

**The Prophet
Abraham (pbuh)
and
The Prophet
Lot (pbuh)**

**Harun Yahya
(Adnan Oktar)**

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Abbreviation used:
(pbuh): Peace be upon him (following a reference to
the prophets)

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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 fine 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 63 different languages, constitute a collection for a total of more than 55,000 pages with 40,000 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 the Prophet Muhammad (saas), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet [may Allah 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 Allah 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 Allah'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 Allah and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books

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

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

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

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological 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 Allah, 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.

TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of Creation—and therefore, Allah's existence—over the last 150 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the opportunity to read only one of our books, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

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

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

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

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

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

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, prophets have called on their tribes to believe in the One and Only Allah and to serve only Him. They relayed the Divine religion to humanity and demonstrated the human morality, which can gain Allah's approval by their own lives. Thus, these chosen servants of Allah represent the very finest model of superior characteristics, proper moral values, and ideal behavior and reactions to events. Just as they served as role models for their societies, Allah reveals in the Qur'an that they also showed all future believers how to live in a manner that pleases Allah:

You have an excellent model in the Messenger of Allah, for all who put their hope in Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah much. (Surat al-Ahzab: 21)

Each prophet possesses virtues that are praised in the Qur'an. Therefore, believers must carefully study every detail of these Qur'anic accounts so that they can take these men's lives, moral virtues, and deep devotion to Allah as models for themselves. Each prophet was sent to his own tribe, experienced different situations, and used various methods to explain Allah's existence. For that reason, the natures of the prophets' tribes, and their reactions to the prophets, as well as the difficulties experienced by those who became believers and the prophets themselves, provide us with important information about how we can please Allah.

This book introduces the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), who is praised in the Qur'an in these terms: "You have an excellent example in Abraham and those with him" (Surat al-Mumtahana: 4) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh), who lived during the same period, so that they can serve as role models for our own lives. Since every piece of information about these two prophets contains considerable wisdom, we shall examine their lives closely in this book so that we can follow their example.

BOOK -1-

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh)

You have an excellent example in Abraham and those with him. (Surat al-Mumtahana: 4)

Characteristics of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Tribe

Allah reveals that the first prophet was the Prophet Adam (pbuh). The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) lived after the Prophet Noah (pbuh) and according to the Qur'an, he is a descendant of the Prophet Noah (pbuh) (Surat as-Saffat: 83). Many of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) descendants were prophets as well, such as the Prophets Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Zacharia, John, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

Historical sources record that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) lived in Mesopotamia. The Qur'an informs us that he and his son, the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) built the Ka`bah. This confirms the historical accounts that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) did indeed live in the Middle East.

Allah states in the Qur'an that the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe followed paganism. In fact, historical sources state that nearly all Middle Eastern tribes at that time either worshipped hand-made idols or various celestial bodies (e.g., the Moon and the Sun). Excavations in Mesopotamia have uncovered information and remains of temples (ziggurats) built for such worship, as well as the remains of many stone and clay statues.

In short, both the historical and archaeological facts show that the majority of the Middle East, at the time of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), was a pagan land. Allah chose the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), by honoring him with prophethood, as His pure servant to represent the Divine religion and proper moral virtues in the midst of these misguided pagans.

Our Lord reveals that the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe carved statues made of stone or wood and then as a great deviance they regarded them as false deities and worshipped them. Although devoid of power and life, these pagans believed that these idols could either harm or help them. Due to these superstitious beliefs, they blindly followed the misguided belief system of their ancestors and passed it on to the next one.

Allah revealed to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) that He was the Creator of everything in the universe and that those who believed otherwise were utterly mistaken. Although his tribe wanted him to live and think like them, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) turned his back on his

tribe's traditional belief system, rejected its false deities, and declared that only Allah truly existed. In order to deepen and reinforce his faith, Allah showed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) proofs of His power and dominion:

Because of that, We showed Abraham the dominions of the heavens and Earth so that he might be one of the people of certainty. (Surat al-An'am: 75)

Although he grew up among pagans, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) exhibited such a very superior character and such an excellent moral understanding that he finally separated himself from them and devoted himself to Allah. But he did not content himself with this separation alone, for he then sought to explain Allah's existence to them and called them to belief in Him. Most people of his tribe, however, refused to accept the truths he told them out of loyalty to their ancestors' superstitious religion. As Allah states in the Qur'an:

When they are told: "Follow what Allah has sent down to you," they reply: "We are following what we found our fathers doing." What, even though their fathers did not understand a thing and were not guided! (Surat al-Baqara: 170)

One of the reasons why his tribe refused to abandon their traditional paganism is found among all people who are distant from true religion: According to them, the ideas of the majority are considered to be right, even though they are deviant and superstitious. According to this distorted logic of these people, questioning, researching, or criticizing widely held ideas are unacceptable. This mistake is so important that Allah states it in the Qur'an and tells all people to avoid it, as follows:

If you obeyed most of those on Earth, they would misguide you from Allah's way. They follow nothing but conjecture. They are only guessing. (Surat al-An'am: 116)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), like all prophets and believers, did not make this mistake. He never abandoned the truth, even when his relatives and friends—in fact, his whole tribe—opposed him. His belief in Allah was unshakable, and no difficulty or pressure could turn him from his chosen path.

Allah Bestows Prophethood upon Abraham (pbuh)

All societies have been aware of Allah's existence, Oneness, Infinite Might and Power; of the Day of Judgment; and of what Allah wills from His servants. Allah reveals this truth in the following verse:

We sent a messenger among every tribe saying: "Worship Allah and keep clear of all false deities." Among them were

some whom Allah guided, but others received the misguidance they deserved. Travel about the land and see the final fate of the unbelievers. (Surat an-Nahl: 36)

Prophets are special people whom Allah selected and endowed with superior qualities. Their powerful faith, pleasing moral virtues, superior character, and exemplary behavior always attracted those around them, and eventually they were forced to move away from their pagan and misguided societies. One of the most important qualities setting them apart is the fact that Allah revealed the truth to them. As Allah reveals in the Qur'an:

We have revealed to you, as We revealed to Noah and the prophets who came after him. And We revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, the Descendents, Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. And We gave David the Psalm. (Surat an-Nisa: 163)

Allah's use of prophets to spread His revelation among their people was a great blessing for humanity, for His revelation continues to show people the way to the true path, teach them how to worship, describe proper moral values, and makes His religion known to those people who live after the time of the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), the last prophet. Our Lord informs us that He has revealed to the prophets how their followers should behave and worship Him:

We made them leaders, guiding by Our command, and revealed to them how to do good actions, perform prayer, and give alms. And they worshipped Us. (Surat al-Anbiya: 73)

Throughout their lives, the prophets sought to gain His good pleasure and compassion, as well as His Paradise. Thus, they lived exemplary lives by fully complying with His commands.

Allah bestowed prophethood, an honorable position attained by His chosen servants, upon the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) after a period of testing. Allah reveals this in the following verse:

Remember when Abraham was tested by his Lord with certain words, which he carried out perfectly. He [Allah] said: "I will make you a model for humanity." He [Abraham] asked: "And what of my descendents?" He [Allah] replied: "My contract does not include the wrongdoers." (Surat al-Baqara: 124)

As stated in this verse, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) obeyed our Lord during this test and perfectly fulfilled all of His commands. Just like the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), all believers have the same responsibility. His unconditional obedience to Allah and submission to His commands are fine models for all believers.

Allah endowed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) with prophethood at an early age (Surat al-Anbiya: 60), and revealed the truth to him:

Or do they in fact envy other people for the bounty Allah has granted them? We gave the family of Abraham the Book and Wisdom, and We gave them an immense kingdom. (Surat an-Nisa: 54)

In other verses, Allah reveals that He gave texts to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his descendents:

... although the Hereafter is better and longer lasting. This is certainly [stated] in the earlier texts, the texts of Abraham and Moses. (Surat al-A'la: 17-19)

Or has he not been informed what is in the texts of Moses and of Abraham, who fully discharged [his mission]? (Surat an-Najm: 36-37)

This shows that Allah had sent down texts to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) before His revelation of the Torah to Prophet Moses (pbuh). These texts contain the true religion, which is based on the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) submission to Allah. The hadith literature records the following conversation:

*I [Abu Dharr] asked: "O Messenger of Allah, has anything from the pages of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Moses (pbuh) been sent down to you?" He replied: "O Abu Dharr," ["Yes," he said, "such verses were revealed," and began to read them:] "Everyone who cleans himself well, recalls the name of the Lord, and performs the prayers has achieved his hopes. Perhaps you hold the life of this world to be superior. But the Hereafter is more auspicious and more constant. These [truths] also exist in previous pages, the pages of Abraham (pbuh) and Moses (pbuh)."*¹

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Religion

Who could have a better religion than someone who submits himself completely to Allah, is a good-doer, and follows the religion of Abraham, a man of pure natural belief?... (Surat an-Nisa: 125)

People continue to argue over which religion the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) followed. Jews regard him as a Jewish prophet and claim to follow his path. Christians also consider him a Jewish prophet, but claim that he followed the Prophet Jesus (pbuh), who came after him.

In the Qur'an however, Allah reveals the truth of this matter by providing certain information:

Or do they say that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Descendents were Jews or Christians? Say: "Do you know better, or does Allah?" Who could do greater wrong than

someone who hides the evidence he has been given by Allah? Allah is not unaware of what you do. (Surat al-Baqara: 140)

Moreover, other verses expose just how irrational this debate really is:

O People of the Book. Why do you argue about Abraham when the Torah and Gospel were only sent down after him? Why don't you use your intellect? You are the ones who argued about that of which you had knowledge. But why do you argue about something of which you have no knowledge? Allah knows; you do not know. (Surah Al 'Imran: 65-66)

Allah provides in the Qur'an the most accurate information about the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), for it is the only uncorrupted book of Allah. If people take other sources as guides, they fall into great error and interpret matters in the light of their own ideas and beliefs. As in all matters, however, believers take the Qur'an and the Sunnah of our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) as the only true sources of information about the prophets and their lines, for teaching falsehoods and engaging in speculation and guesswork, particularly about the prophets, displeases Allah.

Only Allah states in the Qur'an the whole truth about the Prophet Abraham (pbuh):

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a man of pure natural belief—a Muslim. He was not one of the idolaters. (Surah Al 'Imran: 67)

In the Qur'an Allah calls the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) a *hanif*, instead of a Jew or a Christian. *Hanif* means a devout, upright, and righteous person who submits to Allah's command and never moves away from His religion. The most *hanif* characteristics of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) were his belief in the One and Only Allah and his submission to Him.

In another verse, our Lord commands the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to abide by the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) religion:

Then We revealed to you: "Follow the religion of Abraham, a man of pure natural belief. He was not one of the idolaters." (Surat an-Nahl: 123)

Allah wishes people to turn to religion in a *hanif* manner, as pure believers. Allah clearly emphasizes that *hanif* people do not ascribe partners to Him:

So set your face firmly towards the Religion, as a pure natural believer, Allah's natural pattern on which He made humanity. There is no changing in Allah's Creation. That is the

true Religion—but most people do not know it. (Surat ar-Rum: 30)

As can be understood from several verses, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) religion was essentially the same as Islam. In any case, all divinely revealed religions are, in their original and uncorrupted forms, essentially built on earning Allah's good pleasure, compassion, and Paradise. The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) children and grandchildren, as well as other devout individuals from his line, adhered to this religion after his death. For example, Allah tells in the Qur'an the Prophet Joseph's (pbuh) address to his fellow prisoners:

I hold fast to the creed of my forebears Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We don't associate anything with Allah. And that is how Allah has favored us and all humanity, but most do not give thanks. (Surah Yusuf: 38)

All *hanifs*, regardless of when they live, are distinguished by their glorification of Allah without ascribing partners to Him. One of the prophets' main duties was to rescue people from their misguided belief systems and worldviews, as well as those practices and values that transgressed the limits set down by Allah for humanity, and to call their people to the true religion. One hadith informs us of the following:

*Abu Bakrah (ra) relates that: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, once asked: 'Shall I inform you of a great sin, one of the greatest sins? ...[It is] to ascribe a partner to Allah.'"*²

In one verse, Allah reveals that Islam is as easy as the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) religion:

... He [Allah] has selected you and not placed any constraint upon you in the religion—the religion of your forefather Abraham. He named you Muslims before, and also in this, so that the messenger could be witness against you and you could be witnesses against all of humanity. So perform the prescribed prayers, give alms, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector—the Best Protector, the Best Helper. (Surat al-Hajj: 78)

According to the Qur'an the people who turn to Allah and live by His religion in its true sense are *Muslim*. The word *Muslim* comes from the Arabic word *salam* and means one *who has achieved well-being or who has submitted (to Allah)*. The essence of being Muslim lies in submitting to Allah and living in the ensuing peace and security. The prophets, all of whom guided their people to the true path, submitted totally to our Lord and were sincerely devoted to Him, are role models for us. By turning to and then submitting to our Lord, seeking refuge in Him, taking Him as their only friend, and asking for help only from Him, they are all called *Muslim* in the Qur'an.

For instance, Allah commanded the prophet Noah (pbuh) to tell his tribe **"My wage is the responsibility of Allah alone. I am commanded to be one of the Muslims"** (Surah Yunus: 72); the Prophet Moses (pbuh) told his tribe **"My people. If you believe in Allah, then put your trust in Him, if you are Muslims"** (Surah Yunus: 84); and the Prophet Solomon (pbuh) addressed his tribe in these terms: **"Do not rise up against me, but come to me in submission [as Muslims]"** (Surat An-Naml: 31). In the Qur'an Allah reveals the following to His followers:

When I inspired the Disciples [of Jesus] to believe in Me and in My Messenger [Jesus], they said: "We believe. Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 111)

As can be seen from the above verses, sincere believers are those people who submit to Allah, live solely by religious moral values, and have pure faith. Allah honors such people with the name *Muslim*.

The Prophet Joseph's (pbuh) prayer as stated in the verse is a fine example for us in several areas. Allah reveals it in the following verse:

... You have granted power to me in the land and taught me the true meaning of events. O, Originator of the heavens and Earth. You are my Friend in this world and the Hereafter, so take me as a Muslim at my death and join me to the people who are righteous. (Surah Yusuf: 101)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) joyful faith in Allah, his deep love for Him, his submission to all of His commands, as well as his obedience and superior morality, are explained in the Qur'an. Some of these verses read:

Our Lord, make us both Muslims submitted to You and our descendents a Muslim community submitted to You. Show us our rites of worship and turn toward us. You are the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful. (Surat al-Baqara: 128)

When his Lord said to him: "Become a Muslim," he [Abraham] said: "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat al-Baqara: 131)

Every Muslim must take the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) pleasing morality, sincere faith, and total submission and obedience to Allah as role models. In fact, his discernment and determination in presenting Allah's message are among the important traits that all people who call themselves Muslims should adopt.

Originally, all divine religions were based on the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) religion. However, Christianity and Judaism were corrupted over time and so moved away from their original nature: not ascribing partners to Allah (the greatest sin) and living solely to earn His good pleasure. As a matter of fact, there are many parts conforming to true religion and good morals in the Torah and the Gospel of our day.

The love and respect felt by both present-day Christians and Jews for the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) unites them in a common foundation with Muslims. Members of these three divinely revealed religions therefore share a common belief in Allah, which they have inherited from the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), and seek to serve Him. On the other hand, it is clear that the error of trinity held by some Christians is a deviant belief and a great sin, and this is revealed in the Qur'an. However, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) pure natural belief is a common word between the Muslims and the People of the Book. Allah reveals in the Qur'an that Muslims have invited them to this common word:

Say: "O People of the Book [Christians and Jews], come to a proposition that is the same for us and you—that we should worship none but Allah, associate no partners with Him, and take no one of us as lords besides Allah." If they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Surah Al 'Imran: 64)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Spreads the Religion

Every prophet was charged with informing his tribe of Allah's commands and prohibitions. Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), the light of all the worlds, who called people to true religion within idolaters of Mecca, the Prophet Noah (pbuh), the Prophet Salih (pbuh) (of Thamud), the Prophet Lot (pbuh), the Prophet Shuayb (pbuh) (of Madyan), the Prophet Moses (pbuh) (of the Children of Israel), the Prophet Jesus (pbuh), and all other prophets informed their tribes of Allah's existence and called on them to live by the true religion's moral values. However, these prophets often found that the majority of their tribes denied Allah and rejected them and even initiated multifaceted struggles against them consisting of vile slanders, threats, and aggression. In some cases, they resorted to forced expulsion, arrest, or martyr the prophets with their imprudent minds to prevent them from performing their tasks Allah charged them with. Allah reveals how the traps set for the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) will end in failure:

When those who do not believe were plotting against you to imprison you, kill you, or expel you: they were plotting and Allah was planning, but Allah is the Best Planner. (Surat al-Anfal: 30)

As stated earlier, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe worshipped statues that their ancestors had made from stone and wood in grave irrationality. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), who had the determination and the powerful faith to single-handedly tell them of Allah's existence and oneness, was sent to guide them from their blind devotion to their ancestors' paganism into the light of His religion.

Throughout history, **the majority** has often decided which ideas and beliefs are to be accepted as true. Given that it is difficult to stand

up against the majority in societies that are far from religion, many people eventually agree, either willingly or unwillingly, to submit to ideas and beliefs that they know to be wrong. The prophets and the believers who followed them, however, always opposed the unbelieving majority and displayed enormous courage in the face of the ensuing pressure, threats, or attacks. They remained loyal to Allah's religion by scrupulously performing their religious observations and abiding by our Lord's commands out of their fear and awe of Him, as well as their complete trust in Him.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), whom Allah praised as being "**a community in himself**" (Surat an-Nahl: 120), stood alone against his father and his entire pagan tribe. He patiently explained why their idols could never attain any divine quality and that Allah was the only true God. When necessary, even by standing against the entire community in order to tell the truth, his opposition to his tribe's paganism, as well as his method of challenging their superstitions and working to guide them to the true path despite their hostility, clearly revealed his powerful faith, submission, sincerity, and superior character. All of these characteristics made him a courageous and determined individual. Allah reveals some of his words in the Qur'an, as follows:

His tribe argued with him. He said: "Are you arguing with me about Allah, when He has guided me? I have no fear of any partner you ascribe to Him, unless my Lord should will such a thing to happen. My Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge, so will you not pay heed? Why should I fear what you have associated with Him, when you yourselves apparently have no fear of associating partners with Allah, for which He has sent down no authority to you? Which of the two parties is more entitled to feel safe, if you have any knowledge?" (Surat al-An'am: 80-81)

Such conversations with his tribe reveal many pleasing examples of his deep and strong faith. Thanks to the superior wisdom and understanding imparted to him by our Lord, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) gave enormously effective addresses and the wisest of examples. Looked at with the eye of wisdom, present-day Muslims can use the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) means and methods Allah revealed to him to invite their own people to believe in Allah. Given this, we will now look at some of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) wise explanations.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Conversations with His Father

All Muslims are responsible for inviting people to believe in Allah. In the Qur'an Allah refers to this as *commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong*. This duty arises out of the fact that people must be warned, in other words informed and reminded of certain important truths, such as that Allah created the universe from nothing, that every human being is responsible to our Lord and will have to account to Him in the Hereafter, and that they will be rewarded in the Hereafter for what they did in this world.

