

QUICK GRASP OF FAITH

– 2 –

**This is the path of your Lord—straight.
We have made the Signs clear for people who remember.
(Surat al-An'am: 126)**

HARUN YAHYA

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Goodword Books
1, Nizamuddin West Market,
New Delhi 110 013
Tel. 435 5454, 435 1128, 435 6666
Fax. 435 7333, 435 7980
e-mail: info@goodwordbooks.com
Website: www.goodwordbooks.com

Edited by Uthman Ibrahim Morrison

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TO THE READER

All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning Allah's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensure that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at a one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of Allah. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.

We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.

In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

His penname is a composite of the names *Harun* (Aaron) and *Yahya* (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their people's lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of godless ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur' an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's Existence and Unity and the Hereafter; and to expose godless systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian.

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

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological chaos, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such

a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twentyfirst century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include *The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry, Global Freemasonry, The Kabbala and Freemasonry, The Knight Templars, Templars and Freemasonry, Israel's Policy of World Domination, Islam Denounces Terrorism, The Black Clan, Terrorism: The Ritual of the Devil, The Disasters Darwinism Brought to Humanity, Communism in Ambush, Fascism: The Bloody Ideology of Darwinism, The 'Secret Hand'in Bosnia, Holocaust Violence, Behind the Scenes of Terrorism, Israel's Kurdish Card, Communist China's Policy of Oppression in East Turkestan, Palestine, Solution: The Values of the Qur'an, The Winter of Islam and The Spring to Come, Islam and Buddhism, The Philosophy of Zionism, Articles 1-2-3, Romanticism: A Weapon of Satan, The Light of the Qur'an Has Destroyed Satanism, Signs From the Chapter of the Cave in the Qur'an to the Last Times, The End Times and the Mahdi, Signs From the Qur'an, Signs of the Last Day, The Last Times and The Beast of the Earth, Truths 1-2, Idealism The Philosophy of Matrix and the True Nature of Matter, The Western World Turns to God, The Evolution Deceit, The Perfect Design in the Universe Is Not by Chance, Why Darwinism Is Incomparable with the Qur'an, Darwinism Refuted, New Research Demolishes Evolution, A Definitive Reply to Evolutionist Propaganda, The Quandary of Evolution I-II (Encyclopedic), The Error of the Evolution of Species, The Blunders of Evolutionists, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 50 Steps, The Errors of The NAS:A Reply to the National Academy of Sciences Booklet Science and Creationism, Confessions of Evolutionists, Perished Nations, For Men of Understanding, Love of Allah, Allah's Art of Affection, The Glad Tidings of the Messiah, The Prophet Musa (as), The Prophet Yusuf (as), The Prophet Muhammad (saas), The Prophet Sulayman (as), The Prophet Ibrahim (as) and the Prophet Lut (as), Maryam (as) The Exemplary Muslim Woman, The Golden Age, Allah Exists, Allah's Artistry in Colour, Magnificence Everywhere, The Importance of the Evidences of Creation, The Truth of the Life of This World, The Nightmare of Disbelief, Knowing the Truth, Eternity Has Already Begun, Timelessness and the Reality of Fate, Matter: Another Name for Illusion, The Little Man in the Tower, Islam and Karma, The Dark Magic of Darwinism, The Religion of Darwinism, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 20 Questions, Allah is Known Through Reason, The Qur'an Leads the Way to*

Science, Consciousness in the Cell, Biomimetics Technology Imitates Nature, The Engineering in Nature, A String of Miracles, The Creation of the Universe, Miracles of the Qur'an, The Design in Nature, Self-Sacrifice and Intelligent Behaviour Models in Animals, Deep Thinking, Never Plead Ignorance, The Green Miracle: Photosynthesis, The Miracle in the Cell, The Miracle in the Eye, The Miracle in the Spider, The Miracle in the Mosquito, The Miracle in the Ant, The Miracle of the Immune System, The Miracle of Creation in Plants, The Miracle in the Atom, The Miracle in the Honeybee, The Miracle of Seed, The Miracle of Hormones, The Miracle of the Termite, The Miracle of the Human Body, The Miracle of Human Creation, The Miracle of Protein, The Miracle of Smell and Taste, The Miracle of the Microworld, The Secrets of DNA, The Miracle in the Molecule, The Miracle of Creation in DNA, The Miracle of Talking Birds.

The author's childrens books are: *Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Glory in the Heavens, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Islam, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Constructors: Beavers, Tell Me About Creation, The Miracle in Our Body, A Day in the Life of a Muslim, Children This is for You I-II*

The author's other works on Quranic topics include: *The Basic Concepts in the Qur'an, The Moral Values of the Qur'an, Quick Grasp of Faith 1-2-3, Ever Thought About the Truth?, Crude Understanding of Disbelief, Devoted to Allah, Abandoning the Society of Ignorance, Paradise: The Believers' Real Home, Learning from the Qur'an, An Index to the Qur'an, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, Names of Allah, Communicating the Message and Disputing in the Qur'an, Answers from the Qur'an, Death Resurrection Hell, The Struggle of the Messengers, The Avowed Enemy of Man: Satan, The Greatest Slander: Idolatry, The Religion of the Ignorant, The Arrogance of Satan, Prayer in the Qur'an, The Theory of Evolution, The Importance of Conscience in the Qur'an, The Day of Resurrection, Never Forget, Commonly Disregarded Qur'anic Rulings, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, Perfected Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties for Life in the Qur'an, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, Real Wisdom Described in the Qur'an, The Struggle Against the Religion of Irreligion, The School of Yusuf, The Alliance of the Good, Slanders Spread Against Muslims Throughout History, The Importance of Following the Good Word, Why Do You Deceive Yourself?, Islam: The Religion of Ease, Zeal and Enthusiasm Described in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in All, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Hopefulness in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Heed the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity Described in the Qur'an, The Happiness of Believers, Those Who Exhaust Their Pleasures During Their Wordly Lives, A Sly Game of Satan, Passivism in Religion, The Religion of*

Worshipping People, Agonies of a Fake World, How a Muslim Speaks, The Silent Language of Evil, The Ruses of the Liar in the Qur'an, Loyalty in the Qur'an, The Solution to Secret Torments.

1. What does modesty signify in believers?

Modesty is mentioned in the Qur'an as an important attribute of believers. Allah, in His verses, commands believers to be modest. It is also related in Qur'anic verses that Allah does not love those who are haughty and boastful.

Believers are those who are aware of the fact that Allah is the Creator and the only Lord of everything, and that it is He Who bestows His blessings on mankind. A believer is cognisant of his weakness before Allah, and therefore never displays an unjust arrogance. No matter how beautiful, how rich, how intelligent or how esteemed he may be, he does not boast of these things, because he knows that it is Allah Who grants them to him. For that reason his behaviour towards other believers is also modest. He does not try to emphasise his own abilities or good features; he expects the recompense for all he does only from Allah.

Contrary to the arrogance of unbelievers, believers behave with a humility, which is also reflected in their appearance. The modesty of their manner is described in the following verse:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth [i.e., with dignity but without arrogance] and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, "Peace". (Surat al-Furqan: 63)

As a result of this attitude, Allah gives believers the glad tidings of Paradise:

... Your God is One God so submit to Him. Give good news to the humble-hearted. (Surat al-Hajj: 34)

2. How can one turn away from worthless and useless things? What is the meaning of "worthless and useless"?

One can turn away from worthless and useless things if one acts in order to gain the good pleasure of Allah alone. Believers know that they need to use the time granted to them in this world in the most efficient way because what they do in the world determines their permanent abode. Therefore, in every deed they perform, they aim to gain a good deed for the Hereafter. Naturally they talk, have fun, eat, laugh, think and work just as everyone else does; but in doing these things they always have good intentions which are likely to be of benefit to other people and to the religion.

Apart from these things, all believers' acts serve a purpose. They always turn towards good deeds that will gain them Allah's approval the most. For example, anyone can talk about automobiles. Yet a believer would not spend hours in such conversation while there are other urgent things to do. Likewise, a believer would not chat for a long time about which team will be the winner in a football match when talking to someone to whom he can communicate the religion of Allah. That is because the crucial thing at that moment would be to enlighten that person about the existence and the greatness of Allah, and about what he has to do in order to deserve Paradise and to avoid Hell.

In brief, believers neither plunge into long discussions on topics that are not relevant to the benefit of the religion and of Muslims, nor spend more than a sufficient and reasonable time on these subjects. They use their time efficiently by properly distinguishing between all worldly matters. They do this by use of their conscience and reason. They decide what is "worthless" and what is useful, and do not compromise this. The attitude adopted by believers when they hear "worthless talk" is related in the Qur'an in these words:

When they hear worthless talk they turn away from it and say, "We have our actions and you have your actions. Peace be upon you. We do not desire the company of the ignorant." (Surat al-Qasas: 55)

3. What is the concept of cleanliness in the Qur'an?

Believers are people who are physically very clean. The cleanliness and tidiness of their bodies, of the food they eat, of the clothes they wear, and of the environments they live in always attract the attention of others. They try to make the places they are in similar to the elegant environment of Paradise described in the Qur'an. Allah has stressed in a number of verses what a believer's idea of cleanliness should be:

Purify your clothes. Shun all filth. (Surat al-Muddaththir: 4-5)

You who believe! Eat of the good things we have provided for you... (Surat al-Baqara: 172)

... Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stand and bow and prostrate. (Surat al-Hajj: 26)

4. What does moral cleanliness mean?

In the Qur'an Allah states that people should be morally clean too. It is stated that he who avoids the evil of his soul (*nafs*) and purifies it will succeed. Allah states in Surat ash-Shams:

By the soul and the One Who proportioned and inspired it with knowledge of depravity and with its sense of duty, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed. (Surat ash-Shams: 7-10)

Moral purity is attainable, as we are informed in the verse, when one avoids the evil that one's soul commands one to commit. Someone who is morally pure has a sincere faith and a peaceful spirit. All his thoughts and all his deeds are righteous. In every event he encounters, he behaves in a manner that shows that he is well pleased with Allah. He is sincere and genuine. He well knows that there is definitely goodness in everything Allah creates.

Such people are purified from the corruption in their soul. Allah heralds the good end that these people will meet:

... You can only warn those who fear their Lord in the Unseen and establish prayer. Whoever is purified, is purified for himself alone. Allah is your final destination. (Surah Fatir: 18)

He who has purified himself will have success. (Surat al-A'la: 14)

5. How is jealousy mentioned in the Qur'an?

Envy is condemned in the Qur'an. Allah has revealed that He created the soul of mankind prone to selfishness, but that believers should be wary of it:

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

Some people answer "yes" or "a bit" when they are asked if they are jealous. Yet they do not think much about the meaning hidden behind this answer. Jealousy comes as a result of not accepting that somebody else is superior to oneself in a particular aspect. This, indeed, is an attitude which may lead a person even to haughtiness against Allah, because it is Allah Who grants people everything they possess; He gives as He wills and no one can ever prevent this.

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) also warns believers against envy:

Beware of envy because envy consumes (destroys) the virtues just as the fire consumes the firewood. (Abu Dawud)

Apart from this, it is also related in the Qur'an that Satan rebelled against Allah by not prostrating himself before Adam. We are informed that he regards himself superior to Adam. So we face an important fact at this point: jealousy is, in fact, an attribute of Satan, and anyone who fears Allah should strictly avoid it.

In the Qur'an, Allah tells believers to take refuge in Him to protect themselves from the evil of the envious:

[Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of Daybreak] from the evil of an envier when he envies." (Surat al-Falaq: 5)

6. What does the Qur'an say about "mockery"?

Mockery is an example of poor morality which Allah certainly does not approve of. There are many manifestations of mockery in irreligious societies, including mocking the imperfections or defects of others, and calling one another by unpleasant nicknames. In the Quran, Allah warns people against this evil act as follows:

Woe to every scorner and mocker. (Surat al-Humaza: 1)

Another type of mockery referred to by Allah in the Qur'an is that of believers by unbelievers. It is revealed in the Qur'an that because they were unable to grasp that the believers were on the true path, those who believed themselves to be superior to the believers used to mock them. Some of the verses on this subject read:

Those who did evil used to laugh at those who believed. When they passed by them, they would wink at one another. (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 29-30)

Yet, Allah reveals that these people are greatly mistaken and heralds the tragic end they will come to as follows:

So today those who believe are laughing at the disbelievers, on couches, gazing in wonder. Have the disbelievers been rewarded for what they did? (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 34-36)

Furthermore, Allah describes in the Qur'an those who hold Islam and His revelations up to mockery, and reveals that these people reject every warning from Allah and His messengers. They are the people who do not measure the power of Allah to its full extent and ignore the fact that they will be judged in His presence. Yet, these people will be bewildered in the Hereafter and will be repaid for the mockery they used to engage in. This fact is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an:

Those are the people who reject their Lord's Signs and the meeting with Him. Their actions will come to nothing and, on the Day of Rising, we will not assign them any weight. That is their repayment—Hell—because they disbelieved and made a mockery of My Signs and of My Messengers. (Surat al-Kahf: 105-106)

Follow the best that has been sent down to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly when you are not expecting it; lest anyone should say, "Alas for me for neglecting what Allah was due, and being one of the scoffers!" (Surat az-Zumar: 55-56)

7. Where does calling others by offensive nicknames stand in the Qur'an?

People who do not live by the religion of Allah deride other people by calling them by offensive nicknames in an attempt to dishonour them and thus exalt themselves. Believers, on the other hand, never behave in such a poor manner. Allah strictly prohibits believers from doing so, stating that those who do not obey this injunction are wrongdoers:

You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one

another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to faith! Those people who do not turn from it are wrongdoers. (Surat al-Hujurat: 11)

Those who conform to the morals of the Qur'an never behave in this indecent way, which is disapproved of by Allah. They address each other in the most pleasing way and deeply respect each other as sincere servants of Allah.

8. What is the place of gossip in the Qur'an?

In the Qur'an, Allah forbids believers backbiting, and refers to it as an indecency:

... and do not backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat his brother's dead flesh? No, you would hate it. Heed Allah. Allah is Ever-Returning, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Hujurat: 12)

As commanded by this verse, people who live by the religion and are like brothers and sisters to each other strictly avoid this behaviour. On the contrary, believers remember only each other's good intentions and always try to highlight their good attributes. They do not try to find defects or faults in believers—people who are submissive to the will of Allah. Gossip, which indeed causes great distress to people in societies remote from religion, is a corruption that never exists among believers who maintain the limits set by Allah. When believers notice an imperfection or other defect in another, they do not backbite, but instead advise the person directly so that he will amend his unacceptable behaviour.

