



# **Man and Religion**

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## Introduction

***“O followers of the Book! Indeed Our apostle has come to you making clear to you muck of what you concealed of the Book and forgiving muck; indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah. With it Allah guides him who seeks His good pleasure into the ways of peace and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path. Holy' Qur'an (5:15-18)***

Religion represents the work of deliverance, the message of salvation, and the torch of light, guidance and peace. It is evidence of Allah's kindness, Exalted be He, and the result of His mercy to man, as He willed that man be His viceroy on earth.

Allah has bestowed on him powers and capabilities and has thus made him superior to all His creation. So, man, indeed is in need of the message of religion, and the guidance of Allah, Who paved for mankind the path to light and peace, and prepared for him the means of living in happiness, prosperity and brotherhood.

Man, this tormented and unhappy creature, who suffers at the hands of modern forms of ignorance, injustice and oppression, and who endures the pains of hunger and of deprivation in its hell, and who wallows in the shadow of its darkness, in the filth of vice and squalor lives in doubt and in loss.

Man has descended to the pits of meanness which has deprived him of his freedom and will, taken away from him his security and dignity, and robbed him of the very means of living and the comforts of life. All this because he has revolted against Allah's will, and refused to respond to the message of Heaven. Instead he has thrown himself into the labyrinth of straying, wrong-doing and unhappiness. As a consequence of rejecting the leadership of faith, he has lost the right path and extinguished the torch of light by pursuing dark and unknown ways of life. Allah has truthfully said:

***“And Allah sets forth a parable: a town safe and secure to which its means of subsistence come in abundance from every quarter; but it became ungrateful for Allah's favors, therefore, Allah made it to taste the utmost degree of hunger and fear because of what they wrought. Holy Qur'an (16:112)***

But, does contemporary man comprehend this parable? Is he going to tear off the shrouds of hunger, disbelief and fear? Is he returning to the path of the Most High, Allah, so that his heart may be filled with the light of true guidance, (Allah's guidance) and be infused with piety, to flood the earth with peace, happiness and love, so that the word of Allah may come true in respect to man.

***“... eat of the sustenance of your lord and give thanks to Hun; a good land and a Forgiving Lord”. Holy Qur'an (34:15)***

Al-Balagh Foundation beseeches Allah, the Exalted to extend His assistance to man so that he can live under the shade of His mercy, and sincerely worship Him alone. We implore Him with the prayer of Christ (a.s.)<sup>1</sup>, recorded in the Qur'an: ***“If You punish them, surely they are Your slaves; and if You forgive them (surely they are Your slaves) You are the Mighty, the Wise. Holy Qur'an (5:118)***

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## MAN'S NEED FOR RELIGION

### 1. The Natural Proof

### 2. The Scientific Proof

### 3. The Historical Proof

### 4. The Objective Proof

Ever since the history of mankind began, man has been practicing different forms of worship and piety.

There was no nation on the earth unattached to a religion and performing its rites in one way or another. This is because piety is an instinct, a natural feeling deeply rooted in man's being. It can neither be hushed, nor muted in an individual's conscience, nor can the human conscience be prevented from sensing it, or going towards it.

Yet, the instincts of piety and worship have not always been guided by soundness and purity; rather they, in most instances, have been deviated expressions and abnormal practices of worship; religion, in its pure state, is that which is represented by monotheism, the path announced by the prophets and heralded by the apostles, for maintaining the correct mode of worship and to lead the caravan of mankind towards the shores of goodness and peace.

So, the observer of the history of religious myth, and of devious worship in man's life, finds a variety of religious expressions. He finds heliolatry, asrolatry, idolatry, zoolatry, pyrolatry, worship of monarchs, etc.

Analyzing the rise of these deviated religions, and studying the elements which conspired in developing them, one finds them all connected to a superstitious interpretation of the universe and the afterlife. This in turn discloses the lowness of those peoples' knowledge and their ability to fabricate fancy fables that stemmed from their own ignorance and superstition. These rites also illustrate the social customs and the imaginative traditions of those peoples, and their stifled mental and moral capabilities.

History is full of such religions, rituals and superstitious rites. Taken as a whole they reveal man's ignorance and the lowness of his conscience and feelings in such a way as to cause both astonishment and disgust. Some used to slay their sons in sacrifice to their imagined gods, presenting them as offerings at the alter of a false sacredness. They supplicated and requested the idols' grace and the blessings of those stony, silent structures.

History tells us of many ignorant nations, peoples and civilizations such as the Babylonians, the Sumerians, the Chaldeans, the Pharaohs, the Greeks, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Romans, and the Arabs (of Jahiliyah), History also stresses that all those exterminated nations had some sort of worship, religion, and rites which they used to practice, but they were unnatural, superstitious and deviated forms.

The Glorious Qur'an notes abundantly the dark and tragic side of the lives of the perished primitive ignorant groups. It draws our attention to the missions of the messengers and prophets, the inviters to true worship and the saviors and reformers of humanity as a whole.

Considering these facts and other historical evidences, we realize that the existence of religion and worship in the course of man's history is clear

proof that religion is not a passing social phenomenon, nor is it an imaginary compensation for his sufferings from the hardships of his painful life. Neither is it an expression of his failure in understanding the universe and life and in logically and scientifically explaining them; nor is it an opiate for the downtrodden and subjecting them to the injustice of oppressors and exploiters as Marx, the founder of collapsed Communism, asserted by saying that “Religion is the opium of the people.

All these assumptions and biased interpretations, which are being presented by the propagators of materialism and infidelity, with the purpose of falsifying the objectives of religion and destroying the mental and spiritual fundamentals on which it is based, are but futile and refutable allegations which are disproved by objective historical evidence.

Herein, we reiterate some of the numerous and most important realities that the mind has but to accept:



### **First: The Natural Proof**

By this we mean man's instinctive inclination towards religion. This is an inborn proclivity (tendency) found in man since his existence on earth. It explains the genuine driving force and the inner compulsion present in man's constitution, pushing him towards worshipping a being greater than himself.

He feels the mighty superintendence dominant over the whole of existence. He feels the need to be patronized, to appeal to something grand and holy, to whom man may expose his desire for worship. This exercise grows and changes man's internal being in an attempt to understand the existence of a truth that is the greatest truth.

This practice is accompanied by an anxious quest for this truth, which fills man's soul and attracts him to it, as he feels its richness and the possibility of its filling up all the dimensions of the vacancy, contrasted with his own feelings of deficiency. He feels its superiority over the whole world, whose boundaries he is inclined to cross and beyond which he wants to eternalize his being.

This world is unable to respond to the absolute expansion in his soul, nor can be a substitute for that truth which is sought by him. Thus, he always tends to proceed ahead to the truth which is much more eminent than this tangible world, comprehending that this truth has all the ability to satisfy his innate longing which presses upon both his conscience and sub-conscience.

This innate feeling is a true objective one, because it is a natural instinctive tendency. Its existence in man is supported by three objective facts. They are:

- a. Thinking of the abstract absolute of time and place, as well as of the attributes of the tangible world.
- b. The inclination to sanctify the Perfect Absolute, seeking to come under His greatness and to feel small in His presence.
- c. Feeling imperfect while imagining the idea of perfection, searching for it and wanting to march in its direction.

All these feelings are accepted scientific facts proved by psychological studies, in the same way as the intuitive truths and the verbal utterances coined by man to refer to these essential, innate feelings are.

If we comprehend that being religious is a native force deeply rooted in man's self, we will also comprehend that man's devotional tendency is a fact, not legend or superstition. This is because man's natural genesis knows nothing of superstition, nor of legends.

It is in this respect, as it is in respect of his other instincts and tendencies born in him, such as the instincts driving him to knowledge, sex and food.

The mythical and legendary aspect of human life, expressed through different forms and peculiar rituals, appears only when man suffers from a state of loss and of deviation from the true Allah. In this condition man's imagination plays havoc and he draws a picture of religion and of god as was typical during the era of Jahiliyah (pre-Islamic Ignorance).

The Qur'an, confirming this fact, says: "They are Hanifs (tend) to Allah, not polytheists, which Imam Al-Sadiq (a.s.) explained, saying that. "This

tendency' is part of the nature of which man has been created. Allah's creation never changes. He has made them to instinctively know Him.

Imam Ali (a.s.), in a speech explaining piety and the inborn inclination to worship Allah, explicitly says:

“Allah sent prophets - after Adam - with revelations to guide mankind, when many people broke their given promises to Allah and went against their word, forgot their duties and divine rights and began accepting others as their gods and worshipping them.

Satan had instigated them to give up the ways of Allah and forsake His worship. Allah sent His apostles successively one after another, so that they may remind the human beings of the duties which nature has cast upon them as part of the plan of their existence and in redemption of the pledges made by their souls in the spiritual world on the day of creation.

