

The Greatness and Splendour of Allah – the Lord We Muslims Worship

By

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The enemies of Islam have no grasp of Allah's true measure. Their reckless attack on Allah, His Book and His Messenger shows clearly that they are ignorant of Allah's nature and the purpose of Islam as a religion.

Muslims worship the God of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus - peace be upon them all. However, it is certainly true that Jews, Christians and Muslims all have different concepts of Almighty Allah. For example, Muslims - like Jews - reject the Christian beliefs of the Trinity and the Divine Incarnation. This, however, does not mean that each of these three religions worships a different God. There is only One True God. Judaism, Christianity and Islam all claim to be "Abrahamic Faiths", and all of them are also classified as "monotheistic." However, Islam teaches that other religions have, in one way or another, distorted and nullified a pure and proper belief in Allah, by neglecting His true teachings and mixing them with fabricated ideas.

It is worth mentioning that Moses has never said to the children of Israel that he brought to them Judaism, but rather Islam. The Jews who came after him named their religion "Judaism". Judaism is a word derived from the Hebrew name Yehuda, which meant "praised". Judah was one of the twelve sons of Jacob and the ancestor of the tribe of Judah, as told in the Old Testament.

Likewise, Jesus has never said to the Children of Israel that he brought them Christianity. The word "Christian" is a Greek word with formerly Pagan usage. The Mandaean deity of the sun was titled "Christ Helios", the Alexandrian Osiris was titled "Chreistos", and the Romans via the Persians worshipped the sun under the title Chrestos Mithras, where Chrestos took the Roman interpretation of "good", or pure, sacred, or holy.

In actual fact, Jesus proclaimed that he has not come to change the law (the Torah) but to confirm it (Mathew 5:17-18). The term

'Christianity', as a separate religion independent of Judaism, was not used except long after the rise of Jesus to his Lord. The name "Christian" meant: like Christ – people who sought to not only believe in Christ, but to live also like him.

Islam is not named after a person or a tribe. Islam is derived from the Arabic root "Salema": peace, purity, submission and obedience. In the religious sense, Islam means submission to the will of Allah and obedience to His law. Everything and every phenomenon in the world other than man is administered totally by Allah-made laws, i.e. they are obedient to Allah and submissive to his laws, they are in the State of Islam. Man possesses the qualities of intelligence and choice, thus he is invited to submit to the good will of Allah and obey His law, i.e. become a Muslim.

The word Islam therefore, is never used in the Koran as a title for the religion of the Koran in particular, nor a religion that is exclusive to Prophet Muhammad! The word Islam simply means Submission to Allah. It is necessary thus to stop thinking of Islam as the religion exclusive to the Koran, and instead recognize Islam as a spiritual state of submitting to Allah alone.

In this light, Islam is not the religion of the Koran alone, nor is the religion brought by the prophet Muhammad. It is written in the Koran that Islam (Submission to Allah), is as old as Abraham, and that all the practises of Islam were first given to Abraham and his sons long before Muhammad was born.

We read in the Koran:

Strive hard for Allah as His due: He has chosen you and placed no hardship in your religion, the faith of your forefather Abraham. Allah has called you Muslims - both in the past and this (Message) – so that the Messenger can bear witness about you and so that you can bear witness about other people. So keep up the prayer, give the prescribed alms, and seek refuge in Allah: He is your protector – an excellent protector and an excellent helper (Al-Hajj, 78).

We also read in the Koran:

He has laid down for you as religion that He charged Noah with, and that We have revealed to thee, and that We charged Abraham with, Moses and Jesus: "Perform the religion, and scatter not regarding it." Very hateful is that for the idolaters, that thou callest them to. Allah chooses unto Himself whomsoever He will, and He guides to Himself whosoever turns, penitent (Ash-Shura, 13).

All the prophets of Allah submitted to Him completely and called their people to submit to Allah as the One and only God. The only true religion as far as Allah is concerned after discarding the labels Judaism and Christianity is Submission to Allah and that is Islam.

The Jews claim that Prophet Abraham was a Jew, and the Christians claim that he was a Christian, but the fact is: Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian because the Torah and the Gospel were sent down after him. Abraham was a pure monotheist submitter, firm in faith and inclined to right opinion, orthodox in the literal meaning of the Greek words.

Monotheist Submitters, or simply Submitters, emphasize the aspects of strict monotheism. This means that all worship and practice be channelled toward a single supreme being, namely, Allah. This is in contrast with other religious doctrines, which emphasize heavily on the reverence of their founders and/or religious scholars. Such examples can be seen with Christians and the worship of Jesus. While maintaining belief in religious texts, Submitters differ with other religious groups in that they devote all practices and worship to Allah alone.

The Koran says:

Abraham was neither a Jew, nor a Christian; he was a monotheist submitter. He never was an idol worshiper (Al-Imran,67).

Submission to Allah in Islam was enjoined by Abraham and Jacob upon their sons:

And Abraham charged his sons with this and Jacob likewise: 'My sons, Allah has chosen for you the religion; see that you die not save in the faith of Islam (Al-Baqara, 132).

When death approached Jacob, he said to his sons:

Or were you witnesses, when death came to Jacob? When he said to his sons, 'What will you serve after me?' They said, 'We will serve thy God of thy fathers Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, One God; to Him we submit in Islam (Al-Baqara, 133).

Muhammad and all believers were commanded to follow the monotheistic creed of Abraham, and the refrain from associating partners with Allah.

Then We revealed to thee: 'Follow thou the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith and no idolater.' (Al-Nahl, 123).

The Koran also says:

Who therefore shrinks from the religion of Abraham, except he be foolish-minded? Indeed, We chose him in the present world, and in the world to come he shall be among the righteous (Al-Baqara, 130).

Allah is the only God of the universe and He likes justice. This assertion is made in all the revealed Scriptures. The vast universe is run by its Master through its unseen agents, the angels. According to the established knowledge, the universe seems to be a completely unitary system. This would indicate that it has a single planner. Everything in the universe being in its right place is a proof that its Lord loves justice and righteousness rather than injustice and wrongdoing.

Each part of the universe is in complete state of surrender (Islam). All its functions are performed in accordance with the appointed plan of Allah. Exactly the same performance is required by man. Man must recognize his Lord and mould his life in accordance with His plan. Making anyone else, save Allah, the centre of his attention or nurturing the thought that Allah's judgment can be based on anything other than justice is inconceivable in the present universe.

We read in the Koran:

Allah bears witness that there is no god but He – and the angels, and men possessed of knowledge – upholding justice; there is no god but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. The true religion with Allah is

Islam. Those who were given the Book (Jews and Christians) were not at variance except after the knowledge came to them, being insolent one to another. And whoso disbelieves in Allah's signs, Allah is swift at the reckoning (Al-Imran 18, 19).

Allah's way is the straightway of justice and truth. In unity and faith must we dedicate all our life to His service, and His alone; He is the God to whom we shall all return.

The Koran says:

Say: "My prayer, my ritual sacrifice, my living, my dying – all belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being. No associate has He. Even so I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims." (those that surrender) (Al-An'am 162, 163).

The Jews and the Christians brought the Creator down to the level of His creatures. They gave to their great ones and saint the status, which they should have given to Allah. They saw that the Greek and Roman nations had made the sun their god and had presumed the existence of a son of that god. They added the words father and son to their Scriptures and started calling Allah 'the father' and each of their prophets 'the son,' though the fact is that Allah is One and only One; He is incomparable; He alone deserves to be accepted as the Greatest and most worthy of being worshipped.

The Koran says:

The Jews say, 'Ezra is the son of Allah,' and the Christians say, 'the Messiah is the son of Allah.' These are but their baseless utterances, conforming to the unbelievers before them. Allah assails them! How they are perverted. They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from Allah, and the Messiah, Mary's son – and they were commanded to serve but one God; there is no god but He; glory be to Him, above that they associate (At-Tawba 30, 31).

The Jews and the Christians considered their great revered men as mediators between them and Allah. They adopted the belief that whatever they did their holy men would on the strength of their recommendation, be their saviours before Allah. They also

believed that Heaven or Hell existed right here in the present world and that there were nothing beyond this world. Whatever the people themselves wanted, they attributed to Allah and wrote it in Allah's Book.

Sincere faith necessitates that the true believer must believe in Allah as the sole Creator of the universe, in all His angels, all His books, all His messengers and the Last Day. The Jews however confined Allah to their own tribe or sect. They do not believe in Jesus and his Gospel or in Muhammad and his Koran. Likewise, the Christians do not believe in Muhammad and his Koran. This deficient kind of belief will not be accepted by Allah from the Jews or the Christians on the Day of accountability.

