

BIGOTRY: THE DARK DANGER

ADNAN OKTAR (HARUN YAHYA)

Harun Yahya and His Works

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 73 different languages, constitute a collection of more than 65,000 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 Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet [pbuh]), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of irreligious ideologies and to have the "last word," to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the last Prophet (pbuh), who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of this intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share the same goals: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as God's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' shaky foundations and misguided 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 Maldives), Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, Indonesian, Bengali, Danish and Swedish.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in God and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinctive 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 misguided ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if a reader continues to advocate for these beliefs, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

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

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

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological confusion, and that clearly fail in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as has been 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 become 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. These ordeals 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 to provide such service, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of God, these books will be a means through which people in the twenty-first century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

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, God'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 the light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn God's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning God'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 every one 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, giving them an opportunity to 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 God. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is to encourage them to read these books.

- We hope the reader will look through the reviews of the author's 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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Abbreviations used:

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

(ra) (Radiyah Allahu Anhu or Anha): May God be pleased with him/her (following a reference to the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad)

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Preface

The Misunderstood Islam

"Adopt my faith, or die!" That is the slogan of the fanatics. There is no such concept as democracy, freedom of ideas, love, respect, affection, friendship, altruism, appreciating women, scientific progress or making the world a better place in fanaticism. Some people imagine that fanaticism, and its offshoot radicalism, can settle inside a true faith. Yet fanaticism is itself a religion; there are representatives of this false religion inside every idea. There are fanatics in Islam, in Judaism and in Christianity, just as there are in Marxism, fascism and atheism. They all espouse the same false faith; "I don't like your ideas! Either go along with my ideas, or die!"

Especially in recent years, fanaticism has been largely associated with Islam. Indeed, certain groups began to wrongly call this religion of fanaticism Islam, and made it the target of their misplaced fears. So much so, for some people the religion of Islam has come to stand for "fear." Islamophobia is talked about all over the world. People are unaware that their fears stem, not from Islam, but from fanaticism. They fail to see that the fanatical faith produced by peddlers of superstition has appeared in the name of Islam; nobody has ever told them that this is not Islam. Neither the radicals who emerge in the name of Islam nor the Islamophobes who fear those radicals have been shown that Islam has nothing to do with this fanatical, terrifying, loveless and hate-filled faith. The radicals of Islam have begun harming the entire world, but Muslims most of all.

The phrase "moderate Islam" was invented for that reason. As if there were such things as a savage Islam on one hand and a moderate model of Islam on the other, Muslims opposed to the savagery of the radicals began being referred to as "moderate Muslims." Voices opposed to Islam praised the advocates of moderate Islam. The truth was, many of the so-called "moderate Muslims" were also strangers to genuine Islam, and consequently, reason, integrity, rationalism, honesty, compassion and love. Some people wrongly believed that these so-called moderate Muslims were trying to soften an otherwise savage religion (surely Islam is above such claims). They even called this narrative "a reform in Islam," and referred to the advocates of moderate Islam as "reformists." However, there was no need for a reform. The only thing that had to be done was to return to the essence of Islam; the real Islam as described in the Qur'an. Muslims preaching the real Islam and advocating peace, on the other hand, are not trying to soften, reform or moderate Islam. As peace-loving Muslims, our main goal is to intellectually eliminate a falsehood that has been propagated under the name of Islam for many years. It is to eliminate the radicalism, fanaticism and bigotry displayed for years under the name of Islam and to eradicate that nonsensical faith that has nothing to do with the true Islam, and to describe the truth of Islam with evidence from the Qur'an. It is to put an end to the worst defamation of Islam being done by the fanatics up until now.

This book responds to the claims made by certain Western opponents of Islam who have actually come to prominence through their criticism of radicalism, and to the terrifying way of thinking of the fanatics. It reveals, with examples from the Qur'an, the invalidity of the claims made in various sources of the false, fanatical religion which they are trying to make part of Islam. The particular reason for producing a work responding to these claims is that all the criticisms made of Islam take similar directions and that people confuse the religion of radicalism with the true Islam. The objective, therefore, is to provide those people who are wrongly acquainted with the true Islam due to the groundless accusations made against it, with evidence from the Qur'an rebutting those claims.

The fanatics' problem is that they learn their faith from specious superstition. However, those who criticize those fanatics are sometimes just as radical and believe in the accuracy of that same superstition. The more we produce evidence from the Qur'an, the more they try to produce their own from the superstition subscribed to by the fanatics.

That is where they make their gravest mistake. If they want to know the true Islam and find a solution to fanaticism, they must heed the true faith described here. Unless they do that, radicalism will continue to plague the world.

Therefore, one of the goals of this book is to inform not only the Western world but also a major part of the Islamic world that do not know how to save itself from the darkness of bigotry. This book also calls to the bright world of the true Islam as described in the Qur'an those people who have remained somewhat under the influence of bigotry, and thus live surrounded by a wrong conception of Islam, laden with superstitions, those who are estranged to the Qur'an, those who shun seeking the truth, fearing that abandoning superstitions amounts to violating Islamic rules. By the grace of God, this cultural effort will be instrumental in defusing the darkness of bigotry by means of the holy light of the Qur'an, and freedom, love, democracy, joy and quality will spread all around the world.

Chapter 1

The Two Basic Concepts Misused by Those Who Portray Islam as a Violent Faith: Sharia and Jihad

God describes the Qur'an as follows in one verse:

... This [the Qur'an] is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who have faith. (Qur'an, 12:111)

As God explicitly states in this verse, the Qur'an is "a clarification of everything," although it is never enough for the peddlers of superstition. They do not regard the path revealed by the Qur'an as suited to their own false religious conceptions. For that reason, throughout the course of history they have maintained that some of the commandments of the Qur'an are "not sufficient" (surely the Qur'an is beyond that) and need to be interpreted. From that, they developed the idea that "We can only understand the Qur'an through the hadiths."

Let us make one thing clear here; the hadiths have come down to the present day as the words of our Prophet (pbuh). While some are entirely trustworthy and accurate quotations and practices, others have gradually been distorted and the meanings of some have been changed. There are two ways of telling whether a hadith is really the words or the practice of our Prophet (pbuh) and that is if it is in agreement with the Qur'an or if it has already occurred. It is without doubt a slander against our Prophet (pbuh) to maintain that words or practices that conflict with the Qur'an actually belong to the Prophet (pbuh) because our Prophet abided by the Qur'an alone.

The idea that "We can only understand the Qur'an through the hadiths" has wrought enormous harm on the Islamic world because some Muslims thinking along those lines began to fabricate hadiths in the name of the faith. They even eventually abandoned the Qur'an altogether, taking those hadiths alone as the source of their religion. When fabricated hadiths conflicted with the Qur'an, they even had the effrontery to say, "This hadith overrules the commandment of the Qur'an." Hundreds of fabricated hadiths gave rise to different faiths, and the result was four schools that disagreed with one another on many areas within Islam. Almost four different religions, each with different sets of rules, emerged. So much so, there have been times when some sect leaders considered other sect leaders to have abandoned Islam entirely.

As a result, an entirely different conception of Islam appeared; this Islam was based on fabricated hadiths and their interpretations, fatwas deduced from personal convictions and sometimes from traditional erroneous practices. This is a completely misguided version of Islam based on ancient superstitions and includes almost no Qur'anic provisions. In other words, the Islam we encounter in many places today is a dramatically different religion than the one described in the Qur'an and that was lived at the time of our Prophet (pbuh). Our Prophet (pbuh) complains to Almighty God of the state into which the Islamic world has fallen as follows in the Qur'an:

The Messenger says, "My Lord, my people treat this Qur'an as something to be ignored." (Qur'an, 25:30)

Indeed, the problem of a large part of the Islamic world today is that people regard the Qur'an as a book that has been abandoned.

Once the Qur'an had been abandoned, it was time for "ijma." (Ijma: Eminent religious figures living at any time producing commandments regarding Sharia law on the basis of deductive analogy). Since the Qur'an was not their guide they were smothered by thousands of fabricated hadiths and they finally decided that "neither the Qur'an nor the hadiths could properly explain the commandments." These "religious leaders" began producing laws in the name of Islam. The schools began clashing with one another, and the agreements of the Muslim communities came into conflict with those of other schools. Every "religious" leader's own interpretation was regarded as law, each community based itself on a different set of practices and the whole community of Islam began splitting up into sects, classes and finally tiny groups. The Qur'an, however, was left as a decorative item hung up on the wall, still inside its casing. As a result, a large part of the Islamic world abandoned and ignored the Qur'an. The bright world of the Qur'an, that fosters science and development, that champions arts, democracy and secularism [freedom of thought and belief], has been replaced by a cold, ruthless, loveless, crude life in many parts of the world.

Looking at some of the opponents of Islam, we see that their problem is quite ironically the same as that of the peddlers of superstition: They do not learn about Islam from the Qur'an. Just like the peddlers of superstition, they concentrate on fabricated hadiths, traditions and interpretations of Islam by religious leaders that are generally incompatible with the Qur'an. In their eyes, "Islam" is the lifestyle and practices of the peddlers of superstition. In their eyes, "Islam" is the imaginative power of historians, not the faith as revealed in the Qur'an. They call the laws of this fabricated religion "Sharia," not the "laws of the Qur'an." They are unaware of the values, concepts and practices imparted in the Qur'an, but have a great knowledge of all the rules of the false religion of the peddlers of superstition. In criticizing the rules of that false religion, they imagine they are criticizing Islam. So attached are they to the religion of the peddlers of superstition that they do not believe it when they are told, "This is not Islam." And this is an exceedingly serious error.

These people must assess the presented evidence and documents with their conscience and see the truth, if they are not opposed to Islam owing to an ideological religious opposition and if they genuinely seek a solution to the darkness of the fanatical mindset. Their religion is not Islam. The Qur'an by itself is sufficient for a Muslim. Hadiths are true and reliable so long as they are compatible with the Qur'an. A hadith that is incompatible with the Qur'an has no place in Islam. If a Muslim cannot find Islam in the Qur'an, it means he is looking for another religion and the Sharia of that faith is not Islam.

Islam: The Religion of Ease

One of the biggest mistakes of the fanatical mindset is their belief that religion must be difficult. As a matter of fact, some people believe the more complicated and difficult their religion is, the more merit they would earn. This is a warped viewpoint stemming from the failure to understand God's infinite mercy. This has also been a fundamental issue causing people to oppose the prophets throughout history. When the Prophet Moses told his people, "**God commands you to sacrifice a cow,**" his people asked dozens of questions, rendering a very plain order almost impracticable. Furthermore, as they worked to make a simple order difficult, they claimed they were being extremely pious. However, being pious is simply living by the essence of religion; that is, it should be lived in its plain, pure state as revealed by God. In many verses of the Qur'an it is specifically stated that religion is easy:

Strive for God with the striving due to Him. He has selected you and not placed any constraint upon you in the religion – the religion of your forefather Abraham. (Qur'an, 22:78)

... They invented monasticism – We did not prescribe it for them – purely out of desire to gain the pleasure of God, but even so they did not observe it as it should have been observed. To those of them who had faith We gave their reward but many of them are deviators. (Qur'an, 57:27)

We have made the Qur'an easy to remember. But is there any rememberer there? (Qur'an, 54:17)

We will ease you to the Easy Way. Remind, then, if the reminder benefits. (Qur'an, 87:8-9)

As for him who gives out and has fear [of God], and confirms the Good, We will pave his way to Ease. (Qur'an, 92:5-7)

God desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you. You should complete the number of days and proclaim God's greatness for the guidance He has given you so that hopefully you will be thankful. (Qur'an, 2:185)

But as for him who has faith and acts rightly, he will receive the best of rewards and we will issue a command, making things easy for him. (Qur'an, 18:88)

We have made it easy in your own tongue so that hopefully they will pay heed. (Qur'an, 44:58)

... Recite as much of the Qur'an as is easy for you. He knows that some of you are ill and that others are travelling in the land seeking God's bounty, and that others are fighting in the Way of God. So recite as much of it as is easy for you. And perform the prayer and pay the alms and lend a generous loan to God... (Qur'an, 73:20)

You who have faith! Do not ask about matters which, if they were made known to you, would make things difficult for you. If you do ask about them when the Qur'an is being sent down, they will be made known to you. God has ignored them. God is Ever-Forgiving, All-Forbearing. People before you asked about them and then later came to reject them. (Qur'an, 5:101-102)

The True Sharia in the Qur'an

The word Sharia means "path." A Muslim can easily tell what "path" to follow by looking at the Qur'an. Few things are unlawful in the Qur'an, and these are made clear with explicit prohibitions. They are not open to discussion or interpretation. For example, killing, adultery, earning interest, eating pork or drinking blood are all unlawful actions revealed in verses of the Qur'an in definitive terms. This is one important characteristic of the Qur'an. People who aim to come up with prohibitions by interpreting verses in the light of their own desires always produce their own deductions from them. Yet God prohibits what is unlawful with definitive pronouncements, as in this verse:

He has only forbidden you carrion, blood and pork and what has been consecrated to other than God. (Qur'an, 2:173)

God reveals in the Qur'an that there will be people who fabricate what is lawful or prohibited in the name of Islam:

Do not say about what your lying tongues describe: "This is lawful and this is unlawful," inventing lies against God. Those who invent lies against God are not successful. (Qur'an, 16: 116)

Following the time of our Prophet (pbuh), numerous communities emerged who invented lies against God. These communities made things forbidden or lawful with no regard for the Qur'an. However, there are some communities whose characteristics God particularly emphasizes: "They make unlawful the good things made lawful." Our Lord says in the Qur'an:

You who believe! Do not make unlawful the good things God has made lawful for you, and do not overstep the limits. God does not love people who overstep the limits. (Qur'an, 5:87)

In examining the system of savagery applied under the name of Sharia, yet which is completely incompatible with Islam, we shall be speaking of communities that make lawful things unlawful for themselves and that are totally distanced from the Qur'an.

Let us first define the true Sharia, the true path of the Qur'an in other words, as set out in verses:

The Sharia of the Qur'an means love, respect, and affection and protection toward people of all faiths and opinions. The Sharia of the Qur'an insists on democracy, and freedom of ideas prevails. Under the Sharia of the

Qur'an, people are knowledgeable, educated, open-minded, respectful of other ideas, happy, outward-looking, modern, high quality, optimistic, and value art and science, love and friendship. There is no hatred, intolerance, conflict, fighting, despotism, imposition, threatening, unhappiness, anger or war in the Sharia of the Qur'an. We shall be expanding on all these definitions associated with the Qur'an with evidence from verses in later sections of this book.

Is there an Islamic country in the world today that meets these definitions of the Sharia of the Qur'an? Of course not; this Sharia has not been applied since the time of our Prophet (pbuh). The countries that say they are governed under Sharia law apply the Sharia of a fanatical faith that various violent groups impose in the name of Islam. They adopt various untrue hadiths or some so-called Islamic scholars' un-Qur'anic remarks as their guides. Their criterion is not the Qur'an, but rather society's old traditions and values mixed with superstitions. In other words, instead of following God's words, they pay heed to the personal remarks of so-called scholars and in the process, they abandon the Qur'an.

We shall be seeing in subsequent chapters where those groups that claim to be applying Sharia but actually spread rage and hatred draw that conception of Sharia from. We shall be looking one by one and seeing the invalidity of all the false hadiths they adopt as their guides. We shall be seeing with full supporting evidence how far removed this Sharia is from the Qur'an, and how it can never be described as Islamic Sharia at all.

What Does the True Qur'anic Sharia Bring to A Country?

If there really were a country that applied the true Sharia of Islam, what would it be like?

Before answering this question, it is important to clarify an important point. Muslims are responsible for abiding by the law of their countries, following the rules of the administration, and protecting the existence and integrity of the State. If there are anti-democratic, unfair or wrong practices in those countries, it should be known that any effort to correct the problem should comply with laws. Such problems should be solved in a reasonable manner, through intellectual, cultural efforts. A Muslim is always responsible for restoring, building and correcting; he must never become involved in any destructive activity. The Qur'anic Sharia is not demolishing the existing rule of law and democratic regime of a country to replace it with a new system. On the contrary, the Qur'anic Sharia represents moral perfection and quality of life.

