

**How Do Images Come
To Be Seen As Matter?**

**MATTER
THE OTHER NAME
FOR ILLUSION**

HARUN YAHYA

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About The Author

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

Harun Yahya's works, translated into 60 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 45,000 pages with 30,000 illustrations.

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

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

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, Spain to Brazil, Malaysia to Italy, France to Bulgaria and Russia. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Chinese, Swahili, Hausa, Dhivehi (spoken in Mauritius), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

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

these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

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

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

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

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

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

All translations from the Koran are from "The Noble Qur'an: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English" by Hajj Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley, published by Bookwork, Norwich, UK. 1420 CE/1999 AH

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 150 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 (deen). It is imperative that this important service be rendered to everyone. Some of our readers may find the opportunity 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 Koranic 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.

FOREWORD

What is explained in this book is an important truth, which has surprised many and changed their perspectives on life. This truth can be summarized as follows: **"We cannot have direct experience of any of the events and objects that we encounter in real life—buildings, people, cities, cars, places—in fact, any of the things we see, hold, touch, smell, taste and hear. We only confront visions and feelings formed in our brains"**.

There is matter outside, yet we may never know the actual of the matter. We assume with the inculcation we have been given that these are invariable in a world outside our brains and hence that we see and feel the actual of them. **However, in reality we never see real existing materials and we never touch real materials.** In brief while assuming all through our lives that we deal with the matter outside, in reality we know the copy and image of everything.

This is not a philosophical speculation. It is an empirical fact that has been proven by modern science. Today, any scientist who is a specialist in medicine, biology, neurology or any other field related to brain research would say, when asked how and where we see the world, that **we see the whole world in the vision center located in our brains.**

This fact has been scientifically proven in the twentieth century, and although it may seem surprising, it necessarily implies answers to two questions; **"Since throughout our lives we confront the images formed in our brains, then who is it that creates these visions? And who is it that sees these visions in our brains without having eyes and enjoys them, gets excited and happy?"** You will find the answers to these two important questions in this book.

The Secret Beyond Matter is Not Wahdatul Wujood

The topic called “The Real Essence of Matter” has been criticized by some people. Having misunderstood the essence of the subject, these people claim that what is explained as the secret beyond matter is identical to the teaching of Wahdatul Wujood. Let us state, before all else, that the author of this book is a believer strictly abiding by the doctrine of Ahlus Sunnah and does not defend the view of Wahdatul Wujood.

However, it should also be remembered that Wahdatul Wujood was defended by some leading Islamic scholars including Muhyiddin Ibn al-‘Arabi. It is true that numerous significant Islamic scholars who described the concept of Wahdatul Wujood in the past did so by considering some subjects found in these books. Still, what is explained in these books is not the same as Wahdatul Wujood.

Some of those who defended the view of Wahdatul Wujood were engrossed by some erroneous opinions and made some claims contrary to the Qur’an and the doctrine of Ahlus Sunnah. They, for example, completely rejected the creation of God. When the subject of the secret beyond matter is told, however, there is definitely no such claim. This section explains that all beings are created by God, and that the originals of these beings are seen by Him whereas people merely see the images of these beings formed in their brains.

Mountains, plains, flowers, people, seas—briefly everything we see and everything that God informs us in the Qur’an that exists and that He created out of nothing is created and does indeed exist. However, people cannot see, feel or hear the real nature of these beings through their sense organs. What they see and feel are only the copies that appear in their brains. This is a scientific fact taught at all schools primarily in medicine. The same applies to the article you are reading now; you can not see nor touch the real nature of it. The light coming from the original article is converted by some cells in your eyes into electrical signals, which are then conveyed to the sight center in the back of your brain. This is where the view of this article is created. In other words, you are not reading an article which is before your eyes through your eyes; in fact, this article is created in the sight center in the back of your brain. The article you are reading right now is a “copy of the article” within your brain. The original article is seen by God.

In conclusion, the fact that the matter is an illusion formed in our brains does not “reject” the matter, but provides us information about the real nature of the matter: that no person can have connection with its original.

THERE IS MATTER OUTSIDE OF US, BUT WE CANNOT REACH IT

... [S]aying that matter is an illusion does not mean it does not exist. Quiet the contrary: whether we perceive the physical world or not, it does exist. But we see it as a copy in our brain or, in other words, as an interpretation of our senses. For us, therefore, the physical world of matter is an illusion.

The matter outside is seen not just by us, but by other beings too. The angels God delegated to be watchers witness this world as well:

And the two recording angels are recording, sitting on the right and on the left. He does not utter a single word, without a watcher by him, pen in hand! (Surah Qaf: 17-18)

Most importantly, God sees everything. He created this world with all its details and sees it in all its states. As He informs us in the Qur'an:

... Heed God and know that God sees what you do. (Surat al-Baqara: 233)

Say: "God is a sufficient witness between me and you. He is certainly aware of and sees His servants." (Surat al-Isra': 96)

It must not be forgotten that God keeps the records of everything in the book called Lawh Mahfuz (Preserved Tablet). Even if we don't see all things, they are in the Lawh Mahfuz. God reveals that He keeps everything's record in the "Mother of the Book" called Lawh Mahfuz with the following verses:

It is in the Source Book with Us, high-exalted, full of wisdom. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 4)

... We possess an all-preserving Book. (Surah Qaf: 4)

Certainly there is no hidden thing in either heaven or Earth which is not in a Clear Book. (Surat an-Naml: 75)

INTRODUCTION

When you look out of the window, you think that you see an image with your eyes, as this is the way that you have been taught to think. However, in reality this is not how it works, because you do not see the world with your eyes. You see the image created in your brains. This is not a prediction, nor a philosophical speculation, but the scientific truth.

This concept can be better understood when we realize how the visual system operates. The eye is responsible for transforming light into an electric signal by means of the cells in the retina. This electrical signal reaches the sight center in the brain. The signals create the vision you see when you look out of the window. In other words, the sights you see are created in your brain. You see the image in your brain, not the view outside the window. For example, in the picture shown on the right hand side, the light reaches the eyes of the person from outside. This light passes to the small sight center located at the back of the brain after the cells in the eyes transform it into electrical signals. It is these electrical signals which form the picture in the brain. In reality when we open the brain, we wouldn't be able to see any image. However, some kind of consciousness in the mind receives electrical signals in the form of an image. The brain perceives electrical signals in the form of an image, yet it has no eye, eye cells, or retina. So, to whom does the consciousness in the brain belong?

The same question can be asked about the book you are reading now. The light coming to your eyes is converted into electrical signals and reaches your brain, where the view of the book is created. In other words, the book you are reading right now is not outside you, it is actually inside you, in the sight center in the back of your brain. Since you feel the hardness of the book with your hands, you might think that the book is outside you. However, this feeling of hardness also originates in the brain. The nerves on your fingertips transmit electrical information to the touch center in your brain. And when you touch the book, you feel the hardness and intensity of it, the slipperiness of the pages, the texture of the cover and the sharpness of the edge of the pages, all within your brain.

In reality however, **you can never touch the real nature of the book.** Even though you think that you're touching the book, it is your brain that perceives the tactile sensations. This book exists as a material thing outside of your brain, but you merely confront the image of the book within your brain. However, you should not be tricked by the fact that a writer wrote this book, the pages were designed by a computer and printed by a publisher. The things that will be explained in due course will show you that you will never know the originals of the people, computers and the publishers in every stages of the production of this book.

We can therefore conclude that everything we see, touch and hear merely exists in our brains. This is a scientific truth, proven with scientific evidence. The significant point is the answer to the question asked above, which this scientific truth has led us to ask; **who is it that has no eye, but watches sights through a window in our brains and enjoys or becomes anxious from these sights?** This will be explained in the following pages.

IT IS A SCIENTIFIC FACT THAT WE ONLY CONFRONT A COPY OF THE WORLD IN OUR BRAINS

We acknowledge that all the individual features of the world are experienced through our sense organs. The information that reaches us through those organs is converted into electrical signals, and the individual parts of our brain analyze and process these signals. After this interpreting process takes place inside our brain, we will, for example, see a book, taste a strawberry, smell a flower, feel the texture of a silk fabric or hear leaves shaking in the wind.

We have been taught that we are touching the cloth outside of our body, reading a book that is 30 cm (1 ft) away from us, smelling the trees that are far away from us, or hearing the shaking of the leaves that are far above us. However, this is all in our imagination. All of these things are happening within our brains.

At this point we encounter another surprising fact; that there are, in fact, no colors, voices or visions within our brain. All that can be found in our brains are electrical signals. This is not a philosophical speculation. This is simply a scientific description of the functions of our perceptions. In her book *Mapping The Mind*, Rita Carter explains the way we perceive the world as follows:

Each one [of the sense organs] is intricately adapted to deal with its own type of stimulus: molecules, waves or vibrations. But the answer does not lie here, because despite their wonderful variety, each organ does essentially the same job: it translates its particular type of stimulus into electrical pulses. **A pulse is a pulse is a pulse. It is not the colour red, or the first notes of Beethoven's Fifth—it is a bit of electrical energy.** Indeed, rather than discriminating one type of sensory input from another, the sense organs actually make them more alike.

All sensory stimuli, then enter the brain in more or less undifferentiated form as a stream of electrical pulses created by neurons firing, domino-fashion, along a certain route. This is all that happens. **There is no reverse transformer that at some stage turns this electrical activity back into light waves or molecules.** What makes one stream into vision and another into smell depends, rather, on which neurons are stimulated.¹

In other words, all of our feelings and perceptions about the world (smells, visions, tastes etc.) are comprised of the same material, that is, electrical signals. Moreover, our brain is what makes these signals meaningful for us, and interprets these signals as senses of smell, taste, vision, sound or touch. It is a stunning fact that the brain, which is made of wet meat, can know which electrical signal should be interpreted as smell and

which one as vision, and can convert the same material into different senses and feelings.

Let us now consider our sense organs, and how each one perceives the world.

It's Not Our Eyes That See, It Is Our Brain

Because of the indoctrination that we receive throughout our lives, we imagine that we see the whole world with our eyes. Eventually, we usually conclude that our eyes are the windows that open up to the world. However, science shows us that **we do not see through our eyes**. The millions of nerve cells inside the eyes are responsible for sending a message to the brain, as if down a cable, in order to make "seeing" happen. If we analyze the information we learned in high school, it becomes easier for us to understand the reality of vision.

The light reflecting off an object passes through the lens of the eye and causes an upside-down image on the retina at the back of the eyeball. After some chemical operations carried out by retinal rods and cones, this vision becomes an electrical impulse. This impulse is then sent through connections in the nervous system to the back of the brain. The brain converts this flow into a meaningful, three-dimensional vision.

For example, when you watch children playing in a park, you are not seeing the children and the park with your eyes, because the image of this view forms not before your eyes, but at the back of your brain.

Even though we have given a simple explanation, in reality the physiology of vision is an extraordinary operation. Without fail, light is converted into electrical signals, and, subsequently, these electrical signals reveal a colorful, shining, three-dimensional world. R. L. Gregory, in his book *Eye and Brain: The Psychology of Seeing*, acknowledges this significant fact, and explains this incredible structure:

We are given tiny distorted upside-down images in the eyes, and we see separate solid objects in surrounding space. From the patterns of stimulation on the retinas we perceive the world of objects, and this is nothing short of a miracle.²

All of these facts lead to the same conclusion. Throughout our lives, we always assume that the world exists outside of us. However, **the world is within us**. Although we believe that the world lies outside us, it is in the smallest part of our brain. For example, the CEO of a company might consider that he has direct contact with the external existence of the company building, his car in the parking lot, his house by the beach, his yacht, and all the people who work for him, his lawyers, his family, and his friends. However, he merely confronts images of all of these things formed in his skull, in a tiny part of his brain. He never knows the actual of the matter in the outside world.

He is unaware of this fact and, even if he knew, would not bother to think about it. If he stood proudly next to his latest-model luxury car, and the wind blew a piece of dust or

a small object into his eye, he might gently scratch his itching, open eye and notice that the "material things" he saw moved upside down or to the sides. He might then realize that material things seen in the environment are not stable.

What this demonstrates is that **every person throughout his or her life witnesses everything inside their brain and cannot reach the specific material objects that supposedly cause their experiences. The images we see are copies in our brains of the objects that exist outside of us. We can never know the originals of these copies.**

Although German psychiatry professor Hoimar Von Ditfurth is a materialist, he acknowledges this fact about scientific reality:

No matter how we put the argument, the result doesn't change. What stands before us in full shape and **what our eyes view is not the "world". It is only its image, a resemblance, a projection whose association with the original is open to discussion.**³

For example, when you take a look at the room in which you are sitting, what you see is not the room outside of you, but a copy of the room that exists in your brain. You will never be able to see the original room with your sense organs.

How can a bright and colorful image appear in your dark brain?

There is another point that should not be neglected; light cannot pass through the skull. The physical area in which the brain is located is completely dark, and light cannot possibly penetrate it. **However, incredible as it may seem, it is possible to observe a bright and colorful world in this total darkness.** Colorful natural beauty, bright sights, all the tones of the color green, the colors of fruits, the designs of flowers, the brightness of the sun, people walking on a busy road, fast cars in traffic, clothes in a shopping mall—are all created in the dark brain.

Imagine a barbecue burning in front of you. You can sit and watch the fire for a long time, but throughout this entire time, your brain never deals with the original of light, brightness or heat from the fire. Even when you feel its heat and see its light, the inside of your brain remains dark and maintains a constant temperature. It is a profound mystery that, in the darkness, the electrical signals turn into colorful, bright visions. Anyone who thinks deeply will be amazed by this wondrous occurrence.

Light is also composed in our brain

While discussing what science has discovered about vision, we mentioned that the light we receive from the outside gives rise to some movements of the eye cells, and these movements form a pattern from which our visual experience emerges. However, there is another point that we need to make: **Light, as we perceive it, does not reside outside of our brain. The light we know and understand is also formed within our brain.** What we call light in the outside world, which is supposedly outside our brains, consists of electromagnetic waves and particles of energy called photons. When these electromagnetic waves or photons reach the retina, light, as we experience it, begins to come into existence. This is the way light is described in physical terms:

The term "light" is used for electromagnetic waves and photons. The same term is used in physiology, as the feeling experienced by a person when electromagnetic waves and photons strike the retina of the eye. In both objective and subjective terms, "light" is a form of energy coming into existence in the eye of a person, which a person becomes aware of through the retina by the effects of vision.⁴

Consequently, light comes into existence as a result of the effects that some electromagnetic waves and particles cause in us. In other words, there is no light outside our bodies which creates the light we see in our brains. There is only energy. And when this energy reaches us we see a colorful, bright, and light-filled world.

Colors also originate in our brains

Starting from the time, we are born, we deal with a colorful environment and see a colorful world. However, there isn't one single color in the universe. Colors are formed in our brains. Outside there are only electromagnetic waves with different amplitudes and

frequencies. What reaches our brains is the energy from those waves. We call this "light", although this is not the light we know as bright and shiny. It is merely energy. When our brains interpret this energy by measuring the different frequencies of waves, we see "colors". In reality, the sea is not blue, the grass is not green, the soil is not brown and fruits are not colorful. They appear as they do because of the way we perceive them in our brains. Daniel C. Dennett, who is known for his books about the brain and consciousness, summarizes this universally accepted fact:

The common wisdom is that modern science has removed the color from the physical world, replacing it with colorless electromagnetic radiation of various wavelengths.⁵

In *The Amazing Brain*, R. Ornstein and R. F. Thompson have stated the way colors are formed as follows.

'Color' as such does not exist in the world; it exists only in the eye and brain of the beholder. Objects reflect many different wavelengths of light, but these light waves themselves have no color.⁶

In order to understand why this is so, we must analyze how we see colors. The light from the sun reaches an object, and every object reflects the light in waves of different frequencies. This light of varying frequency reaches the eye. (Remember that the term "light" used here actually refers to the electromagnetic waves and photons, not the light which is formed in our brains.) The perception of color starts in the cone cells of the retina. In the retina, there are three groups of cone cells, each of which reacts to different frequencies of light. The first group is sensitive to red light, the second is sensitive to blue light, and the third is sensitive to green light. With the different levels of stimulations of these cone cells, millions of different colors are formed. However, the light reaching the cone cells cannot form colors by itself. As Jeremy Nathans of John Hopkins Medical University explains, the cells in the eye do not form the colors:

All that a single cone can do is capture light and tell you something about its intensity. It tells you nothing about color.⁷

The cone cells translate the information they get about colors to electrical signals thanks to their pigments. The nerve cells connected with these cells transmit these electrical signals to a special area in the brain. The place where we see a world full of color throughout our lives is this special area in the brain.

This demonstrates that there are no colors or light beyond our brains. There is only energy which moves in the form of electromagnetic waves and particles. Both color and light exist in our brains. We do not actually see a red rose as red simply because it is red. Our brain's interpretation of the energy that reaches our eye leads us to perceive that the rose is red.

Color blindness is proof that colors are formed in our brains. A small injury in the retina can lead to color blindness. A person affected by color blindness is unable to differentiate between red and green colors. Whether an external object has colors or not

is of no importance, because the reason why we see objects colorful is not their being colorful. This leads us to the conclusion that all of the qualities that we believe belong to the object are not in the outside world, but in our brains. However, since we will never be able to go beyond our perceptions and reach the outside world, we will never be able to know the originals of materials and colors. The famous philosopher, Berkeley, acknowledges this fact with the following words:

If the same things can be red and hot for some and the contrary for others, this means that we are under the influence of misconceptions...⁸

We Hear All Types Of Sound In Our Brains

The hearing process also operates in a similar manner to the visual process. In other words, we hear sounds in our brains in the same way that we see the view of the outside world in our brains. The ear captures the sounds around us and delivers them to the middle ear. The middle ear amplifies the sound vibrations and delivers them to the inner ear. The inner ear transforms these sound vibrations into electric signals, on the basis of their frequency and intensity, and then transmits them to the brain. These messages in the brain are then sent to the hearing center where the sounds are interpreted. Therefore, the hearing process takes place in the hearing center in essentially the same way that the seeing process takes place in the seeing center.

Therefore, actual sounds do not exist outside our brains, even though there are physical vibrations we call sound waves. These sound waves are not transformed into sounds outside or inside our ears, but rather inside our brains. As the visual process is not performed by our eyes, neither do our ears perform the hearing process. For example, when you are having a chat with a friend, you observe the sight of your friend in your brain, and hear his or her voice in your brain. As the view in your brain is formed, you will have a deep feeling of three dimensions, and your friend's voice is also heard with a similar feeling of depth. For example, you could see your friend as being a long way from you, or sitting behind you; accordingly you feel his voice as if it is coming from him, from near you or from your back. However, your friend's voice is not far away or behind you. It is in your brain.

The extraordinariness about the real nature of the sound you hear is not limited to this. The brain is actually both lightproof and soundproof. Sound never in fact reaches the brain. Therefore, despite the volume of the sounds you hear, the interior of your brain is actually very quiet. However, you hear noise, such as voices, very clearly in your brain. They are so clear that a healthy person hears them without difficulties or distortions. You hear the symphony of an orchestra in your soundproof brain; you can hear all the sounds in a wide range of frequencies and decibel from the sounds of the leaves to the sounds of jet planes. When you go to a concert of your favorite singer, the deep and loud noise that fills the whole stadium is formed in the deep silence of your

brain. When you sing by yourself loudly you hear the sound in your brain. However, if you were able to record the sound in your brain with a tape recorder at that moment, you would hear only silence. This is an extraordinary fact. The electrical signals that reach the brain are heard in your brain as sound, for example the sound of a concert in a stadium filled with people.

All Smells Occur In The Brain

If someone is asked how he senses the smells around him, he would probably say "with my nose". However, this answer is not the right one, even though some would instantly conclude that it was the truth. Gordon Shepherd, a professor of neurology from Yale University, explains why this is incorrect; *"We think that we smell with our noses, [but] this is a little like saying that we hear with our ear lobes."*⁹

Our sense of smell works in a similar mechanism to our other sense organs. In fact, the only function of the nose is its ability to act as an intake channel for smell molecules. Volatile molecules such as vanilla, or the scent of a rose, come to receptors located on hairs in a part of the nose called the epithelium and interact with them. The result of the interaction of the smell molecules with the epithelium reaches the brain as an electric signal. These electric signals are then perceived as a scent by the brain. Thus, all smells which we interpret as good or bad are merely perceptions generated in the brain after the interaction with volatile molecules has been transduced into electric signals. The fragrance of perfume, of a flower, of a food which you like, of the sea—in short all smells you may or may not like—are perceived in the brain. However, the smell molecules never actually reach the brain. **In our sense of smell, it is only electrical signals which reach the brain, as happens with sound and sight.**

Consequently, a smell does not travel in any particular direction, because all smells are perceived by the smell center in the brain. For example, the smell of a cake does not come from the oven, in the same way that the smell of the dish does not come from the kitchen. Likewise, the smell of honeysuckle does not come from the garden and the smell of the sea, some distance away from you, does not come from the sea. All of these smells are sensed at one point, in a related area of the brain. There is no concept of right or left, front or back, outside of this sense center. Although each of the senses seem to occur with different effects, and may appear to be coming from different directions, they all in fact occur within the brain. The smells which occur in the smell center of the brain are assumed to be the smells of outside materials. However, the image of the rose is generated in the sight center and the smell of a rose is generated in the smell center. If there is a genuine smell outside, you can never reach the original of it.

George Berkeley, a philosopher who has realized the importance of this truth, says *"At the beginning, it was believed that colors, odors, etc., 'really exist,' but subsequently such views were renounced, and it was seen that they only exist in dependence on our sensations."*

It may be instructive to consider dreams in order to understand that smell is only a sensation. When people dream, in the same way that all images are seen very realistically, smells are also perceived as if they were real. For example, a person who goes to a restaurant in his dream may choose his dinner amid the smells of the foods that are on the menu; someone who dreams of going on a trip to the sea side senses the distinctive smell of the sea, and someone who dreams of a daisy garden would experience, in his dream, the pleasure of the magnificent scents. Likewise, someone who dreams of going to a perfume shop and choosing a perfume would be able to distinguish between the smells of the perfumes, one by one. Everything in the dream is so realistic that when the person wakes up, he or she might be surprised by this situation.

In fact, it is not necessary to examine dreams to understand the subject. It is even sufficient to imagine one of the depictions that were mentioned, such as the example of the daisy. If you concentrate on the daisy, you can feel as if you are aware of its scent, even though it isn't there. The scent is now occurring in the brain. If you want to visualize your mother in your mind, you can see her in your mind, even though she isn't there in front of you; in the same way you can imagine the smell of the lily, even though it isn't there.

Michael Posner, a psychologist and Marcus Raichle, a neurologist from Washington University comment on the issue of how sight and other senses occur, even in the absence of an external stimulus:

Open your eyes, and a scene fills your view effortlessly; close your eyes and think of that scene, and you can summon an image of it, certainly not as vivid, solid, or complete as a scene you see with your eyes, but still one that captures the scene's essential characteristics. In both cases, an image of the scene is formed in the mind. The image formed from actual visual experiences is called a "percept" to distinguish it from an imagined image. The percept is formed as the result of light hitting the retina and sending signals that are further processed in the brain. **But how are we able to create an image when no light is hitting the retina to send such signals?**¹⁰

There is no need for an external source to form an image in your mind. This same situation holds true for the sense of smell. In the same way as you are aware of a smell which does not really exist in your dreams or imagination, you cannot know about those objects, which you smell in real life, that exist outside you. You can never deal with the original objects.

All Tastes Occur In The Brain

The sense of taste can be explained in a manner similar to those of the other sense organs. Tasting is caused by little buds in the tongue and throat. The tongue can detect four different tastes, bitter, sour, sweet and salty. Taste buds, after a chain of processes, transform sensory information into electrical signals and then transfer them to the brain. Subsequently, those signals are perceived by the brain as tastes. The taste that you

experience when you eat a cake, yogurt, a lemon or a fruit is, in reality, a process that interprets electrical signals in the brain.

An image of a cake will be linked with the taste of the sugar, all of which occurs in the brain and everything sensed is related to the cake which you like so much. The taste that you are conscious of after you have eaten your cake, with a full appetite, is nothing other than an effect generated in your brain caused by electrical signals. You are only aware of what your brain interprets from the external stimuli. You can never reach the original object; for example you cannot see, smell or taste the actual chocolate itself. If the taste nerves in your brain were cut off, it would be impossible for the taste of anything you eat to reach your brain, and you would entirely lose your sense of taste. The fact that the tastes of which you are aware seem extraordinarily real should certainly not deceive you. This is the scientific explanation of the matter.

The Sense Of Touch Also Occurs In The Brain

The sense of touch is one of the factors which prevents people from being convinced of the aforementioned truth that the senses of sight, hearing and taste occur within the brain. For example, if you told someone that he sees a book within his brain, he would, if he didn't think carefully, reply "I can't be seeing the book in my brain—look, I'm touching it with my hand". Or, if we said "we cannot know the original of this book that exists as a material object outside", again the same superficially minded person might answer "no, look, I'm holding it with my hand and I feel the hardness of it - so I know what it actually is like".

However, there is a fact that such people cannot understand, or perhaps just ignore. **The sense of touch also occurs in the brain as much as do all the other senses. That is to say, when you touch a material object, you sense whether it is hard, soft, wet, sticky or silky in the brain.** The effects that come from your fingertips are transmitted to the brain as an electrical signal and these signals are perceived in the brain as the sense of touch. For instance, if you touch a rough surface, you can never know whether the surface is, in reality, indeed a rough surface, or how a rough surface actually feels. That is because you can never touch the original of a rough surface. The knowledge that you have about touching a surface is your brain's interpretation of certain stimuli.

A person chatting to a close friend while drinking a cup of tea immediately lets go of the cup when he burns his hand on the hot cup. However, in reality, that person feels the heat of the cup in his mind, not in his hand. The same person visualizes the image of the cup of tea in his mind, and senses the smell and taste of it in his mind. However, this man does not realize that he actually has contact only with the copy of the tea within his brain. He assumes that he has direct contact with the original glass, and talks to his friend, whose image occurs again within his brain. In fact, this is an extraordinary case.

The assumption that he is touching the original glass and drinking the original tea, which appears to be justified by his impression of the hardness and warmth of the cup and the taste and smell of the tea, shows the astonishing clarity and perfection of the senses which exist within one's brain. This important truth, which needs careful consideration, is expressed by twentieth century philosopher Bertrand Russell:

As to the sense of touch when we press the table with our fingers, that is an electric disturbance on the electrons and protons of our fingertips, produced, according to modern physics, by the proximity of the electrons and protons in the table. If the same disturbance in our finger-tips arose in any other way, we should have the sensations, in spite of there being no table.¹¹

The point that Russell makes here is extremely important. In fact, if our fingertips are given a stimulus in a different manner, we can sense entirely different feelings. However, as it will be explained in detail in due course, today this can be done by mechanical simulators. With the help of a special glove, a person can feel the sensation of stroking a cat, shaking hands with someone, washing his hands, or touching a hard material, even though none of these things may be present. In reality, of course, none of these sensations represent occurrences in the real world. This is further evidence that all the sensations felt by a human being are formed within the mind.