The Koran says :

O believers believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book He has sent down on His Messenger and the Book, which He sent down before. Whoso disbelieves in Allah and His angels and His Books, and His Messengers, and the Last Day, has surely gone astray into far error (Al-Nisa', 136).

The Koran also says:

He has laid down for you as religion that He charged Noah with, and that We have revealed to thee, and that We charged Abraham with, Moses and Jesus: 'Perform the religion, and scatter not regarding it. Very hateful is that for the idolaters that thou callest them to. Allah chooses unto Himself whomsoever He will, and He guides to Himself whosoever turns, penitent (Ash-Shura, 13).

Thereafter, Allah sent another Prophet to rid the divine revelation of all fabricated impurities and to present it again in its original form. Subsequent generations made changes in that as well. This happened repeatedly.

Finally, Allah decided to send a final Prophet, and through him create such conditions that His religion remains safe in its original form forever. This task – the greatest in the history of prophet-hood – was achieved through the Prophet Muhammad.

When Muhammad was sent with the Koran, the original Torah of

Moses and the Gospel of Jesus had already been altered and distorted. The polytheists of Arabia had a religion, which they called the religion of Moses. The Christians had a religion, which they called the religion of Jesus. The books they had were all concocted editions of Allah's religion, and had been wrongly claimed to be the religion set by Allah.

Allah rejected all these religions and established the religion revealed to Prophet Muhammad - peace be upon him – as the sole authentic edition of His religion which will remain valid until Doomsday.

We read in the Koran:

They (Jews and Christians) want to extinguish with their mouths Allah's light and Allah refuses but to perfect His light, though the unbelievers be averse. It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse (At-Tawba 32, 33).

Allah revealed the Koran to His Prophet Muhammad, and guaranteed that He Himself would preserve it, as He says in the Koran:

"Verily We: it is We Who have sent down the Remembrance (the Koran) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." (Al-Hijr, 9).

Now Muhammad came to the Jews and the Christians with the religion of truth to make intelligible to them the facts and to help them abandon imagination, which is often at war with reason so they cannot later on claim innocence before Allah and say, 'No one came to us in the capacity of a Messenger and a warning.'

The Koran says:

People of the Book, now there has come to you Our Messenger, making things clear to you, upon an interval between the Messengers lest you should say, 'There has not come to us any bearer of good tidings, neither any warner. Indeed, there has come to you a bearer of good tidings and a warner; Allah is powerful over everything (Al-Maida, 19).

Or lest the Jews and the Christians may say to their Lord on the Day of accountability, 'Our forefathers associated others with Allah before our time, and we are only the descendants who came after them. So are you going to destroy us for what those inventors of falsehood did?'

We read in the Koran:

Or lest you say, 'Our fathers were idolaters a foretime, and we were seed after them. What, wilt Thou then destroy us for the deeds of the vain-doers?' (Al-A'raf, 173).

After the advent of Muhammad, and after the sending down of the Koran, nobody has the excuse of ignoring the truth, or would dare say before the Lord that he was heedless of the Koran and its commandments. Now, no one would dare say before the Lord, 'I worshipped you as one in three or three in one.' No one would dare say, 'O Lord, I worshipped you as the father in heaven and the son on earth!' After the advent of Muhammad and after the sending down of the Koran, what excuse has anyone to follow the path of misguidance?

From the time of Muhammad until present - more than fourteen hundred years - the Koran has stayed the same, and not a single letter of it has been changed, as occurred with the old divine Books.

When the Koran talks about the Torah, Psalms and Gospel it is speaking about the original versions given to Moses, David and Jesus. It is not talking about the current corrupted Torah, Psalms and the Four Canonical Gospels we have today.

Therefore, Prophet Muhammad had to come to the world after Jesus. Allah wanted to establish the truth by His words and cut off the root of those who corrupted and denied it, so that He might cause the truth to triumph and bring falsehood to nothing even though the wrongdoers might dislike it. It was Allah's merciful plan that He establishes for the last time His only religion - Islam. The only religion Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Judgment.

In conclusion and as the Koran mentioned:

The only religion approved by Allah is Islam (Submission).
(Al-Imran, 19).

The above Koranic verses confirm the truth that as far as Allah is concerned there has always been one religion. The one religion that was decreed to Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

All the Scriptures revealed to mankind from Allah advocate one and the same religion - submission to Allah alone. The principal command from Allah in all revelations is to worship Him alone, and devoting all the religion to Him and rejecting all other gods/idols:

Old Testament:

"You shall have no other gods besides Me" (Exodus 20:3)

New Testament:

"You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve" (Luke 4:8)

The Koran:

Know then that there is no god except Allah (Muhammad, 19).

Submission to Allah is the religion whereby we recognize Allah's absolute authority, and reach an unshakable conviction that He alone possesses all power; no other entity possesses any power that is independent of Him. The natural result of such a realization is to devote our lives and our worship absolutely to Allah alone.

Within the religion of Islam, Allah decreed specific rituals and practices designed to teach man to worship his Lord. These acts (Prayer, pilgrimage, etc.) were first taught to Abraham:

...and appointed them (Abraham and his sons) to be leaders guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and to perform the prayer, and to pay the alms, and Us they served (Al-Anbiya, 73).

Across the ages, as normally happens, many of these rituals were

corrupted and the element of idolising human messengers and saints crept in. All the original practises however, were thus restored to their pristine purity in the Koran. Allah also promised that the Koran will never be corrupted, thus all believers will always have access to the pure way of worshipping Allah.

Allah also tells Muhammad and all believers that within each revelation there are specific laws and rites that are specific to the receivers of this particular revelation. Hence, the command is issued that Muhammad should follow the rites given to him in the Koran and not the rites of previous religions.

And We have sent down to thee the Book with the truth, confirming the Book that was before it (Torah, Gospel), and assuring it. So judge between them according to what Allah has sent down, and do not follow their caprices, to forsake the truth that has come to thee. To every one of you We have appointed a right way and an open road (Al-Maidah, 48).

The need for different revelations at different times and for different people is justified by means of the following:

- 1- Mankind has gone through enormous development through the ages physically, mentally and spiritually, that there was always the need for various revelations at different times and for different peoples. Although the various revelations are united in message and truth, yet we find that Allah never addresses identical revelations to two different people. This being so, it can be said that the diverse revelation do not, and should not contradict one another, for although they differ in form, the religion decreed in all of them is one (pure monotheism).
- 2- If there appears any apparent contradictions between different revelations, they are in human receptacles and not in the divine message. This is a result of human inability to interpret such revelations and more importantly the failure to preserve the 'truth' contained in the revelation, which always tends to be impaired and altered with the passing of time.
- 3- Ultimately, the apparent contradiction is no more than one between corrupt scripts and interpretations of the original

revelations, and not between the revelations themselves. Inevitably, and through corruption in the transfer and application of a Scripture, together with the social and cultural factors that always widen the gap between the factions, we are left with a multitude of corrupt religions. These sub-religions in many ways hardly bare any resemblance to one another, or to the original religion decreed by Allah.

For that, there becomes a necessity for mankind to receive another revelation that puts them back on track with Allah's law that has been badly corrupted.

After the revelation of the Koran, there became no need for any further revelations. Not because the message of the Koran is much different from the message of the Torah or the Gospel, but because of the following reasons:

a- A divine promise has been endorsed in the Koran that it will not be corrupted like previous Scripture. As a result, and if the message would remain intact in one Scripture, there becomes no need to reveal further Scripture.

b- With the advent of the modern fast travel means of today, the whole world became a closer-knit unit. People do not have to travel to hear or receive information, it is brought right up to them through the various media channels that were not available a few centuries ago (1).

It is a fact then, that all Prophets who came before Muhammad brought to their people the religion of Islam and no other. Muhammad is the last Prophet of Islam.

In Islam, Allah is eternal, transcendent and absolutely one (strict monotheism). The Koran clearly states that Allah is incomparable, self-sustaining and neither begets nor was begotten. Muslims believe that Islam is the complete and universal version of a primordial faith that has been revealed before through all prophets including Abraham, Moses, Ishmael and Jesus.

Submission to the good will of Allah, together with obedience to His beneficial Law, i.e. becoming a Muslim, is the best safeguard for man's peace and harmony. This is the religion of Muhammad and all prophets before him.

When Muhammad was sent, the original Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus had already been altered and distorted. The polytheists of Arabia had a religion which they called the religion of Moses. The Christians had a religion, which they called the religion of Jesus. The books they had were all concocted editions of Allah's religion, and had been wrongly claimed to be the religion set by Allah.