Now let's answer the above question: It would be highly developed in terms of art and science, would have a high level of education and standard of living, would be high quality, peaceful, loving and in favor of unification with all the peoples of the world. It would be in the vanguard of peace and a model of love; it would embrace Jews, Christians and atheists, it would regard people of all ideologies as friends and would respect them all, would assume the mission of bringing tranquility and calm to the world, would think of those in need before itself and would find solutions for them. It would be loving and happy. In addition to being very high quality, the people of that country would also have an ultra-modern and ultra-democratic life style. All opinions could be freely expressed, but without any aggression, insults, intolerance or violence. Goods would not be piled up and accumulated. A Qur'anic life style based on protecting the poor and "putting others before oneself" would prevail. There wouldn't be any poor people. Such a system would be one in which all the people in the world could live happily and that all the countries in the world would be delighted with.

If we compare that description with countries that go by the name of "Islamic Republic," a vast difference is immediately apparent. The system currently being applied under the name of Sharia is most definitely not the Sharia of Islam. In order for people to be able to live by the Sharia of Islam, that religion would have to be purged of all its superstition and would have to meet all the descriptions praised in the Qur'an and cited above.

In order for that to happen, it is essential for the head of state of a country governed under Islam to act in full compliance with the Qur'an, not superstition. A Muslim leader who abides by the Qur'an will have three major

characteristics: he or she will be affectionate, democratic and just. Due to those characteristics, such a leader will always be reliable. People who live under the protection of a Muslim leader who fully abides by the moral values of the Qur'an will enjoy the most perfect liberty, of a kind that has never been seen before. No Islamic obligations will be imposed on anyone. Everyone will behave in the light of his own beliefs. Everyone will enjoy the right to speak his mind. No priority will be given to anyone. Everyone will be treated equally. Justice will be administered equally for all. People will still abide by the verse, "**You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives**" (Qur'an, 4:135) even if that sometimes works against Muslims.

A Muslim leader will always strive and desire to establish love. Because the reason for the revelation of religions, the reason for human existence and the reason for the creation of paradise is love. Conflict will be meaningless in a society in which love prevails, in which nobody's freedoms are restricted and in which everyone is treated equally in a state of plenty. Climates of conflict will also disappear when injustice, lovelessness and enmities are eradicated.

It is not possible to speak of the prevalence of the Qur'anic morality in a country if its women are not free, but mistreated, if its cities are gloomy and dark, if science and technology are underdeveloped, if people cannot freely express their thoughts and practice their beliefs, if people are not allowed to dress and travel as they wish, if people are pressured to practice Islam, if followers of different sects are declared unbelievers, if atheists or the irreligious are oppressed, if synagogues and churches are attacked, if members of every religion, language or ethnic background are not treated as first class citizens, if it cannot make a name for the talent and achievements of its artists, if its people lack good manners and if the overall quality of life has deteriorated considerably.

Therefore, in order to understand Sharia, we need to look to the Qur'an, not at the practices of countries who claim to be applying the Sharia of Islam. Islam came with the Qur'an. Therefore, the only Islamic Sharia is in the Qur'an, and it is very clear. It is impossible for a country that does not apply the systems of justice, democracy and liberty in the Qur'an to be a role model on the subject of Sharia. It would therefore be wrong for anyone to suggest, "But this is how it is applied in this country, so Islam will bring savagery with it." The system that needs to be accused here is the false one applied in the name of Islam. It is not the system in the Qur'an. (Surely the Qur'an is beyond that.)

The failure to apply the true system of the Sharia in the Qur'an, which would bring with it the delights cited above, and the savagery being misrepresented as the Sharia of the Qur'an is of course a very terrible thing: Blaming Islam is not the answer, however. Those who blame Islam do grave harm by trying to eliminate it as the sole answer to radicalism, violence and savagery. They are actually smoothing the radicals' path by striving to weaken Islam. It is not their accusations or the weapons they manufacture that will eliminate radicalism and the false beliefs propagated under the name of Islam. The only way is the conception of the true Islam. There is a problem of a false belief here. And false beliefs can only be done away with by replacing them with true ones.

The True Jihad in the Qur'an

The word *jihad* comes from the Arabic word "*jahd*." Its meanings are 1) To work, to strive, to exhibit determination and persistence or self-sacrifice and 2) To control one's lower self. On the basis of these definitions, waging jihad in Islam means to inform the other side, to teach people proper moral values and to turn them away from evil. In doing this, a Muslim must train his own lower self in the direction of moral virtue and train himself to be someone far removed from rage and hatred. In other words, what a Muslim engaged in jihad must do is to train himself on the one hand, and strive to teach people truth and goodness on the other. He must be a role model with his own moral values in order to spread love, peace and affection and to turn people away from evil.

The word "*jahd*" is never used in any other sense in the Qur'an. Now let's see the verses in question to better understand the meaning and context of the word:

An Examination of Verse 95 of Surat an-Nisa'

Those believers who stay behind – other than those forced to by necessity – are not the same as those who struggle in the Way of God, sacrificing their wealth and themselves. God has given those who struggle with their wealth and themselves a higher rank than those who stay behind. God has promised the Best to both, but God has preferred those who struggle over those who stay behind by an immense reward. (Qur'an, 4:95)

This verse describes the difference between those who put all their resources to use and engage in "jihad", in other words, making an effort to spread good and peace around the world, and those who put their comfort and interests before everything else, despite all the injustice, unfairness, poverty, starvation and wars going on in the world. God promises that He will in the best way reward all believers who engage in good deeds. For this reason, all believers will be beautifully rewarded by God but those believers who devote their entire lives to God will be superior in God's Sight. Striving in the way of God, with wealth and oneself, means sacrificing one's own comfort and well-being to spread peace and brotherhood in the world, to restore justice and to protect the oppressed with all one's might. Such a self-sacrificing believer devotes his entire time and resources to this end. He organizes conferences, publishes books, prepares television shows, makes documentaries and constantly tells the truth to anyone he can reach. In other words, contrary to the claims of some people, this verse refers to making an intellectual effort to make the world a better place and not spreading violence and terror around the world.

An Examination of Verse 52 of Surat al-Furqan

So do not obey the unbelievers but use this [the Qur'an] to battle against them with all your might. (Qur'an, 25:52)

This verse offers a guideline to Muslims in their struggle. According to the verse, Muslims are responsible for making an effort in line with the Qur'an; which is by explaining, telling and spreading the beautiful message of God. The provision of "not obeying the unbelievers" refers to the fact that Muslims should intellectually, spiritually and morally distance themselves from the loveless, inconsiderate, unbounded and cruel world of those who deny God. Certainly, all Muslims are obliged to abide by the rules of the countries where they live, and to be sensible and levelheaded. However, this does not mean that in their private lives, they will submit to any impositions against their beliefs. Therefore, this provision of the Qur'an is about making an effort to invite people to the loving and warm world of the Qur'an by pointing out the loveless, unfair world created by irreligion so that the world becomes a better place.

Therefore, those who perpetrate slaughter under the name of "jihad" saying, "Our point of reference is the Qur'an" are either lying or misinformed.

According to the Qur'an, those who are now slaughtering people in the name of jihad, taking their own lives as suicide bombers, or inciting war are committing a grave sin, yet the great majority of these people are not even aware that they are contravening the Qur'an. That is because they have been led astray in the name of religion. They have their own faith in which there is hatred instead of love, rage instead of affection, enmity instead of brotherhood, horror instead of beauty and ignorance instead of art, science and culture. It is frighteningly simple to put a gun in the hands of someone who believes in such a faith and it is all too easy to tell them "This community is your enemy so go and attack it." It is quite easy to incite them and shockingly easy to build communities of rage.

The false hadiths these people cite as supposed justification for aggression, and the verses of the Qur'an they misinterpret in the name of war, will be set out in detail in later chapters. There is one important point that needs to be remembered here; the great majority of radicals spread violence out of ignorance. They do not know the true faith. Most of them have likely never even read the Qur'an. That is why it is no use to condemn, curse, threaten, imprison or exile someone who kills under the misapprehension he is waging jihad. His problem is that he has not been educated with the Qur'an and has not understood the law of God. Since that is the problem, we have to accept the fact that so long as false education persists, there will also be radicals who are ignorant of what they do. If one accepts that this is

the problem, one can also grasp the fact that the only thing that those who spread violence and terror under the name of jihad need is true education.

What Is Misunderstood about War in Islam

A Muslim Has a Responsibility to Believe in Every Verse of the Qur'an, Without Exception

The reason for this heading appearing here is to show the false nature of claims made by fanatics who seek to add superstition to Islam and some opponents of Islam, who in turn misuse the unpleasant idea of those fanatics that some verses of the Qur'an are no longer valid. They cite this verse as supposed evidence for their claims:

Whenever We abrogate an ayat or cause it to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or equal to it. Do you not know that God has power over all things? (Qur'an, 2:106)

Those who twist their tongues against the Qur'an have misinterpreted this verse as evidence to allow them to impose their own superstition as the faith instead of the Qur'an. They have unwisely imagined that by misinterpreting this verse, they can invalidate some verses and even replace them with fabricated hadiths. Some, in order to legitimize the atrocities they seek to commit, wrongly and without any basis, maintain that the Qur'an's provisions regarding compassion, mercy and forgiveness have been abrogated and the verses about war apply. Some opponents of Islam, on the other hand, maintain that there are verses about the use of intoxicants or war that no longer apply and seek to divide Muslims into those who abide by that and those who do not. Neither of these is correct.

The true interpretation of this verse that the people in question seek to cite as evidence for their own utterly perverse way of thinking is as follows; the Arabic word "ayat" in the term "Whenever We abrogate an ayat" is singular. The word ayat also means sign or miracle, as well as verse, but the word "ayat" used to refer to the verses of the Qur'an never appears in singular form. When it appears in the singular, the word "ayat" always means evidence or sign, and that is how it is translated in all other verses.

The meaning here is therefore not "verses of the Qur'an" but "signs, rules and Sharia" that went before it. According to this verse, therefore, if some practices and commandments applied by previous communities to whom Divine books were sent down, that is, Jews and Christians, were forgotten in time, these have either been recalled or else abrogated by the Qur'an. A similar or better version has thus been brought forth with the Qur'an.

We also need to concentrate on the words "cause it to be forgotten" in the verse. In order for one commandment to abrogate another, the earlier one has to have been "forgotten." Since the Qur'an has remained unchanged for 1,400 years there can be no question of one verse replacing another. The commandments that fanatics allege have been abrogated have not been forgotten; they are still in the Qur'an. This clearly shows that the abrogation being referred to here is not of one verse by another, but of commandments belonging to earlier communities that have since been forgotten. Commands that have been sent down to earlier societies but "forgotten" have been restored with the Qur'an, with more auspicious or similar versions being sent down to those communities.

The Qur'an Is a "Preserved" Book

As our Lord explicitly states in a verse, the Qur'an is a "preserved" Book.

It is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the Qur'an] and We Who will preserve it. (Qur'an, 15:9)

It is impossible for some verses in a book which is "preserved" and whose commandments apply to all Muslims to be regarded as valid, while others are not. The perfection in the entirety of the Qur'an, its mathematical and scientific miracles, the fact that it is a guide and the verses regarding how it has been preserved all rebut these claims made by fanatics and some opponents of Islam.

Those who reject the Remembrance [the Qur'an] when it comes to them - truly it is a Mighty Book; falsehood cannot reach it from before it or behind it - it is a revelation from One Who is All-Wise, Praiseworthy. (Qur'an, 41:41-42)

Its collection and recitation are Our affair. So when We recite it, follow its recitation. Then its explanation is Our concern. (Qur'an, 75:17-19)

As these verses explicitly state, the Qur'an is a peerless book, and falsehood cannot catch up with it from before or behind. This book is under the protection of our Lord. It is therefore a blatant slander to suggest that some commandments have replaced those in the Qur'an.

We need to state here that the supposed scholars who slander Islam and the Qur'an in this way are in intense disagreement among themselves as to the number of verses that are supposedly abrogated. Each one in his own way replaces a verse he regards as abrogated with another commandment, and these rules therefore lead to new and different faiths; some supposed scholars have even gone so far as to maintain that hadiths can replace verses. These people completely ignore God's verse that reads "... **We have not omitted anything from the Book...**" (Qur'an, 6:38). They reject verses of the Qur'an and replace them with hadiths, some of which are total fabrications. This logical collapse perpetrated in the name of Islam also represents the basis for the actions of radicals. We shall be looking at this in detail in due course.

Just like the peddlers of superstition, opponents of Islam have also tried to apply this false interpretation over the verses to a large number of commandments about Islam. Let us now look at where these people have gone wrong.

The Mistakes in Differentiating between the "Meccan Period Muslims" and "Medinan Period Muslims"

Some opponents of Islam refer to Muslims advocating peace as "Meccan period Muslims." In their eyes, the time when our Prophet (pbuh) was in Mecca was a peaceful time of no wars, yet wars suddenly started following our Prophet's (pbuh) migration to Medina. Some people claim, on that basis, that the proponents of war in Islam recognize only the verses revealed in the Medinan period, while peace-loving Muslims recognize only the verses from the Meccan period. That idea is as illogical as it is ignorant.

As we have already seen, the essential precondition for a Muslim to acquire the identity of a Muslim is to believe in all the verses of the Qur'an, without exception. If someone rejects a single verse, then he loses the attribute of being a Muslim as described in the Qur'an. There is therefore no possibility in the eyes of the Qur'an of someone who says, "I am a Muslim" to discriminate by saying, "I recognize this verse but not that one."

It is true that there was no fighting in the Meccan period in the life of our Prophet (pbuh), but that there was fighting in the Medinan period and that verses were sent down concerning those particular battles. In order to understand the reason for this we need to understand the difficult conditions in the time of our Prophet (pbuh).

The Harsh Testing of Muslims in the Meccan Period

The revelation to our Prophet (pbuh) took a full 23 years. During the first 13 years of this, Muslims lived as a minority in the pagan society of Mecca and were subjected to very great pressures. Many Muslims were subjected to physical torture, some were martyred, the homes and possessions of most were looted and they were constantly exposed to threats and insults. Yet Muslims continued living without resorting to violence, merely keeping their distance from the pagans and always calling them to the path of peace.

Yet the aggression of the pagan communities in question was unending.

The Quraysh, the tribe that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was born into, initially seemed to regard his prophethood as unimportant. While continuing not to believe, they made no protest against the Prophet's (pbuh) call so long as he said nothing against their idols. When they saw the Prophet (pbuh) however, they attacked him verbally. They unwisely mocked and belittled Muslims. The Quraysh "verbal assault" period began in that way.

The Qur'an describes the position in these words:

Those who did evil used to laugh at those who had faith.

When they passed by them, they would wink at one another.

When they returned to their families, they would make a joke of them.

When they saw them, they would say, "Those people are misguided." (Qur'an, 83:29-32)

Mecca was the center of idolatry. Mecca would fill to overflowing every day with people coming to visit the Ka'aba and the idols around it, thus earning the Quraysh a good deal of money and prestige. The Quraysh regarded the spread of Islam in Mecca as a threat, because they thought that this would act against their own interests and also attract the hostility of other tribes. They also knew that Islam regarded everyone as equal and made no discrimination on grounds of lineage or wealth. Leading members of the Quraysh therefore believed they needed to take precautions to stop the spread of Islam. These "precautions" frequently included the torture and even the killing of Muslims. (*Ibn Hisham, 1/287*)

The pagans of the time could not do much harm to members of strong and eminent families, such as Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Uthman, but they viciously mistreated poor and unprotected Muslims. Worthy Muslims exposed to such severe mistreatment included Abu Fakih, Khabbab ibn al-Aratt, Bilal ibn Rabah, Suhaib ar-Rumi, Ammar ibn Yasir, Yasir ibn Amir and Sumayyah bint Khayyat.

Abu Fakih, a slave of Safwan ibn Umayyah, was tied by his feet every day by his master and dragged over hot gravel and sand.

The iron-worker Khabbab ibn al-Aratt was laid on hot coals and his chest pressed down onto the coals until they had cooled.

Ammar ibn Yasir's father, Yasir ibn Amir, had his legs tied to camels which were then driven in different directions, tearing his body apart. Unable to bear the pain of her husband being martyred in that savage way, Sumayyah bint Khayyat spoke out against the pagans and was killed by an arrow fired by Abu Jahl. (*Zad al-Maad, 2/116; The Age of Felicity, 1/254*)

Umayyah ibn Khalaf would lay his slave Bilal al-Habashi down naked on baking sand every day. He would then place a huge rock on his chest and leave him there for hours; he tortured him to try and make him go against the Prophet (pbuh) and abandon Islam. One day he tied his hands and feet and placed a rope round his neck. He then dragged him over the hot sand through the streets of Mecca. (*Zad al-Maad, 2/116; The Age of Felicity, 1/253*)

They were at first unable to touch the person of our Prophet (pbuh) since he was under the guardianship of his uncle Abu Talib and since they feared the Hashemites. Gradually, however they began slandering him, saying he was a "fortune teller, a poet, a magician, a conjuror." Eventually, they took every opportunity they could find to insult and mistreat the Prophet (pbuh).

