

SEEING GOOD IN ALL

**... It may be that you hate something when it is good for you and
it may be that you love something when it is bad for you.**

God knows and you do not know.

(Surat al-Baqara: 216)

HARUN YAHYA

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SEEING GOOD IN ALL

HARUN YAHYA

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

His pen-name is made up of the names "Harun" (Aaron) and "Yahya" (John), in memory of the two esteemed prophets who fought against lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the cover of the author's books has a symbolic meaning linked to the their contents. This seal represents the Qur'an, the last Book and the last word of God, and our Prophet, the last of all the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah, the author makes it his main goal to disprove each one of the fundamental tenets of godless ideologies and to have the "last word", so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. The seal of the Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, is used as a sign of his intention of saying this last word.

All these works by the author centre around one goal: to convey the message of the Qur'an to people, thus encouraging them to think about basic faith-related issues, such as the existence of God, His unity and the hereafter, and to display the decrepit foundations and perverted works of godless systems.

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, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian, and they have been enjoyed by readers all over the world.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people putting their faith in God and in many others gaining a deeper insight into their faith. The wisdom, and the sincere and easy-to-understand style employed give these books a distinct touch which directly strikes any one who reads or examines them. Immune to objections, these works are characterised by their features of rapid effectiveness, definite results and irrefutability. It is unlikely that those who read these books and give a serious thought to them can any longer sincerely advocate the materialistic philosophy, atheism and any other perverted ideology or philosophy. Even if they continue to advocate, this will be only a sentimental insistence since these books have refuted these ideologies from their very basis. All contemporary movements of denial are ideologically defeated today, thanks to the collection of books written by Harun Yahya.

There is no doubt that these features result from the wisdom and lucidity of the Qur'an. The author certainly does not feel proud of himself; he merely intends to serve as a means in one's search for God's right path. Furthermore, no material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Considering these facts, those who encourage people to read these books, which open the "eyes" of the heart and guide them in becoming more devoted servants of God, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would just be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books which create confusion in peoples' minds, lead man into ideological chaos, and which, clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in peoples' hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is apparent that 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 moral values of the Qur'an. The success, impact and sincerity this service has attained are manifest in the reader's conviction.

One point needs to be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty and conflict, and all the ordeals the majority of people undergo is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. These things can only come to an end with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by ensuring that everybody knows about the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality, so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, which forces people into the downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, it is clear that this service has to be provided more speedily and effectively. Otherwise, it may be too late.

It is no exaggeration to say that the collection of books by Harun Yahya have assumed this leading role. By the Will of God, these books will be the means through which people in the 21st century will attain the peace and bliss, justice and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry, Global Freemasonry, Islam Denounces Terrorism, 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, Behind the Scenes of The Holocaust, Behind the Scenes of Terrorism, Israel's Kurdish Card, The Oppression Policy of Communist China and Eastern Turkestan, Solution: The Values of the Qur'an, The Winter of Islam and Its Expected Spring, Articles 1-2-3, A Weapon of Satan: Romanticism, Signs from the Chapter of the Cave to the Last Times, Signs of the Last Day, The Last Times and The Beast of the Earth, Truths 1-2, The Western World Turns to God, The Evolution Deceit, Precise Answers to Evolutionists, The Blunders of Evolutionists, Confessions of Evolutionists, The Qur'an Denies Darwinism, Perished Nations, For Men of Understanding, The Prophet Musa, The Prophet Yusuf, The Prophet Muhammad (saas), The Prophet Sulayman, The Golden Age, Allah's Artistry in Colour, Glory is 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 the Philosophy of 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, The Real Origin of Life, Consciousness in the Cell, 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, The End of Darwinism, 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 Gnat, 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 Hormone, The Miracle of the Termite, The Miracle of the Human Body, The Miracle of Man's Creation, The Miracle of Protein, The Miracle of Smell and Taste, The Secrets of DNA.

The author's children's books are: Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Splendour in the Skies, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Religion, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Builders: Beavers.

The author's other works on Qur'anic 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, The Real Home of Believers: Paradise, Knowledge of the Qur'an, Qur'an Index, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite

in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, The 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, Disregarded Judgements of the Qur'an, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, General Information from the Qur'an, The Mature Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties Presented by the Qur'an for Life, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, The True Wisdom According to the Qur'an, The Struggle with 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, Enthusiasm and Excitement in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in Everything, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Being Hopeful in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Listen to the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity in the Qur'an.

TO THE READER

The reason why a special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution is that this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation, and therefore the existence of God, during the last 140 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. Therefore, showing that this theory is a deception is a very important duty, which is strongly related to the religion. It is imperative that this important service be rendered to everyone. Some of our readers may find the chance to read only one of our books. Therefore, we think it appropriate to spare a chapter for a summary of this subject.

In all the books by the author, faith-related issues are explained in the light of the Qur'anic verses and people are invited to learn God's words and to live by them. All the subjects that concern God's verses are explained in such a way as to leave no room for doubt or question marks in the reader's mind. The sincere, plain and fluent style employed ensures that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand the books. This effective and lucid narrative makes it possible to read them in a single sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts recounted in these books and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This book and all the other works of the author can be read individually or discussed in a group at a time of conversation. Those readers who are willing to profit from the books will find discussion very useful in the sense that they will be able to relate their own reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to the religion to contribute to the presentation and reading of these books, which are written solely for the good pleasure of God. All the books of the author are extremely convincing. For this reason, for those who want to communicate the religion to other people, one of the most effective methods is to encourage them to read these books.

It is hoped that the reader will take time to look through the review of other books on the final pages of the book, and appreciate the rich source of material on faith-related issues, which are very useful and a pleasure to read.

In these books, you will not find, as in some other books, the personal views of the author, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, doubt-creating, and pessimistic accounts that create deviations in the heart.

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INTRODUCTION

If you could stop for a moment and think about your life, you would notice that all your memories, even though they might comprise those of several decades, would add up to only a few minutes of conversation. What you once considered important, or had greatly looked forward to, or sought to avoid, are all now part of the past. Whatever remains of these thoughts and feelings are just memories.

However, in the sight of God, each word you uttered, and every thought that crossed your mind, are known to Him. After death, which is destined to happen to every one of us, their records will be unfolded before us. Our life, which will then seem to have been only minutes, will be presented to us moment after moment, without even a single instant missing. In the sight of God, no detail of your life is forgotten.

If you have spent your life submitting to God's absolute sovereignty, in every aspect of your life, accepted the purpose of His creation, and, thereby, recognized the good in all things, and been aware of the ultimate perfection in every instant of the divine plan decreed by God, then you can be certain that the end-result for you will be good.

That is because, at death, man is faced with two choices; if one has lived by the values proclaimed by God, he will attain eternal salvation. Otherwise, he will suffer everlasting torment. The morality God demands be adopted by His servants is a feeling of gratitude towards Him, in every instance, no matter what the conditions and circumstances may be, and having faith that ultimately there is good in whatever befalls us, by being aware that everything is from God.

To become accepting of everything that befalls us, having faith that there is good in each and every case, however seemingly adverse, and being instead thankful for every instance, is by no means an unattainable ideal. Rather, it is a truth, recognizable through a grasp of God's greatness and exaltedness. One needs only to know his Lord, the Creator of this world and every circumstance in his life, and to be grateful towards Him for that very reason.

From the moment a person opens his eyes to the world, it is God Who ordains every event that takes place in his life. God is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise and the All-Just. All is created by God in compliance with a plan, and for a divine purpose just as He says in a verse of the Qur'an, "**Indeed, all things We created with predestination.**" (Surat al-Qamar: 49) In light of God's infinite might and superiority, man is merely a feeble being. Without God's blessings he cannot survive. Through his ability to understand and reason, man can grasp realities only to the extent that his Creator allows him. This being the case, submission to God's infinite wisdom and the divine purpose He had ordained in all things, is a fundamental requirement upon each and every one of us. No matter what we may experience in life, we must remain aware that God is the Sovereign Lord of the entire universe, that He knows, sees and hears what we cannot, that He is knowledgeable even of that which might take place or occur of which we are unaware, and thus, we are to realize that it is God who causes every occurrence to happen, and according to a divine purpose: for our own good.

Putting faith in this truth should inspire us with a better outlook, by which we feel grateful for everything that befalls us. In other words, a person will try to recognize the "good" in everything he hears, in every sight he sees, in every incident he experiences, in brief, in every moment of his life, and thereby, achieve a proper understanding of the meaning of this life. Making the right choice between those offered to him, expressed in the Qur'an as, "**We guided him on the Way, whether he is thankful or unthankful**" (Surat al-Insan: 3), man will, by God's Will, attain the supreme end-result, that is, the eternal life in paradise.

The purpose of this book is to make light of the beauty of living with the recognition that there is good in every moment one experiences, and every incident one encounters, and to remind ourselves of the blessings such an outlook on life brings, both in this world and beyond. Likewise, by exposing that which hinders a person from seeing this good, this book may aid in saving one from succumbing to a way of thinking opposed to Islam. This book is intended to encourage man towards adopting the proper moral principles by which he will say, "There is good in this", not by mere words, but with his heart, and showing patience in the face of difficulties with heartfelt submission and gratitude, rather than merely enduring the situation. For, to remind each other of the perfection of the destiny ordained by God, it is to summon all believers to enjoy the pleasure of submitting to His infinite wisdom.

SEEING GOOD IN ALL THAT HAPPENS

"Seeing the good in all things" is actually a fairly common phrase. In the course of their daily lives, people will frequently say, "There must be some good in this" or "It is a blessing from God."

However, people generally mouth these phrases without understanding their true significance, or merely to follow meaningless societal conventions. Most fail to recognise the ultimate meaning of these phrases, or how its understanding applies to our daily lives. Essentially, most are unaware that, more than just being words to utter, these phrases imply important insight into the inner-workings of every-day events.

The fact is, however, seeing the good in all events, whatever the circumstance, whether favourable or unfavourable, is an important moral quality resulting from sincere faith in God, and the approach to life that is brought about by such a faith. Ultimately, a grasp of this truth is important in guiding one to not only the blessings of this world, but in the hereafter, where one will find never-ending peace and bliss.

Not feeling disappointment for any thing that happens throughout the course of this life is a mark of a true understanding of the meaning of faith. Failure to see good in things that happen, being fraught with constant fear, anxiety, despair, sorrow, sentimentalism, on the other hand, indicate a lack of pure faith. This confusion must be removed promptly, and the joy emanating from unswerving faith must be accepted as a necessary part of life. A believer knows that events that might at first sight appear unfavourable, including those which he caused to happen by committing an error, will ultimately turn out beneficially for him. When he uses the words "adversity", "misfortune" or "if only...", it is only to draw a lesson from an experience. In other words, the faithful knows that there is good in whatever happens; he learns from his mistakes and seeks to correct them. However, if he were to fall into the same error again, he keeps in mind that it is all for a specific purpose, and simply resolves to "conduct himself more correctly the next time." Moreover, even if the same thing were to occur dozens of times over, a Muslim must keep in mind that ultimately it is for some good; such is the immutable law of God. This fact is also elaborately stated by the Prophet (saas) who said:

Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his, for this is not the case with others expect the believer. If he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he finds himself in difficulty and submits (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it. (Muslim)

Only in the recognition that God creates everything for a certain good and a specific purpose can one's heart find peace. To have a grasp of this fact is a great blessing for a believer. A person who is distant from Islam suffers from continuous torment; he lives in constant apprehension, turning out to be an ever-present source of anxiety. A believer, on the other hand, recognizes and reveres the fact that there is a divine purpose behind God's creation.