These prophets were to draw the attention of humanity towards the blessings and bounties bestowed by Him, to convey His message to them, to teach them to intelligently and wisely use the treasures hidden in their intellect . He further adds: “The best thing that the beseechers plead with Allah the Exalted as faith in Him and His Messenger and fighting (the Polytheists) for His sake, as this is the highest degree of Islam, and the word of unity which is in the innate nature.

### **Second: The Scientific Proof**

By this we mean the testimony of the sciences and knowledge, presented through their programs, ways of thinking, conclusions, and the results of their researches, which have discovered the composition of matter and the nature of life, and which interpreted the genesis of the universe and existence. All of these are reason enough to believe in a Creator, Innovator, Organizer, and Manager of this universe, and to reject the idea of things happening at random, haphazardly and by mechanical evolution. These concepts of things happening at random are the results of the preachings of the apostates and materialists, in the adolescent period of science, as a theory explaining existence and life.

This is not, however, the topic of our case for inference and argument. We leave that to our coming studies concerning belief and faith.

### **Third: The Historical Proof**

This can be discerned in the long history of religion and messages; in the numerous prophets and messengers, ever since the dawn of humanity till this day. Mankind, even during the darkest periods of ignorance and blindness, and with every era and generation, has beheld some guiding prophet, a preaching messenger, and a changing message, as an expression of Allah's grace, and His beneficency to His servants.

This successive coming of the prophets, spread over a long time, generation after generation, alongside man's progress, and parallel to his historical existence, is an explicit proof of the truthfulness of the prophets' mission and the soundness of their preachings. Otherwise, there would not have been such an enormous number of prophets during different historical stages, all of them proclaiming a similar truth and forwarding the same principles. It is incredible that so great a number of men, in diverse ages, nations and places, should falsely claim to be prophets, and yet they should all be identical in their message. Were the preachings of those prophets false and groundless, contradictions and differences would have been quite obvious in them. Every message would have borne its special specifications, contradicting those of the other, and the objectives of those prophets and their concepts of Allah, religion and the hereafter would have also been contradictory. Actually, it is the contrary which we see. We discern a unity of call in the messages of all those prophets; the call to believe in the Oneness of Allah, to have faith, to believe in the other world, to be interested in reforming mankind and in correcting its conduct and the order of its life. This confirms the unity of the source, Allah, and the unity of the call and goal.

#### Fourth: The Objective Proof

This proof can be inducted by scrutinizing the message of religion and monotheism, and the final code of divine laws (the Islamic laws). By induction and studying the Islamic laws individually, in detail and aims, one can recognize the truth of the divine message, and discover its humanistic and reformative side, its keen interests in the welfare of man and in delivering him, regardless of colour, social position, time and place.

Then, one would realize the falsity of the accusations attributed to religion, as a consequence of explaining it vis.a.vis the ignorance of the materialist interpretation, some aspects of which we related earlier. We know religion to be a message of deliverance, a call to salvation and luminous sign on the dark road. Its purpose is to save mankind, to break the bonds of slavery and open the channels of light and a happy life before a straying humanity.

*“Those who follow the Apostle-Prophet the Ummi, (one who neither reads nor writes), whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel (who) enjoins them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them; so (as for) those who believe in him had honor him and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these it is that are the successful”. Holy Qur'an (1:157)*

*“But the chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said:*

*We do not consider you but a mortal like ourselves, and we do not see any have followed you but I am most abject among us, at first thought; and we do not see in you any excellence over us; nay, we deem you liars. He said: O my people! tell me if I have with me clear proof from my Lord, and He has granted me mercy from Himself and it has been made obscure to you; shall we compel you to (accept) it while you are averse from it? And; O my people! I ask you not for wealth in return for it; my reward is only with Allah and I am not going to drive away those who believe; surely they shall meet their Lord, but! consider you a people who are ignorant: And, O my people! Who will help me against Allah if I drive them away? Will you not then mind? And I do not say to you that I have the treasures of Allah; and I do not know the unseen, nor do I say I am an angel; nor do I say about those whom your eyes scorn (that) Allah will never grant them (any) good - Allah knows best what is in their souls - for then surely I should be of the unjust. “ Holy Qur'an (11:27-al)*

*“And do not drive away those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, they desire only His favour; neither are you answerable for any reckoning of theirs, nor are they answerable for any reckoning of yours, so that you should drive them away and thus be of the unjust. “ Holy Qur'an (8:52)*

Thus, the Glorious Qur'an presents verses speaking of the aims of religion, of its role in man's life, of its attitude towards the poor and the deprived who are the followers of the prophets, and the first to respond to the call of Faith, the call of rescue, liberation and delivery. It also clarifies

the attitude of the proud, arrogant and influential against the weak, and the calls of the prophets and their objectives.

It likewise registers the prophets' reactions towards the proud whose thoughts are filled with conceit and haughtiness. In this way the Qur'an proves to us that religion supports the weak and the deprived, and is the power that strikes justly and sincerely at the greed and the pride of the criminal despots, so that we may realize that religion is not a means of persecuting the poor, nor is it the peoples' opium, a passing phenomenon in man's life, or a social activity, like other costumes and traditions which appear for a short span or specific period, then disappear altogether without a trace. Nor is it an illusion used by man to convince himself or another world that compensates for his failure in this present one.

***Religion is a law inseparable from man's nature just as the laws of physics and life are inseparable from matter and living beings. This is because the Creator of the world has given man the longing for his Creator and directed man towards Him. "Then set your face upright for religion in the right state - the natural disposition..." Holy Qur'an (30:30)***

Yet, this natural or inborn disposition, as such, is subject - through ignorance and obstinacy - to deviation, impurity, and diversion from the path of true religion, as is the case with many of man's instincts and inclinations which deviate from their natural orbit, causing man, to follow diverse types of harmful and perverted customs. Hence the coming of apostles and religions to set right such deviations, restore man's natural inclination to Allah, the Exalted, and satisfy the natural instinct in man for truthful worship upon which rests mankind's happiness. This natural inclination is, actually, the starting point for receiving the principles of religion and adhering to them.

Once again we repeat here that this natural disposition in man cannot be looked upon as a legendary or mythical idea, since legends and myths are the offspring of an invalid imagination and illusion that subvert man's thinking. Man's native inclinations are a true case, met in the world of reality by an actual existence to which they turn, and which is the source of its satisfaction. Thus, the existence of Allah and worshipping Him becomes an outstanding fact, a counterpart of which, inside man, is the deep tendency to worship and the natural direction towards this Great Originator.

Superstition and myth originate when man is ignorant of his actual destination, and his mind is void of any clear vision. The Glorious Qur'an calls such deviation of beliefs as.

***"...they are gone away from us, nay, we used not to call upon wtytizing before..." Holy Qur'an (40:74)***

***"Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his Allah, and Allah has made him err having knowledge..." Holy Qur'an (45:23)***

***"And when Abraham said: My Lord! make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshiping idols: My Lord! Surely they have led many of mankind astray; then whoever follows me, he is surely of me; and whoever disobeys me, You surely are Forgiving, Merciful " Holy Qur'an (14:35-36)***

Thus, the Glorious Qur'an considers the abnormal and superstitious expression of man's ignorant inclination as erroneous and straying, since it is imaginary, and unreal, and a wandering expression that would not realize man's objective. Hence the saying of the Qur'an: "...nay, we used not to call upon anything before... "

## **Mind's Need For Religion**

It is not possible to separate man's way of thinking from his way of living and his dealing in life. Man is a wise and understanding being who thinks for himself, wants to comprehend his surroundings and tries to know the beginning and the end of everything, in order to be able to understand the mysteries of the world and the beings around him. He tries to discover: How did this world begin?

- Where is it going to?
- Why is he here in this life?
- What is the goal of his existence?
- Where will he end to?
- What does life itself mean?
- How should he conduct his life?

Man has always been looking for convincing answers to these questions. The answer to them either leads him to happiness and welfare, or wretchedness and misfortune.

The answers, though short in their form and brief in their expression, are yet great in their meanings, important in their reality and deep in their effects.

It is these answers which define how man should live, behave, understand life and estimate the importance of his own existence. By providing correct answers one may resolve an important crisis of thought—the crisis from which man has long been suffering, unable to find correct answers he has been tormented by anxiety and uncertainty and forced to wander through as abyss of erring.

Therefore, the right answers form the basic principles of the philosophy of life, and soundly evaluate life and man's existence. The correct answers to these questions have always been confined to two contradictory theories, both in their truth and in the resulting constructions that are based upon them.

The two answers are: The first given through religion, lighting the path of righteousness and faith with rational proof; the second given by error and denial, aiming at evoking mist to obliterate clear visibility, to envelope man's conscience and prevent it from directing itself towards Allah, the Beginning and the End of existence.

Religion's answer offers, through its call and message, and interpretation of the universe and life, and an explanation of man's existence, and of his links with them; while the other answer bases its explanation in retort to the idea of faith, denying its reasoning and explanation. Religion bases its interpretation and viewpoint on believing that this universe, life and man have a Creator, a Lord, a God head; and that man's existence on this earth is neither a meaningless and aimless one, nor is it random happening. Life and man have their goals and values exceeding the time span of man's existence on the earth's surface.