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Therefore Prophet Muhammad had to come to the world after Jesus. Allah wanted to establish the truth by His words and cut off the root of those who corrupted and denied it, so that He might cause the truth to triumph and bring falsehood to nothing even though the wrongdoers might dislike it. It was Allah's merciful plan that He establishes for the last time His only religion - Islam. The only religion Allah will accept from His servants on the Day of Judgment.

Allah the All-Mighty Must be Obeyed

Allah has His own way to spread His Message of truth. He takes strict and solemn covenant with all prophets that they shall carry out their mission, proclaim Allah's truth (Allah is one, and there is none other besides Him) without fear or favour, and be ever ready in His service in all circumstances. That gives them their position and dignity, and their tremendous responsibilities in respect of the people whom they come to instruct and lead to the right path.

The prophets must perform this crucial task without the slightest shortcoming. Fearing the wrath of Allah if they do not promulgate His Message the way He ordained the prophets strive hard to teach their people the religion of monotheism and the divine commandments Allah has instructed them to deliver. The prophets are aware that they will be asked on the Day of Judgment how the truth fared in the world, how it was received, who opposed it, and who supported it. Like all trustees the prophets will have to give full account of their trust. Allah knows all, and it will not add to His knowledge. But it will be evidence for and against those to whom it was preached, so that the responsibility of those who dishonoured it may be duly enforced. The primary custodians of spiritual truth are the prophets, but in descending degrees, all men to whom Allah's Message comes are included.

The Koran says:

And when We took compact from the prophets, and from thee, and from Noah, and Abraham, Moses and Jesus, Mary's son; We took from them a solemn compact, that He may question the truthful concerning their truthfulness; and has prepared for the unbelievers a painful chastisement (Al-Ahzab 7,8).

The prophets do not act according to their free will but according to Allah's will. They fear Allah and commit themselves entirely to His commands. They are fearful to offend their Lord, their Creator. If they were to disobey Him, Heaven shall lay their transgression to their charge

and requite them with an immense punishment on a momentous Day.

We read in the Koran:

Had he (Muhammad) invented against us any sayings; We would have seized him by the right hand (the right hand of power and action), then We would surely have cut his life vain and not one of you could have defended him (Al-Haqa 44-47).

The Koran also says:

O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, for if you do not, you will not have delivered His Message. Allah will protect you from them. Allah guides not the people of the unbelievers (Al-Maidah, 67).

The infidels of Makkah tried their best to tempt Muhammad and incite him to make concessions. They thought they almost reduced him into a course of action, which is not divine: a) the deletion of certain passages of what Allah has revealed, like the prostration in worship; b) the introduction of other passages which would honour their idols; c) forging new words or passages in Allah's name etc., and they would have accepted him in their political and social circles. Had Allah not made him stand firm he would nearly have inclined to them a little, thinking that in making a small concession he would succeed in fulfilling the divine mission.

If the Prophet had concluded such concessions with the infidels of Makkah, Allah would have made him taste a double punishment in this life and after death, and then he would have found none to help him against Allah.

The Koran says:

Indeed they were near to seducing you from what We revealed to you, that you might forge against Us another, and then they would surely have taken you as a friend; and had We not confirmed thee, you will nearly have inclined to them a

little, then We would have made you taste a double punishment in this life and a double punishment after death; and then you would have found none to help you against Us (Al-Isra' 73-75).

Allah punished and corrected Prophet Jonah when he disobeyed Him. The inhabitants of the town of Nineveh were idolaters who lived a shameless life. Prophet Jonah also known as 'Dhan-Nun' was sent to teach them the worship of Allah. The people disliked his interference in their way of worship, so they argued. "We and our forefathers have worshipped these gods for many years and no harm has come to us."

Try as he might to convince them of the foolishness of idolatry and of the goodness of Allah's laws, they ignored him. He warned them that if they kept on with their foolishness, Allah's punishment would soon follow. Instead of fearing Allah, they told Jonah that they were not afraid of his threats. "Let it happen," they told him. Jonah was disheartened and decided to stop preaching them. He left Nineveh, fearing that Allah's anger would soon follow.

Hardly had he left the city when the skies began to change colour and looked as if they were on fire. The people were filled with fear by this sight. They recalled the destruction of the people of 'Ad, Thamud and Noah. Was theirs to be a similar fate? Slowly faith penetrated their hearts. They all gathered on the mountain and started to beseech Allah for His mercy and forgiveness. The mountains echoed with their cries. It was a momentous hour, filled with sincere repentance.

Allah removed His wrath and showered His blessings upon them once again. When the threatening storm was lifted, they prayed for the return of Jonah so that he could guide them.

Jonah had boarded a small ship in the company of other passengers. It sailed all day in calm waters with a good wind blowing at the sails. When night came, the sea suddenly changed. A horrible storm blew as if it were

going to split the ship into pieces. The waves looked wild. They rose up as high as mountains then plunged down like valleys, tossing the ship and sweeping over the deck.

Meanwhile, behind the ship, a large whale was splitting the water and opening its mouth. A command had been issued from Almighty Allah to one of the greatest whales of the sea to surface. It obeyed. The whale hurried to the surface of the sea and followed the ship as it had been commanded.

The tempest continued and the chief of the crew asked the crew to lighten the ship's heavy load. They threw their baggage overboard, but this was not enough. Their safety lay in reducing the weight further, so they decided among themselves to lighten their load by removing at least one person.

The captain directed: "We will make lots with all of the travellers' names. The one whose name is drawn will be thrown into the sea." Jonah knew this was one of the seamen's traditions when facing a tempest. It was a strange polytheistic tradition, but it was practiced at that time. Jonah's affliction and crisis began. Here was the prophet, subjected to polytheistic rules that considered the sea and the wind to have gods that riot. The captain had to please these gods. Jonah reluctantly participated in the lot, and his name was added to the other travellers' names. The lot was drawn and "Jonah" appeared.

Since they knew him to be the most honourable among them, they did not wish to throw him into the angry sea. Therefore, they decided to draw a second lot. Again Jonah's name was drawn. They gave him a final chance and drew a third lot. Unfortunately for Jonah, his name came up again

Jonah realized that Allah's hand was in all this, for he had abandoned his mission without Allah's consent. The matter was over, and it was decided that Jonah should throw himself into the water. Jonah stood at the edge of the ship looking at the furious sea. It was night and there

was no moon. The stars were hidden behind a black fog. But before he could be thrown overboard, Jonah kept mentioning Allah's name as he jumped into the raging sea and disappeared beneath the huge waves.

The whale found Jonah floating on the waves before it. It swallowed Jonah into its furious stomach and shut its ivory teeth on him as if they were white bolts locking the door of his prison. The whale dived to the bottom of the sea, the sea that runs in the abyss of darkness.

Three layers of darkness enveloped Jonah, one above the other; the darkness of the whale's stomach, the darkness of the bottom of the sea, the darkness of the night. Jonah imaged himself to be dead, but his senses became alert when he found he could move. He knew that he was alive and imprisoned in the midst of three layers of darkness. His heart was moved by remembering Allah. His tongue released soon after saying:

And Dhul-Nun (Jonah) – when he went forth enraged and thought that We could have no power over him; then he called out in the darkness, ‘There is no god but Thou. Glory be to Thee I have done evil (Al-Anbiya’, 87).

Jonah continued praying to Allah, repeating this invocation. Fishes, whales, seaweeds, and all the creatures that lived in the sea heard the voice of Jonah praying, heard the celebration of Allah's praises issuing from the whale's stomach. All these creatures gathered around the whale and began to celebrate the praises of Allah in their turn, each in its own way and in its own language.

The whale also participated in celebrating the praises of Allah and understood that it had swallowed a prophet.

Allah saw the sincere repentance of Jonah and heard his invocation in the whale's stomach. Allah commanded the whale to surface and ejects Jonah onto an island. The whale obeyed and swam to the farthest side of the ocean. Allah commanded it to rise towards the warm, refreshing sun and the pleasant earth.

The whale ejected Jonah onto a remote island. His body was inflamed because of the acids inside the whale's stomach. He was ill, and when the sun rose, its ray burned his inflamed body so that he was on the verge of screaming from the pain. However, he endured the pain and continued to repeat his invocation to Allah.

Allah caused a vine to grow to considerable length over him for protection. Then Allah caused Jonah to recover and forgave him. Allah told Jonah that if it had not been for his praying to Him, he would have stayed in the whale's stomach until the Day of Judgment.