We Can Never Reach The Original Of The World That Occurs Within Our Brain

As has been demonstrated here, everything that we live through, see, hear and feel in our life occurs within the brain. For example, someone who looks out of the window while sitting on an armchair feels the hardness of the armchair and the slipperiness of the fabric in his brain. The smell of the coffee coming from the kitchen occurs in the mind, not in the kitchen some distance away. The view of the sea, birds and trees he sees from the window are all images formed in the brain. The friend who is serving the coffee, and the taste of the coffee also exist in the brain. In short, someone sitting in his living room and looking out of the window is in reality looking at his living room, and the view seen from the window on a screen in his brain. **What a human being would refer to as "my life" is a collection of all perceptions being put together in a meaningful way and watched from a screen in the brain, and one can never come out of one's brain.**

We can never know the true nature of the original of the material world outside the brain. We cannot know, whether or not the original, for example the green of a leaf, is as we perceive it. Likewise, we can never find out if a dessert is really sweet or whether that is just how our brain perceives it to be. Imagine, for example, a landscape you have seen before. That landscape is not in front of you, but you are seeing it in your brain. The science writer Rita Carter says:

Whenever we recall a given object, face or scene, we do not get an exact reproduction but rather an interpretation, a newly reconstructed version of the original... Although they may appear to be good replicas, they are often inaccurate or incomplete. (Rita Carter, *Mapping the Mind*, University of California Press, London, 1999, p. 135)

The same thing applies to the time when you look at a landscape. There is in fact no difference between your imagining a landscape from a distance and seeing it close up. Therefore, when you look at a view you are actually seeing a version constructed in the brain, not the original.

Anyone who considers this will clearly see the truth. One such person, George Berkeley, expresses this truth in his work *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*:

By sight I have the ideas of light and colours, with their several degrees and variations. By touch I perceive hard and soft, heat and cold, motion and resistance... Smelling furnishes me with odours; the palate with tastes; and hearing conveys sounds... And as several of these are observed to accompany each other, they come to be marked by one name, and so to be reputed as one thing. Thus, for example, a certain colour, taste, smell, figure and consistence having been observed to go together, are accounted one distinct thing, signified by the name apple; other collections of ideas constitute a stone, a tree, a book, and the like sensible things...¹²

The truth Berkeley expresses in these words is this: We define an object by interpreting different sensations that are experienced in the brain. As is the case in this example, the taste and smell of an apple, its hardness and roundness and those sensations related with the other qualities of it are perceived as a whole by our brain and we perceive this whole as the apple. However, we can never actually deal with the original of the apple, only our perception of it. What we can see, smell, taste, touch or hear are only the copies within the brain.

When we consider all that has been discussed up to this point, the truth will be revealed in all clarity. For example:

- If we can see a street full of colorful lights and all the colors with their own brilliant shadings inside the brain where there is no actual light, then we are seeing copies of the notice boards, lights, streetlights and the headlamps of cars which are produced from the electric signals within the brain.

- Since no sound can enter the brain, we can never hear the original of the voices of loved ones. We hear only copies.

- We cannot feel the cool of the sea, the warmth of the sun – we only feel the copies of them in our brains.

- In the same way, nobody has been able to taste the original of mint. The taste someone would sense as mint is only a perception which occurs in the brain. This is because the person cannot touch the original of the mint, see the original of the mint or smell or taste the original of the mint.

In conclusion, throughout our lives we live with copy-perceptions which are shown to us. However, these copies are so realistic that we never realize that they are copies. For example, lift your head and have a look around the room. You see that you are in a room full of furniture. When you touch the arms of the armchair in which you are sitting, you feel the hardness of it as if you are really touching the original of it. The reality of these images shown to you, and the excellent artistry in the creation of these images are sufficient to convince you and billions of other people that the images are "the original of the external matter". Even though most people have read that every sensation relating to the world is formed in their brains, since it is taught in high school biology classes, the images are so convincing that they have difficulty believing that they are actually dealing with only copies in their brain. The reason for this is that each image is created very realistically and perfected to an art.

Nobody has been able to move out of the perceptions that exist in the brain. Everybody lives in the cell that is in the brain, and no one can experience anything except that which is shown by his perceptions. Consequently, one can never know what happens outside of his perceptions. Thus to say "I know the original of matter" would in fact be an unjustified presupposition, because there is nothing that could be held up as evidence. The observer deals with the images formed in his or her brain. For instance, a person who wanders in a garden full of colorful flowers can in fact never see the actual of the garden, but its copy in his brain. Yet, this garden is so realistic that every person gets the same delight from the garden formed in his brain as if it's the actual one. Even so that billions of people have surmised seeing the original of all they have seen just like that garden.

We should also emphasize that scientific or technological development cannot change anything, as every scientific discovery or technological invention occurs in the minds of people, and consequently is of no help to people in reaching the outside world.

The Sense Of Distance Is Also A Perception That Occurs In The Brain

Imagine a crowd on a street, with shops, buildings, cars, horns honking... When you look at this picture it appears to be real. That is why most people cannot understand that the picture they see is produced in their brain, and mistakenly suppose that they see the original of all of it. The picture has been created so perfectly that it is impossible to understand that the image that they perceive as real is not the original of the outside world, but only a copied image which exists in the mind.

The elements which make a picture so convincing and impressive are distance, depth, color, shade and light. These materials are used with such perfection that they become a three-dimensional, colorful and vivid image inside the brain. When an infinite amount of detail is added to the picture a whole new world emerges that, without realization, we assume is real for all life, although we only interpret it in our mind.

Imagine now that you are driving a car. The steering wheel is at arms length from you and there is a set of traffic lights about 100 m (or 300 ft) in front of you. The car in front of you is about 10 m (30 ft) away, while there are mountains on the horizon, which, according to your estimation, would be many kilometers (miles) away in the distance. However, all of these estimations are wrong. Neither the car nor the mountains are as far away as you would assume. In fact, the entire picture, as on a movie reel, exists on a two dimensional frame, on only one surface within the brain. The images reflected to the eye are two-dimensional, like those on a TV screen. In such circumstances, how can a perception of depth and distance occur?

What is referred to as a sense of distance is a way of seeing three-dimensionally. The elements causing the effects of distance and depth in images are perspective, shade and motion. The form of perception called spatial perception by optical science is provided by highly complicated systems. This system can be explained simply in this way: The sight which reaches the eye is two dimensional. That is to say, it has measures of height and width. The senses of depth and distance result from the fact that two eyes see two different images at the same time. The image that reaches each of our eyes differs from the other in terms of the angle and light. The brain assembles these two different images to form our sense of depth and distance.

We can perform an experiment to understand this better. First, extend your right arm in front of you and hold up your index finger. Now focus on this finger while closing your left eye first and then your right eye. Because two different visions come to each eye, you will see the finger move slightly to one side. Now open both of your eyes and while continuing to focus on your right index finger, move your left index finger as close to your eye as you can. You will notice that the closest finger will have created two images. This is because now a different depth has formed in the closer finger from that in the farther finger. If you open and close your eyes one by one, you will see that the finger located nearer your eye will appear to move more than the finger which is further away. This is due to the increasing difference in the views appearing in each eye.

While a three dimensional film is being made, this technique is used; Images shot from two different angles are placed on the same screen. The audience wears special glasses which have a color filter and polarize the light. The filters in the glasses filter out one of the two views, and the brain transforms these into one single three-dimensional image.

The perception of depth in a retina with two dimensions is very similar to the technique used by artists to give the observer a feeling of depth in a picture with two dimensions. There are certain factors resulting in the feeling of depth, such as the placement of objects on top of one another, the atmosphere perspective, changes in texture, linear perspective, the dimensions, the height and the movement. For example the change of texture is very important in perceiving depth. For example, the ground that we walk on in a farm full of flowers is actually a tissue. The tissues closer to us are

more detailed while the tissues further from us seem pale and harder to discern. Therefore, it is easier to estimate the distance of objects located on a tissue. Besides this, effects of shadow and light also contribute to the perception of a three-dimensional view.

The reason we admire a picture made by a successful artist is the sense of depth and reality which are given to the picture, which is created by using the elements of shade and perspective.

Perspective results from the fact that distant objects appear smaller in proportion to those which are nearer, depending on the person who is looking at it. For example, when we look at a view, distant trees appear small, while those nearby appear large. Likewise, in a picture with a mountain in the background, the mountain is drawn smaller than the person in the foreground. In linear perspective, artists use parallel lines. For example, train tracks produce an effect of distance and depth by meeting with the horizon.

The method that painters use in their paintings is also valid for the image that occurs in the brain. Depth, light and shade are produced by the same method in two dimensional space in the brain. The greater the amount of detail in the picture, the more realistic it appears and the more it deceives our senses. We behave as if there was real depth and distance, as if there was a third dimension. However, all pictures are like a film square on a flat surface. The visual cortex in the brain is extremely small! The distances, the images such as those of distant houses, stars in the sky, the moon, the sun, airplanes flying in the air, and birds – they are all crammed into this small space. That is to say, there is technically no distance between a glass that you can hold by extending your hand and an airplane that, if you looked up, you would understand to be thousands of kilometers above; all of them are on the single surface, that is, in the sense center of the brain.

For example, a disappearing ship on the horizon is not actually miles away from you. The ship is in your brain. The window sill that you are looking at, a poplar tree in front of the window, the road in front of your house, the sea and the ship on the sea are all in the sight center of the brain, on a two dimensional surface. Just like a painter can represent the feeling of distance on a two dimensional canvas by using the proportions of size, elements of color, shade and light and perspective, so can the sense of distance also occur in the brain. In conclusion, the fact that we sense objects to be far away or nearby should not fool us, as distance is a sensation like all the others.

Are You In The Room, Or Is The Room Inside You?

One of the reasons that prevent people from understanding that the images seen are actually sensed in the brain, is that people see their body in the image. They come to this wrong conclusion that "since I am in this room, the room does not occur in my brain." Their mistake is to forget that they have direct contact with only an image of their

body too. Just like everything we see around us merely consists of copy images, so does our body also exist as a copy image in the brain. For example, while sitting on an armchair, you can see the rest of your body below your neck. This image too is produced by the same perceptual system. When you put your hand on your leg, you sense a kinesthetic feeling in the brain. This means that you see your body in the brain, and you feel yourself touching your body in the brain.

If the body is an image in the brain, is the room inside of you or are you in the room? The obvious answer to this is "the room is inside of you". And you see the image of your body inside the room, which in turn is in the brain.

Let us explain this with an example. Let us suppose that you call a lift. When it comes, your neighbor, who lives upstairs from you, is in it. You get into the lift. In reality, are you in the lift or is it in you? The truth is: the lift with the images of the neighbor and your body all occurs in your brain.

In conclusion, we are not "inside" anything. Everything is inside us; everything occurs in the brain. The sun, the moon, stars or an airplane flying in the sky many miles away cannot change this truth. The sun and the moon, like the book that you hold are only copy images which occur in a very small sight center in the brain.

Artificially Produced Senses

Science writer, Rita Carter, states in her book, *Mapping The Mind*, that "there's no need for eyes to see" and describes at length an experiment carried out by scientists. In the experiment, blind patients were fitted with a device that transformed video pictures into vibrating pulses. A camera mounted next to the subjects' eyes spread the pulses over their backs so they had continuous sensory input from the visual world. The patients started to behave as if they could really see, after a while. For example, there was a zoom lens in one of the devices so as to move closer the image. When the zoom is operated without informing the patient beforehand, the patient had an urge to protect himself with two arms because the image on the subject's back expanded suddenly as though the world was looming in.¹⁵

As it is seen from this experiment, artificially produced senses can be enough to form sensations.

"The world of senses" that we experience in dreams

A person lies on his bed with closed eyes while dreaming. However, in spite of this, that person senses many things which he or she experiences in real life, and experiences them so realistically that the dreams are indistinguishable from the real life experience. Everyone who reads this book will often bear witness to this truth in their own dreams. For example, a person lying down alone on a bed in a calm and quiet atmosphere at night might, in his dream, see himself in danger in a very crowded place. He could experience the event as if it were real, fleeing from danger in desperation and hiding

behind a wall. Moreover, the images in his dreams are so realistic that he feels fear and panic as if he really was in danger. He has his heart in his mouth with every noise, is shaken with fear, his heart beats fast, he sweats and demonstrates the other physical affects that the human body undergoes in a dangerous situation. However, there is no external equivalent of the events in his dream. They exist only in his mind.

A person who falls from a high place in his dream feels it with all his body, even though he is lying in bed without moving. Alternatively, one might see oneself slipping into a puddle, getting soaked and feeling cold because of a cold wind. However, in such a case, there is neither a puddle, nor is there wind. Furthermore, despite sleeping in a very hot room, one experiences the wetness and the cold, as if one were awake.

Someone who believes he is dealing with the original of the material world in his dream can be very sure of himself. He can put his hand on his friend's shoulder when the friend tells him that "he is dealing with a copy image of matter; it isn't possible to deal with the original of the world", and then ask "Am I an image now? Don't you feel my hand on your shoulder? If so, how can you be a copy image? What makes you think in this way? Let's take a trip up the Bosphorus; we can have a chat about it and you'll explain to me why you believe this." The dream that he sees in his deep sleep is so clear that he turns on the engine with pleasure and accelerates slowly, almost jumping the car by pressing the pedal suddenly. While going on the road, trees and road lines seem solid because of the speed. In addition, he breathes clean Bosphorus air. But suppose he is woken up by his ringing alarm clock just when he's getting ready to tell his friend that what he's living at that moment isn't a dream. Wouldn't he object in the same manner regardless of whether he was asleep or awake?

When people wake up they understand that what they've seen until that moment is a dream. But for some reason they are not suspicious that the life that starts with a "waking" image (what they call "real life") can also be a dream. However, the way we perceive images in "real life" is exactly the same as the way we perceive our dreams. We see both of them in the mind. We cannot understand they are images until we are woken up. Only then do we say "what I have just seen was a dream". So, **how can we prove that what we see at any given moment is not a dream?** We could be assuming that the moment in which we are living is real just because we haven't yet woken up. It is possible that we will discover this fact when we are woken up from this "waking dream" which takes longer than dreams we see everyday. We do not have any evidence that proves otherwise.

Many Islamic scholars have also proclaimed that the life around us is only a dream, and that only when we are awakened from that dream with "a big awakening", will people be able to understand that they live in a dreamlike world. A great Islamic scholar, Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi, referred to as Sheikh Akbar (The greatest Sheikh) due to his superior knowledge, likens the world to our dreams by quoting a saying of the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace):

The Prophet Muhammad [may God bless him and grant him peace] said that "people are asleep and wake up when they die." This is to say that the objects seen in the world when alive are similar to those seen when asleep while dreaming, meaning that they exist in the imagination.¹⁶

In a verse of Koran, people are told to say on doomsday when they are resurrected from the dead:

They will say, "Alas for us! Who has raised us from our sleeping-place? This is what the All-Merciful promised us. The Messengers were telling the truth." (Surah Ya Sin: 52)

As the verse demonstrates, people wake up on doomsday as if waking from a dream. Like someone woken from the middle of a dream in deep sleep, such people will similarly ask who has woken them up. As the verse points out, the world around us is like a dream and everybody will be woken up from this dream, and will begin to see images of the afterlife, which is the real life.

Other examples of worlds that are produced superficially

Modern technology presents many important examples of how sensory experience can be simulated with a high degree of realism, without the help of any external world. In particular, the technology called "virtual reality", which has developed considerably in recent years, gives us some insight on the subject.

Simply put, virtual reality involves showing animated three-dimensional images generated on a computer so as to construct "a real world" with the help of some equipment. This technology, which is used in many different fields for different aims, is called "artificial reality" or "virtual world" or a "virtual atmosphere". The most important characteristic of virtual reality is that a person who uses a special device believes that what he sees is real, and moreover he is captivated by that image. For that reason, recently, the word "immersive" is also used to describe virtual reality, with "immersive" meaning to involve deeply. (*i.e. Immersive Virtual Reality*)

The tools used to create a virtual world are a helmet (which houses a screen that provides an image) and a pair of electronic gloves (which provide a feeling of touch). A device in the helmet checks the movements and angle of the head in order to provide an image on the screen which is consistent with the head's angle and position. Sometimes, stereo pictures are reflected on the walls and floor of a room-size cell. People who wander through the room can see themselves through stereo glasses in different places, such as at the side of a waterfall, on the summit of a mountain, or sunbathing on the deck of a ship in the middle of the sea. The helmets create 3D pictures with a realistic sense of depth and space. The pictures are provided in proportion to human sizes and the sense of touch is provided by other equipment, such as gloves. Thus, a person who uses this equipment can touch the objects that he sees in the virtual world and can pick them up and move them. The sounds one hears in such places are also convincing, coming from any direction with different depths and volumes. In some applications, the very same virtual atmosphere can be presented to a few people in very different places in the world. Three people from different countries (even different continents) can see themselves with the others getting on board a powerboat.

The system used in the devices that create the virtual world is essentially the same as the system used in our five senses. For example, with the effect of a mechanism inside a glove worn by the user, some signals are given to the fingertips and then transmitted to the brain. When the brain processes these signals, the user has the impression of touching a silk carpet or a vase with a serrated surface, with puffy prints on it, even though there is no silk carpet or vase around.

One of the important fields in which virtual reality is now being used is medicine. With a technique developed in Michigan University, doctoral candidates (in particular emergency service staff) complete a part of their training in an artificial operating room. In this application, images related to an operating room are reflected onto the floors and

walls of a room and the images of an operating table and a patient are reflected in the middle of the room. By putting on 3D glasses, doctoral candidates start to operate on this virtual patient.

These examples illustrate that a person can be placed in a realistic yet unreal world with the help of artificial stimuli. With current technology, an image can be produced which is an effective practice aide. There is no reason in principle that eventually this technology couldn't produce a reality which is indistinguishable from the real world. It is very interesting that some famous films made recently deal with the subject. For instance, in a Hollywood film called "*Matrix*", when the nervous system of two heroes of the film are connected to a computer while lying on a sofa, they can see themselves in completely different places. In one scene, they find themselves participating in eastern sports; in another, they are in completely different clothes walking in a very crowded street. When the hero, under the influence of his realistic experience, says that he does not believe that the pictures are created by a computer, the picture is frozen by the computer. The person then becomes convinced that the world which he believed to be real is indeed only an image.

In conclusion, it is possible in principle to create artificial images or, in other words, an artificial world with the help of artificial stimuli. So, we cannot claim that what we deal with in the "life image" that we are seeing all the time is necessarily "the original". Our senses could well be coming from a very different source.

The important truth indicated by hypnosis

One of the best examples of a world created with artificial stimuli is the technique of hypnosis. When a person is hypnotized, he experiences extremely convincing events which are indistinguishable from reality. The person under hypnosis sees pictures, people and various images, and hears, smells and tastes many things, none of which exist in the room. Meanwhile, because of the experience, he becomes happy, upset, excited, bored, worried or flustered. Moreover, the effect of the experience on the person under hypnosis can be watched from outside physically. In very deep hypnotic trances, certain kinds of symptoms can be observed in the hypnotized person, such as an increase in the pulse rate and blood pressure, redness of the skin, high temperature, and the removal of an existing pain or ache.¹⁷

In one hypnotic experiment, a hypnotic subject is told that he is in a hospital and that there is a dying patient on the tenth floor of the hospital. He has been hypnotized into believing that if he rushes to the patient with the right medicine, the patient will be rescued. The subject, under the influence of hypnosis, thinks he is rushing to the tenth floor. Meanwhile he gets out of breath and can't control it, due to a feeling of being extremely tired. Then the subject is told that he is on the top floor, and succeeded in fetching the medicine, and that he can lie on a comfortable bed. The subject then starts

to relax.¹⁸ Although the subject experiences the locations and the atmospheres as if they were completely real, the places, people or events as told to him do not exist.

In another experiment, a hypnotic subject in a normal room is told that he is in a Turkish bath and that the bath is very hot. As a result, he starts to sweat.¹⁹

This draws our attention to a very important point. In order for a person to sweat, some conditions must exist. The reality that we come across in this instance of hypnosis is that the hypnotized person has sweated, even though there is no physical factor which would cause him to sweat. This example shows clearly that there is no physical necessity of direct experience of the original of places or atmosphere to feel such an atmosphere or place. Similar effects can be created through artificial stimulants or hypnotic suggestion.

The British hypnotherapy specialist, Terence Watts, a member of many organizations including The National Hypnotherapy Association, The National Psychotherapists Association, The Professional Hypnotherapists Center, The Hypnotherapy Research Association, states in an article that during hypnosis, some people who are recollecting a past event exhibit some physical changes related to the event. For example, if there was an element of suffocation in the event remembered, a hypnotic subject might become breathless while explaining the event under hypnosis and might even stop breathing for a while. Watts stated that under hypnosis, even finger marks appeared on one of his patients where a slap on the face was recalled. Watts also explains that this is not a mystery but a reaction to sense of pain in the body.²⁰

One of the most striking examples seen in hypnotic applications is that even a wound can appear on the skin of the hypnotized person through inculcation. For example, Paul Thorsen, a researcher, touches the arm of the person under hypnosis with a tip of a pen and tells him that it's a hot skewer. Soon, a blister (as would have been produced by a second degree burn) formed in the region where the tip of the pen touched. Thorsen also hypnotized a person called Anne O. into believing that the letter A was being drawn onto her arm by pressing hard. Although nothing else was done, redness emerged in the shape of an "A" in that area.²¹ Researchers H. Bourru and P. Burot, persuading a hypnotized person that his arm was being cut, saw that the arm was bleeding after being slightly drawn on by a pencil.²²

J.A. Hadfield told a sailor in hypnosis that he was going to press a hot iron bar on the sailor's arm and that the arm would burn. However, he merely touched it gently with his fingertip, after which he covered it. Six hours later when the cover was removed, there was a slight redness and puffiness in that area. Hadfield states that "the following day the puffiness became larger and swelled like a burn."²³

These changes that occurred to the human body during hypnosis show that we do not need the outside world to produce sensations of sight, sound, touch, feeling, pain or ache. For example, although there is no hot iron bar in the outside world, if the person is persuaded, there can be a burn mark on his arm.

These examples show that when we examine how an image occurs, and follow technological developments, and also when we add consciousness-altering methods such as hypnosis to this knowledge, a certain truth becomes clear. Throughout his life, a human being assumes that he is living in a world which is external to his body. However, everything referred to as the world is only our brain's interpretation of the signals which reach the sense centers. In other words, we can never deal with any world other than the one that occurs in our mind. We can never know what happens or exists outside us. We cannot know what the original of the sources of signals reaching the brain is either. This reality has begun to take its place in science books and is taught to people since high school age. The problem is that people do not consider the full significance of this fact.

Who Is It That Experiences All These Perceptions?

So far we have established that everything we perceive takes place in our brains. At this point we face a question which would be asked by anyone who thinks on this subject a little bit.

As we know, the electric signals coming from the cells in our eyes are transformed into an image in our brains. For example, the brain interprets some electrical signals coming to the visual center in the brain as a field filled with sunflowers. In reality, it is not the eye that is seeing.

Therefore, if it is not our eyes which are seeing, what is it that sees the electrical signals as a sunflower field, at the back of our brain, in a pitch dark place, without feeling any necessity for any eyes, retina, lens, visual nerves or pupil and enjoys the view in the sight?

Or who is it that hears (without needing an ear) the voice of a very close friend, becomes happy on hearing it, and misses it when he cannot hear it, when the brain is totally sound proof?

Or who is it in the brain that feels the fur of the cat when stroking it, without having any need for a hand, fingers or muscles?

Who is it that feels sensations such as heat, cold, and a sense of consistency, depth, and distance, as they originate in the brain?

Who is it that smells the lemon, lavender flower, rose, melon, watermelon, orange, and barbecued meat inside the brain (even though the brain is smellproof), and feels hungry because of the smell coming from the grill?

We have thus far discussed how everything we perceive continuously is actually formed inside our brains. Who is it then that sees the sights in a brain as if watching television, and becomes excited, happy, sad, nervous, or feels pleasure, anxiety or curiosity while watching them? Who is responsible for the consciousness which is capable of interpreting everything seen and everything felt?

What is the entity in the brain that has consciousness and throughout life is capable of seeing all the sights shown to him in a dark, quiet head, that is capable of thinking, and reaches conclusions and makes decisions in the end?

It is obvious that it is not the brain, made up of water, lipid and protein, and unconscious atoms, that perceives all this and is responsible for consciousness. There must be a being beyond the brain. Despite being a materialist, Daniel Dennett ponders the above question in one of his books:

My conscious thinking, and especially the enjoyment I felt in the combination of sunny light, sunny Vivaldi violins, rippling branches – plus the pleasure I took in just thinking about it all – how could all that be just something physical happening in my brain? How could any combination of electrochemical happenings in my brain somehow add up to the delightful way those hundreds of twigs genuflected in time with the music? How could some information-processing event in my brain be the delicate warmth of the sunlight I felt falling on me? For that matter, how could an event in my brain be my sketchily visualized mental image of ... some other information-processing event in my brain? It does seem impossible. It does seem as if the happenings that are my conscious thoughts and experiences cannot be brain happenings, but must be something else, something caused or produced by brain happenings, no doubt, but something in addition, made of different stuff, located in a different space. Well, why not?²⁴

On the other hand, R. L. Gregory questions the existence of the entity in the back of the brain, which sees all sights:

There is a temptation, which must be avoided, to say that the eyes produce pictures in the brain. A picture in the brain suggests the need of some kind of internal eye to see it – but this would need a further eye to see its picture... and so on, in an endless regress of eyes and pictures. This is absurd.²⁵

Materialists who believe that nothing exists except matter cannot understand this particular question. Who does this "internal eye", which sees and perceives things seen and reacts to such things, belong to?

In the following passage, Karl Pribram describes this important search by science and philosophy for the identity of the perceiver:

Philosophers since the Greeks have speculated about the "ghost" in the machine, the "little man inside the little man" and so on. Where is the I—the entity that uses the brain? Who does the actual knowing? Or, as Saint Francis of Assisi once put it, "What we are looking for is what is looking".²⁶

Although many people venture close to this reality in answering the question "who is the entity that sees", they hesitate to accept all of its implications. As demonstrated in the examples above, in discussing the entity in our brains, some refer to the "little man", while others say "the ghost in the machine", some refer to "the being using the brain" while some say "the internal eye". All these terms have been used to describe the entity beyond the brain which possesses consciousness, and the means of reaching this entity.

However, materialist assumptions keep many people from understanding the true nature of this being which actually sees and hears.