He has a supreme objective to pursue, embodying it through his attitudes, his deeds and his general activities in a world that goes beyond perception and the time spent in this world. It is the other eternal world and the eternal extension of the absolute:



***“Whoever disbelieves, he shall be responsible for his disbelief, and whoever does good, they prepare (good) for their own souls.” Holy Qur'an (30:44)***

***“And all have ranks according to what they do... “ Holy Qur'an (6:132)***

In this way, religion presents to man a correct explanation of his existence, and gives him a lasting vision that plucks out the roots of his doubt, mental anxiety and fear of perishing, losing, and uselessness in this life.

Thus, by this explanation, religion opens to man the door to the expanses of life. He, then organizes his life according to a perfect and unified ideological basis, taking him to results and objectives in life free of disorder, contradiction and objectives in life free of disorder, contradiction and disappointment. It offers him, besides other things, a sound ideological program, perfect in its order and movement, leading him to understand life and to adhere to a defined and explicit conduct.

The believer believes in the existence of a Just, All-Knowing, All-Powerful and Wise Creator. He further believes in the Day of Judgement and in the responsibility rested upon him for all of his deeds, and he expects rewards on the Day of judgement for his good deeds in this world. Therefore, he behaves according to this belief, and on this basis he forms every detail of his life, such as his ideas, attitudes, feelings and relations, formulating them within this unified ideological frame.

***What a wonderful expression is used by the Qur'an in reference to this fact, describing the faithful elite who recognize the value of life and know the meaning of existence. The Qur'an says: “...and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou have not created this an vain! Glory be to You; save us then from the chastisement of the fire. “ Holy Qur'an (3:191)***

As to the answer of the second group, it is the viewpoint expressed by the disbelievers. They view this world and this life only from inside, disregarding all ties and connections with the invisible world and the Creator, having built their opinion on a faithless interpretation denying the existence of the Creator, the Innovator; they have sentenced mankind to lasting annihilation and transformation into dust, mixing with the elements of the earth, (lost in every nook and cranny) without return or resurrection.

In this way the living feelings of man are pushed down to lowest pitch of death, despair and eternal destruction. It is a disaster that befalls the optimistic and hopeful feelings, and man becomes a prey of despair, goes astray, and submits to decay and decline. Life becomes an arena for conflict and a chance to partake of transient sensual pleasures and appetites, accompanied by a complete death of any feeling of happiness or knowledge of the meaning of life.

Life, to them, is but a period of futile misery, with no hope or expectation and since there would be no other world, no divine justice, no punishment, no reward, no responsibility, no retribution, and no immortality, man is reduced to the level of the plants of the earth and the worms of the ground. Thus, this interpretation has done away with all human values.

There is no doubt that man has never been subjected during his lifetime to a more dangerous catastrophe than the deluge of this devastating one which sentences him to live and die within this terrestrial prison, returning to the terrible soil of destruction. So, what would, then, life mean? What would be its value? Why does not man do whatever he wants, even if such practices meant misery for others and ended their lives with the most horrible types of torture? They say that man's life does not go beyond this limited secular period which is lost in the timelessness of the universe, which swallowed millions of generations and consumed the entire ancient humanity. How wonderfully the Qur'an illustrates this tragedy of the intellect which the rejecting and ignorant mind imagined, while trying to fabricate its argument and speak its ideology:

***“Far, far is that which you are promised with. There is naught but our life in this world; we die and we shall not be raised again”. Holy Qur'an (23:38-37)***

***And how exact is the Qur'an in drawing the tragic picture to which this miserable, straying man reached: “...(as for) those who have lost their souls, they will not believe. “ Holy Qur'an (8:12)***

***“Say: Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds? (They are) they whose labor is lost in this world's life and they think that they are well-versed in skill of the work of hands. These are they who disbelieve in the revelations of their Lord and the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight to them,. “ Holy Qur'an (18:103-105)***

So, as the Qur'an describes them, it is these folk of disbelievers who have lost themselves, and lost their lives, turning life into a hell of misery, instead of making it a blessing and full of happiness, just because they deceive themselves with their distorted understanding of life and existence, and think that it does them good, while actually it takes them away from the path of Allah and His message. They think that they have discovered the right path and have put their feet on the right track. But it is this self-deceit to which the Qur'an refers by saying:

***“The life of this world is made to seem fair to those who disbelieve, and they mock those who believe... “ Holy Qur'an (2: 212)***

So, what other disaster to which man is subjected can be more devastating than losing oneself, leading to the loss of humanity, the loss which befalls man because of this mental wandering, ideological abnormality, and systematic deviation.

Therefore, no sane man doubts the necessity of abolishing this ideology and changing this materialistic way of comprehending life, and resorting to a realistic way of thinking, that is coordination with the cosmic reality of nature, thought and society. This way of thinking is not to be found except in mental reasoning, through mind's innate originality and exact theoretical activity. Mind is the actual thinker, the conscious power that moves according to the general universal existence, and coordinates with it, since it is a part of it - the highest example of its movement and order. This is why the Qur'an addresses the mind and argues with it as it is the only force in harmony with the logic of the Qur'an, and is able to comprehend its course and hear its call. It says:

*“...thus do We make the signs distinct for a people who understand”.*  
*Holy Qur'an (30:28)*

*“...Most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect”.* *Holy Qur'an (39:42)*

When the mind is given freedom of thinking and contemplation, away from influences, deviations, and factors of misinterpretation, it will be able to discover the mental climate which assists its growth and to properly understand life. That climate is the way of the Qur'an and religion. Only under its light the mind can explain life and estimate it as required. In this way man would discover his inefficiency and his need to follow the path of religion and to be guided by it.

## The Spiritual Mission Of Religion

Man's relations to the realm of matter and nature, placing his interests exclusively on them, confining his consciousness and feelings to their narrow field, and moulding everyday behaviour and tendencies according to them, gradually change his life into a mechanical one, killing in him the perception of the Grand Truth, and taking from him the secret of happiness and the source of human perfection in this life.

Sensuality and believing only in the material world, cannot lift man above the bestial and material level of the senses. Neither they grant man a loftier image, nor help him to understand a truth higher than that towards all his aspirations and hopes are inclined.

He is not like the believer who believes in a supreme objective and aims to be higher than the level of the materialistic and instinctive desires. A believer, therefore, follows a spiritual conduct which sublimates through into his supreme humanity, passing through successive stages of perfection, continuing higher and higher, planting in him the love of good and perfection, because the continual growth towards Allah the Perfect, stamps in the believer's heart the love of perfection and the adhesion to the attributes of the Absolute Perfect.

He thus places world and whatever there is in it, on a lower level, as a secondary thing, leading a life, in which his foremost anxiety is to adhere to loftier ideals, only to meet his basic needs and not to tie his existence to it. He regards the life in this world as a transient stage, a stop for one to muster and mobilize one's strength to move on to a higher and more supreme world, the afterworld.

Such a believer lives in the highest degree of spiritual happiness, and the most supreme stage of faith, feeling assured of the results of his existence. He sees nothing in the unknown to be afraid of. He has no feeling of non-being or fear of perishing that may discomfort him in his life. He lives with a perpetual hope of progressively proceeding towards a world full of joy, under the shelter of happiness and spiritual quietness.

***“And (as for) those who believe and do good work, and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad, and it is the very truth from their Lord, He will remove their evil deeds from them and improve their condition”.***  
***Holy Qur'an (47:2)***

So, the spiritual man leads, through his faith, a happy life (and feels) being true to himself. He satisfies the need of the soul which is proceeding naturally towards eternity, and removes from it the apprehensions of perishability- a feeling which chases the infidel and the sceptic, knowingly or unknowingly, turning his life into an unbearable hell, a misery that sees no happiness at all:

***“Surely those who act in opposition to Allah and His Apostle shall be laid down prostrate as those before them...”*** ***“ Holy Qur'an (58:5)***

To have faith in Allah, and observe the valuable principles of religion, satisfy in man yet another spiritual need - the tendency in the human soul to sanctify and glorify.

***Man, through his innate feelings and psychological construction, senses the existence of a Greater-Being, a complete perfection, before***

*which he feels humble and tiny; so he starts to glorify it, yet he cannot understand it clearly. But as he inevitably has to express these innate feelings, he may either proceed in the right direction - that is, in the direction of worshipping the Creator, through the guidance of the prophets and the sound teachings of religion, or in the wrong direction through worshipping man-made creatures and idols, or adoring the detested ego' which is the source of danger, inequity, aggression and greed, causing man to turn into a slave, worshipping and glorifying, not Allah, but tyrants, aspirations, desires, wealth, authority, pride, etc. Thus, humanity's tragedy is actualized in the ugliest forms of deviation, tyranny and abnormal practices. Allah has truthfully said: "You Only worship idols besides Allah and you create a lie..." "Holy Quran (29:17)*

Anything worshipped other than Allah, is but a fictitious and illusive image. And any inclination not to Him is a twisting of the instinct of worship and sanctification.