Those who shoulder this responsibility are devout Muslims who sincerely believe in Allah and who hold Him in awe out of a deep-rooted respect. Allah has given them the power, wisdom, and intelligence to distinguish between right and wrong. In exchange, they are to explain His religion in the light of the addressee's character, state of mind, and viewpoint on life in the most pleasant and appropriate manner possible. In addition, they must properly evaluate the addressee's reaction and response and adapt their methods in order to effectively communicate the divine message. As performing this obligation calls for considerable effort, warning whole societies and explaining the religion to *tribes whose fathers have not been warned*, namely, communities that are far from religion's moral values, is a heavy responsibility. In fact, Allah tells believers to spread His religion *with wisdom and pleasant advice*, as the following verse reveals:

Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way. Your Lord knows best who is misguided from His way. And He knows best who are guided. (Surat an-Nahl: 125)

Each Muslim is entrusted with explaining and advising others about Allah's existence and the Qur'an's beauties. To enable them to carry out this responsibility, Allah has revealed in the Qur'an the most suitable and appropriate methods. For example, believers should invite their friends and family members first to believe in Allah and the Day of Judgment:

So do not call on any other deity along with Allah, or you will be among those who will be punished. Warn your near relatives. (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 213-14)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) words to his father are exemplary in this respect. He explained to his father, in a most wise manner, that worshipping idols was equivalent to ascribing partners to Allah and that a person should serve Allah alone. Some of these words are revealed in the Qur'an:

Remember when Abraham said to his father, Azar: "Do you take idols as gods? I see that you and your tribe are clearly misguided." (Surat al-An'am: 74)

Remember when he [Abraham] said to his father: "Father, why do you worship that which can neither hear nor see, and is of no use to you at all? Father, knowledge that never reached you has come to me. So follow me, and I will guide you to the right path." (Surah Maryam: 42-43)

One of the most important elements of this conversation, which should be taken as a model, is that no matter how arrogant and difficult

an unbeliever may be, a believer must remain patient while relaying the message and behave in the most pleasant manner possible.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) approach here is exactly the same as that of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) toward Pharaoh. The Prophet Moses (pbuh) also employed a temperate and patient style when relaying Allah's message to Pharaoh, in compliance with Allah's command to **"speak to him with gentle words so that, hopefully, he will pay heed or show some fear"** (Surah Ta Ha: 44).

Allah reveals the message that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) gave to his father, as well as his father's reaction:

[Abraham said:] "O my father, do not worship satan. Satan was disobedient to the All-Merciful. Father, I am afraid that a punishment from the All-Merciful will afflict you, and turn you into a comrade of satan." He [his father] replied: "Do you forsake my deities, Abraham? If you do not stop, I will stone you. Keep away from me for a good long time." He [Abraham] said: "Peace be upon you. I will ask my Lord to forgive you. He has always honored me. I will separate myself from you and all that you call upon besides Allah, and I will call upon my Lord. It may well be that, in calling upon my Lord, I will not be disappointed." (Surah Maryam: 44-46)

These conversations Allah revealed in the Qur'an contain important wisdom. First and foremost, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) courageous and humble attitude is most striking. He carried out Allah's order, even at the risk of his own life, and invited his father to the true path. He risked losing his father's love, help, and goods; refused to be intimidated by his father's threats, and displayed the greatest humility and patience when told to leave.

Knowing that Allah would help him and show him the right path, he behaved according to the comfort and security that such knowledge imparted. The way that he immediately prayed to Allah after being unjustly forced to leave the house in which he lived, and his faith that his prayer would be heard demonstrate the exemplary modesty and purity required of a Muslim. Moreover, he displayed a most pleasing moral attitude toward his father, who was quite hostile. He maintained his moderate style and continued to call him *my father*. All Muslims should adopt this example of a very superior morality when calling people to the truth.

He approached his father with great affection and modesty, and humbly invited him to the true path. When his father persisted in his denial, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) immediately sought refuge in Allah and removed himself. This attitude shows that Muslims are to work only for Allah's good pleasure, and to love what He loves and hate what He hates. Allah reveals this quality, which every Muslim should possess, thus:

It is not right for the Prophet and those who believe to ask forgiveness for the idolater—even if they are close relatives—after it has become clear to them that they are the Companions of the Blazing Fire. Abraham would not have asked forgiveness for his father but for a promise he made to him. And when it became clear to him [Abraham] that he [his father] was an enemy of Allah, he renounced him. Abraham was tender-hearted and forbearing. (Surat at-Tawba: 113-14)

Another noteworthy feature of this conversation between the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his father Allah revealed in the verses of the Qur'an, is the latter's devotion to paganism. So strong was his devotion that it led him to threaten his son with death by stoning, a son who was of his own blood, whom he had raised and kept by his side, and who treated his father so respectfully. The only reason for his father's wrath was that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) worshipped only Allah and rejected his tribe's paganism. This is an example of the unbelievers' cruel, uncompromising, and oppressive natures.

The Unbeliever Advised by the Prophet Abraham (pbuh)

Allah refers in the Qur'an to an unbelieving ruler whom the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) met when calling people to believe in Allah. Known as Nimrod in various historical sources, Allah reveals in the Qur'an that he and the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) engaged in an important conversation:

What about the one who argued with Abraham about his Lord, on the basis that Allah had given him sovereignty? Abraham said: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes to die." He [Nimrod] said: "I too give life and cause to die..." (Surat al-Baqara: 258)

As this verse makes clear, Nimrod had become very arrogant due to his goods, property, and rule. While talking with the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), he made the enormous and irrational claim that he also possessed the power of Creation. By proclaiming his own divinity in utter ignorance, as he was so proud of his wealth and chattel, he was, in fact, denying Allah. Because of his pride, he rejected to see Allah's might and power over the universe.

After informing Nimrod of Allah's existence and oneness, this unbeliever who grew arrogant against Allah, irrationally enters into debate with the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and he makes a most wise and rational statement by the inspiration of Allah:

"Allah makes the Sun come from the East. Make it come from the West." And the disbeliever [Nimrod] was dumbfounded. Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (Surat al-Baqara: 258)

All prophets have always employed wise and rational arguments, such as the example given above. Allah has enabled those believers who spread His message to do so most effectively, thus refuting the unbelievers' mistaken worldview. Such arguments always leave unbelievers, who believe themselves to be on the right path and who trust in their wealth, power, and idols, unable to mount a serious defense of their belief systems. Therefore, they are always condemned to be defeated and at a loss for words.

Another important wisdom in the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) response as seen in the verses is his honesty and naturalness. A sincere and honest explanation always influences peoples' hearts and consciences. Allah's existence is evident, and the believer's explanation of this manifest truth from the heart always touches other people. But even if they are so influenced, some unbelievers persist in their unbelief. Such people, who generally are far removed from religion, unwisely grow proud out of the belief that their wealth, attractiveness, or status are the results of their own efforts. They unjustly regard themselves as superior and forget about Allah. Satan encourages their pride and uses the power and position that they mistakenly consider their own, to prevent them from serving Allah.

Believers encounter many people as they spread Allah's message. Many people, due to their pride, cannot see Allah's might and power. In such situations, believers must give examples that show people just how helpless they really are in order to eliminate their pride. As a result, unbelievers will realize that their arrogance and pride in their possessions are of no significance. Gradually, they will realize that their strength and power are limited, that everything will end with death, and that Allah is the only absolute being.

The mode of explication used by the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) to relay the truth to Nimrod shows just how important the use of rational, wise, and target-oriented speech is in spreading His message. Believers must never engage in pointless arguments; rather, they must always use effective and rational explanations to defeat the audience's superstitious beliefs and demonstrate Allah's existence by analyzing the audience members' psychological states and logical frameworks. Clearly, only people with deep faith, who scrupulously adhere to Allah's commands and who hold Him in awe, will be able to devise such an effective and wise mode of explication. This is true, because wisdom is a divine blessing that must be sought from Allah. Allah imparts this secret to us, as follows:

He gives wisdom to whoever He wills, and he who has been given wisdom has been given great good... (Surat al-Baqara: 269)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Calls His Tribe

How should believers behave with those who deny or reject the truth? Allah tells believers to spread His message in a well-considered style and method. There is more than one way of calling people to the truth. Naturally, the method changes according to the audience

members' positions, conditions, ideas, and beliefs. For example, Allah refers to the Prophet Noah (pbuh), who explained His existence both *publicly* and *privately* by using indirect methods to turn them toward His religion. (Surah Nuh: 9)

Another one of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) most noteworthy methods was to incite his tribe's consciences and to employ methods that would encourage them to think. He asked them questions, thereby exposing the irrational and confused nature of their beliefs. He showed them that their idols were nothing more than unconscious pieces of wood and stone, and used a clever plan to convince their hearts and minds of this. As he caused his tribe's traditional pagan worldview to collapse by spreading Allah's truth, he also explained Allah's existence and oneness. In the Qur'an Allah describes the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) method in the following words:

When night covered him [Abraham], he saw a star and said: "This is my Lord!" Then when it set, he said: "I do not love that which sets." Then when he saw the Moon come up, he said: "This is my Lord!" Then when it set, he said: "If my Lord does not guide me, I will be one of the misguided people." Then when he saw the Sun come up, he said: "This is my Lord! This is greater!" Then when it set, he said: "My tribe, I am free of what you associate with Allah! I have turned my face to Him Who brought the heavens and Earth into being, a pure natural believer. I am not one of the idolaters." (Surat al-An'am: 76-79)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) comments regarding the Moon, the Sun, and stars in these verses above are probably not his own thoughts, but rather a means of communicating Allah's message to his tribe. (Allah knows the truth.) The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) knew that the Moon and stars would *disappear* when the Sun rose, and that the Sun would sink again after it had risen. Since his pagan tribe were not reasoning and judging in the light of true faith, however, he may have chosen to employ the gradual explanation outlined above.

As we mentioned earlier, in a grave irrationality the pagan societies in the Middle East at that time worshipped celestial bodies, such as the Sun and the Moon, in addition to idols made by themselves and their ancestors. Therefore, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) may have wished to use the question-and-answer method to explain why these supposedly divine objects were not actually divine. And so he first portrayed the stars as divine in order to draw his tribe's attention to them, and then proved, as Allah inspired him, why these could not actually be deities. Allah reveals the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) expression in a verse, **"I do not love what sets"** (Surat al-An'am: 76) is also an important message aimed at his tribe, for he indirectly explained that a divine entity was immortal and indestructible. (Allah knows the truth.) In fact, these are some of our Lord's names: *al-Baqi* (He Who continues, the immortal one) and *al-Qa'im* (He Who persists).

After this, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) may have employed the same method with regard to the Moon, another *so-called* deity, to show his tribe that it was not divine. He may have used the same logic for the Sun, particularly by emphasizing that it was *the greatest*. His explanation that it was not divine dealt a major blow to their pagan worldview, because beyond the Sun there was no greater physical being visible to the tribe.

With the words Allah reveals in the Qur'an as **"I am not one of the idolaters"** (Surat al-An'am: 79), the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) explained that Allah created all of these things, that He was the true Allah, and that he ascribed no partners to Him. Given the above, we can see that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) knew a great deal about his tribe's pagan belief system. He put forward all of these examples to spread Allah's message and to expose their defective logic and misguided beliefs. In fact, it seems that his tribe sought to debate with him:

His tribe argued with him. He said: "Are you arguing with me about Allah, when He has guided me? I have no fear of any partner you ascribe to Him, unless my Lord should will such a thing to happen. My Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge, so will you not pay heed?" (Surat al-An'am: 80)

In calling his tribe to the truth, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) acted upon what He inspired in him. This is clearly evident from the methods he employed and the examples he gave. In the verse "This is the argument We gave to Abraham against his tribe. We raise in rank anyone We will. Your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing" (Surat al-An'am: 83), Allah reveals that He gave the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) various proofs to use against his tribe.

This manner of communication sets an example for all Muslims. In other words, believers must demolish the other side's false and groundless beliefs and then present indisputable proof of Allah's existence and oneness. Following this, they must call on the other side to believe in Allah and serve only Him. If the other side cannot abandon its misguided belief system and distorted logic, it will be difficult for them to believe in Allah and become true Muslims. True faith can come about only when people abandon all of their idols and superstitious ideologies and philosophies.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) love of Allah, joyous faith, and scrupulous adherence to His commands can be clearly seen in how he conducted himself with others. The way in which he communicated with his father and tribe shows in the finest possible way that he was chosen by Allah, Who made him superior to all others. In the Qur'an Allah reveals:

Recite to them the story of Abraham, when he asked his father and his tribe: "What do you worship?" They said: "We worship idols and will continue to cling to them." He asked: "Do they hear you when you call? Do they help you or harm you?" They said: "No, but this is what we found our fathers doing." He asked: "Have you really thought about what you worship, you and your fathers who came before?" (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 69-76)

As can be seen in the above verses, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) used various methods and analogies to explain to his tribe how futile and irrational it was to worship idols. Their only response was that they would continue to follow their ancestors' path as Allah states in the verses. This vastly unwise response is frequently encountered in societies that are far from religion and is often used to justify superstition, although it has no foundation in the face of divine religion. In the continuation of these verses, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) calls his tribe to faith and introduces them to our Lord:

"They are all my enemies—except for the Lord of all the worlds: He Who created me and guides me; He Who gives me food and drink; and when I am ill, He heals me; He Who will

cause my death and then give me life; He Who I sincerely hope will forgive my mistakes on the Day of Reckoning." (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 77-82)

As Allah states in the Qur'an, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe frequently stated their determination to persist in their paganism. He responded by praising our Lord with His finest names. Only Allah creates or destroys everything in the universe, animate or inanimate. Only He gives all blessings on Earth for the service of humanity and provides an infinite number of beauties. The way a human being is born, grows, eats, drinks, walks, moves, speaks, and laughs—in short, everything in life—happens by Allah's will. As the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) reveals, our Lord Allah heals sick people, by restoring them to health. Unless Allah wills, no medicine or doctor can restore anyone to health.

Allah creates humanity and, in the same way, will take each person's soul at the moment of his or her death. Even before a person is born, Allah has already established the length of his or her life, what will happen to them, and all that they will say and do. In other words, people do not control their destiny, for Allah has written it even before the person is born.

Allah created this world as a testing arena and then sent messengers to lead others to the true path by means of revelation. On the Day of Judgment, every human being will have to account for what he or she did while in this world. Believers who spend their lives doing good in the hope of earning His good pleasure and mercy will meet with countless blessings. Allah, Who is most merciful, forgiving, and loving toward His servants, has promised to cover the evil deeds of His servants on the Day of Judgment, to forgive their mistakes, and to reward them with the countless blessings of Paradise.

Remember that human beings have no power to bring others to the true path, for their only responsibility is to relay His message. In fact, this is a religious obligation for all believers. Whether or not an unbeliever turns to faith depends totally on Allah's guidance, for no one can believe unless Allah so wills. Indeed, despite the strength that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) acquired from his faith in Allah, his pagan tribe, who had no fear of Allah and ignored their consciences, persisted in their denial. In fact, they went so far as to threaten the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) with death by fire. Thus, all believers must devoutly and determinedly call those around them to the true path and not despair if they are ignored and persecuted.

In one verse, our Lord states that **"... It is the truth from your Lord; so let whoever wishes believe and whoever wishes disbelieve"** (Surat al-Kahf: 29). In another verse Allah reveals to our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that **"Perhaps you will destroy yourself with grief because they will not become believers"** (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 3). In Surah Yusuf, Allah reveals that **"But most people, for all your eagerness, are not believers. You do not ask them for any wage for it. It is only a reminder to all beings"** (Surah Yusuf: 103-104).

One reason why the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe persisted in their denial was their concern for their own interests. Their pagan belief system provided them with various worldly advantages, and any change to the established order would conflict with those interests, just as our Prophet's mission (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) upset the Meccan leaders, who enjoyed enormous commercial profits due to Arabia's paganism. This is actually a law that Allah has decreed for His prophets. As Allah states in the Qur'an, the prophets have always been opposed by their tribe. They have been threatened with death and subjected to slander, and sometimes have even been accused of sorcery, madness, and ascribing their own words to Allah. In sum, those who accused the prophets had no hesitation about resorting to such falsehoods as asserting that the prophets were on the wrong path while they were on the right path.

However, these people are laboring under a cloud of irrationality, for while mistakenly trying to protect their own interests, they are actually condemning themselves to eternal suffering. Allah has revealed the fate of those who rebel against His prophets, those role models of pleasing moral values, godliness, and deep faith:

... They have brought down anger from Allah upon themselves, and they have been plunged into destitution. That was because they rejected Allah's signs and killed the prophets without any right to do so. That was because they disobeyed and went beyond the limits [that Allah has established for humanity]. (Surah Al 'Imran: 112)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Entraps the Idols

According to the Qur'an Allah gives those who fear and hold Him in awe *the ability to distinguish between right and wrong*. This great kindness and superior blessing is restricted to the believers. The methods the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) used to call his tribe to belief, as well as his decisions and styles of presentation, are all important examples of this great blessing.