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) also said to the believers:

If he/she is as you've said (and you've spoken about it behind his/her back), then you have committed the gross sin of backbiting, and if what you have said is not found in him, then you have slandered him/her. (Muslim)

9. Why is despair not an approved state?

Despair is unthinkable for a person who is aware of the fact that Allah is the creator of every being and every event, and who measures the power of Allah by its true measure. Because Allah is the One Who removes difficulties for His servants, is most forgiving, is full of mercy and has complete power and knowledge. Every incident that people may regard as a reason for despair, including all impediments, unexpected obstacles, diseases, accidents or mistakes, in fact occurs under the complete control of Allah. Allah is All-Knowing and nothing is absent from His knowledge. Being aware that one's destiny is designated by His endless knowledge is the greatest comfort one can ever have. Knowing this fact, one can never give way to despair.

Besides this, believers, knowing that it is possible that their mistakes may be remitted in this world, do not lose hope. Indeed, people are commanded in the Qur'an not to despair of the mercy of Allah:

... Do not despair of solace from Allah. No one despairs of solace from Allah except for those who disbelieve. (Surah Yusuf: 87)

Say: "My servants, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (Surat az-Zumar: 53)

10. Is being sentimental approved of in the Qur'an?

Being sentimental is not approved of in the Qur'an, although being a man of "wisdom" is essential. Allah bestows intelligence and understanding upon those who heed Him. Believers who possess wisdom consider all events within the framework of absolute truths specified in the Qur'an. They make appropriate decisions acting in the light of their reason and conscience, thereby easily resolving all matters, whereas sentimentality plays a significant role in confounding one's understanding. If one approaches events emotionally instead of using reason, the ability to discriminate between right and wrong becomes impaired. One's decision-making and judgments can no longer be relied upon to be impartial or just. Since one attributes importance to what other people think, one cannot make quick and appropriate decisions. Evaluations made in an emotional state would be based on personal value judgements instead of the criteria of the Qur'an.

11. What is the concept of sincerity in the Qur'an?

"Sincerity", literally, has the meaning of being pure and unadulterated. The concept of sincerity mentioned in the Qur'an denotes turning to Allah in devoutness. A sincere believer devotes all his deeds throughout his entire life to seeking the pleasure of Allah and expects his reward only from Him. He does not make devious calculations orientated around the opinions of other people or trying to find favour with them. Therefore all of his actions are sincere and candid, such as would earn the pleasure of Allah.

A sincere person is honest first with Allah and then with people; because he well knows that Allah hears and sees all things, and that he will be judged in His presence and will be held responsible for all of his deeds, words and thoughts. For this reason the sincerity and candour of believers are among the most significant signs of the firmness of their faith.

Allah has made the sincere attitudes of the messengers, who always sought to earn the good pleasure of Allah, an example for believers:

And remember Our servants Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya'qub, men of true strength and inner sight. We purified their sincerity through sincere remembrance of the Abode. In Our eyes they are among the best of chosen men. (Surah Sâd: 45-47)

Those who turn to Allah in sincerity are praised in the Qur'an. The Qur'an heralds the good outcome of these people as follows:

Those who shun the worship of false gods and turn towards Allah will have good news. So give good news to My servants. Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it, they are the ones whom Allah has guided, they are the people of intelligence. (Surat az-Zumar: 17-18)

The importance of deeds performed solely for Allah's sake is mentioned in the hadith below:

Allah accepts those deeds which were performed purely for His sake and which were meant to seek His pleasure. (Abu Dawud)

12. Do believers grieve over events?

Believers do not grieve over events, because they know that Allah will try them with all manner of circumstances. They put their trust in Allah and maintain their steadfastness. They remember that Allah creates everything with wisdom. An example is given in the Qur'an as follows:

If you do not help him, Allah did help him when the disbelievers drove him out and there were two of them in the Cave. He said to his companion, "Do not be despondent, Allah is with us." ... (Surat at-Tawba: 40)

As stated in the verse, our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) advises his companion, even in the very midst of hardship, not to be despondent. Since believers have an excellent model in the messenger, they behave accordingly in difficult situations.

Among the most important reasons why believers never despair is that they know that every incident Allah brings about will ultimately turn out to be good for them. Allah has promised believers a good life in this world. During this good life, believers hope Allah will place them in the eternal Hereafter in an outstandingly splendid abode, which is much more beautiful than this world and where Allah's blessings never diminish. This is certainly the best news one can ever receive and is the greatest source of joy. Therefore believers never become despondent. Allah gives believers the good news as follows:

Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah", and then remained on a right course—the angels descend upon them [saying]: "Do not fear and do not grieve but rejoice in the Garden [i.e., Paradise] you have been promised. We are your protectors in the life of this world and the Hereafter. You will have there all that your selves could wish for. You will have there everything you demand. (Surah Fussilat: 30-31)

13. Do believers feel anger?

Believers, like anyone else, may naturally feel anger at certain events. However one of the most important indications of their virtuous character is their ability to control their anger. They know that no good will come of an uncontrolled, intense fury, and that they will just lose their ability to act reasonably or to be just. They avoid making wrong decisions that may harm both themselves and those around them. For that reason believers exhibit steadfastness and forgiveness. Allah praises this feature of believers in the Qur'an in these words:

Those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people—Allah loves the good-doers. (Surah Al 'Imran: 134)

Yet, "controlling rage" should not be misunderstood: it does not mean to accept everything as it is or being passive. Believers certainly act in response to events, and try to prevent any wrongdoing or situations that may cause harm to other believers. However, they do not react emotionally; instead they try to find sensible ways to influence people's behaviour, or otherwise limit whatever damage is being caused.

Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has this to say on controlling anger:

The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger. (Bukhari)

14. Do believers make mistakes?

As informed in the Qur'an believers may make mistakes. But, since they fear Allah and are sincere to Him, they do not knowingly persist with their wrongdoing, and immediately try to make amends for it. They seek forgiveness and self-improvement in the areas they were wrong, with the aim of not falling into the same error again. They are well aware of the fact that this world is a place of testing; therefore they draw lessons from their mistakes. Allah praises this commendable attribute of believers in many verses and promises them forgiveness:

Those who, when they act indecently or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their bad actions (and who can forgive bad actions except Allah?) and do not knowingly persist in what they were doing. (Surah Al 'Imran: 135)

15. What is the concept of justice in the Qur'an that believers are commanded to possess?

Allah has commanded believers to evaluate all events with justice and within the boundaries stated in the Qur'an. He has instructed them to be absolutely just while judging between people and always to be on the side of justice.

When believers bear witness, they are the most honest and just in their witnessing. A decision one makes or evidence one gives may sometimes be to one's own disadvantage, or may affect the interests of a friend or relative. However, this is of no importance for one who fears Allah because the measure for the deeds of believers is the good pleasure of Allah. In the moment, the most convenient thing to do may appear to be to bear witness or to make a judgement in a way that Allah does not approve. A worldly expediency, however, does not afford believers serenity or happiness, as long as Allah is not pleased with it.

For that reason believers render justice even if it is against themselves or their relatives. Allah forbids believers the contrary as follows:

You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat an-Nisa': 135)

Another risk that is likely to prevent people from being just in their judgements is the anger they may feel towards other people. If one bears anger or malice towards someone else, then he would be unlikely grant that person the benefit of the doubt or to act in his favour. Believers, however, consider the pleasure of Allah to be of paramount importance and do not cease acting with justice no matter who the other party may be, because Allah has commanded believers:

... Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to heedfulness... (Surat al-Ma'ida: 8)

16. How should the remembrance of Allah be?

Believers are aware of the fact that Allah sees and hears them at every instant, and that Allah has created every event they encounter. For that reason they always bear Allah in mind. At every instant of their lives they internally reflect on Allah, and in their dialogues with other believers they remember their Lord's might, His exaltedness, and the perfection of His handiwork in the creation. It is related in the Qur'an that believers always remember Allah as follows:

Those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying]: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Surah Al 'Imran: 191)

One remembers Allah by being aware of the fact that every occurrence is created by Him, reflecting on the meaning of those occurrences in one's own life, trying to see and understand the wisdom in the creation of Allah, trying to grasp His exaltedness at every instant and transmitting all these to other people. A person can steadfastly put his trust in Allah when he is facing an apparently difficult situation only if he remembers Allah

at that very moment. Therefore, one who is constantly mindful of Allah, is constantly aware of Him and His power, and hence behaves properly.

17. How is the Day of Judgement described in the Qur'an?

As stated in the Qur'an, "**the Hour is coming...**" (Surah Ta Ha: 15). On that day all living things, along with the stars, planets and galaxies, in short, everything in the heavens and the earth will vanish. Some of the occurrences that are due to take place are depicted in the Qur'an as follows:

Heaven will be split apart, for that Day it will be very frail. (Surat al-Haqqqa: 16)

The stars will fall in rapid succession. (Surat at-Takwir: 2)

The sun and moon will be fused together. (Surat al-Qiyama: 9)

The oceans will surge into each other. (Surat at-Takwir: 6)

The mountains will become like shifting dunes. (Surat al-Muzzammil: 14)

The mountains will be like tufts of coloured wool. (Surat al-Qari'a: 5)

The earth will be crushed and ground to dust. (Surat al-Fajr: 21)

The earth will disgorge its charges. (Surat az-Zilzal: 2)

These are only a few of the terrifying happenings that will occur on the Day of Judgement. On that day, essentially everything that man values will vanish, and everyone will understand that nothing, other than the right actions done for the pleasure of Allah, is of any value.

18. How will the unbelievers be on the Day of Judgement?

The Day of Judgement is the most dreadful and terrifying day one can ever imagine living through. On that day unbelievers will meet a manifest truth which they never thought about even though they were promised it, and it will be impossible to be sent back again to compensate for what they did in the world. On that day, unbelievers will understand in terror that death is not a destruction, but on the contrary, the beginning of a painful punishment which will last forever. Allah has stated in the Qur'an that people will be like drunkards on that day, on account of the intensity of the terror they feel:

... and you will think people drunk when they are not drunk; it is just that the punishment of Allah is so severe. (Surat al-Hajj: 2)

On that day, all value judgements of unbelievers will change at once because of the terror of the occurrence. Wealth and sons they used to consider the most valuable won't be of any importance any more. Allah heralds in the Qur'an that on that day people will seek only for their own rescue and will flee from each other:

The Day a man will flee from his brother and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children: on that Day every man among them will have concerns enough of his own. (Surah 'Abasa: 34-37)

Some of the details related in verses about how people will be on that day are as follows:

... the eyes of those who disbelieved will be transfixed... (Surat al-Anbiya': 97)

... Every nursing woman will be oblivious of the baby at her breast, and every pregnant woman will abort the contents of her womb... (Surat al-Hajj: 2)

How will you safeguard yourselves, if you disbelieve, against a Day which will turn children grey... (Surat al-Muzzammil: 17)

19. Are believers in great numbers?

Allah states in many verses that real believers will be very small in number. For that reason the numbers of believers have always been small throughout history and unbelievers have always been the majority. This is also an indication of the pre-eminence, value and superiority of believers. The following verse affirms that most people will not be believers:

But most people, for all your eagerness, are not believers. (Surah Yusuf: 103)

For that reason it would be a big loss for one to take the majority as one's role model, and to believe the way the majority believes. These people, no matter how great they are in number, will not find a way of escape from Hell in the Hereafter.

20. How will believers be welcomed in the Hereafter?

Believers, unlike unbelievers, will be cordially welcomed to their lives in the Hereafter. As stated in the verse **"those the angels take in a virtuous state...."** (Surat an-Nahl: 32), they are taken in death in a good state. They are safe from every kind of fear. They are given an easy reckoning thanks to Allah's favour and mercy to them. They are given by the angels the glad tidings of Paradise that Allah promised them, and are eventually escorted there:

And those who heed Lord will be driven to Paradise in companies and when they arrive there, finding its gates open, its custodians will say to them, "Peace be upon you! You have done well so enter it timelessly, for ever." They will say, "Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of this land, letting us settle in Paradise wherever we want. How excellent is the wage of those who work!" (Surat az-Zumar: 73-74)

21. How will the unbelievers be recognised on the Day of Judgement?

The evildoers will be recognised by their marks and seized by their forelocks and their feet. (Surat ar-Rahman: 41)

In the above verse Allah states that unbelievers will be recognised on the Day of Judgement by their marks. A person might have a beautiful or an innocent face in this world. Nevertheless, these people's faces after being raised up on the Day of Reckoning are described in the Quran as **"downcast"**, **"dust-covered"** and **"overcast with gloom"**. It is related in the verses that unbelievers will be gathered blind. Apart from blindness, their eyes will be horrible in appearance and, as related in the Qur'an, evildoers will be **"blue-eyed"** with terror. Every unbeliever will be raised up on the Day of Judgement in such a horrible state.

22. How do believers react to diseases or hardships?

Believers know that Allah tries men with hardships or diseases. For that reason they are always steadfast. They put their trust in Allah even at the time of a severe disease or a hardship, and never give way to despair. Being aware of the fact that it is Allah Who gives the disease or the hardship and that only He will cause it to cease, they turn towards Him. They hope for the reward for their good behaviour both in this world and in the Hereafter only from Allah. Allah informs us of the virtuous manner of believers faced with hardships as follows:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and life and fruits. But give good news to the steadfast: Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, "We belong to Allah and to Him we will return." Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 155-157)

23. What are the advantages of consultation among believers?

Allah relates in the Qur'an that believers "**respond to their Lord and establish prayer, and manage their affairs by mutual consultation...**" (Surat ash-Shura: 38). Such consultation has both physical and spiritual benefits. Before all else, consulting another person and asking for his or her opinion is a sign of that person's modesty, which Allah approves. Besides this, a number of people working in unison are more likely to arrive at wise decisions than one acting alone. One party may consider a point that another might not have, eliminating any gaps, so that a much more productive and effective result ensues. The consequent success attained in the affair belongs to a number of people, and not only to a single person. This protects the soul from boasting of the success or claiming it as his own.

24. What is the reason for the narration of stories mentioned in the Qur'an?

There is instruction in their stories for people of intelligence. This is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who believe. (Surah Yusuf: 111)

Allah states that there is instruction in the stories related in the Qur'an. Events narrated in these stories provide an example for believers in many respects. These stories assume great importance for believers, in terms of enabling them to recognise and not to repeat the mistakes of those who have passed away; to discern how past messengers and believers behaved in particular cases, and to take them as role models; to discern and adopt their virtuous characters; and to evaluate current events by considering past events and their outcomes.

25. How were past nations destroyed?

Allah sent messengers to nations who have passed away and warned them of the presence of the Hereafter and the Day of Reckoning. Yet most of these nations did not pay heed to these warnings, they opposed Allah and His messengers and forgot their religion, upon which Allah struck them with disasters as a reminder, and destroyed those who did not take heed of the warning. The punishments that befell these nations were varied in nature. However, what is common is that it came to them from where they did not expect, and at an unexpected time, usually while they were asleep.