This mistreatment of Muslims all took place simply because they had faith and preached Islam to others. Despite all that oppression, torture and violence, Muslims never harmed those who were harming them, which is one of the requirements of Islam, and never tried to defend themselves, which is their most basic human right. Seeing that the Muslims were not fighting back, the Quraysh stepped up their aggression and tortures. The Quraysh in question were now martyring Muslims the moment they saw them.

As the persecution worsened, the Muslims, who did not respond to it in any way and did not even defend themselves since the Qur'an prohibits the shedding of blood, found themselves unable to remain in Mecca any longer. That meant they had to migrate to Medina.

The Medinan Period and the Battles

As the idolaters' attacks grew in severity in Mecca, the Muslims migrated to the city of Yathrib (later known as Medina), where the climate was freer and friendlier, and set up their own administration there. Yet even after they established their own political structures, the attacks by the pagans of Mecca did not come to an end. The Quraysh followed the Muslims and persisted in violent attacks against them. But our Prophet (pbuh) and the Muslims around him never embarked on a battle against the idolaters.

No person, community or country in the world will fail to respond if they are attacked. They will always respond to the aggressor in "self-defense" and at the very least, take defensive action. People who engage in self-defense are invariably exonerated by the courts, and countries that do so are exonerated under international law because they have been subjected to an unjust attack, and people's lives, families and loved ones, or countries' peoples, lands and honor are endangered.

That also applied to our Prophet (pbuh) and Muslims in the Meccan period. Yet despite all the unjust and murderous attacks on them, our Prophet (pbuh) and the Muslims never counter-attacked on the grounds that God had made killing unlawful. Instead, as commanded in the verses, they always called the other side to peace, and when peace proposals were ineffective they left their homes, lands and cities and moved away.

In the 13 years or so of the Meccan period and the first years of the Medinan period, believers were still commanded to be patient in the face of all this torture and injustice and to preach the faith of God kindly, as revealed in the verse "**Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way**" (Qur'an, 16:125), and no fighting was permitted. Our Prophet (pbuh) responded as follows to those Muslims who wished to stand up to the persecution in question:

Fighting is still not permitted. Be patient, God's help is at hand, and you will be rewarded for your sufferings...

Our Prophet (pbuh) was given permission to engage in self-defense for himself and his community in the following verses which were revealed after the migration to Medina:

Permission to fight is given to those who are fought against because they have been wronged – truly God has the power to come to their support – those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying, "Our Lord is God" ... (Qur'an, 22:39-40)

With these verses, the Muslim community that had been unjustly forced into exile merely for saying "Our Lord is God" started to make preparations to defend themselves. As explicitly stated in the verse, a Muslim community "who are fought against because they have been wronged" are permitted to defend themselves; but they are not told to attack. Following this verse, Muslims began to defend themselves and fought back against the ferocious community that was attacking them. Verses concerning war and defense revealed after that contain descriptions regarding measures during the fighting taking place then. To put it another way, a special description is provided specific to the situation in that particular war. Therefore, all the verses about war in the Qur'an were specially revealed as referring to the particular attacks taking place at that time to enable us to see the difficult conditions of the time and the justice of our Prophet (pbuh).

Who Were Battles Fought Against?

One important point that needs to be remembered regarding the battles described in the Qur'an is "the other side" in the fighting. Some religious and historical sources say that the battles fought in the time of our Prophet (pbuh) were against the Jews. Some people who read those sources then go on to look for anti-Semitism in the Qur'an, claiming that the verses revealed for specific battles in the Qur'an are generally directed against the Jews. That is a grave error, however.

It was the pagans who engaged in that persecution against our Prophet (pbuh) and Muslims. A great many of these were idol-worshippers. Their aim was to prevent any harm from coming to their idols and perverse beliefs. Some were hypocrites and polytheists who had come out of Jewish communities but it would be very wrong to refer to these as Jews. In the same way that it would be very wrong to regard a polytheist or hypocrite who emerged from a Muslim community as a "Muslim," it is equally wrong to regard polytheists and hypocrites who emerged from among Jews and began spreading violence as "Jews." It is impossible for a true Jew to start fighting and take the lives of believers.

The Qur'an condemns anti-Semitism. For that reason, those who look for expressions of enmity toward the Jews in the Qur'an return empty-handed. A great majority of people who interpret the verses in question as referring to fighting against the Jews are not aware of an important historical fact: Our Prophet (pbuh) always enjoyed good relations with Jewish people. He treated them with respect and affection, and true, devout Jews treated our Prophet (pbuh) with that same respect and affection.

Information concerning our Prophet's (pbuh) affectionate attitude toward Jews, the Torah and Judaism will be examined in detail in the chapter on the People of the Book.

The Description of War in the Qur'an

The Qur'an is quite explicit on when and how war is to be waged:

Fight in the Way of God against those who fight you, but do not go beyond the limits. God does not love those who go beyond the limits. (Qur'an, 2:190)

War must only be waged **against those who attack Muslims**. That is it must be a **defensive** war. It is absolutely **prohibited** in the Qur'an for Muslims to attack the other side for no reason.

What God commands Muslims in the Qur'an is that they must always keep justice at the fore, even if they are angry at a community because of its injustices and aggression. God reveals in one verse:

You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of God, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to devoutness. Have awe of God. God is aware of what you do. (Qur'an, 5:8)

For example, in one verse God prohibits Muslims from going beyond the limits regarding communities that try to stop Muslims from entering the Ka'aba, advising them to treat them and everyone else with kindness:

... Do not let hatred for a people who debar you from the Masjid al-Haram [the Sacred Mosque] incite you into going beyond the limits. Help each other to goodness and piety. Do not help each other to wrongdoing and enmity. Have awe of God... (Qur'an, 5:2)

Muslims are warned by Almighty God not to overstep the bounds, even though they have deliberately been prevented from performing their religious obligation of the Hajj (pilgrimage) and have been treated unjustly. God commands Muslims to behave justly even under those conditions, and commands them to behave well and not be angered. Muslims have an obligation to obey this commandment in the Qur'an, no matter what the circumstances.

The verse that describes the only justification for fighting – self-defense – also contains another condition on the subject of war: not to go to excess. This means that in the event of an attack a Muslim must simply defend himself, must not overreact and must take no other action than defensive measures. In other words, aggression, violence, anger and extremism are banned in the Qur'an.

Other verses reveal the obligation to engage only in defense war against aggressors in these terms:

God does not forbid you from being good to those who have not fought you in the religion or driven you from your homes, or from being just towards them. God loves those who are just. God merely forbids you from taking as friends those who have fought you in the religion and driven you from your homes and who supported your expulsion. ... (Qur'an, 60:8-9)

There is an important distinction here. It is unlawful for Muslims to attack people who have never attacked them, even though they are opposed to Muslims on the level of ideas. A Muslim has a responsibility to treat such people with respect and justice. According to this verse, Muslims are only permitted to engage in defensive warfare against people who oppress them because of their beliefs and actually physically attack them; against people who initiate hostilities, in other words. As we have already seen, everyone will, of course, defend himself if he is attacked. This is the right of every person, nation and country, and is also the correct thing to do.

The fact that our Prophet (pbuh) engaged in no self-defense until the revelation of the verses permitting such activity represents enormous self-sacrifice and religious devotion. Until that time, our Prophet (pbuh) had merely resorted to methods of compromise and trying to convince the other side, as required by the verse "... **argue with them in the kindest way ...**" (Qur'an, 16:125) even though the sole aim of the pagan Quraysh was slaughter.

Having made that important point, we shall now examine all the verses that the peddlers of superstition and opponents of Islam seek to offer as evidence for the violence perpetrated supposedly in the name of Islam, and we will refute their errors on the subject one after the other.

Before looking at these verses, we need to know that all the battles described in the Qur'an were waged against a particular community in that region, and that these special conditions are expressed in the verses. That community was a polytheistic one, with which an agreement had been reached. Therefore, all these battles were determined by the behavior and aggression of the community in question which had breached the peace and friendship agreements. The verses sent down therefore concern the state of affairs at that time and describe that specific climate.

In order to better understand this fact, let us look at the definition of polytheist at the time and the agreements reached with them:

Polytheists with Whom Agreements Were Made

Although, according to some commentaries of the time, the word polytheist simply means "those ascribing equals to God," the term really refers to pagans who worship idols, who explicitly ascribe equals to God and believe in countless deities and who are not Muslim, Jewish, Sabaeen, Christian or Magian.

While the Qur'an refers to the various religions that existed in Arabia during the time of the coming of Islam, the polytheists are always mentioned as a separate group. Looking at the time of our Prophet (pbuh), although it was made lawful to marry women from and eat food prepared by the People of the Book, Jews and Christians; it was forbidden to marry women from or eat food cooked by the Magians and Sabaeans, and also the polytheists.

As we have already seen, our Prophet (pbuh) was forced to migrate to Medina under severe pressure from the polytheists and from the very first days of the emigration, he established a bond of brotherhood between the Ansar (the helpers, the Muslims of Medina) and the Muhajir (the emigrants, the Muslims who had migrated from Mecca to

Medina). He signed numerous agreements with polytheistic communities and people living in the region, and always invited them to be united in order to build peace, despite the extreme attitudes of the polytheists.

Our Prophet (pbuh) came to Medina, and his strengthening of love and brotherhood proved that people could live in peace with peoples of different beliefs, faiths and languages. One of the greatest proofs that he was a messenger of peace and love is that the first text he had written was a peace agreement. After capturing Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) even released all the polytheists who had previously tortured Muslims and treated them with great compassion. This superior moral virtue exhibited by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was something that had never been seen before in Arab society, and was met with great approval.

The Prophet (pbuh) is a role model for all Muslims on the subject of the implementation of justice in conquered territories. Our Prophet (pbuh) applied the justice revealed in the Qur'an to the inhabitants of countries that were taken over and made agreements with them that would content both sides and under which nobody would suffer the slightest victimization. For that reason, the peoples of conquered countries, no matter what their religion or ethnicity, were always delighted by the justice brought with it by Islam. Our Prophet (pbuh) and the Companions with him represented a community that established justice between people, as expressed in the verse, **"Among those We have created there is a community who guide by the Truth and act justly according to it."** (Qur'an, 7:181)

The agreement that our Prophet (pbuh) made with the Christian Najran people in the south of the Arabian Peninsula is one of the finest examples of his understanding and justice.

One of the articles in the treaty reads as follows:

"The lives of the people of Najran and its surrounding area, their religion, their land, property, cattle and those of them who are present or absent, their messengers and their places of worship are under the protection of God and guardianship of His Prophet." (The Pact of Najran, Article 6, http://www.islamicresources.com/Pact_of_Najran.htm)

Following the agreements with all the societies in that region, our Prophet (pbuh) founded the state of Medina by drawing up the first constitution in the history of Islam, the Constitution of Medina. This was the first and most perfect example of a democratic and multilateral constitution. No democratic system today has been able to achieve such an order as that put into action by our Prophet (pbuh) in the Constitution of Medina, and none has been able to implement it as well as our Prophet (pbuh).

The First Multilateral and Most Democratic Constitution Ever: The Constitution of Medina

With the Constitution of Medina, the first constitution of the state of Medina, our Prophet (pbuh) brought a democratic and peaceful order never before seen on the Arabian Peninsula to an urban community made up of various races, religions and tribes.

Under this constitution, all the communities in Medina were to live together in peace, arrange their lives according to their own faith and beliefs, and have the power to operate and regulate their own institutions and laws. In doing this, they would live together in peace and unity with all the communities in Medina.

The Constitution of Medina was written in 622 A.D., under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) some 1,400 years ago, to respond to the demands of peoples of differing beliefs, and has come down to us as a written legal treaty. As a result, communities that were hostile to one another for 120 years and consisted of different religions and races were included under this constitution. By means of this agreement, the Prophet (pbuh) showed that conflict could come to an end between communities that used to attack one another at every opportunity, were hostile to one another and never compromised with one another, and that they could easily live together.

Under the Constitution of Medina, everyone was free to make his own religious, political or philosophical choices, free from any pressure from anyone else. They could establish a community with people holding the same views. Everyone was free to exercise his own justice system. However, nobody committing an offense was to be protected by anyone else. The parties to the agreement were to help and support one another, and would be under the protection of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Disagreements between parties would be brought to the Messenger of God (pbuh). Indeed, even polytheists preferred the arbitration of our Prophet (pbuh), as he was the most just person of all.

This treaty drawn up by our Prophet (pbuh) was implemented gradually between 622 and 632 A.D. Through that constitution, people moved beyond the tribal structure based on ties of blood and family, and people with very different geographic, cultural and ethnic roots came together to constitute one whole. The Constitution of Medina also established very wide-ranging freedom of belief and religion. One of the items expressing that freedom reads:

"The Jews of Banu 'Awf are a community along with the believers. To the Jews their religion and to the Muslims their religion." (The Constitution of Medina, <http://www.islamic-study.org/jews-prophet-page-2.htm>)

The Constitution of Medina consists of 47 items. Items 1–23 concern Muslims, while items 24–47 concern Jewish tribes settled in Medina. Reference being made to Christians, who were much fewer in number, is also important in terms of participation by members of different faiths.

An analysis of the Constitution of Medina in a report titled "A Reassessment of Medina Charter according to Professor Leonard Swidler's Pluralism Perspective" states that the Constitution is a significant document in displaying the Prophet's efforts in uniting the city and bringing the groups together around the law, which was explicitly announced to the people.

According to this report, in terms of law, each individual had equal rights, enjoyed the freedom to choose their own religion and to participate in war together with Muslims, while under all circumstances, they were prohibited from engaging in any separate agreements with the enemy, showing an effort to establish a strict solidarity of the Medina groups. The author of the report says that this political and religious text aimed at establishing a new society around the values of equality and freedom. As it was emphasized in the Constitution, the superiority of the law over the individual was the basic step in attaining the goal of securing an atmosphere of dialogue and co-existence. The items of the Constitution also signified the equal responsibility of each individual in defending the city. According to this report, given that the names of all the groups in the city are cited one by one, the Constitution and thereby the Prophet, recognized all these groups in the city as legal entities and took them into account. (Kenan Çetinkaya, Amerika'da Diyalog anlayışı ve Medine Vesikası [Understanding of Dialogue in America and Medina Charter])

Although there are a large number of items concerning the Jews in the constitution, it will also be appropriate to remind ourselves that it also included pagan communities living there. Although the polytheists in Mecca openly demonstrated their enmity toward the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Muslims and forced them from their lands, the Prophet (pbuh) always treated the pagans of Medina in a very affectionate, peaceable and reconciliatory way. The text of the Constitution of Medina shows that Muslims adopted a protective attitude toward the rights and laws of the polytheists, and that these polytheists wished to act alongside Muslims in the defense of Medina. Such an attitude toward the polytheists is not at all surprising because in the Qur'an, Muslims have a responsibility to protect polytheists with whom they have signed agreements, even at the cost of their own lives. (This will be set out in greater detail in due course.)

In conclusion, the constitution in question is regarded as a highly important document containing the nucleus of unity and union, love and affection, friendship and peace, and represents an example of dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims in general and between Muslims and Jews in particular. The conception of love and peace of our Prophet (pbuh) was based on the Qur'an but it is hard at present to identify a Muslim society capable of living by that same conception. This is definitive and highly important evidence that the most democratic constitution in history was written and implemented by our Prophet (pbuh) and that present-day societies have turned away from the practices of our Prophet (pbuh) as revealed in the Qur'an.

The subsequent sections of this book therefore need to be assessed in the light of this information. The practices of today's peddlers of superstition are radically different from the advice of the Holy Qur'an, which commands that even polytheists be protected and says that the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) enjoy a special status for Muslims, and from the practices of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), who always aimed for peace and democracy. The peddlers of superstition are always looking for evidence for unceasing conflict in the Qur'an, yet the Qur'an itself always counsels peace. This important fact therefore needs to be borne in mind while interpreting the verses about war.

Verses about War and the Interpretation Thereof

After seeing the definition of war in the Qur'an, let us now examine the verses about war that are misused by some radicals and used for criticism of Islam by some opponents of Islam:

Examination of Verse 191 of Surat al-Baqara:

Kill them wherever you come across them and expel them from where they expelled you. Fitna [sedition, strife] is worse than killing. Do not fight them in the Masjid al-Haram [the Sacred Mosque] until they fight you there. But if they do fight you, then you also fight them. That is how the unbelievers should be repaid. (Qur'an, 2:191)

This verse was sent down after Muslims were subjected to severe persecution and violence and were forced to migrate from Mecca to Medina. The conditions we discussed in detail above came about and Muslims received the command to defend themselves against direct attacks. They were forced to use the method of the oppressor community against them, in other words they were forced to defend themselves, because that community insisted on oppression, refused to be reasoned with and ignored calls of peace or negotiation.