One example is the trap he laid for his tribe's idols. Given that he was all alone and operating in a dangerous environment, he took certain precautions to prevent bodily harm and to make sure that Allah's message would be heard. For example, he told the unbelievers around him that he was ill so that they would go away:

And [Abraham] asked his father and his tribe: "What are you worshipping? Is it falsehood—deities besides Allah—that you desire? So what are your thoughts about the Lord of all the worlds?" He looked at the stars and said: "I am sick." So they turned their backs on him. (Surat as-Saffat: 85-90)

After sending the unbelievers away, he went up to the idols and smashed them:

He turned surreptitiously to their deities and asked: "Don't you eat? What is the matter with you that you don't speak?" He turned on them, striking out with his right hand. (Surat as-Saffat: 91-93)

He broke them in pieces, except for the largest one, so that they would have it to consult! (Surat al-Anbiya: 58)

Leaving the largest idol untouched shows great wisdom. When his tribe saw what had happened and that only the largest idol remained, they immediately began looking for the person who had done this. Since they were aware of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) opposition to their idols and paganism, they quickly realized that he was responsible and so sought him out to take their revenge:

They exclaimed: "Who has done this to our deities? He is definitely one of the wrongdoers!" They said: "We heard a young man mentioning them. They call him Abraham." They ordered: "Bring him before the people's eyes so they can be witnesses!" They asked: "Did you do this to our deities, Abraham?" (Surat al-Anbiya: 59-62)

That question revealed why the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) did not destroy the largest idol:

He said: "No, this one, the largest of them, did it. Ask them, if they are able to speak!" (Surat al-Anbiya: 63)

Hearing this response, the unbelievers inevitably began thinking and understanding that their idols would never have the power of speech. And so his plan succeeded, for it caused them to question their pagan belief system. Allah says:

They consulted among themselves and said: "It is you yourselves who are wrongdoers." (Surat al-Anbiya: 64)

However, their regret did not last long. Despite having understood the truth, they again decided to oppose the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) in order to maintain their traditional pagan belief system, which was in line with their own transitory worldly interests:

But then they relapsed back into their disbelief: "You know full well these idols cannot talk." He said: "Do you then worship, instead of Allah, that which cannot help or harm you in any way? Shame on you and what you worship besides Allah! Will you not use your intellect?" They said: "Burn him and support your deities, if you are resolved to do something." (Surat al-Anbiya: 65-68)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) approach Allah reveals in these verses displays a finely calculated plan and wisdom by Allah's

inspiration. Sending the people away by telling them that he was ill, he then smashed all but the largest idol in the hope that they would respond as he expected. This trap shows that he acted under Allah's inspiration and had superior intelligence and foresight. Under divine inspiration, he devised a brilliant trap and, by Allah's will, achieved a most pleasing success. After smashing the idols, he tested his tribe's belief system by saying that the largest idol had destroyed the others.

One aim of this plan was to make his tribe realize just how irrational their belief system actually was. If they failed to comprehend the irrational and illogical nature of their deeds, he knew that they would just make new idols and persist in their paganism. The important thing, therefore, was to make them understand that such superstitious worship was contrary to faith in Allah and His revelation.

It is totally irrational to think that statues can eat, drink, move, or do any harm or good to any person. When those who believe in such fallacies encounter a problem or a difficulty, they seek their idols' help and refrain from displeasing them. They do so due to their fear of their idols and their irrational and illogical belief that lifeless idols created the universe and all living things, direct everything within the universe, and bestow health and plenty, as well as daily bread, power, and understanding, upon humanity. Allah describes their great mistake in the following terms:

... who are not capable of helping them and cannot even help themselves? If you call them [unbelievers] to guidance, they will not follow you. It makes no difference if you call them or stay silent. (Surat al-A'raf: 192-93)

Do they have legs with which they can walk? Do they have hands with which they can grasp? Do they have eyes with which they can see? Do they have ears with which they can hear? Say: "Call on your deities, try all of your wiles against me, and grant me no reprieve." (Surat al-A'raf: 195)

However, such a lack of understanding is not limited to the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) time alone. Paganism still thrives today under a wide variety of different names. The false pagan beliefs of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) time, for instance, bear a close resemblance to Darwinian claims.

Similarities between Paganism and Darwinism

The pagan tribes of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) time foolishly worshipped idols that they and their ancestors had made, and believed that their idols could influence the workings of the universe. According to this superstitious belief, idols could make and implement decisions and could punish or reward human beings. In other words, these pagans believed that inanimate matter could create and control human beings. Allah reveals this terrible mistake and great sin in the Qur'an. For example:

Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him, but He forgives whoever He wills for anything other than that. Anyone who associates something with Allah has committed a terrible crime. (Surat an-Nisa: 48)

Those who defend Darwin's theory of evolution follow a very similar superstitious and deviant concept, for they believe that certain elements (e.g., carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, calcium, magnesium, and iron) as well as muddy water containing various minerals, somehow acquired a supposedly superior power and free will over the course of time and by chance. The Darwinists claim that life emerged from the mud over time and by coincidence. Supposedly, this trio of muddy water, time, and chance decided to form all of the beautiful things in nature, animals, and, most importantly, conscious human beings.

The origins of this superstition lie in the fallacious belief that inanimate substances are actually entities that possess intelligence and willpower, and that can make and act upon decisions. In other words, they regard matter itself as something divine. Based upon this false concept, Darwinists maintain that everything in the universe developed on its own as the result of chance, and that every entity is regarded, together with chance, as supposedly divine. However, those who look at all of the animate and inanimate things that surround them, beginning with their own bodies, will see that the universe is the work of the Almighty Allah, Who possesses infinite intelligence and knowledge. Every detail, from our own planet to the flawless harmony within our own bodies, from the equilibrium between the galaxies, as well as the stars and all other celestial bodies, to our world with all of its countless blessings, proves the existence of an infinitely compassionate and loving Creator: Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Our Lord has revealed this manifest truth, which everyone can discover for themselves, to humanity through such messengers as the Prophet Abraham (pbuh). Yet for some reason, many people throughout history have rejected this truth and have insisted on denying His existence. In His final revelation, Allah describes the position of such people:

They have sworn by Allah with their most earnest oaths that if a sign comes to them, they will believe in it. Say: "The signs are under Allah's control alone." What will make you realize that even if a sign did come, they would still not believe? We will overturn their hearts and sight, just as when they did not believe in it at first, and We will abandon them to wander blindly in their excessive insolence. Even if We sent down angels to them, the dead spoke to them, and We gathered together everything in front of them right before their eyes, they would still not believe unless Allah willed. The truth is that most of them are ignorant. (Surat al-An'am: 109-111)

As we have seen, claiming that unconscious atoms, minerals, and blind chance produced flawless and perfect features is nothing more than bowing down before wooden totems and begging them for health and abundance. The only difference between the two is the names given to them and the concepts used to describe them.

According to the pagans among whom the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) lived, certain idols allegedly regulated the universe, shaped living things, and directed their behavior. Similarly, Darwinists believe that all living things and the universe's flawless Creation emerged under the effect of inanimate matter (e.g., atoms, molecules, natural forces, and the chemical and physical properties of objects). Just as pagans ascribe such powers to their idols, Darwinists use such concepts as *the self-organization of matter and nature's creation of species* in utter irrationality to ascribe imaginary creative power to lifeless matter and then deify it.

This can be clearly seen in popular publications that support the theory of evolution. Such publications make frequent reference to various Darwinist idols, the greatest idol of which is Mother Nature. Those who defend this misguided belief think that every development and change in the universe (e.g., the countless beauties in living things, the life and death of all living beings, and natural disasters) comes about by the direction and will of *Mother Nature*. As a result of grave ignorance, they reveal their misguided beliefs in such unreasonable expressions as *a gift from nature to humanity* when speaking of one of nature's beauties, or *the wrath of Mother Nature* when referring to a disaster. However, they can never explain from where *Mother Nature* receives her power, nor what *she* really is. Of course, this is a very ugly and irrational claim to make. Such people ascribe partners to Allah and attempt to base their perverted beliefs on an allegedly scientific foundation. Professor Philip Johnson, a contemporary critic of Darwinism, describes the theory of evolution and modern materialist philosophy in general as a kind of idolatry:

... denial is always a temptation, and outright atheism is only the most superficial form of denial... Another time-honored strategy [of denial] is to ... [substitute] something we can control. This is called idolatry. Primitive tribes make idols of wood or clay. Sophisticated modern intellectuals make idols of their theories, still employing the word God ... but in such a way that it adds nothing to chance and the laws of nature. All who pursue this strategy are substituting the created thing for the Creator, and this is the essence of idolatry.³

Indeed, substituting the created and helpless entities for our Lord, Who created the whole universe from nothing (surely Allah is beyond all that which they falsely ascribe to Him), has always been one of paganism's main themes. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) struggled against this very worldview, as Allah reveals in the following verse:

Remember when he [Abraham] asked his father: "Father, why do you worship what can neither hear nor see and is of no use to you at all?" (Surah Maryam: 42)

... when he asked his father and his tribe: "What are these statues you are clinging to?" They said: "We found our fathers worshipping them." He said: "You and your fathers are clearly misguided." (Surat al-Anbiya: 52-54)

Clearly, it is a great mistake to suggest that matter is conscious and, as a result, ascribe consciousness to material things. Atoms, molecules, muddy water, and coincidence have no consciousness or power to make any decisions or to think. Atoms are unconscious, inanimate objects. Everything in the universe can acquire life only because of the existence of a superior consciousness and will. These attributes are unique to Allah, Lord of the worlds, for He created the whole universe and thereby displays His infinite knowledge. The flawlessness of His Creation, His superior intelligence, and His exalted wisdom can be seen everywhere in the universe. Allah has created everything, living and non-living, out of nothing and has endowed each one with features that astonish us.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) showed his tribe that the Moon, the Sun, and the stars had no creative power, and then called on them to abandon their paganism and believe in Allah. The path that he followed contains several signposts for us. First of all, he demonstrated, with the inspiration of Allah and in the wisest and most effective way, why the pagans' beliefs were superstitious and groundless.

This approach is an important guide for all believers. Some present-day circles say that it is unnecessary to expose the fallacious nature of such atheist philosophies as Darwinism and materialism, or the errors of those who expound them. In their view, describing Allah's superior Creation is sufficient. But this point of view is mistaken. One of the most important ways of changing peoples' viewpoints consists of answering, one by one, of all their questions. For that reason, while explaining the proofs of Allah's existence and the facts about His Creation, believers must also explain why the theory of evolution is incorrect. This will help the people understand that their own ideas have no real foundation, and, if Allah wills, they will abandon these long-held deceptions and see that Allah's existence is a manifest truth.

Explaining why Darwinism is invalid eliminates all of the supports employed in its defense. In this way, all errors and impossibilities are exposed. Thanks to his superior understanding and foresight, which stemmed from his joyous faith in Allah, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was able to reveal, with proofs and in the wisest possible way, why human-made idols and celestial bodies are not divine. People who spread the message of Allah's existence and the truth of His Creation can use the same method, for Allah made the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) a role model for others of how to live with proper moral values and strong faith.

Another similarity between the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe and Darwinists is their response to the message. The pagans realized that their statues had no power to do anything and admitted as much, as Allah reveals in the verse: **"They consulted among themselves and said: 'It is you yourselves who are wrongdoers'"** (Surat al-

Anbiya: 64). Despite the fact that they saw the truth and accepted it in their hearts, they persisted in their denial and remained blindly loyal to their idols.

Darwinists also know that modern science has exposed the theory of evolution as a fallacy. (For details, see Harun Yahya, *Darwinism Refuted*, [New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2002].) Every new study that reveals the proofs of Allah's superior Creation pushes them deeper into despair and defeat. Examples of all living things' flawless characteristics and His marvelous Creation's details are being made known by scientists, whereas the claims of Darwinism are being dismissed by science. However, while Darwinists do not openly admit this, they do so between the lines and most unwillingly, and even then not in the full sense. In every debate, they blindly continue to defend their theories and ignore the evidence against them.

Believers must not forget one very important fact: The important thing is not to attest to a truth on the surface through words; what really matters is to grasp this truth within one's heart. Darwinists have accepted the truth of Creation in their hearts, and their desire to conceal their true thoughts does not alter this fact. Furthermore, this reveals an important truth informed in the Qur'an: **"Only a small community will believe"** (Surah Ghafir: 59).

Believers are responsible for explaining the truth as many times as required, to develop new methods and styles in order to reach those who do not understand, and to wage a wide-ranging intellectual struggle to inform people of His religion in the best manner possible. Believers who engage in this struggle must be humble and fully submitted to Allah, for only Allah can lead those who listen to them to the true path.

While relaying His message, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was most patient and set an example to others with his humility and submission to Allah. In all situations, he knew that Allah was with him, believed that even the most difficult times and situations were created by Him, and that our Lord would always bring everything to the proper conclusion. Therefore, he persisted in the face of the threats from his tribe and placed his trust in Allah, since he knew that the end result was in His hands. In return for this most pleasing humility, Allah always granted him strength and success.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Intellectual Struggle

As mentioned earlier, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe persisted in their denial and tried to engage him in a debate. On the other hand, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was patient in every situation and displayed a superior morality by taking Allah as his Guardian and giving thanks to Him. When talking with his tribe, he always provided concrete proofs and, thanks to the superior wisdom inspired in him by Allah, gave the most effective examples and employed a most convincing method. His moral values were pleasing to Allah, and he always approached people with affection and compassion.

By means of his plan Allah revealed to him, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) eliminated the fundamental bases of his tribe's pagan superstitions by proving that they were irrational, illogical, and contrary to Allah's revelation.

Whereas his tribe and his father Azar sought to employ the most unjust methods against him, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) limited himself to working on the level of ideas and demonstrated how important the intellectual struggle was. His opponents sought to stone him, exile him, and even martyr him, but he responded to their threats in a balanced and proper manner. Such behavior is part of the morality that pleases Allah and that He wills believers to adopt:

A good action and a bad action are not the same. Repel the bad with something better and, if there is enmity between you and someone else, he will be like a bosom friend. (Surah Fussilat: 34)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) complete submission to Allah, as well as his powerful faith, sincerity, submission, and purity strengthened him in the face of his tribe's hostility and helped him develop effective methods of explaining Allah's existence. He spent his whole life waging an intellectual struggle against all unbelievers with enormous determination and enthusiasm, all the while expecting no reward other than Allah's good pleasure, mercy, and Paradise.

It is much easier to believe in a society in which everyone has faith and lives according to Allah's good pleasure, for people can easily find the true path in such a society. However, living as believers in an unbelieving society requires a much greater determination to live such a life. Therefore, such a life may be more esteemed. (Allah knows the truth.) In these terms, too, Allah made the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) superior to all of his tribe.

Some present-day people despair because, seeing their fellows deny Allah's existence and lead lives far removed from the Qur'an's moral values causes them to lose their enthusiasm for gaining His good pleasure. However, even if the whole world were to deny Allah, Muslims would still have the duty to submit sincerely to Him and live in the manner that earns His good pleasure. In the verse, "**Abraham was a community in himself, exemplary, obedient to Allah, a man of pure natural belief. He was not one of the idolaters**" (Surat an-Nahl: 120), Allah reveals that this servant turned only to Him and lived according to the true faith all by himself. Therefore, all believers must display the same determination and refuse, no matter what the circumstances, to make concessions when confronted with the unbelievers' deceptions and snares.

The Wish to Burn the Prophet Abraham (pbuh)

Angered that their idols had been smashed, the pagans decided to take their revenge upon the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) by burning him to death. As Alla reveals in the following verse:

They exclaimed: "Build a pyre for him and fling him into the blaze!" They tried to outwit him, but We made them the lowest. (Surat as-Saffat: 98)

In another verse, Allah reveals their hostility, as follows:

The only answer of his [Abraham's] tribe was to say: "Kill him or burn him!" But Allah rescued him from the fire. There are certainly signs in that for people who believe. (Surat al-Ankabut: 24)

Although they could clearly see the proofs of Allah's existence, their great anger drove them to throw the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) into the fire. This is an important example of their hatred and intolerance of Allah's prophets and believers. In fact, in the Qur'an Allah reveals that a number of other believers were subjected to a similar cruelty:

Cursed be the Companions of the Pit—the fire well stocked with fuel—when they were seated right beside it witnessing what they did to the believers. The only reason they punished them was because they believed in Allah the Almighty, the All-Praiseworthy. (Surat al-Buruj: 4-8)

As with all of the unbelievers' other snares, this one was also foiled by Allah. Those believers who suffer torture gain great merit in His sight, and the unbelievers who inflict it upon them are rewarded with eternal suffering in Hell.

At first sight, it appeared that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) would be burned to death. However, in the same way that death only comes when Allah wills, fire can only *burn* if He so wills it. Allah, the Creator of all things, commanded the fire to be cool at that moment, and thus turned the unbelievers' trap against themselves:

We said: "Fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham." They desired to trap him, but We made them the losers. We delivered both him and Lot to the land that We had blessed for all beings. (Surat al-Anbiya: 69-71)

Just as Allah always helps His prophets, He rescued the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) in his moment of need and in the finest way. The unbelievers' trap was miraculously foiled, just as He parted the sea and then drowned Pharaoh's army to rescue the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and the Children of Israel. By keeping his fortitude, courage, and humility in such a situation, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) sets an example for all believers. Due to his exceedingly powerful faith, he was aware that everything that happened to him was due to Allah's will and Allah is the Best of Plotters. He knew, therefore, that Allah's help and support were always with believers, even in the most difficult-appearing events, for Allah never permits unbelievers to make progress at the believers'

expense: "Allah will not give the unbelievers any way against the believers." (Surat an-Nisa: 141)

Taking the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), who is praised for his faith in and submission to Allah, as well as for his pleasing morality, as a role model, believers must submit wholly to Allah when they encounter difficult circumstances, and must never forget that Allah creates everything. In fact, all events, even those that appear to be harmful, are actually tests and are auspicious for believers. This being the case, the most appropriate attitude for Muslims to adopt in order to earn Allah's good pleasure is to be enthusiastic and determined and to place their trust in our Lord.