Hence, being indecisive; that is, suffering from the continuous apprehension of constantly expecting both good and evil, may become an embarrassment for a believer in the hereafter. Pleading ignorance of such a plain and obvious truth, because of carelessness or laziness, may only cause torment both in this world and beyond. We must keep in mind that destiny predetermined by God is entirely flawless. For a person willing to recognise the good in all things, he finds only blessings and a divine purpose, hidden within an entire complex of inter-connected events. Though he may have many other things to concern him throughout his day, a person of strong faith, who is guided by his wisdom and conscience, never allows

himself to be tempted by Satan's wiles. No matter how, when, or where an event takes place, he never forgets that there is always some good behind it. Although he may not be able to recognise this good immediately, what really matters is for him to be aware that there is an ultimate purpose.

Due to their hasty nature, people are sometimes not patient enough to see the good in what befall them. As a consequence, they may become aggressive and obstinately pursue something even though it be entirely against their better interest. In the Qur'an this fact is revealed as:

Man prays for evil just as he prays for good. Man is prone to be impetuous. (Surat al-Isra': 11)

Nevertheless, a person must strive to see the good and divine purpose in every event brought before him by God, rather than insisting on being benefited by what to his mind is favourable, and being impatient to acquire them. For instance, though a person may strive to attain improved financial status, this change may never come about. A person who deems such a condition to be adverse would be incorrect. Of course, one may pray to God for wealth to be used for His cause. However, he must know that if this wish is not granted, it is for a reason. It might be that an increase in wealth acquired before the attainment of spiritual maturity would render such a person vulnerable to Satan's tricks. Many other similar reasons towards a divine purpose, many of which may not be immediately recognisable, or will become apparent only in the hereafter, may underlie certain events. A businessman, for instance, may miss a meeting he regarded as an important step in his career. But, if he had gone to the meeting, he might have been involved in a traffic accident on the way, or, if the meeting were in another city, his plane may have crashed.

No one is immune to such occurrences. It is not uncommon to eventually see the good in something that had at first seemed adverse. Nevertheless, one would need to keep in mind that he might not always be able to grasp the purpose of what had appeared to be an adverse situation. Because, as we have said earlier, we may not always have the benefit of witnessing its positive outcome. It may well be that God will only reveal its divine purpose in the Hereafter. For this reason, what must be done by a person who submits himself to his destiny, and puts his trust in God, is to accept every occurrence, no matter what, with a willingness to acknowledge that there must be some good in it and be pleased with it.

It must also be mentioned that "recognizing the good in all" is by no means ignoring the reality of these events, pretending that they hadn't happened, or being overly idealistic. On the contrary, a believer is held responsible for taking all appropriate actions and resorting to all methods necessary to resolve a problem. A believer's resignation must not be confused with the approach of others who, due to a flawed understanding of the matter, remain indifferent to whatever happens around them, and are unrealistically optimistic. Such people are usually described as "wearing rose-colored glasses." They fail to make rational decisions, or put them into action, since they are oblivious and childishly optimistic, instead of seeking solutions to problems. For instance, if such a person is diagnosed with a serious illness, his situation may, in time, deteriorate to the point of becoming fatal as he would neglect to receive due treatment. In another instance, a person who finds it unnecessary to secure his belongings, even though he had already once been burglarised, is liable to become again the victim of further similar incidents.

Undoubtedly, such approaches are far from the meaning of "putting one's trust in God" and "seeing good in all". Such attitudes are, essentially, careless. On the contrary, believers must do their utmost to address the situation practically. Basically, the manner in which they conduct themselves is a form of "worship". Because, when they are involved in such situations, their minds are occupied with remembrance of the fact that it is God Who carries an event to a conclusion.

In the Qur'an, God relates stories of the prophets and true believers as examples of those conscious of this fact, which believers must seek to emulate. The manner in which the Prophet Hud (as) responded to his people, revealing his complete submission to God, and his unwavering trust in Him, in spite of their vicious threats, is one such example.

They said, "Hud, you have not brought us any clear sign. We will not forsake our gods for what you say. We do not believe you. We only say that one of our gods has driven you mad."

He said, "I call on God to be my witness, and you also bear witness, that I am free of all the gods you have apart from Him. So scheme against me, all of you together, and then grant me no respite. I have put my trust in God, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature He does not hold by the forelock. My Lord is on a Straight Path. If you turn your backs, I have transmitted to you what I was sent to you with, and my Lord will replace you with another people, and you will not harm Him at all. My Lord is the Preserver of everything." (Surah Hud: 53-57)

HOW THE IGNORANT PERCEIVE THINGS THAT HAPPEN

In general, people tend to divide events in terms of good and bad. Such a classification often depends on their habits or tendencies. Their reactions to events alternate depending on the severity and form which the event takes; yet, what they ultimately feel and experience is usually determined by societal conventions.

Almost everyone has remnants of his childhood dreams, even in his later life. Although, these plans may not always have developed in the way one expected or planned. We are all constantly prone to unexpected events in life. Such an event, in an instant, can throw our lives into complete disarray. While one is intent on his life progressing as normal, he may be confronted with a series of changes that might at first sight seem negative. An otherwise healthy person may suddenly succumb to a fatal disease, or lose some physical ability in accident. Again, a wealthy person may lose all his wealth instantly.

People's reactions to such a roller-coaster of experiences can vary greatly. Their reactions are good as long as events turn out favourably. Yet, when faced with the unexpected, they tend to feel disappointed, and even angry. Depending on the importance they attach to these events, and their ultimate outcomes, their anger may become quite severe. This tendency is common to societies mired in ignorance.

There are also those among them who, when something disappoints them, nevertheless say, "There must be a goodness in this." However, these are words which they mouth without understanding their true meaning, merely following societal conventions.

There is still another group of people, who are willing to consider what divine purpose there may be in trivial occurrences. But, when faced with more significant happenings, which may prove detrimental to them, all of a sudden, they forget any such intention. For instance, a person may not be distressed at the failure of his car engine on his way to work, and be willing to consider the possible good in it. Yet, if his being late for work infuriates his boss, or turns out to be a reason for his losing his job, then he finds reason to complain. He might behave the same way if it had been an item of jewellery instead of an inexpensive watch he had lost. As these examples indicate, there are certain minor events for which people may react reasonably, or in which they are willing to consider its good; but other more extraordinary instances can lead them to justify insolence and irascibility.

Some, on the other hand, merely seek to console with this notion, without actually having a grasp of the true significance of "seeking the good in everything". In this manner, they believe it to be a way of providing comfort to those who are in trouble, to a family member with a failing business, for instance, or a friend who has failed an exam. However, when it is their own interests that are at stake, they do not show the slightest indication of considering the "good" in it, making light of their ultimate ignorance.

The failure to see the good in what one experiences arises from the failings of one's faith. One's failure to grasp that it is God Who preordains each and every event in one's life, that everything occurs in accordance to a certain pre-planned destiny, and that the life of this world is but a trial, are what hinder him from recognizing any good in all that befalls him.

In the following section, we will explore this notion. That is, having faith that there is good in what ever befalls us, and those factors essential for being able to see it.

HOW TO SEE THE GOOD IN THINGS THAT HAPPEN

Being Aware that it is God Who Pre-Ordains Everything in its Every Detail...

Most people are pleased when things happen in compliance with their wishes, but are easily irritated when the slightest thing does not go their way. But, a believer must not be prone to such feelings. In the Qur'an, God reveals the good news that He has determined every single event for the benefit of His true servants, and that nothing should be a matter of grief or trouble for them.

A person who recognizes this truth deep within his heart is capable of being pleased with whatever he encounters, and to see the blessings behind what happens.

Many people do not even bother to think how they came into existence or why they exist. Although their conscience would guide them into realizing that the wonders of the world and its perfect order have a Creator, the inordinate love they feel for the life of this world, or their unwillingness to face the truth, leads them to deny the reality of His existence. They ignore the fact that every occurrence of their lives is determined according to a plan and purpose, but instead attribute them to false notions such as coincidence or luck. This is an outlook, however, that only hinders one from seeing the good in events and drawing lessons from them.

There are also those, who are aware of the existence of God, and comprehend that it is He Who has created the entire universe. They admit the fact that it is God Who makes the rain fall or sun to rise. They recognize that for there to be any other cause is impossible. Yet, when it comes to incidents in the course of their lives, the minor details that form part of the usual rush of the day, they cannot help thinking that they are somehow independent of God. Nevertheless, it is God Who destines a burglar to enter one's home at night, an obstacle that caused one to fall, a plot of arable land to yield crops or to become arid, a deal to be profitable, or a saucepan to be forgotten on the stove. Every occurrence falls within the infinite wisdom of God, and in compliance with a sublime plan. A drop of mud that stains our trousers, a puncture in the tire, acne appearing on one's face, a disease, or some other undesirable thing to occur, are all incorporated into a person's life in accordance to a specific plan.

Nothing a person experiences in this world, from the moment he opens his eyes, is independent and apart from God. All existence, as a whole, is created by God, the only One to hold control over the universe. God's creation is perfect, flawless and replete with purpose. This is part of the destiny created by God; one must not discriminate between the incidents by attributing good to one and evil to the other. What is incumbent on a person is to recognize and appreciate the perfection in all events, and to believe with all certainty that some good lies in it, remaining conscious of the fact that, within God's infinite wisdom, all is designed to lead ultimately to the most perfect results. Indeed, for those who believe and recognize the goodness in all that befalls them, both this world and the beyond are part of an eternal good.

In the Qur'an, God draws our attention to the aforementioned fact almost in every page. This is why failing to remember that everything is according to a certain destiny is a terrible failing for a believer. The destiny ordained by God is unique, and is experienced by a person in precisely the way God has predestined. The ordinary man perceives the belief in destiny as merely a way of "consoling in time of disaster". A believer, on the other hand, attains the correct understanding of his destiny, fully grasping that it is the sole perfect program exclusively designed for him.

Destiny is an entirely flawless agenda developed to prepare a person for Paradise. It is replete with blessings and for a divine purpose. Each difficulty a believer faces in this world, will be the source of infinite bliss, joy and peace in the next. The verse, "**For truly with hardship comes ease**" (Surat ash-Sharh: 5) draws our attention to this fact; within one's destiny, the patience and courage a believer exhibits are pre-ordained together with their respective rewards in the Hereafter.

It may happen during the course of the day that a believer would become irritated or concerned about certain things that had happened. The primary reason of the irritation he feels is his failure to remember that that very event is part of his destiny, and that it has been especially created by God. Though, he will be comforted and calmed when he is reminded of the purpose of God's creation.

This is why a believer must learn to continually keep in mind that everything is predestined, as well as remind others of this fact. He must show patience in the face of those occurrences that God had predestined for him, in the infinite recesses of time, put his trust in Him, and strive to recognize the reasons behind them. He who attempts to understand these reasons will, by God's Will, be ultimately successful. Even though he might not always be able to detect their actual purposes, he must remain assured that, when something happens, it is certainly for some good and for a purpose.

Comprehending That Every Being, Living or Non-living, is Created in Compliance with a Certain Destiny...

Destiny is God's perfect knowledge of all events past or future, as if a single moment. This expresses the absolute sovereignty of God over all beings and events. People can be aware of a certain event when they experience it. But God knows all events prior to their occurrence. For God, past, present and future are all the same. They are all within the knowledge of God since He is the One Who creates them.