However, the verse also contains a reminder of the rules of war: **"Do not fight them in the Masjid al-Haram until they fight you there. But if they do fight you, then you also fight them."** As we have seen, the only condition for fighting is for the other side to have attacked first. If they do not wage war, if they do not attack, then it is absolutely unlawful for Muslims to fight.

It is of course very suspicious how the radicals and opponents of Islam who distort this verse ignore this rather important provision. The verse explicitly grants Muslims only the right to self-defense: The verse is not therefore commanding warfare and aggression.

Another important element in the verses is revealed as follows: **"Fitna [sedition, strife] is worse than killing."** Inciting communities, encouraging hatred, spreading hatred, anarchy and terror by engaging in slander and outright falsehoods thereby producing hostile masses of people is fitna, and the verse tells us that fitna is worse than killing; thus, the communities that attack Muslims are the ones that engage in actual, psychological and covert fitna and the harm they do is very great. Muslims naturally defend themselves when such aggression rears its head.

The way that some fanatics are taken in by hearsay or superstition and declare individuals, societies or faiths to be spreading fitna and then seek supposed evidence for their perversions from verses of the Qur'an is of course exceedingly pitiful. Fitna involves actions that will lead to corruption, such as spreading division among Muslims, leading them into loss and sin by inflicting all kinds of troubles on them, then establishing the infrastructure for mass rebellions and engaging in physical and verbal assaults on Muslims. Therefore, in order to be able to accuse someone of fitna, they have to have committed one or more of these actions. Those who seek to accuse Jews or Israel by branding them as engaging in fitna thus fly in the face of this verse.

According to the Qur'an, it is a sin to accuse all Jews or Israel of engaging in fitna. People who spread fitna may emerge from any religion or country. Yet in the same way that it is impossible to brand all Arabs, Turks or Muslims as spreaders of fitna simply because there are some Arabs, Turks or Muslims who engage in fitna, there is also no

question of branding all Jews or all Israelis as spreaders of fitna. According to the Qur'an, a Muslim can dine in the home of a Jew, can be his guest and friend, and can even marry a Jewish (or Christian) woman (This will be clarified in detail in another chapter). Marriage is the closest union one can ever establish with another person. It makes two different families relatives. It is clear that an individual who agrees to kinship with a Christian or a Jew would not pronounce them as a menace, or assume an aggressive or oppressive attitude towards them.

That being the case, it is impossible for a Muslim to unconditionally brand a Jew as a spreader of fitna. People who make such sweeping claims know nothing of the Qur'an, as we said at the beginning, and are acting out of ignorance resulting from being raised under the influence of countless fabricated hadiths regarding fitna and the Jews. The hadiths in question and the position of the People of the Book according to the Qur'an will be examined in due course in later chapters.

Examination of Verses 89, 90 and 91 of Surat an-Nisa':

They would like you to be unbelievers as they are unbelievers so that you will all be the same. Do not take any of them as friends until they have emigrated in the Way of God. But if they run away then seize them and kill them wherever you find them. Do not take any of them as either a friend or helper – (Qur'an, 4:89)

Except for those who seek shelter with people with whom you have a treaty, or who come to you greatly perturbed at the prospect of fighting either you or their own people. If God had willed, He could have given them the upper hand over you and then they would have fought you. If they keep away from you and do not fight you and submit to you, God has not given you any way against such people. (Qur'an, 4:90)

You will find others who desire to be safe from you and safe from their own people. Each time they are returned to fitna they are overwhelmed by it. If they do not keep away from you or submit to you or refrain from fighting, seize them and kill them wherever you find them. Over such people We have given you clear authority. (Qur'an, 4:91)

These verses refer to hypocrites. These are creatures who say they are Muslims, who live among Muslims and appear to be one of them, but who actually harbor a great hostility toward God and Islam, and seek to stab Muslims in the back. God reveals that those who die as hypocrites are cast into the lowest circle of hell. As can be seen, because of its two-faced and treacherous nature, hypocrisy is an especially dangerous and despicable human trait, quite unlike traits of the deniers or the polytheists.

It is forbidden in verse 89 of Surat an-Nisa' to adopt as friends hypocrites, who abandon Muslims and who strive to make Muslims fall into the same perversions as themselves. What justifies fighting against them is the state in which the hypocrites in question engage in physical attacks on Muslims. We can see this from the verse that follows, verse 90. As is clear from the words **"If they keep away from you and do not fight you and submit to you,"** there is nothing to be held against a community that does not engage in attacks. The community the killing of which is permitted is quite clearly one that has declared war on Muslims first. Muslims are clearly given the right to defend themselves in the face of attacks here.

In addition, verse 90 of Surat an-Nisa' is another manifestation of the just, forgiving and affectionate language, that always favors peace, of the Qur'an. Some hypocrites, who until then had always stabbed Muslims in the back and betrayed them but who later adopted a peaceful attitude toward Muslims are also immune, as we can see from the words; **"Except for those who seek shelter with people with whom you have a treaty, or who come to you greatly perturbed at the prospect of fighting either you or their own people."** In the same verse God says, "If they keep away from you and do not fight you and submit to you, God has not given you any way against such people," again emphasizing their immunity. This is the very definition of justice.

Verse 91 contains a situation described on the basis of the same conditions. Hypocrites who repent and who say they do not want to fight later return to fitna and begin attacking Muslims again. In that event, the provision regarding war is recalled in the Qur'an, saying that these people are not to be touched as long as they do not attack, but that if they do, then self-defense is legitimate.

We need to remember that the situation described in the verse was a specific one that came about during the Battle of Uhud and concerns those hypocrites who engaged in treachery on the battlefield and caused the martyrdom of scores of Muslims.

Examination of Verse 5 of Surat at-Tawba:

Then, when the sacred months are over, kill the polytheists wherever you find them, and seize them and besiege them and lie in wait for them on every road. If they repent and perform their prayers and pay alms, let them go on their way. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 9:5)

In order to understand the conditions in the above verse we need to start reading from verse 1 of Surat at-Tawba; in that way, we see that the polytheists deserving to be counter-attacked are not "all polytheists" but those perpetrating savage attacks on Muslims and who **then come to agreements** in order not to fight during the sacred months. The polytheists here are the ones who have cunningly tried to hunt Muslims down and have continued to attack them during the sacred months and have taken Muslims' lives, **although they have made a fair agreement with Muslims and they very well knew that Muslims would not get into a war during the sacred months.**

Under these conditions, Muslims are given the right in this verse to defend themselves against savage attacks. As shown in the verse, although the polytheists carried out their savage attacks in the sacred months, Muslims did not respond during those months, as commanded by God. They exhibited patience during those months and only began defending themselves once the sacred months were over. We also see that the verse describes the method that needs to be adopted in defense: seizure, siege and lying in wait on all roads. The primary conditions in wars based on international law are siege and seizure. The passages required for the siege are taken and held and the other side is thus prevented from moving. This verse therefore described the method adopted and now regarded as legitimate under international law. The only difference is that it is not Muslims doing the attacking; they are simply trying to put an end to the attacks against them.

There is also no question in this verse of engaging in any fight against those who stop their attacks and repent. They must be released; that is explicit.

When we look at the very next verse, we find a very important statement that describes the loving and protective spirit of the Qur'an. This verse eliminates all the claims made about Muslims by the opponents of Islam. The verse reads:

If any of the polytheists ask you for protection, give them protection until they have heard the words of God. Then convey them to a place where they are safe. That is because they are a people who do not know. (Qur'an, 9:6)

Through this verse, Muslims are advised to help a polytheist who has taken shelter with them and seeks their help, even if that endangers their own lives. The verse even suggests that such a Muslim should **use himself as a shield** to protect such polytheists. To put it another way, he has a responsibility to risk his own life to protect someone who denies God and to carry him to safety.

This is what the Qur'an commands. According to that commandment, someone is not to be killed for not believing in God. On the contrary, he must be protected, even at the cost of Muslims' lives. Therefore, the justification for war has nothing to do with whether the other side believes in God or not or belongs to another faith. The justification for war is that the other side engages in assaults and torture, and takes people's lives.

Another fact set out in the verse is that all people must be under the protection of Muslims so long as they do not attack or engage in extreme behavior, irrespective of their religion, language, ethnicity or beliefs. A Muslim has a responsibility to protect the People of the Book, or an atheist or a communist, in the same way that he does other Muslims; this is a requirement of being a Muslim; this is the description of a Muslim in the Qur'an. If someone says, "I am a Muslim," he must be protective of others.

Examination of Verse 13 of Surat at-Tawba:

Will you not fight a people who have broken their oaths and resolved to expel the Messenger, and who initiated hostilities against you in the first place? Is it them you fear? God has more right to your fear if you are believers. (Qur'an, 9:13)

This verse is another of those that show the commandments regarding fighting in the Qur'an. When a polytheistic community that had come to a truce with Muslims, in other words, that lived in peace with them as required under those agreements, broke the truce and started attacking, when they tried to force our Prophet (pbuh) to leave his own land and go into exile and when, as the verse explicitly states, they have initiated hostilities, Muslims had the right to fight back against them.

Examination of Verse 33 of Surat al-Ma'ida:

The reprisal against those who wage war on God and His Messenger, and go about the earth corrupting it, is that they should be killed or crucified, or have their alternate hands and feet cut off, or be banished from the land. That will be their degradation in the world and in the hereafter they will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 5:33)

The subject we have particularly stressed in all the verses about warfare is also noticeable in this verse. The characteristics of the community to be fought against are set out in great detail here: they wage war on God and His Messenger and go about the world corrupting it. These people do not merely engage in physical attacks on Muslims; they also spread corruption across the world. The verse is speaking of a community that represents a problem for the whole world, that everyone regards as a perverse, corrupt and warlike society.

As in all wars, killing is possible in resisting a community that has actively declared war on Muslims, so long as it is a last resort, and one of the measures that can be imposed is to force those people from their lands. To put it another way, according to the verses of the Qur'an, Muslims are permitted to do things that would normally be forbidden – killing and forcing people into exile – only in the event of such a state of war.

Examination of Verse 57 of Surat al-Anfal:

So if you come upon such people in war, make a harsh example of them to deter those coming after them so that hopefully they will pay heed. (Qur'an, 8:57)

We also need to assess this verse in the light of the perspective and evidence we have been looking at in detail. It must not be forgotten that the Medinan period when some verses were sent down was a time of intense fighting. This was purely the result of injustice perpetrated against Muslims "**who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying, 'Our Lord is God'...**" (Qur'an, 22:40) as stated in one verse. Moreover, as the verse goes on to say, "**If they keep away from you and do not fight you and submit to you, God has not given you any way against such people.**" Muslims have a responsibility to stop the fighting and not to insult the other side when it does come to an end.

Looking at a few verses before verse 57 of Surat al-Anfal, we see that they reference communities with which Muslims had already reached agreements. As almost every verse that gives permission for legitimate self-defense states, these communities are ones which had broken their truce with Muslims and then immediately attacked them.

It is important to produce a deterrent force in the face of that community which engages in one attack after another, refuses to listen to reason and creates corruption by constantly breaking peace agreements. Then those communities that have become accustomed to spreading corruption will no longer have the strength to do so and other groups of polytheists preparing to follow their lead and create corruption and start attacking will thereby lack the courage to do so. This is a necessary and important precautionary measure against that community that breaks every peace treaty, and one that will prevent subsequent conflict. Great importance is attached to sanctions being "deterrents" in the constitutions of just about all countries of the world and in international law. These precautions in international law are extremely appropriate, and it is unjust, as well as a violation of both common sense and fairness, for people who regard them as necessary for states of law to oppose the same measures when it comes to Islam.

Examination of Verse 4 of Surah Muhammad:

Therefore when you meet in war those who are unbelievers strike their necks. Then when you have decimated them, tie their bonds tightly and set them free or ransom them, until the war is finally over. That is how it is to be. If God willed, He could avenge Himself on them. But it is so that He can test some of you by means of others. As for those who are killed in the Way of God, He will not let their actions go astray. (Qur'an, 47:4)

We need to first mention that, as is the case with the other verses, this verse refers to a state of war in which polytheists start to attack after terminating the agreement. Faced with an attack, there exists no option for believers other than responding. However, the phrase, "strike their necks", which exists in the English versions of the Qur'an, does not exist in the original Arabic. The accurate translation is as follows:

Therefore when you meet in war those who are unbelievers strike their headquarters of observation and command. Then when you have decimated them, tie their bonds tightly and set them free or ransom them, until the war is finally over... (Qur'an, 47:4)

The Arabic original phrase in this verse, which is mistranslated as "strike their necks", is "*fadarbar riqaab*." The word, which is mistranslated as "neck" in the verse is "*riqaab*", and means "observing, being under observation." One of the Beautiful Names of God is also "*Ar-Raqib*", which means "the Watchful One." This word comes from the root "r-q-b" and means observing, controlling, guarding and watching. It means that God is All-Observing, and He constantly watches, guards and controls His servants. **Therefore, the verse does not mean "striking one's neck" but rather refers to rendering ineffective the operation center of those that attack Muslims in a war.** Taking down the operation center from where the war is managed will surely prevent the loss of hundreds of lives in a war. God explains in another verse how "the leaders of disbelief should be fought" in a war in which the unbelievers attack Muslims and try to kill civilians:

If they break their oaths after making their treaty and defame your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief – their oaths mean nothing – so that hopefully they will stop. (Qur'an, 9:12)

As this verse also makes clear, Muslims are in a defensive war with the aggressors who violate peace treaties and target the innocent. The verse also explains that the war is a "deterrent" to convince these unbelievers to stop their oppressive ways, and that rendering ineffective those who command, guide and provoke people to war will help end the war within the shortest time possible. This way loss of lives can be prevented. In other words, when Muslims are forced to fight to defend themselves, they should follow a path so as to end the war and make peace as soon as possible.

Verse 4 of Surah Muhammad also describes an important rule, which is today an important part of the international law of war. God orders Muslims to release the prisoners of wars, which although a part of the

international law of war, is not followed by many nations today. For example although the Afghanistan campaign is over, the prisoners of war are still kept in Guantanamo, and the UN and NATO among others, do not raise any objections. However, such an attitude is not considered acceptable in the Qur'an. According to Islam, for the war to officially end, prisoners of war must definitely be released. In other words, if a Qur'an-abiding Muslim is forced to be a party in a war, he cannot give the slightest harm to prisoners of war. On the contrary, he is responsible for taking care of them in the best way possible until the war ends. For example, even if he is hungry, he should give his food to prisoners of war. In other words, he has to put the well-being of the prisoners of war before his own:

They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor and orphans and captives. (Qur'an. 4:8)

Examination of Verse 89 of Surat an-Nisa':

They would like you to disbelieve as they disbelieve so that you will all be the same. Do not take any of them as friends until they have made pilgrimage in the Way of God. But if they run away then seize them and kill them wherever you find them. Do not take any of them as either a friend or helper. (Qur'an, 4:89)

The people referred to in this verse are hypocrites. Hypocrites hid themselves among the faithful and carried out acts against Muslims. As the verse explains, they tried to drag the faithful into disbelief like themselves, and tried to persuade them to betray Muslims. God commands Muslims not to trust in these hypocrites' words until they abandon this attitude and side with Muslims.

However, if despite everything, hypocrites continue their attack and hostility, it becomes obligatory for Muslims to declare war against them. As it is made clear in the verse, the hypocrites attack first. In other words, once again, Muslims are allowed to engage in war *only* for defensive reasons. Indeed in the following verse God describes the hostile nature of the hypocrites and makes a clear distinction about the hypocrites that do not wish to fight:

Except for those who seek shelter with people with whom you have a treaty, or who come to you greatly perturbed at the prospect of fighting either you or their own people. If God had willed, He could have given them the upper hand over you and then they would have fought you. If they keep away from you and do not fight you and submit to you, God has not given you any way against such people. (Qur'an, 4:90)

It is clear that the verses regarding war relate only to the specific conditions and circumstances of the time, which necessitated these defensive wars. It is also clear that those wars were waged only because this was the only option against those hostile, aggressive pagans and hypocrites who initiated the attack and killed innocent people. It is obvious that building and maintaining peace is always the main goal. Furthermore, according to the Qur'an, a person or a group cannot make a rash decision and start a war saying, "I pronounce this country, this society or the members of this religion enemies." Particularly, they can never assault civilians, the innocent who have nothing to do with the wrongdoing. They cannot target places of worship. In other words, the Qur'an has closed all the doors to violence. The main reason why these verses are misinterpreted and used for the hatred policies of the radicals is that hundreds of false hadiths were added to Islam together with the false perspectives of some analysts and certain societies' deep and entrenched cultures of violence.