For that reason, believers should not feel sad or troubled by the unbelievers' traps, plots, and assaults, for they are all means to increase their enthusiasm and draw closer to Allah. Indeed, Allah tells our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) the following:

Be patient. But your patience is only by Allah. Do not be grieved by them and do not be constricted by the plots they hatch. Allah is with those who fear Him and with those who are good-doers. (Surat an-Nahl: 127-28)

The Wisdom in the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Method

Indicating the Truth by Asking Questions

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) led his pagan people to accept the fact that their idols possessed no power by asking questions:

Do you then worship, instead of Allah, that which cannot help or harm you in any way? (Surat al-Anbiya: 66)

Posing questions enables people to understand their own situations by using their own logic. This is a most effective means of communication. Those who deny Allah suffer a huge defeat in the face of wise, sincere questions, because Allah's existence and the evidence for it are clear. Therefore, it is a serious mistake to close one's eyes to His religion and build a life in which He is forgotten.

Unbiased people who can grasp Allah's infinite might and power know that He has power over everything and that He possesses infinite knowledge and wisdom, and so build their entire lives on His good pleasure. One effective manner of awakening the heedless and those who fail, under satan's influence, to think of these things is to ask questions that will focus their minds. Indeed, many verses invite people to think by asking various questions:

Have you thought about the water that you drink? Is it you who sent it down from the clouds, or are We the Sender? If We had wished, We could have made it bitter. So will you not give thanks? Have you thought about the fire that you light? Is it you who make the trees that fuel it grow, or are We the Grower? We have made it to be a reminder and a comfort for

travelers in the wild. So glorify the name of your Lord, the Magnificent! (Surat al-Wakia:68-74)

As they explain religion's moral values, believers may experiment with several methods depending on the people being addressed, their degree of openness, and how they behave. If they are open to the truth, then it will be easy, if Allah so wills, for them to comprehend religion's moral values. If, however, believers are faced with an arrogant and cruel society, such as the one facing the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), then it is essential to awaken them in some way, defeat their heedlessness, and rock them intellectually.

Due to their arrogance, such people cannot see the truth and, if they somehow do manage to see it, they still cannot accept it. They will stubbornly maintain the truth of their own false beliefs and refuse to listen to any opposing viewpoint. In such a situation, asking questions designed to undermine the unbelievers' ideas is one of the wisest and most effective methods, for unbelievers will be overwhelmed by contradictions and personally witness their irrationality and how they have adopted a superstitious and misguided belief system.

This method also forces the other side to think about what the believers' arguments are, for, as Allah states, **"man is argumentative"** (Surat al-Kahf: 54). For this reason, most people will try to defend their own ideas when confronted with a different idea. The way to prevent such unproductive arguments is to ask questions and lead people to question their own beliefs. Since satan does not want people to think about Allah's existence, the Hereafter, Heaven and Hell, and other important matters, he always seeks to turn them away from the truth. This question-and-answer method can be used with such people to guide them to consider such questions as Allah's existence, the purpose of life, what happens after death, and the Day of Reckoning.

Behaving Courageously and Frankly

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), like all messengers, was granted wisdom by Allah and charged with calling people to religion so that they may earn His good pleasure, live for the Hereafter, and have proper moral values. The messengers' methods of calling and explaining, as well as their styles of dialogue, must serve as examples to all Muslims.

The societies to which the prophets were sent generally consisted of stubborn people who refused to listen to others. Nevertheless, the prophets presented Allah's message in ways designed to earn Allah's good pleasure and demonstrated superior moral virtues, as Allah commanded in the following verse: **"So call and go straight, as you have been ordered to..."** (Surat ash-Shura: 15). The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) had to deal with his tribe, who loved to argue and were devoted to the paganism inherited from their ancestors. When he showed them how illogical and irrational their pagan belief system was, they began arguing with him:

His tribe argued with him. He [Abraham] said: "Are you arguing with me about Allah, when He has guided me? I have no fear of any partner you ascribe to Him, unless my Lord should will such a thing to

happen. My Lord encompasses all things in His knowledge, so will you not pay heed? Why should I fear that which you have associated with Him, when you yourselves apparently have no fear of associating partners with Allah, for which He has sent down no authority to you? Which of the two parties is more entitled to feel safe, if you have any knowledge?" Those who believe and do not mix up their faith with any wrongdoing, they are the ones who are safe; it is they who are guided." This is the argument We gave to Abraham against his tribe. We raise in rank anyone We will. Your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. (Surat al-An'am: 80-83)

One of the most striking elements in the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) method of communication is his sincerity and frankness. While explaining Allah's existence, he addresses peoples' consciences and speaks effectively. In addition, he openly warns them and calls on them to fear and respect no one but Allah. This shows how courageous, perceptive, and determined he was when confronting his pagan society. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) exposed the irrational nature of his tribe's misguided belief system with a sincere explanation and an effective style of presentation. Allah tells all believers to use this method:

Allah knows what is in such people's hearts, so turn away from them, warn them, and speak to them with words that are effective. (Surat an-Nisa: 63)

Although he was opposed by his entire tribe, the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) enthusiasm and determination, as well as his striking, sincere, and intelligent style of presentation, represent a superior attitude capable of influencing all unbiased people. However, since his tribe was far from true religion and was unwilling to abandon their paganism even after realizing the truth of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) words, he experimented with other methods. As Allah reveals in the Qur'an, he responded in the most pleasing way to his argumentative people. In one verse, Allah issues the following command to believers:

If they argue with you, say: "I have submitted myself completely to Allah, and so have all who follow me." Say to those given the Book and those who have no Book: "Have you become Muslim?" If they have become Muslim, they have been guided. If they turn away, you are only responsible for transmission. Allah sees His servants. (Surah Al 'Imran: 20)

Planned Behavior and Sequential Thinking

As we have shown above, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) used several plans and methods by Allah's inspiration when calling his tribe to belief in Allah. One method was to consider the likely dangers and reactions in order to prepare effective precautions. Allah reveals in the Qur'an that He supported all prophets, gave them superior wisdom and understanding, and enabled them, through divine inspiration, to function as servants who took the most rational and effective

precautions and who possessed great foresight. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) had all of these superior characteristics in the most perfect form. Thus, he fulfilled his God-given responsibility in the best possible manner and did his best to call his tribe to the truth.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) tribe, which was quite numerous, threatened him with martyrdom, stoning, and exile. However, he sought to keep his distance from them by telling them that he was ill as Allah reveals in the verses:

And [Abraham] asked his father and his tribe: "What are you worshipping? Is it falsehood—deities besides Allah—that you desire? So, what are your thoughts about the Lord of all the worlds?" He looked at the stars and said: "I am sick." So they turned their backs on him. (Surat as-Saffat: 85-90)

This method reflects a most wise and rational attitude, for his tribe left him alone out of fear that they themselves might become ill. Left alone, he gained enough time to smash the idols. This clever plan, designed to free his tribe from the sin of ascribing partners to Allah, is one of the finest examples of acting based upon his love for and fear (respect) of Allah and personal faith. He made great efforts to carry out his God-given responsibility and, with great courage and determination, refused to give up in the face of all difficulties. He sought no reward from people, responded to evil with good, and sought only Allah's good pleasure while doing so.

In the Qur'an, there are other examples of *portraying something as flawed and thus escaping the clutches of the cruel*, such as Khidr (pbuh), who traveled with the Prophet Moses (pbuh) for a short time. The verses read:

They continued until they boarded a boat, and he [Khidr] caused it to sink. Then Moses said: "Did you cause it to sink so that its owners would be drowned? This is truly a dreadful thing that you have done!" (Surat al-Kahf: 71)

[Khidr said to Moses:] "As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who worked on the sea. I wanted to damage it because a king was coming behind them, commandeering every boat." (Surat al-Kahf: 79)

Khidr (pbuh) was chosen by Allah and given special knowledge through Allah's inspiration, and his great intelligence and foresight in this instance are worthy of note. In the Qur'an Allah praises his profound faith, humility, and submission to Allah, as well as many of his other qualities, and reveals that he was a servant of Allah with special knowledge from Him and whose every action was founded on guidance and wisdom. By sinking this boat, Khidr (pbuh) prevented the king from taking it and also showed great compassion towards its owners, who were poor. At the same time, he damaged it in such a way that it could be easily repaired.

These verses also describe Khidr (pbuh) as being a wise servant of Allah who carried out His commands without hesitation, and as being noteworthy for his love and compassion, for his desire to help believers, and for his patience and determination. (For details, see Harun Yahya, *Signs of the End Times in Surat Al- Kahf* [New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2004].)

As we saw earlier, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) smashed all but the largest of his tribe's false idols with inspiration from Allah. After seeing what he had done, they sought to punish him. At this point, his plan to show them the fallacy of their pagan belief system emerged:

He said: "No, this one, the largest of them, did it. Ask them, if they are able to speak!" (Surat al-Anbiya: 63)

This reply confronted the pagans, who believed the nonsense that their idols directed the universe and controlled human beings, with a terrible dilemma. As a result, they were humbled and unable to respond. Seeing that their lifeless idols had no power, they had no alternative but to accept the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) words. However, they could not publicly admit these truths, which they believed in their hearts and minds. One reason for this, as Allah reveals, was their "wrongness and haughtiness" (Surat an-Naml: 14).

Another element of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) method was to undermine his tribe's misguided beliefs before explaining the truth to them. Allah gave him great wisdom, superior understanding, and the power of effective communication, all of which he employed in the wisest, most effective, and rational style to call his tribe to belief. Under divine inspiration, he exposed the falsity of their pagan belief system and then replaced it, by His will, with a divine perspective based on Allah's existence and belief in His superior power and might.

This wise method is an important model that all Muslims should use when explaining religion's moral values. By revealing his tribe's pagan belief system as no more than a set of contradictions and inconsistencies, he followed the wisest and most effective mode of guiding his tribe to truth. Such an approach will, if Allah wills, help unbelievers see that their beliefs rest on illogical and irrational foundations, after which they may grasp religion's superior nature and understand that Allah created the universe from nothing, possesses infinite might and power, and pervades all things.

The Angels Allah Sent to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh)

One of Allah's greatest blessings to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was to support him with angels. According to the Qur'an two angels came to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) in human guise and stayed in his house:

Has the story reached you of the honored guests of Abraham? When they entered his dwelling and said: "Peace,"

he replied: "Peace, to people we do not know." (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 24-25)

Our angels brought the good news to Abraham. They said: "Peace," and he too said: "Peace" and brought in a roasted calf without delay. (Surah Hud: 69)

As we see, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) realized immediately that these guests were not ordinary guests. He showed a superior hospitality to them, although he had never seen before, and immediately offered them pleasant refreshments. Such an act symbolizes his superior moral values. And, offering such refreshments before his unknown guests made any requests is an example of the fine thinking that Muslims need to adopt. Another model worthy of adoption is the way he prepared the refreshments without giving any indication that he was doing so:

So he slipped off to his household and brought a fattened calf. He offered it to them and then exclaimed: "Do you not then eat?" (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 26-27)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) did not ask his guests whether they were hungry or tell them that he had made any preparations. This is the height of good manners, for a guest may feel shy to request some refreshments, and his or her self-respect may prevent such a request from being made. The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) handling of this situation indicates his respect for and interest in his guests.

He offered them a roasted, fattened calf, which people of that time considered to be a most pleasing and delicious meal. His request that they eat is one of the finest examples of his superior morality and thought.

The Angels' Glad Tidings

However, his guests did not eat the food placed before them, because:

When he saw that their hands were not reaching for it, he suspected them and felt afraid of them. They said: "Have no fear. We have been sent to the tribe of Lot." (Surah Hud: 70)

The way that his guests declined to eat, even though he had treated them very warmly and offered them food, showed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) that something extraordinary was happening. These angels, who came to him in human guise, displayed a most noble and blameless morality. Indeed, he treated them with such enormous hospitality because he realized that they were most worthy guests. The angels then revealed their true identities and gave him the glad tidings of a righteous son:

When they came in to him, they said: "Peace." He replied: "Truly we are afraid of you." They said: "Do not be afraid. We

bring you the good news of a boy of great knowledge." (Surat al-Hijr: 52-53)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his wife were astonished, for both of them were quite old. In addition, his wife was barren. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) replied with the following words:

He asked: "Do you bring me this good news despite the fact of old age having reached me? What kind of good news are you bringing me?" They said: "We bring you good news of the truth, so do not be among those who despair." (Surat al-Hijr: 54-55)

His wife was standing there, and she laughed out loud. So We gave her the good news of Isaac, and beyond Isaac, Jacob. She exclaimed: "Woe is me! How can I give birth when I am an old woman and my husband is an aged man? This is indeed an astonishing thing!" (Surah Hud: 71-72)

This was news of a great miracle. In response to his wife's question, we read in the verse, "They said: 'That is what your Lord says. He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing'" (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 30). As Allah revealed in another verse, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his wife were told not to be astonished:

They said: "Are you astonished at Allah's command? May Allah's mercy and His blessings be upon you, People of the House. He is Praiseworthy, All-Glorious." (Surah Hud: 73)

The angels also reminded the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) of something else:

They said [to Abraham]: "We bring you good news of the truth, so do not be among those who despair." (Surat al-Hijr: 55)

Losing faith in Allah is a spiritual state prevalent among people who live far removed from Allah. When their expectations fail to materialize, they despair and believe that their wishes will never come true. Thus, they cannot show the requisite appreciation of Allah. On the other hand, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) always exhibited proper moral values by placing his hope in Allah.

Believers, who are aware of Allah's power, seek everything from Him and place their hope in Him. They do this because they know that only Allah creates causes and the ensuing effects, and only He controls the world through His laws. If He wills something to be, He merely says, *Be!* and it will immediately come about. Since everything is possible in Allah's sight, believers make their requests full of hope. Allah reveals His infinite might in following terms:

The Originator of the heavens and Earth. When He decides on something, He just says to it, "Be!" and it is. (Surat al-Baqara: 117)

People who grasp this great truth know that even apparently insurmountable obstacles exist because of His wisdom. Allah Who creates sterility for the wife of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) so can turn it into fertility in a moment. That is what happened in the story of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his barren wife who had never given birth before, despite their great age. Only Allah, Who gave them a righteous son, can give and take life, and then bring anything to life once again.

In the Qur'an Allah relates a miraculous event and reveals that He will cause the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his wife to have a righteous son. There may also be an indication in this verse of present-day sterility treatments and advances in medical science. (Allah knows the truth.)

Other News Brought by the Angels

The first news the angels brought to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) is the glad tidings of a son. The angels then informed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) that Prophet Lot's (pbuh) tribe would soon be destroyed because of their homosexual lifestyle. (This will be discussed in greater detail later on.) Allah states in the Qur'an:

He [Abraham] inquired: "What, then, is your business, O emissaries from Allah?" They said: "We have been sent to a tribe of evildoers to unleash upon them lumps of clay earmarked by your Lord for the profligate." (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 32-34)

Allah also gives more details about this conversation in other passages. For example:

When Our emissaries came with the good news to Abraham, they said: "We are going to destroy the people of this city. Truly its inhabitants are wrongdoers." He said: "Lot is in it." They said: "We know very well who is in it. We are going to rescue him and his family—except for his wife. She will be one of those who stay behind." (Surat al-Ankabut: 31-32)

When the feeling of fear left Abraham and the good news reached him, he disputed with Us about the tribe of Lot. Abraham was forbearing, compassionate, and penitent. "Abraham, turn away from this! Your Lord's command has come. A punishment is coming to them that cannot be repelled." (Surah Hud: 76)

They said: "We have been sent to a people who are evildoers—with the exception of the family of Lot, all of whom We will save, except for his wife. We have decreed her to be one of those who stay behind." (Surat al-Hijr: 58-60)

Allah reveals in the Qur'an that He will never destroy a society that contains believers. For that reason, the angels told the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh) to leave the region.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Sons: Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) and Prophet Isaac (pbuh)

The angels told the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) that Allah had accepted his prayer for a righteous child:

"My Lord, bestow on me a righteous child!" (Surat as-Saffat: 100)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) did not ask Allah for a child from his own line especially, but rather for a righteous son. His prayer was for a devout Muslim who would keep the religion alive after his death. The fact that he was not expecting a son can be seen from his reply as Allah revealed in a verse: "Do you bring me this good news despite the fact of old age having reached me? What kind of good news are you bringing me?" (Surat al-Hijr: 54). However, Allah willed to create a righteous line of descent for the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), and so made his elderly and barren wife fertile. As we stated earlier, He sent angels to inform the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his wife of this miracle:

And We gave him the good news of a forbearing boy. (Surat as-Saffat: 101)

This example also applies to Prophet Zachariah (pbuh), one of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) descendants. In the Qur'an Allah informs us of the Prophet Zachariah's (pbuh) prayer and of his being given the glad tidings that his wife will bear a righteous son:

Remembering your Lord's mercy to His servant Zachariah, when he called on his Lord in secret and said: "My Lord, my bones have lost their strength and my head is crowned with white, but in calling on You, my Lord, I have never been disappointed. I fear my relatives when I am gone and my wife is barren, so give me an heir from You to be my inheritor and the inheritor of the family of Jacob. And make him, my Lord, pleasing to You." "O Zachariah. We give you the good news of a boy named John, a name we have given to no one else before." He asked: "My Lord! How can I father a son when my wife is barren and I have reached advanced old age?" He [Allah] replied: "It will be so. Your Lord says: 'That is easy for me to do. I created you before, when you were nothing.'" (Surah Maryam: 2-9)

Like the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), Prophet Zachariah (pbuh) asked for a devout son. As stated above, only Allah can guide someone to the true path. Indeed, Allah reveals: "... Allah guides those He wills. He has best knowledge of the guided" (Surat al-Qasas: 56). Our Lord also gives

the example of Prophet Noah's (pbuh) son. This person had such a worthy father, a role model of sincerity, patience, submission, and pleasing moral values. However, since he did not comply with his father's call to the true path, but rather followed the unbelievers, Allah drowned him in the flood along with the other unbelievers (Surah Hud: 43).

Our Lord gave the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) the glad tidings that he would have righteous children. In the Qur'an Allah reveals that these esteemed sons were the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) and the Prophet Isaac (pbuh), whom He raised to the rank of prophethood because of their devotion and submission to Him, as well as their pleasing moral values. After receiving this welcome news, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) prayed and thanked Allah:

Praise be to Allah Who, despite my old age, has given me Ishmael and Isaac. My Lord is the Hearer of Prayer. (Surah Ibrahim: 39)

Allah informs us of the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) as being "among the best of chosen men" (Surah Sad: 48) and "favored over all beings" (Surat al-An'am: 86). In addition, he is said to be a man "true to his promise and was a Messenger and a Prophet" (Surah Maryam: 54). Our Lord also reveals His pleasure with Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) to all people.