As the verse, "**Indeed, all things We created with predestination.**" (Surat al-Qamar: 49) also suggests, every thing in the world is part of that destiny. The majority of people do not give a moment's consideration to the nature of destiny, and, thus, fail to recognize that it is God's infinite might that exists behind this flawless order. Some consider that destiny encompasses only human beings. However, everything in the universe, from the furniture in your home, to a pebble on the road, or a dried-up weed, a fruit or a jar on the super-market shelf, are all part of the destiny predetermined by God. The fate of every created thing has been determined within the infinite wisdom of God.

Every event a person sees, and every noise he hears, are in every instance part of a life that has been created for him as a unit. Whether major or insignificant, no event in the universe happens by coincidence. No flower either blooms or fades by chance. No man comes into existence or dies out of pure coincidence. No man becomes sick by mistake, and neither does his sickness develop in an uncontrolled manner. In each case, these occurrences are especially predestined by God, from the very moment they were created. Anything that exists, within the depths of the earth or the oceans, or the fall of a single leaf, all occur in compliance with destiny, as the following verse indicates:

The keys of the Unseen are in His possession. No one knows them but Him. He knows everything in the land and sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it. There is no seed in the darkness of the earth, and nothing moist or dry which is not in a Clear Book. (Surat al-An'am: 59)

God's Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (saas) also said that everyone's actions are ordained by God:

God, the Exalted, the Glorious, has ordained for every servant amongst His creation five things: his death, his action, his abode, the places of his moving about and his means of sustenance. (Tirmidhi)

However, people are generally not conscious of the reality that every moment of their lives is predestined by God. Some have never considered how they were created, or how the blessings they have been enjoying came into existence. Others, though, although they know that it is God Who creates life and death, believe it is the coincidences that are responsible for events of minor significance. However, in the Qur'an, God informs us that even the smallest detail is predetermined by His infinite wisdom, and in accordance with a divine purpose:

Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen. That is something easy for God. (Surat al-Hadid: 22)

It is crucial that man have a grasp of this reality. Because, the fate of every thing in this universe is known by God, the All-Knowing, the Wise. Consequently, every detail is perfectly planned, and for a purpose and "everything is by decree" as stated by the Prophet Muhammad (saas). A person who attains full consciousness of this fact will be benefited with being pleased with every moment of his life; good times and those that seem to be bad. The reason being that His truthful servants succeed in recognizing that it is God who created their destiny without a flaw. They will be aware that it is ignorant to regard something as misfortune when there must necessarily be a purpose for it in God's sight. Such a profound comprehension of this fact enables them to discern the blessings in things that happen.

To assume that what one goes through is not created by God, but believing that someone or something else was instrumental in its occurrence, is again an indication of the failure to grasp fate. Every thing that seems not go one's way is, in actuality, the "lesson of destiny". People must wholeheartedly set out to recognize the good and divine purpose of events. People tend to refer to events that turn out unfavourably as "misfortune". There is, however, a good and purpose in what may appear to be a "misfortune". It is only a "misfortune" because we choose to regard as such; in actuality, it is the best of all possible occurrences, because it is what has been predetermined.

If God had shown the good and purpose of the apparently adverse incidents, or of the difficulties that distress and irritate people, they would understand how senseless is their disappointment. Recognizing the blessing in things, a person of faith instead feels joy, not distress. This being the case, what is incumbent on a man is that he seeks to identify the good and benefits in destiny, that is, in events that are, in reality, part of the purpose of God's creation, and feel appreciative of the benefit of such insight.

Knowing That There May Be Bad in Events That Seem To Be Good and Good in Events That Seem To Be Bad

In the above sections, we stressed that God, the All-Wise, creates each and every event in compliance with a special plan. At this point, another issue deserves a special mention; it is only God Who knows the events that are favourable and those that are not. That is because the wisdom of God is infinite, while the insight of human beings is limited. Humans can only see the outward appearance of events, and can rely solely on their limited perception to judge them. Their insufficient information or understanding may, in

some cases, make them dislike a thing while it is good, and love a thing while it is evil. To be able to discern the good then, a person of faith, must put his trust in the infinite wisdom of God, and trust that there is a good in everything that happens. In fact, God has related to man the following:

It may be that you hate something when it is good for you and it may be that you love something when it is bad for you. God knows and you do not know. (Surat al-Baqara: 216)

Here, God informs us that an event one deems to be good may only cause him disappointment, both in this world and beyond. Similarly, something he ardently seeks to avoid, believing it to be detrimental to him, may be for him the cause of bliss and peace of heart. The intrinsic value of any event is a knowledge that resides only with God. Everything, whether apparently evil or good, takes place by God's Will. We experience only those things God wishes for us. God reminds us this fact as follows:

If God afflicts you with harm, no one can remove it except Him. If He desires good for you, no one can avert His favour. He bestows it on whichever of His slaves He wills. He is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surah Yunus: 107)

Consequently, whatever we experience in this life, whether or not it seems good or evil, is, in reality, good, since it is what our Lord predetermines for us. As mentioned earlier, the One who pre-ordains the outcome of events is not a human being, who is confined to time and space, but God, the One beyond space and time, Who created the human being, as well as time and space. (For further information please see *Timelessness and the Reality of Fate* by Harun Yahya)

FOR BELIEVERS, THERE IS GOOD IN ALL THINGS

Everyone experiences difficult times in his or her life. These difficulties frustrate distress or irritate the majority of people who are far removed from the morality prescribed in the Qur'an. Therefore, they easily become anxious, tense and irritable. Not having faith in the perfection inherent in the destiny ordained by God, they do not seek the blessings, or the good in that which they experience. In fact, because they are without faith, every moment they spend only turns out to seem against them. In this manner, encumbered by trouble and distress, they proceed with the rest of their lives.

Believers, however, know that difficulties are brought about by God to test man. They are aware that these difficulties serve to distinguish the true believers from "those having a disease in their hearts", those who are not sincere in their beliefs. That is because, in the Qur'an, God makes it plain that He will test believers to reveal who it is that are truthful:

Or did you imagine that you were going to enter the Garden without God knowing those among you who had struggled and knowing the steadfast? (Surah Al 'Imran: 142)

God would not leave the believers in that [state] you are in [presently] until He separates the evil from the good... (Surah Al 'Imran: 179)

In further regard to this issue, God provides the following example, which took place during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (saas):

What assailed you on the day the two armies met was by God's permission, so that He would know the [true] believers, and so that He would know the hypocrites... (Surah Al 'Imran: 166-167)

The verse above is self-explanatory. In the time of the Prophet (saas), Muslims faced hardships, and suffered trying conditions. Yet, as the above verse also indicates, what the Muslims endured was by God's Will, and served to reveal those who were the hypocrites, who tried to cause harm to believers. That is, everything ultimately turned out in favour of the believers.

Muslims, who aware of the lessons stated in these verses, consider an incident that seems to be evil, or a moment of difficulty, as an opportunity by which their sincerity, loyalty to their Lord, and faith, is put to the test. Never do they forget that difficulties or blessings are to test them. On the contrary, for their nobleness and submission to Him, God changes what seems evil to the advantage of His true servants.

In the following pages, we will talk about difficulties believers are likely to encounter and of the trials peculiar to this world. Our purpose is to remind believers of the hidden blessings and rewards that being patient brings to them, both in this world and hereafter.

God Tests Man With Loss of Wealth

The goal of the majority of people in life is to accumulate as much wealth as possible. To this end, they resort to whatever means, even illegitimate or illicit. The value that humans attach to possessions is described in the Qur'an as "love" for "the embellishment of the life of this world."

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 God. (Surah Al 'Imran: 14)

Wealth and sons are the embellishment of the life of this world. But, in your Lord's sight, right actions which are lasting bring a better reward and are a better basis for hope. (Surat al-Kahf: 46)

In another verse, God addresses such people with the words; "**And you have an insatiable love of wealth.**"(Surat al-Fajr: 20) As we are to understand from this verse, the ignorant crave wealth. Because, wealth is one of the primary measures of status in societies whose values are not based on religion. In these errant societies, people revere, honour and esteem the well-off. Attaining to such wealth makes its possessors wrongly suppose that they hold great power. Therefore, in these cases, the attainment of wealth becomes the main goal in life.

This excessive desire for wealth also leads to a life-time of fearing for its loss. Those who possess such an outlook usually despair when they lose their wealth, and then become rebellious towards their Lord. Being completely ignorant that is merely for a trial, they become completely overwhelmed by their loss of wealth.

However, God commands man "**not to grieve about the things that pass him by or exult about the things that come to him**" (Surat al-Hadid: 23). He commands man to conduct himself moderately and to adopt good morals. Despairing over the loss of wealth, but exulting in times of affluence, is a mark of ingratitude towards God.

Under the influence of such a base outlook, the members of ignorant societies consider it perfectly acceptable to feel disappointment over the loss of their property. For instance, the economic security enjoyed from wealth acquired after much effort may vanish instantly through a natural disaster. Or, a fire may, in just moments, reduce to ruin a beautiful house having been purchased after years of savings. Essentially, a person unconscious of the nature of this life feels confused when he experiences such a loss; becoming overwrought with pessimism and rebelliousness.

Those far removed from the morality of the Qur'an fail ever to recognize that a loss of wealth could be for a good or beneficial aspect. Indeed, due to their outlook and failure to put their trust in God, upheavals they experience in their economic situation become emotionally burdensome.

However, this is not the case for those who seek to consider the good in things. For them, the loss of wealth is for a purpose, even if they are not able to immediately discern it. It may be that it is as a reminder from God to His servants who have exulted in their wealth, and were overcome by the temporary worldly pleasures. Any decrease only serves the purpose of reminding us of the infinite might of God, and urges us to turn all our attention to Him. Or, it may be that God has something better in store for His servants who

have shown patience through dire straits, and put their trust in Him. Instead of the temporary enjoyments of the life of this world, He grants the numberless and eternal blessings of paradise; clearly, the infinite blessings of paradise are incomparably more advantageous than worldly blessings.

However, these changes in livelihood may also serve a more immediate purpose. For instance, there may be some good in being involved in an accident with one's new car, for it may have been that God was protecting the driver from a more serious accident that would have caused him more harm. A conscientious person recognizes this accident as a reminder, and a warning, and asks for forgiveness and accepts the destiny predestined for him by God.

"It May Be That You Love Something When It Is Bad For You ..."

As we said earlier, God informs us in **Surat al-Baqara, verse 216**, that certain circumstances which may appear to us to be evil may turn out to be good. Similarly, as the same verse indicates, God also states that that which people love may be evil for them. In the Qur'an, God gives the example of wealthy disbelievers who are reluctant to spend of their wealth. The disbelievers' consideration that their thriftiness is "clever", and their supposition that hoarding the wealth they are unwilling to spend for the cause of God is to be of some benefit for them, is purely ignorant. In the Qur'an, God informs us that such wealth is evil and will only bring torment in hell:

Those who are tight-fisted with the bounty God has given them should not suppose that that is better for them. No indeed, it is worse for them! What they were tight-fisted with will be hung around their necks on the Day of Rising. God is the inheritor of the heavens and the earth and God is aware of what you do. (Surah Al 'Imran: 180)

In Surat al-Qasas, God relates the story of Qarun. God bestowed great fortune upon Qarun but he became vain due to extent of his wealth, and grew insolent towards his Lord. The case of Qarun, who was destroyed because he remained inattentive to the warnings, is a lesson for people. Qarun's story is related in the Qur'an as follows:

Qarun was one of the people of Musa but he lorded it over them. We gave him treasures, the keys alone to which were a heavy weight for a party of strong men. When his people said to him, "Do not gloat. God does not love people who gloat. Seek the abode of the hereafter with what God has given you, without forgetting your portion of the world. And do good as God has been good to you. And do not seek to cause corruption in the earth. God does not love corrupters" he said, "I have only been given it because of knowledge I have." Did he not know that before him God had destroyed generations with far greater strength than his and far more possessions? The evildoers will not be questioned about their sins. (Surat al-Qasas: 76-78)

As the above-quoted verses suggest, Qarun believed that his treasures would bring him good. Thus, he exulted and grew arrogant. But, ultimately, he only suffered great disappointment.