These punishments sometimes destroyed a whole city or an entire nation, they did not leave any trace of the city, and were painful and fearful. Allah refers to such perished nations in many verses in the Qur'an as a reminder to people:

Do they not see how many generations before them We have destroyed and that they will not return to them? (Surah Ya Sin: 31)

Of the punishments mentioned in the Qur'an some are listed as follows:

Drowning, (Surat al-Isra': 103)

Plague sent down from heaven, (Surat al-Baqara: 59)

Earthquake, (Surat al-A'raf: 78)

Gushing springs, (Surat al-Qamar: 12)

A great blast, (Surah Hud: 67)

Raining down stones of hard baked clay, (Surah Hud: 82)

Howling wind, (Surat al-Qamar: 19)

Thunderbolt, (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 44)

Overturning, turning upside down... (Surat an-Najm: 53)

26. Who should be reminded?

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an whom shall take heed and remember, and in the verse, "**Remind, then, if the reminder benefits**" (Surat al-A'la: 9) He commands believers to remind those who are of such character. Some of the attributes of those who shall benefit from a reminder are as follows:

This is admonishment for all who believe in Allah and the Last Day... (Surat at-Talaq: 2)

He who has fear will be reminded; (Surat al-A'la: 10)

It is only people of intelligence who pay heed. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 19)

But none pay heed save those who repent. (Surah Ghafir: 13)

So remind, with the Qur'an, whoever fears My Threat. (Surah Qaf: 45)

And remind them, for truly the believers benefit from being reminded. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 55)

27. What is the best response to a reminder?

In the verse, **"The reply of the believers when they are summoned to Allah and His Messenger so that he can judge between them, is to say, 'We hear and we obey.' They are the ones who are successful."** (Surat an-Nur: 51). Allah points out here how believers should respond to a reminder. Allah promises Paradise to those who hear and unhesitatingly obey the reminder of Allah and His messengers. In another verse Allah states that, **"Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it, they are the ones whom Allah has guided, they are the people of intelligence"**, (Surat az-Zumar: 18). On the advice of this verse, believers are open to all reminders from those who have faith in Allah. They remember that believers always command them the right and forbid the wrong, and sincerely put it into practice.

28. What does "giving in the way of Allah" mean?

Giving away means spending the wealth and opportunities one has in the way of Allah. In recompense for spending in His way as defined in the verse, **"Whatever is surplus to your needs"** (Surat al-Baqara: 219), Allah promises this person Paradise in the Hereafter and to compensate for what he gives in this world:

Say: "My Lord expands the provision of any of His servants He wills or restricts it. But anything you expend will be replaced by Him. He is the Best of Providers." (Surah Saba': 39)

[those who] give of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a transaction which will not prove profitless. (Surah Fatir: 29)

29. What is the best attitude while giving away? How should one give?

Allah informs us that one may give away his wealth **"secretly and openly"** (Surat al-Baqara: 274). Besides this, Allah states that those who give away should not do so to "show off", nor should they demand gratitude or insult others after spending their wealth. Allah reminds us that those who spend their wealth just to show off to other people shall have no reward:

Correct and courteous words accompanied by forgiveness are better than a charitable deed followed by insulting words. Allah is Rich Beyond Need, All-Forbearing. You who believe! Do not nullify your charitable deeds by demands for gratitude or insulting words, like him who spends his wealth, showing off to people and not believing in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is that of a smooth rock

coated with soil, which, when heavy rain falls on it, is left stripped bare. They have no power over anything they have earned. Allah does not guide disbelieving people. The metaphor of those who spend their wealth, desiring the pleasure of Allah and firmness for themselves, is that of a garden on a hillside. When heavy rain falls on it, it doubles its produce; and if heavy rain does not fall, there is dew. Allah sees what you do. (Surat al-Baqara: 263-265)

30. What is the reprisal in the sight of Allah for hoarding wealth or being tight-fisted?

Some people hoard up their wealth and money throughout their entire life and do not use it for good causes as defined in the Qur'an. With insatiable greed, they persistently try to possess more and more wealth. As for what they gain, they do not spend it in the way of Allah, or to feed those in need, but just to enjoy themselves. They hoard up much more than they will ever need and do not use it for good deeds apart from some small expenditures which serves as a means to show off. These people will have a terrible reprisal in the Hereafter, which is related in the Surat at-Tawba as follows:

As for those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the Way of Allah, give them the news of a painful punishment on the Day it is heated up in the fire of Hell and their foreheads, sides and backs are branded with it [when it will be said]: "This is what you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you were hoarding!" (Surat at-Tawba: 34-35)

Those who hoard their wealth and are parsimonious are in fact those who are greedily attached to this world with what they possess and who cannot grasp that Allah has given them wealth and assets to try them in this world. Yet Allah is the One Who is rich beyond need, and is the true owner of all wealth. It is man who needs a reward from Allah by spending in His way. This fact is related in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

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

31. Will wealth be of any use in the Hereafter?

Neither being rich nor possessing power in this world will be of any use in the Hereafter. No matter how much money or wealth one has in the world, this wealth will not be of any use when one is dead and buried in the earth. If he is a disbeliever, he will be treated in the same way as all other unbelievers and will be flung into the punishment of Hell. These people who used to get special treatment due to their wealth will be humiliated in the Hereafter with an incomparable humiliation. This is because they were too proud because of their worldly

wealth and rejected the signs of Allah. In the Hereafter people will be treated based on their faith in Allah, fear and awareness of Him and the intention behind the deeds they performed. The wealth or power which they used to have in the world will not grant them any privilege. The following verse confirms that wealth is of no value in the presence of Allah:

We never sent a warner into any city without the affluent people in it saying, "We reject what you have been sent with." They also said, "We have more wealth and children. We are not going to be punished." Say: "My Lord expands the provision of anyone He wills or restricts it. But the majority of mankind do not know it." It is not your wealth or your children that will bring you near to Us—only in the case of people who believe and act rightly; such people will have a double recompense for what they did. They will be safe from all harm in the high halls of Paradise. (Surah Saba': 34-37)

32. How does one avoid the dangers of self-exoneration?

The self commands man to do evil. This fact is related in Surat ash-Shams as follows:

By the soul and the One Who proportioned and inspired it with knowledge of depravity and with its sense of duty, he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed. (Surat ash-Shams: 7-10)

Another verse pointing out the capacity of the soul to command to do evil is about the Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him), who, when a lie was forged against him though he was innocent, said:

I do not say my self was free from blame. The self indeed commands to evil acts—except for those my Lord has mercy on. My Lord, He is Forgiving, Merciful. (Surah Yusuf: 53)

As Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) remarked, the self always commands to evil. For that reason it would not be appropriate to try to defend oneself or to prove one's rightness immediately, for one might have momentarily and unawares followed what the self desired. What should indeed be done in such a case is to stop and reflect first before acting. When a person reflects sincerely and honestly, he may see that he in fact did wrong in many instances in which he assumed himself to be right.

Perceiving things in this way is an enormous gain to the believer, because seeing and admitting one's own mistakes and amending one's wrongdoing is the first step in seeking the forgiveness of Allah. Otherwise, no matter how right a person may appear to be in the eyes of people, however hard he tries to vindicate his soul and avoids attributing any mistakes to himself, Allah knows the truth. And this truth he will meet in the Hereafter.

It is a good action in the sight of Allah to reproach oneself, to admit one's own imperfections and failings and to turn to Allah in order to eliminate them, rather than to defend one's lower self.

33. How can one avoid being swept away by the life of this world?

This world is a particular place created by Allah where man is being tested and is being prepared for the abode of the Hereafter. Part of this test is that it is made to seem fair and attractive to man. Some features of this world that are alluring to people are stated in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

To mankind the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colours: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. The best homecoming is in the presence of Allah. (Surah Al 'Imran: 14)

As stated in the verse, invaluable ornaments, wealth, profitable commerce, charming and wealthy mates, healthy children, pleasing houses, cars in any colour or model, assorted food are the values that attach man to this world. Yet man should remember that these are bestowed by Allah as a temporary benefit, all of them are merely the perishable goods of this world and, as announced in the verse above, "**the best homecoming**" is in the Hereafter. As for these benefits he is given, he should not squander them during his worldly life, but use them in making preparation for the Hereafter. Those who behave in accordance with this absolute truth are not swept away by the life of the world.

34. What will be the end of those who are satisfied with the life of this world?

Some people are greedily attached to the world, forgetting that it is imperfect and short-lived. Allah characterises these people in the Qur'an as follows:

As for those who do not expect to meet Us and are content with the life of this world and at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our Signs, their shelter will be the Fire because of what they earned. (Surah Yunus: 7-8)

Those who are blindly attached to this world, forgetting their Creator, should know that in reprisal for what they do, they will suffer the eternal punishment of Hell. These people, on account of preferring a very short life of enjoyment, will lose an endless life of bliss. In the Hereafter they will not, even for a single instant, be able to enjoy those benefits which they are so greedily attached to in this world.

35. Can a person spend his entire life for Allah?

In order to understand how to spend one's entire life for Allah, one first needs to know the real meaning of life. Allah informs us about the real meaning of the life of this world in the Qur'an:

He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action. He is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. (Surat al-Mulk: 2)

As stated in this verse, everybody is tested in his deeds. Those who do good desire to earn the pleasure of Allah and to enter Paradise. And they know that they therefore need to spend every moment of their lives engaged in such an effort.

Some people, however, are mistaken on this point. They think that only performing prayers and avoiding what is forbidden are for the pleasure of Allah, and that the rest of the time is not connected to the religion. In fact man should try to earn the good pleasure of Allah at every single moment, in every word, in every thought and in every deed. Someone who intends to devote every moment of his life to Allah always speaks in a manner that will be pleasing to Him. For example, everyone in the world works and earns money. Yet he who lives for Allah works in order to serve His religion and, setting aside of his earnings for himself only what he needs, spends the rest in deeds that would please Him. This person always talks in the way that would please Allah most. He reminds people of Allah, forbids them what is wrong and commands them to do what is right. He makes friendships with those whom Allah would be pleased with. While making this selection, he does not take into consideration his worldly interests or the criteria of people who do not live by the religion. At every instant, he considers how he can best earn the good pleasure of Allah.

To spend one's entire life for Allah is among the basic demands of the religion. Therefore Allah commands believers to:

Say: "My prayer and my rites, my living and my dying, are for Allah alone, the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat al-An'am: 162)

36. Why should man not deem himself self-sufficient?

The main purpose of a person who fears Allah is to be pleasing to Him. This person knows that he needs to improve himself and to engage in a continual effort to be better in behaviour; virtues such as sincerity, honesty, diligence, self-sacrifice and modesty have no "upper limits". In other words no one can say, "I have achieved model behaviour, it couldn't be any better than this."

A person's spiritual improvement will be rapid if he sees himself as imperfect and seeks to become better. Such a person purifies himself of his wrongdoings and progresses towards even better behaviour every single day. If someone sees himself as sufficient in any matter, then he will not attempt to seek or make any improvement. As a matter of fact, he is unable to find his faults and imperfections and so cannot amend them,

which prevents improvement. Allah states in the Qur'an, that imagining oneself to be self-sufficient is a serious mistake:

No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient. (Surat al-'Alaq: 6-7)

For that reason man should not deem himself sufficient, neither in performing good deeds that would please Allah nor in spiritually improving himself. Using the reason that Allah granted him he should always ask for what is better and the superior, and make a sincere effort to attain it.

37. Is there any compulsion in religion?

The answer to this question is given clearly in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false gods and believes in Allah has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 256)

As stated in the verse, no-one can be compelled to live by the religion. Conveying the existence of Allah and the morals of the Qur'an to other people is a duty that believers are charged with. Believers who desire to perform their duty spread the message of religion in order to guide other people; yet knowing that they cannot do anything unless Allah wills, they leave the rest to Him. Since the existence of Allah and of the Hereafter is evident, it is extremely easy to discriminate between the path that Allah calls to and the indecency that Satan calls to. Everyone can easily see which of these is better and beneficial. Therefore, those who fear Allah follow the right path without any compulsion or pressure.

Allah states in many verses that believers' only duty is to convey the truth. This is related in a Qur'anic verse as follows:

If they argue with you, say, "I have submitted myself completely to Allah, and so have all who follow me." Tell both those who have been given the Book as well as the ummi, "Have you become Muslim?" If they become Muslim, they have been guided. If they turn away, you are only responsible for transmission. Allah sees His servants. (Surah Al 'Imran: 20)

38. What does "competing to do good deeds" mean?

People are distinguished from each other by their level of faith. There are people who have no faith in Allah, whereas there are those who, due to the strong fear and awareness of Allah they have, always try to do good deeds and serve the religion. These people who aim to attain the contentment of Allah in each instant of their lives are characterised in the Qur'an as follows:

Such people are truly racing to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein. (Surat al-Muminun: 61)

These people, at every instant, aim to serve the religion and perform deeds that will be beneficial both to the religion and to believers. In brief, in every step they take, they try to do good which Allah will be pleased with. They, hence, know that they need to reflect, pray, seek and put into practice the behaviour which earns the good pleasure of Allah. For that reason they are profound thinkers who honour Allah's greatness with the reverence that is due to Him to draw nearer to Him. They do not let themselves spend even a minute without thinking of the Hereafter, and are never oblivious to it. Therefore do not engross themselves in the temporal goods of this world. Since they possess pure faith, they spend every instant of their lives for Allah and are not heedless. It strengthens their awareness of Allah to reflect on Him and on His greatness. As Allah commands in the Qur'an, they work on and still toil when they finish a task. These people are the "forerunners", whom Allah promises Paradise:

And the forerunners, the forerunners. Those are the ones brought near in Gardens of Delight. (Surat al-Waqi'a: 10-12)

39. What do believers show patience in?

One of the distinguishing attributes of believers is their patience. However, the concept of patience that we learn from the Qur'an does not mean endurance at times of hardship. What is recommended in the Qur'an is to display patience when it comes to choosing the kind of behaviour that will be pleasing to Allah, in all situations and at all times.

Allah tests believers with a variety of situations, such as hunger, fear and loss of goods or prosperity. The believer described in the Qur'an perseveringly seeks the good pleasure of Allah regardless of the circumstances. In prosperity he gives thanks to Allah; in case of difficulty and hardship he puts his trust in Him. For him the benefits of the religion always take precedence over personal benefits. He patiently fulfils every detail of a virtuous character throughout his entire life. He is sincere, honest, generous, diligent and eager; he always speaks with generosity and gentleness, and always tries to serve the religion. In short, he applies everything that Allah points out as being good. As a reward for this, Allah gives His patient servants glad tidings:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and life and fruits. But give good news to the patient: Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, "We belong to Allah and to Him we will return." Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 155-157)

40. What is the purpose of the wealth granted to unbelievers?

The wealth and power that unbelievers possess have always led them to even further insolence. This is a mystery explained in the Quran. Allah informs believers that the wealth of unbelievers is only worldly and commands believers not to be impressed by them in any way. He also promises that He will increase their disbelief with this wealth, and ultimately drive them altogether into Hell.