The only source that answers this question is religion. In the Koran, God states that He created man in a physical way initially and then "breathed His Spirit" to the man He created:

When your Lord said to the angels, "I am creating a human being out of dried clay formed from fetid black mud when I have formed him and breathed My Spirit into him, fall down in prostration in front of him!" (Surat al-Hijr: 28-29)

(He) then formed him and breathed His Spirit into him and gave you hearing, sight and hearts. What little thanks you show! (Surat as-Sajda: 9)

In other words, the human being has another existence besides its physical body. That entity inside the brain which says "I am seeing" the sight inside the brain, and "I am hearing" the sound inside the brain and aware of its own existence, and which says "I am me", is the soul given to human beings by God.

Any human being with a mind and a conscience can understand this: the being that watches every incident inside the brain—watches as if looking at a screen throughout his life—is his soul. **Every human being has a soul that sees without the need for an eye, hears without the need for an ear and thinks without the need for a brain.**

The materialistic view—which maintains that matter is the only thing that exists, and that human consciousness is only a result of some chemical reactions in the brain—is in a quandary about this issue. To see this it might be instructive to ask the following questions to a materialist:

- o Sight is formed in our brains but what is it that watches this sight in our brains?

- o Try to see in your mind's eye your neighbor living downstairs in your apartment building when he is not with you. Who is it that vivifies this person so clearly in your imagination down to the details of his costume, the lines in his face, the whites in his hairs; the tone of his voice, the way he speaks, the way he walks?

A materialist will be unable to give a satisfactory answer to such questions. The only explanation to these questions is the soul given to man by God. However, materialists make a mistake not accepting the existence of any being other than matter. For this reason the truth explained in this book deals a massive blow to atheist materialist thought, and constitutes a subject that materialists refuse to discuss most.

Who Lets Our Souls Watch All Of These Views?

At this level there is another question that should be asked: Our soul watches the sights in our brains. But who is it that creates these sights? Could the brain itself form a

bright, colorful, clear, shadowy sight and form a whole world through electrical signals in a tiny space? The brain is no more than a wet, soft, curvy piece of meat. Could a simple piece of meat like this create a sight clearer than any that could be provided by a television set with the latest technology, without any snow or horizontal jitter? Could a vision of such high quality be formed inside a piece of meat? Could this wet piece of meat form a stereo sound of higher quality than a stereo hi-fi system with the highest technology, without any sizzling noises? Of course, it is impossible for a brain, which is made of one and a half kilograms (four pounds) of meat to form such perfect perceptions.

Here we arrive at another truth. Since together with everything surrounding us, the body we have, our hands, arms and faces are the shadow beings, then our brains are also shadow beings. Thus we cannot say that this brain which is itself actually only a visual sensation, forms these visual sensations.

Bertrand Russell points out this truth in his work *The ABC of Relativity*:

Of course, if matter in general is to be interpreted as a group of occurrences, this must apply also to the eye, the optic nerve and the brain.²⁷

Realizing this fact, French philosopher Bergson said in his book, *Matter and Memory*, that "the world is made up of images, these images only exist in our consciousness; and the brain is one of these images."²⁸

Who, then, is the being that shows these sights to our souls, with all their reality and clarity, and lets us live a life with all of these perceptions and without any interruptions?

The being that shows all the sights to our souls, lets us hear all the sounds, and creates all the tastes and smells for our pleasure, is the Lord of all the worlds, the creator of everything, God.

One Of The Most Important Dilemmas Of Materialism: Human Consciousness

Materialist philosophy can never explain the source of human consciousness, i.e. the qualitative experiences that belong to the human soul. For the materialist philosophy, matter is the only thing that exists. Qualities belonging to the soul of a human being, such as consciousness, thought, decision-making processes, happiness, excitement, longing, enjoyment and judgment can never be explained in the materialistic concept. Materialists pass quickly over this subject saying "human consciousness is only the result of the functions of the brain". A materialist scientist, Francis Crick summarizes this materialistic claim as follows:

Your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.²⁹

However, such a claim cannot be defended by either science or logic. The materialist prejudices lead materialists to make such explanations regarding the qualities of a soul that belongs to human beings. In order not to accept the fact that there is a being beyond the material world, they attempt to reduce human intelligence to matter and make such claims that have no relation with intelligence or logic.

The science writer John Horgan, although sympathetic to the materialist position called "reductionism", points out the following problems with Francis Crick's claims:

In a sense, Crick is right. We are nothing but a pack of neurons. At the same time, neuroscience has so far proved to be oddly unsatisfactory. Explaining the mind in terms of neurons has not yielded much more insight or benefit than explaining the mind in terms of quarks and electrons. There are many alternative reductionisms. We are nothing but a pack of idiosyncratic genes. We are nothing but a pack of adaptations sculpted by natural selection. We are nothing but a pack of computational devices dedicated to different tasks. We are nothing but a pack of sexual neuroses. **These proclamations, like Crick's, are all defensible, and they are all inadequate.**³⁰

Of course, these explanations are all inadequate and they are definitely not logical. Any fanatic materialist is in fact aware of this truth. Not surprisingly, Thomas Huxley, the foremost advocate of Darwin also stated that consciousness cannot be explained by the interaction of neurons: **"How it is that anything so remarkable as a state of consciousness comes about as a result of irritating nervous tissue, is just as unaccountable as the appearance of the Djinn, when Aladdin rubbed his lamp."**³¹

From Huxley's time until the present, the failure to explain human consciousness through neurons hasn't changed. However, this is not because of the inadequacy of science regarding this issue. In contrast, especially towards the end of the 20th century, there have been many developments in the field of neurology with many mysteries being solved. However, these findings have showed that human consciousness can never be reduced to matter and the reality lies beyond the material. One of the leading Darwinist-materialist writers in Germany, Hoimar Von Ditfurth, also confesses the fact that the currently adopted methods cannot describe human consciousness:

With our present research in natural history and genetic development, it is obvious that we will not be able to give an answer to what consciousness, spirit, intelligence and feelings are. That is because psychic-consciousness level is the highest level that evolution has arrived, at least in this world. Therefore, although we are able to look at the other stages and phases of evolution from the outside, by rising above them, again by the help of our consciousness, we are unable to approach consciousness (or spirit) itself in a similar way. That is because no level higher than consciousness is available to us.³²

American philosopher and doctor of mathematics, William A. Dembski, states in his article, "Converting Matter into Mind", that the bio-chemical functioning of neurons in the

human brain and which mental functions it involves have been understood, although qualities such as decision making, wishing, or reasoning cannot be "reduced to matter". Dembski also points out that specialists on consciousness have realized the error of reductionism;

...Cognitive scientists abandon hope of understanding this higher level through the lower neurological level. ...Thus while the commitment to materialism persists, the hope of explaining human intelligence at the neural level, which for the materialist is the logical level, is not a serious consideration.³³

It is impossible to describe consciousness with a materialist worldview, regardless of the extent of scientific development. As details of the brain surface, it becomes clearer that the mind is irreducible to matter. Materialists must put aside their prejudices and think deeper and research further if they are to understand the concept of human consciousness, as it is impossible to define the real meaning of consciousness through matter. Consciousness is a function of the soul that is given to man by God.

Questions For Materialists

It is totally illogical to state that thoughts, judgments, decision mechanisms, or feelings (such as happiness, excitement, joy and peace) are merely the results of the interaction of neurons in the brain of a human being. Materialists who consider this issue more deeply are aware of this truth. The famous materialist, Karl Lashley, made the following comment towards the end of his career, even though he had defended the idea for years that human consciousness could be reduced to matter:

Whether the mind-body relation is regarded as a genuine metaphysical issue or a systematized delusion, it remains a problem for the psychologist (and for the neurologist when he deals with human problems) as it is not for the physicist. . . . **How can the brain, as a physico-chemical system, perceive or know anything;** or develop the delusion that it does so?³⁴

Lashley drew attention to this conflict in one single question. However, there are many other details that materialists must consider. The explanations listed below illustrate some of the issues that reveal the impasse of the materialist approach, and which must therefore be considered in depth :

- Stating that thoughts, excitements and feelings are products of neurons is to claim that such things are the products of the unconscious atoms, or products of the sub elements of atoms, such as quarks or electrons.
- Unconscious atoms cannot know the feeling of happiness or sadness and neither can they enjoy music, taste, good friendship or a chat with a friend.
- Unconscious atoms cannot be Darwinist or materialist and come together to write a book.

- Unconscious atoms cannot view themselves or the nerve cells that form themselves under an electron microscope and reach scientific solutions from their research.

- What is meant by the statement "consciousness is in the neurons of our brains"? Neurons, just like other cells, are made of cell membrane, mitochondria, DNA and ribosomes. Therefore, according to the materialists, where does consciousness lie in these things? If they suppose that consciousness is a result of chemical reactions between the neurons and electrical signals, they are mistaken, because they cannot explain a single "chemical reaction with consciousness". Nor can they show us an "electric wave" that starts to "think" at a certain voltage level.

If materialists think sincerely about these issues, they will realize that all people including themselves are different from groups of neurons or bunches of atoms. Despite being a materialist, the brain specialist Wolf Singer, admits this fact by saying "*In this confusing material of the universe there is 'something' that perceives itself as 'I am'.*"³⁵

This "something" that the scientist refers to is actually the soul that is given to the human being by God. Due to this soul possessed by the human being, a person can think, be happy, get excited, produce new ideas, or oppose the ideas of others, or know the concepts such as honour, respect, love, friendship, loyalty, sincerity and honesty. The neurons and atoms that form human beings cannot think, make decisions, produce philosophical ideas or know the feeling of love, compassion or affection.

Materialists, when they are alone, know this truth and accept it. However, due to their regarding their materialist prejudices as the requirement of science and reason, they cannot come to accept this absolute reality. On the other hand, the predicament they put themselves into just to defend materialism, and the illogical ideas they accept, actually cause much greater damage to them. A person who says "Our thoughts are the product of our atoms and neurons" is no different than a person who thinks his or her dreams are real, or a person who invents incredible stories like fairytales and then believes in them.

The truth is actually this: a human being is a being that possesses a soul given by God, and with this soul, he can think, talk, be pleased, make decisions, establish civilizations and manage countries.

WHY IS THE TRUTH ABOUT MATTER SUCH AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT?

That what people see, hear, touch, smell and assume to be absolute entities are in reality perceptions, and that throughout our lives we merely deal with copy images is as remarkable as the facts that the universe was created from nothing, that existence is eternal, and that we rise again to eternal life after death. God creates the universe at every moment with its numberless details, perfect and without defect. Moreover, this creation is so flawless that many people who have lived on the earth so far have not understood that the universe and everything they see is an illusion, and that they have no connection with the reality of matter.

In the 21st century, this truth has become more evident because scientific discoveries have definitely proven that we are actually never in touch with matter. Although some people still refuse to accept this fact, it is not something that can be ignored, disregarded or rejected. On the contrary, **knowing the true nature of matter is an important condition of being a realist.** For this reason, it is very important for those who consider this question to grasp its significance. Some of those who read about the real nature of matter have stated that they do not understand why so much importance has been given to this question. They even think that it has no relation to faith, and ask why it has a place in every discussion about faith. However, the importance of this topic is now evident. A knowledge of the true nature of matter scares materialists because it destroys their worldview, and it is very important for Muslims to understand this truth and to try to let people know about it.

This knowledge helps people to understand some questions about faith and must be explained as being as important as any other matter concerning faith. As a result of an explanation of the real nature of matter, people are cleansed from their attachment to the things of this world, they direct their thoughts to the afterlife, they are rescued from a grave error and they can easily grasp some truths that those errors prevented them from understanding. Someone with a materialist view of the world, or someone who has been brought up under the influence of this kind of worldview, can never understand certain questions such as, "Where is God?", "Do heaven and hell and hell exist?", "What is the nature of spirit and eternity?", "Is there life after death?". But perceiving that matter is an illusion naturally provides answers to these questions, and enables people to clearly see that God is the one absolute Being.

When people understand what matter is, they strongly sense that everything by which they are bound to the life of this world—their desires, passions and everything that makes them forget God and the Day of Judgment—are deceptive and vain. Learning the true nature of matter is what saves people from the desires of this world. It directs them

with pure hearts and sincerity towards God and saves them from the error of associating others with Him.

This is a century in which people display arrogance, conceit and every kind of inhuman and amoral behavior. However, when they realize that they themselves, and those whom they look up to, are just shadow beings, their arrogance and conceit will be replaced by humility and gentleness.

All these developments will be the means by which we will achieve a secure and comfortable society, in which people can live without meanness, selfishness and pitiless competition.

Certainly, there will be one important result that will come from an awareness of the fact that we have no contact with the original matter: The collapse of materialist philosophy.

Now, we shall discuss in detail why the fact that matter is not absolute is one of the most important discoveries in history.

The Truth About Matter Shows That God Is The One Absolute Being

One of the most important things implied by this fact is that God is the One Absolute Being. Some people, under the influence of materialist philosophy, think that matter is absolute being. Some of these people believe that God exists, but when they talk about the existence of God, and where He is, they display their ignorance. For example, if they are asked "Where is God?", they will ignorantly answer, "Show me your intelligence; you cannot. So, God is a reality like intelligence, but you cannot see it." Others assume in their own minds (God is surely beyond that) that God has an illusory existence like that of radio waves. According to their false view, they themselves and the things they possess are absolute existence and God's existence encompasses this material existence like radio waves. **However, what is illusory is they themselves and the things they possess. The One Absolute Being is God.** God's existence embraces everything. Human beings are in no way absolute beings but a transient image.

God reveals this truth in a verse:

God, there is no deity but Him, the Living, the Self-Sustaining. He is not subject to drowsiness or sleep. Everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him. Who can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them but they cannot grasp any of His knowledge save what He wills. His Footstool encompasses the heavens and the earth and their preservation does not tire Him. He is the Most High, the Magnificent. (Surat al-Baqara: 255)

The fullness of faith consists of understanding this truth, avoiding the mistake of associating others with God and acknowledging God as the One Absolute Being. Someone who knows that, apart from God, everything is a shadow existence, will say with certain faith (at the level of Haqq-al yakin – truth of certainty) that only God exists and there is no other deity (or any being with strength) besides Him.

The materialists do not believe in the existence of God, because they cannot see Him with their eyes. But their claims are completely invalidated when they learn the real nature of matter. Someone who learns this truth understands that his own existence has the quality of an illusion, and grasps that a being which is an illusion will not be able to see a being which is absolute. As it is revealed in the Koran, human beings cannot see God but God sees them.

Eyesight cannot perceive Him but He perceives eyesight... (Surat al-An'am: 103)

Certainly, we human beings cannot see the Being of God with our eyes but we know that He completely encompasses our inside, our outside, our views and our thoughts. For this reason, God reveals Himself in the Koran as **"controlling hearing and sight"** (Surah Yunus: 31) We cannot say one word, we cannot even take one breath without God's knowing it. God knows everything we do. This is revealed in the Koran:

God - Him from Whom nothing is hidden, either on earth or in heaven. (Surah Al 'Imran: 5)

It is very important that God watches us, sees us and hears us at every moment. Someone who realizes this, even if he does not see God with his eyes, knows that He is aware of him at every moment. For this reason, no matter what he is doing, he knows that God is a witness of him. Consequently, he is careful not to do anything to displease Him and will be mindful of what he does, says, and thinks. In the Koran, it is revealed that God is close to us in everything we do; that He watches us and that nothing eludes Him.

You do not engage in any matter or recite any of the Koran or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it. Not even the smallest speck eludes your Lord, either on earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surah Yunus: 61)

Certainly God, Who is Absolute Being, knows every aspect of the human beings He has created. This is a very simple thing for God. But some in their ignorance may find

this hard to understand. However, when we observe the impressions we think are the "external world", that is, as we lead our lives, the closest being to us is not an impression, it is clearly God. The secret of the verse **"We created man and We know what his own self whispers to him. We are nearer to him than his jugular vein"** (Surah Qaf: 16) is hidden in this fact. But when a person thinks that his body is composed of "matter, the absolute entity," he cannot conceive of this important reality; this is again because he thinks that the nearest thing to him is his body. For example, if this person conceives of his existence as being his brain, he does not admit the possibility that there is a being closer to him than his jugular vein. However, when he conceives of the fact that matter is not absolute, and that everything is a facsimile that he experiences in his mind, then concepts such as outside, inside, far and near have no meaning. His jugular vein, his brain, hands, feet, his house and his car that he thought were outside himself, even the sun, the moon and the stars that he thought were so far away, are all on the same plane. God has encompassed him all around and is eternally near to him.

That God is eternally near to human beings is also revealed in this verse: **"If My servants ask you about Me, I am near (to them)..."** (Surat al-Baqara: 186) In another verse the same reality is expressed, **"Surely your Lord encompasses mankind round about."** (Surat al-Isra': 60). In spite of this, some people continue to err by thinking that the nearest thing to themselves is themselves. However, God is closer to us even than we are to ourselves. The fact that God is the nearest Being to a human being is emphasized again in these verses: **"Why then, when death reaches his throat and you are at that moment looking on—and We are nearer him than you but you cannot see"** (Surat al-Waqi'a: 83-85) Indeed, a person on the point of death or lying in a hospital bed may think that the closest being to him is the doctor at his bedside, his mother who is embracing him, or his friends touching him and holding his hand. But as it says in this verse, God is closer to him at that time than anyone else. Moreover, God is the single closest Being to him not only at that particular moment, but from the first moment of his existence. But, because people do not see it with their eyes, some of them are ignorant of this reality.

The fact that God is not circumscribed by space but embraces all things is revealed in another verse:

Both East and West belong to God, so wherever you turn, the Face of God is there. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 115)

In another verse, God explains this reality in this way:

It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then established Himself firmly on the Throne. He knows what goes into the earth

and what comes out of it, what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. He is with you wherever you are—God sees what you do. (Surat al-Hadid: 4)

All of this implies that God is the One, True, Absolute Existence. With His Knowledge, God embraces human beings who are shadow beings and every other thing. This fact is also pointed out in the following verse:

Your God is God alone, there is no deity but Him. He encompasses all things in His knowledge. (Surah Ta Ha: 98)

In another verse of the Koran, God warns people against being heedless:

What! Are they in doubt about the meeting with their Lord? What! Does He not encompass all things? (The Koran, 41: 54)

Human Actions Also Belong To God

God has created man as a shadow being with no power independent of Himself. This reality is revealed in this verse:

But you will not will unless God wills... (Surah Fussilat: 30)

Some people are unaware of this great fact. They accept that God created them, but think that the work they do belongs to them. However, every action performed by a human being is created with the permission of God. For example, a person who writes a book writes it with the permission of God; every sentence, every idea, and every paragraph is composed because God wishes it. God reveals this very important principle in several verses; one of these verses is, "... **God created both you and what you do?**". (Surat as-Saffat: 96) In these words "**... when you threw; it was God Who threw...**", (Surat al-Anfal: 17) God reveals that everything we do is an act that belongs to Him.

In other verses, God instructs the prophet to take charity from believers, but in the continuation of the verse, He explains that it is really He Who takes charity:

Take charity from their wealth to purify and cleanse them and pray for them. Your prayers bring relief to them. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Do they not know that it is God Who receives repentance from His servants and accepts such acts of charity, and that God is the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful? (Surat at-Tawba: 103-104)

The great Islamic scholar Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi explains that the deeds we do belong to God:

As for the spirits, the source of the actions that derive from them is not found in their entities. **It is God alone who puts spirits and objects into action continuously.** ... Spirit and matters are not comprised of chosen beings and determined facts. They are comprised of divine acts; various manifestations of the almighty being. In the same way, things that are said to be finite or infinite are nothing but a single entity seen from two different points.³⁶

As Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi explains, it is God Who creates every deed and makes the soul of the doer believe that it is he himself who is performing it. God creates this sense so realistically in every soul that someone who throws a stone, for example, really thinks that he is throwing it himself. However, a person who is a shadow being cannot perform the act of throwing, but God makes him feel as if he is performing the act. As a result of the wonderful perfection in God's creation, a person senses this feeling intensely and actually thinks that he is holding the stone, drawing back his arm to exert strength for speed and throwing it.

Human beings live at every moment dependent on God and, whether they know it or not, or whether they accept it or not, they are subject to God. God reveals this in this verse:

Everyone in heaven and earth prostrates to God willingly or unwillingly, as do their shadows in the morning and the evening. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 15)

Whoever you know, who lives or has lived in this world, in the present or in the past, wherever he may be, whatever he may possess, or no matter how stubborn a denier he may be, this reality does not change for him or for anyone. Every human being is subject to God's will, every person is a shadow being created from the breath of God's Spirit. Anyone who knows this finds it impossible to accept praise for his wealth, knowledge, title or reputation; nor can he accept adulation for his place or position in society or success in his profession. Those who are still arrogant despite this are in fact completely powerless. After God has revealed that the person who thinks he has thrown the stone has not really thrown it, but that it was God Himself who threw it, it is unfathomable ignorance for anyone to think that he deserves credit for any human success.

In this way God tests and trains every human being. Today those who cannot understand or accept this obvious reality will, when they are raised from the dead, see everything in its true light and understand that their own strength avails for nothing:

The metaphor of those who reject their Lord is that their actions are like ashes scattered by strong winds on a stormy day. They have no power at all

over anything they have earned. That is extreme misguidance. (The Koran, 14: 18)

God is the only Being who has power over all things:

Everything in the heavens and everything on earth glorifies God. Sovereignty and praise belong to Him. He has power over all things. Surat at-Taghabun: 1)

An Understanding Of The Real Nature of Matter Will Lead People To Faith

People who will come to realize that they have been watching images shown to their spirits throughout their lives, will believe with certainty that it is God Who created both their spirits and these uninterrupted images.

The reason why some people stubbornly refuse to accept the secret of matter is their unwillingness to conceive of the magnitude of God's greatness and to accept their own nothingness. But even if these people do not want to accept it, there is an indisputable truth: Everything in heaven and on earth is God's and a manifestation of God. The only absolute Being is God. The other beings that God has created are not absolute beings but appearances. All the 'I's', that is individuals, who observe the appearances that God has created are all spirits from God.

When people grasp the great secret of this knowledge, they will attain great clarity of consciousness and the haze enshrouding their spirits will lift. Everyone who understands it will freely submit to God, love Him and fear Him. In addition, human feelings of pride and self-satisfaction will be replaced by humility and modesty. This is what God wants from human beings. Those who understand this amazing fact will look at things from a different point of view and start out on a totally different life. They will acknowledge God's power appropriately, and distance themselves from the kind of person described by this verse:

They do not measure God with His true measure. The whole earth will be a mere handful for Him on the Day of Rising and the heavens folded up in His right hand. Glory be to Him! He is exalted above the partners they ascribe! (Surat az-Zumar: 67)

Understanding The Reality Of Matter Removes Worldly Ambitions

What we have described so far is one of the most profound truths that you have heard in your whole life. We have shown that the whole material world is really a shadow, and that this is the key to understanding the existence of God, His creation, and the fact that He is the one absolute Being. At the same time, we have presented a

scientifically undeniable demonstration both of how helpless human beings are and a manifestation of God's wonderful artistry. This knowledge makes people assured believers making it impossible for them not to believe. This is the main reason why some people avoid this truth.

The things that are being explained here are as true as a physical law or a chemical formula. When necessary, human beings can solve the most difficult mathematical problems and understand many very complex matters. However, when these same people are informed that throughout their lives they have experience of only the images formed in their mind, and that they have no connection with the original of matter, they have no desire at all to understand. This is an exaggerated case of an inability to understand, because the idea discussed here is no more difficult than the answer to the questions, "What is two times two?" or "How old are you?", If you ask any scientist or professor of neurology where they see the world, they will answer you that they see it in their brains. You will find this fact even in high school biology text books. But despite the fact that it is clearly evident, information pertaining to the fact that we perceive the material world in our brains and the results that this information entails for human beings can be overlooked. It is of major significance that one of the most important scientifically proven facts is so carefully hidden from people's eyes.

The fundamental reason why people easily accept all scientific facts, yet are so afraid to accept this one, is that learning the truth about matter will basically change the way everyone looks at life. Those who believe that matter and the self are absolute beings will discover one day that they have merely dealt with the reflection in their minds of everything they have worked for and protected based on this idea - their spouses, their children, their wealth, even their own personalities. People are very afraid of this reality and pretend not to understand it even if they do. They try with determination to disprove the facts, which are simple enough for even a primary school child to understand. The reason behind this opposition is that they are afraid to lose what this world offers.

For someone who is attached to his possessions, his children, or the transient offerings of this world, the illusory nature of matter is cause for great fear. At the moment such a person understands this, he will have died before his natural death, and he will have surrendered his possessions and his soul. In the verse, **"If He did ask you for it (all your wealth) and put you under pressure, you would be tight-fisted and it would bring out your malevolence."** (Surah Muhammad: 37), God reveals how human beings will behave with meanness when He demands their possessions from them.

But when a person learns the real nature of matter, he will understand that his soul and his possessions already belong to God. If he knows that there is nothing to give or to resist giving, he will submit himself and all he possesses to God before he dies. For sincere believers, this is a beautiful and honorable thing and a way to draw nearer to

God. Those who do not believe or whose faith is weak cannot recognize this beauty and stubbornly reject this reality.

Those Who Own Factories, Yachts Or Land, Which Are Images

In The Brain Worry Themselves For Nothing

In this section we will consider the example of a heedless factory owner who has lived all his life with the ambition of being rich, and who worked day and night since he was young, thinking that he would earn everything by the sweat of his brow. This example will show us a very important truth.

The person whom we shall describe is middle-aged. He has two children, a boy and a girl, whom he sends to good schools. He owns a few cars, a yacht, some houses and some land. This man thinks he has everything that is admired in the life of this world. He thinks he has attained everything that a person could hope for in this life. Besides his wealth, he has gained a great deal of respect. Everyone who knows him regards him as a person who is respected, and has standing and position in society. This opinion is shared by the servants who attend him in the morning, the chauffeur who bows as he opens the car door for him, the security guards who greet him with respect when he enters the company building, and the employees who stand to attention from the moment he enters the factory until he gets to his office. He has many close friends and acquaintances in high places and positions. Every day he runs from meeting to meeting; he is a member of some boards and societies, and even chairman of others. In the course of a day he gives orders to hundreds of individuals. In his bank and private safe he has more money, stocks and bonds that he can count. As he adds up these things from time to time, he gains even more satisfaction; he is proud of himself and congratulates himself. What gives him a special feeling of satisfaction and self-confidence is the fact that he earned everything himself by his own hard work, and that he attained what he had devoted his whole life to achieving.