Religion guides man to worship Allah, the Exalted Truth, over everything else in this world, such as desire, pleasure, riches, dignity and power. Man is, thus, directed to worship the One to Whom are attributed all the qualities of perfection, such as justice, mercy, truthfulness, kindness, gentleness, knowledge, wisdom, power, etc.. The whole life, by this continual journeying towards Allah, coincides with the values of truthfulness, righteousness and perfection which are the attributes of Allah the Glorious, worshipped by man. .

There is still another spiritual fact which religion cultivates in man's conscience, implanting it deep inside him. It is the sense of responsibility and willingly undertaking it, affected by his conscious connection with Allah, the Exalted. The person who believes in Allah feels he is being watched by Him and fears Him. So, he acts knowing that Allah is with him, watches him, and nothing is concealed from Him, whether in the heavens or in the earth:

*"And those who disbelieve say: The hour shall not come upon us. Say: Yea! My Lord, the Knower of the unseen, it shall certainly come upon you; not the wig/it of an atom becomes absent from Him, in the heavens or at the earth, and neither less than that nor greater, but (all) is at a clear book " Holy Quran (34:3)*

*"He knows the stealthy looks and that which the breasts conceal." Holy Quran (40:19)*

This awareness and the true faith is sufficient to urge man to perform his duty and to undertake his human responsibility in every phase of life, legal; devotional or ethical. The Qur'an rears up this spirit of responsibility in its followers and believers, and stresses its cultivation and development through many texts and concepts:

*"...these are the limits of Allah, (imposed by Allah) so do not exceed them, and whoever exceeds the limits of Allah these it is that are the wdist " Holy Quran (2:229)*

So, a believer is keen on respecting the limits imposed by Allah and observing His instructions, and adheres to the law which organizes his life and directs his activities, contrary to the unbeliever who, having no faith in

Allah and no fear of His observation, seizes every opportunity to transgress the limits of law and order, to cast away all responsibilities, and tread upon them whenever he finds a chance for disobedience and rebellion. This is because neither he accepts the sanctity of the law which organizes his life, nor does he believe in Divine punishment as long as he thinks he can slip away from the grasp of the authority and its just punishment.

This phenomenon - that of defying the will of truth and justice - constitutes one of the most grave problems from which the contemporary ignorant society is suffering, owing to the fact that the concepts of belief have disappeared from its horizon, and dutifulness has faded away from its conscience, and that its moral criteria is confused, it is natural that this collapsed inner constitution of the lost and materialistic man should affect his civil position and social relations; and it is natural, too, that the human rights and man's dignity should be lost under this state of ignorance.

Before ending this study, it is necessary to summarize the positive results that can be brought about by a Muslim individual or society believing in Allah. These may be arranged as below:

1. Faith in Allah, His justice and Wisdom makes man realize his own value and the meaning of life. It helps man to understand that there is no injustice, uselessness and ruin in this life.
2. Faith in Allah frees man from the anxieties of being lost and perished, due to man's believing in the eternal existence in the other world.
3. Faith in Allah makes man's soul conscious, feels he respects life, and cares for society's laws and just values.
4. Faith in Allah frees man from the inclination of being submissive and yielding to other forms than Allah; and thus, grants him freedom and self-consciousness.
5. Faith in Allah raises in the believer the idea of Divine perfection and directs him towards it.

## **The Role of Religion in The Psychological and Moral Perfection**

*“To this then so on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allah has revealed of the Book and I am commanded to do justice between you... “ Holy Qur'an (42:15)*

Realizing life's value depends on the presence of an important sensible reality, that is to feel happy. Happiness, as a supreme vital value, cannot be estimated through sensual practices, nor through the abundance of luxuries. So there are many nations, although materially developed, with numerous sensual pleasures exceeding their needs, yet, a high percentage of their nationals are found suffering from a most dangerous crisis of mental strain which often drives them to commit crimes and aggression just to ease themselves from their complexes.

Sometimes this tension reaches its highest, driving them to commit suicide, as is the case with the man of the modern materialistic civilization in the countries of Europe, America and elsewhere all over the world.

The secret behind all this is that this man is suffering from a crushing spiritual vacancy, and is in quest for an unknown truth which he cannot find. He continues trying, groping about, suffering, feelings self-tortured, despite drowning himself and his feelings in different pleasures, physical satisfaction and sensual expressions.

Statistics speak every year of tens of thousands of suicidal and other criminal events. Streets, squares and parks are crowded with hundreds of thousands of aimless roamers and social dropouts running away from this torturing hell of life, individually and in groups, calling themselves different names. The one, who is plunged into the filth of this modern material culture, does his best to run away from the hell of this life and tries to escape it, even by resorting to a world of imagination and hallucination, enjoying oneself with shadowy happiness, and to burying the world of reality in the cemetery of illusion, through addiction to drugs and narcotics, such as morphine, heroin, alcohol etc.

By this, man loses the joy of life and buries the spirit of happiness in the formidable grave of materialism, and deprives himself of all the beautiful spiritual joys and pleasures. He deprives himself even of the pleasure of sound sleep in the lap of a comfortable slumber. Thus, millions of inhabitants of the major cities of the world, such as Washington, London and Paris, are unable to sleep even with the help of tranquillizers.

Tens of millions of human beings are now suffering from nervous sicknesses and diverse psychological complexes, and the number of the mental homes go parallel to the number of hospitals in most parts of the world, the means of physical satisfaction, though numerous and varied, cannot provide them with relief or mental calmness. On the contrary, as statistics confirm, man's psychological crisis and its result on society are getting more complex day after day as the ways of satisfying get more sophisticated, because the sensual expressions are actually void of any spiritual and moral values.

So, what is, then, happiness?

Where can it be found?

Because of the importance of an answer, and the importance of its role in man's life, diverse groups take part in the quest for it and in formulating it. They include philosophers, physicians, psychologists, moralists, socialists and others interested in finding an answer to this question. But all efforts seem to be fruitless, as they all fail to illustrate man's happiness on the earth.

Yet, the different studies, researches and statistics which have been compiled by those concerned with human and cultural studies, all confirm that happiness does not come through physical satisfaction, and that its existence is not a physical case. It is "a feeling of contentment and of being in harmony with man's good nature", or, in other words, it is "a mental feeling of contentment and security .

Hence the impossibility, by the material resources - such as food, drink, sex, wealth, pleasures, etc.- to realize this wonderful dream, or to capture this much wanted objective of the human soul. Such pleasures are unable to give man happiness, the feeling of contentment and joy. The human soul reacts to all these pleasures only temporarily with an obvious feeling of floating on the surface of man's life, while his inner feelings and his quest for the lost happiness revolve in a miserable vacancy, wandering through a world of emptiness and horrible sorrow. Nothing but faith in Allah can provide him with happiness, and make him feel confident, secure and pleased, coordinating his instinctive desires, practices and feeling contented. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (a.s.) wonderfully illustrates the concept of happiness by saying: "Allah the Exalted through His justice and equity, placed comfort and relief in faith and contentment, and placed anxiety and sorrow and doubt and discontentment . "

Uncertainty, sorrow and misery are psychological punishments self-imposed by man's conscience as a natural result of the spiritual vacuum of the soul and its being void of faith in Allah-the faith which brings tranquility, comfort and a feeling of content. Allah has truthfully said:

***"Those who believe and whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah; now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest "(As for) those who believe and do good, a good reward shall be theirs and a goodly return. " Holy Qur'an (13:28-29)***

***"And that when we heard the guidance, we believed in it, so whoever believes in his Lord, he should neither fear loss nor being overtaken (by disgrace) . " Holy Qur'an (12:13)***

***"And (as for) those who believe and do good, and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad, and it is the very truth from their Lord. He will remove their evil deeds from them and improve their conditions . " Holy Qur'an (42:2)***

Thus, believing in Allah, looking towards Him, having a heart full of His love, and feeling content with life and in harmony with His will, are the way to attain happiness, feeling self-satisfaction filled with love, sensing the beauty of life, and attaining a state of coordination between man's inner feelings and the objectives to which he proceeds in life.



Therefore, believing in Allah is a natural inborn need, without which man's journey towards the goal cannot be enriched, while he looks for happiness, security and contentment, and is anxious to end his spiritual torture, to uproot fear and anxiety and free himself from them. Fear, as the psychologists say - fear of the unknown, fear of danger, fear of being lost, fear of being deserted, fear of danger, or need and poverty, fear of emptiness, fear of death, etc. is the source of his misery. Allah had truthfully said:

***“And his people disputed with him. He said: Do you dispute with me about Allah? And He has guided me indeed; and I do not fear in any way those that you set up with him, unless my Lord pleases; my Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge; will you not then remember? And how should I fear what you have set up (with Him), while you do not fear that you have set up with Allah that for which he has not sent down to you any authority; which then of the two parties is surer of security, if you know? Those who believe and do not mix up their faith with inequity, those are they who shall have security and they are those who are rightly guided. “ Holy Qur'an (6:80-82)***

How exact and meaningful is what Imam Ali (a.s.) says, by the way of expressing this fact and formulating it into a psychological principle of life: “He who fears has no life. “

Thus, feeling secure, tranquil and stabled is the first reflection of faith on the soul; while happiness and being contented with life are the first fruit of those feelings which religion implants in the human soul, ripened by the fragrance of faith spread through one's conscience.