A Qur'anic verse relating to this significant fact states:

Do not let their wealth and children impress you. Allah merely wants to punish them by them during their life in this world and for them to expire while they are disbelieving. (Surat at-Tawba: 55)

41. Why aren't unbelievers repaid with immediate destruction for their disbelief?

Since this world is a testing place, Allah lets everyone live long enough to pay heed and to correct their behaviour. Until this specified time expires, the punishment of unbelievers in the Hereafter is deferred, so that they won't have any excuse to offer when they enter the Fire. Those who are resolute in their disbelief are given opportunities to reveal their evil as much as possible. Thus enough evidence is gathered for them to meet the reprisal in Hell for what they have earned.

Those who disbelieve should not imagine that the extra time We grant to them is good for them. We only allow them more time so they will increase in evildoing. They will have a humiliating punishment. (Surah Al 'Imran: 178)

42. What end awaits unbelievers in this world?

Allah has made ready for the unbelievers a painful punishment in the Hereafter which is everlasting. Yet besides this, there are various punishments for unbelievers in this world too. These are a sort of preliminary to the endless punishment that they will receive later. They also come in the nature of a warning from Allah to lead them to regret, to pay heed and to reorient themselves to the right path. Allah announces the punishment He will give in the world and the reason for it as follows:

We will give them a taste of lesser punishment before the greater punishment, so that hopefully they will turn back. (Surat as-Sajda: 21)

The most significant reason for the disbelief of unbelievers is their passionate attachment to the life of this world and the fact that they repudiate the truth. The punishment that Allah has made ready for the

unbelievers in this world deprives them of all worldly blessings. Some of these punishments mentioned in the Qur'an are as follows:

- **On a nation of unbelievers animals such as locusts, lice and frogs are sent down. (Surat al-A'raf: 133)**
- **Unbelievers are seized with drought and scarcity of fruits, with trouble in economics. (Surat al-A'raf: 130, Surat an-Nahl: 112)**
- **Those who gloat with their wealth and property, such as Qarun and the wealthy garden owner, lose all their wealth with personal destruction. (Surat al-Qasas: 76-82, Surat al-Kahf: 32-43)**
- **Unbelievers are made the most miserable. (Surat al-A'la: 11-12)**
- **They live filled with false hopes. (Surat an-Nisa': 120)**
- **Allah makes their breast narrow and constricted; He defiles them. (Surat al-An'am: 125)**

43. Who will enter the Fire?

In many verses of the Qur'an those who will enter Hell are classified with certain characteristics. Some of the characteristics of these people can be listed as follows: those who disbelieve in Allah; who associate others with Allah; those who take other gods together with Allah; those who claim to be god; those who take others as false gods, saviours or guides instead of Allah; those who hinder men from the path of Allah; those who look for crookedness in the path of Allah; those who conceal any of the revelations of the Book of Allah; those who prevent His name from being celebrated; those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully; those who do wrong to people; those who devour usury; those who slayed the prophets unjustly; those who slay those among men who enjoin justice; those who oppose the messengers of Allah; those who kill men deliberately; those who devour the property of men by false means; those who treat their religion as a game and a diversion; those who make a mockery of Allah's Signs and of His messengers; those who do not believe that they will be raised up and do not believe in the Hereafter; those who do not believe that they will be gathered to Allah; those who are pleased with the life of this world and are content with it; those who do not strive to perform the prayers that Allah ordains for them without any acceptable excuse; those who do not fear Allah in the way they should fear Him; those who do not establish regular prayer; those who devise evil plots; those who cause corruption; those who seek discord; who deny Allah's Signs; those who are too proud to worship Allah; those who slander believers; those who spread fornication; those who conceal the truth and are liars; those who do not preserve the limits of Allah; those who consume forbidden foods; those who do not give full measure and full weight with justice; those who are arrogant, tight-fisted, coarse, selfish, ungrateful, treacherous, boastful, indecent and obdurate...

Allah has announced that every unbeliever who possesses these attributes and remains so until death will enter Hell and will be repaid with painful punishment for what he used to do. It is stated in Surah Qaf as follows:

Hurl into Hell every obdurate disbeliever, impeder of good, doubt-causing aggressor, who set up another god together with Allah. Hurl him into the terrible punishment. (Surah Qaf: 24-26)

44. Will remorse in Hell be of any benefit?

Allah informs all mankind through His messengers and His revelations about what they should do. He does not destroy any city without giving it prior warning as a reminder (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 208). Everyone lives long enough to take heed and to learn what to do. People who persist in their unbelief despite being cognisant of everything they have to do and having enough time to be mindful, thus, deserve to stay in Hell forever. However, having entered Hell, these people will feel a deep regret for what they did in the world, which cannot possibly be compensated for. Begging to return to the world in order to compensate for the things they did will be of no help to the unbelievers, for they refused to grasp the opportunity they were given before and will have missed their chance forever. Allah relates the helplessness of these unbelievers in the Qur'an as follows:

They will shout out in it, "Our Lord! Take us out! We will act rightly, differently from the way we used to act!" Did We not let you live long enough for anyone who was going to pay heed? And did not the warner come to you? Taste it then! There is no helper for the wrongdoers. (Surah Fatir: 37)

45. Are there any other punishments in Hell apart from the Fire?

Allah informs us in the Qur'an that unbelievers will be flung into Hellfire, and will have garments of fire and tar. (Surat al-Hajj: 19) Yet the punishment of Hell is not limited to fire:

- **There are cudgels made of iron (Surat al-Hajj: 21);**
- **people will be yoked together in chains (Surah Ibrahim: 49);**
- **they will be dragged along and will have shackles and chains around their necks (Surah Ghafir: 71);**
- **the punishment of boiling water will be poured on their heads (Surat ad-Dukhan: 48);**
- **they will wear shirts of tar (Surah Ibrahim: 50);**
- **they will be flung into a narrow place in it, shackled together in chains (Surat al-Furqan: 13);**

- **they will be firewood and fuel for Hellfire (Surat al-Jinn: 15, Surah Al 'Imran: 10).**

What is listed here is in fact only a small portion of the types of punishment of Hell. In Hell there are punishments that are so painful that no one on earth can ever imagine. Besides the regret they feel, the spiritual pain that Allah inflicts on the companions of the Fire will everlastingly burn their hearts. Allah draws attention to this spiritual pain in the Qur'an as follows:

And what will convey to you what the Shatterer is? The kindled Fire of Allah reaching right into the heart. (Surat al-Humaza: 5-7)

46. What will the unbelievers be given as food and drink in Hell?

The companions of Hell, who are removed from the mercy and grace of Allah on account of their excesses in the world, will not be given any blessing in the Hereafter. Unbelievers who will meet only the punishment of Hell will call out to believers, begging them to throw down some of the blessings that are endlessly bestowed on them (Surat al-A'raf: 50).

Nevertheless, instead of these blessings which are forbidden to them, the unbelievers will be given food which chokes, causes pain, and in no way satisfies hunger, and drinks which intensify their thirst. What is more, although they are of no good to them, they will long for this agonising food and drink.

Descriptions in the Qur'an of the food and drink that are prepared for unbelievers in Hell convey the indescribable punishment and the sickening horror of their situation:

The tree of Az-Zaqqum (Surat ad-Dukhan: 43-46) and bitter thorny bush (Surat al-Ghashiyya: 6-7) are among the food of Hell. Scalding water (Surat al-Waqi'a: 54-55), pus to drink (Surah Ibrahim: 16-17) and exuding pus (Surat al-Haqqa: 36) are among the drinks of Hell.

47. Is Hell divided into ranks?

In Hell, everyone will be repaid in full for what they did. Certainly people will be ranked according to the intensity of their disbelief, the confusion they stirred up concerning the believers and Allah's religion, and according to the seriousness of the wrongdoing they used to commit in the world. For example, it is declared in the Qur'an that hypocrites, the main enemies of believers against whom they hatch secret plans, will be in the lowest level of the Fire (Surat an-Nisa': 145). Likewise, it is stated in the verse below that all unbelievers will certainly enter the Fire and, with the justice of Allah, will be paid in full for what they did:

Those are people of whom the statement about the nations, both of jinn and men, who passed away before them, has also proved true; truly they were the lost. Everyone will be ranked according to what they did. We will pay them in full for their actions and they will not be wronged. (Surat al-Ahqaf: 18-19)

Besides this, contrary to what some people suppose, people will not be forgiven and released from Hell after a given period of punishment for their wrong actions. Every unbeliever who enters Hell will remain in it for eternity, forever (Surat al-Baqara: 80-81).

48. Do the people of Paradise and the people of Hell see each other?

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that the people of Paradise and the people of the Fire will see each other and narrates the dialogues between them. Seeing each other brings a great increase in gratitude for those in Paradise, while for those in Hell it increases their yearning and regret. It is stated in the Qur'an that the people of Paradise see those in Hell. A part of the dialogue between them is narrated as follows:

One of them will say, "I used to have a friend who would say to me, 'Are you one of those who say that it is true: that when we have died and are turned to dust and bones, we will face a Reckoning?'" [And] he will add, "Would you like to look [and see him]?" So he will look down and see him in the midst of the Blazing Fire and say, "By Allah, you almost ruined me! If it were not for the blessing of my Lord, I would surely be [now] among those who are given over [to suffering]." (Surat as-Saffat: 51-57)

The Companions of the Fire will call out to the Companions of the Garden, "Throw down some water to us or some of what Allah has given you as provision." They will say, "Allah has forbidden them to the disbelievers." (Surat al-A'raf: 50)

49. What will life in Paradise be like?

Descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an use terms that are familiar to us from the world we live in. Residences in Paradise are described, magnificent furniture and dazzlingly beautiful goods are mentioned. Besides these, descriptions are given of the jewellery and the garments worn in Paradise, and of the food and drink provided there. Great emphasis is placed on the surpassing beauty and incomparable magnificence of what the believers will enjoy. It is also declared that, in Paradise, man will be given anything that he may think of and beauties that he cannot even imagine. The biggest difference between the life of this world and the life of Paradise is undoubtedly the fact that none of the imperfection of this world exists in the Garden. Some of the delicacies and wonders of Paradise are mentioned as follows:

- A great and magnificent kingdom;
- Lofty chambers and residences;

- Raised couches;
- Finest garments made of silk and brocade;
- Bracelets made of gold and silver; jewels and pearls;
- Gardens with rivers flowing under them;
- Cool, refreshing shade;
- Platters and cups of gold;
- Couches lined with rich brocade;
- Green quilts and exquisite rugs;
- Rivers of milk whose taste will never change, rivers of honey of undiluted purity;
- Vessels of crystalline silver and many others...

Paradise is evidently a place of extraordinary perfection where man can find the greatest of pleasures.

Allah relates in a verse of Qur'an the splendour of Paradise as follows:

Wherever you look, you will see pleasure and great dominion. (Surat al-Insan: 20)

50. What will the spiritual environment of Paradise be like?

Paradise is a blessing that Allah bestows on believers in return for their good behaviour and good actions which they performed in the world. It is stated in the Qur'an that in Paradise, where all kinds of beauty are presented, there is nothing at all to disturb people:

- There is complete security;
- There is no rancour or hatred;
- There is no chatter or lies;
- There is no tiredness or weariness;
- There is no fear or sadness;
- There are sweet and lovely people;
- There is no growing old, everybody is of the same age;
- Paradise is a place where people will be surrounded by the greatest pleasures.

What is listed here is certainly only a few examples which illustrate the security and peace of Paradise. Allah declares that whereas unbelievers will suffer indescribable torment, believers will be in a great physical and spiritual comfort and peace:

You will see the wrongdoers afraid of what they have earned, when it is about to land right on top of them, whereas those who believe and do right actions will be in the lush Meadows of the Gardens. They will have whatever they wish for with their Lord. That is the great favour. (Surat ash-Shura: 22)

51. How does one take one's self as one's god?

One who takes his self to be his god is one who considers his self-interests and his comfort more important than the common interests of the religion, whereas a truly and sincerely devout person takes only Allah as his god and acts only in ways that would please Him. This applies to all conditions. Such a person would never ignore the benefits of the religion and the limits of Allah even when he is sick, or suffering hardship or even if his self-interests would be completely ruined.

However, if a person cannot make even a minor self-sacrifice for the sake of religion, or if he prefers what appears fine to his self leaving the religion aside when he faces a difficulty, then this person is seeking to please his self and thus has taken his self as his god.

Allah describes those who take their own selves to be their god in the Qur'an as follows:

Have you seen him who takes his whims and desires to be his god—whom Allah has misguided knowingly, sealing up his hearing and his heart and placing a blindfold over his eyes? Who then will guide him after Allah? So will you not pay heed? (Surat al-Jathiyah: 23)

52. Is Satan continuously trying to misguide man?

Satan is endlessly occupied in trying to misguide man from the path of Allah. He does not cease from it even for a single moment and tries all kinds of methods. He approaches man via his weaknesses, trying to make him behave the way he wants him to. It is related in the Qur'an that Satan will actively strive to delude mankind:

... Satan wants to misguide them far away. (Surat an-Nisa': 60)

He [i.e., Satan] said [to Allah], "By Your misguidance of me, I will lie in ambush for them on your straight path. Then I will come at them, from in front of them and behind them, from their right and from their left. You will not find most of them thankful." He [Allah] said, "Get out of it, reviled and driven out. As for those of them who follow you, I will fill up Hell with every one of you." (Surat al-A'raf: 16-18)

Satan is the greatest enemy of mankind. He strives to keep mankind away from the religion by means of whisperings and presenting right as wrong and wrong as right. As stated in the above verse, he seeks to prevent people from being thankful to Allah. Those who follow Satan, however, as declared in the Qur'an, will certainly be the losers. That is why people should be alert to the sly ambushes of Satan and studiously avoid obeying him.