One day, while he is sailing on a yacht with his friends, someone comes up to him and says: *"Everything you see here at this moment—all these people, this yacht, the sea, the factories, the houses, the employees who jump to your command... You merely deal with their images formed in your brain. You never know the originals of these appearances. If the nerves entering your brain were severed, this yacht, the people on it, their voices and conversations, the smell of the sea, the taste of the fruit juice you are drinking, in short, everything would cease to exist in a moment. All of these things as well as everything you have owned in your whole life are in your mind. There is no difference between your houses, cars, yachts, factories and companies and things you own in your dreams. It is like having a dream about going to Europe in your own private airplane and waking up in the morning to find that there is no airplane, and that you are not in Europe but in bed. If one day you wake up from this sleep you call your life; how*

can you be sure that you will not be in a completely different place observing images pertaining to this life? "

This rich man will react strongly to what he is being told. If these facts were told to him plainly with all scientific proof, even if he understood he would not accept the truth. In his mind, to accept that everything he owned was a dream-like fantasy would mean that he had been following an illusion his whole life. Then, everything for which a person is praised, everything that gives him a sense of pride and self-importance is an illusion. The situation of that person will be as humiliating and ridiculous as that of a person who is rich in his dreams and puts on airs because of this imaginary wealth. When the rich man in our example goes into his company after he has grasped this truth, he will not be moved to arrogance by the respect and esteem shown to him. This is because he now knows that those who show him respect and bow to him are only facsimiles in his mind. Or when these things are told to him, he will not be able to "show off" to his guests with his yacht because both the yacht and the guests on it are appearances in his brain.

When he is told that matter is an illusion and that he can have no connection at all with the source of material existence, the farm he bought the day before will come into his mind. In that case, the money he counted out bill by bill and gave to the vendor, the farm he bought with all its fixtures, the surrounding area surveyed as he made the purchase—all would exist only in his mind. It would be exactly as if he had dreamed the night before that he had won an important contract and made a lot of money from it. When he woke up nothing would be left, and what he thought was real would be a dream.

If this is the case, he is not in the yacht now. The yacht is an appearance inside him. When he thinks he is going into his house furnished in the latest style, in fact, he is opening a big garden gate and entering a house in his brain. The house, the furnishings, the garden and the garden gate are in his mind.

If this person is aware that what he is being told is clearly true, he will come to realize that everything he owns at that moment are fundamentally shadow beings. All these things are images shown to him by God Who created him. In order to test him, God created his life and the appearances of the things that he would think he owned. But forgetting that God gave him these things and blessed him with the wealth of these appearances, he became arrogant and spoiled by these things, gave himself airs and regarded people as his inferiors. Then, he has spent his life vainly clambering after an illusory dream world. But one day he realizes that he has been caught up in illusions and wasting his time, that none of these things has absolute existence and that only God exists.

In one verse, God calls attention to those who have refused to accept this reality throughout history and those who have pretended not to know it:

But the actions of those who disbelieve are like a mirage in the desert. A thirsty man thinks it is water but when he reaches it, he finds it to be nothing at all, but he finds God there. He will pay him his account in full. God is swift at reckoning. (Surat an-Nur: 39)

As we can see in this verse, God compared the deeds of deniers to a mirage or a phantom. When these people attach themselves to these phantoms and discover that they cannot expect help from them, they understand that the phantoms are not real and that God alone is the one absolute reality.

One of the main reasons why people are so afraid of this reality and do not wish to accept it is that they understand, like the man in the example above, that everything they own, their respect, their wealth will pass away in one moment. Here we call your attention to one point: we are not saying here that "everything a person owns will stay behind after death and do him no good". We are saying that "everything a person owns is an appearance." When he sees that what he has striven for throughout his life, has troubled him and made him sad, and that he has tried to beat down other people in the process, he realizes that it was all an empty deception. In one verse, the Koran reveals that heedless people live in deception. The greedy attachment of people to property is related in a verse as follows:

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

In another verse it is revealed that the life of this world is a game, a waste of time and a deception:

Know that the life of this world is merely a game and a diversion and ostentation and a cause of boasting among yourselves and trying to outdo one another in wealth and children: like the plant-growth after rain which delights the cultivators, but then it withers and you see it turning yellow, and then it becomes broken stubble. In the hereafter, there is terrible punishment but also forgiveness from God and His good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but the enjoyment of delusion. (Surat al-Hadid: 20)

When people realize that these appearances they thought they owned during this life are actually an illusion, they understand that they have struggled and worried in vain, and that they have wasted their time. There are those who jealously guard what

they own, and for the sake of these things become angry and abuse others, get irritated and pound the table with their fist. But when they realize that they have no connection with the actual material things, they are ashamed and deeply sorry that they are like be someone who, in a dream, assaults other people, gets angry and shouts at them. They immediately understand that they should act in a way that will be pleasing to God, the Origin of all the appearances shown to them. Those who comprehend this reality, that is, believers say:

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

It is important never to forget this important point: It does not matter at which point in his life a person comes to understand this reality; it is never too late. He can change his way of looking at life right away and reorder his way of living according to this principle; he can begin to live not for illusions but for our Lord, the One Absolute Being. God is always forgiving to His servants.

Those who slyly pretend not to know this reality, and refuse to accept the fact that God is the One Absolute Being, have fallen into a powerful trap. God describes their state:

... What they achieved here will come to nothing. What they did will prove to be null and void. (Surah Hud: 16)

Even if a person does not want to accept this reality now and prefers to deceive himself by believing that the things he owns are absolute things, everything will become very clear after he dies on that Last Day when he is raised again to life. On that day, as it says in the verse, his **"sight is sharp"** (Surah Qaf: 22), and he will come to a much clearer awareness of everything. But if he has spent his worldly life running after illusory goals, he will wish that he had never lived in that world. He will perish saying, **"If only death had really been the end! My wealth has been of no use to me. My power has vanished."** (Surat al-Haqqa: 27-29)

Those Who See The Real Nature Of Matter Lose Their Arrogance

Some people who become aware of this plain truth get upset. When they understand that they merely deal with the copies in their brains of their factories, houses, cars, property, children, spouses, relatives, and social position, their helplessness and powerlessness lies open before God. They understand that both they themselves and all that they own, even the whole universe is an illusion and that they themselves are nothing. All that is left is the spirit they call "I". Because it was God Who

gave them this spirit, they certainly believe in God and submit to Him, even though they may not have believed before.

When a person grasps these facts, a feeling of humility and dependence replaces pride, arrogance and self-satisfaction. If all the wealth of the world and the most important position in it were given to a person such as this, he would not become conceited, proud or arrogant. He will not forget that he is only observing images that God has given to him, and he will not get caught up in illusions. This sublime reality will remove ambition, pride and conceit, as well as such negative feelings as spite, hatred and anger. Those who know that everything is an illusion will not engage in cut-throat competition with one another or harbor spite or enmity against anyone. In an environment where everyone has submitted himself only to God, there will be humility, submission, compassion, deference, love and intimacy.

Therefore, it is highly unreasonable for a person to pretend not to know this truth, and to fear it and run away from it. A person without faith may well fear this truth because if he accepts these facts, he will also be forced to accept the existence of God. But believers must embrace with pleasure and enthusiasm the fact that matter is a reflection that God makes them experience in their minds and that the one Absolute Being is God. For a believer, to fear God's magnificent artistry and to avoid seeing it makes no sense. When the truth is evident, it is pointless not to acknowledge it, and to continue to be deceived by the clear lines of shadows and three-dimensional apparitions. The believer does not fear the truth, but thinks about the beauty and depth of reality, and considers how much more wondrous God's flawless artistry becomes within this system.

This Reality Threatens Those Who Are Attached To This World By Ambition

A man who has received an award for what he has achieved, received the award in his brain. Those who applaud him as he receives the award are, in fact, an apparition of people in his brain.

A person watching this awards ceremony on the little screen in his brain has no way of connecting with the source of the people in the auditorium, the award, or the auditorium itself. These things stay inside the brain. It is as if the person were watching the reward being given to him on a videocassette.

This is the reason why people avoid this reality with horror. When those who are bound to this world by ambition understand that their standing and position in society, the awards they win, their bank accounts, yachts, real estate, and the people that praise and esteem them are all apparitions in their brains, they are consumed by a tremendous anger. They avoid accepting this fact in all their arrogance because, they realize that it implies that their esteem, reputation and property will not be worth the ambitious

commitments they have made. But no matter how hard they try to escape this reality, they cannot change the fact that they lead the whole of their lives inside their skulls.

Worries And Difficulties Are Like Images In A Dream

Some people realize that certain things happen as apparitions in the brain, but tend to forget that this is true for all phenomena. However, in every second of one's life, one experiences copy images in the brain. For example, a businessman who goes bankrupt receives images of his workplace and his employees in his brain. The things he sold and the money he received for them are all impressions in his brain. When this man loses all his money, he loses the image of that money. A person who loses his workplace and all possessions loses the image in his brain of the workplace and the property. Or a person who has his car stolen again has lost the appearance of a car in his mind. He can no longer see this car-like apparition which he thought he owned, but of course he was never actually connected to the original of that apparition even for one moment throughout his whole life.

Not only things like this, but every difficulty a person experiences in the course of his life is in the brain. For example, consider a person who lives in a country where there is internal strife. He lives every moment in mortal danger and comes every moment face to face with assaults from hostile soldiers, but he is actually face to face with an appearance of hostile soldiers in his brain. A person who is wounded or loses his arm in a skirmish loses the apparition of the arm in his brain and all his feeling of pain is a perception formed in the brain. The threatening, spiteful and aggressive things said to him by his enemies are composed of sounds formed in the brain.

As a result, events which produce difficulties, worries and fear are illusions occurring in the brain. A person who sees what these illusions really are does not feel anxious because of the difficulties in which he finds himself, nor does he complain about them. Even if he were confronted by the most aggressive and dangerous enemy, he would know that he is face to face with illusions in his brain and would not be overcome by fear or hopelessness. He knows that each one of these things is an apparition formed by God and that He created them for a purpose. No matter what he encounters, he is at peace in his trust and submission to God. In some verses of the Koran, God reveals that there will be no fear or sorrow for believers. One verse reads:

Those who say, "Our Lord is God," and then go straight will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Surat al-Ahqaf: 13)

A person who knows that throughout his whole life he has experience of the images created by God in his brain of everything that has happened, and every sound he has

heard, will, instead of becoming fearful and vainly filled with anxiety and panic, trust in the endless mercy and compassion of the Creator Who made him and these images.

The Environment That Will Come To Be When The Real Nature Of Matter Is Not Kept Secret

Those who know that they have no connection with the actual material things, and that they are in the presence only of images that God presents to them, will change their whole way of living, their view of life and their values. This will be a change that will be useful both from the personal and social point of view, because someone who sees this truth will live without difficulty according to the high moral qualities that God has revealed in the Koran.

For those who do not regard the world as important and who understand that matter is an illusion, it is spiritual things that deserve to be given importance. Someone who knows that God is listening to him and watching him at every moment, and is aware that he will render an account of his every action in the hereafter, will naturally live a morally virtuous life. He will be very careful about what God has commanded and what He has forbidden. Everyone in society will be filled with love and respect for one another, and everyone will compete with one another in the performance of good and noble deeds. People will change the values according to which they judge others. Material things will lose their value and therefore, people will be judged not according to their standing and position in society but according to their moral character and their piety. No one will pursue illusion; everyone will seek after truth. Everyone will act without worrying about what others will think; the only question in their minds will be whether or not God will be pleased with what they do. In the place of the feelings of pride, arrogance and self-satisfaction that come from possessions, property, standing and position, there will be a sense of the understanding of humility and dependence. Therefore, people will willingly live according to those examples of good moral qualities spoken of in the Koran. Eventually, these changes will put an end to many problems of today's societies.

In place of angry, aggressive people, anxious even about small profit, there will be those who know that they have experience of an illusion of everything they see. They will be well aware that reactions of anger and loud shouting make them look foolish. Well-being and trust will prevail in individuals and societies and everyone will be pleased with his life and possessions. These, then, are some of the blessings that this hidden reality will bring to individuals and societies. Knowing, considering and living according to this reality will bring many more goodnesses to human beings. Those who wish to attain these goodnesses should consider this reality well and endeavor to understand it. In one verse, God says,

Clear insights have come to you from your Lord. Whoever sees clearly, does so to his own benefit. Whoever is blind, it is to his own detriment... (Surat al-An'am: 104)

Knowing The Real Nature Of Matter Is The End Of Materialism

The philosophy of materialism is the worldview that is most threatened by the fact that we never have direct experience of the original material world. In order to understand this better, we must look at the general definition of materialism. The wicked philosophy of materialism is defined in materialist writings as:

Materialism accepts the eternity and endlessness of the world, that it is not created by God and is infinite in time and space.³⁷

In the 8th volume of the Larousse Encyclopedia, materialist philosophy is defined as follows:

Materialism is a doctrine which does not accept the existence of any other substance than matter. It is the opposite of idealism which says that the essence and substance of reality is created by spirit.

As we can see in this brief definition, materialist philosophy regards matter as the only absolute existent and believes that, apart from matter, no thought or thing exists. Materialist philosophy does not accept the existence of spirit but regards human consciousness as a product of the activities of the brain. (We considered the invalidity of this materialist claim in the section entitled, "One of the Most Important Dilemmas of Materialism: Human Consciousness"). One of the most important implications of what is explained throughout this book is the fact that materialist philosophy is completely invalid. This is due to the fact that it is now very clear today that we merely know the version in our mind of what we call matter; it is impossible for us to demonstrate what the original of matter outside our mind is like. This is because it is impossible for us to come out of our minds and come into contact with a material source of things. If we accept this fact summarized in two sentences, neither matter nor materialism remains. Seeing that we can never attain to the material existence in the external world, it is clearly unnecessary and pointless to construct a philosophy on matter and to base a view of life on it.

The basic reason why those who espouse materialist philosophy are disturbed by this important secret underlying matter and refuse to accept it even though it is very evident, is that they understand that it will mean the end of their philosophy. Throughout history every materialist has been disturbed by the description of the nature of matter, even by the other materialists' reading books telling about this fact, and they have expressed their misgivings. For example, one of the leaders of the bloody Russian Revolution, Vladimir I. Lenin, in his book written almost a century ago called *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, warned his followers of this fact:

Once you deny objective reality, given us in sensation, you have already lost every weapon against fideism, for you have slipped into agnosticism or subjectivism-and that is all that fideism requires. **A single claw ensnared, and the bird is lost.** And our Machists have all become ensnared in idealism, that is, in a diluted, subtle fideism; they became ensnared from the moment they took "sensation" not as an image of the external world but as a special "element". It is nobody's sensation, nobody's mind, nobody's spirit, nobody's will.³⁸

These sentences show how uncomfortable this fact made materialists; Lenin was very afraid of it and wanted to erase it from his own mind and from the minds of his comrades. But materialists today are in a much greater state of discomfort than Lenin was because the invalidity of materialism has, in the last 100 years, become more clearly and strongly established. Considered in the past to be a philosophical speculation or a matter of opinion, the unreality of matter has now been proven for the first time in history in an irrefutable and scientifically based manner. The science writer Lincoln Barnett says that even hinting at this possibility makes materialist scientists anxious and fearful:

Along with philosophers' reduction of all objective reality to a shadow-world of perceptions, **scientists have become aware of the alarming limitations of man's senses.**³⁹

In Turkey and throughout the whole world, this fear and anxiety can be seen very clearly in every materialist who confronts this issue. For example, in Turkey, materialists have suffered a serious set-back from the collapse of the theory of evolution, which they supposed to be the basis of their philosophy. Now they have begun to understand that they have lost a more important support than Darwinism—matter itself. For this reason they are now saying that, from their point of view, this issue is a very serious danger which causes their cultural fabric to be totally shredded.

In fact, this points to a promise revealed to human beings by God in the Koran. Where truth is plain, false ideas are bound to perish:

Say: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Falsehood is always bound to vanish." (Surat al-Isra': 81)

Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away! Woe without end for you for what you portray! (Surat al-Anbiya': 18)

Materialism and those who have espoused it throughout history use matter as a pretext to rebel against God, Who created them from nothing, gave them life and created the universe for them to live in. Asking such superficial and ignorant questions as "If matter exists, where is God in it?", they deny the existence of God and exert much

effort to get others to deny Him. Today they see one of their most important supports destroyed; the reality described here has ripped their philosophy up from its roots and left no possibility for further discussion. The matter on which they had based all their ideas, their lives, their arrogance and their denial has slipped from their hands in an instant.

Throughout history, materialists have left a heritage of denial and methods of denial. For example, many materialists today use the words of Lenin quoted above and urge their associates not to listen to or read about this reality. However, the fact that science has clearly explained the nature of matter, together with the fact that it is so easy to use technology such as the internet to diffuse this information throughout the world, has brought their efforts to nothing. Individuals are reading about this reality, learning about it and coming to understand it. Those who have accepted materialism until recently as the most valid worldview now are very surprised to learn the real truth about matter and life in this world. This is an extraordinary trap that God has set for the deniers. No matter how deniers throughout history have set traps with their foolish minds for true religion deviantly making material idols just to deny God, God, in turn, has prepared an environment where their false idols will be taken out of their hands and where they themselves will be caught in the traps they have set. God reveals how throughout history He has responded to the traps set by deniers.

... they were planning and God was planning, but God is the Best of Planners. (Surat al-Anfal: 30)

By giving people the impression that they are in contact with the source of matter, God has made materialists fall into a trap and has humiliated them in a way that has not been seen before. They have regarded as absolute being things composed of illusion—their possessions and property, positions and titles, the society in which they live, in fact, the whole world. And by trusting in these things, they exalt themselves before God. In their own arrogant minds they rebel and go forward in their denials. While doing this, their only strength lies in matter. But they have fallen into such a lack of understanding that they never think that God encompasses and surrounds them. In the Koran, God reveals the final condition that deniers will reach as a result of their lack of understanding:

Or do they desire to dupe you? But the duped ones are those who disbelieve. (Surat at-Tur: 42)

Materialists have not yet realized that they are moving step by step towards the greatest defeat in their history. For example, when they have discovered that all images are perceptions in the brain, they have not been able to take into account that this will

cause the foundation of their belief to collapse. When a materialist scientist, at the end of his researches, discovers that things are not really what he had believed them to be, and that he actually deals with images formed in the mind, he has given a blow to materialist belief with his own hands. In one verse, God reveals that deniers will unconsciously fall into the trap that they themselves have set:

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

No doubt, the realization of this fact is the most horrible thing that could happen to a materialist. The fact that he merely has experience of copy images of everything he owns is, in his own words, to be sentenced to a living death.

Together with this reality, only God and they are left. In this verse, God points out the fact that everyone is totally alone in His presence.

Leave the person I created on his own to Me alone. (Surat al-Muddaththir: 11)

This remarkable fact is also revealed in many other verses:

You have come to Us all alone just as We created you at first, leaving behind you everything We bestowed on you... (The Koran, 6: 94)

Each of them will come to Him on the Day of Rising all alone. (Surah Maryam: 95)

In another verse, God reveals that deniers will be addressed with these words on the Last Day:

On the Day We gather them all together, We will say to those who associated others with God, "Where are the partner-gods, for whom you made such claims?" (Surat al-An'am: 22)

After this, deniers will see the loss and destruction of all the things they regarded as more important than God, things they thought existed in the world such as possessions, children and all the things around them. God reveals this truth in this verse:

See how they lie against themselves and how what they invented has forsaken them! (Surat al-An'am: 24)

The 21st century is a turning point in which this reality will be spread among all people and materialism will be wiped off the face of the earth. Why people believed what they believed in the past or held the opinions they held is not important. What is important is that, after seeing the truth, they must not resist it and not be too late to understand this truth which will be completely understood at the time of death. We must not forget that there is no escape from truth.

TIME IS A PERCEPTION TOO

At this point in the book it has been explained that we can never reach the original matter, thought to be an absolute existent, and that every person experiences merely copy images in his brain. And it has been shown how important this reality has been for the increase of fear and love toward God, the spread of spirituality and good morals and the collapse of materialism.

There is another concept similar to matter that materialists have considered eternal and absolute—time. But like matter, time is also a perception and is not eternal; there is a moment when it was created. This fact, which has now been established by scientific proofs, was revealed in several verses of the Koran.

Time Is A Concept That Is Formed From The Comparison Of One Moment With Another

Time is a concept that depends totally on our perceptions and the comparison we make between our perceptions. For example, at this moment you are reading this book. Suppose that, before reading this book, you were eating something in the kitchen. You think that there is a period between the time when you were eating in the kitchen and this moment, and you call it "time". In fact, the moment you were eating in the kitchen is a piece of information in your memory, and you compare this moment with the information in your memory and call it time. If you do not make this comparison, the concept of time disappears and the only moment that exists for you will be the present moment.

For example, a high school graduation ceremony is something in a person's memory. By comparing other pieces of information in his memory since the graduation, with the present moment, he forms an idea of time and, according to the information in his memory, he determines the length or the shortness of this time. But this sense of length or shortness is completely in his brain, and comes from this comparison.

In the same way, when someone sees a person bend over to pick up a pen that he had dropped on the floor and put it on the table, he makes a comparison. In the moment when the observer saw the person put the pen on the table, that person's bending over, picking up the pen, walking to the table are pieces of information in the observer's brain. The perception of time arises from the comparison of the person putting the pen on the table with these pieces of information.

Renowned physicist Julian Barbour defines time in this way:

Time is nothing but a measure of the changing positions of objects. A pendulum swings, the hands on a clock advance.⁴⁰

In short, time is composed of **a few pieces of information hidden as a memory in the brain; rather, it arises from the comparison of images.** If a person did not have a memory, that person would live only in the present moment; his brain would not be able to make these interpretations and, therefore, he would not have any perception of time.

The Views Of Scientists On The Idea That Time Is A Perception

Today it has been scientifically accepted that time is a concept that arises from our making a definite sequential arrangement among movements and changes. We will try to make this clearer by giving examples from those thinkers and scientists who have established this view.

The physicist Julian Barbour caused a great stir in the scientific world with his book entitled *The End of Time* in which he examined the ideas of timelessness and eternity. He pointed out that the idea that time was a perception was very difficult for many people to accept. In an interview with Barbour reported in *Discover* magazine, these comments are made about time being a perception:

"I still have trouble accepting it" he (Barbour) says. But then, common sense has never been a reliable guide to understanding the universe – physicists have been confounding our perceptions since Copernicus first suggested that the sun does not revolve around Earth. After all, we don't feel the slightest movement as the spinning Earth hurtles through the void at some 67,000 miles per hour. **Our sense of the passage of time, Barbour argues, is just as wrongheaded as the credo of the Flat Earth Society.**⁴¹

As we can see above, this renowned physicist pointed out that any idea we have of time being absolute is false, and that research done in modern physics has confirmed this. **Time is not absolute; it is a variously perceived, subjective concept depending on events.**

François Jacob, thinker, Nobel laureate and famous professor of genetics, in his book entitled *Le Jeu des Possibles* (The Possible and the Actual) says this about the possibility that time can move backwards:

Films played backwards make it possible for us to imagine a world in which time flows backwards. A world in which milk separates itself from the coffee and jumps out of the cup to reach the milk-pan; a world in which light rays are emitted from the walls to be collected in a trap (gravity center) instead of gushing out from a light source; a world in which a stone slopes to the palm of a man by the astonishing cooperation of innumerable drops of water which enable the stone to jump out of water. Yet, in such a world in which time has such opposite features, the processes of our brain and the way our memory compiles information, would similarly be functioning backwards. The same is true for the past and future and the world will appear to us exactly as it currently appears.⁴²

Because our brain works by arranging things in a sequence, we do not believe that the world works as described above; we think that time always moves forward. However, this is a decision our brain makes and is therefore totally relative. If the information in our brains were arranged like a film being projected backwards, time would be for us like a film being projected backwards. In this situation, we would start to perceive that the

past was the future and the future was the past and we would experience life in a way totally opposite than we do now.

In fact, we cannot know how time moves or, indeed, if it moves at all. **This demonstrates that time is not an absolute reality but only a kind of perception.**

The fact that time is a perception was proved by the greatest physicist of the 20th century, Albert Einstein, in his "General Theory of Relativity". In his book, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, Lincoln Barnett says this:

Along with absolute space, Einstein discarded the concept of absolute time – of a steady, unvarying inexorable universal time flow, streaming from the infinite past to the infinite future. Much of the obscurity that has surrounded the Theory of Relativity **stems from man's reluctance to recognize that sense of time, like sense of colour, is a form of perception.** Just as space is simply a possible order of material objects, so **time is simply a possible order of events.** The subjectivity of time is best explained in Einstein's own words. "The experiences of an individual" he says, "appear to us arranged in a series of events; in this series the single events which **we remember appear to be ordered according to the criterion of 'earlier' and 'later'.** There exists, therefore, for the individual, an I-time, or **subjective time.** This in itself is not measurable. I can, indeed, associate numbers with the events, in such a way that a greater number is associated with the later event than with an earlier one."⁴³

From these words of Einstein, we can understand that the idea that time moves forward is totally a conditioned response.

Einstein himself pointed out, as quoted in Barnett's book: "Space and time are forms of intuition, which can no more be divorced from consciousness than can our concepts of colour, shape, or size."⁴⁴

According to the "General Theory of Relativity", time is not absolute; apart from the series of events according to which we measure it, it has no independent existence.

Our dreams are very important in understanding the relativity of time. In our sleep we experience events that we believe go on for days but actually, we are having a dream which lasts for only a few minutes or even a few seconds.

In order to make this clearer, let us think of an example. Let us think of a specially designed room with one window and that we spend a certain amount of time in it. In the room there is a clock by which we will be able to see the passage of time. Through the window we can see the sun coming up and going down at regular intervals. After a few days we are asked how long we have stayed in the room. Our answer will be calculated by information we have received based on looking at the clock from time to time and on how many times the sun rose and set. For example, we calculate that we have spent three days in the room. But if the person who put us in the room comes and says that we were actually in the room for two days, that the sun we saw in the window was actually artificially produced, and that the clock in the room was fast, then our calculations would make no sense.

This example shows that our knowledge about the rate at which time passes depends on references which change according to the person who is perceiving it.

This is an example of how under different circumstances a person perceives the same amount of time as longer or shorter. Here is another example. For a person who is waiting for his brother to come out of an operation, one hour seems like several. But if the same person is doing something he really enjoys, he cannot understand how the hour passed so quickly.

Einstein scientifically established the following fact in his "General Theory of Relativity": The rate at which time passes changes according to the speed of a body and its distance from the center of gravity. If the speed increases, time decreases, contracts, moves slower and seems that the point of inertia approaches.

Let us explain this with one of Einstein's thought experiments. Suppose that there are two twin brothers. One of them stays in this world, the other goes on a space journey during which he travels almost at the speed of light. When he returns from space, he will find that his twin brother is much older than he is. The reason for this is that the time passed much more slowly for the brother who went on the space trip. The same example can be thought of in relation to a father who went on a space trip in a rocket traveling at nearly 99 percent of the speed of time and his son who remained on this earth. According to Einstein, if the father was 27 years old and his son was three, 30 earth-years later when the father returned to earth, the son would be 33 and the father would be 30 years old. ⁴⁵

The relativity of time is not something that is relative to the speeding up or slowing down of the clock; it comes from the fact that every material system, to the particles at the subatomic level, works at different rates of speed. In an environment where time was slowed down, a person's heartbeat, rate of cell division and brain activity would happen more slowly. In this situation, a person would go about his daily business unaware that time had slowed down.