Consequently, Islam offers the basic factors for mankind's happiness. These are:

1. Enjoying security and social peace, as the Qur'an says:

***“With it Allah guides him who seeks His good pleasure... “ Holy Qur'an (5:16)***

2. Developing man's good characteristics so as to coincide with the principles of perfection and proceed towards Allah, the source of perfection.

3. Coordinating the environment to the native and natural inclinations, through cherishing this natural system and being in harmony with it.

Therefore, man's attempts have proved successful to provide for himself security, safety, a feeling of contentment and submission, and bring about a spiritual and lawful harmony to create co-ordination between the picture of the inner self of the believer, and the outer form of life and society.

Islam, too, is keenly interested in keeping the natural system, in protecting it against deviation, and in guiding it along the straight path of Allah, so as to realize happiness for man, and to solve his spiritual and moral problems. To achieve this, it starts with purifying the inner self, cleansing it from its leaning towards evil and transgression, and developing the inclinations towards good and probity, such as love, sympathy, tenderness, justice, unselfishness, security, contentment, optimism, truthfulness, honesty, etc., besides attempting to uproot the factors of the negative tendencies, such as hatred, selfishness, fear, despair, aggression, cowardice, deceit, etc..

All of these are to consolidate the movements of the psychological balance and to protect the safety of the mental and moral constitution, which is the starting point for the movement of behaviour, and of cultivating the pushing power. This sort of conduct and culture, which is personified in man, illustrates man's spiritual development and status. Every movement and every brick in the construction of man's culture and life, are but representatives of the contents of the soul, of its deep desires and established moral endowments. Truthfully Allah the Almighty says:

***“Say: Every one acts according to his manner; but your Lord best bestows who is best guided in the path. “ Holy Our'an (17:84)***

## Society's Need For Religion

*“Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book which We have revealed to you that you may bring forth men, by their Lord's permission, from utter darkness into light, to the way of the Mighty, the Praised One. “ Holy Qur'an (14:1)*

*“O followers of the Book! indeed Our apostle has come to you making clear to you much of what you concealed of the Book and forgiving much; indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah. With it Allah guides him who seeks His good pleasure into the ways of peace and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path. “ Holy Qur'an (5:15-18)*

*“He said: O my people! have you considered if I have a clear proof from my Lord and He has given me a goodly sustenance from Himself ; and I do not desire that in opposition to you I should betake myself to that which I forbid you I desire nothing but reform so far as I am able, and with none but Allah is the direction of my affair to a right issue; on Him do I rely and to Him do I turn. “ Holy Qur'an (11:88)*

*“And to Madyan (We sent) their brother Shu'aib. He said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no Allah other than Him; clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord, therefore give full measure and weight and do not diminish to men their things, and do not make mischief in the land after its reform; this is better for you if you are believers. “ Holy Qur'an (7:85)*

*“There is no good in most of their secret counsel except (in his) who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people; and whoever does this seeking. Allah's pleasure, We will give him a mighty reward. “ Holy Qur'an (4:114)*

*“They who turn (to Allah), who serve (Him), who praise (Him), who fast, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil and who keep the limits of Allah, we will give good news to the believers. “ Holy Qur'an (9:112)*

*“Ta this then go on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allah has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to do justice between you... “ Holy Qur'an (42:15)*

*“...and help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression; but keep your duty to Allah; surely Allah is severe in punishment. “ Holy Qur'an (5:2)*

*“And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it; thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way. And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful.” Holy Qur'an (3:103-104)*

*“Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah*

***admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing; Hearing. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (4:58)***

The above mentioned Qur'anic verses are rich with their concepts, alive in their spirit and contents, full of meanings and ideas, and prolific in organizing and guiding notions and values. By combining these concepts and ideas, and by connecting them to the objectives stated through their letters and expressed by their texts, we realize that they are a clear statement inviting people to organize, reform and protect the society, and to draw a program for it according to the best possible legislative and cultural forms.

This can be discerned by scrutinizing the words of the verses and the details of Qur'anic texts, so that their implications and contents can be comprehended. If we do so, we will be able to discover the following:

1. The Glorious Qur'an is the torch of light and guidance for humanity and guides it on the road to safety and righteousness. It prevents humanity from going astray, through its principles, its laws and its values for the purpose of organizing the society, building its structure and basing its being on the foundation of truthfulness, justice and order. Allah the Exalted says:

***"...indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah. With it Allah guides him who seeks His good pleasure in the way of peace, wad brings them out of utter darkness into Light by His Will; wad guides them to the right path. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (5:15-18)***

2. The call of religion is the call for reforming and rejecting mischief, and for fighting against destruction, as well as against those practices borne by mankind's ignorance during diverse ages and generations as a distinguishing characteristic and a historic indication showing its culture.

***"Therefore, fear Allah and obey me, and obey not the command of the prodigal who spread corruption in the earth wad do not reform. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (28:150-152)***

3. Religion calls upon people to do good and to forbid evil, mischief, wickedness and tyranny. Allah, the Exalted says: ***"Surely, Allah enjoins justice wad kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He admonishes you in order that you may take heed. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (16:90)***

4. According to Islam, injustice, deviation and crime in this life are man-made, and man is responsible for them; but these devious phenomena are not imposed on man as inevitable; and thus Islam urges man to refuse injustice, mischief and deviation, stirring in him the spirit of resistance, to block the way of evil and error. By this man rejects the theory of compulsion and fate that leads to acceptance of injustice and submission.

The Qur'an is quite explicit in communicating this fact and in placing it before man's eyes: ***"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of (the evil) which men's hands have done, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (30:41)***

***"...It was not for Allah to wrong them, but they wronged themselves. "***  
***Holy Qur'an (29:40)***

5. Islam tries to establish a unified and cooperative society dominated by the spirit of brotherhood and equality. ***"...help one another in goodness and***

*piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression... " Holy Qur'an (5:2)*

6. The invitation of religion is to establish a state of truth and justice, and to make them the foundation of the law as justice is the most sacred symbol and the loftiest truth that Islam discerns in the world. To make certain the sanctity of justice, and to demand it to be implemented, it suffices to note that Allah, the Exalted describes Himself as Just, and acquits Himself from injustice, and He commands His apostle to rule with justice, equality and to adhere to truth and equity. Allah the Exalted says:

*"To this, then go on inviting and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allah has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to do justice between you... " Holy Qur'an (42:15)*

*"O David! Surely We have made you a ruler in the Land; so judge between mankind with justice, and do not follow desire... Holy Qur'an (38:28)*

So, the Glorious Qur'an defines the most obvious social aims of religion, and explains man's need for them, and states the most important measures to be taken to build the society and to organize and preserve it. These measures are:

### **First: Individual Education:**

Islam set a sound educational program for the individual so that he may be prepared to live in society and to hold fast to the principles of ordered life. Allah the Exalted says: *"And as for him who fears to stand in the presence of his Lord and restrains his soul from low desires, surely the garden will be his home." Holy Qur'an (19:40-41)*

*"He is indeed successful who purifies it, and he is indeed a failure who corrupts it." Holy Qur'an (91.-9-10)*

*"O you who believe! Observe your duty to Allah with right observance, and die not unless you become Muslims (unto Him). " Holy Qur'an (3:102)*

### **Second: Organizing the Society:**

The second step taken by Islam in this respect is to move from educating the individual to organizing the society, through adherence to the law and keeping it, in order to protect social life and Islam's teachings. Allah the Exalted says: *"...these are the limits (imposed by) Allah, so do not exceed them, and whoever exceeds the limits of Allah, these it is that are the unjust."* Holy Qur'an (2:229)

*"And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger and goes beyond His limits, He will cause him to enter fire to abide in it, and he shall have an abasing chastisement. "* Holy Qur'an (4:14)

### **Third: Building the State:**

The third step taken by Islam after building society is to construct the state and to implement justice, as a sacred principle in life, which is the foundation for a good government through which the rights are observed, the duties are carried out, and the regime is protected.