It should be remembered that Satan can influence only those who do not have sincere faith. People who have certain faith in Allah, have certainty about the Hereafter and the Day of Reckoning and are not affected by Satan's attempts to influence them. If ever they feel such an effect, they immediately take refuge in Allah. Allah states that Satan is extremely weak against believers:

As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from Satan, they remember and immediately see clearly. (Surat al-A'raf: 201)

Satan himself, admits that he would not have a misguiding power over believers who are sincerely devoted to Allah. This fact is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

He said, "My Lord, because You misled me, I will make things on the earth seem good to them and I will mislead them all, every one of them, except Your servants among them who are sincere." (Surat al-Hijr: 39-40)

53. Is everything I think about known to Allah?

Allah knows about everything, including what one is thinking about because one of the attributes of Allah is "Al Habir" (All-Aware), which means that Allah knows the inside truth and concealed aspects of everything. One can hide one's thoughts from the people who surround one but not from Allah. As stated in the verse, **"Allah—Him from Whom nothing is hidden, either on earth or in heaven."** (Surah Al 'Imran: 5) In another verse it is stated as follows:

He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth. He knows what you keep secret and what you make public and He knows what you earn. (Surat al-An'am: 3)

Man is dependent on time and space, whereas Allah is exalted above all these deficiencies. It is Allah Who creates time, space, all mankind and all the events that people see occurring. He alone determines the fate of everyone and everything. Therefore, Allah knows man inside out, including all our thoughts. As stated in the Qur'an, **"... He knows what the heart contains."** (Surat al-Mulk: 13)

54. Is it enough for one to have a chaste heart and to be benevolent in order to enter Paradise?

Every person or every society has its own understanding of "goodness" and "kindness". It is "goodness" for some people to raise children to a high educational standard, or to be a member of a charity for some others, or to work for an animal-rights movement for others.

Deceiving themselves in this way, people try to escape their true responsibility. In fact, everyone well knows that on the Day of Reckoning he will be judged according to whether he followed the Qur'an or not. However, as he avoids following the commands of Allah, he pretends to be ignorant of this fact. One who does not run away from this responsibility and who accepts the reality that he is accountable according to Qur'anic criteria knows that the real meaning of "goodness" can only be found in the Qur'an since the Qur'an contains the commands of our Creator.

"Having a chaste heart" is not what one essentially needs in order to gain Paradise, but to strictly follow the Book which contains the commands of Allah. In other words, living in one's own world, without causing any harm or being covetous of the property, wealth or honour of others does not qualify one for Paradise. In addition to these things, one also needs to possess other good traits and attributes that Allah has specified in the Qur'an.

Allah informs us what real goodness is and who the real Muslims are in a verse as follows:

It is not a virtue to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, the truly virtuous are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish prayer and pay alms; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who guard against evil. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

The measure of goodness in the sight of Allah is explained with an example in another verse as follows:

Do you make the giving of water to the pilgrims and looking after the Masjid al-Haram the same as believing in Allah and the Last Day and striving in the Way of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah. Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (Surat at-Tawba: 19)

Those who believe and emigrate and strive in the Way of Allah with their wealth and themselves have a higher rank with Allah. They are the ones who are victorious. (Surat at-Tawba: 20)

55. How does one emigrate to Allah?

To emigrate to Allah means to turn only to Allah and live in the way He wills, leaving all past wrongdoing, wrong thoughts or habits, in short, leaving behind everything that does not accord with a proper understanding of Allah and His Book.

The Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was a Muslim who emigrated to Allah, quitting the life style of his people once he saw the truth. The Prophet Lut (pbuh) is another messenger who turned towards Allah, showing a virtuous character like the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh). This conduct of the Prophet Lut (pbuh) is related in the Qur'an as follows:

And Lut believed in him [Ibrahim]. He said, "I will emigrate to [the service of] my Lord. He is the Almighty, the All Wise." (Surat al-'Ankabut: 26)

56. What does the phrase "the religion of our fathers" mean in the Qur'an?

The commands of Islam and how a believer should behave are thoroughly defined in the Qur'an. The phrase "religion of fathers" means a made-up religion based on past habits, traditions or hearsay, acting by many rules that have nothing to do with the commands of the Qur'an. It is this "religion of fathers" which is the source of superstitious beliefs and practices that are brought forward in the name of Islam—yet are not mentioned anywhere in the Qur'an.

People who live by the "superstitious religion of fathers" are found in great numbers within ignorant societies. People who live in these societies follow various prayers and rituals without questioning why they do it, or examining the way they have been inherited from their forefathers, and simply assume that they are performing satisfactory and acceptable religious acts. Quite clearly, their purpose is not to gain the good pleasure of Allah, but instead to preserve the corrupt inheritance they have received from previous generations. The example of the people of the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) given in the Qur'an relates to this subject:

Recite to them the story of Ibrahim when he said to his father and his people, "What do you worship?" They said, "We worship idols and will continue to cling to them." He said, "Do they hear you when you call or do they help you or do you harm?" They said, "No, but this is what we found our fathers doing." He said, "Have you really thought about what you worship, you and your fathers who came before? They are all my enemies—except for the Lord of all the worlds: He Who created me and guides me; He Who gives me food and gives me drink; and when I am ill, it is He Who heals me; He Who will cause my death, then give me life; He Who I sincerely hope will forgive my mistakes on the Day of Reckoning." (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 69-82)

As seen in the above verses, the Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) departed from the false religion of his people, turned only to Allah and communicated to his people that Allah is the only god and the only religion to follow is His religion.

Many messengers have been accused by their people of rejecting the religion of their fathers and of aiming to destroy the religion of that time, and have been threatened by its followers. The following Qur'anic verses relate to this theme:

They said, "Have you come to us to turn us from what we found our fathers doing, and to gain greatness in the land? We do not believe you." (Surah Yunus: 78)

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

No, in fact they say, "We found our fathers following a religion and we are simply guided in their footsteps." (Surat az-Zukhruf: 22)

57. Are man and woman equals in Islam?

In the Qur'an, Allah refers to believers who have faith and do deeds of righteousness. In the sight of Allah the measure of value and superiority is not being a man or a woman, but to have faith and to perform good deeds. Everyone, with no exception, is responsible for their own fulfilment of Allah's commands and the precepts of Islam. It is stated in the Qur'an that the reward for people's good actions, whether male or female, will be paid on equal terms:

Anyone, male or female, who does right actions and is a believer, will enter Paradise. They will not be wronged by so much as the tiniest speck. (Surat an-Nisa': 124)

Besides this, Allah has informed us in other verses that a person's heedfulness (*taqwa*) is the important thing; not their gender. In other words, fearing Allah, protecting the self from all kinds of sin, disobedience, corruption and deviation, and avoiding all kinds of evil which will lead to destruction in the Hereafter are of the real issues of importance:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah's sight is the one who best performs his duty. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat: 13)

58. How can the heart and eyes of a person be sealed?

The commands of Allah are clear in the Qur'an and anyone who is aware of them should fulfil these commands. If a person does not behave as he should in spite of being aware of Allah's guidance in the matter, then it means that he does not pay heed to his conscience. Therefore, his heart becomes hardened, his reason and conscience decline and after a while he can no longer see right from wrong. He cannot understand what is described in the Book of Allah and cannot see the truth. He cannot even perceive the end that awaits him.

Allah, in His verses, states that the hearts, ears and eyes of those who prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter, who use fallacious arguments to deny Allah's Signs, who fabricate lies against Allah, who only obey their lower selves, who become disbelievers after believing, who prefer to stay behind at the time of battle and who do not want to spend their wealth in the way of Allah although they are rich, will be sealed up and there will be heaviness on them. The Qur'an also states that these people are the people of Hell:

Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara: 7)

Those are the people whose hearts, hearing and sight Allah has sealed up. They are the unaware. There is no doubt that in the Hereafter they will be the losers. (Surat an-Nahl: 108-109)

59. What does corruption mean in the Qur'an?

Many examples are given in the Qur'an of corrupt people and their characteristics. Yet the basic attribute of a corrupt person is that they oppose Allah, His messengers and His books, set up obstacles to the religion and Muslims, and reject the limits of Allah. The attributes common to such people are described in the following verse:

As for those who disbelieved and barred access to the way of Allah, We will heap punishment on top of their punishment because of the corruption they brought about. (Surat an-Nahl: 88)

It is mentioned in the Qur'an that these people, who try to prevent others from the way of Allah, disturb peace and harmony on earth, stir up trouble, undermine the commands and prohibitions of Allah, and give short weights and measures. Allah repays these people both in the world and in the Hereafter. He punishes them in many ways as declared in the above verse, and with His endless justice, repays with the punishment due to them everyone who tries to bring corruption.

60. Who are the hypocrites?

Hypocrites are defined in the Qur'an as people who pretend to believe, when in fact they don't, and who hope to take advantage of the believers among whom they live. Allah has informed us that hypocrites are corrupt people, who attempt to cause dissension among believers. In other words, they secretly aim to disturb the peace and harmony of believers. On account of this trait of theirs, they are described as "hypocrites" (*munafiqun*), meaning those who bring dissension and corruption (*nifaq*).

Another significant attribute of the hypocrites is that their real character only shows itself when the believers are facing difficulties, but at no other time do they reveal themselves. These people, who think that they are deceiving the believers are, in fact, themselves deceived. In the verse below Allah mentions the mistake that the hypocrites make:

Among the people there are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day", when they are not believers. They think they deceive Allah and those who believe. They deceive no one but themselves but they are not aware of it. There is a sickness in their hearts and Allah has increased their sickness. They will have a painful punishment on account of their denial. (Surat al-Baqara: 8-10)

Allah has promised them the most painful punishment since they have demonstrated how vile they are. Out of arrogance and for the sake of some worldly benefit, they rejected faith after accepting it, even though full knowledge about religion and the Hereafter had been conveyed to them and even though they knew the messenger and lived together with believers. Their punishment is also because they attempted to cause dissension, were hostile to the messenger and to the believers, and provoked the unbelievers into acting against the believers:

The hypocrites are in the lowest level of the Fire. You will not find anyone to help them. (Surat an-Nisa': 145)

61. Are there any signs that characterise hypocrites?

Allah has described various characteristics of the hypocrites in the Qur'an, and has warned the believers against this group of disbelievers. For this reason, the features of these vicious, furtive people are obvious to anyone who knows the Qur'an well. A cautious believer who is familiar with the Book of Allah never misses the signs of the hypocrites, who have sickness in their hearts. No matter how hard they try to conceal them, the signs they bear of their disbelief reveal themselves in their actions, in their speech and in the way they react to events. Believers cannot name a person who reveals such signs as a "definite hypocrite", but would be cautious of this person. Some of the signs that help to identify hypocrites are mentioned in the verses below:

The hypocrites think they deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them. When they get up to pray, they get up lazily, showing off to people, and only remembering Allah a very little. (Surat an-Nisa': 142)

The verse makes it clear that seeking to impress people by their behaviour and trying to show off are signs that can be perceived by believers. It is stated in a verse of the Qur'an that the real face of these people will ultimately be revealed and if Allah wills, they will be known by their features and by their manner of speech:

Or did those with sickness in their hearts imagine that Allah would not expose their malevolence? If We wished, We would show them to you and you would know them by their mark and know them by their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions. (Surah Muhammad: 29-30)

Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) defines the signs that characterise hypocrites thus:
The signs of the hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he promises he breaks his promise and when he is entrusted he betrays the trust. (Bukhari and Muslim)

62. Who is an "ignorant person" according to the Qur'an?

The adjective "ignorant" as used in the Qur'an has a different meaning to what is generally understood. Ignorance expressed in the Qur'an means being unaware of the reason for one's creation, being unaware of the exalted attributes of the Creator and the knowledge and wisdom contained in the Book which He has sent down,

and being unaware of matters concerning the Hereafter and as a result of this ignorance adopting an unconscious life style.

The "ignorance" of people who do not accept Allah as the only true god and who do not follow the way He has sent with His messengers, is pointed out in the Qur'an as follows:

They said, "Have you come to us to divert us from our gods? Bring us what you have promised us if you are telling the truth." He said, "All knowledge is with Allah. I only transmit to you what I have been sent with. But I see that you are a people who are ignorant." (Surat al-Ahqaf: 22-23)

63. How is the creation of mankind related in the Qur'an?

Allah gives ample information in the Qur'an about the stages of the creation of mankind. Most of this information contains facts that could not be known by the people of that time, but have recently been discovered by modern science; which is one of the innumerable scientific miracles of the Qur'an. Information given in the Qur'an about the creation of mankind can be summarised as follows:

- The nutritive fluid called semen, which contains sperm, is not composed only of sperms. On the contrary, semen is composed of a mixture of different fluids. It is pointed out in the Qur'an that semen is a "mingled" fluid. This fact was recently revealed through the aide of modern science.

We created man from a mingled drop to test him, and We made him hearing and seeing. (Surat al-Insan: 2)

- Only one of the millions of sperms in the semen fertilises the ovum. In other words, the essence of man is not the whole semen, but only a little part of it. It is stated in the Qur'an that man is not created from the whole semen, but from a mere part of it as follows:

Was he not a drop of ejaculated sperm? (Surat al-Qiyama: 37)

- Without wasting any time, the "zygote", the cell resulting from the union of the sperm and the ovum, starts duplicate to become a "piece of flesh". The zygote does not spend this developmental stage in a cavity, but clings to the mother's uterine wall and sticks there by means of its extensions, like roots anchoring a plant to the ground. This fact, which has been recently revealed, was described in the Qur'an centuries ago:

Recite: In the Name of your Lord Who created, created man from alaq [i.e., something that clings]. (Surat al-'Alaq: 1-2)

- The womb is filled with the "amniotic fluid" surrounding the zygote which has started to develop. The importance of this fluid in which the foetus grows is to protect the foetus from external impact. The fact that the foetus develops in a secure place is also mentioned in the Qur'an:

Did We not create you from a base fluid, then place it in a secure repository for a recognised term? (Surat al-Mursalat: 20-22)

- Allah has given information about some of the stages of man's creation in Surat al-Muminun. Today it is a biologically proven fact that the developmental stages of man are exactly the same as what is described in the Qur'anic verses:

We created man from the purest kind of clay; then made him a drop in a secure receptacle; then formed the drop into an alaq (embryo) and formed the alaq into a lump and formed the lump into bones and clothed the bones in flesh; and then brought him into being as another creature. Blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators! (Surat al-Muminun: 12-14)

64. How can one call to the religion of Allah?

To communicate the religion and good conduct to people is a command of Allah:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Surah Al 'Imran: 104)

In one verse Allah commands us to "**Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition...**" (Surat an-Nahl: 125). Calling to the religion of Allah is done by means of spreading the commands of the Qur'an with "wisdom and fair admonition". During this communication process, topics such as the existence and unity of Allah, and His matchless perfection in creation are explained so that the respect, love and fear that the person who is invited to religion has for Allah are enhanced. How a right acting person should react to events is described in detail. The nature of man's existence in this world is that he is tried here, that death is near, that he will be judged after death, and that he will either enter Paradise or Hell according to this judgement. All of this is also explained by showing how Allah has prepared the Garden and the Fire with His infinite justice, it is ensured that the listener will strive to avoid coming to an evil end. If people who learn about Allah, the Qur'an and the Hereafter through these descriptions act according to their consciences, then they will try to fulfil the commands of Allah to the best of their ability.

65. How can one think deeply in daily life?

Man thinks about so many things during the flow of daily life. For example, he may think about the things to be done on that day, where to go, the pleasant or the unpleasant things said about him, what he has done or will do at his job or school, or about long term plans. Many such thoughts may keep one's mind busy during the day. These are surely necessary thoughts, yet they should occupy the person only as is necessary because there are much more important subjects on which man needs to reflect, things that concern one's eternal life.