How believers regard their wealth, on the other hand, differs considerably from his flawed understanding. For a believer, who adheres to the Qur'an, possessions are of no great significance. A believer conducts himself nobly; he never allows himself to make it his goal or ambition to possess more, for it is a base pursuit founded in ignorance. A believer devotes all his life only to earning God's consent. Therefore, he spends all of his wealth for the cause of God, and never allows himself to be seized by the selfish desires of his lower-self; he aspires to the eternal rewards of the Hereafter, not the worldly benefits of this world. God renders believers with this mindset superior in His sight, and promises them paradise:

God has bought from the believers their selves and their wealth in return for the Garden. They fight in the Way of God and they kill and are killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Injil and the Qur'an and who is truer to his contract than God? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the great victory. (Surat at-Tawba: 111)

Aware of this fact, prophets, messengers and true believers, considered what they possessed as a blessing from their Lord, while knowing deep in their hearts that all they possessed belonged ultimately to God. Thus, they spent their wealth and possessions for the cause of God. This superior morality and compassion among the believers is described in the verse as follows:

[Those with true devoutness are those 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 ... (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

Furthermore, believers do not spend for ostentation. Their sincere intention in spending their wealth is related as follows:

...those who spend their wealth, desiring the pleasure of God and firmness for themselves ... (Surat al-Baqara: 265)

Consequently, when they lose some of their possessions, they react very differently than do the ignorant. Essentially, they know that it is all a trial from God. They show patience and seek what good there may be in the loss. The noble outlook of the believers is related in the following verse:

Say, "O God! Master of the Kingdom! You give sovereignty to whoever You will You take sovereignty from whoever You will. You exalt whoever You will You abase whoever You will. All good is in Your hands. You have power over all things." (Surah Al 'Imran: 26)

Consequently, believers know very well that the wealth possessed by the disbelievers in this world will only bring them torment rather than good. This is the promise of God:

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

Divine Wisdom Behind Diseases

People who live in the societies of ignorance continually make plans for the future and hope these plans proceed as they desire. This being the case, an unexpected disease or some accident throws their life into complete disarray, since such incidents were not incorporated into their future plans. While they are enjoying good health, many of them never think that such incidents-even though it happens to thousands of others every day-could happen to them.

That is why, when confronted with such unexpected incidents, the ignorant people immediately become insolent towards their Creator. They contradict the fact of destiny and say, "Why has this happened to me?" for people who are far from possessing the morality commanded in the Qur'an, tend not to put their trust in God at times of sickness or accident, or to seek the good in what befalls them.

Such people, who do not grasp the reality of destiny, assume that it is merely the viruses or microbes that cause a sickness. Similarly, when they are involved in a traffic accident, they assume it is the driver of the other car that caused the accident. However, the truth is otherwise. Each disease-producing agent, such as a microbe or bacteria, or anything that causes harm to man, are, in actuality, creatures created by God as a cause. None of them are "haphazard" causes; they all act under the control of God. Man is vulnerable to microbes because God wills it so. If a man becomes seriously ill due to a virus, it happens because this is within the knowledge of God. If a car hits a person, leaving him disabled, this is also an event that has come into being by God's Will. No matter how one strives to avoid them, he can never alter the course of these happenings; not even a single one of them. He cannot remove a single moment from his destiny, because, fate is created as a whole. For a person who submits himself to the All-Mighty God, and who trusts in His infinite wisdom and mercy, an accident, disease or another adversity, is a temporary trial that leads to ultimate bliss.

It is the good moral qualities that a person adheres to in such circumstances that is important. Diseases and accidents are the incidents in the face of which believers have the opportunity to show forth their patience and good morals, and through which they can draw nearer to God. In the Qur'an, God discusses diseases while relating the importance of patience through such times:

... Those with true righteousness are those who believe in God and the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who attend to their prayers and give 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 believers. Those are the people who go in fear of God. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

As we said earlier, the fact that in this verse diseases are also counted among adversities is due some consideration. A person confronted with a physical dilemma must keep in mind that it is a trial for him, and that it is only God Who brings about diseases and their cures. This is the reasoning necessary for maintaining a proper moral attitude. A person benefits from thinking about the good and divine purpose in the disease he suffers, or an accident he might be involved in, even though he may not be able to grasp them immediately. It may be that he must go through a temporary difficulty, but that, in the hereafter, as a servant who has wholeheartedly submitted himself to his Lord, he will be rewarded with infinite bliss.

We all need to keep in mind, however, that it is essential to recognize this fact deep in our hearts and to maintain high morals immediately after being confronted with a similar incident. For this end, we need to know that all diseases are created for a purpose. If God were to will it, a person would never become sick or feel pain. But, if a person is afflicted with such a trial, then he must be aware that it is for a purpose, helping him to grasp the transience of this world and the infinite might of God.

Diseases remind man that he is weak and in need of God

In times of sickness, the body, which had until then been robust, is defeated by viruses and bacteria. As is well known, many diseases cause pain and leave the body weak. In some cases, a person may even feel too weak to get out of bed or engage himself in his everyday tasks. Such a person, because he is unable to combat a virus that is invisible, gains a much better understanding of his weakness and how he is in need of God. Now, in declining health, a person, who otherwise dares to show arrogance towards his Creator, or boasts of his wealth and possessions, becomes conscious of this fact. He can better appreciate the infinite might of God, the Creator of all things.

Diseases make one better understand that health is a blessing and favour of God

Another issue we usually fail to consider through the daily rush of our lives is how great a blessing it is to be healthy. A person who has not been sick for long, and thus, has not suffered any pain, easily adjusts to the situation. Yet, when faced with a sudden onset of sickness, he recognises that health is a favour from God. That is because, being deprived of something or losing it makes one better appreciate its value. As Said Nursi, also known as Bediuzzaman (the Wonder of the Age), puts it: "The people of reality even say that '**Things are known through their opposites.**' For example, if there was no darkness, light would not be known and would contain no pleasure. If there was no cold, heat could not be comprehended. If there was no hunger, food would afford no pleasure. If there was no thirst of the stomach, there would be no pleasure in drinking water. If there was no sickness, no pleasure would be had from good health."(The Twenty-Fifth Flash, Seventh Remedy)

A serious disease makes one consider seriously the transience of this world, death and the hereafter

Most people would consider being seized by a fatal disease or the loss of an organ as an adversity. Yet, this may be regarded not as an adversity but as a means for salvation in the hereafter or for turning towards God alone. Because, a person afflicted with a serious disease naturally becomes more alert. His suffering helps him to recognize the lack of attention that disabled his conscience, and urges him to contemplate the reality of the hereafter. Such a person truly grasps the meaninglessness of attachment to this world and the nearness of death. Instead of living his life irresponsibly, the sudden onslaught of disease may

make him grasp the importance of earning God's consent and of the life of the hereafter, and thereby attain salvation.

Diseases add to one's prayers and draw him nearer to God

As the symptoms of a disease become more severe, a person begins to think of death, a thought he had until then deliberately avoided. With all his sincerity, he asks God for a recovery. Even a person who has never prayed before may suddenly feel the need to implore God once afflicted by an incurable disease. He offers the most sincere prayers to his Lord; this may be a reason to draw him nearer to God. If he does not show ingratitude after his recovery but continues to pray sincerely, his disease becomes a good and the beginning of a life of faith.

God mentions the people who turn to Him in times of such adversity as follows:

When We grant blessing to a man, he turns away and draws aside but when any evil touches him, he is full of endless prayers! (Surah Fussilat: 51)

When harm touches man, he calls on Us, lying on his side or sitting down or standing up. Then when We remove the harm from him he carries on as if he had never called on Us when the harm first touched him. In that way We make what they have done appear good to the profligate. (Surah Yunus: 12)

When harm touches people they call on their Lord, turning in repentance to Him. But then, when He gives them a taste of mercy from Him, a group of them immediately associate others with their Lord. (Surat ar-Rum: 33)

As the foregoing verses suggest, man must not only pray at times of difficulty; a person must also take refuge in God after he has been relieved. It may then be that that very disease or trial allows the person to acknowledge his weakness before God and repent, and thereby, lead to life-time submission in God.

In return for the patience shown in disease, God may reward the sufferer with an eternal life in paradise

As we said earlier, another purpose of suffering from a disease is testing the patience and trust of a person in God. When afflicted by a disease, Muslims are clearly distinguished from the people of ignorance with the patience and trust they put in God and their loyalty to Him. That is because, aware that the proper outlook they uphold during difficult times is deserving of God's consent, it is the great rewards of the hereafter they hope to earn. A person who failed to submit himself to God prior to his disease may acquire these noble qualities during the course of his suffering, and may attain the infinite blessings of the life of paradise in return of the temporary troubles in this world.

The Prophet Ibrahim's sincere prayer when faced with illness is a good example for all believers:

And when I am ill, it is He who heals me. He who will cause my death, then give me life. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 80-81)

The attitude and superior morality assumed by the Prophet Ayyub (as) is another good example for believers. As the Qur'an informs us, Ayyub (as) suffered from a serious illness; but his disease enhanced his loyalty and trust in God, a trait that made him one of the prophets praised in the Qur'an.

From the Qur'an, we also know that, in addition to the disease he suffered, Ayyub (as) was also exposed to the wicked afflictions of Satan. Thinking to seize on this moment of weakness, Satan tried to deter him from putting his trust in God. Because in such times it is difficult for a sick person to focus his attention, he may become vulnerable to the temptations of Satan; but, being a prophet wholeheartedly devoted to God, Ayyub (as) escaped Satan's trap. He prayed sincerely to God, asked help from Him. In the Qur'an, the exemplary prayer of Ayyub (as) is quoted as follows:

And Ayyub when he called out to his Lord, 'Great harm has afflicted me and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful,' We responded to him and removed from him the harm which was afflicting him... (Surat l-Anbiya': 83-84)

In response to his sincere prayer, God said the following to the Prophet Ayyub:

Remember Our slave Ayyub when he called on his Lord: "Satan has afflicted me with exhaustion and suffering."

[So he was told], "Stamp your foot! Here is a cool bath and water to drink." We gave him back his family and the same again with them as a mercy from Us and a reminder for people of intellect. "Take a bundle of rushes in your hand and strike with that but do not break your oath." We found him steadfast. What an excellent slave! He truly turned to his Lord. (Surah Sad: 41-44)

The Prophet Ayyub truly received the rewards of the trust he put in God, his devoutness to Him and his superior qualities. He also became a good example for all Muslims to follow.

The Mistakes of Believers Also Turn out in Their Favour

One of the matters the people of societies founded on ignorance most dread is making a mistake. When a person makes a mistake he is usually humiliated and becomes an object of mockery. Or, a mistake may cause him to miss certain opportunities he may deem important.

From the point of the Qur'an, however, such situations must be regarded totally otherwise. A believer does not base his judgments about people on the mistakes they make; aware of the fact that human beings are fallible, he rather feels compassion and mercy for them.