While the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was still alive, our Lord presented the Prophet Isaac (pbuh) with a son, Jacob (pbuh), who was also a sincere believer endowed with prophethood. Allah reveals that He has perfectly fulfilled His blessing on this elect servant (Surah Yusuf: 6). The Prophet Jacob (pbuh) is a blessed person, one praised for his sincere faith in Allah, and for being a sincere servant with pure remembrance of his true home in the Hereafter (Surah Sad: 46). Allah reveals the Prophet Isaac's (pbuh) and the Prophet Jacob's (pbuh) superior moral qualities in the following verses:

We purified their sincerity through sincere remembrance of the abode. In Our eyes, they are among the best of chosen men. (Surah Sad: 46-47)

And in addition to that, We gave him [Abraham] Isaac and Jacob and made both of them righteous. We made them leaders, guiding them by Our command, and revealed to them how to do good actions, perform prayer, and give alms. And they worshipped Us. (Surat al-Anbiya: 72-73)

We gave him [Abraham] the good news of Isaac, a Prophet, one of the righteous. (Surat as-Saffat: 112)

Allah praises in the Qur'an that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) for turning to Allah in everything he did, his sincere and genuine prayers, and his determined faith. The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) submissive attitude in the face of all troubles and difficulties is an example for all believers. His sincere prayer for his children is a clear indication of this:

"Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring by Your Sacred House in an uncultivated valley. Our Lord, let them perform prayer. Make the hearts of humanity incline toward them and provide them with fruits, so that, hopefully, they will be thankful." (Surah Ibrahim: 37)

Allah describes the great blessing He has placed on the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) descendents in the following terms:

"Accordingly, your Lord will pick you out and teach you the true meaning of events and perfectly fulfill His blessing on you, as well as on the family of Jacob, just as He fulfilled it perfectly before upon your forebears Abraham and Isaac. Most certainly, your Lord is Knowing, Wise." (Surah Yusuf: 6)

In other verses, Allah reveals the following information about this blessed line:

We gave him [Abraham] Isaac and Jacob, and placed prophethood and the Book among his progeny. We gave him his reward in this world, and in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous. (Surat al-Ankabut: 27)

And remember Our servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, men of true strength and inner sight. We purified their sincerity through sincere remembrance of the abode. In Our eyes, they are among the best of chosen men. (Surah Sad: 45-47)

When he [Abraham] separated himself from them and what they worshipped besides Allah, We gave him Isaac and Jacob, making each of them a prophet. We endowed them with Our mercy and made them highly honored. (Surah Maryam: 49-50)

Our Lord further informs us that He has made the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) family superior to the worlds, supported them with wisdom and the Book, and provided them with considerable assets:

Allah chose Adam and Noah, as well as the family of Abraham and the family of `Imran, over all other beings. (Surah Al 'Imran: 33)

Or do they, in fact, envy other people for the bounty Allah has granted them? We gave the family of Abraham the Book and wisdom, and We gave them an immense kingdom. (Surat an-Nisa: 54)

"Those who believe and do not mix up their faith with any wrongdoing, they are the ones who are safe; it is they who are guided." This is the argument We gave to Abraham against his tribe. We raise in rank anyone We will. Your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. (Surat al-An'am: 82-83)

And left the later people saying of him: "Peace be upon Abraham." That is how We recompense good-doers. Truly, he was one of Our believing servants. (Surat as-Saffat: 108-111)

Allah rewarded the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) with a pleasing, guided, and unsullied line of descent. Although his tribe was disobedient, proud, and insistent upon denying Allah, his sons, whom Allah selected as prophets, were his true legacy:

We gave him Isaac and Jacob, each of whom We guided. And before him We had guided Noah. And among his descendents were David and Solomon, Job and Joseph, Moses and Aaron. That is how We recompense the good-doers. (Surat al-An'am: 84)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh), and the Prophet Isaac (pbuh) all called on people to believe in Allah. The Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) and the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) built the Ka`bah.

Building the Ka`bah

Allah reveals in the Qur'an that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) built the Ka`bah. Located in Mecca, the Ka`bah was the first structure built solely to worship Allah, for:

The first House established for humanity was that at Bakka*, a place of blessing and a guidance for all beings. In it are Clear Signs—the place where Abraham stood [to pray]. All who enter it are safe. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all humanity—those who can find a way to do it. But if anyone does not believe, Allah is Rich Beyond Need of any being. (Surah Al 'Imran: 96-97)

* Mecca

These two prophets built the Ka`bah, a task that Allah had entrusted to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), as the following verses reveal:

And We located the position of the House for Abraham: "Do not associate anything with Me, and purify My House for those who circle it and for those who stand and bow and prostrate. Announce the Pilgrimage to humanity. They will come to you on foot and on every sort of lean animal, coming by every distant road so that they can be present at what will profit them, and invoke Allah's name on specific days over livestock He has provided for them. Eat of them and feed those who are poor and in need." (Surat al-Hajj: 26-28)

Allah told the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) to cleanse the Ka`bah. This may represent a physical cleaning or may have a spiritual meaning.

Thus, Allah commanded that the Ka`bah be cleansed both physically and spiritually (from pagan practices). In another verse, Allah reveals the tasks He assigned to these two prophets:

And when Abraham built the foundations of the House with Ishmael: "Our Lord, accept this from us. You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing." (Surat al-Baqara: 127)

As they engaged in building the Ka`bah and thereby fulfilling their religious duty, these two prophets constantly prayed to our Lord. Following this pleasing practice, we can pray and seek Allah's help in any matter, and praise and call on His name. This is because Allah knows what is hidden in peoples' hearts, hears them at all times, and sees and knows what they do. Believers know that He will respond to their prayers, and so regard prayer as a means of drawing closer to Him. People sometimes think that prayer can only be performed at certain times or places, and therefore seek to mold it into a specific form. Yet the prophets' prayers show that believers can turn to Allah at any time (e.g., when working, going to bed, or sitting down). As there is no rule concerning this, believers may turn to Allah at all moments, recall Him in their hearts at all times, and praise our Lord with His most beautiful names.

At the end of their prayers, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) praised Allah. After stating what they sought from Him, the two prophets praised Him, expressing the fact that He knows and hears everything. This demonstrates that it is acceptable to recall His names during prayer and to use them when praying to Him. Indeed, in one verse Allah reveals that:

To Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so call on Him by them and abandon those who desecrate His Names. They will be repaid for what they did. (Surat al-A'raf: 180)

Believers should express the fact, as did the prophets, of Allah's greatness, that He sees and hears everything, controls everything, and is the Lord of power and wisdom. Many verses concerning the prophets' prayers shed light on how believers should actually pray.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Test

One of the many tests that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) had to face was that of sacrificing the Prophet Ishmael (pbuh). As Allah relates in the following verse:

And We gave him [Abraham] the good news of a forbearing boy. When he [Ishmael] was of an age to work with him, he [Abraham] said: "My son, I saw in a dream that I must sacrifice you. What do you think about this?" He said: "Do as you are ordered, father. Allah willing, you will find me patient." Then when they had both submitted and he had lain him face down on the ground, We called out to him: "Abraham! You have

discharged your vision." That is how We recompense good-doers. This was indeed a most manifest trial. We ransomed him with a mighty sacrifice. (Surat as-Saffat: 101-107)

In the above verses, Allah relates how He tested the Prophet Abraham (pbuh). Islamic scholars generally interpret these verses in the same way. For example, in his commentary on the Qur'an Hamdi Yazir of Elmalı states that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) saw a revelation in his dream and was told to fulfill it. He explains the relevant verses in the following terms:

"...He did not seek to do this by force. Rather, he indicated that by asking his son's views on how to bring this about, thus seeking his obedience and submission and enabling him to acquire merit in Allah's sight. One can only imagine what a great feeling of love must beat in a father's heart when he says: 'O, my dear son,' and how his great passion for duty and love for God overcame even his love for his son... That gentle-hearted son, who understood that this was Allah's command and that Allah was with those who were patient, replied: 'O, my dear father, do whatever you are commanded. By God's will, you shall find me patient.'"⁴

In his commentary, Omer Nasuhi Bilmen offers the following account:

"The Prophet Abraham and his son obeyed and submitted to Allah's command, and the Prophet Abraham (laid his [son's] head to one side) and accepted the task of cutting his throat... Understanding that his dream was a divine command, he was eager to discharge his duty, and showed great fortitude and obedience to Allah's command. Then Allah blessed him, ordering him to sacrifice an animal instead of his son, and thereby saved the Prophet Abraham from a self-sacrifice."⁵

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) and the Prophet Ishmael's (pbuh) sincere obedience, submission, and devotion to Allah can be seen clearly from these verses and commentaries. Their superior behavior is an excellent example and a matchless guide for all believers. Therefore, all believers must follow this path and become known for their scrupulous implementation of Allah's commands, and for showing strong resolution when facing troubles or difficulties and maintaining their patient and humble natures. In the following verses, Allah further reveals that:

And left the later people saying of him: "Peace be upon Abraham." That is how We recompense good-doers. He truly was one of Our believing servants. (Surat as-Saffat: 108-11)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Pleasing Moral Values

Allah informs us of the pleasing moral features of the prophets sent by our Lord to warn and impart glad tidings to their people. All prophets, due to their submission to Allah and sincerity, as well as their just, humble, and honorable behavior, had exceedingly superior moral values. The Prophet Muhammad's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) deep faith in Allah, not to mention his submission to, sincerity and respect for Him; the Prophet Solomon's (pbuh) constant giving of thanks to our Lord and raising His name, as well as displaying his determination, strength, and power when spreading the religion; the Prophet Job's (pbuh) and the Prophet Noah's (pbuh) patience; the Prophet Moses' (pbuh) sincerity; the Prophet Jesus' (pbuh) spiritual depth and submission to Allah; how the Prophet David (pbuh) turned to Allah and his attitude and behavior—all of these and a great number of other features have been given as examples for humanity.

Everyone must adopt the characteristics of these chosen people, whom Allah raised to prophethood, supported with knowledge and strength, and praised for their moral values, and implement them in their own lives. All believers must follow in the path of these worthy individuals, whom Allah made superior to the worlds, and implement their matchless moral values in their own lives.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh), "the Intimate Friend of Allah"

Who could have a better religion than someone who submits himself completely to Allah and is a good-doer, and follows the religion of Abraham, a man of pure natural belief? Allah took Abraham as an intimate friend. (Surat an-Nisa: 125)

Our Lord has revealed that He took the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) as a friend. For that reason, he is known as *Khalilullah* (the friend of Allah), and remembered by that name. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "*Oh my Allah, the Prophet Abraham is Your friend [Khalil] and Your prophet.*"⁶

In the Gospel, we find the following statement concerning the Prophet Abraham (pbuh):

And the scripture was fulfilled that says: "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. (James 2:23)

The only aim of those who are friends of Allah and who love and fear (and respect) Him is to gain His good pleasure, mercy, and Paradise. Allah is always in their hearts and minds. Whenever they see things that give them pleasure, they say: How beautifully has Allah

created them. He is worthy of praise. They call on Allah by His most beautiful names.

Such people know that all blessings come from Allah and constantly thank Him for whatever He sends to them. Whenever they encounter trouble or difficulty, they know that Allah is testing them and that whatever good it contains one day will be revealed. They demonstrate a pleasing patience, show submission, and engage in devout works in the hope of gaining their abode in the Hereafter. And, they take Prophet Muhammad's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) words, "*Praise be to Allah, Who created everything as is necessary, Who does not hasten anything He defers and determines. Allah is enough for me and sufficient*"⁷ as a guide and thank Him for everything.

Allah encourages believers to reach this honorable state by seeking ways to draw closer to Him:

O you who believe. Fear [and respect] Allah, and seek the means of drawing near to Him... (Surat al-Ma'ida: 35)

In other verses, Allah says, "So flee to Allah" (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 50) and:

... So perform prayer, give alms, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector—the Best Protector, the Best Helper. (Surat al-Hajj: 78)

Allah also commands people to turn only toward Him:

Remember the Name of your Lord, and devote yourself to Him completely. Lord of the East and West—there is no deity but Him—so take Him as your Guardian. (Surat al-Muzzammil: 8-9)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Possessed Strength, Insight, and the Ability to Choose Right

Allah states that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) possessed "true strength and inner sight" (Surah Sad: 45). Insight means being able to look at events with wisdom and indicates deep understanding. Like all of the prophets, whom Allah made role models for humanity due to their deep faith, sincerity, and submission, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) made correct decisions, looked ahead, and possessed insight.

Allah reveals in another verse that our Lord endowed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) with *rushdahu* (right guidance), in other words, maturity:

We gave Abraham his right guidance [*rushdahu*] early on, and We had complete knowledge of him. (Surat al-Anbiya: 51)

The word *rushdahu* means *proceeding, turning to, heading toward, with a divine truth, with a full and superior accuracy, and with sure steps*. Strengthened by Allah with these pleasing qualities, perception,

and understanding, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) waged a great struggle against the pagans. In this struggle, his ability to look ahead, distinguish between right and wrong, and make correct decisions were great assets. All of these characteristics show that he was a servant who trembled before Allah and who scrupulously implemented the verses of our Lord. Indeed, Allah revealed that this great blessing will be imparted to those who fear (and respect) Him:

O you who believe. If you fear [and respect] Allah, He will give you discrimination, erase your bad actions, and forgive you. Allah's favor is indeed immense. (Surat al-Anfal: 29)

The superior qualities with which our Lord endowed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) enabled him to wage a most effective and rational struggle against his pagan society. As a result, he and his followers prevailed.

Truth and choosing what is right are very important characteristics of believers. Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) constantly reminded his followers of them, as the few examples given below show:

*Worship Allah alone and do not associate anything with Him ... speak the truth.*⁸

*Let whoever is pleased that Allah and our Prophet love him always tell the truth.*⁹

*To whomsoever Allah wills good, He gives true understanding (of religion).*¹⁰

*Truth leads to piety, and piety leads to Paradise. A man persists in speaking the truth until Allah enrolls him as a truthful man. Falsehood leads to vice, and vice leads to the Fire (Hell). A person goes on telling a lie until Allah enrolls him as a liar.*¹¹

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was a Pure Servant Who Always Thought about the Hereafter

Allah describes the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his line as being pure and always thinking of the Hereafter:

And remember Our servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, men of true strength and inner sight. We purified their sincerity through sincere remembrance of the abode [of the Hereafter]. (Surah Sad: 45-46)

One of the fundamental characteristics that distinguishes prophets and believers from other people is their total concentration on earning Allah's good pleasure and His Paradise, to the exclusion of all worldly concerns. One of the clearest proofs of this is that they continue to warn their tribes, with great patience and purity, right up until the end of their lives.

When performing their good deeds and religious observances, believers seek only His love, good pleasure, approval, and friendship. Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the

finest example in this regard, for he never stopped seeking Allah's good pleasure, mercy, and Paradise. Allah reveals that the prophets sent to people as a mercy and a blessing called their people to live by religion's moral values without expecting anything in return:

Say: "I do not ask you for any wage for it, nor am I a man of false pretensions." (Surah Sad: 86)

Say: "I have not asked you for any wage—it is all for you. My wage is the responsibility of Allah alone. He is witness of everything." (Surah Saba': 47)

In one hadith, our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) says: "*Allah accepts those deeds that were performed purely for His sake and that were meant to seek His pleasure.*"¹² He calls on all people to behave with pure sincerity. When we look at the prophets' prayers and warnings, we see that they called their tribes to believe in Allah and perform good works, not to be deceived by this world's transient blessings, and to work only to gain the abode in the Hereafter.

One important quality that believers need to possess is the ability to focus all of their thought about reaching this abode. Everything they do or say must have the gaining of Allah's good pleasure as its only goal. Believers must always feel a longing for the Hereafter (the true life) and must never be bound to the life of this world. Of course, they will use the blessings of Allah in this world to thank Him and think about the originals of these blessings in the Hereafter. Yet these blessings must never become an end in themselves. Rather, each one must be seen as a means of winning Allah's good pleasure, explaining religion's moral values, and recalling the life of the Hereafter.

Thinking about Paradise's infinite beauties, rejoicing at Allah's promise of Paradise, avoiding Hell's endless torments, and keeping this in mind are important ways for believers to increase their closeness to Allah and their enthusiasm for living by the Qur'an's moral values. Otherwise, satan will seek to use their forgetfulness and encourage them to live without worrying about the Day of Judgment. Believers must never fall into this snare, and must always, like the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), think deeply about the Hereafter and explain it to others. Indeed, Allah says of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh):

Who would deliberately renounce the religion of Abraham, except someone who reveals himself to be a fool? We chose him in this world, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the righteous. (Surat al-Baqara: 130)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was a Distinguished and Auspicious Servant of Allah

In Our eyes, they are among the best of chosen men. (Surah Sad: 47)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was one of Allah's servants to whom He vouchsafed the true path, honored with prophethood, and made distinguished in His own sight. The fact that he and his family were set apart from his tribe is revealed in the following verse:

Allah chose Adam and Noah, and the family of Abraham and the family of `Imran, over all other beings. (Surah Al 'Imran: 33)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his sons distinguished themselves from their fellow tribesmen by calling on their people to believe in Allah and telling them of His superior might and power. Allah reveals that, "We sent Noah and Abraham, and placed prophethood and the Book among their descendants..." (Surat al-Hadid: 26) and informs us that He has honored the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) family with prophethood.

Being guided is an important sign of believers. Unbelievers bring evil to the world and those around them, instead of good, because those who deny Allah believe that their own interests are more important than anything else. Thus, they do not hesitate to harm others when their personal interests are at stake. On the other hand, believers bring only guidance, plenty, and abundance in both spiritual and physical terms. In fact, they are required to do so, for these are indications of their fear (and respect) for and profound faith in Allah. Given this, they carry out justice even when it goes against their own interests or those of the people close to them, do good deeds, oppose those who are cruel and unjust.