Gradually Jonah regained his strength and found his way to his hometown, Nineveh. He was pleasantly surprised to notice the change that had taken place there. The entire population turned out to welcome him. They informed him that they had turned to believe in Allah. Together they led a prayer of thanksgiving to their Merciful Lord. Jonah then guided them to the right path – Islam (2).

The Koran says:

Jonah too was one of the envoys; when he ran away to the laden ship and cast lots, and was of the rebutted, then the whale swallowed him down, and he blameworthy. Now had he not been of those who glorified Allah, he would have tarried in his belly until the day they shall be raised; but we cast him upon the wilderness, and he was sick, and We caused to grow over him a tree of gourds. Then We sent him unto a hundred thousand, or more, and they believed; so We gave enjoyment for a while (As-Saffat 139-148).

The Splendour and Greatness of Allah

The principal aim human beings are required to attain is stated in the Koran in very clear terms:

And I did not create the jinn and mankind but that they should serve Me. (Al-Hijr,56).

The purpose of creation then is to serve Allah as the only God, and live a pious life. The ultimate success for Muslims is to enter Paradise, and to achieve that, they have to undergo trials and tests. If Muslims pass successfully these tests and trials, Paradise is the reward. One who believes and acts contrary to this, fails and lands in Hell.

Allah says in the Koran:

We created man of a sperm drop, a mingling (sexual discharge of man and woman), trying him; and We made him hearing, seeing (Al-Insan, 2).

The Koran also reads:

Who created death and life to test you (as to) which of you is best in deeds, and He is the Mighty, the Oft Forgiving, (Al-Mulk, 2).

Allah is All-Merciful. He wants His servants to attain the mighty triumph, His paradise.

The Koran says:

Those are Allah's bounds. Whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him to gardens underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever; that is the mighty triumph (Al-Nisa', 13).

But the road to Paradise is surrounded with difficulties and hardship that will intercept the believers while living their lives on earth. Allah has ordained that the believers follow a certain code of life through which they could overcome all difficulties and win Allah's mercy and forgiveness. This code of life is based on the principles included in the revelations He sent down to His messengers. The first principle which must be considered in order for Allah to forgive the sins of His servants is to worship Him alone without associating with Him any partners. Pure monotheism is the first law, which must be strictly observed by His servants, and then to stay away from

anything which angers Him by following the teachings of the Koran and the Sunna of the Prophet.

Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate God, who sent hundreds of revelations to His servants throughout history in order to protect them from Hell Fire, is also vengeful. As He described Himself in the Koran, He is the All- Mighty, the All-Powerful, the Irresistible, the Compeller, the Subduer, the Abaser, the Magnificent, the Destroyer, the Harmer, etc. Allah hates the disbelievers, the atheists, the idolaters, the polytheists, the wrongdoers and the oppressors. On the Day of resurrection He will punish them without mercy.

The Koran narrated stories of ancient nations, which Allah has destroyed because of their disobedience and blasphemy.

Have they not regarded how We destroyed before them many a generation We established in the earth, as We never established you, and how We loosed heaven upon them in torrents, and made the rivers to flow beneath them? Then We destroyed them because of their sins, and raised up after them another generation (Al-An'am, 6).

Allah promised the disbelievers a terrible punishment in Hell in the Hereafter.

The Koran says:

Theirs will be a boiling drink and painful doom because they disbelieved (Yunus, 4).

And that's just a sample of the 60 verses in the Koran that describe the painful doom that the unbelievers will endure.

Because of His Majesty and Might, Allah is to be feared. Fearing Allah means piety. The believer obeys Allah's commands and abstains from His prohibitions. He associates nothing with Allah in worship, deems lawful what He has made lawful, and prohibits what He has prohibited. He accepts what He has enjoined upon him,

and is certain that he shall meet Allah and that his actions will be accounted for.

We Muslims are overwhelmed with feelings of humility and modesty towards Allah. We tremble at the thought of Him and entertain the profound reverence dutiful to Him.

The Koran says:

And give thou good tidings unto the humble who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts quake (Al-Hajj, 35).

Allah is the Just, the Judge, and the Avenger. He is All Mighty, All-Vengeful. He punishes those who do evil. He has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in exchange of Paradise. They strive in His cause, whether they kill the infidels and gain victory over them or be killed and martyred in His cause. It is a solemn promise which Allah has pledged in the Torah, in the Gospel and in the Koran, and who can honour and fulfil His promise better than Allah. We Muslims, may rejoice at the bargain which we made with Allah to our advantage. This is indeed triumph supreme.

Allah says in the Koran:

Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their possession against the gift of Paradise; they fight in the way of Allah; they kill and are killed; that is a promise binding upon Allah in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Koran; and who fulfils his covenant truer than Allah? So rejoice in the bargain you have made with Him; that is the mighty triumph (At-Tawbah, 111).

As the Koran teaches, those who deny Allah and death claims them vested with the ugly vesture of disbelief, shall have committed an unforgivable sin. The offer of as much gold as the earth can treasure, shall not be accepted from any of them in expiation for their guilt. Such like persons must expect endless suffering in Hell Fire and shall find no one to offer them help.

Allah says in the Koran:

Surely, those who disbelieve and die while they are unbelievers, the earth full of gold shall not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer to ransom himself with it, these it is who shall have a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers (Al-Imran, 91).

Allah also says in the Koran:

And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the unbelievers (Al-Imran, 131).

Allah's incomparable power compels man to bow humbly before Him. There is no word to express the dimensions of His power; whenever He wills a thing to come into existence, it suffices for the command "Be!" to issue forth from Him and the object addressed will be.

The Koran says:

When He wills a certain thing, He commands it 'Be!' and it is (Yasin, 82).

The Koran also says:

There is nothing in the heavens or the earth that can frustrate Him. Surely He is All-Knowing , All-Powerful (Fatir, 44).

Understanding the Greatness of Allah through His Miraculous Creation

Allah is capable of doing all things. He has created the world according to a precise and specific scheme. All His creation surrenders to His command.

The Koran says:

Surely your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days – then sat Himself upon the Throne, covering the day with the night it pursues urgently – and the sun, and the moon, and the stars subservient, by His

command. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of all Being (Al-A'raf, 54).

Allah created man from the elements of the earth. By dividing human beings into men and women, Allah caused the human race to multiply. This shows the power of Allah, the Creator. At the times when a child starts developing in his mother's womb, he finds that all the factors essential to his growth are provided without asking. This shows that the Creator of the child knew his requirements beforehand, otherwise how could he have made such perfect arrangements in advance?

The same is true of a man's age. Nobody has the power to determine his own life span. It appears that this lies wholly in the hands of Allah. He takes away one person at a young age, while He gives another a longer life. In all these events, nobody has any say, except Allah.

There is a large store of water on the earth – salt water in the oceans and seas, and fresh water in rivers, lakes and springs. This water is the source of innumerable advantages for man. It is used for drinking and irrigation. The creatures, which live in water, provide valuable food for man. The oceans and seas spread over three-fourths of the earth enable transportation and form a vast storehouse of valuable objects like pearls, mineral ores, etc.

Allah causes the earth to revolve around the sun and rotate on its axis in a regulated manner, thereby causing the seasons, and the alternation of day and night. There are similar innumerable arrangements which have been brought into being by the All-Powerful, Allah. As such, who else is there than Allah who deserves man's utmost gratitude?

It is Allah with His unfathomable powers that can fulfil the needs of man, and not those imaginary gods who possess absolutely no powers (3).

The Koran describes the miraculous creation of Allah:

Allah created you of dust then of a sperm-drop, then He made you pairs. No female bears or brings forth, save with His knowledge; and no one's life is prolonged or shortened, but it is in a Book. Surely, that is easy with Allah.

Not equal are the two seas; this is sweet, delicious to drink, and that is salt, bitter to the tongue. And from them both you eat fresh tender meat (fish), and bring forth out of it ornaments for you to wear; and in each you see the ships ploughing through the waves so that you may seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks. He makes the night to enter into the day, and makes the day enter into the night, and He has subjected the sun and the moon, each of them running to a stated term.

That is Allah, your Lord; to Him belongs the Kingdom; and those you call upon, apart from Him, possess not so much as the skin of a date stone. If you call upon them, they will not hear your prayer, and if they heard, they would not answer you; and on the Day of Resurrection they will disown your partnership. None can tell you like One who is aware (Fatir 11-14).

Everyone can see how Allah's artistry produces from rain the wonderful variety of crops and fruits – golden, green, red, yellow, and showing the most beautiful tints we can think of. And each undergoes in nature the gradual shading off in its transformation from the raw stage to the stage of maturity. And in the mountains Allah made paths, passages and tracks of varied hues, white and red of various shades and others of raven black, each reflecting the colour of the dominant mineral its rocks contain.