When a believer himself makes a mistake, he thinks conscientiously about it and examines his faults; his fear of God and conscience alert him immediately. He strives to correct his mistakes. He prays to God, the Merciful, and asks for repentance.

In fact, the regret a believer feels after making a mistake, only turns out to be a good for him in the end. That is because his is not the type of a self-pitying regret felt by unbelievers but a resolution not to repeat the same mistake again. The submission evinced by a believer, his trust in God, and acting with the consciousness that all events are part of his destiny, are all important factors for the thought of the believer. They draw him nearer to his Lord.

"Every Self Will Taste Death..."

According to the ignorant, the worst thing that can happen to a person is death. That which is most feared among them is nearing death or losing a loved one. Even the mere mention of death is a topic to be avoided. Although an ignorant person may recognize the good in certain occurrences, for him, death can never be a good thing.

The outlook of disbelieving societies on death is consistently the same; they are never able to look at it differently. Death is complete annihilation, while the hereafter is a matter of mere speculation.

For people far from the truth of the religion, the life of this world is the only life. With death, this single chance is expired. This being the case, they grieve over the loss of a loved-one. Still worse, a sudden death of a loved-one at an early age is cause for the ignorant to become angered at God and fate.

However, these people forget some important facts: First of all, no one on earth comes into existence of his own will. Everyone's life belongs to God; everyone is born at a time predetermined by God and according to His Will. This being the case, God, to whom belongs everything in the heavens, earth and all between them, can take back the soul of whom He wills, at any time He wills. No one can put off his appointed time. This is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

No self can die except with God's permission, at a predetermined time. If anyone desires the reward of this world, We will give him some of it. If anyone desires the reward of the hereafter, We will give him some of it. We will recompense the thankful. (Surah Al 'Imran: 145)

No matter what measures one adopts or how secure the place he may choose, he cannot avoid death. As stated in one of the sayings of the Prophet (saas), "When God decrees that a person is to die in a certain land, He creates a need for him to go there." (Tirmidhi) A person may depart this world at any time. Similarly, no matter how one strives not to lose a loved-one-even if he puts all the resources available on earth to the purpose-he cannot prevent death. That man may face death wherever he may be is related in the following verse as follows:

Wherever you are, death will catch up with you, even if you are in impregnable fortresses. (Surat an-Nisa': 78)

Therefore, the solution is not to try and avoiding from death, but in being prepared for the life of the Hereafter.

Death Is A Beginning, Not An End

People of poor faith, or those having no faith at all in the Hereafter, have a distorted perception of death and the life that comes after it. That is why, as we said earlier, they consider death a calamity rather than as a blessing. They believe that when they lose someone to death they lose them for ever; therefore, according to them, in the ground he is reduced to nothingness.

The fact is, however, that death is not eternal extinguishment; on the contrary, it is a transition to the life of the hereafter, our resting place. It is a moment we are all drawing near to, to the day we will have to give account of all that we engaged in the life of this world, that is, the Day of Judgment. Every human being, without exception, will meet the moment of death and pass to his eternal resting place. This may happen at an early age as well as later in life. Ultimately then, everyone will one day depart from this world; every day brings that predetermined date nearer. As such, to strive to escape death, or avoiding the very thought of it, or considering it as a calamity, is completely irrational.

Some among those who have faith in the truth of the hereafter, on the other hand, still find it entirely acceptable to grieve over someone's death. But God is the All-Just. That person who dies will give an account of his deeds in this world and, based on His judgment, be rewarded or punished. For this reason, for everyone who has faith in God and the existence of the hereafter, and thus lived a life devoted to his Lord, death is a gate through which to pass to blissful eternity. But, from the point of view of the ignorant, who deny the hereafter and disregard the Day of Judgment, death is a gate to eternal torment. For this reason, to them, it is difficult to regard death as a good. For Muslims, however, it is the beginning of total salvation.

The believer's reaction to the death of another believer differs clearly from that of the type of morality or attitude of the ignorant. Because, death, perceived to be the worst thing that could happen to anyone, is, in truth, a good for believers. The attitude of the believers' towards death is clearly described in the following verse:

If you are killed in the Way of God or if you die, forgiveness and mercy from God are better than anything you can acquire. (Surah Al 'Imran: 157)

As it is with their lives, the death of the believers also brings good. In the sight of God, special degrees await those believers who meet death while striving for His cause, for martyrdom is an honour and blessing that greatly increases a believer's reward in the Hereafter. The death of a believer, who makes his sole aim to attain the hereafter, and thus lives to earn God's consent, is, thus, a glorious event. Aware of these glad tidings given in the Qur'an, believers never grieve over the death of another believer who loses his life in God's way. On the contrary, seeing the good and blessings of his death, they are joyful. Truly, the greatest reward is in gaining the pleasure of God and His paradise.

A believer who had led a long life spent in the service of God is prized in God's sight. The Prophet Nuh (as), who was granted long life by God, is such an example. Because this noble man struggled every minute of his life to attain the pleasure of God, His mercy and His Paradise, his efforts improved his reward in the Hereafter.

On the contrary, there is a delusion here into which disbelieving societies tend to fall; they consider a long life a gift. The verse below exposes this falsehood:

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)

Those who belong to the societies of the ignorant, who make the pursuit of the temporary pleasures of this world the sole pursuit of their lives, consider a long life as further opportunity to enjoy these worldly goods. Thus, these, who forget God and the Day of Judgement, fail to grasp the value of the time they recklessly waste. However, as mentioned in the verse above, this time granted to them, in actuality, works against them.

A person who contemplates these issues may attain a deeper understanding of how we are to determine what is "good" and what is "bad", according to the statement of God that "it may be that one hates something when it is good for him and it may be that one loves something when it is bad for him."

REASONS THAT PREVENT SOME PEOPLE FROM SEEING THE GOOD

Forgetting That This Life is a Test

Some think that much of their lives is subject to coincidence. However, to think this way is entirely irrational. Everything, including developing cancer, to becoming involved in a traffic accident, from the food one eats for his supper to the clothes he is wearing, are all special things predetermined. As we have repeatedly stressed throughout the book, all these events, in all their minute detail, are specially created by God to test man.

It is at this point that the fundamental difference between disbelievers and believers becomes apparent. Believers have a very different outlook to what happens to them and to the world around them. This outlook of theirs complies perfectly with the commands of the Qur'an: that is, in regarding each event as a part of a test. Accordingly, being aware that they are being tested, believers strive to conduct themselves in a way that earns God's consent.

People, who remain indifferent to the truths revealed through Islam, set many illusory goals for themselves; that of entering a prestigious college, being happily married, getting the kids through school, improving their living standards, achieving status in the community... All these goals have one thing in common: they are all wishes and aims related to this world alone. The plans and aspirations of people who make these goals the main aim of their lives are limited to this shallow outlook. Because, as we said earlier, the knowledge of the majority of people is limited to the existence of this world. However, their assumption is incorrect. Even if one were to attain all the goals he had set for himself, his life is, ultimately, doomed to that inevitable end, death. Consequently, a life concentrated on this world alone is a vain life, unless otherwise willed by God.

Furthermore, a person, who has adopted such a way of life can never attain all he desires. It is the immutable law of God; nothing on earth is immune to decay. Nothing on earth is immune to the effects of time. A fruit, for instance, gradually darkens and finally decays from the moment it is plucked from its branch. A beautiful house painstakingly built over years eventually becomes uninhabitable. Most importantly, the human body is vulnerable to the detrimental effects of time. Every person experiences the effects of time on his physical self. Greying hair, the failure of organs, wrinkling of skin, and many other signs of aging, are clear signs that indicate the immanence of death.

In addition to aging, a human's life, which rarely extends beyond 6-7 decades, may be concluded abruptly; unexpected events, such as a traffic accident, or a fatal disease, may, at any time, bring an end to his life. As we said in the previous section, no matter how man might struggle to avoid even the thought of death, he will ultimately meet that unavoidable end. Whether a pretty girl, or a famous person, no one is immune to death. Not wealth, possessions, sons, friends, that is, nothing, can protect man from death:

Say: "Death, from which you are fleeing, will certainly catch up with you. Then you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible and He will inform you about what you did." (Surat al-Jum'ua: 8)

The foregoing means the following; the life of this world is temporary and it is not the real and final resting place of man. Consequently, a man must orient all his efforts toward the life of the hereafter.

Whatever you have been given is only the enjoyment of the life of this world. What is with God is better and longer lasting for those who believe and trust in their Lord. (Surat ash-Shura: 36)

If we consider the fact that the life of this world is temporary and that the human body is vulnerable to death, we are led to a subject we must all contemplate; the purpose of man's creation on earth. God makes plain this purpose in the following verse:

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)

In many verses of the Qur'an, God makes it clear that man is created to be a servant to his Creator. It is also stressed that the life of this world is a test, designed to distinguish the good from the evil:

We made everything on the earth adornment for it so that We could test them to see whose actions are the best. (Surat al-Kahf: 7)

Because man's entire life is part of a test, nothing that befalls him is accidental. If a person fails to grasp that there is a purpose behind these events, falsely assuming that they happen apart and independently of God, then he commits a grave error. Because, all events that take place in the course of life are, in actuality, trials specially designed for him by God. Man is held responsible for his responses and behaviour through the course of these trials. The way he conducts himself, and the morality he evinces, determine his reward or punishment in the life of the Hereafter.

That nothing-whether the experience is insignificant or great-occurs accidentally, that everything that takes place in our life are all events predetermined in our destiny, are facts a person must always keep in mind. As long as a person keeps his mind occupied with their remembrance, he will never forget that everything he meets in life is ultimately good for him. That is, what he encounters is merely what God wills for him. To sum up, it is essential to keep in mind that this world is a place of test by which we are expected to see the good and divine purposes of this life.

God does not place a burden on a person greater than he can bear

God puts every person through different trials with various types of events and through different acquaintances. Yet, it needs to be mentioned that God is infinitely just and He is forbearing towards His servants (al-Halim); He never imparts a burden greater than one can bear. This is the promise of God:

We do not impose on any self any more than it can stand. With Us there is a Book which speaks the truth. They will not be wronged. (Surat al-Mu'minun: 62)

As for those who believe and do right actions-We impose on no self any more than it can bear-they are the Companions of the Garden, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surat al-A'raf: 42)

Diseases, accidents, all forms of distress, and any other kind of trial a person is likely to encounter in the life of this world, are bound within the limits of one's ability to withstand them. But, if a person chooses rebellion and ingratitude to God, Satanic qualities, rather than maintaining the noble values of the Qur'an, such as patience, then he will ultimately be held responsible for it.