Fourth: Preserving the Safety of the Social Structure: The fourth and last stage in an Islamic society is to make reforms and prevent mischief and corruption from creeping in after the society has been constructed, organized and reformed. Allah the Exalted says quoting prophet Hud (a.s.): *"...I desire nothing but reform m far as I am able. " Holy Qur'an (11:88)*

*"...and do not make mischief in the earth after its reformation. " Holy Our'an (7:58)*

When the disease of deviation and decay creeps into society's body, and there appear the signs of injustice, mischief and confusion, Islam imposes on every individual the obligation to do his duty of reforming both the individual and the society, and to resist corruption and pluck out the roots of evil and transgression, so as to guide the progress of society on the straight path, and merge with the procession of truth and justice. Allah the Exalted says:

*"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good, and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it as that shall be successful." Holy Qur'an (3:104)*

Accordingly, the construction of society, and measures for its welfare and safety are implementable only through religion. Therefore, the message of religion and the principles of belief are indispensable to the society. This discernable cultural reality is confirmed by man's social experience and by his sufferings from deviated principles, systems and theories.



## Religion and Physical Care

As religion has its moral, spiritual and mental programme and plans, it similarly has its exact and complete program for taking care of the body and meeting its physical and instinctive needs. This bodily care is in harmony with that of the mental, psychological and spiritual programmes, since man is regarded as one complete unit of inseparable soul and body. The religious laws and values have been formulated to satisfy, coordinate and guide all the human inclinations and activities. So, Islam legislated laws for economy, matrimony, food, drink, worship, cleanliness, etc., in order to meet these needs within the limits of the law.

Islam has founded its special plan for taking care of the body and the instinctive activities, on the following basic principles:

1. Accepting the physical needs of the body and man's inborn instincts, and the necessity to satisfy them in a natural way so as to keep the body balanced. This admission has been met by the laws and teachings which provide for man all his needs of food, drink, shelter, clothes, marriage, medical treatment, etc.. Allah the Exalted says:

***“And seek by means of what Allah has given you the abode of the hereafter, and do not neglect your portion of the world and be kind as Allah has been kind to you, and do not seek corruption in the earth. Sure& Allah does not love mischief-makers.” Holy Qur'an (28:77)***

2. Islam has offered a complete programme for the protection of the body and its energy against diseases, vanity and waste. It prohibits whatever is harmful and immoral, such as wine, adultery, sodomy, extravagance, lust, etc. It also purifies and protects the body against sickness, filth and impurity which attack the body and destroy health and cleanliness. Allah the Exalted Says:

***“Say: My Lord forbids only indecencies, those apparent of them and those concealed, and sin and rebellion without justice and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no a authority, and that you say concerning Allah that which you do know not.” Holy Qur'an (7:33)***

3. Islam has a plan for utilizing man's energy and bodily effort in the fields of construction, production and innovation. Allah the Exalted says:

***“...he brought you into being from the earth, and has made you dwell in it... ” Holy Qur'an (11:81)***

***“And do not make mischief in the earth after its reformation... ” Holy Qur'an (7:58)***

4. Islam has given man the right to enjoy the beauties and the adornments of life, and to make use of its good things. ***“Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good provisions?” Holy Qur'an (7:32)***

By these practical and scientific measures, Islam protects the health of the body, provides man with physical happiness, keeps his natural right to live, and saves his sanity and energy from uselessness, from being completely lost and from the destruction imposed upon him by the ignorant programmes, the man- made laws and dogmatic theological calls.

## **Can Religion Be Substituted?**

Can man reject religion and replace it by the discoveries and the knowledge to which he could attain in the fields of social organization, in morals and behaviour, and in ideological explanations?

Would man be happy, dignified and comfortable if he took that as a substitute for religion?

This must be studied carefully so as to find an objective and correct answer, since the advocates of ignorance have one answer, and the believers in Allah have another. All the ignorants, notwithstanding their different materialistic and infidel philosophies, sects and secular trends, reject religion and advocate its replacement by man's scientific and theoretical achievements, with an argument based on a deformed idea and a disordered concept about the origin of religion, its message and aims - the concept which takes religion to be nothing but a mythical legend or an imagery created by a superstitious mind during the backward and primitive ages. According to them in those ages man tried to interpret the appearance of the universe and life.

Having failed to discover the scientific laws of nature and life, he attributed that to an unknown creator. He saw the rain, observed the sunrise and the sunset, and discerned the growth of plants and animals, their multiplication, their birth and death; yet he did not know how those events happened, because he was ignorant of their scientific explanation. He, therefore, invented an imaginary theory, fabricated by his illusions, telling of the existence of a god behind this physical existence, and of an unseen divine power that was behind the movement and direction of all these things.

Then, as man gradually started discovering the laws of nature, he came to obtain a materialistic answer to every event; so, now he has no need of religion and he would not like it.

Prophets, from the viewpoint of this ignorant concept, are men representing the thought of their communities, backward in their beliefs and knowledge. They are distinguished because of the class - struggle and an inclination to reform. So, they are moved by economic and social factors to enact social reforms according to their thinking and the conditions of their communities. As for Allah, revelation and prophethood, they say they do not exist except in the minds of those who believe in them.

Such are the calumnies of the modern ignorant mind and the materialistic, infidel thought which rejects religion, revelation and prophethood, and which is founded on denial, infidelity and disbelief in the existence of a Creator of this universe, refusing to accept revelation and prophethood as being true and real.

These religious facts are regarded by this ignorant and denying interpretation as ideas expressing peoples' low understanding, and illustrating their inferior level of knowledge. This ignorant argument is the idea which is being repeated by the infidel seculars, according to which they demand the abolition of religion, replacing it with the materialistic interpretation and organization, which man reached through researches and

experiments, announcing that man is in no need of religion, and thus severing his ties with Allah.

Religion, likewise, presents its own answer to the question: (Can religion be substituted?), and explains its point of view. Religion's answer is derived as we shall see, from intellect and human experience. The answer is: There is no substitute for religion. This answer is based on numerous scientific and known facts which prove that man cannot do without religion.

They confirm the scientific discoveries which pave the way for organizing social life and coining laws to govern behaviour - such as the discoveries in the science of economy, finance, statistics, psychology, sociology, health, etc. But without divine guidance these are incapable of offering the legislative prescription that may cure the disorder and the abnormality from which man is suffering in respect to his conduct, legislation, systematizing, thinking, etc.

There are before the contemporary man enough facts and events to break down his scientific conceit which he acquired in the wake of his achievements in technology and invention. These made him believe that he was the god on earth, and that he could do without adhering to religion, and that what he obtained of knowledge and scientific achievements was enough to organize life and lead mankind's progress to happiness.

This conceited allegation is not novel in man's history, nor is it alien to the human thinking. In fact, it is a sickness of ignorance that has been accompanying man throughout the stages of his history and the chapters of his life.

The divine invitation has in every generation been confronted by the accusations of the ignorant opponents of guidance and faith, of being superstitious and mythical who allege that they can do without religion, since they possess knowledge, wealth, power, etc. The inseparability between ignorance and this accusation (religion being a legend, and man's knowledge is able to take its place), is but a proof of its deficient comprehension, and of how far it lags, in its spirit, mind and conduct, behind the procession of religion and its invitation to catch up with it.

As a matter of fact, this accusation is not new nor discovered in man's age of knowledge and learning, as otherwise, the accusers would have provided themselves with an excuse, and refuted their opponents by arguing that man's knowledge of facts and achievements could discover the mythical aspect of religion, and avoid resorting to, or depending on, it.

But the tragedy of the modern ignorant mind is that it has been blindly repeating what has originally been said during man's most ignorant, backward and reactionary period - a fact which confirms that the accusation is a mere justification for man's ignorance concealed behind it - for his rejection of the message of religion, and for his discordance with it, spiritually and psychologically. It has not been a scientific discovery, nor has it been an objective estimation of religion.

Here the Qur'an presents us with text telling about the disputes of the nations and the perished ignorant people. These texts spotlight the painful and bitter fact that man is diverged from admitting the truth; justifying it by abuse, self-deceit and proud and empty allegations. Allah the Exalted says:

***“And when Our revelations are recited to them, they say: We have heard. If we wish we can speak the like of this; this is nothing hut the stories of the ancients. ” Holy Qur'an (8:31)***

***“And when it is said to them: What is it your Lord has revealed? They say: Stories of the ancients. ” Holy Qur'an (16:24)***

Then the Qur'an continues, elsewhere, to talk about man's pride and his illusive belief of his having no need for religion. It illustrates the result of this proud and empty haughtiness of the time of ignorance - it is a tragic result of arrogance and is the proof of truth and Allah's message.

Thus arrogance and pride, the main characteristics of nations and peoples in the time of ignorance, were the cause of their own down - fall and closed the deformed register of their historical existence. Allah the Exalted says:

***“Have you not traveled in the land to see the nature of the consequence for those before them? They were more (numerous) than these, and mightier in power and (in the) trace (which they left behind them) in the earth. But all that they used to earn did not avail them, and when their messengers brought them clear proofs (of Allah's sovereignty) they exulted in the knowledge they (themselves) possessed. And that which they used to mock befell them. ” Holy Qur'an (40:82-83)***

This is how the Qur'an brings to us over generations, pictures of the Conscience and thoughts of the time of ignorance, to show us a phenomenon that accompanies man on this path through the history of his life, so that the advocates of faith may not be taken by surprise by this invalid accusation synchronized with deviated thought and the imagination of the ignorant. It may suffice, by reviewing the Holy Qur'an, to unearth the roots of this accusation and write the pages of its history along man's procession, and to come to an important conclusion; i.e. the argument of those of the time of ignorance - which can be summarized as:

religion is mythical, and man can replace it by the knowledge and discoveries he has attained - was not a scientific fact discovered by the scientific mind; it is rather a repetition of ignorant, deviated and ancient theory, whose existence synchronizes with the existence of human ignorance and the very old backward ages. Besides this historical proof exposing the fabrication of the said allegation, there are further facts confirming the need for religion, and that the scientific achievements cannot enrich human life with belief, concepts and systems capable of explaining life, its order and its arrangement.