Man should first think about how he and all the living beings that surround him have come into existence and how they continue to exist. Following this he should reflect on the attributes of Allah, Who created all these beings out of nothing and who maintains their existence. Then he should consider why his powerful and knowledgeable Creator created him and what He wants him to do. He should develop the resolve to fulfil the commands of Allah in the best possible manner. In the meantime, he should always remember and act with awareness of the inescapable end which awaits him; death and the Hereafter. He should avoid frivolous thoughts, behaviour and speech which would distract him from these urgent matters, leading to heedlessness and thankless pursuits that are of no advantage to him in the next life.

The mental capacity of man is, in fact, very great. What is important is to know how to use it and not to let unnecessary thoughts occupy one's mind.

One can reflect on these important matters while continuing with daily life. One can even consider each separate topic quite deeply in relation to the relevant Qur'anic verses. For example, a person who spends 9 or 10 hours a day at work or at school encounters so many things that he could think about during that time; different people whose characteristics are described in the Qur'an, or factors concerning the various circumstances he may find himself in throughout the day. One's daily experiences give rise to hundreds of thought-provoking matters such as heeding the voice of one's own conscience, not giving way to the urges of the self, struggling with feelings of jealousy, striving for modesty, putting trust in Allah and trying to be steadfast. Furthermore, one can ponder on these subjects in such a way as to increase the profundity of one's understanding. Therefore, the important point is to seize these opportunities whenever they present themselves.

In addition, one can also give thought to the kind of things that we often take for granted, varying from the blossoming of plants, to birds flying in the sky, from the benefit of the oxygen we breathe, to our hearts which continuously beat. One who has an enquiring mind that does not stop at the most obvious or facile explanations, will start to think deeply. Allah states in the Qur'an that believers are people of reflection:

In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are Signs for people with intelligence: those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth [saying]: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Surah Al 'Imran: 190-191)

66. What prevents deep thinking?

One's attention may easily be distracted from a particular subject by other things. While thinking about an important matter, one may find oneself distracted by the ordinary things one intends to do the following day, or even by the pen one is holding in one's hand. Such distractedness hinders one from profound thinking.

Besides this, if a person does not have sufficient knowledge about a subject, the results of his thinking can only go so far. However, this need not represent a permanent obstacle to profound thinking. So long as one knows where to look and how one should go about it, one can always enhance one's knowledge if necessary.

Certainly one of the most significant barriers to proper thinking is over-familiarity with things and looking at things from a fixed perspective. A person who has constantly seen certain things happening since the day he was born will regard all these events as nothing unusual if he does not reflect on them thoroughly. Since he is used to seeing them everyday, he will be unable to appreciate the exceptional design that living things possess. He will not think about the ant, for instance, who easily carries 200-300 times its own weight for many metres, which means that he will never reflect on who has given the ant this physical mechanism which enables it to perform such hard work. By the same token, it will never dawn on him even for a single instant, that he could never achieve a comparable feat of strength. Another example might be the fine details in the structure of a bird's wing. He does not realise that the wing mechanism of the bird requires an eminently unique design. On the other hand, a person who is capable of thinking deeply can arrive at far reaching conclusions by taking up and examining even a single feather. He may even discover many significant new details ranging from the order in the feather, to the structure of the material that the feather is made of. His examination of this single feather can reveal to him the evidence of Allah's creation.

Yet it should be noted that one does not necessarily need to have great knowledge in order to break free from the common, habitual way of thinking. It would be sufficient to take a careful look at the living things one is surrounded by, the sky or one's own body. Allah draws attention to this point in the Qur'an with an example as follows:

Have they not looked at the sky above them: how We structured it and made it beautiful and how there are no fissures in it? And the earth: how We stretched it out and cast firmly embedded mountains onto it and caused luxuriant plants of every kind to grow in it, an instruction and a reminder for every penitent human being. And We sent down blessed water from the sky and made gardens grow by it and grain for harvesting and soaring date-palms with layered spathes, as provision for Our servants; by it We brought a dead land to life. That is how the Emergence will take place. (Surah Qaf: 6-11)

67. What is the loss of those who refrain from thinking?

In the Qur'an, Allah, advises man to think. In many verses He gives examples and asks "will you not pay heed?"

In fact, man has many opportunities in a day to take heed, to see the handiwork of Allah, to grasp the proofs in His creation and to praise Him with the understanding due to His glory and greatness. People who do

not think, however, would fail to appreciate the importance of these openings, since to them they appear to be no more than ordinary events occurring in the flow of daily life.

For example, when such a person has an accident or catches a disease, it does not occur to him that it might be a special condition given to him to make him turn towards Allah. Yet, in the Qur'an, Allah mentions the hardships inflicted on people in order to make them think:

Do they not see that they are tried once or twice every year? But still they do not turn back. They do not pay heed. (Surat at-Tawba: 126)

Ignoring such reminders are disadvantageous only to the person himself. Furthermore, this would be only one of the innumerable losses incurred because of failure to reflect.

One who does not think cannot recognise the beauty that surrounds him. He cannot take pleasure in the subtleties of Allah's creation. He cannot grasp the proofs of the existence of Allah, the Creator of everything, and His exaltedness. This is the loss of a significant gift for man because he who cannot grasp that Allah is the creator of everything of beauty in the world cannot look forward to the Hereafter. Furthermore, since he assumes that everything in this world will vanish with death, it is not possible for him to experience a genuine enjoyment of these temporary things either. On the contrary, he sees these pleasures merely as things that he will ultimately lose some day. This leads to feelings of distress and anxiety, instead of enjoying the gifts that Allah has bestowed on him.

68. What are the advantages of reflecting on created things?

Unlike people who refrain from thinking, one who thinks that everything is created by Allah, sees His traces in every detail, and understands that everything is specifically created for mankind.

For example, reflecting on the exquisite systems possessed by living beings, including mankind, and remembering that the planet he lives on and the whole universe has been built by a supreme power, brings the person to a better knowledge of Allah. This softens the heart of the individual, and enhances the respect, love and awe that he feels for Allah. His faith increases, since he sees the signs of Allah's power and exaltedness in all living things, from trees to birds, to ants, to butterflies, and in every mechanism of their beings. Allah draws attention to the fact that only people who reflect will see and appreciate the evidence of the truth that is all around them:

In the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and day, and the ships which sail the seas for people's benefit, and the water which Allah sends down from the sky—by which He brings the earth to life when it was dead and scatters about in it creatures of every kind—and the varying direction of the winds, and the clouds subservient between heaven and earth, there are Signs for people who use their intellect. (Surat al-Baqara: 164)

A person who has certain faith in Allah comprehends that the world is not without a purpose and that there are important things he should reflect on. He knows that everything given to him is what Allah has bestowed on him, for which he gives thanks. He always thinks about the Hereafter and asks for forgiveness in order to be protected from the terror of that day.

The most important point about thinking is surely the fact that it is a gain which everyone makes with his own personal efforts. No one can force another to think. That is why one who thinks thoroughly helps only himself. Allah points out in the Qur'an that only people who reflect will take proper heed of the events they encounter, and that people who pay attention in this way can save their eternal lives. Allah states that some people avoid being reminded, and therefore will end up feeling endless regret:

Remind, then, if the reminder benefits. He who has fear will be reminded; but the most miserable will shun it, those who will roast in the Greatest Fire and then neither die nor live in it. (Surat al-A'la: 9-13)

69. How can one consider Allah with the consideration that is due to Him?

From the moment we wake up, we meet with the gifts that Allah has given to us. We can breathe, see, hear and think, our hearts beat, our cells are renewed. When we are hungry, we eat, enjoy the flavour and become stronger. When we are thirsty, we can quench our thirst. We can speak.

These are but a few of the gifts bestowed by Allah on mankind. The real important thing for a person who is aware of these gifts is to measure Allah with His true measure. Allah is the Glorious One, He is the Owner and Creator of everything. One needs to try to know Allah, reflecting on Him with His exalted attributes. Allah mentions the greatness of His glory in the Qur'an as follows:

They do not measure Allah with His true measure. The whole earth will be a mere handful for Him on the Day of Rising, the heavens folded up in His right hand... (Surat az-Zumar: 67)

In the universe, from the creation of man to the stages of the occurrence of the Day of Rising, from the creation of the heavens to the existence of the seas and the mountains, there is a magnificence and infinite power, which belong to Allah alone, Who possesses all knowledge.

Allah has sent mankind revelations and prophets. He makes Himself known to us both by the matchless knowledge and artistry manifested in every living thing that He creates, and by means of His books and prophets. The responsibility of mankind is to think as profoundly as one can in order to measure the exaltedness and greatness of Allah with the measure that is due to Him.

70. What should one do when one makes a mistake or forgets?

Man is created weak; he may forget things or may make mistakes. Not to forget and not to be wrong are peculiar only to Allah. What is important is to act on it when one remembers what is right. Allah gives an example of this behaviour in Surat al-An'am as follows:

... And if Satan should ever cause you to forget, once you remember, do not stay sitting with the wrongdoers. (Surat al-An'am: 68)

As stated in the verse, one may, unawares or as a result of forgetting, behave in a way which is not good. That is why it would be inappropriate to feel sad or to be anxious because of things forgotten or because of mistakes made. What believers should do in such cases is to take refuge in the infinite mercy and forgivingness of Allah, and to pray as He has advised us in the Qur'an, "... **Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake...**" (Surat al-Baqara: 286).

71. Were messengers sent to every past nation?

Allah has informed us in the Qur'an that He sent a messenger to every past nation. Allah's messengers have invited their people to the religion of Allah, showed them the right way, conveyed the prohibitions of Allah, explained to them the closeness of death, the reason for their existence in the world and the existence of Paradise and Hell. With the justice of Allah, all mankind was warned and given good news by means of His messengers. This is a very important point which shows that everybody has heard the call of Allah, and that people will not be able to plead ignorance in the Hereafter. Allah enlightens mankind about this point in the following verse:

We have sent you with the truth bringing good news and giving warning. There is no community to which a warner has not come. (Surat Fatir: 24)

72. Why have unbelievers cast aspersions on all prophets throughout history?

The fact that prophets always communicate the religion of Allah never pleases unbelievers. This is because people who understand and fulfil what they are told demonstrate a change in themselves and move away from the superstitious systems of the unbelievers. For instance, since they know that they should fear only Allah after they become believers, it is no longer possible to frighten them with any other thing. Since they always consider the benefits of the religion in every action they take, it becomes very difficult to intimidate them or lead them astray. These people, no matter what the conditions are and no matter what they are offered in return, do not hesitate to say what is right and just, and do not diverge from what they believe to be right.

This annoys unbelievers, because it endangers their personal worldly interests. For instance, whereas unbelievers try to live and make others live according to their own ideas, believers who adhere to the example

of the prophet follow only the commands of Allah. They teach people the inappropriateness of the ignorant system that unbelievers live in, and the beauty of the religion which will bring peace and happiness to people both in this world and in the Hereafter.

For these reasons, in every age, unbelievers have attempted to hinder messengers by using various methods. Examples of this are related in the Qur'an. By means of inconsistent and irrational arguments, unbelievers attempt to deny what Allah's messengers convey. They try to stop them with verbal threats. When verbal means fail, they try to make believers revert from the right way by means of real physical methods. However none of these methods works; they can never bring forth convincing evidence against the truths that messengers and sincere believers convey; nor can they put forward ideas that successfully oppose ideas based upon truth.

In many verses Allah has given examples of the verbal assaults of unbelievers, and of groundless allegations they made against prophets:

The ruling circle of those of his [Nuh's] people who disbelieved said, "This is nothing but a human being like yourselves who simply wants to gain ascendancy over you. If Allah had wanted He would have sent angels down. We never heard of anything like this among our ancestors, the earlier peoples. He is nothing but a man possessed so wait a while and see what happens to him." (Surat al-Muminun: 24-25)

What is he [i.e., Nuh] but a man who has invented a lie against Allah? We do not believe in him. (Surat al-Muminun: 38)

... But they said [for Musa], "A lying magician." (Surah Ghafir: 24)

Allah relates in one verse that such aspersions have almost been a tradition among unbelievers:

Equally, no Messenger came to those before them without their saying, "A magician or a madman!" Did they bequeathe this to each other? Indeed they are an unbridled people. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 52-53)

73. Will the efforts of the unbelievers result in anything?

The verbal or physical opposition that unbelievers put up against the messengers of Allah and believers never results in anything positive. This is because Allah has declared that it is only His followers who will be the uppermost both in this world and in the Hereafter, stating "**... you shall be uppermost if you are believers**" (Surah Al 'Imran: 139).

We see that unbelievers have carried on their struggle against believers all throughout world history. Yet all these struggles have always come out in favour of the believers. This is what Allah has promised. Allah has mentioned this in the Qur'an as follows:

Allah has written, "I will be victorious, I and My Messengers." Allah is Most Strong, Almighty. (Surat al-Mujadala: 21)

74. Who are the true friends of the believers in this world?

Allah is the friend of believers. He is the protector and guardian of believers who take Him as their friend, and who seek only His good pleasure. There is the aid and support of Allah behind all the deeds of the believers. Every act that believers perform, seeking the pleasure of Allah, results in an absolute goodness. It is stated in one verse that **"Allah is with those who fulfil their duty and with those who are good-doers."** (Surat an-Nahl: 128). In another verse Allah gives the good news of His support to believers as follows:

Allah is the Protector of those who believe. He brings them out of the darkness into the light... (Surat al-Baqara: 257)

Besides this, believers are the friends and protectors of one another. They invite each other to goodness and forbid evil. They aim to direct each other to Paradise, and to raise each other's rank in the Hereafter. Allah has informed believers in the Qur'an whom they should take as friends:

Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who establish prayer and pay alms, and bow. As for those who make Allah their friend, and His Messenger and those who believe: it is the party of Allah who are victorious! (Surat al-Ma'ida: 55-56)

75. Why can't anyone other than a believer be taken as a friend?

People who do not have sincere faith in Allah, who do not comply with His limits and do not fear Him can never be friends to believers. First of all, Allah does not love these people. A believer who seeks the friendship, love and pleasure of Allah, surely, does not take those whom He does not love, and who are, in fact, His enemies, as his friends. He knows that such behaviour could lead to the loss of the friendship and pleasure of Allah. Allah has warned believers against such behaviour as follows:

You who believe! Do not take the disbelievers as friends rather than the believers. Do you want to give Allah clear proof against you? (Surat an-Nisa': 144)

Apart from this, those who do not believe do not deserve to be taken as friends. Before all else, they are not reliable. Faithfulness and loyalty in friendship cannot be expected from a person who does not mind losing

the friendship of Allah. Undoubtedly, such a person would abandon his friend, should this friendship collide with his personal interests. What is more, he would not hesitate to betray this "friend" when it suited his interests.