In some cases, a person might feel he has exhausted all options available to cope with a problem, and see no way out of the circumstances he is in. Failing to remember that there is also a good in such a happening, he may become rebellious. These are merely the vain feelings instilled in him by Satan. Whatever he may encounter in life, a sincere believer must remain aware of the fact that he is confronted with a situation in which he can conduct himself virtuously and with patience. If he despairs, on the other hand, it is merely the temptation of Satan. God commands His servants not to despair:

Do they not know that God expands the provision of anyone He wills and restricts it? There are certainly Signs in that for people who believe. Say: "My slaves, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of God. Truly God forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful." Turn to your Lord and submit to Him before punishment comes upon you, for then you cannot be helped. (Surat az-Zumar: 52-54)

A person, who complies with the command of God as stated above, knows that from good comes good; a person who despairs, on the other hand, is alone in this world and without a way out. God informs us that those who despair of His mercy are, in fact, disbelievers:

Those who reject God's Signs and the meeting with Him, such people can despair of My mercy, such people will have a painful punishment. (Surat al-'Ankabut: 23)

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

In compliance with God's command, a Muslim must never despair, but try to attain a more profound understanding of that which happens around him through contemplation. When a believer meets a difficulty, it leads him to consider the good in it; and ensures that, throughout the period, which is a trial for him, that he be courageous, patient, compassionate, loyal, devout, loving and self-sacrificing. That is, it is a period through which a believer exercises his trust in God. Once he attains the hereafter, knowing that he has been given the paradise as a blessing and as a reward for his good conduct and character will be an added source of pleasure and joy for him. A person, who has been tested in the world, has born difficulties with steadfastness in the life of this world, perceives the blessings and offerings in Paradise with a deeper appreciation, and therefore, enjoys a more profound pleasure in it. It is important to remember that one who hasn't experienced difficulty cannot appreciate ease; even if he does, he can never feel it as deeply as one who has endured hardships. Therefore, every difficulty a believer experiences in this world shall ultimately be a source of bliss in the Hereafter.

Essentially, being patient, wise, reasonable, stable, forgiving, compassionate, in brief, showing the noble qualities of a believer, offers man the particular sort of happiness that can only come from faith. By the Will of God, this happiness will be enjoyed perpetually into eternity.

Any misfortune that befalls man is from himself

The people who are far from adhering to the morality commanded in the Qur'an often share a common character trait: when things go their way, they think it is from themselves and feel pride. But, when a misfortune befalls them, then they immediately seek someone to blame. But, God is the All-Just and, as the verse below suggests, it is the person himself who is ultimately responsible for each and every adversity he meets:

Any good thing that happens to you comes from God. Any bad thing that happens to you comes from yourself... (Surat an-Nisa': 79)

The Qur'an provides various examples to explain the perverted way in which disbelievers interpret things that happen. For instance, God informs us in Surat al-Araf that the Pharaoh and his inner circle attributed the evil that befell them to Musa (as) and his people. However, they themselves were the source of evil and wickedness:

Whenever a good thing came to them, they said, "This is our due." But if anything bad happened to them, they would blame their ill fortune on Musa and those with him. No indeed! Their ill fortune will be with God. But most of them did not know. (Surat al-A'raf: 131)

As the example in the verse above suggests, under all circumstances, people who are far from the morality of the Qur'an seek someone else to blame. They ignore their own mistakes and shortcomings and try to accuse good people of wickedness. However, as what God draws our attention to in the above-quoted verse, it is they who are responsible for the evil. If these people interpret evil as good and vice versa, then they only have themselves to blame.

Misunderstanding Destiny

Throughout their lives, people continue to plan their future, even the next day or the next hour. At times, these plans proceed as planned. But, in some cases, they are hindered because of unexpected developments. Those who are far from the teachings of Islam attribute these obstructions to coincidences.

In actuality, however, there are neither programs that are carried out, nor unanticipated obstructions. All of the events that a person encounters in life are predetermined by God for that person in his destiny. This fact is related in the following verses:

He directs the whole affair from heaven to earth... (Surat as-Sajda: 5)

Indeed, all things We created with predestination. (Surat al-Qamar: 49)

A person may erroneously think that during the course of his day he experiences merely what he has planned for himself. The fact is, however, he is only conforming to the destiny determined for him by God. This being the case, even if a person assumes that he has intervened in a situation and thus changed the course of his destiny, he, in actuality, is yet again experiencing another moment predetermined for him. None of the moments that make up our lives happen beyond fate. A person in coma who later dies does so because he was destined to at that time. Another who recovers after months in the same condition does so because it is his destiny.

For a person who has not truly grasped the significance destiny, all events are the outcome of accident. He falsely assumes that everything in the universe has an independent existence. That is why, when afflicted by some disaster, he refers to it as an "unfortunate" incident.

Nevertheless, the human being is limited in wisdom and his faculty of discernment; moreover, he is confined to space and time. On the other hand, all that befalls a person, without exception, is planned by God, the possessor of "infinite wisdom," Who is unbounded by space and time.

Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen. That is something easy for God. (Surat al-Hadid: 22)

Consequently, all a person needs to do is to submit himself to the destiny determined by his Creator, remaining aware that everything will turn good in the end. Indeed, people of true faith spend every moment of their lives with the acknowledgement of the fact that whatever happens is part of their destiny, and that event circumstance is pre-ordained for a purpose. They continually benefit from this positive outlook, and eventually meet this good. The noble morality and wholehearted submission practiced by believers is related in the Qur'an as follows:

Say: "Nothing can happen to us except what God has ordained for us. He is Our Master. It is in God that the believers should put their trust." (Surat at-Tawba: 51)

Ultimately, whether he judges it as good or bad, a person can never prevent a predetermined event from happening. If he sees good in all, then he always benefits; otherwise, he does nothing other than harm to himself. Regret or assuming a rebellious attitude does not change even a single moment of one's destiny. This being the case, the responsibility of a human being as a servant to God is to submit himself to His infinite justice and the destiny He predetermines, to regard all incidents as ultimately good, and thus, become a spectator to his destiny with a heart tranquil and at peace.

Satan Strives to Hinder Man from Recognizing the Good

In the Qur'an, God relates that Satan is ungrateful and rebellious. We also learn from the Qur'an that he will approach man from every angle and that he will resort to any means for the purpose of leading man into all kinds of debauchery. The most common method he employs towards this evil plan is hindering man from seeing the good in the things that happen to him. In this way, he also strives to mislead man into

rebellion and ingratitude. People who fail to grasp the beauty of the morality of the Qur'an, those who are far from the teachings of Islam and spend their lives chasing vain pursuits, who are oblivious of the Hereafter, are prone to the snares of Satan.

Satan appeals to man's weaknesses and whispers deceptive ploys to him; he summons him to rebel against God and fate. For instance, one may not find it difficult to remind his neighbour who had been involved in an accident of the fact that it forms part of his destiny. Yet, the same person may fail to adopt the same mature attitude when he or his family is beset with a similar accident. Through the influence of Satan, he finds it easier to adopt a rebellious attitude. Because, one must exercise his conscience in order to strive to see goodness in events, to show submission and to put his trust in God. The failure to exercise one's conscience leads only to an errant attitude.

Satan's efforts to hinder man from seeing the good may be recognized in all kinds of circumstances. His whisperings also prevent some from seeing the good of their own deeds. For instance, Satan strives to instil fear of poverty into someone who is willing to spend of his wealth in the cause of God. This temptation of his is related in the following verse:

Satan promises you poverty and commands you to avarice. God promises you forgiveness from Him and abundance. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 268)

However, all such sentiments are vain feelings. These insidious plans of Satan can by no means influence the true believer, since the believer's aim in spending his wealth is not to obtain worldly benefits or his own gratification. His main goal is to earn the good pleasure of God, His mercy and Paradise. For this reason, Satan cannot deceive believers with vain aspirations. That Satan can exert no influence on believers is stated in a verse as follows:

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

From the foregoing we should understand that Satan employs two methods to hinder man from engaging in good deeds. First, he strives to prevent a good and beneficial deed and presents the pursuit of worldly benefits as the sole purpose of life. Secondly, he does his utmost to hinder people from seeing the good and purpose of an event. Especially, when a misfortune befalls a man, he presents it as an "evil", and tempts him into assuming a rebellious attitude towards God.

However, so many are the blessings granted to a person that one could never count them. From the moment of his birth, man is bestowed with numerous blessings from his Lord, a bounty that is not interrupted at any moment for the rest of his life. That is why believers, who take their Lord as their sole ally and protector, put their trust in Him, and, when something seemingly adverse happens to them, aware that there exists an ultimate good in it, show patience even if they fail to see an immediate divine purpose. As the Prophet (saas) says, they "take refuge with God from the difficulties of severe calamities," (Bukhari) and no matter what happens to them, they never become rebellious or complain. They always retain in mind that a seemingly adverse incident will ultimately turn out in their favour. And, by the Will of God, that hardship may ultimately prove to be a major milestone in their life that will lead them to eternal salvation.

EXAMPLES FROM THE LIVES OF THE PROPHETS AND TRUE BELIEVERS

The struggling against disbelievers constituted a major part of the efforts of the prophets and the true believers who followed them. These noble people were faced with many incidents that would otherwise have seemed unfortunate. Yet, when confronted with these trials, that trait which was their most distinguishing became apparent; no matter how trying the circumstances were, they felt the peace and comfort of knowing that nothing is apart and independent of God. Such a knowledge aided them to adopt a positive attitude...

The messengers of God and the true believers led their lives assured of the fact that God will help them during the hard times and that everything will ultimately turn out in their favour, and based their entire outlook on this fact. This superior trait of theirs, derived from a profound faith, sets a good example for all believers.

Verbal Attacks of Disbelievers

As we learn from the Qur'an, believers encountered groups of disbelievers and hypocrites who resorted to all kinds of methods to prevent them or divert them from the right path. The Qur'an gives a detailed account of the insulting and slanderous language used by the disbelievers:

You will be tested in your wealth and in yourselves and you will hear many abusive words from those given the Book before you and from those who associate others with God. But if you are steadfast and do your duty, that is the most resolute course to take. (Surah Al 'Imran: 186)

In the above verse, God makes it clear that the lies and slander which appeared evil to the believers were, in actuality, good. In another verse, God relates this fact with another example that took place in the time of the Prophet (saas):

There is a group of you who propagated the lie. Do not suppose it to be bad for you; rather it is good for you. Every one of them will incur the evil he has earned and the one who took it on himself to amplify it will receive a terrible punishment. (Surat an-Nur: 11)

Effectively, such circumstances encountered by believers in the past were the tactics employed by the disbelievers to deter and dissuade them from adhering to the tenets of Islam. Yet, the believers always remained steadfast, assured of the fact that these wicked attempts would ultimately turn out beneficially for them, and their cause would prevail in the end. That is why they responded to such slander and verbal attacks with moderation and wisdom; not for a moment did they forget that patience and putting one's trust in God would lead them to success. They were aware that, as the Prophet (saas) said, "whoever remains patient, God will make him patient. Nobody can be given a blessing better and greater than patience." (Bukhari)

As is in these examples from the past, it is essential for believers of today to submit themselves to the destiny created by God, and to put their faith in the truth that everything develops in accord with a divine purpose. A believer who lives by these principles will also attain the greatest rewards possible in this world. Because, God promises to help His servants who put their trust in Him, and assures them that they will never find themselves without "a way out":

If God helps you, no one can vanquish you. If He forsakes you, who can help you after that? So the believers should put their trust in God. (Surah Al 'Imran: 160)

The Physical Attacks of Disbelievers

Throughout history, disbelieving societies has always perceived believers' commitment to the religion of God, their living by its principles and spreading the message of God, as a threat. That is why, for the purpose of demoralizing the believers, they employed evil methods such as slander or deceit. And, in some cases, when these methods failed, they did not hesitate to employ more severe methods, such as threat, torture, and arresting or driving believers out of their homes.

The ill-treatment believers are subjected to in their struggle with disbelievers is merely evidence of the insolence of disbelievers. However, believers always recognize the good in such abuse, aware that God has surely ordained it for a purpose. They are very well aware that true righteousness is to show patience and putting trust in God. God describes this trait of their in the following manner:

...[T]hose with true righteousness are those who believe in God and the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who attend to their prayers and give 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 believers. Those are the people who go in fear of God. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

Some of these positive character traits are illustrated in a story in Surat al-Ahzab, relating an incident that took place in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (saas). According to the story, during a battle, the believers were tested and severely shaken when the disbelievers came at them from all sides. In such trying circumstances, hypocrites and those with sickness in their hearts devised various excuses, thus exposing who they were.