Allah says in the Koran:

Did you not see how Allah sent down water from the sky with which We bring forth fruit of diverse colours. In the mountains, there are streaks of various shades of white and red, and jet-black rocks; in like manner, men, beasts, and cattle have their diverse hues too. Only those of His

servants, who possess knowledge, fear Allah. Allah is Almighty and Most-Forgiving (Fatir, 27).

The universe as we know it shows not only evidence of initial designs, but also the working of an intelligent providence, which constantly sustains it. That is Allah. If you could imagine that removed, what is there to keep it going? There would only be chaos.

Allah says in the Holy Koran:

Allah holds the heavens and the earth, lest they remove; did they remove, none would hold them after Him. Surely He is All-Clement, All-Forgiving (Fatir, 41).

What is man that Allah should care for him, instruct him, and send him messengers to warn him of danger and harm? It is man that depends on Allah and has need of Him every moment of his life. Allah has no need of him, but He bestows His grace on him as on all His creatures out of His unbounded Mercy and loving kindness. If it were Allah's will, He could blot out man for his rebellion and create an entirely new world. There is no limit to Allah's creative power, or His creative energy, and that is not hard for Allah.

The Koran says:

O men, you are the ones that have need of Allah; He is the All-Sufficient, the All-Laudable. If He will, He can put you away and bring a new creation; that is surely no great matter for Allah (Fatir, 15-17).

The attributes of Allah are different from anything we know in our present world. He lives, but his life is self-subsisting and eternal: it does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. He keeps up and maintains life. His life being the source and constant support of all derived forms of life. Allah has no need of rest or sleep. His activity, like His life, is perfect and self-subsisting. Contrast with this the expression used in the Psalms lxxviii. 65: "Then the lord awake as one out of

sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.”

Everything is His. How then can any creature stands before Him as of right, and claims to intercede for a fellow creature? Allah’s knowledge is absolute and is not conditioned by time and space. His knowledge and our knowledge are therefore in different categories, and our knowledge only gets some reflection of reality when it accords with His will and Plan (4).

The Koran says:

Allah - there is no God but He, the Living, the Everlasting. Slumber seizes Him not, neither sleep; to Him belongs all that in the heavens and the earth. Who is there that shall intercede with Him save by His leave? He knows what lies before them and what is after them, and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge save such as He wills. His Throne comprises the heavens and the earth; the preserving of them oppresses Him not; He is the All-High. The All-Glorious (Al-Baqara, 256).

The only source of light in this universe is Allah. All receive light and guidance from this source alone.

Allah speaks about His light in the Koran:

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth; the likeness of His Light is a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star kindled from a blessed Tree, an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West whose oil would shine, even if no fire touched it; Light upon light; Allah guides to His Light whom He will. And Allah strikes similitudes for men, and Allah has knowledge of everything (Al-Nur, 35).

The above verse is a metaphor with many layers of meaning. Light symbolizes the guidance of Allah.’ Niche’ is man’s heart and lamp’ is faith, sheltered in that niche. The image is elaborated by two more points of reference: ‘glittering star’ and ‘shining oil’. The ‘Glass by itself does not shine,

but when the light comes into it, it shines like a glittering star. So men of Allah, who preach Allah's Truth, are themselves illuminated by Allah's Light and become like illuminated media through which that Light spreads and permeates human life. Faith already compared to a 'lamp' standing in the 'niche' of the human heart, is safe and well protected from any external influence by the walls of the niche (human heart). The 'shining oil' filling the lamp and ready to be lit at any moment, speaks of the eagerness with which faith waits for the Truth to appear before it, so that it may accept it without the slightest delay and sets itself ablaze (5).

By nature, man's receptivity to Truth is so immense and inflames so easily that it may be compared to petrol, which flares up as soon as a spark comes in contact with it.

Allah's power is overwhelming and beyond human imagination. Nothing is hidden from Him, the weight of a speck of dust on the earth or in the heaven. Not what is less than that or what is greater than that but it is written in a Clear Record. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. He owns all things, and He has no need of anything besides Himself, everything is in need of Him and in a state of submission to Him.

He withholds the heaven from falling on the earth except by His leave. If He willed, He could give the sky permission to fall on the earth, and whoever is in it would be killed.

The seven heavens and the earth and all creation praise His glory and extol His glorious attributes. All Nature bears witness to His power, wisdom and goodness. It is only those who deny faith who understand not their way of ascribing His glory.

The seven heavens and the earth, and whosoever in them is, extol Him; nothing is, that does not proclaim His praise, but you do not understand their extolling! Surely He is All-Clement, All-Forgiving (Al-Isra', 44).

Allah gave us life, and then will cause us to die, and will again give us life, and then He will bring us to account.

Allah had called upon all people in every era to fear Him. We read in the Koran:

And We had enjoined upon those who were given the Scripture before – as well as yourselves – to fear Allah. (Al-Nisa', 131).

It is Allah's right over His servants that they fear Him as He ought to be feared.

Allah says:

“O you who believe! Fear Allah as He ought to be feared and do not die except as believers.” (Al-Imran, 102).

Fearing Allah means that He is to be obeyed not disobeyed, remembered not forgotten, and shown gratitude not ingratitude.

The fear of Allah is the path to forgiveness, salvation, and the attainment of Allah's mercy.

Allah says:

“Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who do good.” (Al-nahl, 128).

He also says:

“And My mercy encompasses all things, and I shall decree it for those who fear Me.” (Al-A'raf, 156).

“And whoever fears Allah – He will pardon him his sins and grant him a great reward.” (Al-Talaq, 5).

“Indeed, those who fear Allah will be among gardens and rivers, in a seat of truth near an All-Powerful Sovereign.” (Al-Qamar 54, 55).

Allah promises those who fear Him that He will provide for their needs and grant them a way out of their worldly difficulties.

Allah says:

“And whoever fears Allah, He will make for him a way out, and provide for him from whence he could never imagine.”
(Al-Talaq, 2,3).

Fear of Allah after knowing His greatness and overwhelming power prevents His servants from sin. They know that if they commit any wrong, they will have to stand and answer their wrongdoings before Allah very shortly. One must not ponder on whether the sin is big or small, rather reflect upon the greatness of whom he has disobeyed.

Fear of Allah is a blessing from the many of His blessings to man. Allah calls this fear a blessing because it prevents people from sin.

Fear of Allah is the highest rank of piety. Man cannot attain the high ranks of the pious unless he is afraid of Allah. In confirmation of that, Allah says in the Koran:

Those only are believers who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts quake, and when His signs are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and in their Lord they put their trust Al-Anfal, 2).

Surely those who tremble in fear of their Lord and those who believe in the signs of their Lord and those who associate not with their Lord (other deities), and those who give what they give (their charity and also do other good deeds) with their hearts quaking of fear (whether their alms and charities have been accepted or not) because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning)
(Al-Mu'minoon, 60).

The Prophet of Islam said:

“I have the best knowledge about Allah among the

people, and I fear Him most among them all.”

The Prophet's wife A'isha narrated that she said to the Messenger of Allah, “O Messenger of Allah! When people see clouds they usually feel happy, hoping that it would rain, while I notice that when you see clouds, the signs of dissatisfaction are visible on your face.” He said: “O A'ishah! What guarantees to me that there will be no punishment in it, since some people were punished with wind? Verily, some people saw (received) the punishment, but (while seeing the cloud) they said: ‘This cloud will give us rain.’”

Due to his great fear while standing in front of his Lord in prayer, the Prophet would weep so much that his chest would sound like the sounding of a boiling kettle. It is narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullah Ibn Ash-Shakhir, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: “I saw the Messenger of Allah, while he was performing prayer, during which I heard (him weeping and) his chest was sounding like the sounding of a boiling kettle, due to his great fear of Allah Almighty.”

Those are some examples illustrating how Prophet Muhammad, felt afraid of Allah His Lord. Now, we move to the angels and their fear of their Lord.

The next verse refers to the Trinitarian superstition that Allah has begotten a son and to the Arab superstition that the angels were daughters of Allah. All such superstitions are derogatory to the glory of Allah. The prophets and angels are no more than servants of Allah. They are raised higher in honour, and therefore they deserve our high respect, but not our worship.

Allah says in the Koran:

They say, "The Most Merciful has taken a son." Glory be to Him! Nay, but they are honoured servants that outstrip Him not in speech and performs as He commands. He knows what is before them and behind them, and they intercede

not save for him with whom He is well pleased, and they tremble in awe of Him. (Al-Anbiya' 26-28).