Hereunder are some of these proofs:

Firstly, the shortcomings of the scientific discoveries, and their not covering the whole truth in man's world, both in its individual scientific facts and in its unified and correlated wholeness.

Science failed to find out the laws that govern man and his society, and was unable to recognize their correlation and the extent of their interaction and effectiveness.

There is a correlation between human motives and the constitution of the human body; between economic laws and society, politics, ethics, health, ways of thinking, etc. But science failed to recognize and define it in its complete objective form. So, man was left in his own reality, his social

laws, still in an unknown world which science could neither discover nor define. Therefore, man has become an object of experiment for those who have theories, principles, philosophies, but they lost their lives at the alter of those severe and bitter experiments.

Secondly, the effect of man's will on the scientific discoveries of social trends: Man's free will to choose is the essence of humanity and its far-reaching truth evident in every act and position, which science cannot tame and force to accept and adopt its results, unless man responds to it. So, the most that science can do and offer to man, is to uncover knowledge and laws and place them before man so that he may make use of them and define his attitude towards them.

Here is where the task of science comes to an end, and the task of man, with all his emotional and voluntary being, begins, the task to choose his method of handling these facts, positively or negatively.

Consequently, the role of religion is quite important in guiding mankind and in putting him on the road leading to goodness and happiness. It is religion that is capable of making a free will in accordance with the will of goodness and truth, scientific knowledge is incapable of attaining this goal, because a scientific fact is of man's discovery, and he, therefore, is not obliged to observe it or to turn against it. He finds in himself the power of accepting and implementing such information, as well as the power of omitting them from his life, since he is their owner and master, and has the will to ignore them. For this there is much evidence and many examples.

For example, man has discovered the dangers of alcohol, adultery and drugs, nevertheless millions of people are still falling victims to these dangers, subjected to deadly diseases and insanity under the psychological, nervous, and financial chaos.

Man-made laws still regard lawful such practices, and grant abnormal individuals full freedom to practice them. So, man's knowledge availed him not, nor did it save him from his disastrous fate.

Man has realized the dangers of usury, monopoly economic exploitation, unlawful speculations in money and goods, and their bad effects on human society and its security and welfare. But this knowledge was unable to solve man's economic crisis, nor did it put an end to poverty and fulfilled his needs. Millions of people still cannot find enough food to keep them alive, nor do they have means to protect themselves against poverty; and thus, hundreds of thousands of them die every day from hunger and undernourishment, whereas, a small number of the elite enjoy diverse kinds of luxury and excessive wealth.

Therefore, scientific discoveries, knowledge and social experience cannot help man to force the implementation of those findings, unlike the laws, the values and the ethics of religion, as these have the power to direct man's will, to omit personal effect and to curb his inner desires and whims.

This is because a believer believes that the principles of religion are divine and must be carried out, and he is responsible for their implementation, for which he is promised reward. This faith gives the message of religion - besides the support of the law and scientific facts-the authority to implement and to educate. This prepares man to obey these

principles and put them into effect, through the spiritual and moral immunity of the religion. They work as a guaranteed confirmation of the purpose of their application and their fulfillment.

Analyzing the motives which induce the supporters of ignorance and secular principles to advocate breaking away from religion and abolishing its role in life, we come to locate three major reasons:

1.The backwardness of the materialistic and ignorant man and his weak personality which is unable to ascend to the level of adhering to the message of religion - the message of normal and straight forward men. This causes man to accept his lowliness and stick to the bottom of the swamps, and to defend this debased situation of his, he accuses religion of being inert, reactionary, legendary, etc., trying to justify his degrading position and his submission to be in such an immoral situation. The Qur'an is quite exact in analyzing these types of people and rebuking them:

***"...Is it ever so, that, whenever then a messenger came to you (from Allah) with that which your souls did not desire, you grow arrogant, and some you disbelieve and some you say?" Holy Qur'an (2:87)***

***"Among them are some who give ear to you, (Muhammad) till when they go forth from you, they say to those who have been given knowledge: What was it that he said just flow? Those are they whose hearts Allah has sealed, and they follow their own Lust. " Holy Qur'an (47:16)***

This factor - of psychological backwardness and moral deviation - is the first of the three reasons for pronouncing the ignorant secular call.

2.The second reason that encourages the call for abolishing religion and seeking a substitute, is the distorted picture drawn about religion and learning by the Church, the Jewish concepts and paganism. These twisted concepts and beliefs which place faith in opposition and hostility towards learning and man, have been encountered with rejection and disdain, and man, with all his mighty culture and modern ideas, stands against these backward and legendary tendencies.

In fact these distorted tendencies are to blame for man's lack of understanding of religion and of the messages of faith and of the invitations of guidance, not knowing that it was religion that first called for fighting such legendary concepts, and was at the head of the objectors against those ideas and beliefs, contradictory to the logic of science and mind. It was religion that pioneered the announcement of the slogans calling unity among faith, mind and science. The Qur'an, which is the soul of divine legislation and constitution of the Islamic religion, advocates this slogan by saying:

***"...Allah will exalt those of you who believe, and those who have knowledge to high ranks... " Holy Qur'an (58:11)***

***"He grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever is granted wisdom, he truly has received abundant good. But none remember except men of understanding." Holy Qur'an (2:269)***

And this, the apostle of religion, Muhammad, (s.a.w.)<sup>2</sup>, the spokesman of the apostles, raises his voice saying: "The honor of knowledge is dearer to me than the honor of worship and the best of your religion is piety." "Whoever desires this world let him learn, whoever desires the other world let him learn, and whoever desires both Let him learn . " Tohaful Uqool p.34

3. The third and last reason is the endearment of scientific achievements, and the lack of distinguishing between social experience and being able to discover and make use of its laws, on one hand, and the natural experiments and man's ability to discover the natural laws and utilize them, on the other. This mixing between the nature of the two experiences, and man's connection to them without being able to distinguish between the two, the social and the natural, encouraged the call for satisfaction with man's achievements in the social field, as it sufficed him to be content with his natural discoveries, without taking into consideration the differences between the two cases. By scrutinizing both practices, the social and the natural, their basic differences can be detected, and then we may clearly discern the grave mistake in treating the two practices on the same level. It is a mistake committed by materialistic thought when it regards the social experience as equal to the natural one, ignorant of the differences between the two. These differences are:

a. Concerning the natural experience:

In this experience man deals with matter, which possesses no will to refuse or to resist. It responds to the law, and is forced to submit exactly to the movement of that law.

Whereas in the social experience, the dealing is with the human will which has the power to refuse or accept, and it is the will which handles the law, not the contrary.

b. As for the natural laws, man utilizes them to his interests as soon as he discovers them. He cannot forge these interests or falsify the results. But he can fabricate the social laws, motivated by his selfishness and the benefits thereof, in order to take hold of the results.

Whereas in the case of the social laws, knowing them does not inevitably imply carrying them out and utilizing them. Actually, man's desires and selfish interests affect the law and misinterpret it or even cancel it.

c. In relation to the law, man can live without having to know or to discover most of the natural laws, or to continue the search for discovering them, and apply those already discovered to serve his purpose. Man, in encountering failure in his natural experiments, or being short of comprehending them, (or knowing very little about them), does not harm himself whatsoever. Whereas in respect to the social law, to ignore it, or to neglect to comprehend it, inevitably causes disorder and chaos in the society, and man himself would be the victim of this deficiency and failure in his social experiment. What can man win if he loses himself and his happiness? True is Allah's saying:

***"...say: the losers will be those who lose themselves and their house-folk on the Day of Resurrection. Ah, that will be the manifest loss!" Holy Qur'an (39:15)***

So many social experiments proved disappointing! So many systems that were applied failed! And man was the victim, and suffered much torture and misery. When a human society lacks the social system that establishes justice, equality and respect for peoples' rights, it loses much more than what it loses in being ignorant of the laws of the atom, or of the planets, or of the depths of the oceans.