Yet the Qur'an needs to be read with a pure, clean and enlightened mind, purged of all false hadiths, superstitions and erroneous traditions added to Islam subsequently. Considered in the war-ridden context of the time, the meaning of the verses becomes extremely clear.

There Is No Justification for War in Islam Except for Self-Defense

Those who allege that Islam is a religion of war must realize that such a perspective is in fact diametrically opposed to the teachings of Islam. According to the Qur'an, there is no justification for attacking the other side. As we have seen with evidence from the Qur'an throughout the book, Muslims only have the right to defend themselves. If Muslims are unable to subdue and take away the weapons of an attacker that attacks them, they have the right to defend themselves. However, the conditions of the defense are clearly established and are fully compatible with the contemporary international laws of war. The Qur'an provides the very finest description of democracy and freedoms. In a climate of democracy and freedom there is no question of denouncing the other side as the enemy or seeking to silence it. That climate is one in which everyone is respected and everyone can speak freely, and Islamic Sharia describes just that environment. Therefore, there is no justification for offensive warfare in the Qur'an. Let us examine this fact through the words of verses of the Qur'an:

War to Enforce Conversion to Islam?

Those who employ war, force or coercion to impose Islam on someone are betraying the Qur'an. One of the most explicit statements in the Qur'an is that "there is no compulsion in the religion":

There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned.... (Qur'an, 2:256)

This is an explicit commandment of the Qur'an. No Muslim can disobey that command and force anyone else to be devout. That is expressly forbidden in the Qur'an.

Our Prophet (pbuh) is only an adviser. He has a responsibility to preach and introduce communities to Islam, the last revealed religion. At that time, some of those who heard about Islam from the mouths of our Prophet (pbuh) and other Muslims came to believe, while others did not. As explicitly required by the Qur'an, neither our Prophet (pbuh) nor the other Muslims with him ever resorted to compulsion. Our Prophet (pbuh) is reminded in the Qur'an; **"So remind them! You are only a reminder. You cannot compel them [to believe]."** (Qur'an, 88:21-22) Compulsion is therefore absolutely forbidden.

According to the Qur'an, all Muslims have a duty to tell people of the moral values of Islam, but nobody can use compulsion and say, "You must become a Muslim" or "You must perform the religious observances." The purpose of the Qur'an is to bring love and peace to the world. Such pressure is therefore incompatible with the Qur'an.

Other verses in which compulsion is prohibited read:

Say: "It is the truth from your Lord; so let whoever wishes have faith and whoever wishes be irreligious"... (Qur'an, 18:29)

If your Lord had willed, all the people on the earth would have had faith. Do you think you can force people to be believers? (Qur'an, 10:99)

We know best what they say. You are not a dictator over them. So remind, with the Qur'an, whoever fears My threat. (Qur'an, 50:45)

Say: "Unbelievers! I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship. Nor will I worship what you worship nor will you worship what I worship. You have your religion and I have my religion." (Qur'an, 109:1-6)

Since force and compulsion are prohibited in the Qur'an, there is no justification for war, aggression, enmity or anger. What things, apart from converting, would Muslims compel polytheistic communities to do? It is clear that it is

unlawful for someone to be forced to convert. Therefore, according to the Islam in the Qur'an, imposing Islam can never be a pretext for war.

War for Ideological or Ethnic Superiority?

Islam respects all ideologies, all nations, all ethnic groups, all ideas and all faiths. The Qur'an irrevocably bans the notion of considering one's own race, lineage, tribe or peoples superior over others.

No race has superiority over another:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in God's Sight is the one with the most piety. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Qur'an, 49:13)

Islam completely eliminates the claims of superiority of any race over others, effectively ending irrational assertions such as racial superiority and thus their use as justification of war. Furthermore, Islam is a religion that encourages complete freedom of thought and respect for different ideas. In a religion of such fineness of democracy and freedom, wars due to disagreements of ethnical differences will be impossible.

One of the Main Causes of Radicalism: Tribal Culture

The tradition of tribalism underlies the hundreds or even thousands of years of social texture and culture of a great majority of the Middle Eastern civilizations. Today, despite their modern state statuses, some of the societies in North Africa, the Arabic world and Middle Asia have never really left their tribal mindset and tribalism; they have only changed their forms. Therefore any analysis regarding the Islamic world today should take into account this historical and social fact. In many Middle Eastern countries, administrations, which are usually inherited from one generation to another, maintain their power by means of the support of their tribes. For this reason, it would be extremely wrong to see the tribal mindset as a historical phenomenon peculiar to the feudal ages. Rick Docksai, a researcher-writer working for the United States Department of Defense, pointed out the structure of the ruling groups in today's Islamic world:

***"The highly tribal societies of Yemen, Afghanistan, and Libya are clear-cut embodiments of clan rule. In other countries, such as Pakistan, Kenya, and South Sudan, clans vie with the central government in nonstop battles of wills."*¹**

Status, identities, ranks and other concepts relating to individuals in these societies are deeply affected by the values, rules, traditions and principles of the tribes that developed over the course of centuries. Docksai explains that tribal identities still remain in the Arab world as a powerful factor in the background, which, according to him, will pose an obstacle to the development of individual freedoms in the Middle Eastern societies. The distorted values and rules of the tribal culture not only provide a wrong justification for violence like feuds, but they take their highest toll on women. In various Islamic communities, women and girls are often subjected to forced genital mutilation by their families under the pretense of protecting their chastity. They are forced to marry people they don't want to marry, are almost made slaves of their husbands. They are usually not even allowed to go out shopping without their husbands' consent and constant domestic violence becomes almost a routine. They are not allowed to drive, do not have the right to vote or be elected, and are kept away from education and business life.

¹ Book Reviews, Mark Weiner. *The Rule of the Clan: What an Ancient Form of Social Organization Reveals about the Future of Individual Freedom*, Reviewed by: Rick Docksai, World Future Review, Bethesda, MD, USA

These rules are nothing but bogus principles and traditions made up to protect and further the interests of the patriarchal mentality dominant in these tribal cultures, and to appease the inferiority complex and jealousy so often seen in these settings. Inevitably, this nonsense in time turned into social and "religious" convention, and sometimes even became state laws. Regrettably, the Islamic world is largely represented by this primitive and backward frame of mind, yet the ugly picture created by the mentality in question is unfairly attributed to Islam and the Qur'an.

War for the Purpose of Spreading the Rules of Islam to be Introduced by A Muslim Leader?

As we have already seen in detail, according to the Qur'an, a Muslim leader must be someone who also embraces Christians, Jews, atheists, communists, agnostics, Buddhists and people who adhere to other beliefs and ideological systems in the community he leads. He must implement complete freedom of ideas. He must allow people complete liberty. Conflict, slander and hypocritical people appear where there are no freedoms. He must prevent that and do what the Qur'an requires. As stated in the verse **"You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives."** (Qur'an', 4:135) he has a responsibility to maintain justice without regard for individuals, beliefs or origins, even if that works against himself.

War for the Elimination of Enemies?

How can there be enemies in Islam? Islam is a religion that requires all people to be equal and brothers. According to Islam, no matter what someone's color, language, religion, race, citizenship or social standing, he is an entity worthy of respect simply for the fact that he is human. As all the revealed religions say, human beings are brothers as we are all the children of the Prophet Adam (pbuh). This principle of brotherhood is a requirement of religious belief.

Islam is opposed to all fascist-type ideologies and ideas and materialist and Darwinist thinking that are based on racial superiority and divide people into false categories such as "advanced" and "primitive." It therefore engages in an intellectual and rational struggle against these conflicts that these ideologies bring with them, and has no room for them within itself.

The rule in Islam about all humans being worthy of respect represents the basis of all relations between people. In the view of Islam, even someone who acts wrongly always has the potential to be turned in the direction of goodness. It is therefore impossible for a true Muslim to have any enemies. Every Muslim has a responsibility to treat others with affection and to tell them about moral virtues, not to make enemies with others and plot to bring them down.

While there is no distinction among people on the subject of superiority when they are addressed in the Qur'an, the use of the term "the sons of Adam" shows that in that respect all people are created equal:

We have honored the sons of Adam and conveyed them on land and sea and provided them with good things and favored them greatly over many We have created. (Qur'an, 17:70)

The way that a religion that offers no pretext for warfare is heralded by many as a religion of war stems entirely from the practices of the peddlers of superstition. Some people are generally mistaken about Islam because they are simply unaware of these clarifications regarding it and only witness the practices of the radicals. People with a radical mindset are unaware that they are applying commandments outside the Qur'an and have adopted another faith quite different to the true Islam; and that is just what we are trying to remedy with this book.

Who Desires War?

When referring to various supposed scholars who direct wide swathes of society in the name of Islam, we need to remember one very important point: for some groups, the armaments sector is one that always needs to be kept alive.

It is the only sector not affected by economic crises. It is a vibrant sector in which supply and demand never end and in which novelties are always being offered to the market. Why is it vibrant? Because wars are kept alive. One of the ways of keeping war alive is this: the provocation of an ignorant mass of people who regard their own faith as one of war and who are ready to kill and be killed. It is of course not hard to guess who best matches that description: the radical groups that appear in the name of Islam.

Some opponents of Islam in the West are right about violence being spread by the radicals in question. However, these people are wrong when it comes to some leaders, such as Osama bin Laden. Such so-called leaders are generally people with no interest in Islam and Muslims but who are kept ready under the supervision of various intelligence services. They are immediately involved whenever a climate of turmoil or war is needed. They spend their time in bars and cafes in Western countries, but when the command comes, they let their beards grow, change their clothing and language, assume a typically Middle Eastern appearance and set to work implementing the superstition they have learned over the years.

This phenomenon has become reality many times; Osama bin Laden was just one of these. The coming of Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh) (the personage of the End Times who will be instrumental in people being rightly guided, who will restore the moral values of Islam and unite Muslims) is the greatest event in the End Times foretold by our **Prophet (pbuh)**, and **Muslims' sincere expectations on the subject were used to give the impression by some circles that bin Laden himself was the Mahdi and efforts were made to convince many people of this. The journey that began with bin Laden struck not just Afghanistan but the whole Muslim world; the scenario was to end with images of bin Laden's dead body. This was perhaps the most striking part of the whole plan. Under that plan, the Muslim world would see that their Mahdi is dead and lose all hopes and expectations. This was a systematic scenario aimed at the weakening and further exploitation of the Islamic world.**

People with radical mindsets are no doubt guilty on the subject, but we must not ignore certain forces that feed them. War always serves some people's interests at a time when the armaments industry is so strong and profitable. It is usually radical groups who are incited to fight, but it is those who need war for their own wicked ends who pull their strings. These groups ready for war because of their ignorance are an ideal "cover" for these forces behind the scenes; they are merely pawns that can easily be sent to war.

Americans or Europeans who complain about the radicals must not forget these managers running them. This does not of course mitigate the crimes of those who have fallen into the clutches of radical groups and peddlers of superstition, split up into sects and declared one another to be the enemy, but neither should this important reality be ignored. Indeed, the various organizations that openly stage and manage protests and uprisings, particularly in Muslim countries, have no hesitation about openly expressing their aims.

Conclusion:

In this chapter, we have examined explanations of the verses about war used as an argument against Islam and how the true Islam looks at the concepts of war and jihad. The source of the religion of the fanatics will be described in the chapters that follow. We will see how the conceptions of a superstitious faith based on fabricated hadiths conflict with the Qur'an. We will also see how the religion of the fanatics that desires war, hatred and rage has nothing to do with the true Islam.

Chapter 2

The False Faith of the Fanatics

Our Prophet (pbuh) is the most perfect implementer of the Qur'an. He lived his whole life in compliance with the Qur'an and is the finest role model for Muslims. All his words and actions are without doubt fully compatible with the Qur'an, and some of those have come down to the present. Some of these sayings of his, known as hadiths, clearly belong to our Prophet (pbuh) and are completely trustworthy since they reflect the practices of the Qur'an. Many hadiths referring to the End Times in particular have remained completely unchanged and foretold extraordinary things that would take place in the future. These hadiths have all come true, one after the other, in our time. The hadiths foretold, 1,400 years ago, events that would only occur once in human history, such as the coming of the double-tailed comet Lulin, the occupation of Afghanistan, the Iraq War and 9/11 attacks (For detailed information see *The Prophet Jesus (pbuh) and Hazrat Mahdi (pbuh) Will Come This Century*, Harun Yahya, Global Publishing). Therefore, the things foretold by our Prophet (pbuh) are exceedingly valuable to us, and we need to regard trustworthy hadiths as glad tidings and blessings, and must not disregard them all.

However, it is also a fact that there are books of hadiths that contain things that were added at a later time and have nothing to do with the true sayings and practices of our Prophet (pbuh). The distinguishing feature between these and the trustworthy hadiths is that they are completely incompatible with the Qur'an. It is impossible for words or practices that clash with the Qur'an to belong to our Prophet (pbuh).

Therefore, in looking at the religion of the fanatics, a completely different faith from Islam, we need to know some facts about these hadiths because the religion of the fanatics has no place in the Qur'an, the only true scripture of Islam. So where is this false faith?

The religion of the fanatics lies in traditions and superstition spread by word of mouth, but mainly in fabricated hadiths, which have been invented but presented as the words of our Prophet (pbuh).

In the centuries that followed the revelation of the Qur'an, various practices and sayings of our Prophet (pbuh) began to be collected together as hadiths. The hadiths are believed to have begun being written down as of the Second Century Hijri. Some of the hadiths in question have been preserved; others, however, have been incorrectly transmitted, distorted or else completely fabricated.

As we have already seen, we need to look to the Qur'an to see whether a hadith really represents the words or actions of our Prophet (pbuh). If a hadith is in agreement with the Qur'an, then it is true. If a hadith that refers to the future has already come about, then it is also true. If, however, the hadith in question conflicts with the Qur'an, then there is no room for doubt; that hadith cannot be regarded as true.

Are the hadiths necessary for a Muslim? First of all, the only "indispensable" reference for a Muslim is the Qur'an, and the Qur'an is, by itself, quite sufficient for a Muslim. As our Almighty Lord reveals, every Muslim will be questioned solely with regard to the Qur'an. However, it is of course a great blessing to know about the practices or miracles of our Prophet (pbuh) based on the Qur'an. It is not obligatory for a Muslim to abide by the hadiths, but the words and actions of our Prophet (pbuh), and what he foretold for the future, are all important guides. For that reason, it is very important to be able to differentiate between what is true and what is false, and to be able to recognize the accurate hadiths that have come down to the present day.

For some Islamic communities, however, the problem is that they have abandoned the Qur'an and adopted fabricated hadiths as their guides instead. We shall be looking at these hadiths under the heading of "fabricated hadiths:"

Fabricated Hadiths that Shape the Religion of the Fanatics

The term "fabricated hadith" refers to words or traditions attributed by means of lies and slanders to the Prophet (pbuh), but which were in fact never spoken by him. In other words, it means the deliberate misuse of words never spoken by the Prophet (pbuh) as if they were a genuine hadith uttered by him.

Fabricated hadiths are the main subject matter of the next chapters of this book, because these hadiths are the main cause of the growth of a new faith that has replaced the Qur'an in some Muslim communities. We will be discussing the most striking and most current of the fabricated hadiths in question; lying hadiths, in other words. This is in order to expose the superstition on which the false conception of Islam in question is based and to show its false nature with evidence from the Qur'an. We hope that in this way, some people improperly acquainted with Islam will come to realize that the religion of the fanatics is not only based on misunderstanding, but is in fact built on an entirely fraudulent system. At the same time, those who unwisely criticize Islam and the Qur'an may see that they are mistaken and that many people with supposedly "Muslim" identities have almost nothing to do with the true Islam and the Qur'an. We also hope that the clarifications given here will be instrumental in people who are sincere but forced to live under the fanatical mindset, and who regard that as the one and only system and imagine that to be the truth, coming to the true path of the Qur'an.