The Concept Of The Relativity Of Time Is Revealed In The Koran

As we explained in previous pages, time is not an absolute reality; with discoveries in modern science it has been definitely proved that it is a relative perception. It is a wonder that this discovery made by science in the 20th century was revealed in the Koran 1400 years before.

For example, in some verses, it is pointed out that life is very short. A human life of approximately 60 years is said to be as short as an hour in a day.

On the Day He calls you, you will respond by praising Him and think that you have only tarried a very short time. (Surat al-Isra': 52)

On the day We gather them together—when it will seem if they had tarried no more than an hour of a single day - they will recognize one another... (Surah Yunus: 45)

In other verses, it is revealed that time is much shorter than people think it is.

He will say, "How many years did you tarry on the earth?" They will say, "We tarried there for a day or part of a day. Ask those able to count!" He will say, "You only tarried there for a little while if you did but know!" (Surat al-Muminun: 112-114)

In other verses in the Koran it is said that time moves with a different speed in different dimensions. For example, it is revealed that one day in God's sight is equal to a thousand years. (Surat al-Hajj: 47) Other verses speak of this:

The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day whose length is fifty thousand years. (Surat al-Ma'arij: 4)

He directs the whole affair from heaven to earth. Then it will again ascend to Him on a Day whose length is a thousand years by the way you measure. (Surat as-Sajda: 5)

In the style used in many verses of the Koran, it is clearly shown that time is a perception. For example, God speaks of a number of believers (The Companions of the Cave) whom He put into a deep sleep for over 300 years. Later, when He woke them up, these people thought that they had been asleep for a very short time; they could not imagine how long they had been asleep:

So We sealed their ears with sleep in the cave for a number of years. Then We woke them up again so that we might see which of the two groups would better calculate the time they had stayed there. (Surat al-Kahf: 11-12)

That was the situation when we woke them up so they could question one another. One of them asked, "How long have you been here?" They replied, "We have been here for a day or part of a day." They said, "Your Lord knows best how long you have been here..." (Surat al-Kahf: 19)

The situation referred to in the verse below is an important proof that time is a psychological perception:

Or the one who passed by a town which had fallen into ruin? He asked, "How can God restore this to life when it has died?" God caused him to die a hundred years then brought him back to life. Then He asked, "How long have you been here?" He replied, "I have been here a day or part of a day." He said, "Not so! You have been here a hundred years. Look at your food and drink—it has not gone bad—and look at your donkey so We can make you a Sign for all mankind. Look at the bones —how We raise them up and clothe them in flesh." When it had become clear to him, he said, "Now I know that God has power over all things." (Surat al-Baqara: 259)

As we see, it is revealed in these verses that time is relative and not absolute. This means that time changes according to the perceptions of the perceiver; it is not a concrete existent that exists on its own apart from the perceiver.

The Relativity Of Time Explains The Reality Of Fate

As we see from the account of the relativity of time and the verses that refer to it, time is not a concrete concept, but one that varies depending on perceptions. For example, a space of time conceived by us as millions of years long is one moment in God's sight. A period of 50 thousand years for us is only a day for Gabriel and the angels.

This reality is very important for an understanding of the idea of fate. Fate is the idea that God created every single event, past, present, and future in "a single moment". This means that every event, from the creation of the universe until doomsday, has already occurred and ended in God's sight. A significant number of people cannot grasp the reality of fate. They cannot understand how God can know events that have not yet happened, or how past and future events have already happened in God's sight. From our point of view, things that have not happened are events which have not occurred. This is because we live our lives in relation to the time that God has created, and we could not know anything without the information in our memories. Because we dwell in the testing place of this world, God has not given us memories of the things we call "future" events. Consequently, we cannot know what the future holds. But God is not bound to time or space; it is He Who has already created all these things from nothing. For this reason, past, present and future are all the same to God. From His point of view, everything has already occurred; He does not need to wait to see the result of an action. The beginning and the end of an event are both experienced in His sight in a single moment. For example, God already knew what kind of end awaited Pharaoh even before sending Moses to him, even before Moses was born and even before Egypt became a kingdom; and all these events including the end of Pharaoh were experienced in a single moment in the sight of God. Besides, for God there is no such thing as remembering the past; past and future are always present to God; everything exists in the same moment.

If we think of our life as a filmstrip, we watch it as if we were viewing a videocassette with no possibility to speed up the film. But God sees the whole film all at once at the same moment; it is He Who created it and determined all its details. As we are able to see the beginning, middle and end of a ruler all at once, so God encompasses in one moment, from beginning to end, the time to which we are subject. However, human beings experience these events only when the time comes to witness the fate that God has created for them. This is the way it is for the fates of everyone in the world. The lives of everyone who has ever been created and whoever will be created, in this world and the next, are present in the sight of God in all their details. The fates of all living things—planets, plants and things—are written together with the fates of millions of human beings in God's eternal memory. They will remain written without being lost or diminished. The reality of fate is one of the manifestations of God's eternal greatness, power and might. This is why He is called the Preserver (al-Hafiz).

The Concept Of "Past" Comes From Information In Our Memories

Because of suggestions we receive, we think we live in separate divisions of time called past, present and future. However, the only reason we have a concept of "past" (as we explained earlier) is that various things have been placed in our memories. For example, the moment we enrolled in primary school is a bit of information in our memory and we perceive it therefore as an event in the past. However, future events are not in our memories. Therefore, we regard these things that we do not yet know about as things that will be experienced or happen in the future. But just as the past has been experienced from our point of view, so has the future. But, because these events have not been given to our memories, we cannot know them.

If God puts future events into our memories, then, the future would be the past for us. For example, a thirty year old person has thirty years of memories and events in his memory and, for this reason, thinks he has a thirty year past. If future events between the ages of thirty and seventy were to be put into this person's memory, then, for this thirty year old individual, both his thirty years and the "future" between the ages of thirty and seventy, would become the past. In this situation past and future would be present in the memory, and each one would be lived experiences for him.

Because God has made us perceive events in a definite series, as if there were a time moving from past to future, He does not inform us of our future or give this information to our memories. The future is not in our memories, but all human pasts and futures are in His eternal memory. This, as we said before, is like observing a human life as if it were already wholly depicted and complete in a film. Someone who cannot advance the film sees his life as the frames pass one by one. He is mistaken in thinking that the frames he has not yet seen constitute the future.

Past And Future Are News Of The Unseen

In the verses, God reveals that the only one who knows what is secret, invisible, unseen and unknown is He Himself:

Say: "O God, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the Unseen and the Visible, You will judge between Your servants regarding what they differed about." (Surat az-Zumar: 46)

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-Jumu'a: 8)

He said, "Adam, tell them their names." When he had told them their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the Unseen of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you make known and what you hide?" (Surat al-Baqara: 33)

Generally, the word "secret" is thought to refer only to something unknown about the future; however, both the past and the future are secret. Those who have lived in the past and those who will live in the future are kept in God's sight. However, God gives some of the knowledge kept in His sight to the memories of people and makes it known. For example, when God gave knowledge concerning the past in the Koran, He told the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) that this was news of the unseen:

That is some of the news of the Unseen which We reveal to you. Neither you nor your people knew it before this time. So be steadfast. The best end result is for those who do their duty. (Surah Hud: 49)

This is news of the Unseen which We reveal to you. You were not with them when they decided what to do and devised their scheme. (Surah Yusuf: 102)

God gave the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) information about some things that had not yet happened which was news of the unseen about the future. For example, the taking of Mecca (The Koran, 48: 27) and the victory of the Greeks over the pagans (The Koran, 30: 3-4) were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) before they happened. The Prophet's (may God bless him and grant him peace) sayings about the signs of the day of

resurrection and the end times (which were news of the unseen to people of that time) show that God taught these things to him.

The Koran explains that news of the unseen is given to prophets and some devout believers. For example, it was revealed to Joseph that the trap set for him by his brothers will come to nothing (The Koran, 12: 15), and to the mother of Moses it was revealed that her son would escape the cruelty of Pharaoh and become a prophet. (Surat al-Qasas: 7)

Finally, all that we call past and future is news of the unseen hidden in the sight of God. God gives some of this knowledge to the memories of those He chooses, at a time He chooses, thus making them aware of some of the unseen. The events which become visible and observable are characterized by human beings as being past events.

The Importance Of Submission To Fate

The fact that past and future are already created in God's sight, and that everything has happened and is present at God's sight, demonstrates a very important truth. **Everyone is in complete submission to his fate.** Just as a person cannot change his past, so he cannot change his future, because, like the past, the future has already happened. Everything in the future is determined—when and where events will happen, what he will eat, who he will talk to, what he will discuss, how much money he will earn, what diseases he will get, and when, where and how he will die. All these things are already in God's sight and already experienced in His memory. But this knowledge is not yet in a person's memory.

Therefore, those who are sorry, upset, outraged and worried about the future, are anxious in vain. The future they are so worried and anxious about has already happened. And no matter what they do, they cannot change these things.

At this point it is very important to point out that it is necessary to avoid a mistaken understanding of fate. Some people misunderstand and think that what is in their fate will happen anyway so there is nothing they can do. It is true that everything we experience is determined in our fate. Before we experienced an occurrence, it has been experienced in God's sight and is written in all its details in the Mother of the Book (Lawh Mahfuz) in God's sight. But God gives everyone the sense that he can change things and make his own choices and decisions. For example, when a person wants to drink some water, he does not say "If it is my fate I will drink", and sit down without making any move. Instead, he gets up, takes a glass and drinks the water. Actually, he drinks a predetermined amount of water from a predetermined glass. But as he does this, he senses that he is acting according to his own desire and will. He senses this throughout his life in everything that he does. The difference between a person who submits himself to God and to the fate created by God, and someone who cannot grasp this reality is this: the person who submits himself to God knows that everything he does is according to the will of God despite the sense that he has done it himself. The other person mistakenly assumes that he has done everything with his own intelligence and power.

For example, when a person who has submitted himself to God learns that he has contracted a disease, knows that the disease is in his fate and he trusts in God. He thinks that because God has put it in his fate, it will certainly bring him great good. But he does not wait without taking any measures thinking that if he is fated to get better he will get better. On the contrary, he takes all possible precautions; he goes to a doctor, pays attention to his diet and takes medicine. But he does not forget that the effectiveness of the doctor, the treatment, the medicine, as well as whether or not he will get better are all in his fate. He knows that all this is in God's memory and was present there even before he came into the world. In the Koran, God reveals that everything that human beings experience is written beforehand in a book:

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. That is so that you will not be grieved about the things that may have escaped you or exult about the things that come to you. God does not love any vain or boastful man. (Surat al-Hadid: 22-23)

For this reason, anyone who believes in fate will not be troubled or despair about things that happen to him. On the contrary, he will have the utmost trust and confidence in his submission to God. God has determined in advance everything that happens to a person; He has commanded that we not be sorry for the things that happen to us, and be self-satisfied by the blessings that we receive. The difficulties that human beings experience, together with their wealth and success, is determined by God. All these things are in the fate predetermined by our Lord to test human beings. As it is revealed in one verse, "... **God's command is a pre-ordained decree.**" (Surat al-Ahzab: 38)

In another verse, God reveals that "**We have created all things in due measure.**" (Surat al-Qamar: 49) Not only human beings but also all things animate and inanimate, the sun, the moon, mountains and trees have their fate determined by God. For example, a broken antique vase was broken at the moment determined by its fate. While it was being made, it was determined who would use this centuries-old vase, as well as in which corner of which house and with which other objects it would stand. The designs on the vase and its colors were determined in advance in its fate. It was known in God's memory on which day, which hour, which minute, by whom and how it would be broken. The first moment the vase was made, the first moment it was placed in the window for sale, the first moment it was placed in the corner of the house, the moment it was broken into pieces, in short, every moment in the centuries-long life of this vase, was present in God's sight as one single moment. Whereas even though the person who would break the vase was not aware that he would break it until a moment before it happened, that moment was experienced and known in God's sight. For this reason, God tells human beings not to be sorry for the things that may have escaped them. What have escaped them escaped in accordance with their fate, and they cannot change it. People must learn a lesson from what happens in their fate, see the purpose and benefits that accrue to them from it. They must always incline themselves toward the endless mercy, compassion and justice of our Lord, Who creates their fate, and spares and protects His servants.

Those who lead their lives heedless of this important reality are always anxious and fearful. For example, they are very worried about the future of their children. They are very concerned about questions such as these: What school will they go to? What profession will they follow? Will they have good health? What kind of lives will they lead? However, every moment of a person's life is determined in God's sight, from the time he is a single cell to the time he learns to read and write, from the first answers he gives in

a university exam to what company he will work in during his life, what papers he will sign and how many times he will sign them, where and how he will die. All of these things are hidden in the memory of God. For example, **at this moment**, a person is in the fetal stage, at primary school and at the university. These are all in God's memory as **one single moment**, along with the moment he celebrates his thirty-fifth birthday, the first day he begins his job, the moment when he sees the angels after he dies, the moment when he is buried, and the moment on the Last Day when he will give an account to God.

Consequently, it is pointless to worry and be fearful about a life whose every moment has been lived, experienced and is still present in the memory of God. No matter how hard a person tries and no matter how anxious he may be, everyone, his children, spouse, friends and relatives will live the life that is present at God's sight.

If this is the case, a person of conscience and intelligence who grasps this reality must submit humbly to God and to the fate He has created. Actually, everyone is already in submission to God, created in subservience to Him. No matter whether he likes it or not, he lives subservient to the fate created for him by God. A person who denies his fate is a denier because being a denier is written in his fate.

Those who submit themselves willingly to God may hope to enjoy God's pleasure and mercy and to win paradise; they will live a life of well being in security and happiness both in this world and in the world to come. This is because, for a person who submits himself to God, knowing that there is nothing better for him than the fate created for him by God, there is nothing to fear or be anxious about. This person will make every effort, but he knows that this effort is in his fate and, no matter what he does, he will not have the ability to change what is written in his fate.

A believer will submit himself to the fate created by God. In the face of what happens to him, he will do his best to understand the purpose of these happenings, take precautions, and make an effort to change things for the better. But he will take comfort in his knowledge that all these things come to be according to fate and that God had determined the most beneficial things in advance. As an example of this, the Koran mentions measures taken by Jacob for the security of his children. In order to make his sons beware of people with evil intentions, Jacob advised his sons to enter the city by different gates but he reminded them that this would never influence the fate determined by God.

He said, "My sons! You must not enter through a single gate. Go in through different gates. But I cannot save you from God at all, for judgment comes from no one but God. In Him I put my trust, and let all those who put their trust, put it in Him alone." (Surah Yusuf: 67)

People may do what they like, but they will never be able to change their fate. This is revealed in this verse:

Then He sent down to you, after the distress, security, restful sleep overtaking a group of you, whereas another group became prey to anxious thoughts, thinking other than the truth about God—thoughts belonging to the Time of Ignorance—saying, "Do we have any say in the affair at all?" Say, "The affair belongs entirely to God." They are concealing things inside themselves which they do not disclose to you, saying, "If we had only had a say in the affair, none of us would have been killed here in this place." Say, "Even if you had been inside your homes, those people for whom killing was decreed would have gone out to their place of death." So that God might test what is in your breasts and purge what is in your hearts. God knows the contents of your hearts. (Surah Al 'Imran: 154)

It can be seen in this verse that even if a person runs away from a task in the way of God in order not to die, if his death is written in his fate, he will die anyway. Even the ways and methods resorted to in order to escape death are determined in fate and everyone will experience those things that are written in his fate. And in this verse, God reveals to human beings that the purpose of the things created in their fate is to test them and to purify their hearts. In the Koran it is said that everyone's death is determined in the sight of God and that the conception of a baby happens with the permission of God.

God created you from dust and then from a drop of sperm and then made you into pairs. No female becomes pregnant or gives birth except with His knowledge. And no living thing lives long or has its life cut short without that being in a Book. That is easy for God. (Surah Fatir: 11)

In the verses below it is revealed that everything a person does is written sentence by sentence and what those in paradise experience are also things that have already been experienced. As we said earlier, the real life of paradise is for us in the future. But the lives of those in paradise, their conversations and feasting is in God's memory at this moment. Before we were born, the future of humanity in this world and the next had been experienced in God's sight in a moment and is being kept in God's memory.

**Everything they did is in the Books.
Everything is recorded, big or small.
The heedful are amid Gardens and Rivers,**

on seats of honour in the presence of a Competent Sovereign. (Surat al-Qamar: 52-55)

We can understand from this way of speaking in the Koran that, in God's sight, time is a single moment and for Him there is no past or future. As we see, some events that will be for us in the future, are understood in the Koran as being long passed. This is because both the past and the future are created by God as a single moment. Therefore, an event which is related to occur in the future, in fact, has already occurred, but, because we cannot understand this, we think of them as future. For example, in the verses where the account to be given to God by human beings is described, it is understood as a long passed event.

And the trumpet is blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth swoon away, save him whom God wills. Then it is blown a second time, and behold them standing waiting! And the earth shone with the light of her Lord, and the Book is set up, and the prophets and the witnesses are brought, and it is judged between them with truth, and they are not wronged. Every self will be repaid in full for what it did. He knows best what they are doing. Those who disbelieve will be driven to Hell in companies and when they arrive there and its gates are opened its custodians will say to them, "Did messengers from yourselves not come to you, reciting your Lord's signs to you and warning you of the meeting on this Day of yours?" They will say, "Indeed they did, but the decree of punishment is justly carried out against the unbelievers." They will be told, "Enter the gates of Hell and stay there timelessly, for ever. How evil is the abode of the arrogant!" And those who fear [and respect] 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." (Surat az-Zumar: 68-73)

Some further examples of this are the following:

And every soul came, along with a driver and a witness. (Surah Qaf: 21)

And the heaven is cloven asunder, so that on that day it is frail. (The Koran, 69: 16)

And because they were patient and constant, He rewarded them with a garden and garments of silk. Reclining in the garden on raised thrones, they saw there neither the sun's excessive heat nor excessive cold. (Surat al-Insan: 12-13)

And Hell is placed in full view for all to see. (Surat an-Nazi'at: 36)

But on this day the believers laugh at the unbelievers. (Surat al-Mutaffifin: 34)

And the sinful saw the fire and realized they are going to fall into it and find no way of escaping from it. (Surat al-Kahf: 53)

In the above verses, the events we are to experience after death are described as finished. This is because God is not bound to the relative dimension of time and space as we are. God has willed all these events in timelessness; human beings have done them, experienced them all and brought them to a conclusion. The verse below reveals that every kind of occurrence, great and small, happens within the knowledge of God and is inscribed in a book.

You do not engage in any matter or recite any of the Koran or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it. Not even the smallest speck eludes your Lord, either on earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surah Yunus: 61)

ETERNITY IS HIDDEN IN GOD'S MEMORY

Some of those who do not completely understand that we never have contact with the original matter and everything we see is actually a complex of perceptions formed in the brain fall into error and draw wrong conclusions. For example, some people understand the explanations about matter being an illusion to mean that matter does not exist. Others think that matter exists as an illusion only when we are looking at it, but when we are not looking at it, it does not exist. Neither of these ideas is correct.

First, to say that matter does not exist, or that people, trees or birds do not exist is definitely wrong. All of these things exist and have been created by God. But, as we have explained from the beginning of this book, God has created all these things as an image or a perception for us. That is to say, after God created these things, He did not give them a concrete independent existence. Every one of them continues to be created at every moment.

Whether we see them or not, all these things are eternal in God's memory. All those things that have existed before us, and that will exist after us, have already been created by God in one single moment. As has been explained in the earlier chapter, time is an illusion; God created time and He is not bound by it. Therefore, those things that will exist for us in the future have been created in one moment in God's sight and they currently exist. But we cannot see them yet because we are bound by time.

Just as those things we will see in the future (or will exist in the future for us) are present every moment in God's memory, so, in the same way, things in the past do not cease to exist, but are present in God's memory. For example, when you were a fetus in your mother's womb, the day when you started to learn how to read and write, the moment you picked up your first school report, the moment you first drove a car, the time an old lady smiled at you when you gave her your seat on a bus, and other such things you experienced in the past, together with all the moments you will experience in the future, are at this moment in God's memory and will remain there for eternity.

Suppose you kick a stone as you walk along a path. The time when you would kick that stone was determined and created in your fate even before you were born. The fact that this stone fell off a larger piece of rock, and every stage at which each of its cracks and recesses was formed—all of these were present in the sight of God even before you kicked the stone.

The same thing is true of a dead butterfly you see in a garbage can or a dry leaf falling from a tree onto your head. From the time the butterfly was still a caterpillar to the time it left its cocoon, from the time its wings dried to the time it fell into the garbage, everything was predetermined in its fate. In God's sight, the living butterfly and the dead butterfly continue to exist and will continue to exist eternally.

Everything Is Recorded In The Mother Of The Book

As we explained in the foregoing section, God created in one moment every event and every creature that we perceive as past and future. In the Koran it is revealed that the fates of every human being and every other creature are hidden in the Mother of the Book:

And truly, it is in the Mother of the Book, in Our Presence, high in dignity, and full of wisdom. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 4)

... We possess an all-preserving Book. (Surah Qaf:4)

Certainly there is no hidden thing in either heaven or earth which is not in a Clear Book. (Surat an-Naml: 75)

In other verses, God says that everything that happens in heaven and on earth is recorded in this book.

Those who disbelieve say, "The Hour will never come." Say: "Yes, by my Lord, it certainly will come!" He is the Knower of the Unseen, Whom not even the weight of the smallest particle eludes, either in the heavens or in the earth; nor is there anything smaller or larger than that which is not in a Clear Book. (Surah Saba': 3)

It is revealed in these verses that, since the universe was created, everything animate and inanimate, every event which happens are the creation of God and are therefore in His knowledge. In other words, all these things are in God's memory. The Mother of the Book is a manifestation of God as the Preserver (Al-Hafiz).

Past And Future Are Actually Experienced In The Present

Because time does not exist in the sight of God, all things happen in a single moment, that is in the "present". All events which we think of as past and future are present to God; in His sight everything is much more clear and vital than we can perceive. For example, at this moment Jonah (pbuh) is being cast into the sea as a result of the drawing of lots; Joseph (pbuh) is being thrown in to the well by his brothers; he is eating his first meal in prison and leaving the prison. At this moment Mary is speaking with Gabriel; Jesus (pbuh) is being born. At this moment Noah (pbuh) is driving the first nail into the ark and leaving the ark with his family at the place God chose for them. The mother of Moses (pbuh) is putting his cradle into the water, Moses (pbuh) is receiving his first revelation from God in the bush, he is dividing the sea and the believers are passing

through it. At this moment Pharaoh and his army are being drowned as they cross through the sea and Moses (pbuh) is speaking with Khidr, Khidr is repairing the walls of the orphan children. Those who asked Dhu'l-Qarnayn to build a barrier to protect them are at this moment presenting their request and Dhu'l-Qarnayn is building the rampart that was not to be breached until the Day of Judgment. Abraham (pbuh) is at this moment warning his father, breaking down the idols of the pagans, and the fire they threw at him is giving Abraham (pbuh) coolness. Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) is at this moment receiving a revelation from Gabriel and he is being taken from Masjid al-Haram to Masjid al-Aqsa. At this moment the people of 'Ad are being destroyed. The dwellers in Paradise are on their thrones engaged in mutual conversation; the dwellers in Hell are being consigned to the flames suffering in great sorrow for which there is no remedy or recourse.

God sees and hears all these things, in this moment, with a far greater clarity than we can imagine. God can hear sounds at frequencies that we cannot hear and He can see things that we cannot see. All the events and sounds that we can perceive and not perceive are all present in the sight of God and experienced at every moment in all their vividness. None of these things is ever lost but continue in God's memory with all their details.

This is also true of all the events in your life. For example, the foundation of the house left to you by your grandfather is at this moment being constructed. Your father is now being born in this house. The moment you first started to talk is happening now. You are now eating the meal you will "actually" eat ten years from now.

The reality that all these examples present us with is this: no moment, no event or no existing thing has ever, or will ever cease to exist. As a film we are watching on television is recorded on a film strip and composed of several frames, and as our not seeing some of the frames does not mean that they do not exist, so it is with what we call "the past" and "the future".

It is very important to understand one point correctly: none of these images is like a memory or a dream. All of them are vivid as if you were experiencing them at this moment. Everything is vitally alive. Because God does not give us these perceptions, we see them as past. And God can show us these images whenever He wants to; by giving us the perceptions proper to these events, He can make us experience the events.

From these examples it can be seen that for God, past and future are both the same. For this reason, nothing is hidden from God, as is pointed out in this verse;

(Luqman told his son): "My son, even if something weighs as little as a mustard-seed and is inside a rock or anywhere else in the heavens or earth, God will bring it out. God is All-Pervading, All-Aware." (Surah Luqman: 16)

To Those In Paradise Who Desire To See It,

God Can Show The Past Just As It Happened

If a servant of God in Paradise wishes, God can show him things from the earthly life just as they happened. (God knows the truth.) For example, if a person in Paradise asks God to let him see his dead dog alive again, his burned house before it was destroyed, or the Titanic before it sank, God can show it all to him even more vivid than it was before. For example, as the Titanic makes its way on the sea, the fish surrounding it will all be in the same place as at that moment and the passengers will be discussing the same things using the same words. Or ancient great civilizations can be seen in the high point of their splendor and wealth. A person who is curious about the Inca civilization can see any period of this civilization whenever he wishes. Because every event continues to be lived eternally with the same vividness in God's memory, the person who wants to see an event will find everything present the same as it was.

In one verse, God reveals that in Paradise people will have everything they desire:

... You will have there all that your selves could wish for. You will have there everything you demand. (Surah Fussilat: 31)

If those in Paradise wish it, God will show them every worldly image and occurrence that will give them sorrow but will make them happy and joyous. This is a great blessing that God has prepared for His worthy servants in Paradise.

The Importance Of This Matter For Human Beings

This matter is of great importance for human beings because everything that happens to us in a day, even things we have forgotten by the time evening comes, the way we act, our attitudes and every thought that crosses our minds are unforgotten and kept in God's sight.

For example, a person gossiping with his friend forgets this; it is not important to him. But that moment when he gossiped remains forever in God's sight. Or if a person has a negative thought about Muslims, that thought, the moment he thought it, the expression on his face and the sentences he used all remain forever in God's sight. Or the self-sacrifice with which a person feeds his friend although he himself is hungry will remain eternally in God's sight together with the circumstances of that moment, and the attitude and the thoughts that were expressed. Or a person who remains patient in a difficulty for God's sake and speaks kind words to the one who is troubling him will not have his fine moral behavior lost, but kept for eternity. And on the Day of Judgment, God will question all the good and evil deeds that a person has committed; those things which people have done but forgotten will confront them unforgotten and unchanged. Some people will even be surprised that the book they are given in the course of the reckoning is so detailed and they will say,

The Book will be set in place and you will see the evildoers fearful of what is in it. They will say, "Alas for us! What is this Book which does not pass over any action, small or great, without recording it?" They will find there everything they did and your Lord will not wrong anyone at all. (Surat al-Kahf: 49)

For this reason, a person aware of this reality must never forget that his every act and thought are locked for ever in God's memory and will continue to exist there; he must take care and fear the Day of Judgment.