In such times, the hypocrites who had, for some time, blended into the community of believers, became known. These people, similar to cancerous cells developing invisibly inside the body, immediately retreated at such times of hardship, though God's help and support always remained with the believers.

While hypocrites acted despicably, the believers were aware of the ultimate good in the hardships they faced. They recognized themselves as going through what the verses of the Qur'an had informed them of, and thus, attained a deeper faith and loyalty to God:

When the believers saw the Confederates they said: "This is what God and His Messenger promised us. God and His Messenger told us the truth." It only increased them in faith and in submission. (Surat al-Ahzab: 22)

As the example above also suggests, a trying situation may turn out to be a great blessing for the believers while it leads astray into further disbelief those who fail to appreciate the good. Meanwhile, as well as distinguishing the good from evil, these events served to nullify the efforts of the disbelievers. In Surat al-Ahzab, that the disbelievers failed to attain success but only returned in rage and deeper hatred, is stated as follows:

God sent back those who disbelieved in their rage without their achieving any good at all... (Surat al-Ahzab: 25)

The Emigration of Muslims

If needed, leaving one's possessions and assets behind and emigrating elsewhere is a form of worship as stated in the Qur'an. Therefore, Muslims emigrating for the cause of God always see the good in such forced removal from their homes. Indeed, in the Qur'an, those emigrating for the cause of God are mentioned among those who can hope for God's Mercy:

Those who have believed and who have migrated and striven for God's sake may expect God's mercy. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Baqara: 218)

The rationale of ignorance considers one's fleeing from his home country due to unrest or out of exile to an unfamiliar country as a misfortune, utterly throwing his life into disarray. Yet, it must be mentioned that, believers are, from the outset, aware that they will be disliked by the majority of people who deny the religion of God. Consequently, such an oppression is, in actuality, a manifestation of the truth of the verses of God. That is why believers who emigrate or are driven out of their homes always face such circumstances with great zeal and anticipation. The superior morality of believers who lived in the time of the Prophet (saas) and their unshakable faith is one of the best examples of today's believers. Aware that obedience to the Prophet (saas) would earn them God's pleasure, they willingly endured all forms of hardship with pleasure. For the good of the Muslims, they did not hesitate to leave their country, willingly abandoning all their worldly possessions.

In return for their upstanding morality and the positive way in which they perceived these events, God promised them His infinite Paradise and mercy. Surely, God is true in His promise:

Their Lord responds to them: "I will not let the deeds of any doer among you go to waste, male or female-you are both the same in that respect. Those who have migrated and were driven from their homes and suffered harm in My Way and fought and were killed, I will erase their bad actions from them and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them, as a reward from God. The best of all rewards is with God." (Surah Al 'Imran: 195)

In addition to God's infinite rewards in the Hereafter, God also gives the glad tidings of abundant benefits and resources in this world too. This is recounted in Qur'an as follows:

Those who migrate in the Way of God will find many places of refuge on the earth and ample sustenance. If anyone leaves his home as a refugee for God's and His Messenger's sake, and death catches up with him, it is God Who will reward him. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat an-Nisa': 100)

As for those who migrate for God's sake after being wronged, We shall give them good lodging in the world, and the reward of the hereafter is greater still if they only knew-those who are steadfast and put their trust in their Lord. (Surat an-Nahl: 41-42)

The Exemplary Faith of the Prophet (saas)

The Prophet Muhammad (saas), as is the case with all other prophets, encountered various hardships throughout his life, and set a perfect example for all Muslims through his patience and faith in God. A situation recounted in the Qur'an relates the superior morality and the unwavering faith of the Prophet Muhammad (saas).

When the Prophet (saas) left Mecca, the disbelievers pursued him for the purpose of killing him. As a result, he took shelter in a cave. In their search, the disbelievers managed to eventually come upon the entrance of the cave. Even in such a distressful moment, the Prophet (saas) advised his companion not to worry and reminded him to put his trust in God:

If you do not help him, God 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, God is with us." Then God sent down His serenity upon him and reinforced him with troops you could not see. He made the word of the disbelievers undermost... (Surat at-Tawba: 40)

Clearly, the sole reason why the Prophet (saas) felt no fear or distress at such a moment, when his life was in evident danger, was for his trust in God and his awareness that God ordains everything in one's destiny for a purpose. Ultimately, he reached Medina unharmed and thus the emigration, a great milestone in the history of Islam, had begun.

The Superior Morality of the Prophet Musa (as)

The Qur'an provides a detailed account of the Prophet Musa's struggle with the Pharaoh, a man who has gone down as one of the most oppressive rulers in history. The Pharaoh responded to message of God communicated to him by the Prophet Musa (as) with threats and abuse. The superiority of the Prophet Musa's morality and his trust in God when faced with Pharaoh, who resorted to all sorts of methods to divert him from the right path, is truly an example for all believers.

The Qur'an explains the period of Musa's mission as follows: The Pharaoh who ruled in Egypt exercised absolute power over the children of Israel. On the other hand, the Prophet Musa (as) and his people were a minority in the country. Therefore, from the perspective of the ignorant, who judge things merely from the way they appear, and thus falsely suppose that the powerful wins out over the just, would expect success for the Pharaoh. Yet, this is delusion, for God commands as follows:

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

God kept his promise He gave to His Prophets and granted victory to the Prophet Musa (as) against the Pharaoh. God supported him through his brother Harun as well as His own protection. In addition, God granted several miracles for the Prophet Musa (as) to perform and set him apart from all other people by speaking to him. We can draw lessons from Musa's struggle as related in the Qur'an. It clearly reveals how what may appear adverse for the believers can, in an instant, turn out in their favour by the Will of God.

One such event took place in the following manner: The Pharaoh and his army set out to capture Musa (as) and his companions after fleeing Egypt. By the time the children of Israel had reached the sea, the Pharaoh and his soldiers had nearly caught up with them. At that moment, the words of Musa (as) were very moving; although the Pharaoh and his soldiers were within grasp, and there was no way of escape, he did not despair of God's help, and thus maintained a composure that was truly exemplary. This story is recounted in the Qur'an as follows:

So they pursued them towards the east. And when the two hosts came into sight of one another Musa's companions said, "We will surely be overtaken!" He said, "Never! My Lord is with me and He will guide me." So We revealed to Musa, "Strike the sea with your staff." And it split in two, each part like a towering cliff. And We brought the others right up to it. We rescued Musa and all those who were with him. Then We drowned the rest. There is certainly a Sign in that yet most of them are not believers. Truly your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 60-68)

In this story, our attention is drawn to the notable qualities of the Prophet Musa (as): throughout his difficult struggle, he continually kept his mind occupied with the remembrance of God's help, saw good in whatever befell him, and even in his most trying moments, strove to put his trust in God and maintained his loyalty towards Him.

Unswerving Submission of the Prophet Yusuf (as)

One of the most beautiful examples in the Qur'an about the change of a seemingly adverse situation in favour of the believers is the life of the Prophet Yusuf (as).

The Prophet Yusuf (as), from his earliest years, and throughout his life, was known for his mature behaviour through adversity and his strong loyalty to God. His conduct through trying circumstances was a great example for believers. The Prophet Yusuf (as), who regarded God as his guardian, sought the

goodness in whatever befell him and was aware that no matter what he faced was from Him. Therefore, throughout his life, he recognized every opportunity as a test and always remained faithful and upright.

The Prophet Yusuf (as) was first subjected to unjust treatment by his own brothers who had been jealous of him. They threw him into a well, and thus kept him away from their home and their father. However, God saved him from the well when a caravan came passing by. The travellers rescued the young Yusuf and sold him to some prominent person in Egypt. The wife of the owner of the house, impressed by Yusuf's beauty, "solicited" him, as the Qur'an relates. Therefore, Yusuf (as) was again treated unjustly, this time wrongly accused by this woman. Although the investigation carried out revealed evidence in favour of Yusuf (as), he was imprisoned:

Then, after they had seen the Signs, they thought that they should still imprison him for a time. (Surah Yusuf: 35)

As is evident, Yusuf (as) was slandered only because of his virtuous character. As a result of this accusation, Yusuf (as), who remained in prison for a long period of time, showed patience in the face of all the difficulties of prison life, and put his trust in God. As the Qur'an relates, by the way he conducted himself and his superior submission to God, he was truly an example for all believers.

Surely, Yusuf (as) received the greatest rewards, both in this world and beyond, in return for his patience, putting his trust in God, and recognizing the good in whatever befell him. God placed him in authority over the state-treasury and made him a ruler in the country. His recognizing the good in all that happened to him and his prayer to God is related in the Qur'an as follows:

He raised his parents up onto the throne. The others fell prostrate in front of him. He said, "My father, truly this is now the interpretation of the dream I had. My Lord has made it all come true; and He was kind to me by letting me out of prison and brought you from the desert when Satan had caused dissent between me and my brothers. My Lord is kind to anyone He wills. He is indeed All-Knowing and All-Wise. My Lord, You have granted power to me on earth and taught me the true meaning of events. Originator of the heavens and earth, You are my Friend in this world and the Next. So take me as a Muslim at my death and join me with the righteous." (Surah Yusuf: 100-101)

Truly, this story is a great example of the rewards believers receive in return for their sincerity and their putting trust in God. Whatever happens to a sincere believer, he must strive to find and grasp the purpose of those events. He should take refuge in God, and pray for such insight. A Muslim must never forget that any event, great or small, that may concern him in the course of the day, are by no means against him. This is something entirely contrary to truth of fate, an immutable law of God. God definitely ordains everything in favour of believers. As a great blessing, God may reveal the purpose and good of something into the heart of a believer. Yet, even if not, a believer must show patience and be able to say "it is for some good."

GOD'S PROMISE AND HELP TO BELIEVERS

As stated in the Qur'an, "...most of the people do not believe."(Surat ar-Ra'd: 1), meaning that disbelievers usually make up the majority of people on earth. They always outnumber the believers, which is why these ignorant people consider themselves to be on the right path. The material wealth and numbers deceive them into a false feeling of assurance. Being aware of only the appearance of things makes them erroneously assume themselves to be superior. Yet, there remains a fact of which they are entirely unaware; the promise and support of God to the believers:

God will not give the disbelievers any way against the believers. (Surat an-Nisa': 141)

As the verse above suggests, God creates everything in favour of believers and provides them help in various ways. In Surat al-Inshirah, God informs believers of the secret that, for a Muslim, with every difficulty there surely is relief. God, Who creates a cure for every disease, provides relief after every difficulty. This fact is revealed as follows:

For truly with hardship comes ease; truly with hardship comes ease. (Surat ash-Sharh: 5-6)

Only believers are aware of this support and assistance granted by God. No matter what they encounter in life, they enjoy the comfort and peace of mind of awareness that God aids and guards them. God promised to His servants:

God knows best who your enemies are. God suffices as a Protector; God suffices as a Helper. (Surat an-Nisa': 45)

Disbelievers and hypocrites, on the other hand, harbour all sorts of fears. They feel constant concern for they have no faith in God, worship others beside Him, and believe events happen accidentally. This is, in actuality, a fear God instils into the hearts of those who fight against the believers:

And when your Lord revealed to the angels, "I am with you so make those who believe firm. I will cast dread into the hearts of those who disbelieve..." (Surat al-Anfal: 12)

The help and support God offers to believers lasts throughout their lives. Throughout history and in many ways has God provided his assistance to believers. In some cases, He granted miracles to His prophets, in others, He supported Muslims by invisible armies, angels or through natural events. Sometimes, even events that seemed unlikely to happen occurred. Some examples related in the Qur'an are as follows:

You who believe! Remember God's blessing to you when forces came against you and We sent a wind against them and other forces you could not see. God sees what you do. (Surat al-Ahzab: 9)

Remember when you called on your Lord for help and He responded to you: "I will reinforce you with a thousand angels riding rank after rank." (Surat al-Anfal: 9)

There was a sign for you in the two parties which met face to face, one party fighting in the Way of God and the other disbelievers. They saw them with their own eyes as twice the same [number] as themselves. God reinforces with His help whoever He wills. There is instruction in that for people of insight. (Surah Al 'Imran: 13)

All Plots Hatched against the Muslims are Doomed from the Outset

Disbelievers employ all types of devious methods in their struggle against the Muslims. One of the most commonly used methods is the establishment of alliances against them. Disbelievers, who believe that they will succeed because they are in the majority, and those who plot in secret, fail to remember that God sees them as they are plotting. They are entirely oblivious of the fact that God is nearer to man than his jugular vein. Nevertheless, whether keep it to themselves or divulge it, God knows "what is in their hearts." God knows every detail of every one of their thoughts, and every plot or plan they devise.