In the hadith, "*The best of you are those who have the most excellent morals*"¹³, our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) states that believers with exemplary morals are *auspicious individuals* for their communities. Allah reveals the difference between those believers who behave according to Allah's prescriptions and always carry the beauty of religion's moral values with them, and those who lack this quality:

Allah makes another metaphor: two men, one of them deaf and mute, unable to do anything, a burden to his master. No matter where he directs him, he brings no good. Is he the same as someone who commands justice and is on a straight path? (Surat an-Nahl: 76)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Had a Pure Heart

When he came to his Lord with an unblemished heart. (Surat as-Saffat: 84)

Allah set the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), whom He had made His friend, apart from his pagan people and made him the leader to the true path for all believers.

Believers who take His prophets, with their superior moral characteristics, as role models for themselves must turn toward Allah to remove all of their superstitious and misguided beliefs from their hearts. Only by doing so can they become the people whom He loves and gain His good pleasure. In other words, they must turn to Allah with a pure heart. This purification also means turning away from the wickedness of earthly desires and satan's unwelcome incitements.

Allah reveals that He will **"sift the rotten from the good"** (Surah Al'Imran: 179). The cleanliness referred to here is a moral and spiritual one. Many people who live far removed from religion's moral values may well say: *My heart is clean*. Yet in reality, they are merely trying to ease their own consciences, for anyone who wants a pure heart must have a genuine belief in Allah, scrupulously abide by His commands, and be humble and submissive to Him. Allah describes the goodness and moral values that please Him in the following terms:

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

In another verse, Allah reveals that "[He] loves those who purify themselves" (Surat at-Tawba: 108). People may have spent a long time indulging in prohibited actions, and thus have wicked thoughts and low moral values. Yet the important thing is to repent to Allah, abandon those low moral values, and to turn to Allah with a purified heart.

Our Lord imparts the following glad tidings to those who believe:

But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and puts things right, Allah will turn toward him. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 39)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was "a Community in Himself"

Abraham was a community in himself, exemplary, obedient to Allah, a man of pure natural belief. He was not one of the idolaters. (Surat an-Nahl: 120)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) held Allah above all things, was genuinely devoted to Him, feared (and respected) only Him, and placed his trust only in Him. Although many people opposed him and even sought to martyr or burn him, he never wavered from his struggle of

making Allah's religion prevail, thanks to his profound faith-based courage and submission.

All believers must seek to acquire these superior moral values. Even if they are alone, they must submit to Allah, be courageous and determined, sincere and strong willed. First of all, they must submit from the heart to our one and only Lord, fear (and respect) only Him, and take Him as a friend. That is because all believers, in whatever unbelieving society they find themselves and even if they are alone, must do their best to earn Allah's good pleasure, behave in the correct manner, fulfill their religious obligations, live by religion's moral values, and spread those values to others as a requirement of the Qur'an's moral values. They must always act in the knowledge that Allah constantly protects and supports them. Whoever exhibits the same moral values as the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), whoever devotes himself or herself to Allah with that same faithfulness and submission, may also hope to be given the strength of a *one-man community of the faithful*.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was Grateful to Allah

Allah has given people countless blessings. All of the beautiful things that surround humanity, from their own flawless bodies to the incomparable living things in the universe, are each a means of rendering genuine thanks to Allah. In fact, Allah reveals that:

For this We sent a messenger to you from among you to recite Our Signs to you, purify you, teach you the Book and Wisdom, and teach you things you did not know before. Remember Me—I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful. O you who believe. Seek help in steadfastness and prayer. Allah is with the steadfast. (Surat al-Baqara: 151-153)

As a servant who constantly gave thanks to Allah for the blessings imparted to him, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was a sincere believer whom Allah made a model for all Muslims. As Allah states in the Qur'an:

He was thankful for His blessings. Allah chose him and guided him to a straight path. (Surat an-Nahl: 121)

When we look at the prophets' moral values, as recounted in the Qur'an we see that they were believers who turned to Allah at all times, gave thanks to Allah for His blessings, called on His name, and exalted His glory. In one of his prayers, the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "*Praise be to Allah*"¹⁴, thus drawing attention to the importance of gratitude.

Allah reveals that all believers must adopt such grateful behavior as a model for themselves and constantly give thanks to Him. All believers must immediately give thanks to Allah in moments of difficulty, when faced by any trouble or sickness, or when confronted with any form of cruelty or injustice. They must see that such events

are created by our Lord, out of His wisdom, for Allah uses such tests to reveal their true moral values. He promises that those who exhibit the proper moral values will be given a great reward in this life and the next. Our Lord reveals that:

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

Every person will taste death. We test you with both good and evil as a trial. And you will be returned to Us. (Surat al-Anbiya: 35)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was Submitted to Allah

When his Lord said to him, "Become a Muslim," He [Abraham] said: "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat al-Baqara: 131)

The word *Islam* comes from the verb *salama*, which means to *submit*. Therefore, being a Muslim means *one who has submitted*. Throughout his struggle with his tribe, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) demonstrated deep devotion and total submission to Allah. No matter how difficult his tribe was or how much they tried to wear him down, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) continued to spread Allah's religion with the great enthusiasm stemming from his joyous faith. This was true to such an extent, in fact, that he eventually left his tribe and all of his possessions behind and went to another land.

These prophets, who were sent to bring their people out of the darkness of idolatry and into the light of truth, knew full well that Allah created all people and the universe with a destiny, and that our Lord has set down every event that we will ever experience in both worlds. For that reason, they were esteemed individuals who were fully submitted to Allah, turned to Him constantly, and willingly obeyed His commands. Believers must consider the truth of the destiny revealed by Allah and live in willing submission to it.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was Tender-Hearted

Being compassionate, tender-hearted, affectionate, and full of love and forgiveness is yet another of the believers' characteristics praised by Allah. Our Lord reveals that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) possessed such a tender-hearted nature:

... Abraham was tender-hearted and forbearing. (Surat at-Tawba: 114)

Abraham was forbearing, compassionate, penitent. (Surah Hud: 75)

As a manifestation of their joyous love for our Lord, believers make great efforts to be servants who please Allah and have the moral values revealed in the Qur'an. Being tender-hearted, compassionate, and affectionate are moral values frequently emphasized in the hadiths. Some of these read as follows:

*When tenderness enters something, it always makes it more beautiful. When it is removed from something, it makes it flawed.*¹⁵

*Do you wish your heart to grow tender? Be compassionate to the orphan, caress his head, and give him to eat of what you eat. Your heart will grow tender.*¹⁶

*Be compassionate, that compassion may be shown to you. Forgive, that you may be forgiven.*¹⁷

*Allah is compassionate and loving, and loves the compassionate. The recompense He gives to the compassionate, He gives with nothing else.*¹⁸

Allah reveals that the other prophets also possessed these superior qualities. For instance, He said of the Prophet Shu`ayb (pbuh), sent as a messenger to the tribe of Madyan: "... **You are clearly the forbearing, the rightly-guided!**" (Surah Hud: 87)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) Was a Guide to the True Path

Allah manifests His name of *al-Hadi* (He Who leads to the true path) in the most excellent manner through the prophets' lives. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was sent to guide his own tribe to the true path by inviting them to belief in Allah. In the same way, the other prophets from the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) line also directed their own tribes to the true path in guidance:

And in addition to that, We gave him Isaac and Jacob and made both of them righteous. We made them leaders, guiding by Our command, and revealed to them how to do good actions, perform prayer, and give alms. And they worshipped Us. (Surat al-Anbiya: 72-73)

Allah also reveals the prayers of believers to be *a good example for those who guard against evil*:

[Believers are] those who say: "Our Lord, give us joy in our wives and children, and make us a good example for those who guard against evil." (Surat al-Furkan: 74)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) also called his tribe to the most honorable and delightful path, the path of Allah, and worked for his tribe's salvation in this world and the Hereafter. Allah reveals our Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) message in the following verse:

Say: "Are we to call on something besides Allah that can neither help nor harm us, and to turn on our heels after Allah has guided us, like someone satan has lured away in the land,

leaving him confused and stupefied, despite the fact that he has companions calling him to guidance, saying: 'Come with us!?' Say: "Allah's guidance, that is true guidance. We are commanded to submit as Muslims to the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat al-An'am: 71)

One hadith mentions that the best way is that of Allah and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), thus: "*The finest word is the Book of Allah. The best way is the way of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).*"¹⁹

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Prayers

In many verses of the Qur'an, Allah tells us of the prophets' prayers, each of which is a very wise example for those Muslims who are striving to draw closer to Allah. Learning these pure and sincere prayers, attempting to understand the moral values and spiritual depths of the individuals who uttered them, and praying to Allah with all sincerity are important ways of increasing one's closeness to Allah.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) prayers contain great wisdom for all Muslims. He lauded Allah with the following words: **"My Lord is the Hearer of Prayer"** (Surah Ibrahim: 39), and drew attention to the importance of prayer:

I will separate myself from you and all you call upon besides Allah, and I will call upon my Lord. It may well be that, in calling on my Lord, I will not be disappointed. (Surah Maryam: 48)

He prayed to Allah for rule and wisdom, and that he might join the godly:

My Lord, give me right judgment and unite me with the righteous. (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 83)

He also sought from Allah *being highly esteemed*:

[My Lord,] make me highly esteemed among the later peoples. (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 84)

This is how he prayed for the life of the Hereafter:

And make me one of the inheritors of the Garden of Delight. Forgive my father—he was one of the misguided, and do not disgrace me on the Day they are raised up. The Day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any use—except to those who come to Allah with sound and flawless hearts. (Surat ash-Shu'ara: 85-89)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) also sought our Lord's forgiveness:

Our Lord, do not make us a target for those who do not believe, and forgive us. Our Lord, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat al-Mumtahana:5)

Our Lord. Forgive me and my parents and the believers when the Reckoning takes place. (Surah Ibrahim: 41)

He also asked for a godly heir to keep the religion alive after him:

My Lord, bestow on me a right-acting child. (Surat as-Saffat: 100)

and prayed for his line:

My Lord. Make me and my descendents people who perform prayer. My Lord. Accept my prayer. (Surah Ibrahim: 40)

When Abraham said: "My Lord. Make this land a place of safety, and keep me and my sons from worshipping idols." (Surah Ibrahim: 35)

He prayed to Allah to make the city in which he lived a safe place and to provide the believers with fruits:

And when Abraham said: "My Lord, make this a place of safety and provide its inhabitants with fruits—all of them who believe in Allah and the Last Day." He [Allah] said: "I will let anyone who becomes an unbeliever to enjoy himself a little, but then I will drive him to the punishment of the Fire. What an evil destination!" (Surat al-Baqara: 126)

When performing a task, he asked Allah to accept it:

And when Abraham built the foundations of the House with Ishmael [he said]: "Our Lord, accept this from us. You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing." (Surat al-Baqara: 127)

He also prayed to Allah to make him and his line submissive to His will, reveal the methods of religious observance, and accept their repentance:

Our Lord, make us both Muslims submitted to You, and our descendents a Muslim community submitted to You. Show us

our rites of worship and turn toward us. You are the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful. (Surat al-Baqara: 128)

Our Lord, raise up among them a messenger from them to recite Your Signs to them, teach them the Book and Wisdom, and purify them. You are the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat al-Baqara: 129)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) sincere devotion to Allah and absolute certainty in the Day of Judgment are why all believers can feel the complete godliness, sincerity, and submission in his prayers. When praying, all believers must use the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) as a role model and turn to our Lord as their only friend and helper.

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) Legacy

Allah informs us of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) as a pure natural believer who does not associate anything with Allah:

When Abraham said to his father and his tribe: "I am free of everything you worship, except for Him Who brought me into being, Who will certainly guide me. He made it an on-going word among his descendants so that, perhaps, they might turn back." (Surat az-Zukhuf: 26-28)

The Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) legacy to all believers is monotheism. This legacy shows that he lived solely to gain Allah's good pleasure, took Him as his only friend, and feared (and respected) only Him. Throughout his life, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) relayed the divine message of Allah's oneness and that no partners could be ascribed to Him. As Allah states:

When his Lord said to him: "Become a Muslim," he replied: "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds." Abraham directed his sons to this, as did Jacob: "My sons. Allah has chosen this religion for you, so do not die except as Muslims." (Surat al-Baqara: 131-32)

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) was a messenger who guided people to true path of Allah and this continued with his line: his sons Prophet Ishmael (pbuh) and Prophet Isaac (pbuh), his grandson Prophet Jacob (pbuh) and his son Prophet Joseph (pbuh), and the other holy prophets from that same line who later continued to call on their people to live by religion's moral values. Allah informs us of the Prophet Jacob's (pbuh) legacy in the following verse:

Or were you present when death came to Jacob and he asked his sons: "What will you worship when I have gone?" They said: "We will worship your Allah, the Allah of your forefathers, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac—one Allah. We are Muslims submitted to Him." (Surat al-Baqara: 133)

All prophets who came after the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) left the same legacy to their descendents: Submit to Allah wholeheartedly and die as Muslims. Whoever abides by the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) legacy, serves only Allah, and spends his or her life for Allah's good pleasure may hope for His forgiveness and Paradise, the abode of eternal happiness.

Book 2

The Prophet Lot (pbuh)

We gave right judgment and knowledge to Lot, and rescued him from the city that committed disgusting acts, They were evil people who were deviators. We admitted him into Our mercy. He was one of the believers. (Surat al-Anbiya', 74-75)

The Prophet Lot's (pbuh) Life

Allah informs us that a number of prophets lived during the same period. For example, the Prophet Aaron (pbuh) supported his brother, the Prophet Moses (pbuh), in his struggle with Pharaoh and in relaying the Divine message to the Children of Israel. The Prophet Jacob (pbuh) and the Prophet Joseph (pbuh) also were honored by Allah with prophethood during the same period.

The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh) lived in the same region. Although they lived among different people, they still supported one another. Our Lord reveals that:

He [Abraham] said: "You have adopted idols apart from Allah as tokens of mutual affection in this world. But then, on the Day of Resurrection, you will reject one another and curse one another. The Fire will be your shelter. You will have no helpers." And Lot had believed in him. He said: "I will emigrate to [the service of] my Lord. He is the Almighty, the All Wise." Surat al-Ankabut, 25-26)

Immigration (*hijra*) means to submit to Allah willingly, knowing that He is your only friend and guardian, and taking refuge in His protection. The Prophet Lot (pbuh) migrated to our Lord by moving away from his unbelieving tribe. Like all of the prophets, he was a chosen individual who left an example for all people of sincerity and submission to Allah. The Prophet Lot (pbuh) and the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) were sent to different tribes. Allah reveals in the Qur'an that the society to which the Prophet Lot

(pbuh) relayed the Divine message was steeped in homosexuality, a practice cursed by Allah.

The Prophet Lot's (pbuh) Misguided People

In the Qur'an, Allah states **"So set your face firmly toward the Religion, as a pure natural believer, Allah's natural pattern on which He made humanity"** (Surat ar-Rum, 30) and that He has created human beings with a specific disposition. Satan, on the other hand, asserts **"... I will command them, and they will change Allah's Creation..."** (Surat an-Nisa', 119). He seeks to turn people away from that disposition and to lead them into various prohibited practices.

One of the prohibited practices to which satan incites human beings is homosexuality. Indeed, Allah describes the situation of those who follow satan's urgings and live an immoral lifestyle: **"If they see every Sign, they will not believe in it. If they see the way of right guidance, they will not take it as a way. But if they see the way of error, they will take that as a way"** (Surat al-A'raf, 146). As Allah states **"Allah desires to turn toward you, but those who pursue their lower appetites desire to make you deviate completely"** (Surat an-Nisa', 27), these people wish to draw everyone away from the true path. Allah states in the Qur'an the reward that such people will receive:

An evil generation succeeded those who neglected the prayer and followed their appetites. They will plunge into the Valley of Evil. (Surah Maryam, 59)

This prohibited practice has appeared in many societies throughout history. In the Qur'an, Allah specifically tells the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) tribe, who was well known for this custom. The Prophet Lot (pbuh), an esteemed prophet who believed fully in our Lord and possessed the proper moral values and resignation to Allah, called on his tribe to fear (and respect) Allah, abandon their homosexuality, and live a life that would please Him. But they responded to his words with hostility. Due to their monstrous temerity and immorality, they fully merited our Lord's chastisement. As Allah tells us, they met the following fate:

And Lot, when he said to his tribe: "Do you commit an obscenity not perpetrated before you by anyone in all the worlds? You come

with lust to men instead of women. You are indeed a depraved tribe." The only answer of his tribe was to say: "Expel them from your city! They are people who keep themselves pure!" So We rescued him and his family—except for his wife. She was one of those who stayed behind. We rained down a rain upon them. See the final fate of the evildoers! (Surat al-A'raf, 80-84)

These people, who refused to abandon their sin despite being warned, threatened the Prophet Lot (pbuh) and the believers with exile. Saying **"They are people who keep themselves pure!"** (Surat al-A'raf, 82), they imagined that they were mocking the believers. Despite their sinful lifestyle and excesses, however, the Prophet Lot (pbuh) continued to relay His message in order to earn Allah's good pleasure.

Prophet Lot (pbuh), who was a patient, determined, and courageous servant, manifested his joyous faith in and respect for Allah. His tribe's mockery and attacks only reinforced his enthusiasm and determination. Like all of the other prophets, he continued to command what is good and forbid what is evil, thus scrupulously fulfilling the duty Allah has entrusted him with. In the Qur'an, Allah reveals the following:

O Prophet. We have sent you as a witness, a bringer of good news and a warner, a caller to Allah by His permission and a light-giving lamp. Give good news to the believers that they will receive immense favor from Allah. Do not obey the unbelievers and hypocrites, and disregard their abuse of you. Put your trust in Allah. Allah suffices as a Protector. (Surat al-Ahzab, 45-48)

Then We sent Our messengers, one after another, at intervals. Each time its messenger came to a community, they called him a liar. So, We made them follow one another too and turned them into myths and legends. Away with the people who do not believe! (Surat al-Hajj, 44)

Believers must take the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) superior moral values as models for themselves, always behave patiently when presenting His message, and explain religion's moral values to people in the most appropriate and effective way.