All that in the heavens or earth, whether inanimate things, ordinary living things and angels bow down and serve their Lord. The angels whom we imagine to be pure glorious creatures of light, high in the spiritual world, near the Throne of Allah Himself, are yet His creatures, serve Him without ceasing, and are proud to do so. Such is the majesty of Allah Most high.

The Koran says:

To Him belongs whosoever is in the heavens and the earth; and those who are with Him wax not too proud to do Him service, neither grow weary, glorifying Him by night and in the daytime and never failing (Al-Anbiya', 19, 20).

Allah says in the Koran:

To Allah bows everything in the heavens, and every creature crawling on the earth, and the angels. They have not waxed proud (they worship their Lord with humility); they fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded (Al-Nahl, 49, 50).

What Allah requires of man, is that he should always remain in the state of submission as demanded by acknowledgement of the Truth. This is the true religion. Viewed from this point, the whole universe follows the religion of Truth.

From Allah we are; to Him we belong; and to Him we shall return. Not only we, but all creation proclaims this in the whole world.

There is a specific mode of prayer and way of glorifying Allah prescribed for every single creature of Allah, which is expected to adhere to. Similarly, there is a specific method of glorifying Allah as prescribed for a human being and he is expected to follow it. If a man indulges in

rebellious behaviour on this score, he shall have to pay a heavy price for it.

Hast thou not seen that Allah, He it is Whom all who are in the heavens and the earth praise, and the birds in their flight ? Of each He knoweth verily the worship and the praise; and Allah is Aware of what they do (An-Nur 41, 42).

It is narrated on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik, that the Messenger of Allah, said: "O Gabriel! What is the matter with Michael that I never see him laughing?" he said: "Michael has never laughed since Allah Almighty created the fire (of Hell)."

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir, that the Messenger of Allah said: "On the night I was made to set out on a night journey, I came upon the highest assembly (of angels), thereupon I saw Gabriel, (as motionless) as a worn-out cloth because of his great fear (of Allah Almighty), and thereupon I came to know his position."

As such was the Prophet, and the angels; although they completely obeyed their Lord, they also feared Him so much.

It is related that once, Ali the fourth caliph, offered morning prayer in Kufah and then sat lowering his head, with the signs of gloominess visible on his face. Then he said something, after which the next Friday did not come upon him before he had died. He said: "I saw the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, and I have never seen anything resembling them. Whenever morning came upon them, they would seem dishevelled, pale (because of their long standing at night praying), with dust covering their clothes, and swelling in between their eyes like the goat's knee because of their much weeping, having spent the night in prostration to Allah and standing in prayer, reciting the Book of Allah, reclining for some time against their feet during their standing, and for some time against their foreheads (during their prostration). When dawn broke, they would remember Allah Almighty, and incline like the trees on a windy day, by Allah, as if they spent the night

heedless (of the world round them).” After that he was not seen laughing or smiling.

Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir, kept weeping so much until his family feared for him. They went to Abu Hazim and asked him to check him up, and Abu Hazim came and asked him: “What causes you to weep, may Allah have mercy upon you?” Muhammad said: “A Holy Verse in Allah’s Book which, when I recite, I could not help shedding tears.” He asked him about it and he said: “It is the statement of Allah: “If the evildoers possessed all that is in the earth, and the like of it with it, they would offer it to ransom themselves from the evil of the chastisement on the Day of Resurrection; yet there would appear to them from Allah that they never reckoned with, and there would appear to them the evils of that they have earned, and they would be encompassed by that they mocked at (Az-Zumur 39:47).

Then, all of us went on weeping.

Sitting with his pupils, Sufyan Ath-Thawri all of a sudden, went on weeping. They asked him about the reason and he said: “I feel afraid I would be deprived of faith at death.” When death approached him, he wept so much, and when he was asked about that, he said: “Woe to you! Do you know whether to Paradise or to the fire (of Hell) I would be taken?”

Al-Hasan Al-Basri, was in the habit of extreme sadness and fear of Allah. In comment on that, he said: “I feel afraid that when Allah looks at our deeds, He would say: ‘I would not accept anything from you.’”

One day, ‘Ata’ As-Sulami, looked at the furnace thereupon he fell unconscious, for he remembered the statement of Allah: “The Fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured) (Al-Mu’minun, 104).

The fear of Allah results in strict observation of His commandments. The fearful of Allah always feels the significance of the statement of Allah in the Koran:

All that in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him; He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth; He gives life and He makes to die, and He is powerful over everything. He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward; He has knowledge of everything. It is He that created the heavens and the earth in six days then seated Himself on the Throne. He knows what penetrates into the earth, and what comes forth from it, what comes down from heaven and what goes up unto it. He is with you wherever you are; and Allah sees the things you do (Al-Hadid 1-4).

He who seeks the mundane glory and power must realize that such attributes are entirely those of Allah. If man seeks for mere glory and power, there is no such thing apart from Allah. But by seeking Allah, man attains the highest glory and power.

An undeserving person may temporarily receive honour, but in the Hereafter all the honours will fall to the lot of those who are really deserving of them. The criteria of judging worthiness will be righteous words and pious deeds of man while struggling throughout his life to serve Allah and submit to His will. Those who build their lives in piety are bound to secure Allah's help.

We read in the Koran:

Whosoever desires glory, the glory altogether belongs to Allah. To Him good words go up, and the righteous deed – He uplifts it; but those who devise evil deeds – theirs shall be a terrible chastisement, and their devise shall come to nothing (Fatir, 10).

The rejecters of Allah hardly realize the terrible consequences awaiting them. If Allah's grace is withdrawn from them, they will perish in their own sins and wrongdoing.

...then I seized the unbelievers, and how was My horror (Fatir, 26).

The enemies of Islam think that the falsehood they promulgate about Islam is a light thing, while it is most serious in the sight of Allah.

The Koran says:

When you received it (falsehood) on your tongues, and were speaking with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, and reckoned it a light thing, and with Allah it was a mighty thing (Al-Nur, 15).

To oppose the Truth is to oppose Allah. Man can never hide anything from Allah, nor is it possible for anybody to elude His grasp. On the Day of Judgment Truth will prevail and all false values will be remedied. Not only true values will be restored, but we shall see ourselves the inwardness of things in our own lives, which we never saw before.

Allah says in the Koran:

Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger shall be frustrated as those before them were frustrated. Now We have sent down signs, clear signs, and for the unbelievers awaits a humbling chastisement, upon the Day when Allah shall raise them up all together, then He shall tell them what they did, Allah has numbered it, they have forgotten it. Allah is witness over everything (Al-Mugadalah 5, 6).

Whatever secret men may plot, everything is known to Allah. His recording angels are at His servants sides recording everything.

The Koran says:

Or do they think that We hear not their secret and what they conspire together? Yes indeed, and Our Messengers are present with them writing it down (Az-Zukhruf, 80).

Everything that exists is known to Allah; not only concrete things, but feelings, motives, plans and what the breasts conceal. He it is that has made us inheritors in the earth; if

then, any do reject Allah, their rejection works against themselves, and add to their own undoing.

Allah says in the Koran:

Allah knows the Unseen in the heavens and the earth; He knows the thoughts within the breasts. It is He who appointed you viceroys in the earth. So whosoever disbelieves, his unbelief shall be charged against him; their unbelief increases the disbelievers only in hate in Allah's sight; their unbelief increases the disbelievers only in loss (Fatir 38, 39).

The descent of anybody in Hell will be entirely because of his own shortcomings. Allah gave man a high degree of understanding, and opened up for him the paths of Truth. But man knowingly and deliberately ignored the Truth. How then could he escape being subjected to eternal punishment?

The scourge of Hell will be so grievous, that there will be no hope of relief from it. The appeal made by people in Hell to Malik the angel in charge of Hell will be an expression of helplessness and the affirmation that Allah's decision was final and that it could not be evaded.

The Koran says:

The evildoers shall endure forever the chastisement of the Fire, from which there is no relief: they will remain there in utter despair. We have not wronged them, but they themselves did the wrong. And they shall call, 'O malik! (keeper of Hell) Let your Lord make an end of us.' He will say, 'Verily, you shall abide for ever.' We brought you the Truth (Muhammad with the Koran), but most of you were averse to it (Az-Zukhruf 75-78).

While dedicating their lives for such noble purpose, the prophets were promised Allah's protection against their enemies. This protection takes several forms: wars against Allah's enemies, natural disasters wiping out disobedient nations, invisible angels supporting the prophets while struggling in

Allah's cause. These sorts of divine protection are not violence, but are Allah's will to enforce His Law in His earthly Kingdom. In that sense, Allah's enforcement of His Law is a Mercy to His servants and not violence.