Man can do without that kind of knowledge. There is no harm in his failing to discover these laws, or in their incorrect application; but the case is not so with the concepts of justice, truth, equality, etc.

d. There is still another difference. The natural facts can be discovered through observation and laboratory-experiments; whereas this is not the case with the concepts of truth, equity, goodness, etc., by which the social laws and values are measured. These measures, the legislative and moral values, are not the results of laboratory experiments, nor are they something tangible in as much as a social experiment can explicitly distinguish. They are moral and spiritual values or measures, or evaluating facts that need knowledge, understanding and estimation, outside the limits of an experiment, and an objective treatment of man. They are general facts that man tries to attain, but in reality he is always short of them, while their contraries have always been there during his bitter experience at the time of ignorance. So, how can man attain them? How can he make them?

Thus, in light of the above reasons, it is a grave mistake to equate a social experiment with a natural one and, consequently, give up religion as a social legislator. Our scientific discoveries and experiments, though satisfying us from the natural and materialistic viewpoint, miserably fall short of solving our social life and organizing it. In fact, we have but to open wide the doors of learning and the windows of the intellect, in order to accept the word of Allah, and to respond to the preachings of the Qur'an and look into them carefully:

***“O you who believe! Obey Allah and the Messenger when He calls you to that which gives you life and know that Allah intervenes between the man and his heart, and to Him you will be gathered. ” Holy Qur'an (8:24)***

At the end of our essay, we should not forget to say that the errand of the religion is not only organizing life and guiding it; but the ultimate goal is the other world, a much bigger reality in the message of religion. Preparing for the afterlife is a basic and most important task of every religion and divine message.

Man should think of that world before thinking of the transient travel of this life. The other life is a real fact, and it is the inevitable end at whose shores man will have to anchor. Science is incapable of guaranteeing safety for man in the afterlife, nor can it make him believe in it and work for it, away from the message of religion and the guidance of faith.



## The Testimony Of Figures

In concluding this study we cite the testimony of statistics in support of the viewpoint of religion, confirming that there is no substitute for religion, and that man cannot make a civilization that is capable of offering him prosperity and peace, away from religion and the message of Allah.

These figures, as we shall see, are a witness telling the truth before the tribunal of history and judgement of intellect; the witness that will explain to us the severity of the tragedy under the reign of the substitute brought by man to take the place of the civilization of Faith, after having dismissed from his life the idea of faith, the moral values and the way of religion.

Let us hear these figures speak, and let us ask for the testimony of the institute for statistical researches. Let us put the contemporary civilization in the cage of accusation, so that we may uncover its secrets and its identity before the eyes of deceived humanity. We can figure out only snap-shots and mere samples, randomly taken, to disclose the bitter truth hidden behind these figures.

The concerned studies and statistics show horrible facts about the incidents of the individual and social decline and ruin, in the materialistic and capitalistic communities. Hereunder are excerpts from those statistics:

\*A crime is committed every 30 seconds in New York.

\*Nine girls out of every twelve are raped or kidnapped in Great Britain. The police could arrest only 13% of the criminals. \* The percentage of crimes increased by 84% during recent years;

whereas the juvenile crimes increased by fivefold during the first half of 1975. Groups of youngsters - below 20 years of age -are kept every day waiting at the doors of the courts, for grave crimes such as burning vehicles, immoral transgression, rape, robbing and murder.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Homer, a Swede, and envoy of the United Nations who had been asked to study the status of the women in the Arab countries in 1975, announced: "It is the Swedish woman who should demand her freedom. as the woman in the Arab countries has already reached the peak of her freedom under Islam. "She also said: "The Swedish woman tries these days to have this year announced as The International Year of the Woman', and then declare another year for the man, so that he may extract his rights from the woman.

She added that the tragedy of the Swedish woman is the very freedom which took her to a dangerous and tem1~'ing stage.

In her report, Dr. Homer says: "25%of Swedish women suffer from psychological and nervous sicknesses; and 40% of Sweden's income is spent on these diseases caused by the freedom which the Swedish woman attained and which she is practicing .<sup>4</sup> \*Another report disclosing the tragedy of humanity under the materialistic culture says: "The American association for Family Services announced that the disintegration of the family, which reached an epidemic stage, tops the list of social problems. Every year more than one million persons are separated or divorced, which is sevenfold higher in percentage, compared to that of a hundred years ago.

\*The juvenile crimes, which are strongly connected to divorce cases, are three times as much compared with the statistics of 1940.~

\*Let us listen to Mr. Winch, who says: “Do you know that most of the murder crimes are not committed by professional criminals, and that they are not motivated by theft; and that most of them are committed by friends and relatives? \*The Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I) reports that in murder cases within families, the husbands are mostly the murderers; and in 15% of family murders the children are the victims of their parents.<sup>6</sup>

\*According to a referendum carried out recently by the UNESCO, 60% of the housewives in the USA and Europe feel discontented, disappointed and miserable.<sup>7</sup>

\*In the report issued by the French Physician, Dr. Lyreete: 30,000 people die every year in France of Syphilis, while in the USA the victims of inherited syphilis are between 30,000 and 40,000 children.<sup>8</sup> This disease is spread by adultery.

\*A report about divorce cases on the grounds of unfaithfulness in Great Britain shows the following figures:

In 1938 9970 cases

in 1950 29096 =

In 1960 27870 =

In 1969 60134 =

In 1970 70575 =

In 1971 110017=

In 1972 109822=

In 1973 115048=

\*The grave problem in the pre-Soviet communist society was that of every two marriages one was ended in divorce, in most of the cities of west USSR. In Moscow, for example, 49 out of 100 marriages ended in divorce after the birth of the first child. In Mavadansk the percentage of divorce is 72.9%. The Physicians' Conference held in Moscow in 1975 called for urgent measures to tackle this grave social instability - that is, the high divorce percentage and low birth rate...<sup>9</sup>

The “Hospital Today , a magazine of London, in its editorial of the April 1975 issue, published a summary of the annual report of the British Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. It says:

“...Despite the abundance of contraceptive medicines and legalized abortion, it is noted that 8.6% of the children are born to unmarried mothers! There is a further serious problem. In 1973 the following cases were noted:

I case of an 11 - year old pregnant girl.

6 cases of 12 - year old pregnant girls.

38 cases of 13 - year old pregnant girls.

255 cases of 14 - year old pregnant girls.

There were 166,000 cases of legal abortion during the same year, 50% of which were by unmarried women. If these talking figures give us astounding facts about the social and moral state of the materialistic and communist civilizations, there are some other figures which draw the picture of their economic tragedy, giving more evidence of the failure of man-made systems and their being incapable of solving man's problems.

\*International statistics show that, “there are in the world 400 million persons undergoing a slow death because of hunger , and that five million

persons actually die of hunger. Several conferences have been held within the past two months in Bucharest, Rome, London and elsewhere to discuss the food problem. Before holding each of these conferences, the observers used to assert that the results of the conference would be no better than those of the previous one. They say: "It has become a common thing to see these conferences held and concluded without finding the solution for this human drainage to which the peoples of the world are subjected, especially in Africa and Asia..."<sup>10</sup>

"...at the same time, the experts stress that the USA alone can feed all those millions of people who are being subjected to slow death..."<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the best confirmation of the said statement came from the American Minister of Agriculture who announced: "If we killed half of the cats and dogs we keep, the food which we thus spare can satisfy all the hungry stomachs in the world."<sup>12</sup> "In the fields of development, food and housing, all the experts unanimously agree that the available natural sources in the world can meet the needs of all the people of the world, should there be enough good intention to exploit them, and to equally distribute them among the people of the world. But the root of the problem stems from the unjust distribution of wealth."<sup>13</sup> This is the picture which is drawn by the figures and statistics accumulated by the substituted civilization, a civilization devoid of any faith and spirit. A civilization devised by the deviated ignorant minds after refusing to live under the shade of the message of the religion and faith, the message which tells the truth, and invites the lost and the proud to repeat the reckoning of their accounts, and review the history of their lives, and reconsider the evaluation of their attitudes, deriving a lesson from Allah's saying:

***"And how many a generation We destroyed before them who were mightier in prowess than they! so they went about in the lands! Is there a place of refuge? Surely there is a reminder in this for him who has a heart or he gives ear and is a witness. Holy Qur'an (50:38-37)***

*And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.*

## Endnotes

- 1- (a.s.) are the abbreviations of the Arabic phrase aloyhi/alayha/ alayhim/ as-salam which mean May peace be upon him/her/them'.
- 2- (s.a.w.) are the abbreviations of the Arabic phrase sal-lallahu ala yhi wa alihi' which mean May Allah's blessings be upon him and his descendants'.
- 3- Al-Mujtama Magazine, No. 282, pp. 4-5, Kuwait. 4- This information was extraced from a bulletin issued by Alexandria University in Egypt, under the title 'The Mingling of the Two Sexes in Islam,' p. 39
- 5- Ibid, p. 34
- 8- Ibid. p. 34
- 7- Ibid. p. 35
- 8- Fathi Yakon, 'Islam and Sex', p. 82
- 9- 'Medical Interphase', April, 1977
- 10- Oggi Magazine, Italian, quoted from the Kuwaiti AI-Qabas Paper, No. 1525 0115/8/1976
- 11- Ibid
- 12- Ibid
- 13- Ibid

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