The Prophet Lot (pbuh) Warns His Tribe

The people of Lot denied the messengers, when their brother Lot said to them: "Will you not guard against evil? I am a faithful Messenger to you. So fear [and respect] Allah and obey me." (Surat ash-Shu'ara, 160-163)

The Prophet Lot (pbuh) wished that his tribe would abandon their indecent acts and join him in worshipping Allah. Immediately after relaying the Divine message, he made it clear that he expected nothing from them but their willingness to gain Allah's good pleasure:

"I do not ask you for any wage for it. My wage is the responsibility of no one but the Lord of all the worlds." (Surat ash-Shu'ra, 164)

He then described his tribe's gross immorality:

"Of all beings, do you lie with males, leaving the wives Allah has created for you? You are a people who have overstepped the limits." They said: "Lot, if you do not desist, you will be expelled." He said: "I am someone who detests the deed you perpetrate." (Surat ash-Shu'ra, 165-168)

Just like some people today, his tribe sought to portray the sin of homosexuality as acceptable and justified. In fact, such an attitude is one of the causes for the present moral degeneration all over the world. Muslims, however, live according to Allah's decrees and thus must adopt the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) attitude toward this sin.

Allah reveals in the Qur'an that these unbelieving and immoral people, who responded to the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) warnings with threats and attacks, felt secure due to their large numbers. People who live far removed from religion often have this erroneous perspective. However, our Lord reveals that believers have always formed a small minority of people. As for the number of believers among the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) tribe, Allah says: **"But [We] found in it only one house of Muslims"** (Surat adh-Dhariyat, 36). However, Allah's support and help are always with believers, for our Lord promises that those who believe with a sincere heart, seek only His good pleasure, strive for the Hereafter, and spread religion's moral values will always be victorious. As Allah states:

Allah has promised those of you who believe and do right actions that He will make them successors in the land, just as He made those before them successors; 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 do not believe after that, such people are deviators. (Surat an-Nur, 55)

Our Lord has always implemented this Divine law, and small numbers of believers have always achieved enormous success against their far more numerous peoples. Allah gives the faithful the following glad tidings:

... How many a small force has triumphed over a much greater one, by Allah's permission! Allah is with the steadfast. (Surat al-Baqara, 249)

The Angels Who Came to the Prophet Lot (pbuh)

The angels who came to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) gave him the glad news of a righteous child and told him something about the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) people:

When Our angels came with the good news to Abraham, they said: "We are going to destroy the people of this city. Truly its inhabitants are wrongdoers." (Surat al-Ankabut, 31)

Allah describes this visit in the following terms:

When Our angles came to Lot, he was distressed for them, very concerned for them, and said: "This is a dreadful day." (Surah Hud, 77)

When his people learned that messengers had come to the Prophet Lot (pbuh), they came running towards him and, as revealed in the Qur'an:

They even wanted to seduce his guests!... (Surat al-Qamar, 37)

The Prophet Lot (pbuh) warned his tribe in these terms:

His tribe came running to him excitedly—they were long used to committing evil acts. He said: "My people, here are my daughters. They are purer for you. So fear Allah and do not shame me with my guests. Is there not one rightly-guided man among you?" They said: "You know we have no claim on your daughters. You know very well what we want." (Surah Hud, 78-79)

The Prophet Lot's (pbuh) reference to his *daughters* informed in the verse may mean his own daughters or else the tribe's young women. (Allah knows the truth.) In other words, he was saying that his tribe to marry those women, as this is the type of relationship of which Allah approves. The expression **"is there not one rightly-guided man among you?"** shows that his entire tribe was caught up in this sinful behavior and excess. As an honorable and moral man chosen by Allah, the Prophet Lot (pbuh) wished to depart from his immoral people:

He said: "If only I had the strength to combat you or could take refuge in some powerful support!" (Surah Hud, 80)

However, our Lord used these angels to reveal to the Prophet Lot (pbuh) that his tribe would be punished severely for their excesses:

He said: "You are people we do not know." They said: "We have come to you with what they had doubts about. We have brought you the truth, and we are certainly truthful men. Travel with your family in the dead of night, following behind with them in front of you. None of you must look back. Go to where you are ordered." We revealed to him the command We had decreed: that on the following morning the last remnant of those people would be cut off. (Surat al-Hijr, 62-66)

They said: "Lot, we are messengers from your Lord. They will not be able to get at you. Set out with your family—except for your wife—in the middle of the night, and none of you should look back. What strikes them will strike her as well. Their promised appointment is the morning. Is the morning not close at hand?" (Surah Hud, 81)

Allah reveals that the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) wife would be destroyed, despite her position as a prophet's wife. Although Allah had honored and

elevated her husband with prophethood, this blessing and honor gained her nothing because of her insincerity and denial.

Her death shows that such connections as being related to or descended from the prophets of Allah will be of no benefit in the Hereafter. Only one's deep faith, submission and obedience, and strong fear and respect of Allah will be of any benefit. If one's heart contains no sincere faith, one will find no salvation, regardless of his or her physical or familial closeness to Allah's prophets. Indeed, such proximity may well increase one's responsibility in Allah's Sight, for Allah reveals:

O wives of the Prophet. If any of you commits an obvious act of indecency, she will receive double the punishment. That is an easy matter for Allah. But those of you who are obedient to Allah and His Messenger and act rightly will be given their reward twice over; and We have prepared a generous provision for them. O wives of the Prophet. You are not like other women, provided you guard against evil. Do not be too soft-spoken in your speech, lest someone with sickness in his heart becomes desirous. Speak correct and courteous words. Remain in your houses and do not display your beauty, as it was previously displayed in the Time of Ignorance. Perform [the prescribed] prayers and give alms, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah desires to remove all impurity from you, O People of the House, and to purify you completely. (Surat al-Ahzab, 30-33)

Our Lord cites the wives of the Prophet Lot (pbuh) and the Prophet Noah (pbuh) to serve as a deterrent in this matter. Allah also refers to Pharaoh's wife, who is a fine model of sincerity, fear and respect of Allah, and heartfelt prayer:

Allah has made an example for those who do not believe: the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were married to two of Our servants who were righteous, but they betrayed them and were not helped at all against Allah. They were told: "Enter the Fire along with all who enter it." Allah has made an example for those who believe: the wife of Pharaoh when she said: "My Lord, build a house in the Garden for me in Your Presence, rescue me from Pharaoh and his deeds, and rescue me from this wrongdoing people." (Surat at-Tahrim, 10-11)

The Destruction Is Sent

Prophet Lot (pbuh) first informed the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) of the news he had received from the angels:

He [Abraham] inquired: "What, then, is your business, messengers?" They said: "We have been sent to a people of evildoers to unleash upon them lumps of clay earmarked by your Lord for the profligate." We brought out all the believers who were there, but found in it only one house of Muslims. (Surat adh-Dhariat,31-36)

After they had fulfilled their mission to the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), the angels visited the Prophet Lot (pbuh) and told him that his tribe would be destroyed. A Muslim society, however, will be protected from such destruction. According to the Qur'an:

They even wanted to seduce his guests! So We put out their eyes: "Taste My punishment and warnings!" (Surat al-Qamar, 37)

When Our command came, We turned their cities upside down and rained down on them stones of hard baked clay, piled on top of one another in layers, each one earmarked by your Lord. And they are never far from the wrongdoers. (Surah Hud, 82-83)

Perhaps *turning upside down* signifies the region's destruction by a powerful earthquake. The expression *rained down on them stones of hard baked clay* may indicate a volcanic eruption and the *hard baked* lava and stones thrown up by it. The same event is described elsewhere: **"and made a rain come pouring down upon them. How evil is the rain of those who are warned!"** (Surat ash-Shu'ara, 173). In other words, the tribe may have been destroyed by an earthquake followed by a volcanic eruption. (Allah knows the truth.)

Historians opine that the site of this great disaster is the shore of the Dead Sea, also known as Lake Lut. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, located alongside the Dead Sea, between the West Bank and Jordan, are regarded as the cities of the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) mainly homosexual people. Archaeological research shows that these cities collapsed after a powerful earthquake. According to researchers, one area, shallower than the rest of the Dead Sea, houses the remains of these people, who entered the deep parts of the sea. (For further details, see Harun Yahya, *The Perished Nations* [Istanbul: 2002]).

The Fate of Pompeii

Pompeii was the symbol of Rome's moral degeneration. Just like the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) tribe, the inhabitants of Pompeii, who had also strayed far from religious morality, chose a lifestyle contrary to the morals and life commanded by Allah. And so Allah punished them, just as He punished the Prophet Lot's (pbuh) tribe. Every society that rebels against Allah inevitably is punished, either in this world or the next, for this is one of Allah's laws. As Allah reveals:

... You will not find any changing in the pattern of Allah. You will not find any alteration in the pattern of Allah. (Surah Fatir, 43)

Pompeii was destroyed when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 CE. Mount Vesuvius is the symbol of Italy, particularly the city of Naples. Dormant now for some 2,000 years, it is also known as the *Mountain of Misfortune*. Naples

stands on the mount's western slopes, and Pompeii stands on its eastern slopes. This disaster struck Pompeii so suddenly that everything seems to have been frozen in time.

There are important lessons to be learned from Pompeii's fate. Historical sources reveal that before its destruction, Pompeii was a hotbed of vice and debauchery and was known for its widespread prostitution. Yet Mount Vesuvius wiped the city from the map in a single moment. Interestingly, despite its terrible eruption, nobody fled. It seems that the people were rooted to the spot, as if unaware of the tragedy. A number of couples have been found, among which are same-sex couples and young boys and girls. Some of the petrified human remains contain perfectly preserved facial features. Their general expression is one of surprise, for Pompeii was destroyed *suddenly*. Allah gives an example of the people of a city:

It was but one Great Blast, and [then] they were extinct. (Surah Ya Sin, 29)

The Immigration (*Hijra*) of the Prophet Lot (pbuh) and the Prophet Abraham (pbuh)

Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh), along with the believers, migrated at Allah's command and settled in a delightful new land. In the Qur'an, our Lord reveals their blessed destiny:

We delivered both him [Abraham] and Lot to the land that We had blessed for all beings. And in addition to that, We gave him Isaac and Jacob and made both of them righteous. We made them leaders, guiding [them] by Our command, and revealed to them how to do good actions, perform prayer, and give alms. And they worshipped Us. We gave right judgment and knowledge to Lot, and rescued him from the city that committed disgusting acts. They were evil people who were deviators. We admitted him into Our mercy. He was one of the righteous. (Surat al-Anbiya', 71-75)

Hijra is a religious observation that only devout believers can perform. People who live far removed from religion can never agree to suddenly leave behind everything they own and emigrate to an unknown destination. Their homes, goods, and property are most important to them. Yet wherever believers may go, since they know that Allah will meet all of their needs, they have no hesitation about leaving everything behind and emigrating for

Allah's good pleasure. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh) demonstrated their submission to Allah in the finest possible manner. They renounced their material possessions and homelands to gain His good pleasure. In return, our Lord settled them in a good land and endowed them with the infinite blessings of Paradise in the Hereafter.

Believers, who trust in Allah and know that He will meet all of their needs at every moment, must follow the Prophets' model of complete submission to Allah. That is because people who are attached to the world and are concerned about the future are far removed from religion's moral values. Our Lord gives believers the glad tidings that as a reward for not indulging in material interests, believers will receive matchless blessings in both worlds.

In addition, Allah informs us of the prophets' vast property as a blessing from Him. The Prophet David (pbuh) had a great deal of property, and the Prophet Solomon (pbuh) possessed so much power and wealth that nobody could match them. Allah reveals that He gave the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his line a lot of property:

Or do they, in fact, envy other people for the bounty Allah has granted them? We gave the family of Abraham the Book and wisdom, and We gave them an immense kingdom. (Surat an-Nisa', 54)

Goods, property, and power are always causes of arrogance and self-love among those who do not believe and are heedless. On the other hand, the prophets and the believers who follow them use the goods and property Allah has given them to spread His religion, earn His good pleasure, and achieve their abode in the Hereafter. Furthermore, believers also know that all of their property belongs to Allah. When sincere Muslims are given blessings in this world, they thank our Lord. More importantly, when such blessings diminish they still thank Allah with all of their hearts and display the proper patience, for they know that this life is a test and that Allah will reward them in Paradise:

Those who believe and emigrate and strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and their selves have a higher rank with Allah. They are the ones who are victorious. 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, forever and ever. Truly, there is an immense reward with Allah. (Surat at-Tawba, 20-22)

CONCLUSION

In this book, we have described the joyous faith in Allah manifested by the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh), how they turned to our Lord in all of their actions, their superior moral values, and their difficult struggles against their pagan and sinful peoples. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) relayed the Divine message to his tribe with great determination and, thanks to his submission to Allah, was patient and steady in all circumstances. The Prophet Lot (pbuh) struggled patiently with his tribe, calling on them to believe in Allah and abandon their immorality. These prophets, made superior to the worlds by Allah, won His good pleasure due to the deep faith and superior moral values they exhibited throughout their lives. In the end, they achieved their true abode in Paradise, with its infinite blessings.

The greatest aim of each believer's life is to follow in the footsteps of the prophets, each of whom was a guide to the true way, and thus become servants with whom Allah is pleased. Allah gives the glad tidings of the reward awaiting such believers:

Whoever obeys Allah and the messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent company such people are! (Surat an-Nisa', 69)

In order to become Allah's friend and be with the prophets in the Hereafter, believers must live in accord with Allah's good pleasure, always trust in Him, and hold Him and His religion above everything else. Whoever demonstrates these virtues and thus lives according to the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) words that **"I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds,"** can expect the greatest happiness from Allah and to reach salvation.

The fact that many people remain heedless of His existence must not deceive anyone. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) called on his pagan tribe to believe, even though he was alone, and our Lord praised this moral virtue: **"Abraham was a community in himself..."** (Surat an-Nahl, 120). The Prophet Lot (pbuh), together with a very few believers, displayed his very superior submission to Allah and called on his largely homosexual tribe to abandon their immoral lifestyles and to believe (Surat adh-Dhariyat, 36). Those very few believing people, however,

were much stronger than all of their people, for they had Allah's help and support.

The important thing is to understand that Allah controls everything that exists, all of which has submitted to Him, and to live accordingly. The Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh) understood this truth and became His friends. Like them, all believers must seek to achieve the same level of deep faith and spirituality and make a serious effort to become His friend.

THE DECEPTION 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, as well as by the discovery of about 300 million fossils revealing that evolution never happened. 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

As a **pagan doctrine** going 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 opposed, in his own eyes, the fact that Allah created different living species on Earth separately, for he erroneously 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 ignorantly denies Creation, it maintains that the "first cell" originated as a product of blind coincidences within the laws of nature, without any 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."**²⁰

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.²¹

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.**²²

After a long silence, **Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.**²³

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?²⁴

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 outstandingly 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 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} 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 a magnificent 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.²⁵

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated spontaneously as a result of blind coincidences, then it has to be accepted that life was "**created**." 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.²⁶

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.²⁷

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 Darwinists espouse, despite their own awareness of its scientific invalidity, 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.**²⁸

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 the unscientific supposition of 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.²⁹

However, **Darwin was well aware that no fossils of these intermediate forms had yet been found.** He regarded this as a major difficulty for his theory. In one chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," he wrote:

Why, if species have descended from other species by insensibly fine gradations, do we not everywhere see innumerable transitional forms? Why is not all nature in confusion instead of the species being, as we see them, well defined?... But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?... Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory.³⁰

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.**³¹

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.³²

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 man evolved from so-called ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, some "transitional forms" between present-day man and his imaginary 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.³³

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."³⁴

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.³⁵

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. **Homo sapiens neandarthalsensis and Homo sapiens sapiens (present-day man) co-existed in the same region.**³⁶

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.³⁷

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.³⁸

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 irrational 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 1 in 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]...³⁹

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 brought life into being. 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 ignorantly defend it just so as not to acknowledge, in their own eyes, the evident existence of Allah.

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice sees 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, 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 the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or some among the people of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) 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, in the Qur'an Allah relates the incident of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) 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 the Prophet Moses (pbuh) to meet with his own magicians. When the Prophet Moses (pbuh) 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 the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as revealed in the verse:

We revealed to Moses: "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: 117-118)

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.⁴⁰

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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**They said, "Glory be to You!
We have no knowledge except
what You have taught us. You are
the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."
(Surat al-Baqara: 32)**

CAPTIONS:

14

The ziggurat of Ur, built by Ur Nammu (2112-95 BCE) to worship the Moon. According to Hammurabi's inscriptions, Ur was Sumeria's most famous city.

16

Remains found in Mesopotamia depict the local societies' idolatrous and superstitious belief system. In this picture, King Tukulti-Ninurta of Assyria bows before the light and fire-god Nusku, who is symbolized by a throne.

19

Our Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "Every prophet has friends from among the prophets. My friend is Abraham, my forebear and the friend (khalil) of my Lord." He then recited the following verse: "The people with the strongest claim to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet, and those who believe. Allah is the Protector of the believers." (Surah Al 'Imran: 68) (Hadith at-Tirmidhi)

20

TURKEY

URFA

FISH LAKE

HARAN

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

IRAN

SYRIA

LEBANON

DAMASCUS

BAGHDAD

PALESTINE

IRAQ

ISRAEL

BABYLON

THE DEAD SEA

EL-KHALIL

UR

SAUDI ARABIA

JORDAN

EGYPT

THE RED SEA

MADINA

MECCA

The broken red line shows the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) route in the light of historical records. He left Ur, in Sumeria, and eventually reached Mecca.

(Overleaf) Excavations outside the city walls of Ur reveal the remains of a settlement dating from 2000 BCE. Historians state that the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) people may have lived in similar houses.

27

This locket, from the eighth or ninth century BCE, symbolizes the Assyrians' idolatrous worship. The main deity of Assyria, the strongest power in Mesopotamia between 1900 and 612 BCE, was known as Asshur.

29

...He [Allah] has selected you and not placed any constraint upon you in the religion- the religion of your forefather Abraham... (Surat al-Hajj: 78)

33

The majority of Mesopotamian societies worshipped the Sun and the Moon. It is believed that Naram Sin, king of Akkadia, was deified by the moon god and possessed extraordinary powers.