Muhammad - peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – had many difficulties to contend with many enemies and dangers to avoid. His mission must be fulfilled. The Messenger must go forward and proclaim that Message and fulfil his mission, trusting Allah for protection and unconcerned if people who had lost sense of right rejected it or threatened him.

When the Prophet Muhammad appeared in Arabia, it was not the case that there was nobody professing religion there at that time. The whole Arabian society was founded on religion. It was in the name of religion that many people had assumed positions of prominence and leadership. In spite of this, the Prophet had to endure the worst type of opposition from his own people. The reason for this was the prevalence among them of a new self-made religion of Allah.

Centuries of traditions had resulted in the formation of various seats of power and centres of vested interests. When the prophet gave a call for pure religion, the people felt that it was damaging to their religious status. They were afraid that once Muhammad's religion took root, the old religious order which had given them prominent status would be destroyed.

Prophet Muhammad had to struggle against established religious authorities of the time. As a result, he faced ridicule, violent actions and was deprived of all support. They put him under siege, tortured and killed his companions, and launched wars against him. But the purveyor of Allah's will was patient and trusted in Allah. Allah's promise of help assisted him in spreading the Message. Bringing Islam to the world is Allah's will and plan, so it was inevitably completed.

The Message of Allah is glad tidings for those who believe in Him and follow His Law, for it is a Message of Mercy and forgiveness through repentance and amendment. But in the case of the wicked it is a cause of sorrow, for it denounces sin and proclaims the punishment of those who do not turn from evil.

Allah is the Knower of the Unseen, He reveals to none His Unseen except to a Messenger from mankind whom He has chosen, and then He makes a band of angels to march before him and behind him, so that He may know that the messengers have delivered the messages of their Lord. He encompasses all that is with them and He keeps count of all things

The Koran says:

Knower of the Unseen, and He discloses not the Unseen to anyone, save only to such a Messenger as He is well-pleased with; then He despatches before him and behind him watchers, that He may know they have delivered the messages of their Lord; and He encompasses all that is with them, and He has numbered everything in numbers (Al-Jinn 27, 28).

In the scheme and plan of Allah, war is justified as long as it is launched in His cause. When Prophet Muhammad brought the Message of Islam to the idolaters of Makkah, they denied the Message, killed his companions, put him under siege, persecuted him and fought him. This torture lasted for eleven years after which Allah ordered the Prophet and the believers to fight back.

The Prophet and the believers fought the infidels and the idolaters not out of their own desire but because of the command of the Creator.

Allah commands in the Koran:

Fight them, till there is no persecution and the religion is Allah's entirely; then if they give over, surely Allah sees the things they do; but if they turn away, know that Allah is your

protector – an excellent protector, an excellent helper (Al-An'am 39).

This is Allah's mode of action with all His enemies throughout all ages. Allah does not change His words or commands to His prophets, and no man would dare change His words. In order to make the truth to triumph Allah commanded His prophet and the believers to fight the disbelievers until they renounce infidelity and turn to Allah. If they believe in Allah and His Message of Islamic monotheism, they will be forgiven their past iniquities. But should they resume hostilities and persist in their assertion of their falsehood, the Prophets and the believers should fight them until the worship will all be for Allah alone. Even in the midst of the fight, Muslims must always be ready for peace if there is any inclination towards peace on the other side.

The Koran says:

But if the enemy incline toward peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah: for He is One that heareth and knowest all things (Al-Anfal, 61).

Allah does not want to see infidels and disbelievers in His earthly kingdom. He created the universe and made it subservient to man in order for man to worship Him alone – that is the purpose of creation. Violating this purpose by disbelieving in Allah, or worshipping Him through other invented deities bring Allah's wrath on the wrongdoers and on the nations involved in such blasphemy.

Allah's commands to His Prophets and the believers to fight their enemies are clear in the Bible and the Koran.

I have here before me 1317 violent passages in the Bible corresponding to only 532 violent verses in the Koran. Does that mean that Judaism and Islam are violent religions? For example, and as shown in the Bible, Allah could destroy His enemies through natural disasters.

In Nahum 1:2-8 NLT we read:

The LORD is a jealous God, filled with vengeance and wrath.

He takes revenge on all who oppose him and furiously destroys His enemies! The LORD is slow to get angry, but His power is great, and He never lets the guilty go unpunished. He displays His power in the whirlwind and the storm. The billowing clouds are the dust beneath His feet. At his command, the oceans and rivers dry up, the lush pastures of Bashan and Carmel fade, and the green forests of Lebanon wilt. In His presence the mountains quake, and the hills melt away; the earth trembles, and its people are destroyed. Who can stand before His fierce anger? Who can survive His burning fury? His rage blazes forth like fire and the mountains crumble to dust in His presence. The LORD is good. When trouble comes, He is a strong refuge. And He knows everyone who trusts in Him. But He sweeps away his enemies in an overwhelming flood. He pursues His foes into the darkness of night.

Allah destroys His enemies through pillage and plunder. As mentioned in Nahum 2:2-10 NLT:

For the land of Israel lies empty and broken after your attacks, but the LORD will restore its honour and power again.

Shields flash red in the sunlight! The attack begins! See their scarlet uniforms! Watch as their glittering chariots move into position, with a forest of spears waving above them. The chariots race recklessly along the streets and through the squares, swift as lightning, flickering like torches. The king shouts to his officers; they stumble in their haste, rushing to the walls to set up their defences. But too late! The river gates are open! The enemy has entered! The palace is about to collapse! Nineveh's exile has been decreed, and all the servant girls mourn its capture. Listen to them moan like doves; watch them beat their breasts in sorrow. Nineveh is like a leaking water reservoir! The people are slipping away. "Stop, stop!" someone shouts, but the people just keep on running. Loot the silver! Plunder the gold! There seems no end to Nineveh's many treasures – its vast, uncounted wealth. Soon the city is an empty shambles, stripped of

its wealth. Hearts melt in horror, and knees shake. The people stand aghast, their faces pale and trembling.

As mentioned in Zephaniah 3:6-10 NLT, Allah is an angry jealous God:

"I have wiped out many nations, devastating their fortress walls and towers. Their cities are now deserted; their streets are in silent ruin. There are no survivors to even tell what happened. I thought, 'Surely they will have reverence for me now! Surely they will listen to my warnings, so I won't need to strike again.' But no; however much I punish them, they continue their evil practices from dawn till dusk and dusk till dawn." So now the LORD says: "Be patient; the time is coming soon when I will stand up and accuse these evil nations. For it is my decision to gather together the kingdoms of the earth and pour out my fiercest anger and fury on them. All the earth will be devoured by the fire of my jealousy. "On that day I will purify the lips of all people, so that everyone will be able to worship the LORD together. My scattered people who live beyond the rivers of Ethiopia will come to present their offerings.

In Zephaniah 1:2-6 NLT we read that Allah will kill everyone;

"I will sweep away everything in all your land," says the LORD. "I will sweep away both people and animals alike. Even the birds of the air and the fish in the sea will die. I will reduce the wicked to heaps of rubble, along with the rest of humanity," says the LORD. "I will crush Judah and Jerusalem with my fist and destroy every last trace of their Baal worship. I will put an end to all the idolatrous priests, so that even the memory of them will disappear. For they go up to their roofs and bow to the sun, moon, and stars. They claim to follow the LORD, but then they worship Molech, too. So now, I will destroy them! And I will destroy those who used to worship me but now no longer do. They no longer ask for the LORD's guidance or seek my blessings."

We read in the Gospel of Jesus - Matthew 26: 52-54:

Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

We also read:

Jesus Christ said: "Do not think that I came to bring peace on Earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."
(Matthew, Chapter 10).

It would not be right to conclude that the religion preached by Moses or Christ was one of war and violence, for such utterances relate purely to particular occasions. So far as general life is concerned, Moses and Christ taught peaceful values, such as the building up of a good character, loving each other, helping the poor and the needy, etc.

The same is true with the Koran. When the Prophet of Islam emigrated from Makkah to Madinah, the idolatrous tribes were aggressive towards him, but the Prophet always averted their attacks by the exercise of patience and the strategy of avoidance. However, on certain occasions no other options existed, save that of retaliation. Therefore, he had to battle on certain occasions. It was these circumstances, which occasioned those revelations relating to war. These commands, being specific to certain circumstances, had no general application. They were not meant to be valid for all time to come. That is why; the permanent status of the Prophet has been termed a 'mercy for all mankind.'

As the Koran says:

We have not sent thee, save as a mercy unto all beings
(Al-Anbiya', 107).