Our Prophet (pbuh) Did Not Allow any Hadith to be Written Down

We know from historical records, and the first hadiths that have come down to us, that there were no written hadiths in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) or of the Four Caliphs. Al-Harawi says this on the subject: *"Neither the companions of the Prophet, nor those followers in point of time, the ones that lived after Muhammad was dead, but had conversed with at least one of his companions wrote any of his sayings. They just transmitted them by word of mouth. There is no exception of this outside of one or two instances. Being afraid of their sinking into oblivion, Omar ibn Abdul Aziz, in a letter addressed to Abu Bakr al-Hazm, wanted him to try to research traditions and have them copied."* Yazid ibn Abd al-Maliq removed Abu Bakr al-Hazm and those working with him from their posts on the death of Omar ibn Abdul Aziz. The next caliph, Hisham, is regarded as the first person to collect the hadiths of az-Zuhri. This dates back to two or three centuries after the death of our Prophet (pbuh).

There is information in other sources confirming that our Prophet (pbuh) prohibited the writing of hadiths. Some of them are as follows:

Abu Saeed al-Khudry said, "I asked the Messenger of God a permission to write his hadiths, but he refused to give me a permission." (Taq-yeed Al-Ilm)

One day, the Messenger of God came to us while we were recording the Hadith. He asked "What are you writing down?" "These are Hadiths that we have heard from you," answered we. "Do you want to depend upon a book other than the Book of God (The Holy Qur'an)?" reproached the Messenger of God. "The nations who came before you were misled only when they recorded books besides the Book of God." (The Prohibition of Recording the Hadith, Causes and Effects, Sayyid Ali Al-Shahristani; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 3:12-13; Al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy; Taqyid al-'Ilm, 33; Al-Haythamiy, Majma 'al Zawa'id 1:151)

O people! The Fire is blazed, and sedition is coming like the waves of the dusky night! By God you can lay nothing to my charge. I have surely made lawful only what the Qur'an has made lawful and have prohibited only what the Qur'an has prohibited. (Sirat ibn Hisham, Biography of the Prophet, Al-Falah Foundation, p. 286)

Salman narrated: "The Messenger of God.... said: 'The lawful is what God made lawful in His Book, the unlawful is what God made unlawful in his Book, and what He was silent about; then it is among that for which He has pardoned.'" (Jami at-Tirmidhi, Volume 3, p. 456 Hadith no: 1726; Sunan Abu Dawud)

From the hadith above we can readily conclude the following: it is obvious that our Prophet (pbuh) did not make anything unlawful other than what the Qur'an prescribes as unlawful. Consequently, those who make additions to the Qur'an by means of hadith and those who make up unlawful things by using the hadith are not telling the truth. This also holds true for those who, resorting to hadith, try to legitimize what is unlawful – for instance, violence – and proclaim it lawful.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs Did Not Allow the Writing of Hadiths

All the Rightly-Guided Caliphs followed in the footsteps of our Prophet (pbuh) and did not let the hadith be written down or even be related. Although these first four caliphs were the people who best knew about the words and practices of the Prophet (pbuh), they did not narrate any hadith in order to ensure that people take the religion described in the Qur'an as their sole guide of religion.

Following the death of our Prophet (pbuh), Abu Bakr (ra) gathered people and said the following to them:

You relate from the Messenger of God traditions regarding which you disagree, and consequently severer controversy shall occur among people. So relate nothing from the Messenger of God, and when asked by anyone you can say: The Book of God is the arbitrator between us. Deem lawful what it considers lawful, and deem unlawful what is considered unlawful in it. (Al-Dhahabi in Tadhkirat-al-Hufadh, v. 1, p. 3)

Umar (ra) sent letters to the Companions of our Prophet (pbuh) residing in other cities and asked them to destroy all the handwritten hadith they had in their possession.

According to another account about Umar (ra), he said:

I recall those nations before you, they too have written books and held on to them, forsaking the Book of God. I would never intermingle anything to the Book of God. (Al-Khatib al-Baghdadiy, Taqyid al-'Ilm)

Ali ibn Abu Talib (ra) also objected to writing down any hadith or their narration. He once said in one of his speeches:

I urge all those who have writings taken from the Messenger of God to go home and erase it. The people before you were annihilated because they followed the hadiths of their scholars and left the book of their Lord. (Sunan al-Daramy)

In another account it is said:

Al-Hārith Al-A'war said: "I passed by the Masjid when the people were absorbed in storytelling. So I entered upon 'Ali and said: 'O Commander of the believers! Do you not see the people are becoming engrossed in story-telling?' He said: 'They have been consumed with it?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'As for me, I heard the Messenger of God saying: "Indeed there comes a Fitnah." So I said: "What is the way out from it O Messenger of God?" He said: "God's Book. In it is news of what happened before you, and information about what comes after you, and judgment for what happens between you. It is the Criterion (between right and wrong) without jest. Whoever among the oppressive abandons it, God crushes him, and

whoever seeks guidance from other than it, then God leaves him to stray. It is the firm rope of God, it is the wise remembrance, it is the straight path, and it is the one that the desires cannot distort, nor can the tongues twist it, nor can the scholars ever have enough of it, and it shall not become dull from reciting it much, and the amazement of it does not diminish." (Jami at-Tirmidhi, Volume 5, p. 238-239, Hadith No: 2906)

Some of the Companions of Our Prophet (pbuh) Objected to Collecting Hadith

A great majority of the prominent Companions strictly held on to the advice of our Prophet (pbuh):

Narrated 'Abdul-'Aziz bin Rufai': Shaddad bin Ma'qu'il and I entered upon Ibn Abbas. Shaddad bin Ma'qu'il asked him, "Did the Prophet leave anything (besides the Qur'an)?" He replied, "He did not leave anything except what is between the two bindings (of the Qur'an)." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 6, p. 441, Hadith No:5019)

Ibn Abbas forbade writing down hadiths and said: "Those nations before you have gone astray because they came up with books like these." (Ibn 'Adb al-Barr, Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm WaFadlih)

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud came with pages of hadiths and said, "Verily this book contains sedition, delusion and heresy. The past nations who had Divine Books perished because they followed such books and neglected the Book of God. I hereby ask anyone who knows where such books are found to lead me to them. I swear by Him Who prevails my soul that if I know that such a book is found in Dayr al-Hind [a village in Syria], I will bring them even if I have to go there on foot." Then he asked for water and erased that book. (The Prohibition of Recording the Hadith, Causes and Effects, Sayyid Ali Al-Shahristani)

The Idolaters and Hypocrites Tried to Harass Our Prophet (pbuh)

When prophets communicated the message of the Divine religions, their first opponents were the so-called scholars of their times, those who considered themselves entitled to dictate religious commandments and those who benefitted from society's erroneous customs and traditions. Similarly, when our Prophet (pbuh) communicated the message of the Qur'an, idolaters, or radicals of his time were the ones that opposed him most and even tried to martyr him. These people could not accept the religion of God, because God's religion was easy, because it was the source of joy and removed burdens that bothered people. They opposed this religion because it saved people from being choked by made-up rules and customs, because it encouraged people to contemplate and research, and introduced compassion, love and kindness, because this religion taught people that they were all equal, and valued and respected women. They tried to pressure our Prophet (pbuh) into amending the Qur'an –may God forbid– and wanted to introduce their system, brimming with countless meaningless rules and superstitions they inherited from their forefathers. The pressure of hypocrites, idolaters and the radicals of the time on our Prophet (pbuh) is related in the following verse:

They were very near to enticing you away from some of what we have revealed to you, hoping that you would invent something against us. Then they would have taken you as their intimate. If We had not made you firm, you would have leaned towards them a little. Then We would have let you taste a double punishment in life and a double punishment in death. You would not have found any helper against Us. (Qur'an, 17:73-75)

When Our clear signs are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say, "Bring a Qur'an other than this one or change it. Bring a Qur'an other than this one or change it." Say: "It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I follow nothing except what is revealed to me. I fear, were I to disobey my Lord, the punishment of a Dreadful Day." (Qur'an, 10:15)

Say: "I am forbidden to worship those you call upon besides God." Say: "I do not follow your whims and desires. If I did I would go astray and not be among the guided." (Qur'an, 6:56)

Where Did Fabricated Hadiths Come from?

The words claimed to have been said by our Prophet (pbuh) and accounts regarded as representing the practices of our Prophet (pbuh) were written down only centuries after his demise. Of the authors of the famous Kutub al-Sittah (The Six Books), consisting of six books of hadiths, Bukhari died in Hijri 256, Muslim in 261, Tirmidhi in 279, Abu Dawud in 275, an-Nasai in 303 and Ibn al-Majah in 273. Furthermore, Shiite hadith books are different, and some Sunnis and Shiites do not recognize one another's books of hadiths. The Shiite books of hadiths were prepared more recently. Of the famous Shiite collectors of hadiths, al-Kulayni died in Hijri 329, Babawayh in 381, Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Hassan Tusi in 411 and al-Murtadha in 436.

Before Bukhari, no attempt was made to differentiate between hadiths on the basis of their degrees of validity. The efforts to divide them into "trustworthy" and "weak" began with Bukhari. However, examination of the hadiths shows that these endeavors were unsuccessful. Not only weak hadiths, but even totally fabricated ones were disseminated under the name of Islam and increasingly grew in numbers.

It was impossible to prevent that state of affairs at that time because six or seven generations had passed from the death of our Prophet (pbuh) until the writing of these books, and the famous books of hadiths in which these hadiths are related involve chains of transmission to, and from, six or seven people. When the hadiths in question were narrated, even the link after the link after the link after the Prophet (pbuh) had passed on. In other words, the people who could have confirmed whether or not the people who handed those hadiths on were speaking the truth were themselves dead.

Hadith scholars were aware of this. Muslim said that he did not include every hadith he regarded as being completely trustworthy in his book (Muslim, Vol. 1). Bukhari, who said that hadiths were the source of the faith, knew 600,000 hadiths but only included 6,000-7,000, or 1% of the total. He concluded that the remaining 99% were not trustworthy and did not include them in his book. This means that the hadiths for the entire Islamic world were determined solely according to the opinions of a few people, and this is indeed a terrible state of affairs for those who regard the hadiths as "the source of the faith" because they can never acquire any information about other hadiths which may be regarded as trustworthy by others, but that Muslim did not feel necessary to include in his book. Let us remember at this point that while all this analysis was going on, the Holy Qur'an, the utterly trustworthy, protected and unchanging beauty of Islam, was set to one side.

The Egyptian commentator Ahmad Amin makes the following assessment, revealing the scale of fabrication of hadiths:

Were we to make an expository display of the hadiths, we would be confronted with a pyramid, the summit illustrating the period of God's messenger. As we go down we observe the gradual expansion toward the base. Yet, the ideal should have been the reverse; for, the companions of the Prophet best knew what the Prophet uttered. As they were to pass away, the number of those who knew the words uttered by the Prophet would decrease and the pyramid would have changed its position and turned upside down. Yet, we observe that the number of hadiths is even greater under the Omayyads than during the lifetime of the Prophet. (Ahmad Amin, Duha al-Islam)

That being the case, the existence and trustworthiness of hundreds of thousands of hadiths, all different to one another and sometimes even contradicting each another, has also led to hostilities between some hadith scholars. For

example, while Ikrima is a reliable source in the eyes of Bukhari and several famous hadith scholars, he is accused of lying by Muslim. Perhaps the most interesting of these is the way that Bukhari, the author of the best known book of hadiths in Islam, declares Abu Hanifa, the head of the Hanafi school, to be "ghayr al-siqah," in other words "unreliable," and carries not one hadith narrated by him. In the view of the most famous hadith scholar, the founder of the most famous school is deemed unreliable, yet much of the Muslim world regards the two of them as the most trustworthy hadith scholars. The fact is there are as many inconsistencies in the debates about the reliability of those who related the hadiths as there are in the hadiths.

Another problem, apart from the fact that a variety of fabricated hadiths have found their way among the many fine hadiths passed down from our Prophet (pbuh) that do reflect the spirit of the Qur'an, is the way the hadiths were handed down. Many people imagine that the hadiths have come down directly from the mouth of our Prophet (pbuh), but that is not so: Not even hadith scholars claim that these are directly transmitted sayings. Many hadith scholars, and especially Bukhari, have considered that it is enough for the meaning of the hadith to have been transmitted and that there is no need to have memorized them word for word. That, of course, has made it possible for much additional commentary to have entered these sayings, for misunderstood subjects to be handed down as true, and for people with a less than total understanding of the subject to have become involved in transmission.

While it has been regarded as sufficient to transmit the sense of the hadith, failure to hear the beginning and end of the hadith has also sometimes led to a loss of meaning. For example, two people came to Aisha (ra) and said to her that Abu Hurayrah narrates that the Prophet (pbuh) used to say that ill fortune is to be found only in women, horses and houses. At this Aisha (ra) replied: *"By God Who revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet! The Prophet never said this; what he did say was that the People of the Ignorance hold this opinion."*

There is no doubt that the founders of the four schools were all worthy Muslims and Islamic scholars. However, we need to know that it was the hadiths in question that were instrumental in the founding of those schools. The founders of the four schools based those schools on the hadiths they personally selected.

The four imams founded their own schools by going beyond the criteria employed by the hadith imams who wrote the collections of hadiths in the Kutub al-Sittah. As we have already seen, Abu Hanifa, the founder of the Hanafi school, the largest of the four, has been criticized by other hadith imams, especially Bukhari, on the grounds of having a weak knowledge of the hadiths and generally emphasizing his own opinions.

Despite such division among hadith scholars and schools, there have also been those who have claimed that the hadiths are undeniable. Such people have spread the nonsensical idea that anyone who denies even a single hadith in Bukhari and Muslim is an unbeliever. Some people have gone even further, as we shall be seeing in detail in due course, claiming that the hadiths supersede the commandments of the Qur'an. It is these terrifying irrationalities that underlie the extremism that has spread throughout a great part of the Islamic world.

Let us now see how different fabricated hadiths have given rise to different sects with their own rules within Islam.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ISLAMIC SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

	SUBJECTS	HANAFI	MALIKI	SHAFI	HANBALI
1	The skin of carrion animals	Unlawful	Lawful	Unlawful	Lawful
2	Eating eel	Lawful	-	-	Unlawful
3	(For men) Wearing red clothes?	Disliked	Lawful	Unlawful	Disliked
4	(For men) Wearing yellow clothes	Unlawful	Lawful	Unlawful	Unlawful

5	What is the status of playing the oud, horn, tambourine, trumpet or drum?	Disliked	Lawful	Lawful	Unlawful
6	Eating crow meat	Unlawful	Lawful	Unlawful	Unlawful
7	Eating horsemeat	Unlawful	Lawful	-	-
8	Eating mussels	Unlawful	Lawful	-	-
9	Eating oysters	Unlawful	Lawful	-	-
10	Eating swallow meat	Lawful	Lawful	Unlawful	Unlawful
11	Eating eagle meat	Unlawful	Lawful	Unlawful	Unlawful
12	What is the distance at which it is unlawful to pass in front of someone praying?	40 cubits	1 cubit	3 cubits	3 cubits
13	Does talking inadvertently during prayer invalidate the prayer?	Yes	No	No	Yes
14	Does it invalidate the prayer to utter "Ah" or "Oh" during it?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
15	The number of fard (compulsory) components in ablution	4	7	6	7
16	Is it compulsory to perform ablution in a given order?	No	No	Yes	Yes
17	Is it compulsory to perform ablution without pause?	No	Yes	No	Yes
18	The number of factors that invalidate ablution	12	3	5	8
19	Does loud laughter during prayer invalidate ablution?	Yes	No	No	No
20	Does eating camel meat and giving a dead person a final wash invalidate ablution?	No	No	No	Yes
21	Does doubt invalidate ablution?	No	No	No	Yes
22	Does flowing blood invalidate ablution?	Yes	No	No	No
23	The number of causes that make ghusl (major ablution) obligatory?	7	4	5	6
24	The number of fard (compulsory) components in ghusl	11	5	3	-
25	What is the ruling for those who do not perform prayer out of negligence or laziness?	To be detained, to be beaten until they bleed, to be	To be killed if they don't repent	To be killed if they don't repent in three days	To be killed if they don't repent in three days

		killed			
26	How many times is it obligatory to say salam at the end of the prayer?	It is not obligatory	It is obligatory to say salam to one side	It is obligatory to say salam to one side	It is obligatory to say salam to both sides
27	Is it obligatory to perform the intention to fast in Ramadan for each day separately?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
28	Does having a blood sample taken break the fast?	No	No	No	Yes
29	Is it obligatory for men and women to give alms on jewelry?	Yes	No	No	No
30	Is it permissible for a woman to perform the hajj (pilgrimage) without her husband?	No	Yes	Yes	No
31	The number of the pillars of the Hajj	2	4	5	4
32	Is it unlawful to sit or recline on silk or to use it as a cushion or wall covering?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
33	Is shaving the beard unlawful?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
34	Is playing backgammon unlawful?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
35	Is playing chess unlawful?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
36	What is the ruling concerning an animal that is the victim of bestiality?	It must be killed. Its flesh cannot be eaten.	It is not killed. Its flesh can be eaten.	It is not killed. Its flesh can be eaten.	It must be killed.
37	What is the punishment for drinking wine and other intoxicants?	80 lashes	80 lashes	40 lashes	80 lashes
38	Is it permissible for the property of an apostate who has been executed to be given to his/her heirs?	Yes	No	No	No
39	Does the death penalty apply to female apostates?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
40	Is it permissible for a woman to be a judge?	Yes	No	No	No
41	Are dogs impure?	No	No	Yes	Yes

Those Who Seek Commandments outside the Qur'an Must Turn to the Truth of the Faith

Thousands of fabricated, misreported and distorted hadiths, interpreted in the light of individuals' own desires, are currently regarded as the most important source of Islam. Islam has been divided into four separate schools; in essence, four separate religions, each conflicting with one another, have been established. Many of our Muslim brothers imagine that this is the truth of the faith, apply it unknowingly and think that many untrustworthy hadiths are actually true. This superstition, which represents the main cause of so much conflict today, is the product of mindsets that cannot agree with one another on the subject of the hadiths. Let us remind ourselves of an important fact that we have already seen, and that we shall frequently be repeating in this book; the only complaint that our Prophet (pbuh) makes to our Lord in the Qur'an is that the Qur'an has been set aside as an abandoned Book:

The Messenger says, "My Lord, my people treat this Qur'an as something to be ignored." (Qur'an, 25:30)

If our Lord wished, of course He could place all of our Prophet's (pbuh) words under protection, and these 1,400-year-old sayings would have come down to us unchanged, just like the verses of the Qur'an. However, the Qur'an by itself is sufficient for the perfect implementation of Islam; indeed, all the practices of our Prophet (pbuh) are in the Qur'an. That is why our Lord has protected the Qur'an and why it is sufficient for all Muslims. Since the Qur'an is protected and immutable, the peddlers of superstition have never been able to use it as a basis for their superstition, have produced no evidence from the Qur'an for the version of Islam they have tried to make very difficult and have always tried to produce evidence from the hadiths in question instead. However, there is one path, one description and one mind in the Qur'an around which all Muslims can unite.