Unbelievers can never be truly self-sacrificing, because their entire lives and mentalities are based on selfishness. They are not concerned with the reckoning of their so-called friend in the Hereafter, hence they do not urge him to what is right or discourage him from wrong in order to protect him from Hell. More concisely, they do not possess the attributes that a friend should possess. Allah has informed us that these people are enemies to the Muslims, and commanded believers not to take them as friends:

You who believe! Do not take any outside yourselves as intimates. They will do anything to harm you. They love what causes you distress. Hatred has appeared out of their mouths, but what their breasts hide is far worse. We have made the Signs clear to you if you use your intellect. (Surah Al 'Imran: 118)

76. Who takes Satan as a friend?

The most significant aspect of Satan is that he promised that he will divert mankind from the path of Allah. Therefore, anyone who rejects belief in Allah and His messenger, who tries to hinder people from the way of Allah, opposes Allah and the religion, or causes people to forget Allah, the Hereafter and the religion, is the supporter and friend of Satan. However, these people will be bitterly disappointed both in the world and in the Hereafter because of what they do. Allah has stated that Satan would aim to mislead mankind, and related the end of those who make him their friend as follows:

What they call on is a rebellious Satan whom Allah has cursed. He said, "I will take a certain fixed proportion of Your servants. I will lead them astray and fill them with false hopes. I will command them and they will cut off cattle's ears. I will command them and they will change Allah's creation." Anyone who takes Satan as his protector in place of Allah has clearly lost everything. (Surat an-Nisa': 117-119)

77. Can man be assured of entering Paradise while he is in this world?

No one can be sure of entering Paradise while he is still in the world. Allah tells us that man should be filled both with fear and with hope stating "... pray to Him with fear and hope..." (Surat al-A'raf: 56). Everyone should try to attain the good pleasure of Allah by trying their utmost to fulfil the commands of the Qur'an, and by implementing the good conduct approved by Allah in every moment of one's life. In return for these efforts he can hope for Paradise, yet can never be absolutely certain of it.

78. Who are the "ruling elite" mentioned in the Qur'an?

Each time messengers called their people to the religion of Allah, there has always been a section who opposed them, trying to impede their actions and causing difficulties for believers. The Qur'an tells us that these people were mainly among the ruling elite of that community. This is because of the fact that these people possess wealth, power and authority within their society. The reason for their furious opposition to the messengers of Allah is that they worry about losing this worldly power, and the influence and reputation they hold. It is stated in the Qur'an that there will be such people in every age:

And likewise in every city We set up its greatest wrongdoers to plot in it. They plot against themselves alone, but they are not aware of it. (Surat al-An'am: 123)

In fact these people, too, being people created by Allah in order to reveal the superiority of believers, completely yield to the fate decreed for them by Allah. As mentioned in the Qur'an, Allah has caused the evil purposes of the schemes these people hatched to backfire on them, and has taken what they possessed when they were still in the world and has bequeathed it to the believers. Allah describes the outcome of Pharaoh's opposition and that of his leading people, who had great power and authority in Egypt but were succeeded by the Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and the believers who followed him:

And We bequeathed to the people who had been oppressed the easternmost part of the land We had blessed, and its westernmost part as well. The most excellent Word of your Lord was fulfilled for the tribe of Israel on account of their steadfastness. And We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people made and the buildings they constructed. (Surat al-A'raf: 137)

We expelled them [Pharaoh and his people] from gardens and springs, from treasures and a splendid situation. So it was! And We bequeathed them to the tribe of Israel. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 57-59)

This word of Allah which is for all believers is related in another verse as follows:

We wrote down in the Psalms, after the Reminder came: "It is My servants who are righteous who will inherit the earth." (Surat al-Anbiya': 105)

On the other hand, what these leading unbelievers shall meet in the Hereafter will be an inescapable and painful punishment.

79. What does "right action" mean?

Right actions are deeds, which are performed utterly in order to earn the good pleasure of Allah. A person may perform some actions which seem to be remarkable in their goodness or self-sacrifice. For instance, he may give considerable amounts of help, money etc. to those in need. The amount of his aid, however, does not indicate that it is a right action because people may provide such help in order to be known as "good" by others, or to show off or to gain people's trust in a business transaction. For a deed to be a "right action", it should be performed only to please Allah.

One exerts oneself to do one's best while performing right actions not because one's aim is to show off, but to attain the result which would please Allah the most. On account of these sincere efforts, Paradise and a good life are promised to believers who do good deeds:

As for those who believe and do right actions and humble themselves before their Lord, they are the Companions of Paradise remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surah Hud: 23)

Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and We will recompense them according to the best of what they did. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

80. How do believers behave when they are given wealth?

A believer knows that Allah is the real owner of the entire Kingdom, and that He gives sovereignty to whoever He wills. Therefore, he does not become insolent and arrogant because of what he has, but thanks Allah for what He has bestowed on him and spends what he has in the way that would please Him the most.

In the Qur'an, Allah makes an example of a man of wealth and property. That man owns gardens which are remarkably fertile. However, boasting of what he possesses, he pretends not to understand that it is Allah Who has given these to him and becomes ungrateful. His companion, who is a believer, warns him about this attitude of his as follows:

His companion, with whom he was debating, said to him, "Do you then disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, and then formed you as a man? He is, however, Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord. Why, when you entered your garden, did you not say, 'It is as Allah wills, there is no strength but in Allah?' " ... (Surat al-Kahf: 37-39)

As exemplified in the verse, the behaviour of believers is to remember Allah and give thanks to Him for the gifts given to them.

81. What does being "wise" mean?

Being "wise" means to talk and behave rationally, concisely and fittingly. A wise person has the insight, the ability to see the true aspects of events, and possesses profound understanding. For that reason all his decisions and actions are to the point. His words are striking and moving. Everything he says produces a profound effect on the hearts of others.

Wisdom is a virtue given by Allah to truly sincere people who in every instant turn towards Allah, who live and think according to the Qur'an. Allah has stated that wisdom is a great gift in the verse, "**He gives wisdom to whoever He wills and he who has been given wisdom has been given great good...**" (Surat al-Baqara: 269)

82. How is extravagance referred to in the Qur'an?

Allah has forbidden His servants to be extravagant, revealing what the criterion should be when spending:

Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor mean, but take a stance mid way between the two. (Surat al-Furqan: 67)

Muslims spend everything they have in the way of Allah and in the way that would please Him most. They do not forget that what they have is what Allah has given them as a blessing and that they are not the real owners of any of it. When they have to make sacrifices they spend everything they have as commanded by the Qur'an; yet when expenditure is unnecessary they avoid spending even a single penny wastefully. Allah, in the Qur'an, has commanded believers to give their goods to those in need, but not to squander them:

Give your relatives their due, and the very poor and travellers but do not squander what you have. Squanderers are brothers to the Satans, and Satan was ungrateful to his Lord. (Surat al-Isra': 26-27)

On the other hand, avoiding extravagance should not be misunderstood to mean avoiding the gifts of Allah. He states in the Qur'an "**... eat and drink but do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate.**" (Surat al-A'raf: 31) In this verse Allah has told believers to enjoy His gifts, and has forbidden them only to spend wastefully. Today, however, in societies remote from religion, extravagance is not paid the attention it is due. In restaurants and houses, plates of food and huge amounts of bread, fruits and vegetables are thoughtlessly thrown away. But Allah has forbidden extravagance, whether in significant or insignificant amounts. Therefore people should try to find a way to make use of all such provision before they spoil, instead of throwing them away saying, "this has gone off" or "we cannot use this". Only in this way can they give these gifts their due; otherwise the result is scarcity and ingratitude to Allah.

83. How do angels take people in death? Does the person see the angel when his soul is being taken?

Death is a sort of transformation in dimension. The connection between the soul of the person and his worldly body becomes severed when he dies. Beginning from the moment man dies, he passes to a dimension where he can see the angels of death. This transition is also the beginning of man's eternal life. Along with passing to a different dimension, the person sees the angel who has come to take his soul, who even talks to him. However, not everybody is taken in death in the same way. What the angels who come to take the soul of believers do and say is entirely different from those who come to take soul of the unbelievers.

The angels take the soul of believers in a virtuous state, saying "peace be upon you!" At the same time they give the glad tidings of Paradise they will enter. (Surat an-Nahl: 32)

On the other hand, the angel who comes to take an unbeliever in death beats his face and his back when he least expects it (Surah Muhammad: 27). They pluck his soul out harshly, while the unbeliever's legs are entwined together (Surat al-Qiyama: 29). When the angels stretch out their hands to him, they give him the news of the punishment of humiliation and fire, which will last forever. (Surat al-An'am: 93)

84. What is the provoking whisper of Satan?

Satan approaches man from all directions, aiming to distract him from the path of Allah. He plays various tricks on man in order to achieve his goal. Satanic suggestion is one of these tricks. Satanic suggestions are delusions, doubts cast in the heart, vain hopes, disturbing thoughts or words whispered by Satan in order to keep people occupied with vain things, and to divert them from matters that they really should be preoccupied with. This characteristic of Satan is related in the Qur'an as follows:

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the insidious whisperer who whispers in people's breasts." (Surat an-Nas: 1-5)

Satan whispers to man against the Qur'an, desiring to prevent him from thinking soundly and to keep him occupied with illusions about his religion that will be harmful to him both in this world and in the Hereafter. He attempts to cause the person to lose his self-confidence by the influence of senseless and inconsistent ideas projected as the person's own thoughts. One who does not hold to the Qur'an has no protection against this trick of Satan, and becomes distracted by his whisperings and starts to waver. These whispers corrupt one's knowledge of religion, and causes the individual to consider Allah in a manner inappropriate to His exaltedness and causes him to be in continual doubt. As a result of this, instead of pondering on the greatness of Allah and on the meaning of his life in the world, he wastes his time with things that are of no benefit either to himself or to other people. Consequently, Satan achieves success with this person, whose unawareness of the Qur'an and remoteness from religion lead him to endless punishment. It is stated in the Qur'an that unbelievers and wrongdoers are always susceptible to the influence of Satan, and act under the direction of his whisperings:

Shall I tell you upon whom the Satans descend? They descend on every evil liar. They give them a hearing and most of them are liars. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 221-223)

85. How can man escape from the whisperings of Satan?

As Allah informs us in the Qur'an, Satan's scheming is always feeble (Surat an-Nisa': 76). He has no authority over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. Allah has informed believers about what they should do when Satan whispers to them and about how to escape from his whispering. Believers, who obey the Qur'an, immediately seek refuge in Allah from Satan when he whispers to them. Very quickly they see that the

thought crossing their mind is, in fact, a whisper of Satan. Without being distressed at all, they remember Allah and escape this evil trick. The Qur'an informs us of this:

If an evil impulse from Satan provokes you, seek refuge in Allah. He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from Satan, they remember and immediately see clearly. (Surat al-A'raf: 200-201)

86. What should one do when the Qur'an is recited?

Allah commands people to be quiet and listen to the Qur'an when it is recited:

When the Qur'an is recited listen to it and be quiet so that hopefully you will gain mercy. (Surat al-A'raf: 204)

Many people do not know about this commandment of Allah, and continue to live their daily lives and to talk with others when the Qur'an is being recited on TV or on the radio. Yet what should be done in such a situation is to be quiet and to listen to it. If silence cannot be maintained under the circumstances, then the TV or radio may be turned off, since to do otherwise would be to neglect what Allah has commanded.

87. Is it sufficient to recite the Qur'an?

Today, many people who characterise themselves as Muslims, in fact, do not know what Allah wants them to do nor how they can be true Muslims. This is because they have not read the holy book that Allah has sent to them even once throughout their lives. However, Allah has sent the Qur'an to inform us why He has created mankind and what He wants us to do. Those who desire to know Allah, and to enter His Paradise earning His good pleasure, should have a thorough knowledge of the Qur'an.

However in societies of ignorance there is an erroneous opinion of the Qur'an. Some of these people merely read the Qur'an, yet do not reflect on the advice that Allah offers them and neither do they follow it. Reading the Qur'an is certainly a form of worship, but the Qur'an is read in order to know Allah and to learn and act upon what He wants. Again, some of these people think that the Qur'an is merely a book of prayers. While praying, they recite the verses they previously memorised, but do not understand their meaning. Allah has given examples in the Qur'an of the prayers of prophets; no doubt the believers should take them as a model. However, it would be a mistake to consider the Qur'an as merely a book of prayers.

The Qur'an was sent by Allah as a guidance for believers, and its clear verses deliver believers from darkness to light. Allah relates this feature of the Qur'an as follows:

... A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book. By it, Allah guides those who follow what pleases Him to the ways of Peace. He will bring them from the darkness to the light by His permission, and guide them to a straight path. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 15-16)

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

An erroneous belief that these people hold about the Qur'an is that it was sent to past nations. Yet despite the passing time, developing technology, or living in the space age or in the computer age does not change anything at all. The greed, passions, opinions and ignorance of people who lived 1400 years ago are identical with those of the people of today or of the people of the future. On the other hand, the source of true knowledge that these behaviours should be replaced with is always the Qur'an. Those who, in order not to obey the Qur'an, assert that it is "the legends of previous people", are warned of Hell as follows:

When Our Signs are recited to him, he says, "Just myths and legends of the previous peoples!" No indeed! Rather what they have earned has rusted up their hearts. No indeed! Rather that Day they will be veiled from their Lord. Then they will roast in the Blazing Fire. (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 13-16)

88. What aspects of religion ensure peace and harmony?

Religion, before all else, commands people to live according to their conscience. In an environment where everyone acts conscientiously, there will not be any quarrels, fighting or behaviour that would disturb the peace.

Those who conform to religion have wisdom and common sense; thus their approach to events are also in line with this. Therefore, they always exhibit positive and reassuring behaviour, which make their environment easy and comfortable.

Religion commands justice. Everybody is given his due perfectly, therefore, no one needs to struggle for his rights or to apply various methods to achieve them. His rights are at any rate protected by other devout and conscientious people in the most decent manner.

Since they fear Allah, people of faith do not get involved in actions which Allah has forbidden, such as murder, suicide or theft. They never do things which they will not be able to account for in the Hereafter.

Where people live by the religion, there is no greed for personal interests. Every man is liable to do the best he can for the common benefit of religion. Therefore, a disturbance that may result from the clash of interests does not exist.

There is no compulsion where religion is concerned. Believers are responsible only to communicate the truths which are revealed by religion.

