth Century

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

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.⁴⁰ Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.⁴¹ After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁴²

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the

San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in Earth magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁴³

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together. The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10950 for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 1050 is considered to be impossible in practical terms.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each. A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the Scientific American magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.⁴⁴

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanism of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

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

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

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*: Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁴⁵

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁴⁶ However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

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

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

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

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁴⁷

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

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record. According to this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years. Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

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

If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained: If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.⁴⁸

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All of the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

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

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.⁴⁹

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

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.⁵⁰ Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the Earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution The Tale of Human Evolution

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

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

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors Australopithecus, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various Australopithecus specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.⁵¹

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes.

Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical

[puzzles] such as the origin of life or of Homo sapiens, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."⁵² By outlining the link chain as Australopithecus > Homo habilis > Homo erectus > Homo sapiens, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that Australopithecus, Homo habilis, and Homo erectus lived at different parts of the world at the same time.⁵³

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. Homo sapiens neandarthalensis and Homo sapiens sapiens (modern man) co-existed in the same region.⁵⁴

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution, although he is an evolutionist himself:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.⁵⁵ Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is "upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific foundation.

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

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

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.⁵⁶

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

Darwinian Formula!

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

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

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids - which have no possibility of forming under natural conditions - and as many proteins - a single one of which has a formation probability of 10⁻⁹⁵⁰ - as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels.

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

multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them. Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with God's superior creation.

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

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

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

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

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you.

This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

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

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

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

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

brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry.

Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

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

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

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

For this consciousness is the spirit created by God, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think. Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty God, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the required intermediate forms have never existed. So, it

certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered universe model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

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

The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature. Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.⁵⁷

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

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

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

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

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history."

" Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Abraham (pbuh) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) worshipping the Golden Calf. In fact, God has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verse, He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. God has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2:6-7) ... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7:179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Qur'an, 15:14-15)

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

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

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Qur'an, 7:116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Moses (pbuh) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as the verse puts it. We revealed to Moses, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Qur'an, 7:117-118)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all

credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge also stated this:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.⁵⁸ That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

*They said, "Glory be to You!
We have no knowledge except
what You have taught us. You are
the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."
(Qur'an, 2:32)*

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BACK COVER

We are living in an era in which the world is desperately in need of peace, friendship, and solidarity. Despite the urgent need for solidarity and cooperation, certain circles are inciting conflict, particularly conflict between the world's two greatest and deep-rooted civilizations. One of the best ways of preventing the disastrous war of civilizations is to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation between these civilizations. This is not a hard task, as there are no fundamental differences between Islam and the Judeo-Christian western world. This dialogue and alliance will be based on the sincere believers' quest for justice, peace, and support for all people. This alliance will be one of the main contributing factors to tranquility at a time when Prophet Jesus' (peace be upon him) second coming is expected.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, who writes under the penname Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in helping many to return their faith in God, and, in many others, to gain a deeper insight into their faith. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, regardless of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the readers' perspective by encouraging them to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of God and His unity, and to live by the values He prescribed for them.

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