The Qur'an was revealed as a guide and a blessing for Muslims:

... This is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who believe. (Qur'an, 12:111)

God speaks in the Qur'an of the existence of people who regard the Qur'an as insufficient or null and void (surely God and the Qur'an are beyond that) and who follow false discourse instead:

Those are God's signs We recite to you with truth. In what discourse, then, after God and His signs, will they believe? (Qur'an, 45:6)

God calls on people to reflect on the Qur'an, the unchanging commandments of God and the true Book of Islam, against these false sayings that are all riddles with contradictions:

Will they not ponder the Qur'an? If it had been from other than God, they would have found many inconsistencies in it. (Qur'an, 4:82)

When the Qur'an is abandoned, when the Islam in the Qur'an is regarded as insufficient (surely the Qur'an is above that) and when people start looking for a new faith, confusion, disagreements and enmities always follow on one another's heels. Those people who unwisely criticize the Qur'an and try to establish the functionality of the religion they have manufactured, use superstition to try and turn future generations as well away from the Qur'an.

Radicals Seek to Hold on to "What They Learned from Their Forefathers"

An extremist mentality has its own rights and wrongs, its own list of forbidden (haram) and lawful (halal) things. Hundreds of thousands of people who live by this extremist mentality unknowingly follow this wrong thinking. Their criteria are not the commands of God, but instead the knowledge passed down through generations and the rules they follow in the name of religion. God sent down the Religion of Truth to guide people who had strayed from the right path over time to the real path of salvation, and to give the glad tidings that this salvation is in fact very easy. However, for a radical, it is unacceptable for religion to be easy, or for it to give people the glad tidings of joy and happiness. This is because for the radicals, religion takes away the joy of living, the energy and the pleasures of people (true religion is surely above such thoughts). For a radical, the more difficult a religion, the better it is. They know that all people would easily and lovingly practice religion if they understood how easy it is. However, this would leave the radicals without their imagined status of 'respectable, serious scholars.' Because of this, throughout history, radicals have always resisted the true religion sent down by God, and have wanted instead to continue to follow the 'system they learned from their forefathers'. This truth is explained as follows in the Qur'an:

Their leaders went off saying, "Carry on as you are! Hold fast to your gods. This is clearly something planned. We have not heard of this in the old religion. This is merely something contrived." (Qur'an, 38:6-7)

When they are told, "Follow what God has sent down to you," they say, "We are following what we found our fathers doing." What, even though their fathers did not understand a thing and were not guided! (Qur'an, 2:170)

They said, "Have you come to us to make us worship God alone and abandon what our fathers used to worship? Then bring us what you have promised us if you are telling the truth." (Qur'an, 7:170)

Whenever they commit an indecent act, they say, "We found our fathers doing it and God commanded us to do it too." Say: "God does not command indecency. Do you say things about God you do not know?" (Qur'an, 7:28)

The Islamic World's Abandonment of the Qur'an

Some Muslims have systematically turned their backs on the Qur'an over the years because of these fabricated hadiths and the superstition that various supposed scholars have tried to add onto the faith. According to the fabricated hadiths and pronouncements made jointly by various Islamic scholars many practices have spread that have no place in the Qur'an. These are so difficult and obstructive that many people have begun regarding the Qur'an as "untouchable." For example;

- Although ritual ablution is clearly set out in just one verse of the Qur'an and is exceptionally easy, according to the superstition of the fanatics, there are thousands of things that can invalidate ablution set out in many long books. Touching the Qur'an has therefore been made almost impossible.
- The Qur'an is generally not to be touched. It can only be placed somewhere high up inside a protective covering and never brought down again.
- While the Qur'an should be the most important part of a Muslim's life, this nonsense says that only at certain times, such as the month of Ramadan, holy nights and at funerals, the Qur'an should be read and only in Arabic. It is absolutely forbidden for a person to read it in his own tongue. Under the faith of superstition, many people have come

to believe that it is a sin to read the Qur'an in their own native language. That is why so many non-Arab communities are ignorant of the content of the Qur'an.

- Because of that mentality, millions of Muslims in the world are quite bluntly unaware of what the Qur'an says.
- Although there is no obligation to cover the head in the Qur'an (this will be discussed in due course) and although it contains no rule about only touching the Qur'an in a state of ritual purification, it is still forbidden in this superstitious faith for a woman to touch the Qur'an unless her head is covered and she has purified herself. In the same way, many specious commandments have been invented that prevent the Qur'an being touched through many rules that are very difficult to abide by for men as well.
- One of the best-known myths invented to prevent access to the Qur'an is the idea that that the Qur'an cannot be understood alone, that one needs the interpretations and commentaries of scholars in order to understand it. Some Muslims brought up in this way have believed that they will not be able to find sufficient explanation in the Qur'an, despite God saying "... **We have made all things very clear**" (Qur'an, 17:12) in one verse, and have imagined that the fabricated hadiths imposed on them are true guideposts.

The Qur'an Is Our Guide and Should Be in Our Hands at All Times

The Qur'an is our guide that must be read everywhere and at all times. Yet because of these rules it is all but impossible for a Muslim to so much as pick it up.

Yet in the verse "**And remember the signs of God and the wise words which are recited in your rooms...**" (Qur'an, 33:34) the Qur'an is described as always being read and its wisdom as always being borne in mind. In another verse God describes the Qur'an in the words, "**That is the Book, without any doubt. It contains guidance for those who have piety**" (Qur'an, 2:2). In order for a book to be a guide, people need to know the wisdom it contains. The verses of the Qur'an reveal that it is a guide, a light that illuminates the way, a measure that distinguishes truth from falsehood, evidence against those in rebellion, a miracle, medicine for those with spiritual sickness in their hearts, glad tidings for believers who are troubled, advice and a reminder for all people, a law that sets out all matters in detail, guidance that deepens reflection, an explanation of all things in various forms, a warning for those who use their intelligence and a means for bringing people who are in dispute together. Yet those people who desire fanaticism have first of all prevented people from having access to the Qur'an.

When people are prevented from accessing the Qur'an, it naturally becomes impossible for a Muslim to tell the difference between truth and falsity as they have no standard of comparison. There is also no possibility of establishing the truth of hadiths on the basis of the Qur'an; when the Qur'an is replaced by superstition and false hadiths, the result is a brand new faith totally different from the Qur'an. That fanatical faith has come to dominate the Islamic world through these methods.

A Major Problem: The Defamatory Idea that the Hadiths Have Abrogated Verses

We have already looked at the subject of abrogation. We have examined, with full supporting evidence, the illogicality of the idea that one verse can cancel out another. The problem here is that some supposed scholars of religion have gone so far as to say that hadiths have abrogated the commands in verses.

Those who make that claim are essentially defaming our Prophet (pbuh). They are cunningly trying to make people believe that our Prophet (pbuh) went beyond the Qur'an with his words and practices and did things that are not in the Qur'an (surely our Prophet is beyond that).

Our Prophet (pbuh) governed on the basis of the Qur'an and lived by the Qur'an alone. Our Prophet (pbuh) has absolutely no authority to make anything lawful or unlawful outside the Qur'an, and because of his prophethood and powerful fear of God, he would in any case never do such a thing. Almighty God reveals in a verse that this attracts His wrath:

... this [the Qur'an] is the word of a noble messenger. It is not the word of a poet –how little faith you have! Nor the word of a fortune-teller –how little heed you pay! It is a revelation from the Lord of all the worlds. If he had made up any sayings and ascribed them to Us, We would have seized him by force, and then We would have cut off his life-blood and not one of you could have protected him. (Qur'an, 69:40-47)

The Qur'an is an explanation of everything and has been preserved. As God reveals in one verse:

... This [the Qur'an] is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who believe. (Qur'an, 12:111)

As is clear from the verse, **"O Prophet! Why do you make unlawful what God has made lawful for you, seeking to please your wives? God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful"** (Qur'an, 66:1), our Prophet (pbuh) has no authority to make lawful things unlawful, even in his own private life. In addition, God makes it clear in numerous verses, such as **"Jurisdiction over it belongs to God alone"** (Qur'an, 6:57) and **"Nor does He share His rule with anyone"** (Qur'an, 18:26) that He is the only source of commandments and jurisdiction. God's commandments are in the Qur'an.

It is therefore impossible for our Prophet (pbuh) to issue a commandment that God has not issued.

When access to the Qur'an is obstructed and some people have the sheer effrontery to say that the verses of the Qur'an have been abrogated by hadiths, it becomes exceedingly easy to fabricate a new religion and attract large masses of people toward it. Let us have a look at some fabricated hadiths in order to see this new Islam which is entirely different from the one in the Qur'an.

Adnan Oktar: (Concerning the claims that hadiths abrogated the Qur'anic verses) These people tried to change the Qur'an. They even go as far as saying for the verses sent by God that "they are no longer valid." Based on what [do they say that]? Based on their wishes. This [saying something like that] is nothing but irreligiousness. How can they say something like that? They say, "This verse, that verse, many verses are no longer valid, are abrogated." What kind of Muslims are they? According to these people, all the verses about love, compassion and mercy are no longer valid. Then they unleash their hatred on Christians and Jews, and accuse anyone being kind and compassionate towards Christians and Jews of infidelity. When we remind them of verses of the Qur'an in which Muslims are commanded to be compassionate and kind towards People of the Book, they say "those verses are abrogated." Based on what do they say that? They answer, "I just think so." How can you claim that God's verses are no longer valid just because you think so? On the contrary, God's verses will continue to be valid until the end of the world.

With the claim that "certain verses in the Qur'an are abrogated," they made an evil plan to cut our ties with the Christians and Jews. It is not right. No Qur'anic verses were ever abrogated. The Qur'an is valid and effective in its entirety. Satan is playing a game, people shouldn't fall into this trap. Almighty God explains in the Qur'an that Muslims can marry Christian and Jewish women. There is no reason for animosity. *(Excerpt from Mr. Adnan Oktar's conversations on A9 TV on January 27, 2017)*

Understanding the Limits of the Fanatical Mindset

Some Westerners who criticize the fanatical mindset are generally unaware of the bounds of that mentality. The rules of this religion developed on the basis of false sayings, false teachers and superstition are far more terrifying than they imagine. The signs of a radical's extremism are not limited to his strapping on a bomb and blowing himself up. A terrifying mentality reveals itself at every moment of a radical's life. Everything is redolent with darkness, from the environment he lives in to his family life, from his opinion of women to his views of all living things and from his conception of cleanliness to his idea of happiness.

In demonstrating this perspective, we shall be presenting the false hadiths that inspire radicals and responding to them with verses from the Qur'an. That is in order to show the source of radicalism and that it has nothing to do with Islam. Let us start with a reminder we shall be repeating at every stage; **none of the superstition we shall be examining here actually appears in the Qur'an: The false hadiths and practices in question are the diametric opposite of the content and spirit of the Qur'an. They conflict with the Qur'an, and therefore are not part of Islam and these fabrications have always harmed Muslims. For that reason, they need to be explicitly exposed in order to establish the precautions that can be taken against this menace.**

The Killing of People Who Drink Alcohol

If he is intoxicated, flog him; again if he is intoxicated, flog him; again if he is intoxicated, flog him if he does it again a fourth time, kill him. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, Hadith 4469)

This commandment, which appears nowhere in the Qur'an, was added onto Islam with this superstition. Yet verses of the Qur'an speak of the existence of people who are Muslims and who even discharge their religious obligations despite drinking alcohol. One verse says:

You who believe, do not approach the prayer when you are drunk, so that you will know what you are saying ... (Qur'an, 4:43)

There are two important pronouncements in this verse. A Muslim may have sinned by drinking alcohol, but he has not renounced the faith or become an unbeliever. The verse explicitly says that there may be those among Muslims who drink out of error, but these are advised to be sober when they pray. God has forbidden someone who is drunk to perform an observance requiring such great concentration as the salat (prayer), and in which the person concerned must know what he is saying and doing in repeating the name of God. Yet the verse also makes it clear that the person goes back to praying after he has sobered up, once the state of drunkenness has passed. In other words, that person is still a Muslim.

The Qur'an is sending the message with this clear pronouncement that even if people make a mistake, they do not necessarily renounce the faith, while the false hadith literally refers to murder. The problem is that many people in the radical world know the false hadith by heart but are unaware of the true pronouncement in the Qur'an.

The Killing of People Who Commit Adultery

Slay those who commit adultery. (1623-Tirmidhi, 1601)

In case of married male committing adultery with a married female, they shall receive one hundred lashes and be stoned to death. (Sahih Muslim, Book 17, Hadith 4191)

These false hadiths were invented in order to make the stoning of people who commit adultery, which appears in the distorted Torah, also part of Islam and to attempt to justify this barbaric practice. Some supposed scholars have even gone so far as to fabricate other false hadiths in order to have the fabrication in question included in the hadith literature. These hadiths, a few examples of which are set out below, are full of slanders aimed against our Prophet (pbuh), the Caliphs and the Companions for the sake of justifying the practice of stoning to death:

(Narrated 'Aisha) "The verse of the stoning and of suckling an adult ten times were revealed, and they were (written) on a paper and kept under my bed. When the Messenger of God expired and we were preoccupied with his death, a goat entered and ate away the paper." (Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol. 6. p. 269; Sunan Ibn Majah, p. 626; Ibn Qutbah, Tawil Mukhtalafi 'l-Hadith (Cairo: Maktaba al-Kulliyat al-Azhariyya. 1966) p. 310; As-Suyuti, ad-Durru 'l-Manthur, vol. 2. p. 13)

Umar wanted to place the verse about stoning to death that the goat had eaten back in the Qur'an; but he was afraid of public gossip and refrained from doing so. (Sahih Bukhari 53/5; 54/9; 83/3; 93/21; Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Hudud 8/1431; Sunan Abu Dawud 41/1; Itkan 2/34)

'Abdullah b. 'Abbas reported that 'Umar b. Khattab sat on the pulpit of God's Messenger (pbuh) and said: Verily God sent Muhammad (pbuh) with truth and He sent down the Book upon him, and the verse of stoning was included in what was sent down to him. We recited it, retained it in our memory and understood it. God's Messenger (pbuh) awarded the punishment of stoning to death (to the married adulterer and adulteress) and, after him, we also awarded the punishment of stoning, I am afraid that with the lapse of time, the people (may forget it) and may say: We do not find the punishment of stoning in the Book of God, and thus go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by God. Stoning is a duty laid down in God's Book for married men and women who commit adultery when proof is established, or if there is pregnancy, or a confession. (Sahih Muslim, Book 17, Hadith 4194; Sahih Bukhari, Book 82, Hadith 816)

Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah As-Salami: ... When we reached Medina, Umar (in a Friday sermon) said, "No doubt, God sent Muhammad with the Truth and revealed to him the Book (Qur'an), and among what was revealed, was the Verse of Ar-rajm (stoning adulterers to death)." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 92, Hadith 424)

Let us examine the above hadiths that are full of countless slanders against the Qur'an, our Prophet (pbuh) and the Companions:

First of all, God explicitly states in verses that the Qur'an is a Book under Divine protection:

It is We Who have sent down the Reminder and We Who will preserve it. (Qur'an, 15:9)

It truly is a Noble Qur'an in a well protected Book. (Qur'an, 56:77-78)

Its collection and recitation are Our affair. (Qur'an, 75:17)

God has explicitly stated that He is the protector of the Qur'an and that it is He Who brought the verses of the Qur'an together and preserves them. We learn from the Qur'an itself that it, the final revelation sent down, is under Divine protection. Since the Qur'an is the Final Book, it will be instrumental in people finding salvation until the Day of Reckoning so the final revelation is placed under the protection of God.