In fact, the principle of fighting in Islam is only for self-defence:

Leave is given to those who fight because they were wronged – surely Allah is able to help them – who were expelled from their habitations without right, except that they say, ‘Our Lord is Allah.’ Had Allah not driven back the people, some by the means of others, there had been destroyed cloisters and churches, oratories and mosques, wherein Allah’s Name is much mentioned. Assuredly, Allah will help him who helps Him – surely Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty (Al-Hajj 39, 40).

As mentioned in the above verse, the Koran is so tolerant as to allow waging wars only as a last resort, and for the protection of churches, synagogues, and mosques

Further, Muslims are commanded not to be aggressive during wars:

And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not: Allah loves not the transgressors (Al-Baqarah, 190).

In addition, when the enemy inclines toward peace, Muslims are commanded to cease hostilities:

And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it; and put thy trust in Allah; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing (Al-Anfal, 61).

The guiding principle of Islam with respect to non-Muslims is one of tolerance and mutual respect:

Allah forbids you not, as regards those who have not fought you in religion’s cause, and expelled you from your habitations, that you should be kindly to them, and acts justly towards them; surely Allah loves the just (Mumtahinah, 8).

Then there is the issue of how the Koran treats Jews and Christians. Some have claimed that the Koran says that Jews are consigned to humiliation and wretchedness. But this humiliation and wretchedness were not meant for all Jews, but only those who disobeyed Allah and worked corruption in the land.

The Koran says about those Jews who introduced corruption:

Cursed were the unbelievers of the Children of Israel by the tongue of David, and Jesus, Mary's son; that, for their rebelling and transgression. They forbade not one another any dishonour that they committed; surely evil were the things they did (Al-Maida 78, 79).

And those who breached Allah's covenant and disobeyed Moses:

And when We took compact with the Children of Israel; 'You shall not serve any but Allah; and to be good to parents, and the near kinsman, and to orphans, and to the needy; and speak good to men, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms.' Then you turned away, all but a few of you, swerving aside.

And when We took compact with you: 'You shall not shed your own blood, neither expel your own from your habitations'; then you confirmed it and yourselves bore witness. Then there you are killing one another, and expelling a party of you from their habitations, conspiring against them in sin and enmity; and if they come to you as captives, you ransom them; yet their expulsion was forbidden you. What, do you believe in part of the Book and disbelieve in part?

What shall be the recompense of those of you who do that, but degradation in the present life, and on the Day of resurrection to be returned unto the most terrible of chastisement? And Allah is not heedless of the things you do (Al-Baqara 84, 85).

The Koran says about the Jews who were enemies to Archangel Gabriel:

Say: 'Whosoever is an enemy to Gabriel – he it was that brought it (the Koran) down upon thy heart by the leave of Allah, confirming what was before it, and for a guidance and good tidings to the believers. Whosoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His messengers and Gabriel,

and Michael – surely Allah is an enemy to the unbelievers.’ (Al-Baqara 97, 98).

It is therefore important that when addressing verses that on the surface seem to be derogatory toward Jews, it is essential that the verses be placed in context.

The iniquities of the Jews mentioned in the Koran are not addressed to all Jews but only to those who committed these iniquities at their specific time and place.

It becomes clear therefore that the claim of the Koran's anti-Semitism is an absurd fallacy.

In the Koran, Jews and Christians are given the honorific title "People of the Book." The Prophet was the last in the line of Prophets and Messengers, dating back to Adam. Islam is nothing more than the continuation and completion of their message. Thus, the Koran acknowledges and respects the previous Messages of Abraham, David, Moses and Jesus (6).

In response to the charges that Islam is a violent religion, I assert here that Islam does not condone violence but, like other religions, does believe in self-defence. Like all religions, Islam occasionally allows for force while stressing that the main spiritual goal is one of nonviolence and peace. Although it would be a mistake to think that Islam is inherently a violent religion, it would be equally inappropriate to fail to understand the conditions under which believers might feel justified in acting violently against their enemies. The Koranic exposition on resisting aggression, oppression and injustice lays down the parameters within which fighting or the use of violence is legitimate.

We know that the Bible and the Gospel were corrupted in several places. But if the violent passages in them were correct and were truly the words of Allah to His Prophets, we, believers, must surrender, submit and accept them because they were the commands of Allah to the prophets

and the believers to make His religion triumphant over all faked religions.

Likewise, the violent verses in the Koran must be treated the same way.

I do not hesitate to emphasize again and again, that man has been given freedom of action in the present life, but he misuses it. His wrongs are so many that if he were taken to task for his misdeeds, the entire human race would be wiped out from the face of the world. But human freedom is purely for the purpose of putting man to test, and there is a period fixed for this. The period for the individual lasts until his death and the period fixed for humanity as a whole is until Doomsday. For this reason, the human race is still extant in the worldly life. However, just as it is a fact that Allah does not seize hold of anybody before the expiry of the trial period, He will definitely do so and nobody will escape the trial.

Allah says in the Koran:

What, have they not journeyed in the land and beheld how was the end of those before them? They were stronger than themselves in might; but Allah – there is naught in the heavens or the earth that can frustrate Him. Surely He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

If Allah should take men to task for what they have earned He would not leave upon the face of the earth one creature that crawls; but He grants them respite until an appointed time comes, then they will know that Allah is Ever-Seer to His slaves (Fatir 44, 45).

The enemies of Islam in all ages have not credited Allah with the attributes which are asserted as His own and they failed to ponder His marvels which credited His Omnipotence. On the Day of Resurrection, they will realize His greatness when the earth with all its contents shall be under His command as though it were an object firmly grasped with His fist and heavens folded in His right Hand.

On that Day, the trumpet will be blown emitting a thunderous blast as to overwhelm all those in the heavens and on earth who shall be stunned into unconsciousness except those, Allah spares. Next follows another trumpet blast, and there, they are all upon their feet and looking around.

The earth will shine with the light of its Lord; the Record of deeds will be laid open, and all the Prophets and the witnesses are brought up to the August presence of Allah their Lord, and the divine sentences will be decided with equity and truth and no one shall ever be wronged.

And there, each soul will be requited with what is commensurate with its deeds. The infidels will be herded in throngs to the abysm of Hell and when they have reached its gates they are swung open in Allah's name, and there, shall the harsh angels in charge of Hell receive them with a reproach unto their infidelity, thus: 'Did you not – you infidels – ' say the angels, 'receive Apostles chosen from your midst to recite to you the divine revelations revealed by Allah your Creator, and warn you of this Day?' 'Indeed they did', say the infidels.' 'But' say the angels.', 'Allah's Word that was proclaimed beforehand is now being realized that the infidels were born to be the inmates of Hell.' And here, they are told, 'make entry – you infidels – into the gates of Hell to take your permanent abode in its abysm.'

And led to Paradise in crowds are those who remained in awe of Allah, and when they have reached its gates which are now laid open in the name of Allah, they are received with heartily welcome, and the angels in charge of paradise would say, 'Peace be upon you Allah's devotees. Well done, make entry; you are here to stay for eternity.'

We read in the Koran:

They measure not Allah with His true measure. The earth altogether shall be His handful on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens shall be rolled up in His

right hand. Glory be to Him! High He exalted above that they associate!

The Trumpet shall be blown, and whosoever in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth shall swoon, save whom Allah wills. Then it shall be blown again, and lo, they shall stand, beholding. And the earth shall shine with the light of its Lord, and the Book shall be set in place, and the Prophets and witnesses shall be brought, and every soul shall be paid in full for what it has brought, and they will not be wronged.

Then the unbelievers shall be driven in companies into Gehenna (Hell) till, when they have come thither, then its gates will be opened and its keepers will say to them, Did not Messengers come to you from among yourselves, reciting to you the signs of your Lord and warning you against the encounter of this your day?' They shall say, 'Yes indeed; but the word of chastisement has been realized against the unbelievers.'

It shall be said, 'Enter the gates of Gehenna, to dwell therein forever.' How evil is the lodging of those that are proud!

Then those that feared their Lord shall be driven in companies into Paradise, till, when they have come thither, and its gates are opened, and its keepers will say to them, 'Peace be upon you. Well you have fared; enter in, to dwell forever.' And they shall say, 'Praise belongs to Allah who has been true in His promise to us, and has bequeathed upon us the earth, for us to make our dwelling where we will in Paradise.' How excellent is the wage of those that labour.

And thou shalt see the angels encircling about the Throne proclaiming the praise of their Lord; and justly the issue shall be decided between them; and it shall be said, 'Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all Being (Az-Zumar 67-74).

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