In addition to these, it is stated in the Qur'an that Allah sends down peace of reassurance into the hearts of believers. This is a great gift of Allah to righteous believers. This fact is related in the Qur'an as follows:

It is He Who sent down serenity into the hearts of the believers thereby increasing their faith with more faith—the legions of the heavens and the earth belong to Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat al-Fath: 4)

What has been mentioned so far is only a general description of the delightful environment that religion offers to mankind. Religion produces the most peaceful, the most ideal and the most perfect environment that could ever be in the world, both for the individual and for communities.

89. What are the morals of trade as advised in the Qur'an?

A believer performs every deed in order to earn the good pleasure of Allah. No matter what he is engaged in, he does not let it divert him from his real aim. Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an that trade or commerce does not make believers forget their real goal:

... There are men who proclaim His glory morning and evening, not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of prayer and the payment of alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Surat an-Nur: 36-37)

Allah wants believers to be of virtuous character, and believers strive to fulfil the requirements of this character whatever activity they are engaged in. Hence, they are honest, sincere, diligent, fair and modest even while they are conducting trade. Their attention is again focused on the pleasure of Allah and on the limits of what He permits and what He forbids. Besides this, Allah has also commanded believers not to encroach on the rights of others, to give full measure and full weight, and not to cheat people of their belongings (Surah Hud: 85).

In Surat al-Isra', Allah states that it is better to be honest, to be fair and to please Him by means of exhibiting such good behaviour:

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

90. How does not putting trust in Allah destroy the soul?

Putting one's trust in Allah means to trust in and rely on Allah in every matter, and to yield to Him knowing that He is the unique protector. Believers, who are aware of the fact that events take place under the whole control of Allah, know that He always supports and helps those who believe in Him. People who are in this frame of mind, surely feel peace and security. On the other hand, people who do not put their trust in Allah

and do not yield themselves to Him, spend their entire lives in fear, anxiety, distress, panic, insecurity, dissatisfaction, greed, anger, depression, regret, envy etc. Allah places turmoil in the hearts of those people on account of their disbelief. He does not let them enjoy the ease, comfort and peace of putting their trust in Him. The distress of those who do not rely on Allah is described in the Qur'an as follows:

When Allah desires to guide someone, He expands his breast to Islam. When He desires to misguide someone, He makes his breast narrow and constricted as if he were climbing up into the sky. That is how Allah defiles those who have no faith. (Surat al-An'am: 125)

Be people of pure natural belief in Allah, not associating anything else with Him. As for anyone who associates others with Allah, it is as though he had fallen from the sky and the birds had seized him and carried him away or the wind had dropped him in a distant place. (Surat al-Hajj: 31)

91. How does one pray in action?

Prayer in action is to keep on asking for something by means of verbal prayer while exerting oneself and doing everything needed to bring about the desired result. For example, when a person wants to drink some water, he does not sit and wait for it to appear in front of him; instead he pours some water into a glass and then drinks it. In other words, in order to get what he asks from Allah, he acts according to the causes and rules that Allah has taught him and then expects the best result from Allah. Likewise, one may want to pass an exam, so he prays to Allah, studies hard, learns the things that he should, avoids being in environments that may distract his attention or hinder him from studying, and as a result of these efforts, Allah gives him success.

Some people have an erroneous way of thinking about prayer. According to these people, after praying to Allah, one should isolate oneself and wait for the outcome of that prayer. However, this is not sincere behaviour because someone who really wants something should pray for it both in words and actions. Yet one should not fall into the error of those who say, "I did everything necessary" performing all kinds of physical efforts, yet forgetting to pray to Allah verbally. Both kinds of prayer should be performed together.

92. What is the connection between lack of religion and the degeneration of communities?

People who do not submit to the religion that Allah has sent for mankind do not have the good manners described in the Qur'an and do not preserve the limits stated in the Qur'an. Since they do not fear Allah and do not believe in the Hereafter, they are not affected by the fear of being judged for what they do. For that reason, societies without religion are full of individuals who perform all kinds of immoralities and evil without any fear and without thinking of the consequences. A rapid and extensive process of degeneration is inevitable for such societies.

This social decline can be seen in the ease and frequency with which people commit robbery, cause damage to other people, lose their temper, kill people, violate the rights of others, lie, never appreciate anyone other than themselves, never do anything except in return for material benefit, and always oppress those who are weaker than themselves. A person who says, "I may not be religious, but I am not a violent person either" may one day find himself in a situation that he can no longer endure, and claim to have the right to do all kinds of wrong actions. He may get so angry that he may even attempt to kill someone.

Irreligiousness, since it does not accept any limits, destroys all humane feelings in society and leads to a terrible degeneration. In irreligious societies, the justice, humility, good manners, compassion and affection that religion brings to mankind never exist. Therefore, lack of religion is the main source of a community's moral and social decline.

93. What kind of beings are the jinn? Are there believers and unbelievers among the jinn? Will there be Paradise and Hell in the Hereafter in which they will live?

Jinn are beings who are created, like human beings, to worship Allah, but are created out of fire, unlike man who is created from dust (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 56, Surat al-Hijr: 27). Allah sends messengers to the jinn, too, in order to make them believe (Surat al-An'am: 130). There are believers and disbelievers among them. Allah relates this fact about the jinn in the Qur'an as follows:

[A band of the jinn said:] "Some of us are Muslims and some are deviators. Those who have become Muslim are those who sought right guidance." (Surat al-Jinn: 14)

Besides this, among them are those who oppose the prophets, like their human counterparts:

In this way We have appointed as enemies to every Prophet Satans from both mankind and from the jinn... (Surat al-An'am: 112)

Consequently the jinn, just like people, will be fully paid in the Hereafter for what they do. Those who believe in Allah, and pay heed to the warnings of the prophets will be repaid for their deeds and will not be wronged. On the other hand, jinn who disbelieve will be thrown into Hell together with disbelieving people. Allah has related this fact in the Qur'an as follows:

We created many of the jinn and mankind for Hell. They have hearts they do not understand with. They have eyes they do not see with. They have ears they do not hear with. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf: 179)

94. Can the jinn foretell the future?

Allah has stated in many verses in the Qur'an that no one, other than Himself, has knowledge of the unseen and will never have the capacity to acquire it. One of these verses states as follows:

Say: "No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allah." They are not aware of when they will be raised. (Surat an-Naml: 65)

Jinn can never, unless Allah wills, gain knowledge about the future. There are verses in the Qur'an relating that the jinn will attempt to gain knowledge of the unseen, but will not succeed and will themselves admit that they cannot. These verses of Surat al-Jinn abolish the erroneous beliefs that people have about the jinn. In addition, the jinn who served the Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) are also mentioned in the Qur'an, and it is mentioned that these jinn learned that the Prophet Sulayman (pbuh) had died much later on. Therefore, people who seek refuge in the jinn—hoping to find favour with them—should know that they falling into great error; it is not possible, unless Allah wills, for jinn to gain any knowledge about the future. The fact that jinn do not have any knowledge of the future is pointed out in the story of Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an:

Then when We decreed that he should die, nothing divulged his death to them except the worm which ate his staff; so that when he fell down it was made clear to the jinn that if they had truly had knowledge of the unseen they need not have stayed there suffering humiliating punishment. (Surah Saba': 14)

Other verses in Surat al-Jinn which relate to the fact that the jinn cannot know the unseen are as follows:

We tried, as usual, to travel to heaven in search of news but found it filled with fierce guards and meteors. We used to sit there on special seats to listen in. But anyone listening now finds a fiery meteor in wait for him. We have no idea whether evil is intended for those on the earth, or whether their Lord intends them to be rightly guided. (Surat al-Jinn: 8-10)

95. Can the question of how life emerged on earth be answered by the fossil record?

We can easily find the answer to the question of how living beings originated in the fossil record. The oldest fossils of complex living creatures are found in the stratum of the Cambrian era, which has an estimated age of 520-530 million years.

The fossils found in the Cambrian rocks belonged to snails, trilobites, sponges, earthworms, jellyfish, marine crustaceans and sea lilies. All of these invertebrates emerged suddenly and completely without previous

ancestors, which is contrary to what the theory of evolution claims. This miraculous and sudden emergence of living beings is referred to as the "Cambrian Explosion" by scientists.

How such a great number of animal species could have emerged all of a sudden is a question that remains unanswered by evolutionists. An English biologist Richard Dawkins, one of the foremost advocates of evolutionist thought in the world, comments on this as follows:

For example the Cambrian strata of rocks, vintage about 600 million years, are the oldest ones in which we find most of the major invertebrate groups. And we find many of them already in an advanced state of evolution, the very first time they appear. It is as though they were just planted there, without any evolutionary history. Needless to say, this appearance of sudden planting has delighted creationists. (Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, London:W. W. Norton 1986, p. 229.)

As Dawkins, who is an evolutionist, is forced to acknowledge, the Cambrian Explosion is strong evidence for creation.

96. What structures did the creatures that lived millions of years ago have?

Creatures that lived about 500 million years ago had complex structures no different from those of today. Fossils that appeared in the Cambrian period have been shocking for scientists, especially for the evolutionists. Because according to the theory of evolution, creatures of that period should have had "primitive" systems, different from the living things of today.

However the complex systems they have like eyes, gills and circulatory system are evidence of the fact that these creatures were not primitive. For example, the trilobites of the Cambrian period had compound eyes with multi-faceted eye lenses as do some insects today. These complexly structured eyes of the trilobites consisted of hundreds of hexagonal lenses forming a structure resembling a honeycomb. This perfect eye structure which appeared 530 million years ago forced evolutionists to express their amazement.

David Raup, an evolutionist professor of geology at Harvard, Rochester, and Chicago Universities, is forced to acknowledge the impossibility of the formation of the trilobite eye by chance saying: "the trilobites 450 million years ago used an optimal design which would require a well trained and imaginative optical engineer to develop today". (David Raup, "Conflicts Between Darwin and Paleontology", *Bulletin*, Field Museum of Natural History, Vol 50, January 1979, p. 24.)

97. Can evolutionists, who assert that dinosaurs took wing while hunting flies, explain the origin of flies?

Evolutionists cannot come up with an explanation for the origin of flies. Yet, surprisingly, though they cannot explain the formation of a tiny fly, they attempt to explain the transformation of gigantic dinosaurs into birds. Moreover, they fabricate an imaginary scenario asserting that dinosaurs who flapped their front legs to

hunt flies took flight. It is, undoubtedly, senseless for a theory which cannot come up with an explanation even for a tiny fly, to comment on how completely flightless creatures managed to take to the air.

Evolutionists have valid reasons for not mentioning the origin of flies. First of all, flies have a perfect flight mechanism, which cannot be wholly imitated even with today's technology. An average fly has a wing system that enables it to flutter its wings 500 times a second. Moreover, this system is planned so perfectly that it is able to move both its wings simultaneously at such an amazing speed. Apart from this, it has a complex respiratory system. It can use the oxygen it needs to fly in a much quicker and much more efficient way than other living things.

English biologist Robin Wootton describes the perfect creation of the fly as follows:

The better we understand the functioning of insect wings, the more subtle and beautiful their designs appear. . . . Structures are traditionally designed to deform as little as possible; mechanisms are designed to move component parts in predictable ways. Insect wings combine both in one, using components with a wide range of elastic properties, elegantly assembled to allow appropriate deformations in response to appropriate forces and to make the best possible use of air. They have few if any technological parallels – yet. (Robin J. Wootton, "The Mechanical Design of Insect Wings", *Scientific American*, v. 263, November 1990, p.120)

98. Are elephants, squirrels and other mammals derived from a common origin?

According to the claims of the theory of evolution, reptiles are the ancestors both of birds and of mammals. When mammals are considered, it can easily be seen how impossible such a claim is. For example, let's think about tigers, cows, bears, elephants, dolphins, whales, mice and bats. There are great structural differences between these mammal species. Furthermore, each of these living things possesses systems specifically designed for their own needs. For example, dolphins have a very sensitive sonar system. Bears have mechanisms which are appropriate to the climatic conditions of their habitat.

Evolutionist zoologist R. Eric Lombard expresses what great difficulty these differences cause to evolutionists as follows:

Those searching for specific information useful in constructing phylogenies [evolutionary development] of mammalian taxa will be disappointed. (R. Eric Lombard, "Review of Evolutionary Principles of the Mammalian Middle Ear, Gerald Fleischer," *Evolution*, vol. 33, December 1979, p. 1230)

Apart from these differences, the fossil record demonstrates that mammals, like all living things, appeared on earth suddenly and fully formed with their present perfect structures, without any evolutionary process.

99. Can living cells come into being by chance?

No, they cannot. Cells have such a complex structure that it is not possible for them to have come into existence spontaneously or by chance. In a small space which can only be seen by a microscope, there are incredibly complex structures such as specialised working systems, communication systems, systems for in-

coming and out-going transportation, control systems for the exchange of materials and centres where information is recorded. W. H. Thorpe, an evolutionist scientist, acknowledges the exquisiteness in the structure of a cell saying: "the most elementary type of cell constitutes a 'mechanism' unimaginably more complex than any machine yet thought up, let alone constructed, by man." (W. R. Bird, *The Origin of Species Revisited*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Co., 1991, pp. 298-99.)

The probability of the spontaneous formation of such a perfect structure, which mankind, with 20th century technology at its disposal cannot succeed in producing, is "zero". The cell is created by Allah with its complete perfect structure.

100. Could the molecule called DNA, which is found in the nucleus of cells, have come into being by chance?

DNA is a molecule, which has an extremely complex structure. This molecule contains the complete information of the human body, which is recorded by means of a special coding system. In addition to features like height, eye, hair and skin colours, the DNA of a single cell also contains the design of 206 bones, 600 muscles, a network of 10,000 auditory muscles, a network of 2 million optic nerves, 100 billion nerve cells and 100 trillion cells in the body. If we were to write down the information coded in the DNA, we would end up with a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each. Yet this incredibly voluminous information is not encoded in volumes of encyclopaedias, but in the components of DNA called "genes".

Genes are made up of four special bases called nucleotides, which occur in a particular sequence. An error in this sequence would render the gene completely useless. There are 200,000 genes in the human body, and each of the millions of nucleotides making up these genes must be in the right sequence. When mathematical calculations are done to measure the probability of this sequence being formed by chance, its impossibility becomes evident. For example according to the calculations of Frank Salisbury, an evolutionist biologist, the possibility is one in $4^{1,000}$. The number $4^{1,000}$ is the equivalent of 10600, which gives the figure 1 followed by 600 zeros! This number is completely beyond our comprehension.

The impossibility of the formation of RNA and DNA by a coincidental accumulation of nucleotides is expressed by the French scientist Paul Auger in the following way:

We have to sharply distinguish the two stages in the chance formation of complex molecules such as nucleotides by chemical events. The production of nucleotides one by one—which is possible—and the combination of these within very special sequences. The second is absolutely impossible. (Paul Auger, *De La Physique Theorique a la Biologie*, 1970, p. 118)

**They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what
You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."**

(Surat al-Baqara: 32)

Also by Harun Yahya

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