(Side) A victory inscription of King Naram Sin and his pagan people who prostrated to the Moon.

35

O Messenger! Transmit what has been sent down to you from your Lord. If you do not do it you will not have transmitted His Message... (Surat al-Ma'ida: 67)

37

... call your witnesses, besides Allah, if you are telling the truth. If you do not do that - and you will not do it - then fear the Fire whose fuel is people and stones, made ready for the unbelievers. (Surat al-Baqara: 23-24)

39

Could they not see that it did not reply to them and that it possessed no power to either harm or benefit them? (Surah Ta Ha: 89)

(Left) An idol from 2500-1100 BCE.

(Right) The Assyrians believed that idols made of stone and wood could protect them from disasters. This idol, known as Hadad, was regarded as a protective idol by King Esarhaddon (seventh century BCE).

42-43

...Have done with the defilement of idols and have done with telling lies. Be people of pure natural belief in Allah, not associating anything else with Him. As for anyone who associates...

... others with Allah, it is as though he had fallen from the sky and the birds had seized him and carried him away or the wind had dropped him in a distant place. (Surat al-Hajj: 30-31)

44

He has made night and day subservient to you, and the Sun and Moon and stars, all subject to His command. There are certainly Signs in that for people who use their intellect. (Surat an-Nahl: 12)

47

Every self will taste death. You will be paid your wages in full on the Day of Resurrection. Anyone who is distanced from the Fire and admitted to the Garden has triumphed. The life of this world is just the enjoyment of delusion. (Surah Al 'Imran: 185)

49

Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and beware! If you turn your backs, know that Our Messenger is only responsible for clear transmission. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 92)

53

“I found both her [Queen of Saba] and her people prostrating to the Sun instead of Allah. Satan has made their actions seem good to them and debarred them...” (Surat an-Naml: 24)

55

This statue depicts Hammurabi (app. 1955-13 BCE) paying respect to Shamash, the Sumerian sun god.

56

The unseen of the heavens and the Earth belongs to Allah and the whole affair will be returned to Him. So worship Him and put your trust in Him... (Surah Hud: 123)

61

As for those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabaeans and the Christians, Magians and idolaters, Allah will distinguish between them on the Day of Resurrection... (Surat al-Hajj: 17)

65

But they have adopted deities apart from Him which do not create anything but are themselves created. They have no power to harm or help themselves. They have no power over death or life or resurrection. (Surat al-Furqan: 3)

66

Darwinists believe that all living and non-living things created themselves by means of various chemical and physical properties of atoms, molecules, natural forces and objects, and with the help of chance. However, even in the most ideal Darwinian-inspired environment, it would still be impossible for anything to emerge. If evolutionists placed all of the atoms, enzymes, hormones, proteins, and whatever other elements they wish into the vat in the picture, mixed them by whichever methods they choose, and then nourished them for as long as they wished, no living thing, or even a cell of a living thing, will ever be produced.

68

**Allah is He Who created you, then provides for you, then will cause you to die and then bring...
... you back to life. Can any of your partner-deities do any of that?... (Surat ar-Rum: 40)**

75

They took the place where Abraham stood [to pray] as a place of prayer. We contracted with Abraham and Ishmael: “Purify My House for those who circle it, and those who stay there, and those who bow and who prostrate.” (Surat al-Baqara: 125)

A view of the Kubbat as-Sahra Mosque (Dome of the Rock)

(Carl Werner, 1863, Mathaf Gallery, London)

76-77

Explaining the Invalidity of Darwinism Ensures the Destruction of the Greatest Idol of the End Times

ADNAN OKTAR'S LIVE INTERVIEW

ON EKIN TV, January 19, 2009)

ADNAN OKTAR: First of all, their idol needs to be destroyed just like how the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Moses (pbuh) did. As you know, the Prophet Moses (pbuh) first smashed down that golden calf and showed people that his staff turned into a slithering snake. This way, he proved invalidity of the idea of evolution at the outset and made evident that neither people nor creatures came into existence from the muddy waters of the Nile through coincidences. Foremost, he proved Creation. **What we will do is to prove Creation first and explain the invalidity of Darwinism to people in order to clear their brains away from that idol, from that dirt. After putting that away, it is very easy to give the message of Islam and the Qur'an on top of that clean foundation.** But the most important thing is to attach importance to the signs of Creation. For example talking about the body structure or life of an insect, or the life of a bee will amaze one who has no knowledge on these. The lives and physical features of these animals is astoundingly perfect and marvelous. They, for instance, may also tell the life of a spider. However, they will get the most effective result in describing that the perceived image forms in the brain. If they are capable of making people comprehend this well, those ones may attain a stage of hakkal yakin faith. No wise person could resist this knowledge and I cannot imagine anyone who would confront this.

**ADNAN OKTAR'S LIVE INTERVIEW ON EKIN TV,
KOCAELI TV, December 15, 2009)**

ADNAN OKTAR: Firstly, one has to establish love in his heart, he has to be very sincere, he should not make himself uneasy. He has to submit himself to Allah, he will have fear of Him. He should read the Qur'an at least a couple of times. Then, he should totally submit himself to the path of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), to the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah and be attached to it. Other than that, smashing the philosophy is also very important. **See what the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) has done? He came and gave a blow on all the idols. What did the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) do? He also smashed the idols. What did the Prophet Moses (pbuh) do? He destroyed the idol. What is the idol of the End Times? It is Darwinism and materialism. Then what is our foremost duty? To destroy all the idols, to smash down the idol of Darwinism with all one's strength, using science as the axe.** For this, there is need for weapons made of light and they can receive that by making use of my books, works and our Internet website. That way they will have accomplished that beautiful task. When idols are broken down, then the path is wide open to pure natural belief. Then we can move as we like, but it is definitely important that we should not divide, we should not separate Muslims as

Shiite, Alawite or Sunni, because they all recite "La ilaha illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah." It is crucially significant that we have love for them all, we embrace all as friends and brothers. Anything contrary to this would serve the satan. May Allah forbid. There is only a handful of Muslims over this world, for instance we are only by the handful in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria or Iraq. But there are ones who make mischief and attempt bringing them against one another. They want Syria to fall out with Iraq, Iraq with Syria, Iran with Turkey, Turkey with Iran, Saudi Arabia with Iraq in order to make them fight one another. These are masonic games and they want Muslim countries to fall out with each other. Nobody should be deceived into this. Everyone who says, "La ilaha illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah" is our brother. We enfold them in our arms insha'Allah.

79

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

83

His command when He desires a thing is just to say to it, "Be!" and it is. Glory be to Him Who has the Dominion of all things in His Hand. To Him you will be returned. (Surah Ya Sin: 82-83)

84

Signs from the Story of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) for the Present Day

In the verse, "Fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham" (Surat al-Anbiya: 69), Allah reveals that the fire did not harm the Prophet Abraham (pbuh). As a result, the pagans' snares were neutralized and they could not harm him. This verse also contains an important indication for the present day. (Allah knows the truth.)

As we know, all kinds of fabrics and materials are now produced by high technology. Among them are fire-proof clothing and vehicles. For instance, fire-resistant clothes protect their wearers against fire, flames, and other effects of burning, for they catch fire less easily, burn slower, and put themselves out when the flame or the fire's source is removed. Such clothing gives people more time to remove their burning clothes or extinguish the flames.

Fabrics made from glass, aramid, novoloid, sulphur, and saran fibers do not catch fire and resist very high temperatures. These fabrics are the result of different fibers joined together, through a series of tests, to protect the wearer against fire. Shirts, pants, jackets, sweaters, shoes, gloves, socks, and headgear designed from such fire-resistant materials are used by workers in oil refineries, chemical substance producing plants, electricity and natural gas facilities, steel and aluminum

factories, welding plants, the air and space industry, the construction industry, and emergency and fire-fighting personnel. (American Firewear Product Specifications; <http://www.firewear.com/spcgide.htm>)

The above verse may be pointing to this major scientific development, which will emerge during the End Times, and indicating the production of these fire-resistant fabrics and materials. (Allah knows the truth.)

88

"Our people, respond to Allah's caller and believe in Him. He will forgive you some of your wrong actions and save you from a painful punishment. Those who do not respond to Allah's caller cannot thwart Allah on Earth and have no protectors apart from Him. Such people are clearly misguided." (Surat al-Ahkaf: 31-32)

89

He said, "My Lord, I have called my people night and day but my calling has only made them more evasive. Indeed, every time I called them to Your forgiveness, they put their fingers in their ears, wrapped themselves up in their clothes and were overweeningly arrogant. Then I called them openly. Then I addressed them publicly and addressed them privately." (Surah Nuh: 5-9)

93

We sent a Messenger among every people saying: "Worship Allah and keep clear of all false deities." Among them were some whom Allah guided but others received the misguidance they deserved. Travel about the Earth and see the final fate of the unbelievers. (Surat an-Nahl: 36)

96-97

**"As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who worked on the sea. I wanted to damage it...
... because a king was coming behind them, commandeering every boat." (Surat al-Kahf: 79)**

109

"... Originator of the heavens and Earth, You are my Friend in this world and the Next. So take me as a Muslim at my death and join me to the people who are righteous." (Surah Yusuf: 101)

110

When his Lord said to him, "Become a Muslim!" he said, "I am a Muslim who has submitted to the Lord of all the worlds." Abraham directed his sons to this, as did Jacob: "My sons! Allah has chosen this religion for you, so do not die except as Muslims." (Surat al-Baqara: 131)

118

The Maqam Ibrahim (Station of Abraham) houses the stone that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) used as a walkway while building the Ka`bah.

123

A sacred stone inside the Mosque of Umar, which Muslims believe was used by the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) when the Ka`bah was being built.

125

We ransomed him [Abraham] with a mighty sacrifice. (Surat as-Saffat: 107)

126

According to the Torah, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and his wife were interred in the Machpelah cave in al-Khalil (Hebron).

133

Allah has made an example for those who believe: the wife of Pharaoh when she said, "My Lord, build a house in the Garden for me in Your presence and rescue me from Pharaoh and his deeds and rescue me from this wrongdoing people." (Surat at-Tahrim: 11)

136

We do not send the Messengers except to bring good news and to give warning. As for those who believe and put things right, they will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Surat al-An'am: 48)

139

... Abraham said, "My Lord, make this a place of safety and provide its inhabitants with fruits - all of them who believe in Allah and the Last Day"... (Surat al-Baqara: 126)

140

Messengers bringing good news and giving warning, so that people will have no argument against God after the coming of the Messengers... (Surat an-Nisa: 165)

141

We only sent you for the whole of humanity, bringing good news and giving warning. But most of humanity do not know it. (Surah Saba': 28)

143

Each person faces a particular direction so race each other to the good. Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together. Truly, Allah has power over all things (Surat al-Baqara: 148)

147

Who would deliberately renounce the religion of Abraham except someone who reveals himself to be a fool? We chose him in this world and in the Hereafter he will be one of the righteous. (Surat al-Baqara: 130)

149

The Originator of the heavens and Earth. When He decides on something, He just says to it, "Be!" and it is. (Surat al-Baqara: 117)

155

... Then to be one of those who believe and urge each other to steadfastness and urge each other to compassion. Those are the Companions of the Right. (Surat al-Balad: 17-18)

156

Say: "My Lord has commanded justice. Stand and face Him in every mosque and call on Him, making your religion sincerely His. As He originated you, so you will return." (Surat al-A'raf: 29)

157

Urfa appears in historical sources as the region in which the Prophet Adam (pbuh), the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), the Prophet Job (pbuh), the Prophet Shu`ayb (pbuh), and the Prophet Elisha (pbuh) all lived. According to various accounts, an important part of the Prophet Abraham's (pbuh) life was spent in Urfa. The Gospel's Book of Acts indicates that the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) lived in Haran.

To this, he replied: Men, brothers, and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. "Leave your country and your people," God said, "and go to the land I will show you." So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. (Acts, 7:2-4)

(Side) In the picture is Urfa's Fish Lake, suggested as one of the places where the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) lived.

158-159

"I hold fast to the creed of my forebears Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. We don't associate anything with Allah. And... that is how Allah has favored us and all humanity, but most do not give thanks." (Surah Yusuf: 38)

165

Not so! All who submit themselves completely to Allah and are good-doers will find their reward with their Lord... (Surat al-Baqara: 112)

166

Those who shun the worship of false deities and turn towards Allah will have good news. So give good news to My servants. (Surat az-Zumar: 17)

167

Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it, they are the ones whom Allah has guided... (Surat az-Zumar: 18)

172

To those who do not believe, the life of this world is painted in glowing colors and they laugh at those who believe. But on the Day of Resurrection those who fear [and respect] Allah will be over them. Allah provides for whoever He wills without any reckoning.

(Surat al-Baqara, 212)

"Picos de Europa" (1860)

Carlos de Haes

Museo del Prado

174

And Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah and Lot. All of them We favored over all beings. (Surat al-An'am, 86))

180

And Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity - We breathed Our Spirit into her and she confirmed the Words of her Lord and His Book and was one of the obedient.

(Surat at-Tahrim, 12)

183

German researcher Werner Keller, who bases his arguments on archeological and geological studies, said that Sodom and Gomorrah were located in Siddim Valley. He states that these cities were at the lowest edge of the Dead Sea (Lake Lut), where, over the years, large settlements gradually developed. As a result of the catastrophe in the region, some of these cities' remains, which slipped toward the lake, now stand at its edge. These remains show that the people enjoyed a rather high standard of living.

184

The expression turning upside down may be describing how the region was destroyed in a violent earthquake. Indeed, the Dead Sea (Lake Lut) is located in an active seismic region.

In the same verse, Allah reveals that He rained down on them stones of hard baked clay. Keller explains: "The subsidence released valconic forces that had been lying dormant deep down along the whole lenght of the fracture. In the upper valley of the Jordan near Bashan there are still towering craters of extinct volcanoes; great stretches of lava and deep layers of basalt have been deposited of the limestone surface." (Werner Keller, Und die Bibel hat doch recht [The Bible as History; a Conformation of the Book of Books], William Morrow, [New York: 1956, 76.])

185

Has the news of those who came before them not reached them, the people of Noah and 'Ad and Thamud, and the people of Abraham and the inhabitants of Midian and the overturned cities? Their messengers brought them the Clear Signs. Allah did not wrong them; rather they wronged themselves. (Surat at-Tawba, 70)

186-187

"Do you come with lust to men instead of women? You are a people who are deeply ignorant." The only response of his people was to say: "drive the family of Lot out of your city! They are people who keep themselves pure!" (Surat an-Naml, 55-56)

190

A few examples of the petrified human bodies unearthed from the ruins of Pompeii.

192

This fresco depicts a banquet that brought the people of Pompeii together.

193

Frescoes from Pompeii.

194

**"My Lord, rescue me and my family from what they are doing."
Therefore We rescued him and all his...**

195

**... family - except for an old woman who remained behind. Then
We utterly destroyed the rest.
(Surat ash-Shu'ara', 169-172)**

196

These ruins contain four mills used to grind flour.

207

Charles Darwin

208

Louis Pasteur

209

Alexander Oparin

210

One of the facts nullifying the theory of evolution is the incredibly complex structure of life. The DNA molecule located in the nucleus of cells of living beings is an example of this. The DNA is a sort of databank formed of the arrangement of four different molecules in different sequences. This databank contains the codes of all the physical traits of that living being. When the human DNA is put into writing, it is calculated that this would result in an encyclopaedia made up of 900 volumes. Unquestionably, such extraordinary information definitively refutes the concept of coincidence.

211

Natural selection only selects out the disfigured, weak, or unfit individuals of a species. It cannot produce new species, new genetic information, or new organs.

214

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, evolutionary biologists have sought examples of beneficial mutations by creating mutant flies. But these efforts have always resulted in sick and deformed creatures. The top picture shows the head of a normal fruit fly, and the picture on the left shows the head of a fruit fly with legs coming out of it, the result of mutation.

Antenne
Eye
Mouth
Leg

217

LIVING FOSSILS REFUTE EVOLUTION

Fossils are proof that evolution never happened. As the fossil record shows, living things came into being in a single moment, with all the characteristics they possess and never altered in the least for so long as the species survived. Fish have always existed as fish, insects as insects and reptiles as reptiles. There is no scientific validity to the claim that species develop gradually. Almighty Allah created all living things.

A 54-to-37-million-year-old fossil sunfish
A 295-million-year-old fossil sea urchin
A 125-million-year-old fossil cicada
A 50-million-year-old fossil sequoia leaf

219

Evolutionist newspapers and magazines often print pictures of primitive man. The only available source for these pictures is the imagination of the artist. Evolutionary theory has been so dented by scientific data that today we see less and less of it in the serious press.

223

Darwin did not even want to think about the eye. It is impossible for the eye to happen by coincidence because the eye is perfect and yet so complex. It is the obvious truth that God has created the eye.

228

We live our whole life in our brains. People we see, flowers we smell, music we hear, fruit we taste, the moisture we feel with our hands-all these are impressions that become "reality" in the brain. But no colors, voices or pictures exist there. We live in an environment of electrical impulses. This is no theory, but the scientific explanation of how we perceive the outside world.

Movement
Thought
Speech
Taste
Smell
Hearing
Sight
Touch

BACK COVER

Each prophet possesses virtues that are praised in the Qur'an. Therefore, believers must carefully study every detail of these Qur'anic accounts so that they can take these men's lives, moral virtues, and deep devotion to Allah as models for themselves. Each prophet was sent to his own tribe, experienced different situations, and used various methods to explain Allah's existence. For that reason, the natures of the prophets' tribes, and their reactions to the prophets, as well as the difficulties experienced by those who became believers and the prophets themselves, provide us with important information about how we can please Allah.

This book introduces the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), who is praised in the Qur'an in these terms: "You have an excellent example in Abraham and those with him" (Surat al-Mumtahana: 4) and the Prophet Lot (pbuh), who lived during the same period, so that they can serve as role models for our own lives. Since every piece of information about these two prophets contains considerable wisdom, we shall examine their lives closely in this book so that we can follow their example.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adnan Oktar, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on faith-related, scientific and political issues. He 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.

All of the author's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies. His more than 300 works, translated into 63 different languages, enjoy a wide readership across the world.

By the will of Allah, the books of Harun Yahya will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.