More importantly, God, the all-Knowing, informs us that He has thwarted the plots of disbelievers from the outset. No matter how secretive or devious these plans may be, all plots against believers are doomed from the moment they are conceived:

...God always confounds the schemes of the disbelievers. (Surat al-Anfal: 18)

They concocted their plots, but their plots were with God, even if they were such as to make the mountains vanish. (Surah Ibrahim: 46)

In addition, God informs us that such plots will not harm the believers, and that they will ultimately come back upon the plotters themselves:

...But evil plotting envelops only those who do it. Do they expect anything but the pattern of previous peoples? You will not find any changing in the pattern of God. You will not find any alteration in the pattern of God. (Surah Fatir: 43)

Believers put their trust in this divine promise (that God will thwart the plots of disbelievers). Aware of the fact that God's help is always with them, they live a life of tranquillity. As we have stressed thus far, thanks to this resignation, they can see the good and purpose in every event they encounter; and even if they fail to see it, they believe with certainty that every incident will ultimately turn out to be good for believers.

"It is the Party of God who are Victorious!"

The rewards of seeing good, even in seemingly evil events, and always putting one's trust in God, has always been plentiful:

Those to whom people said, "The people have gathered against you, so fear them." But that merely increased their faith and they said, "God is enough for us and the Best of Guardians." So they returned with blessings and bounty from God and no evil touched them. They pursued the pleasure of God. God's favour is indeed immense. (Surah Al 'Imran: 173-174)

Let us remind ourselves that disbelievers may from time to time seem to have the upper hand. However, it is merely a trial from God for believers. As we said earlier, it is part of a divine plan to distinguish the true believers from those who are weaker in faith. Believers who put their trust in God, show patience and see good in all that happens, show forth clearly their loyalty and trust in God. That is why, those who will earn God's pleasure, both in this world and in the life of the Hereafter, and who will ultimately triumph, are the believers:

As for those who make God their friend, and His Messenger and those who believe: it is the party of God who are victorious! (Surat al-Ma'ida: 56)

CONCLUSION

Believers live in wholehearted submission to God, aware that everything, in its minutest detail, is created by God and predetermined by Him according to a certain plan. Although believers may encounter all sorts of hardships and trials throughout their lives, they never feel regret and say, "I wished this did not happen to me..." They believe that a divine purpose and good is to be found in every event. Therefore, even in the most distressing circumstances, they live with peace of mind. However, disbelievers, who are unaware of this truth, feel great anxiety whenever they are confronted by an event which to them seems evil. Hopelessness and despair pervades their lives. The fact is, however, due to his nature, man is constantly seeking peace and comfort, because of the physical and spiritual pains that difficulty, stress and sorrow cause him. But, the sorrow, stress and despair, which a person who does not put his trust in God or see the good in whatever befalls him is subjected to, encroaches upon him from all around. He can never manage to free himself from fear of future, fear of death, disease, or fear of poverty.

Man's only salvation is found in remembering that God creates every event for a divine purpose and a certain good. A believer is putting his faith in God in the truest sense only if he remains cognisant of this fact. He comports himself in the manner of a true servant only if he does not merely endure these situations, but is patient through them. Keeping always near to God, by praying and putting one's faith in Him, and expecting that everything comes from Him, is a quality particular to believers.

In this world, in which he waits to attain the gates of Paradise, a believer encounters various sorts of circumstances as part of his trial. During this test, he conducts himself responsibly towards his Creator, and endeavours to earn the pleasure of God and His Paradise. He seeks to avoid hell, fears God, and sees the good in all that occurs to him and around him. Though he fails to see this good, he remembers that it is God Who knows all, no matter what the circumstance. A believer is a being who has descended to the world from paradise through timelessness, that is, in God's sight. Here he is to remain, for a brief period of time, until he is permitted to enter that final abode by God's will. God informs us about an event which is sure to happen to His servants who fear Him and do their duty:

And those who have heeded their Lord will be driven to the Garden 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 God Who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of this land, letting us settle in the Garden wherever we want. How excellent is the wage of those who work!" You will see the angels circling round the Throne, glorifying their Lord with praise. It will be decided between them with truth. And it will be said: "Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat az-Zumar: 73-75)

THE EVOLUTION MISCONCEPTION

Every detail in this universe points to a superior creation. By contrast, materialism, which seeks to deny the fact of creation in the universe, is nothing but an unscientific fallacy.

Once materialism is invalidated, all other theories based on this philosophy are rendered baseless. Foremost of them is Darwinism, that is, the theory of evolution. This theory, which argues that life originated from inanimate matter through coincidences, has been demolished with the recognition that the universe was created by God. American astrophysicist Hugh Ross explains this as follows:

Atheism, Darwinism, and virtually all the "isms" emanating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century philosophies are built upon the assumption, the incorrect assumption, that the universe is infinite. The singularity has brought us face to face with the cause - or causer - beyond/behind/before the universe and all that it contains, including life itself.¹

It is God Who created the universe and Who designed it down to its smallest detail. Therefore, it is impossible for the theory of evolution, which holds that living beings are not created by God, but are products of coincidences, to be true.

Unsurprisingly, when we look at the theory of evolution, we see that this theory is denounced by scientific findings. The design in life is extremely complex and striking. In the inanimate world, for instance, we can explore how sensitive are the balances which atoms rest upon, and further, in the animate world, we can observe in what complex designs these atoms were brought together, and how extraordinary are the mechanisms and structures such as proteins, enzymes, and cells, which are manufactured with them.

This extraordinary design in life invalidated Darwinism at the end of the 20th century.

We have dealt with this subject in great detail in some of our other studies, and shall continue to do so. However, we think that, considering its importance, it will be helpful to make a short summary here as well.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

Although a doctrine going back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the 19th century. The most important development that made the theory the top topic of the world of science was the book by Charles Darwin titled *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. In this book, Darwin denied that different living species on the earth were created separately by God. According to Darwin, all living beings had a common ancestor and they diversified over time through small changes.

Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory was failing in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve the "Difficulties of the Theory." However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties.

The defeat of Darwinism against science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

1) The theory can by no means explain how life originated on the earth.
2) There is no scientific finding showing that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any power to evolve at all.

3) The fossil record proves completely the contrary of the suggestions of the theory of evolution.

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

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

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

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and does not accept any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan, or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. This, however, is a claim inconsistent with even the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes from Life"

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

Similarly, worms developing in meat were assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, only some time later was it understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even in the period when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, which disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said, "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."²

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

Inconclusive Efforts in the 20th Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the 20th century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930's, he tried to prove that the cell of a living being could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession: "Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms."³

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve the problem of the origin of life. The best known of these experiments was carried out by American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, the atmosphere used in the experiment having been very different from real earth conditions.⁴

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁵

All the evolutionist efforts put forth throughout the 20th century to explain the origin of life ended with failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada from San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth Magazine* in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: **How did life originate on Earth?** ⁶

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a big impasse about the origin of life is that even the living organisms deemed the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living being is more complex than all of the technological products produced by man. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing inorganic materials together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10⁹⁵⁰ for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10⁵⁰ is practically considered to be impossible.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of the cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. It is calculated that if the information coded in DNA were written down, this would make a giant library consisting of 900 volumes of encyclopaedias of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: the DNA can only replicate with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can only be realized by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means. 7

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

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

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

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

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

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁸

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favourable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science in his age. According to the French biologist Lamarck, who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation and these traits, accumulating from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, according to Lamarck, giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples, and in his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time⁹

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Mendel and verified by the science of genetics that flourished in the 20th century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favour as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

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

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

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

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would not be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.¹⁰

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living beings, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer). No doubt, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself" as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, neither could any imaginary process called evolution have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to the theory of evolution, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else in time and all species have come into being in this way. According to the theory, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, then numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

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

If such animals had really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹¹

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the 19th century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All the fossils unearthed in excavations showed that, contrary to the expectations of evolutionists, life appeared on earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

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

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹²

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

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence. ¹³

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the earth. That means that "the origin of species" is, contrary to Darwin's supposition, not evolution but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

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

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

Evolutionists call the so-called first ape-like ancestors of men "*Australopithecus*" which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, has shown that these belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹⁴

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to the evolutionist claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than *Australopithecus*. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the most important proponents of the theory of evolution in the 20th century, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."¹⁵

By outlining the link chain as "*Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*," evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time.¹⁶

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neandarthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.¹⁷

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

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (*A. africanus*, *the robust australopithecines*, and *H. habilis*), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.¹⁸

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is sought to be upheld with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific ground.

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

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

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible - and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.¹⁹

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

Technology In The Eye and The Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of "how we see". Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the retina of the eye. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and they reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain called the centre of vision. These electric signals are perceived in this centre of the brain as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that the inside of the brain is solid dark, and light does not reach the location where the brain is situated. The place called the centre of vision is a solid dark place where no light ever reaches; it may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the 20th century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you read, your hands with which you hold it, then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any

other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, coloured, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective having depth.

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

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

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

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just like it is from light: it does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside; the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your brain, which is insulated from sound, you listen to the symphonies of an orchestra, and hear all the noises in a crowded place. However, if the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, it would be seen that a complete silence is prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavour, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality HI-FI systems produced by the biggest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a HI-FI you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the technology of the human body are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does HI-FI; it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no visual or recording apparatus produced by man has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear.

However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater fact lies beyond all this.

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

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

The stimulations coming from the eyes, ears, and nose of a human being travel to the brain as electro-chemical nervous impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact about this subject: Who is it that perceives these electro-chemical nervous impulses as images, sounds, odours and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for eye, ear, and nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? There is no doubt that this consciousness does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot give any answer to these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by God. The spirit needs neither the eye to watch the images, nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, nor does it need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty God, should fear Him and seek refuge in Him, He Who squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimetres in a three-dimensional, coloured, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is a claim evidently at variance with scientific findings. The theory's claim on the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the intermediate forms required by the theory never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas such as the earth-centered universe model have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

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

The reason is that the theory of evolution is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward for the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations,

no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door. 20

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

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

**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)**

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