REPLIES TO OBJECTIONS REGARDING THE REALITY OF MATTER

Although the issue of the reality of matter is exceedingly straightforward and easy to understand, some people attempt to avoid accepting the only possible conclusion, for a number of different reasons, and pretend not to comprehend it.

Many people who have understood the problem have expressed their extraordinary excitement at learning "the secret behind matter," and how it has changed their lives and way of thinking. Many people try to go deeper into the issue, asking questions to try to understand it better. You can see some of the comments they make in the chapter "Those Who Learn The Secret of Matter Feel Great Excitement."

Others, however, stubbornly deny this extraordinary truth, and put forward various objections of their own in an effort to reject it. Anyone who does reject it has to scientifically demonstrate that images or sounds do not form inside the brain. Yet none of the objections that are put forward, from scientists, professors of neurology, brain experts, psychologists, psychiatrists or professors of biology, in short from anybody at all, deny that our perceptions are formed within our brains. This is because it is a scientifically established fact.

Despite this, some people try to cover the matter up by playing word games or adopting an overblown scientific manner. They try to avoid the evident truth which follows from the statement beginning "Since images form in our brains..." One of the clearest examples of this is the answers given by scientists who are asked whether images form in the brain.

One of these scientists replies: "No, images do not form in the brain. The incoming signals form a representation of a visual experience."

Let us now examine the method this scientist employs to ignore the truth. Asked whether images form within the brain, he starts out with a definite "No." He then follows up by saying that the signals form a representational image which enables us to see what we are looking at. So he is actually answering the above question in the affirmative. Of course the image in the brain is a "representational one". Our brains can never contain a real table, or sun or the sky. The image we have is a representation, in other words a copy. When we say we can "see the world," we are actually perceiving this "representational world", or "copy", or "imaginary world". These expressions are all different ways of saying the same thing. One scientist, asked whether what we see in our brains is a representational world, answers, "Definitely not. What we see in our brain is a copy of the world." In other words, he first rejects the question asked, but then uses a rather more confused explanation to confirm that we actually do see in our brains. This is a dishonest method resorted to by some scientists who fear that if they accept this truth

they will in turn be forced to give matter up, which they believe is the only thing that exists.

Others feel unable to deny that images form in our brains, but because they hesitate to say, "Yes, I see the whole world in my brain," they give a more meandering answer, "The brain simply processes the incoming signals and orders neural activity, that is how you see and hear." Yet in any case, the real subject of discussion is where the image forms once the brain has carried out all its processing. The answer provided by this scientist is not an answer at all but a short account of the stage before the formation of an image. The brain processes the signals, but it does not then send them back to the eye or the ear. For this reason, it is not the eye that sees, or the ear that hears. That being the case, what does the brain do after processing the incoming signals? Where is the processed information stored, and where is it turned into images or sounds? Who is it who perceives this information as images or sounds? When these scientists are asked for answers to questions like these, they try to avoid accepting the truth by offering long, convoluted accounts. Actually, it is a wonder that there is any debate about such an obvious truth at all.

However, all these ways of objecting to or avoiding the issue to hand are feeble and invalid. Until someone who objects to the reality that is described in these pages comes up with scientific facts to disprove that all our perceptions are formed within our brains, what he says will be of absolutely no worth. It is a fact that images and all our senses form in our brains. However, even though someone has clearly grasped this concept, he may still ignorantly insist on denying in his own mind the fact that it is God Who forms these images. He may say, 'I don't even like to think about it,' or 'It is uncomfortable to imagine that I can never see actual matter itself,' or "my life does not have any meaning any more." However, it should be noted that learning this vital truth about matter is not an uncomfortable situation at all. On the contrary it is a means to deeper perceive the might and power of God, better grasp His superior artistry of creation, love Him and hence the images around more by knowing that they are all manifestations of God, get more pleasure from them and live with a deeper meaning. In brief it's a great and precious blessing. Yet, some people who find it hard to understand the profoundness of faith may find it unnerving that nothing exists but God. Yet they can never say that they see what they do with their own eyes, or that what they see are the originals that exist outside them. That is because there is no scientific evidence or observation to show that that is the case, and neither can there ever be any. In any case, even the most determined materialists accept that images are seen inside the brain.

This chapter will mainly be devoted to replying to the objections of those who cannot bring themselves to accept this fact. Reading these objections and the replies to them, you will see that the replies are actually quite evident when examined with honesty and without prejudice.

Objection: "When you see a bus coming towards you, you get out of the way to avoid being crushed. That means the bus exists. Why should you get out of the way if you see it in your brain?"

Reply: The point where those who ask such questions are mistaken is that they think the concept of "perception" only applies to the sense of sight. In fact, all sensations, such as touch, contact, hardness, pain, heat, cold and wetness also form in the human brain, in precisely the same way that visual images are formed. For instance, someone who feels the cold metal of the door as he gets off a bus, actually "feels the cold metal" in his brain. This is a clear and well-known truth. As we have already seen, the sense of touch forms in a particular section of the brain, through nerve signals from the fingertips, for instance. It is not your fingers that do the feeling. People accept this because it has been demonstrated scientifically. However, when it comes to the bus hitting someone, not just to his feeling the metal of the indoor—in other words when the sensation of touch is more violent and painful—they think that this fact somehow no longer applies. However, pain or heavy blows are also perceived in the brain. Someone who is hit by a bus feels all the violence and pain of the event in his brain.

In order to understand this better, it will be useful to consider our dreams. A person may dream of being hit by a bus, of opening his eyes in hospital later, being taken for an operation, the doctors talking, his family's anxious arrival at the hospital, and that he is crippled or suffers terrible pain. In his dream, he perceives all the images, sounds, feelings of hardness, pain, light, the colors in the hospital, all aspects of the incident in fact, very clearly and distinctly. They are all as natural and believable as in real life. At that moment, if the person who is having that dream were told it was only a dream, he would not believe it. Yet all that he is seeing is an illusion, and the bus, hospital and even the body he sees in his dream have no physical counterpart in the real world. Although they have no physical counterparts, he still feels as if a 'real body' has been hit by a 'real bus.'

In the same way, there is no validity to the materialists' objections along the lines of "You realize that matter actually exists when someone hits you," "You can have no doubt as to the existence of matter when someone kicks your knee," "You run away when you meet a savage dog," "When a bus has hit you, you understand whether it is in your brain or not," or "In that case, go and stand on the motorway in front of the oncoming traffic". A sharp blow, the pain from a dog's teeth or a violent slap are not evidence that you are dealing with the matter itself. As we have seen, you can experience the same things in dreams, with no corresponding physical counterparts. Furthermore, the violence of a sensation does not alter the fact that the sensation in question occurs in the brain. This is a clearly proven scientific fact.

The reason why some people think that a fast-moving bus on the motorway or an accident caused by that bus are striking proofs of the fact they are dealing with the physical existence of matter is that the image concerned is seen and felt as so real that

it deceives one. The images around them, for instance the perfect perspective and depth of the motorway, the perfection of the colors, shapes and shadows they contain, the vividness of sound, smell and hardness, and the completeness of the logic within that image can deceive some people. On account of this vividness, some people forget that these are actually perceptions. Yet no matter how complete and flawless the perceptions in the mind may be, that does not alter the fact that they are still perceptions. If someone is hit by a car while walking along the road, or is trapped under a house that collapses during an earthquake, or is surrounded by flames during a fire, or trips up and falls down the stairs, he still experiences all these things in his mind, and is not actually confronting the reality of what happens.

When someone falls under a bus, the bus in his mind hits the body in his mind. The fact that he dies as a result, or that his body is completely shattered, does not alter this reality. If something a person experiences in his mind ends in death, God replaces the images He shows that person with images belonging to the hereafter. Those who are unable to understand the truth of this now on honest reflection will certainly do so when they die.

Objection: "It is true that I see all objects in my mind, but I cannot believe that all are copy images."

Reply: The fact that we perceive the whole world in our brains has been definitively established by science, and no right-thinking person can claim anything to the contrary. However, the point that people fail to understand is this: If we perceive all things in our minds, then will we never be able to know the originals of the objects that exist outside our minds? This doubt is valid: We never can be sure that what we perceive in our minds is the original external matter. That is because we can never step outside our brains and see what is really out there. That is why it is impossible for us to know how the external counterparts of the images in our brains really are. Nobody—not the person making the claim, nor a neurologist, nor a brain surgeon, nor a philosopher, nor anyone else—has ever been able to step out of his own brain to know how the matter outside it is.

Everything that a person knows about his life is perceived by the brain by means of the electrical signals reaching it. In other words, we always live in the worlds that exist within our own brains. The birds we see when we look at the sky, the car about to disappear from sight at the other end of the street, the things in our rooms, the book in our hands, our friends, relations and everything else—all of these are copy images that reach our brains. Nobody can step outside this life within the brain. Neither science nor technology can be of any assistance in doing so. That is because whatever a scientist may invent, he still invents it within that image in his brain. For that reason, the object he invents to see the outside world with still remains inside his brain.

It is not possible for anyone to know what matter actually looks like, because nobody has ever come face to face with the original of anything. From the time of the

first man right up to today, not one human being has ever heard the original of any sound, nor seen the original of any view, nor enjoyed the original smell of a rose.

Objection: " The pain when a knife slips and cuts my hand and the blood that flows from it are not an image. What is more, my friend was with me and saw it happen."

Reply: We actually considered the reply to this objection in the previous answer. Given the importance of the subject, however, it will be beneficial to run over it one more time.

Those who say this kind of thing ignore the fact that not only sight, but other senses such as hearing, smell and touch also happen inside the brain. That is why they say, "I may see the knife in my brain, but the sharpness of the blade is a fact, just look how it has cut my hand." However, the pain in that person's hand, the warmth and wetness of the blood, and all the other perceptions still form within the brain. The fact that his friend may have witnessed the incident changes nothing, because his friend is also formed in the same visual center of his brain where the knife is formed. This person could also experience the same feelings in a dream—the way he cut his hand with a knife, the pain in his hand, the image and the warmth of his blood. He can also see in that dream the friend who saw him cut himself. Yet the existence of his friend does not prove that what he sees is not a dream.

Even if someone came up just when he was cutting his hand in that dream and said: "What you are seeing is just perceptions, this knife is not real, the blood flowing from your hand and the pain in it are not real, they are just events you are witnessing in your mind," the person will not believe him, and will object. He might even say: "I am a materialist. I do not believe in such claims. I feel everything I am now seeing. Look, can't you see the blood?"

Those who insist that they have direct contact with the original matter are like the person we have just been considering. In the world of perceptions they live in, they hear the words, "All these things are perceptions, and you can never reach the original sources of these perceptions," yet they violently oppose this truth.

Yet we must not forget that nobody who cuts his hand just says, "This is only an image" and sits down without doing anything about it. That is because God has created effects binding people to the images they perceive. For instance, someone who cuts his hand puts something on it, bandages it or goes to the doctor. However, he merely has experience of images formed in his brain of all of these processes. The bandage and the medicine he puts on are all images that form inside the brain.

Objection: "Is saying that we only have experience of the illusion of matter we perceive in our minds compatible with Islam?"

Reply: Some Muslims suggest that the fact that we only have experience of the illusion of matter in our minds is not compatible with Islam, and maintain that religious scholars in the past rejected this fact. That is not actually the case, however. On the contrary, what we are saying here is in complete conformity with the verses of the Koran. It is exceedingly important for a definite understanding of many verses and subjects revealed in the Koran, such as heaven and hell, timelessness, infinity, resurrection and the hereafter.

Unquestionably, even if he is unaware of this subject, a person can still live in complete faith. He can have faith, with all his heart and feeling no doubt, in what God has revealed in the Koran. We must still make it clear, however, that an awareness of this subject allows such a person to deepen his faith and certainty. A number of Islamic scholars of the past looked on the matter from that same point of view. The only factors that prevented what they had to say from being widely spread and known were 1) the fact that the level of science when they lived was unable to totally clarify the subject and 2) the existence of trends that were apt to lead to its being misunderstood.

The most important of those Islamic scholars who explained the true nature of matter was **Imam Rabbani**, who has been widely respected in the Islamic world for hundreds of years and is seen as "the greatest reformer of the 10th century according to the Muslim calendar." In his book *Letters*, Imam Rabbani provides a detailed commentary on this very subject. In one of his letters, Imam Rabbani says that God created the entire universe at the level of perception:

I have used the following sentence above, "God's creation is at the sphere of senses and perceptions." This means "God's creation is at such a sphere that at that sphere, there is no permanency or existence for objects apart from senses and perceptions."⁴⁶

On close examination, Imam Rabbani is careful to emphasize that the world we see, in other words all that exists, has been created on the level of perception. All that exists outside this level of perception is the Being of God. Imam Rabbani explains that God is the only absolute being:

Nothing but God exists on the outside... Perhaps all of Almighty God's creation finds constancy on the sphere of perception... If it does have a fixed appearance, that is again only on the perceptual level. It only has permanency **thanks to God's artistry on that one level.** In short, it only has permanency and appearance on one level. It does not have existence on one plane and appearance on another... ⁴⁷

As a result, as we can see from Imam Rabbani's clear exposition, matter is not an absolute entity and we have only a very limited knowledge of it. All we can see is the image presented to us in our minds. It is God, the Lord of all the Worlds, who creates this image and presents it to us.

The great Islamic scholar **Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi** also believes that the only thing that has definitive existence is God, Who has created the whole universe only on

the perceptual level. He is known as "The Greatest Master" (Shaykh al-Akbar) on account of the depth of his knowledge, and in his work *The Essence of Wisdom (Fusûs al-Hikam)*, he reveals that the universe is but a shadow existence consisting of what is manifested by God:

I say that you must know that apart from God, all that exists, or everything in the universe, stands in the same relation to God as a shadow to a man. That being the case, everything apart from God is but His shadow... **There is no doubt that the shadow exists in perception.**⁴⁸

As Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi's words demonstrate, man is something that possesses the soul God has breathed into him, a manifestation of God. God is all that really exists, whereas man is a dream. This is a most important truth, and we would be making a grave error to believe the opposite.

Alongside Imam Rabbani, **Mawlana Jami** also expresses this astonishing truth, that he came by from signs in the Koran and by using his own powers of reason, in the words; **"Whatever exists in the universe is but a perception. It is like a reflection in a mirror, or a shadow".**

As we have seen, great Islamic thinkers have made this truth perfectly clear, and for this reason it is not credible to claim that it conflicts with the Koran and the Sunnah, or that it is rejected by the world of Islam. What is more, it must not be forgotten that it is a scientifically proven fact, which nobody can deny, that we see all that we do in our brains. Because this was not scientifically known in past times, it is quite natural that some Islamic scholars should not have referred to it. Furthermore, the fact that we cannot have direct experience of the original matter has been described in a perverted way by some circles, who have tried to do away with the rules and laws of religion in this way. On account of these twisted and dishonest views, some Islamic scholars have issued warnings against these dangers. However, these comments have deviated from the truth. They should not be compared with the comments we have seen above.

As we have stressed from the very beginning, the truth is that matter is created by God and we cannot experience direct contact with its original.

Objection: "If we are dealing with an illusion of everything, how can we explain some of the attributes of God?"

Reply: Some believers think that when we accept the true nature of matter, a curtain is brought down on many of the names of God, and that if matter is simply an illusion, the manifestation of some of those names cannot be explained. This is again an error that stems from shallow thinking and failure to understand the nature of the subject.

First of all, no force or idea can draw a curtain over any of the names of God. No scientific truth can prevent the manifestation of any of these names. It is God Who creates these truths in the first place. God is not bound by the things and laws He

creates. For this reason, no power or knowledge in the world can do away with any of these manifestations. Even thinking such a thing would be failing to appreciate the infinite might of God.

Furthermore, the fact that we are dealing with a copy of matter that forms in our minds is an important proof that, contrary to what these people may think, the manifestation of the names of God takes place at all times and in all places. That is because, just like a film, this image which forms on the perceptual level cannot come about of itself, and there must be something that displays it, and that means a Creator, Almighty God, Who brings it into being.

The fact that the image is permanent and unbroken is clear evidence that our Creator God continues His act of creation at all times. In fact, one verse says that the earth and the sky (in other words, the universe) are not fixed and unvarying, that they only exist by virtue of God's creation, and that they will cease to exist when that creation ceases:

God keeps a firm hold on the heavens and earth, preventing them from vanishing away. And if they vanished no one could then keep hold of them. Certainly He is Most Forbearing, Ever-Forgiving. (Surah Fatir: 41)

In the Koran, sura 27, verse 64, God reveals that He "**originates creation and then regenerates it**". In another verse, He draws attention to the fact that people are at every moment being created:

Do they make things into partner-gods which cannot create anything and are themselves being created? (Surat al-A'raf: 191)

In other words, **the reason for the permanent and unbroken nature of the images we see, is not that they have a fixed existence, but that God creates them at every moment.** So the manifestation of God's continuous creation can be seen at every moment, in everything a person sees or feels.

In consequence, this truth makes the manifestation of the attributes of God in the universe even clearer. For example, someone who knows that when he goes into a garden he has experience of only the images of all the fruit, flowers and trees presented to him in his own mind will recall that it is God, the **Provider (al-Razzaq)**, Who gives him countless blessings and beauties, and Who shows these images to him. Someone with a pleasant house who knows the true nature of all the furniture, antiques, gold and silver in it, in other words who realizes that he is only dealing with images of all these things in his brain, can never brag about his possessions. Just like the Prophet Solomon (pbuh), he identifies God, the **Giver (al-Vahhab)** as He Who shows the beauty of these possessions to him and makes him wealthy by means of it. Or, when someone convinces

another of the existence and oneness of God, that He is the only Absolute Being, together with the existence of heaven and hell, he thus sees the manifestation of God's attribute of He Who reveals the true path, the **Guide (al-Hadi)**.

We must here recall that it is a scientific fact that everyone sees the images, hears the sounds that accompany them, and feels their physical properties in his brain. We can never know, by means of our perceptions, what lies outside our brains. We can be sure, however, that there is a power as the result of which we see these images and hear these sounds, and who creates them in a relationship of cause and effect. That force is God. If He did not create these images for us, there would be no life in this world. In this way, God's creation and the manifestation of His attributes continue at every moment. For instance, God continues to create this book and the words in it, together with the colors in the pictures it contains, for whoever reads it.

This shows to us God's attribute of Creation (al-Khaliq), and the power of His creation. At this very moment, God is showing the billions of people on earth billions of separate images. Each of these images is created without pause, in perfect harmony, and down to the finest detail. Every individual is shown images without the tiniest error of detail. Thinking of this wonder will demonstrate God's infinite might and that He is the only Ruler of the Worlds.

When saying that matter was created on the level of perception, Imam Rabbani explains that the names of God are also manifested on the level of perception:

... The Glorious God **assigned an appearance from all appearances for names from all names in the sphere of non-existence with his Perfect Might. And He created it at the sphere of sensations and perceptions.** At the time He willed and in the way He willed... **The constancy of the world is not at the exterior level but at the level of sensations and perceptions...** Even in the exterior, there is nothing permanent and existing other than the being and attributes of the Almighty God...⁵¹

It is impossible for anyone who comprehends this truth to swell up with pride because of his success, wealth, property and titles. Since at every moment, in every place, he knows there is a manifestation of the name of God, and that he is perceiving an image that God is causing in him, he can never forget how helpless and needy he is in the face of God.

He believes in the truth stated in the verse below as "Haqq-al yakin" or with truth of certainty:

Mankind! you are the poor in need of God whereas God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy. (Surah Fatir: 15)

Objection: "This is an old philosophy that was once put forward by the idealists"

Reply: Because some people are very uncomfortable at the true explanation of matter, they try to compare the truth that we have experience of only a copy of matter formed in our brains to earlier philosophies. Developments in the sciences, however, reveal that this is a scientific fact, not a mere philosophical speculation. So these peoples' efforts are all in vain.

Besides, the fact that other thinkers in other times have supported an idea neither disproves nor makes it worthless. The fact that we have experience of a perception of matter has been understood and stated by people in earlier as well as our own times.

Furthermore, the ideas of the idealists of the past were not disproved by the materialists who emerged later. Therefore, saying, "This idea has been expressed in the past" proves nothing.

The idea that we perceive the world in our brains is not a philosophical speculation:

The true facts about matter are not something that has been discovered for the first time, although it is true that in the past they were discussed only in the form of a philosophical speculation. However, the facts have now been scientifically proved.

Many thinkers, religious scholars and scientists throughout history have brought this subject up and explained that we merely have experience of copies of matter. For instance, ancient Greek philosophers such as Pythagoras, the Elea School and Plato—with his allegory of the cave—have looked at the subject from that aspect. Documents that have come down to us show that false religions such as Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, as well as Judaism and Christianity, two of the true religions based on Divine revelation, have all discussed the matter. Prominent Islamic scholars such as Imam Rabbani, Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi and Mawlana Jami have also discussed the essence of matter in the same way. However, it is the Irish philosopher Berkeley whose ideas on the subject need to be given the most detailed discussion.

Berkeley said that we knew only the copy version of matter that formed in our minds. He came in for fierce attacks from the materialists of the time who believed that matter enjoyed an absolute existence, and who tried to silence him by insults and slander.

However, because of the lack of scientific facts at the time when they lived, neither Berkeley nor other thinkers were able to support their views with empirical evidence. As a consequence, it was not possible for the matter to be completely understood or widely discussed, particularly given the pressure from those who held the opposite view. Some of these incorrectly evaluated the truth they had discovered, and even though they came close to the truth, they were unable to draw the correct conclusions. Others with hidden agendas tried to drag the matter in a completely erroneous direction.

The Essence of Matter is a Scientific Fact:

In our time, however, "that we know matter as it is perceived in the mind," is no longer a matter of philosophical speculation, but has turned into a fact backed up by scientific proof. Advances in the world of science have revealed the functioning of man's

sensory organs. As we saw at the beginning of this book, this functioning is the same for every sensory organ. The signals coming to our sensory organs from the outside world are turned into electrical signals by our cells and forwarded to the perception centers in our brain by our nerves. So man sees, hears, smells, tastes or touches the world in tiny perception centers in his brain.

These scientific facts are now completely clear, and can be found in any book on physiology or high school biology textbook. The way images and perceptions form in the brain is now taught in a detailed manner in medical schools. As our knowledge has advanced, sciences such as physics, quantum physics, psychology, neurology, biology and medicine have clarified the factual details of the process.

For instance, the theoretical physicist Dr. Fred Alan Wolf, who has attracted considerable attention with his research and has written eight award-winning books, explains that quantum physics in particular has revealed that the world we see is composed of copy beings that we have experience of in our brains:

...there is something beyond all materialism, beyond the physical world, out of which all reality, the whole of existence, projects. This would overwhelm traditional dualism – and I take this view not as a mystic but as a quantum physicist. I think that our most modern understanding of the physical world suggests that there may be an ineffable realm, a mystical realm, an "imaginal" realm, out of which the physical world pops into existence. Kind of like what [the German physicist and pioneer of quantum mechanics] Werner Heisenberg suggested when he brought the notion of consciousness into physics – when he said that it's the observer who creates the observed simply by the act of observation... I see reality differently. Reality to me is more like a dream – I see a dreaming reality. **I envision a dreamer, or a great spirit, of which we're all a part... And I think that using this model we can achieve some real scientific breakthroughs, rather than attempting to reduce everything down to the simplest level.**⁵³

This scientist has seen the fact that we perceive the material world in our minds in the light of scientific discoveries, and is only one of the scientists who have done so. Those who reject this evident scientific truth do so for ideological reasons, not scientific ones. That is because these scientists do not wish to accept this fact, knowing as they do that it will completely undermine the materialism to which they are so stubbornly attached. In fact, Dr. Wolf makes it clear that this reality will exclude any possibility of materialism.

When we consider the scientific results that have been obtained, there is no credibility in treating the fact that we perceive the outside world in our brains as a philosophical speculation. **It is not a philosophical speculation at all, but a scientific fact clearly revealed by scientific discoveries.** It is a fact that everyone lives within, and which nobody can deny. Everyone, religious or not, knows that unconditionally, and even if someone does reject it, that rejection is meaningless.

Objection: "Is the subject of the truth of matter the same as the idea of the unity of being (Wahdat al-Wujud)?"

Reply: It is true that the idea of the unity of being is something that many Islamic scholars of the past have discussed while considering some subjects that appear in this book. However, what is being discussed here is not the same as the unity of being.

Throughout history, many scholars and thinkers have explained this principle. Some of them, however, have been led astray by a false idea, and have seen the things that God has created as totally non-existent. However, to say that we see an illusion of matter formed inside our brains does not mean that "none of the things we see exist." That is **because all the things we see, the mountains, meadows, flowers, people, seas, in short everything we see, everything whose existence God has described in the Koran, has been created and does exist. However, each and every one exists as an image.**

Everything created by God exists whether we see it or not. It has in any case been created, and as we have seen, it will continue to exist under the memory of God from the moment it is created until the moment it dies. (For further information see *Eternity Has Already Begun* by Harun Yahya).

As a result of this, the fact that we have experience of only an illusion of matter formed in our minds does not mean it does not exist. But this fact does tell us something about the true nature of matter i.e. that it is a perception.

Objection: "How can anyone love something he knows to be an illusion? If we accept that everything is an illusion formed within our minds, how are we to love our mothers, fathers, friends and the prophets?"

Reply: A person asking this question does not know, or has not understood that he is also an illusion. Whereas he accepts his friends and family as illusions, he accepts himself as absolute. However, like those close to him, he is also an illusion. The body he sees and touches, like those of those he loves, is an image that forms inside his brain.

Furthermore, the fact that such peoples' friends and family are also perceptions in their minds does not prevent them being loved. If someone loves his family and friends because of their corporeal or material existences, then that is in any case a false love. True love consists in loving someone because of the features manifested in him by God. For instance, although we have never seen the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace), we feel great love and affection for him because we know that many of the attributes of God, such as The Supporter (Al-Wali), The Sovereign Lord (Al-Malik), The Generous One (Al-Karim), The Trustee (Al-Wakil), The Guide (Al-Hadi) are manifested in him. Yet the only source of this love we have for the Prophet Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace) is the love and affection we feel for his true Lord, God.

Muslims love people, and all other things too, because of their love of God, and because all of these things are a manifestation of Him. For instance, a Muslim who loves a young gazelle, does so because God's compassion and love are manifested in it, because the lovable qualities God has created in the animal please him, and its appearance inspires a feeling of compassion in him. He does not love the animal itself, or any other creature, on its own as an independent entity.

A Muslim feels no independent love or ties for any person or thing. The origin of all love is the love of God. One Koranic verse says, "... **besides God, you have no protector and no helper,**" and stresses that man has no other friend than God. (The Koran, 2: 107) Another verse asks, "**Is God not enough for His servant?**". (The Koran, 39: 36) That being the case, those we love cannot be our friends and parents independently of God. For that reason, the fact that all our family and friends are perceptions in our mind just reinforces that truth. When we love our mothers, what we actually love are the qualities of God that He manifests in her, The Merciful (Ar-Rahim), the Compassionate (al-Rauf) and the Protector (al-Asim). Alternatively, when we love a brother believer, we really love the pleasing morality that God manifests in him. Since we hope that his character and nature will be pleasing to God, they are also pleasing to us. Since we see that he loves and fears God, we also take pleasure in this faithful image that God has created. For that reason, when we love someone, we are really loving God, and our love and affection for that image are really love and affection for their true source, God.

Those people who love others independently of God, as having an independent existence distinct from Him, are making a grave error. According to the Koran, love and devotion are only to be felt for God, and other things are loved for their manifestations of Him. God has the following to say about those who love people and ascribe to them an independent existence:

Some people set up equals to God, loving them as they should love God. But those who believe have greater love for God. If only you could see those who do wrong at the time when they see the punishment, and that truly all strength belongs to God, and that God is severe in punishment. (Surat al-Baqara: 165)

As it says in the verse, to ascribe to people or things a force outside the existence of God means to consider them the equals and partners of God. However, nothing that exists has the power to do anything or carry out any action apart from God. In many verses of the Koran, people are warned about ascribing powers to anything else than God:

Those you call on besides God are servants just like yourselves. Call on them and let them respond to you if you are telling the truth. Do they have legs they can walk with? Do they have hands they can grasp with? Do they have eyes they can see with? Do they have ears they can hear with? Say: "Call on your partner-gods and try all your wiles against me and grant me no reprieve. My Protector is God Who sent down the Book. He takes care of the righteous." Those you call on besides Him are not capable of helping you. They cannot even help themselves. If you call them to guidance, they do not hear. You see them looking at you, yet they do not see. (Surat al-A'raf: 194-198)

As is clearly stated in the above verses, it is not possible for anyone other than God to help anyone else. Not even a person's parents, children or friends, whose existence he assumes throughout the course of his life, can actually do anything to help him. Help from friends and family only happens by the will and permission of God. It is not even possible for someone to help himself outside the will of God. It is even impossible for anyone to walk, see or feel, in short to survive, if that is not the will of God.

Neither must we forget that things and people, of whose original existence we can have no idea, and we are dealing with only copy images of which, will be taken away from those who resist acknowledging this fact in the Hereafter. As revealed in the Koran, everyone will be called to account all alone. In other words, in the same way that everyone is actually alone with God in this world, so he will be called to account in the same way after death. God states this in a verse;

You have come to Us all alone just as We created you at first, leaving behind you everything We bestowed on you. We do not see your intercessors accompanying you, those you claimed were your partners with God. The link between you is cut. Those you made such claims for have forsaken you. (Surat al-An'am: 94)

When looking at a friend, for instance, everyone sees the image of a friend that God creates in his mind. If the nerves to his brain are cut, the image of his friend will disappear. It is only God Who is Living and Eternal. So how, in that case, can anyone be attached to anything, the original of which he can never establish contact with, and which only exists in his mind? It must not be forgotten that it is only God Whom a person must love and submit to.

Objection: "A person wants his loved ones to be as real and permanent as he is."

Reply: Some of those who object to this matter say: "A person wants his friends to be as real and permanent as he is. How can they be any different?"

Such statements show that these people have not understood what we have been saying about the true nature of matter, or else have not thought deeply enough about it. People who say such things are not "real and permanent" as they believe themselves to be, so they cannot expect their loved ones to be real and permanent. When one considers the matter, a person will understand that his own body is merely an image that God shows to his soul.

When some people feel their bodies, feel pain when they cut their fingers, or meet some of their bodies' physical needs, this may cause them to forget that their bodies are copy images. However, a person's own body is actually a perception, just like everything else, and nobody can ever know the original of the physical existence of his body. For example, the pain when one cuts one's finger is again a perception. So is the feeling of fullness one enjoys after eating something. Artificial signals from outside the human body can also produce the same feelings. However, nobody can ever know how the original of his own body is. It is the soul that God has given to man that feels pains or understands the words on a page, for that reason, the individual himself is also a manifestation of God. These people are not real and permanent, as they would believe.

Objection: "To conclude that the universe is a collection of perceptions means abandoning enquiry into how the universe functions, in other words science."

Reply: This is a form of objection generally put forward by materialists, and is used to show this subject, in their own opinions, as opposed to science and intended to negate it. However, it is clearly false and invalid.

God shows us the images we experience within ourselves as united by a network of cause and effect relationships, all linked together by laws. The images that form in our brains of night and day, for instance. We perceive night and day as being linked to the Sun and the movement of the Earth. When the image of the Sun in our minds is at its height, we know that it is noon, and when the Sun goes down, we witness the fall of night. When creating perceptions belonging to the universe, God created them together with a cause and effect relationship. We never experience daytime after the Sun has gone down. Thus science is the observation and study of this cause and effect relationship that God has created in our minds.

Let us consider another example: In the illusion within our minds, whenever we let a pen go, it falls to the ground. As a result of research into the cause and effect relationship that governs these kinds of occurrences, we discover "the law of gravity." God presents the images he shows us in our minds as linked to particular causes and laws. One of the reasons for the creation of these causes and laws is that life is created as a test. Science is born as a result of research into the order within which these laws and the collection of perceptions called the "universe" function. That is why it is very

important to study science, the laws that appear to govern the extraordinary images that God has created.

In conclusion, there is no justification for materialist claims that accepting the fact that we do not have direct contact with the actual matter means rejecting science. On the contrary, those who genuinely accept the fact see science as an important way of understanding this collection of images, and the secrets within them.

There is a great difference between this conception of science and that of the materialists. The laws of nature that we have discovered by observing the totality of images in question are the laws of God, Who created that same totality. The view of science held by materialists, who erroneously think that matter has an absolute existence, that the laws of nature stem from matter itself, and that it is these laws which actually created them, collapses in the light of this truth.

Neither must we forget that God possesses the power to create all these perceptions without the need for any cause or law. For example, God can create a rose without using a seed, or rain without the need for clouds, or shadow and day and night without the Sun. God reveals this fact in a verse:

Do you not see how your Lord stretches out shadows? If He had wished He could have made them stationary. Then We appoint the sun to be the pointer to them. Then We draw them back to Ourselves in gradual steps. It is He Who made the night a cloak for you and sleep a rest, and He made the day a time for rising. (Surat al-Furqan: 45-47)

As we have seen in this verse, God reveals that He first created shadow, then the Sun as a cause of it. Dreams are an example that can help us to understand this creation better. Although our dreams have no material counterpart, we still perceive the light and warmth of the Sun. From that point of view, dreams are indications that perceptions of the Sun can be created in our minds without its actually being there.

However, within this test, God has also provided humans with a reason for everything. Day is caused by the Sun, and rain by clouds. All of these are images that God creates individually in our minds. By creating a cause before an effect, God enables us to think that everything functions within specific rules, and thus enables us to carry out scientific enquiry.

Objection: "Is there not a contradiction between describing the being of God with the proofs of His existence in nature on the one hand, and saying that the physical world, put forward as a proof of His existence, does not exist on the other?"

Reply: Some people who have not fully understood the essence of matter mistakenly suppose that the statement "We cannot contact the original of the physical

world, all we are dealing with is the copy images in our minds" means "Nothing exists." However, saying that matter is a totality of perceptions or an image we perceive in our brains is not the same as saying that matter does not exist. There is a physical universe, but we can never know its original. We merely have experience of its copy, or illusion, in our minds.

That we merely deal with matter's illusion is very definite proof of the existence of God. That is because since nothing that exists on the perceptual level (just like an image) can possibly create itself, that shows there is a Creator—Almighty God—Who brings it into being. Thus, the fact that the physical universe is only an image is concrete proof of the existence and oneness of God. For that reason, there is no contradiction between the fact that we have experience of matter's image and existing things manifesting the existence of God. Quite the contrary, one is a logical consequence of the other.

God has created everything that exists. However, we only know their perception and images formed in our minds. Examining and studying the properties of these image-objects demonstrates proof of the superiority of God's creation, His art and His infinite knowledge. As a result, there is no contradiction between saying that matter is a totality of perceptions and then studying the properties of these perceptions and seeing the greatness, and might of God.

It must also be made clear that some people think that God only exists as long as there exist beings that think about Him (God is surely beyond that), and as a result of this a grave error, put forward a number of objections. However, if God wished He could eliminate all the images that He has created, and destroy all that exists, yet He would still exist. That is because He is infinite and timeless. Several verses draw attention to the fact that God can destroy whatever He wishes at any time:

Mankind! if He wanted, He could remove you altogether, and produce others instead. God certainly has the power to do that. (Surat an-Nisa': 133)

Mankind! you are the poor in need of God whereas God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy. If He wills He can dispense with you and bring about a new creation. That is not difficult for God. (Surah Fatir: 15-17)

God existed before anything else, and will continue to exist even if everything else ceases to exist. This is revealed in a verse:

Everyone on it will pass away; but the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity. (Surat ar-Rahman: 26-27)

Objection: "If we accept this account, then there can be no concepts of lawful or unlawful."

Reply: This is a completely unrealistic claim. The fact that we cannot be in direct contact with the physical world does not do away with the secret of the test. Even though we never get to know the original of the matter, what God has said to be forbidden is forbidden, and what is lawful is lawful. For example, God has forbidden the eating of pork. Saying, "I only confront the perception of pork" and then going on to eat it is evidently dishonest and unintelligent. Alternatively, saying "I only know the images of these people in my mind, so it does not matter if I lie to them" is not something that anyone who fears God and has understood what we are discussing could ever do. That applies to all the limits, commands and prohibitions imposed by God. The fact of what we are discussing does not do away with performing the five daily prayers, giving alms, for instance. The fact that the alms we give exist in the minds of the people we give them to does not mean we need not perform this obligation. God has created the whole world as a totality of perceptions, however, within these perceptions we are still charged with abiding by what the Koran has revealed.

In the past, some people twisted this truth to try and do away with the concepts of lawful and unlawful. However, they already possessed a twisted belief system, and they may have wanted to use this truth for their own ends. Yet it should be understood that the conclusion they arrived at was incorrect.

In conclusion, anyone who honestly considers the situation will clearly see that, for the purposes of the test which God gives us, it is not necessary to interact with the matter itself. God has created this test within the world of images. There is no basis to the suggestion that one needs to know the original of the matter to pray or distinguish between what is lawful and unlawful. Furthermore, the important thing is the soul. It is the soul that will be punished or rewarded with blessings in the Hereafter. For that reason, the fact that we confront an illusion of matter in our minds does not prevent us doing what is lawful and avoiding what is unlawful or carrying out our religious obligations.

At this point, we need to be clear that those who claim they have no responsibility for images will say, "We thought we were not responsible, that is why we are here," when they are sent to Hell. Even though Hell is an image, in the same way as this world is, its torments will still be suffered forever.

Objection: "Everybody says leaves are green when they look at a tree. Since everyone describes this tree in the same way, that means it does not exist in my mind alone."

Reply: What people around us call green, we also call green. However, is the color they call green the same green we see in our minds, or do they refer to what we see as blue, and call it green? There is no way we can ever know. As we have already seen,

there are no colors outside our mind. There are only different length light waves outside, and it is our brains which process these into colors. Thus colors form within us, and no one else can ever see the color we see in our brains.

This is a subject that has been discussed by many philosophers and scientists, and the latter have agreed that "We can never say whether someone else sees the rose which we see as red in the same way as we do, or whether what we see as blue he refers to as red." This applies to perceptions, not just colors. Daniel Dennett, for instance, expresses his thoughts on and interest in the subject:

Locke discussed it in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), and many of my students tell me that as young children they hit upon the same idea for themselves, and were fascinated by it. The idea seems to be transparently clear and safe:

"There are the ways things look to me, and sound to me, and smell to me, and so forth. That much is obvious. I wonder, though, if the ways things appear to me are the same as the ways things appear to other people."

Philosophers have composed many different variations on this theme, but the classic version is the interpersonal version: How do I know that you and I see the same subjective color when we look at something? Since we both learned our color words by being shown public colored objects, our verbal behavior will match even if we experience entirely different subjective colors – even if the way red things look to me is the way green things look to you, for instance.⁵⁴

Drew Westen, a professor of psychology from Harvard University, says that from the scientific point of view we can never know whether somebody else perceives a rose in the same way we do:

If perception is a creative, constructive process, to what extent do people perceive the world in the same way? Does red appear to one person as it does to another? If one person loves garlic and another hates it, are the two loving and hating the same taste, or does garlic have a different taste to each? The constructive nature of perception raises the equally intriguing question of whether, or to what extent, people see the world as it really is. Plato argued that what we perceive is little more than shadows on the wall of a cave, cast by the movement of an unseen reality in the dim light. What does it mean to say that a cup of coffee is hot? And is grass really green? A person who is color-blind for green, whose visual system lacks the capacity to discriminate certain wavelengths of light, will not see the grass as green. Is greenness, then, an attribute of the object (grass), the perceiver, or some interaction between the observer and the observed? These are philosophical questions at the heart of sensation and perception.⁵⁵

As we see, the fact that we make the same definitions, or call the colors by the same name, does not mean that we see the same things. To compare the perceptions of people is absolutely impossible, because everyone sees a distinct world within his brain

which belongs to him alone. The next objection includes yet another explanation pertaining to this objection.

Objection: "I am in a garden with two friends, and the three of us see exactly the same things. If what we each see in our minds is the same, how can you say that these images are illusions?"

Reply: The fact that you and other people see the same things does not mean that you see the original of matter that exists outside your minds. That is because you also see your companions in your mind. For example, when strolling with your friends in a fruit garden, in the same way that the apples, apricots, colored flowers, the sounds of the birds, the warm breezes, and the smells of the fruit and flowers all form in your brain, so do your friends, and the things you all talk about. In other words, your friends are walking in the garden you see in your mind, not one in the outside world. So the fact that your friends see the same things as you does not mean that you confront the original of all that you see.

When you watch a match in a stadium full of people, the fact that thousands of people see a goal being scored at the same time and react to it at the same moment is no proof of your seeing the real existence of the stadium, the players, the referee nor the thousands of people in the stands. The players, fans, cheering and everything else you see there all take place inside your brain. The player who scores a goal and the fans who rejoice at it are all inside you. You rejoice at a goal scored in your mind, and clap and cheer with the crowd in your brain. In conclusion, the fact that the people you see alongside you confirm what you see does not mean that you are seeing their originals that exist in the external world. No matter what their number is, the people you say are "right beside" you, are actually in your brain.

Objection: "We perceive the external world as it actually is so there isn't any abnormality in our behavior. For instance, when we come to a cliff, we stop instead of keeping on and walking over the edge."

Reply: This objection shows that the questioner is seriously confused, and has not understood what is being said. That is because the objection rests on the following claim: "There is a physical world out there. However, everybody sees that world differently in his own mind." This person thinks that such a claim is being made, and goes on to object to it, thinking that he disproves the claim by saying: "There is a material reality out there, and we see it as it is. Nobody sees it any differently. The proof of this is that when there is a cliff edge out there we see it as such, and stop walking."

However, the fact under discussion here is very different from what that person supposes. One case says, "There is an outside world, but we see this world differently from how it truly is." The other says, "We perceive all that we experience in our minds, and we can never make direct contact with any sort of original independent entity. For

that reason we can never know what these originals that exist in the external world are like."

The fact that we do not walk over the edge of a cliff does not mean that we have direct experience of the original matter in the external world. When we walk along a straight path and then stop at the cliff edge, we are walking along a path in our brain, and see the cliff edge in our brain. In fact, even if we do fall off the edge of the cliff, we still perceive doing so in our brains. That happens in exactly the same way as when a bus hits us, or a dog bites us, as we have seen above. When we fall off the cliff, the pain of any injuries or broken bones we suffer still forms in our brains.

Objection: " God shows us these images in order to test us. However, why should God, the creator of all actions, bring about such a test?"

Reply: Naturally, God has no need to test people to see their attitudes, since it is our Lord who has created all events, times and places. God is not constrained by time and place. What for us are the past and future have been lived and come to an end in an instant in His sight. However, God allows us to experience these tests and causes so that people should witness their own attitudes and understand why they go to heaven or hell. Someone who knows that God is his friend—that He is infinitely just, compassionate and loving—will accept this creation of His.

God shows us things that have already happened in His sight. He gives people the feeling that they are doing these actions themselves. Within that feeling, He announces by means of the Koran that we are responsible for everything He reveals. That responsibility is to obey all of our Lord's commands. We can learn beyond this only if God wills. If He wishes, God can reveal this secret and wisdom to us either in the world or in the hereafter. Or if He wishes, never at all. As stated in a verse, **'they cannot grasp any of His knowledge save what He wills'**. (Surat al-Baqara: 255) Whatever happens, God is our Lord and Protector. It is therefore our duty to trust in Him, who gives us so many blessings, and to be pleased with everything He creates.

Some people in the past have grasped the truth about the essence of matter, yet because their faith in God and their understanding of the Koran have been weak, they have produced deviant ideas. Some have said, "Everything is an illusion, so there is no point in worship." Such ideas are twisted and ignorant. It is true that everything is a perception presented to us by God. However, it is also true that God charges us to abide by the Koran. What we have to do is to carefully abide by His commands and prohibitions.

In the Koran, God reveals that He has provided very little information about the soul. God has created this image of a test for a certain cause:

We will test you with a certain amount of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and life and fruits. But give good news to the steadfast. (Surat al-Baqara: 155)

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)

There is considerable wisdom within this test. One of these is that we are tested and then it is determined where we will be in the eternal life of the Hereafter as a result. Further wisdom could lie in the way people can witness what they do throughout their lives, and see why the morality by which they have lived should lead them to heaven or hell at the Day of Judgment. But God knows the truth. All we can do is to pray that He will reveal His knowledge to us.

Objection: "From what we have seen so far, our perception will continue even after death. Will that last forever? Are heaven and hell nothing but totalities of perception?"

Reply: God has created the people in such a way that we can only perceive the world by means of images presented to our souls. In other words, we can only see the images presented to us in our brain, and can by no means see or touch what lies outside it. However, after death God will create the individual in a different manner. This creation will also be an image, in other words, we will see an image of heaven again in our minds, although we can never know how that new creation will be.

Nevertheless, the fact that heaven and hell are experienced as perceptions does not in the least detract from the pleasure received from the former, nor the suffering from the latter. In the same way that someone in this world feels pain when he burns his hand, so he will also feel the reality of this perception in the Hereafter. Feelings such as pain are also perceived in the brain. However, this perception, which everybody experiences, has been created to be exceedingly realistic, just like all our other perceptions. People can even faint from the violence of the pain they feel. In the same way, some images can cause people intense discomfort, even though they are created as perceptions in our minds. For instance, an unpleasant sight or sound, or a bad smell can cause great discomfort. The fact these are perceived in the brain changes nothing. **Therefore, even though hell will be presented to the soul as a perception, that fact does nothing to lighten the torment that will be experienced there.** In the same way that God creates the life of this world to be so clear and convincing that people assume it to be "a definite fact," He has the power to do exactly the same thing in the hereafter. God reveals in several verses that the torments of hell are quite unbearable:

... My punishment is the Painful Punishment. (Surat al-Hijr: 50)

We will make those who disbelieve suffer a severe punishment and repay them for the worst of what they did. That is the repayment of the enemies of God - the Fire. They will have it for their Eternal Home as repayment for their renunciation of Our Signs. (Surah Fussilat: 27-28)

The same thing applies to heaven. Everything a person enjoys or which gives him pleasure is a perception that forms in his mind. Someone enjoying a conversation with his best friend, for instance, is in reality doing so in his mind. Or someone enjoying the magnificent sight of a waterfall, and listening to the roaring of the water, is actually seeing sights and hearing sounds in his mind. There is no question about that. Yet that does not stop him enjoying that image. That is why God reveals in the Koran that heaven represents supreme achievement for people, and that it contains everything their souls will take pleasure from:

But those who heed their Lord will have Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever: hospitality from God. What is with God is better for those who are truly good. (Surah Al 'Imran: 198)

Their Lord gives them the good news of His mercy and good pleasure and Gardens where they will enjoy everlasting delight, remaining in them timelessly, for ever and ever. Truly there is an immense reward with God. (Surat at-Tawba: 21-22)

As for him whose balance is heavy, he will have a most pleasant life. (Surat al-Qari'a: 6-7)

Furthermore, someone who knows that it is God Who allows him to see these delightful images will take even greater pleasure from the fact. For example, someone who picks an apple from a tree, with its lovely smell and pleasing appearance, and thinks of God Who has created that smell and appearance for him, will enjoy that image even more than other people. God will prepare different images of heaven for each believer, and the best examples of whatever a believer's soul craves will be given to him there. In this world and in the hereafter, a person's only friend, protector and creator is God. All the prophets, apostles, devout believers, houris and others that he will see with him in heaven are beings that form the clearest manifestation of God's friendship, love and closeness.

It is quite evident that God allows us to receive this totality of perceptions throughout our lives. An honest person who realizes this can feel no doubt about His justice, flawless creation, and that He creates the best and most beautiful of everything.

God will also create heaven and hell within an image as perceptions. Yet that fact does not change the promises God makes in the Koran. While a person is offered the greatest joys and pleasures for all eternity in heaven, the terrible suffering in hell for unbelievers will also last for all eternity. God's creation is flawless, and He keeps His promises.

Those are people from whom We accept the best of what they have done and pass over their evil deeds. They are among the Companions of the Garden, in fulfillment of the true promise made to them. (Surat al-Ahqaf: 16)

As verses make clear, heaven exists at this very moment in the sight of God. He has created heaven and hell, and both of them exist, in time and form, in His sight.

Objection: "Can we never directly experience absolute existence? I am uneasy at knowing that I exist only in a world of perceptions."

Reply: Only God exists absolutely. Whatever else we see is a manifestation of God. People generally assume that they and others do physically exist, and that God permeates them, a bit like radio waves. (God is surely beyond that) Yet the truth is the exact opposite of that. In other words it is only God Who exists. We must not be deceived by the fact that we cannot directly see His Being. Wherever anyone turns, whoever he looks at, whatever he is actually seeing is the manifestations of God.

Furthermore, far from making someone uneasy, this fact should give even greater happiness to anyone who believes in God. It is a great honor that God is all that exists and that we, His servants, are illusions. That fact is cause for rejoicing. It multiplies the awe we feel for our Lord, and our submission to His infinite might.

It is also an important statement that people will naturally be freed from their worldly desires, and that will allow them to worship God without attributing any partners to Him. That is because saying "Something else must exist besides God," is actually attributing an equal to Him, and claiming that there is another power outside that of God. However, that can never be the case with a true believer. Such a person has no fear of anything but God. When he comes by any strength or power, he knows that these really belong to God. When a doctor finds a cure for his sickness, he praises God as the One who has really supplied the cure. He knows that the doctor is just an agent for the cure God has caused to come about.

God always creates the most beautiful and best of everything. That fact must never be forgotten. In one verse, God reveals:

Return to your Lord, well-pleasing and well-pleased! (Surat al-Fajr: 28)

A person must always be content with every event that God creates. In that case it can be clearly understood how this truth we are discussing can bring people closer to

God. What is more, when the Koran is read again with this truth in mind, the wisdom in many of the verses can be more readily appreciated.

It is true, however, that someone who does not believe in God, who is trapped by his worldly desires, who has no hope of the hereafter, and who holds materialist views, could be made terribly uneasy by this situation. It is truly disappointing and crushing for such people to understand that they confront only an illusion of all the things they desire and all the people they assume to have absolute existence. When they understand the truth, they will see that they have spent all their lives chasing illusions, and wearing themselves out in vain with their desires. They will see that they wasted their energies in denying the truth. They will be truly saddened by that, and even humiliated.

They will also suffer grave disappointment in the hereafter from assuming that all such illusions were truly real.

Those are the people who have lost their own selves. What they invented has abandoned them. Without question they will be the greatest losers in the hereafter. (Surah Hud: 21-22)

Yet, the fact that everything is an illusion, that God is all that truly exists, is a source of great joy to anyone who accepts God as his only friend and protector, and who genuinely loves Him.

Objection: "Is the end of this world of perception nothingness? Can people remain in that nothingness?"

Reply: One of the things that prevent people from thinking about this subject is that they are frightened of remaining in complete nothingness. When they consider the implications of this, they realize that they can never know the original of what they think they touch. However, nothing apart from the will of God can remove any of the causes that He has created to test us in this world. These causes will continue to be created until the moment of our death.

We will continue to undergo such tests as feeling the hardness of a table, seeing our blood when we cut our hand, pain, suffering, fear and sickness. The fact that we live in a world of nothing but perceptions will not do away with our close connection to such causes. Even when we die, there will still not be nothingness. As God has revealed in the Koran, we will begin a new life of different dimensions and causes. There is no reason to think that we will end up in nothingness. Since God has created human beings in this environment which tests us, He will continue to provide us with perceptions. That is in fact what He reveals in the Koran. When our perceptions in this world cease, perceptions of the hereafter will start, and we will never feel ourselves to be in nothingness.

Objection: "Can someone who understands that he can never reach the world existing outside his brain continue to be tested in this world?"

Reply: This is a very important subject. Some people suggest that the test will come to an end when this truth is finally understood. However, that is a dishonest idea. As we have already seen in other replies, the test will continue as long as we live.

Even though God causes us to live in a way in which we can never confront the original matter, He also links the world to all its many causes and effects. For instance, when we are hungry we eat something. We do not say, "It is all an illusion, so it does not matter." If we do not eat, we grow weak and eventually die. God can remove these causes and effects whenever He wishes, for whoever He wishes, by whatever means He wishes. We can never know when or why He will do this. However, this is a most important truth: God charges us with abiding by the whole of the Koran, and we continue to live in the sphere of causes in order to abide by the divine commandments in it. For example, God commands people to do good and avoid evil. He orders defenseless women and children to be spared cruelty and suffering. In the Koran God asks "Why are you not fighting in their name?" It would be completely wrong and dishonest to adopt an attitude rejecting these responsibilities that God has placed on our shoulders.

On the contrary, someone who is aware that it is God Who shows him everything that goes on will feel an enormous obligation in response to every image he sees. Unlike many people, he will always try to support good and prevent evil. That responsibility can never be passed on to others, and no excuses to the effect of "Let someone else do a bit, I've done all I can" are acceptable. Someone who knows the true facts of the situation will say, "If God is showing me this image, then He wants me to find a solution, and I am responsible for doing so."

In conclusion, everyone must do all he can to carry out the responsibilities laid on his shoulders in the Koran. Knowing the true nature of matter -and coming by a view of the world in accordance with that nature- further strengthens all our efforts to gain God's good pleasure, and increases our determination many times over.

Objection: "Is it really true that God is everywhere? Does His sovereignty not lie in the heavens?"

Reply: Some people believe in the existence of themselves, matter, and the world they see around them. They think of God as an illusion that somehow surrounds this existing matter. (God is surely beyond that) Or, since they cannot see God with their own eyes, they say "God must be somewhere we cannot see, in space, or somewhere far away in the sky." (God is surely beyond that) These are all enormous mistakes.

God is everywhere, not just in the heavens. As the only thing that truly exists, God permeates all the universe, all people, and all places and He manifests Himself in the entire universe. Wherever you turn, the face of God is there. According to the accounts related, our Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) told a person who says that God is in the heavens that he's telling the truth. However, this account does in no way conflict with the fact that He is everywhere. Since if one person on earth at one point on your location holds his hands up and prays to God and assumes that He is in the

heavens and if another person at the South Pole turns to God in the same way and yet another person at the North Pole also holds his hands up, and another in Japan, another in America and yet another on the equator all turn to Him holding their hands up to heaven, then it's impossible to talk about any fixed direction. In the same way if the djinns, angels, satans at different points of the universe and the space pray towards the heavens, then a fixed heaven or direction would be out of the question to discuss and it would cover the entire universe. Wherever you turn, the manifestation of God is there. As we have seen in earlier sections, it has been revealed in several verses of the Koran that God is everywhere, closer to us than our own bodies, and that wherever we turn we see the face of God. For instance, He says **"... His Footstool encompasses the heavens and the earth..."** (Surat al-Baqara: 255) Another verse stresses that there is no doubt that the Lord encircles all that people do:

"... But my Lord encompasses everything that you do! " (Surah Hud: 92)

As is revealed in the Koran, God is not solely in the heavens. God is everywhere. This truth has been given us by means of the Koran.

The explanation of the secret behind matter will enable people to understand these verses better. Those people who see that matter has no absolute existence will understand that God is everywhere, that He sees and hears them every moment, that He witnesses everything and is closer to them than their own bodies, and that He hears every prayer offered to Him.

Conclusion: Hell Is The Home Of Argument

In the Koran, God draws attention to human beings' argumentative natures, **"We have variegated throughout this Koran all kinds of examples for people, but, more than anything else, man is argumentative!"** (Surat al-Kahf: 54) Some people pretend not to understand the simplest truths, no matter how clear they are, especially if they think these truths conflict with their own interests. They go into unnecessary detail, ask pointless questions that can never lead to any definitive conclusion, and reveal an argumentative nature. On account of that character trait, some people throughout history have argued with all the prophets and messengers chosen by God, and put forward unrealistic arguments to oppose the clear truth that has been given to them. The aim behind this opposition was not a genuine desire to learn the truth, but rather a wish to make difficulties in their own opinions so they could ignore it.

We must exclude here those people who ask questions out of a genuine desire to learn the truth, consider and understand it. Of course it is totally reasonable and necessary to ask questions about this very important subject, and to refer to those who know more about it, since most people will have come across it for the first time in their lives and it will completely change their ways of looking at the world. It is also evident

that people who ask questions out of a genuine desire to understand are different from those who are simply argumentative and skeptical and lack all understanding. The people we are talking about here are those who refuse to see the truth, and who have grown used to argument and denial.

God describes the state of mind of such argumentative types in a verse:

They retort, "Who is better then, our gods or him?" They only say this to you for argument's sake. They are indeed a disputatious people. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 58)

One of the examples of stubborn and argumentative people given in the Koran is Pharaoh. Although the prophet Moses (pbuh) explained the whole truth to him quite clearly, he asked a question that had nothing to do with what the prophet had been saying, the answer to which could not possibly do him any good. This is the question he asked the Prophet Moses (pbuh) when told about the existence of God:

He said, "What about the previous generations?" (Surah Ta Ha: 51)

It is evident that Pharaoh only asked the question to start an argument. There was no sincere desire to learn in it, and he thought in his own feeble mind that the Prophet Moses (pbuh) would have no answer. However, the prophet immediately understood why he asked it, and, as revealed in the verse, gave him a clear reply:

He said, "Knowledge of them is with my Lord in a Book. My Lord does not misplace nor does He forget." (Surah Ta Ha: 52)

Naturally, argumentative and denying natures are not restricted to Pharaoh and similar types who lived in the past. A large part of people today are always ready to start an argument about subjects that clash with their own interests, and particularly about religion. They do not really want to understand a subject that is perfectly obvious if approached with a measure of honesty. This is immediately clear from their attitudes and the questions they ask. Subjects such as destiny and the nature of matter in particular, such as we have been considering in this book, are some that people most often try to ignore. For that reason, questions asked about these subjects are often inspired by a wish to convince themselves such things are not true, rather than a sincere inquiry into the truth. For instance, those who ask, "If everything is an image, what is the purpose of carrying out our religious duties?" cannot realize what a meaningless question that is. The only reason they suggest the fact that man is created as an image should stop him praying, or the fact that food is an image should stop some things from

being unlawful, is simply to raise an objection, without thinking about the matter at all. Their sole aim, which lacks any logic, is to refuse to accept the truth.

Believers, however, immediately accept the truth when they see it, and abide by it. They say, "We have heard and obeyed," as the Koran puts it. When argumentative types ask them questions, they give clear replies without getting drawn into polemics. God has revealed that believers give this kind of reply when questioned by those who want to have an argument:

Say, "Do you argue with us about God when He is our Lord and your Lord? We have our actions and you have your actions. We act for Him alone." (Surat al-Baqara: 139)

Those who argue with true believers, who refuse to understand that God is all that truly exists and that they themselves actually belong to God, thus rejecting obvious truths, and who, with their foolish minds, question the existence of heaven and hell, the compassion of God, and His justice with illogical questions must understand the following: They will continue these arguments in hell. Koranic verses describe hell as a place of eternal argument and conflict:

Arguing in it with one another, they will say, "By God, we were plainly misguided" (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 96-97)

When they are squabbling with one another in the Fire, the weak will say to those deemed great, "We were your followers, so why do you not relieve us of a portion of the Fire?" Those deemed great will say, "All of us are in it. God has clearly judged between His servants." (Surah Ghafir: 47-48)

As we have seen in the above verses, the deniers will continue to argue even in the flames of hell. In other verses, Allah reveals the following about those who try to argue with believers, and cites their words:

They will say, "Our Lord, give him who brought this on us double the punishment in the Fire!" They will say, "How is it that we do not see some men whom we used to count among the worst of people? Did we turn them into figures of fun? Did our eyes disdain to look at them?" All this is certainly true - the bickering of the people of the Fire. (Surah Sad: 61-64)

The souls in hell will still continue to argue in those dark and narrow places, under the iron cudgels and the boiling water poured over them, as their skins melt from the heat of the flames. The pointless debates will go on, and they will keep asking each other

why they are suffering these torments. They will continue to fall out over God and the believers:

Here are two rival groups who disputed concerning their Lord. Those who disbelieve will have garments of fire cut out for them, and boiling water poured over their heads, which will melt the contents of their bellies as well as their skin, and they will be beaten with cudgels made of iron. Every time they want to come out of it, because of their suffering, they will be driven back into it: "Taste the punishment of the Burning!" (Surat al-Hajj: 19-22)

However, they will never be able to come to any conclusion from these debates. The unbelievers who argued over the truth in this world, and thus ignored it, will continue arguing in the pains of hell, in great sorrow, which will never cease—unless God wills.

The continuation of this debate among the companions of hell is a sign that not even when they see the fires of hell will those who do not believe come to understand the truth of what they are talking about. They will continue to deny, even among the torments of hell:

Those in the Fire will say to the custodians of Hell, "Call on your Lord to make the punishment less for us for just one day." They will ask, "Did your Messengers not bring you the Clear Signs?" They will answer, "Yes." They will say, "Then you call!" But the calling of the disbelievers only goes astray. (Surah Ghafir: 49-50)

The bad manners and attitude of these people, who will continue to refuse to call on to their Lord even in the fires of hell and to be swollen with pride, are clear for all to see. No matter how many examples are given them, no matter how much proof, they still will not understand. God reveals how some people will never believe in another verse:

They have sworn by God with their most earnest oaths that if a Sign comes to them they will believe in it. Say: "The Signs are in God's control alone." What will make you realize that even if a Sign did come, they would still not believe? (Surat al-An'am: 109)

For that reason, we must not be surprised if some people refuse to accept the truth of what we have been discussing here, no matter how clear and evident it is. Their stubbornness in the face of the truth is actually a revelation from God.

CONCLUSION: THE TRUTH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

An increasing number of people are coming to accept this truth, which changes people's fundamental ideas and makes them firm believers in God. Accepting this truth enables people to love and willingly abide by all the features of that pleasing morality revealed in the Koran, and removes all evil feelings—such as competitiveness, hatred and enmity—and replaces them with love, compassion and humility, which is the true nature of matter. Those who say, **"How is it that it took me so long to realize a truth so obvious and simple as this?"** are in the majority.

It is very important that anyone who understands this one truth should tell others about it. It enables people to definitively grasp other difficult subjects, such as destiny, time, death, the resurrection, heaven and hell. Everyone who does this will both enable others to understand the Koran better and more quickly, and will be a means whereby people turn rapidly to the true path.

God has given the glad tidings that when nothing is associated with Him, when only He is worshipped, when only He is accepted as the one deity and the one power, then the morality of the Koran will rule on the earth:

God has promised those of you who believe and do right actions that He will make them successors in the land as He made those before them successors, and will firmly establish for them their religion with which He is pleased and give them, in place of their fear, security. "They worship Me, not associating anything with Me." Any who disbelieve after that, such people are deviators. (Surat an-Nur: 55)

For the morality of the Koran to hold sway all over the world, the most important condition is for people to believe that there is no other power than God. The subjects discussed in this book need to be thoroughly understood in order to get rid of such polytheistic ideas as thinking that matter has an absolute existence outside God, that He can only permeate matter in an illusory manner, to see God as an entity just as abstract as intelligence, to imagine that human beings have a power other than God, that people can change their destiny if they choose, (surely God is beyond all these) or that time and place are absolute. Those who ask why the matter is so important and why we devote space to this subject at every available opportunity in all our books, should think some more about it.

God is the only being to exist absolutely. He sees and hears us as we read or think about this book and knows the secrets of our hearts. God surrounds us from every direction. **God exists absolutely. It is we His servants who are abstract. This fact**

is a source of great joy and beauty to all who love God and realize that they are His servants. It cannot be right for Muslims to seek to avoid this truth. Muslims must accept the truth with all their hearts, not diminish themselves in the sight of God by ignoring it. God issues a warning to His believing servants in the Koran:

Do not mix up truth with falsehood and knowingly hide the truth. (Surat al-Baqara: 42)

We must not forget that the revelation of this truth will be a means whereby materialism will be overthrown, and spirituality and pleasing morality will rule the earth. People in materialist circles who realize this are very uneasy when this truth is revealed, and resort to the most ridiculous and desperate means to prevent it from reaching peoples' ears. This is because they know it will undermine the entire basis of their philosophy. However, the truth about matter has now been revealed in complete clarity and openness. This truth, which used to be just a philosophical speculation because of the lack of scientific evidence, has now been totally validated scientifically. Frederick Vester, for instance, who grasped the truth of the matter, has this to say,

The statements of certain thinkers that "man is an image, everything experienced is temporary and deceptive, and this universe is a shadow," seem to be proven by science in our day.⁵⁶

All materialist squirming is to no avail. Now that knowledge can be communicated all over the world in the blink of an eye, this truth that they have tried to hide from peoples' eyes for hundreds of years is **now being read, learned and explained everywhere, from Guyana to England, America to Indonesia, Singapore to Sweden, and even in the strongholds of materialism, Russia, China, Cuba and Albania.** Materialism is falling apart with the greatest collapse in history. That is because it has today been realized that we can never approach the original of matter. **If we can never have a direct relationship with matter, then there can be no materialism.**

This important fact, which makes it easier to understand a number of signs and subjects in various verses of the Koran, completely demolishes the superstitious and antireligious belief that is materialism. This is a major development. God states in the Koran:

Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away! Woe without end for you for what you portray! (Surat al-Anbiya': 18)

As is revealed in this verse, when the truth comes to replace falsehood, matter, which is the brain of materialism, which is a false ideology, also disappears. No materialist has the slightest chance of holding back or changing this fact.

THOSE WHO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT MATTER FEEL GREAT EXCITEMENT

The letters below are from people who read about 'The Secret Behind Matter,' in previously published books. These extracts from these letters contain only their thoughts after learning the truth.

- The fact that matter is an illusion is so enormous that it seems almost impossible to describe it. For instance: Can you imagine the excitement felt by someone who dies and returns to life? Or the ineffable excitement felt by someone who flies through the air, walks through a wall, or is in several places at the same time? Yet this matter is not comparable even to those miraculous states. The word extraordinary is mild in comparison. Even to say that it is wonderfully strange and exciting is insufficient. It is an incomparable manifestation of God's deep and sublime art. Yet what I do not understand, how was it that something so easy to grasp was hidden from man's understanding for so many years? How did mankind fail to realize it? Or else were those who did realize frightened, and so chose to tell nobody? I read it once and immediately understood. Everything is perfectly obvious... K.H.G. Frankfurt

- We must immediately tell this truth, which shocks man's reason, to everyone. What are we waiting for? Is it not perfectly clear? We must immediately use all possible means to tell the world about it. This truth will bring people closer to God. In my view, this is a truth that will rock everything in the world to its foundations. I can find no other words to say. My respects to you, and may God have you in His keeping.' F.E. Ankara

- I read the chapter "The Secret Behind Matter" at the back of *The Evolution Deceit*. There is one thing I did not understand. It is something rather odd. What is this thing, this me, inside me? What a great secret this is. I wonder when people will ever understand it. It is perfectly clear, and not hard to grasp at all. Why did it take us so long to understand? When everyone in the world understands it, I think there will be countless revolutions in science. I do not know what to call this situation. I was amazed, stunned. I gave thanks to the great God. I now understand everything better. Yet I find it rather difficult to explain it to others. Some people fail to understand. They say they are standing in front of me. Yet when they say so, I am an image in their brains. That person thinks I am outside. I am now simply wondering how better to explain by amazement. I am waiting for this subject in your new book. If the examples are all taken from daily life, it will be easier to explain things to others. S.K. Muğla.

- Dear Mr. Yahya, I have read 'The Secret Behind Matter' in your books many times. My view is that matter is definitely an illusion. This is something wondrous, that life is just like a dream. It has affected me in an extraordinary way. However, the impression that we deal with the original of matter, and the feelings it inspires in me, are so convincing that I generally live as if it is real. Yet when I think about it for a moment, I

immediately clearly feel that matter is just an illusion. Yet it is really so believable. I laugh at myself. Sometimes, something annoys me so much that I raise my voice. Then I am embarrassed when I remember the image in my brain I shouted at. What an astounding creation we have. The idea that I feel matter is so powerful that nobody who did not know the truth could ever doubt it. I sometimes look at the Bosphorus. I think about how long it would take to get to the opposite shore. I look into the distance. Then I think. Even the place I believe to be furthest away is inside me, in my brain, inside my brain as an image in other words. Man is an extraordinary creature. God has created him with such splendid knowledge that I do not exactly know how to describe or talk about it. Let me say, however: I hope that you and your work will find favor with God for giving us this great knowledge. E.M. Istanbul

- I read your account of the secret behind matter at the back of *The Evolution Deceit* with great interest and excitement. At first, I understood it in theory, but not in practice. Then it suddenly fell into place when I was thinking about it. I was caught up in a stunning excitement. "God," I said, "this is an amazing thing." Such a thing had never crossed my mind. They used to say that life was like a dream. I thought that was just a figure of speech. Such people did not mean it in the true sense of the words, but as a simile. Who knows what they would do if they knew it was actually true? It is an extraordinary situation. Yet everyone who reads the book is quite calm. I wonder if they have fully understood it. How can they be so calm in the face of such a position? I have now understood death, the hereafter, resurrection, life in heaven and everything much better. In the Koran, God says, "It is easy for Us to create you again." Everything is now clear in my mind. Everyone I talk to on the subject has difficulty in understanding it. How can I explain it more easily and clearly? Some people I described the subject to got really very excited. I wonder if I am wrong to explain it all so directly? Would it be better if I first explain about the love of God, that He is the Compassionate and Merciful, and that He wants people to attain the very best and live in the best possible way? What do you think? S. U. Edirne

- Since primary school I was always told that all the senses form inside the brain. It was a fact I knew very well. I explained it clearly so many times in biology classes, but I still never really saw the true face of the matter. I would say that images formed in the brain, but that matter existed far away outside me. It is out there, and I see it. My thinking was confused, along the lines that the image formed where my eye was, and then in the brain. Thought that matter existed absolutely, right there in front of me. Actually, I cannot have thought too deeply about it. Whereas matter appears in only one place. I see that place and matter as being together. It is as if I am in front of a thin curtain, but it is not clear what is actually doing the watching, a nothingness or a soul. Yet there is a power that perceives everything, a nothingness that takes up no space, yet a consciousness that perceives the five senses. Are you thinking of writing a more detailed work on the subject? Also, your books are not available in the province where I

live. Can I inform the publishers? With my respectful wishes for your every success. Y.C. Kayseri

- I explained this subject to a number of my friends. They are university graduates, yet they are quite incapable of conceiving what the subject is all about. "Come off it," they say. "OK, the image may form in my brain. But you are right there in front of me," as they put their hands on my shoulder. I describe how that conversation and action is all taking place in the brain. I even say that if the nerves leading to the brain were cut they would be unable to see, or touch. They still don't understand. That failure to understand seems to me like 'the emergence of a diagnostic metaphysical truth,' because they are unable to grasp this concept. Yet I explained it to my nephew, a primary school student, and he got it at once. I ask myself whether their comprehension has been deliberately prevented. Or whether they have no personal identity. Is that possible? The Koran speaks about people whose eyes and ears are closed. Is it possible some people do not have any consciousness of seeing or hearing? Could you go into these matters in the next edition of your book? Thank you in advance. E.A. Istanbul

- Dear Harun Yahya, I particularly enjoy reading philosophy, and so I read about the secret behind matter with great enjoyment. That matter is an illusion has been explained several times in the past. Yet people have probably not had the time to consider the perceptions that convince them that they see the original of matter, or else they would have grasped this evident truth. However, they have much greater opportunities to see truth of it these days. The studies into and descriptions of the structure of the eye, the nerves that carry the image to the eye, the visual center in the brain and similar matters have made it a great deal easier to understand this truth. Furthermore, the development of specific physics, three-dimensional films, television, video and the like have all made it easier to provide vivid examples. In my view, this subject will come to predominate in the world in this century. As you also know, quantum physics is already shouting the truth out loud. I expect it will be even easier if some people do not retreat into a childish fear of the truth, and if the pain of the shattering of the love of the world can be overcome. I do not think that running away from the truth, hiding one's head in the sand and ignoring the facts are not an attitude compatible with human honor. There are many things I want to say, but I do not wish to take up your time. With my very best wishes. T.E. Richmond

- Why do the television, radio and newspapers not tell people that we confront a version of matter in our brains, in other words its copy formed by the interpretation of electrical signals? This certain truth should be evaluated by prominent scientists on panel shows or television debates. I wonder whether anyone could be found to oppose it, and what he would say. I have heard accounts from people who have failed to understand it, and I have been amazed. How is it that grown up people fail to grasp such an obvious fact? Such people might turn up, but it is the nation that will make the final judgment. Not only will the nation learn from it, but it will also see the logic, or rather the

illogicality, of those who cannot understand this truth. My view is that this subject is very important in Islam. I hope that this importance will grow as time passes... K.I. Samsun

- Your description of matter affected me very deeply. It goes beyond the powers of human reason. It is not something that can be completely understood. It is odd to think that even this letter I am writing is an image. Image meets image, and they communicate. It really is an astounding situation. In my view, everyone who reads about it will understand... W.B.F. England

- My way of looking at life has changed since reading the chapter in your book about the secret behind matter. The other day, for instance, I got angry at someone and was about to raise my voice. Then I realized that everything was inside my brain. I immediately calmed down, and all my anger had ebbed away. It seemed as if I were behaving like an old woman getting angry at a poor actor in a Turkish film. These truths, that constitute such a major change, need to be communicated to much wider communities, and you must therefore bring out a new book. If you do bring out such a book, would you please let me know? M.V. Aydin.

- I have read *The Secret Behind Matter*. Does everything really happen in my brain? Is my brain not an image, too? That is what I really fail to understand. Everyone should be told about it in schools and on the television. I would like to go into the matter in much greater detail. What do you suggest? I would be most grateful if you would help. K.B. Antalya.

- I am an eye doctor. A patient asked me about how we see the other day. The first questions were technical ones, but then he started asking things that really made me think. Such as who it is who sees the images in the brain. I was strongly affected. I believe in the existence of God and the soul, yet it had never occurred to me to explain the existence of the soul in such a scientific and clear way, although it lies within my field of expertise. I read what you had to say on the matter on your Internet page. Are there any other sources, or do you have any other books you can recommend? It might even be a foreign source. I really think that this is an important subject, well worth learning, researching and thinking about. Not only what I have read broadens peoples' horizons, but it leads them to question many things in life. It is genuinely important. F.N.G. Eskisehir.

- I watched the CD *THE SECRET BEYOND MATTER* yesterday. I tried my best to understand, and think I managed to do so. There are questions I want to find answers to. Please help me. M.H. Izmir

- When I read "THE SECRET BEYOND MATTER" I thought everything was a screenplay written just for me. I mean I felt as if I was in a film such as *Truman Show* or *Matrix*. I felt as if I am living in a machine designed just for me. I found myself in a number of states when I looked at things in that way. You have gone into the matter in greater depth than anyone to date. E.H. Toronto.

- I have just watched part of your video, *The Secret Behind Matter*. The subject has been very well explained, although I think we will need more examples when we explain it to others. The examples in the documentary are definitely sufficient, but a few more, particularly from daily life, would make it easier for us to understand and explain, I think, if a subsequent version is produced. That is because people cannot comment on this subject as it requires, and they are putting false ideas forward. In order to put a stop to that, I think it would be useful to reinforce the existing examples with some simpler ones. S.G. Istanbul

- My views on the material world and life have changed fundamentally. Life, other people and those around me are no longer what they were. The more I learn the facts, the more I have started to turn away from certain things, I have started to look inside myself and think more. I wonder if that is right. But in one way I feel more at peace, more secure and happier. What people do and say now seem quite facile to me. I am looking for someone who will listen to and understand what I am experiencing. I hope that, as always, you will help me on this most important issue. I do not want to waste my life in vain. K.U. Tekirdağ.

Comments From Some Scientists and Thinkers Asked About The Nature Of Matter

- Many thanks for your e-mail and its most interesting contents. I am not a scientist, but I found your questions very interesting. I cannot give any scientific answers to your questions but I must say that I learnt a lot by reading them. Thank you for writing and I will share your questions with some friends in the sciences to see what answers they will give. Best wishes and, again, than you for writing. Kofi Opoku

- All of your questions and observations are insightful and right on target! These are old questions of course, but to this day they are not fully resolved. In fact modern neuroscience and psychology and even philosophy would be much advanced if their researchers were as concerned about these questions as you are. Unfortunately, your question #13 is also right on target (Question #13. Some people are incredibly afraid when these topics are discussed? What do you think the reason for this may be?) The answer is that when you see the world correctly, the way you describe it, it is a very very frightening prospect. But the truth is always worth discovering, even if it is a frightening truth. Steve Lehar

- You ask a number of interesting questions that have troubled philosophers for centuries. Certainly we could be living in a virtual world inside some supercomputer, and never know the difference, as in the movies Tron or The Matrix, but as long as the "laws of nature", which could be part of the programming, remain stable, and we can't tell the difference, it doesn't make a difference. Naturally, many people are afraid of thoughts of this kind because they threaten their comfortable worldviews. Jon Roland (President and CEO of the Vanguard Research Institute)

THE MISCONCEPTION OF EVOLUTION

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

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the fact of creation to account for the origin of life.

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

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

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

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

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.
- 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.

3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.
In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

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

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

"Life Comes From Life"

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

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

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

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."⁵⁷

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a

living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts of the Twentieth Century

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

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.⁵⁸

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

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.⁵⁹

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁶⁰

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth* magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁶¹

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

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

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written

down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

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

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.⁶²

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

Imaginary Mechanism of Evolution

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

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

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

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

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁶³

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the

next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁶⁴

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

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

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

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

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁶⁵

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

that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, no such any imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

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

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

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

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

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

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.⁶⁶

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

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

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

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find – over and over again – not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.⁶⁷

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that all living things are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without

any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.⁶⁸

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

The Tale of Human Evolution

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

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

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors Australopithecus, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various Australopithecus specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.⁶⁹

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of Homo sapiens, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."⁷⁰

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.⁷¹

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. Homo sapiens neanderthalensis and Homo sapiens sapiens (modern man) co-existed in the same region.⁷²

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. The late Stephen Jay Gould explained this deadlock of the theory of evolution although he was himself one of the leading advocates of evolution in the twentieth century:

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.⁷³

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

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

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "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.⁷⁴

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

Darwinian Formula!

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

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

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids and as many proteins—a single one of which has a formation probability of 10-950—as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a human's formation. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope. They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with Allah's superior creation.

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

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

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

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

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

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

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

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

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends

these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing in the brain.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

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

A Materialist Faith

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

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

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

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

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced

by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine [intervention]...75

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

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 Allah, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

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

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

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically, and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Ibrahim (as) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of Prophet Musa (as) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, Allah has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verses, He reveals that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara, 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf, 179)

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

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

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

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

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Musa (as) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as the verse puts it:

We revealed to Musa: "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A'raf, 117-8)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge, who was an atheist defending evolution for some 60 years, but who subsequently realized the truth, reveals the position in which the theory of evolution would find itself in the near future in these terms:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.⁷⁶

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

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What is explained in this book is an important truth, which has surprised many and changed their perspectives on life. This truth can be summarized as follows: "We cannot have direct experience of any of the events and objects that we encounter in real life—buildings, people, cities, cars, places—in fact, any of the things we see, hold, touch, smell, taste and hear. We only confront visions and feelings formed in our brains".

There is matter outside, yet we may never know the actual of the matter. We assume with the inculcation we have been given that these are invariable in a world outside our brains and hence that we see and feel the actual of them. However, in reality we never see real existing materials and we never touch real materials. In brief while assuming all through our lives that we deal with the matter outside, in reality we know the copy and image of everything, which is created in our brains.

This is not a philosophical speculation. It is an empirical fact that has been proven by modern science. Today, any scientist who is a specialist in medicine, biology, neurology or any other field related to brain research would say, when asked how and where we see the world, that we see the whole world in the vision center located in our brains.

This fact has been scientifically proven in the twentieth century, and although it may seem surprising, it necessarily implies answers to two questions; "Since throughout our lives we confront the images formed in our brains, then who is it that creates these visions? And who is it that sees these visions in our brains without having eyes and enjoys them, gets excited and happy?" You will find the answers to these two important questions in this book.