Our Lord reveals this to our Prophet (pbuh) with the verse **"We will cause you to recite so that you do not forget."** (Qur'an, 87:6). As revealed by this verse, God never allowed our Prophet (pbuh) to forget any verse that had been read to him. It is therefore impossible for there to be any forgotten or deficient verses in the Qur'an.

As to the idea of the goat eating the verse in question, the claim is that a verse found its way out of the Qur'an, a Book which God describes as being preserved and well-protected, or to put it another way, may God forbid, that God was unable to protect the verse (surely God is beyond that). Rejecting the verses in question means doubting God and thus departing from the faith.

Moreover, the Caliph Umar (ra) is also blatantly slandered with fabricated hadiths. It is slanderously alleged that Umar **knows a pronouncement that is not in the Qur'an**, that he announces it as a verse from the pulpit of Medina **despite its not being in the Qur'an, and that the Companions make no objection, yet Hazrat Umar does not include it in the Qur'an because he is supposedly afraid of gossip.**

There is no doubt that it is absolutely impossible for the Caliph of our Prophet (pbuh) to say of a pronouncement that does not appear in the Qur'an that "It actually was in the Qur'an." That would mean Umar denying the fact that the Qur'an is a well-protected Book, and that would mean him denying God's word (surely Hazrat Umar is beyond that). Umar is being horribly and enormously defamed through these false hadiths.

It is also a terrible slander of the Companions to suggest that they made no objection to a statement in a sermon that a verse of the Qur'an was not protected. It is quite clear that the Companions would have strongly objected to such a claim and immediately have pointed to counter-evidence from the Qur'an.

Another ugly slander of Umar through the false hadiths in question is the allegation that he failed to declare a pronouncement that he thought actually formed part of the Qur'an because he was afraid of gossip. This shows how perverse and horrible the view of God, our Prophet (pbuh), the Caliphs and the Companions adopted by false scholars who fabricate hadiths truly is; Hazrat Umar is an immaculate Muslim who took our Prophet (pbuh) as his role model, lived his whole life for God, faced many difficulties for His sake and who even risked death because of his faith in God and protection of our Prophet (pbuh) and the Qur'an. To say that this superior and blessed person who never feared any criticism, death, battle or threats throughout his life, failed to declare a verse that had been removed from the Qur'an because he was merely afraid of gossip is the foul and slanderous product of a mind that has nothing to do with Islam.

In addition to all that, the pronouncement regarding adultery is set out in quite some detail in the Qur'an, and there is absolutely no place in it for the savagery known as stoning to death, or *rajm*. If the subject of stoning were in the Qur'an, as the supposed scholars in question suggest, then how could there be two very different pronouncements on the subject of adultery? There could not, of course, and this is just further evidence of fraud. Now let us set out the only valid pronouncement of our Lord in the Qur'an on the subject of adultery through verses:

Adultery in the Eyes of the Qur'an

The pronouncement on adultery in the Qur'an is as follows:

A woman and a man who commit fornication: flog both of them with one hundred lashes [jalda]... (Qur'an, 24:2)

Jalda implies a small stick rather than a large one. In the time of the Prophet (pbuh), this was done by tying 100 sticks together, and the pronouncement was fulfilled by striking the adulterer just once with 100 sticks tied together in this way.

Apart from that, another point needing to be emphasized is that we can see from other statements on the subject that the punishment of the lashes in question is meant to be a deterrent, and one that could not really be administered in practice:

But those who make accusations against chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses: flog them with eighty lashes and never again accept them as witnesses. Such people are deviators. (Qur'an, 24:4)

As can be seen from this verse, in order to be able to accuse a woman of adultery, four people have to have seen her at the time. These must be eye-witnesses to the act of adultery, not people who saw her before or after it because it would be mere supposition to make that allegation before or after. Since it is in practice not possible for four people to witness an act of adultery, this is clearly intended as a deterrent.

The punishment with 80 lashes of those who are unable to produce witnesses to their allegations of adultery is also a highly deterrent pronouncement. Another verse says that people who accuse a woman of adultery but are unable to back this up with witnesses will be regarded as liars in the Sight of God:

Why did they not produce four witnesses to it? Since they did not bring four witnesses, in God's Sight, they are liars. (Qur'an, 24:13)

As we have seen, the person who is unable to produce witness is himself accused of lying and defamation. Therefore, the only valid means of knowing whether or not the person is telling the truth is the presence of four witnesses to the adultery. There is simply no other way his words can be valid.

That is the pronouncement of adultery in the eyes of the Qur'an. It is detailed and clear, and the punishment described is very different to stoning to death. Those people who are trying to add the barbarity of stoning onto Islam, despite the clear pronouncement in the verse, are committing a grave slander. The stoning to death implemented under the name of "Islamic Sharia" in countries such as Iran, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia is both murder and a violation of the Qur'an. The practice in question in those countries is murder under the name of Islam.

The Killing of People Who Steal

Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah: A thief was brought to the Prophet (pbuh). He said: kill him. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, Hadith 4396)

The pronouncement on the subject of killing people who insist on stealing appears nowhere in the Qur'an and is a product of another fabricated hadith. It is also outright murder.

The pronouncement in the Qur'an regarding people who steal is as follows:

As for thieves, both male and female, cut off their hands in reprisal for what they have done: an object lesson from God. God is Almighty, All-Wise. (Qur'an, 5:38)

The Arabic term used for the verb "to cut" here is "*iqtaa*." This word is the plural form of the verb "*qata'a*," to cut. The verb "*qata'a*" in the Qur'an describes a particular mode of cutting, as we can see from its use in another passage:

But when she heard of their malicious talk, she sent for them and made a sumptuous meal and then she gave a knife to each of them. She said, "Go out to them." When they saw him, they were amazed by him and cut their hands. They said, "God preserve us! This is no man. What can this be but a noble angel here!" (Qur'an, 12:31)

It is quite obvious here that they did not cut their hands off with the knife for peeling fruit that they were given. We can see that the knife slipped from their hands and left a cut in the skin. Therefore, when we bear in mind the meaning of the word, we can see that we are not looking at a pronouncement regarding complete severing, but a cut resembling a scratch or flesh wound being made for deterrent purposes, or to mark the person as a thief and thereby prevent him from doing it again.

Looking at the Qur'an in terms of the pronouncement about stealing, we can see that, as with all forms of crime, the emphasis is always on forgiveness here. The verse after 5:38, in which the pronouncement about stealing is set out, is about forgiving people who commit that action. The most important condition for this, of course, is that the person should repent afterward and amend his ways. The verse reads:

But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and puts things right, God will turn towards him. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 5:39)

Another important point needing to be emphasized here is the reason for the theft. Societies in which the pronouncement of the Qur'an in question about stealing will be implemented are without doubt societies loyal to the Sharia of the Qur'an. It is impossible for a society that abides by the Sharia of the Qur'an to have rich people on one

side and very poor people on the other because societies based on the Qur'an are societies with the most perfect welfare systems. In other words, people of means protect those who have none and bear a responsibility to give to the needy. Verses on the subject read:

It is not devoutness to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, those with true devoutness are those who have faith in God and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travelers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish prayer and pay alms; those who honor their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who have piety. (Qur'an, 2:177)

They will ask you what they should give away. Say, "Any wealth you give away should go to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor and travelers." Whatever good you do, God knows it. (Qur'an, 2:215)

They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor and orphans and captives: We feed you only out of desire for the Face of God. We do not want any repayment from you or any thanks. (Qur'an, 76:8-9)

Give your relatives their due, and the very poor and travelers but do not squander what you have. (Qur'an, 17:26)

Having provided this information, let us now ask the question, why do people steal in the first place?

The first reason is out of need. When someone is in a difficult position, in debt or wracked by poverty he may make the false choice of turning to theft. Yet in such a community under the protection of the Qur'an, it is impossible for anyone to be in difficult circumstances, in debt or wrecked by poverty. The poor will be protected by those with greater means, while the pronouncement in the Qur'an concerning the debts of people in difficulties is manifestly clear, and reads as follows; "... **making a free gift of it would be better for you if you only knew.**" (Qur'an, 2:280)

The second probable reason for theft may well be mental or psychological disorders. This is a special condition requiring treatment and rehabilitation, and the individual concerned is sick, not guilty.

In practical terms, there are no other reasons that might lead a person to steal. Doing away with the causes concerned with it, such a crime as theft is prevented in Islamic communities right from the outset.

Since the peddlers of superstition, who naturally ignore all this, seek to depict Islam as a religion of death and violence their pronouncement is completely at odds with the Qur'an. It is of no concern to them that while theft is unlawful, someone who steals is generally either in need or else suffering from some psychological disturbance, yet both needy and sick people are the responsibility of Muslims. Since they fail to see that responsibility they are capable of the most shameless murder because of this pronouncement. The people who impose this false pronouncement unwisely dislike the Qur'an (may God forbid), regard it as incompatible with their own perverse mindsets and seek to implement their own justice system rather than that of the Qur'an. Yet when we look at the Qur'an, we see love and forgiveness, rather than violence.

The Killing of Apostates

Slay him, who changes his religion. (Sunan an-Nasa'i, Tahrir al-dam, bab 14; Malik's Muwatta, Akdyia, tr. 15; Sunan Abu Dawud, Hudud, bab 1)

Whichever man abandons Islam, invite him to return to it. If he does not return, behead him. (Tabarani)

These fabricated hadiths are one of the main reasons for the lovelessness, rage and violence in countries governed by non-Qur'anic and false Sharia systems. Not only does a pronouncement like this, one of the worst deceptions aimed at the essence of Islam, have no place in the Qur'an, the Qur'an fundamentally forbids and curses such a fanatical way of thinking. Some of the verses that express freedom of ideas and belief in the Qur'an are as follows:

There is no compulsion in the religion. ... (Qur'an, 2:256)

"You have your religion and I have my religion." (Qur'an, 109:6)

... You are not a dictator over them.... (Qur'an, 50:45)

Say: "It is the truth from your Lord; so let whoever wishes have faith and whoever wishes be irreligious." ... (Qur'an, 18:29)

If your Lord had willed, all the people on the earth would have had faith. Do you think you can force people to be believers? (Qur'an, 10:99)

So remind them! You are only a reminder. You cannot compel them [to believe]. (Qur'an, 88:21-22)

In the Islam described in the Qur'an, everyone is free to believe or not, as he wishes. In the Islam of the Qur'an, a Muslim merely has an obligation to tell others of proper moral virtues. Salvation is in the hands of God. A Muslim's responsibility is to treat everyone with affection, whether they believe or not. Those people who try to portray Muslims as killers try to cover up this reality in the Qur'an.

In the Islam described in the Qur'an, a Muslim has a responsibility to maintain justice, even if that works against himself, his parents or his family (Qur'an, 4:135). According to that verse, the rights of everyone are protected, no matter what their religion or beliefs, and there is a duty to treat them with justice.

As we have seen before, and shall be seeing very often again, in one verse God commands Muslims even to use their own bodies to shelter someone who does not believe:

If any of the idolaters ask you for protection, give them protection until they have heard the words of God. Then convey them to a place where they are safe. That is because they are a people who do not know. (Qur'an, 11:6)

The conception of religion that Muslims - who have a responsibility to protect those who do not believe - should adopt is very clear. Indeed, God tells the Prophet (pbuh) to address unbelievers as follows and describes a transparent democratic system:

Say: "Unbelievers! I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship. Nor will I worship what you worship nor will you worship what I worship. You have your religion and I have my religion." (Qur'an, 109:1-6)

These verses that start with the word "Say" describe for the Prophet (pbuh) the most perfect democratic system and the means to be adopted within that system. The *surah* ends with the words, "You have your religion and I have my religion." In other words, a Muslim must not interfere in other people's beliefs while he practices his own. He must not resort to force and compulsion, and must not oppress other people because they are not Muslims. He must respect them and leave them be, saying "You have your religion." And he insists upon the same respect from them, saying "I have my religion." The Qur'an, in which force and compulsion are rejected, in which unbelievers are protected even at the cost of believers' lives, in which pronouncements command justice even for deniers and in which democracy is described in the fullest and most perfect way, is the true guide for Muslims.

The Killing of Those Who Cease to Pray

Those who cease to pray can be killed. (2117-Sunan Abu Dawud)

The above false hadith is another of those that command the killing of those who abjure Islam. It is clear, however, that a faith which openly denies compulsion and force is not going to compel people to pray. How could a religion that says "... **You are not a dictator over them....**" (Qur'an, 50:45) be so violent and repressive? It cannot,

of course. When we look at the Qur'an we see that everyone must be treated with respect and affection, whether they believe or not.

Let us remember one important fact we set out at the beginning of this book: an act of worship performed under compulsion will lose any validity as an act of worship, and may also give rise to hatred and anger. When someone is forced to pray, he does not become a Muslim; someone who is forced to pray against his will may turn into a two-faced hypocrite, an enemy of the faith. Someone who thinks he will be killed if he stops praying will simply pretend to be a believer if he does not wish to endanger his own life. He will behave hypocritically and will loathe the life he leads, and therefore the faith imposed on him. Creating a hypocrite is the worst possible harm that can be done to Islam. Therefore, a religious devotion ensured through compulsion, force and threats of death is no religious devotion at all. This merely harms Islam.

If someone has stopped praying although he has no mental or physical disability, there may be various reasons for this. The person may not be sufficiently devout, God may not have placed a sufficiently powerful faith in his heart or he may not fear God sufficiently. Guidance is in the hands of God, and it is not human beings who can ever bring guidance about. Not praying does not mean that this person has abjured the faith. He may stop praying but then start praying again the next day; that will be of great benefit to him. Or he may not start, but will still be a good and useful person; or none of these things may happen. Even if he does completely abjure the faith that person must still be treated with affection by Muslims. That is how it should be in the eyes of the Qur'an.

To kill someone for such a reason is no less than murder, and that never has any place in the Qur'an.

The four schools that were gradually produced on the basis of various hadiths and interpretations, and then made part of Islam over the course of time are like four separate faiths, each completely incompatible with one another. (The profound differences between the four schools have already been summarized in previous pages.) The four schools ordain various punishments for those who stop praying out of sloth, but these disagree with one another. For example, the penalty in the Hanbali school for someone who stops praying out of laziness is death. According to the Hanafis, however, someone who neglects praying out of laziness does not become an unbeliever and is not to be killed; however, he must be imprisoned and beaten until the blood flows. (*Hashiya Radd al-Muhtar*, 1/62) Yet none of these things are in the Qur'an.

Such contradictions, barbarities and practices external to the faith appear when one starts looking for the faith outside the Qur'an. People filled with hatred and rage appear when one starts living by a faith outside the Qur'an. The religion of the fanatics is one that rejects the pronouncements of the Qur'an and regards them as inadequate (surely the Qur'an is beyond that).

The pages that follow contain various barbaric practices in the fanatic faith, such as "beating children who do not pray and the killing of people who fail to give alms, or who are drunk." We must never forget the following fact as we look at the justifications for savagery perpetrated under the name of Islam:

None of these practices have any place in the Qur'an. The religion of the fanatics is a fabricated one.

The Beating of Children Who Stop Praying

... When he [a boy] becomes ten years old, then beat him for prayer. (Sunan Abu-Dawud, Prayer, 494)

Worship is something done willingly and fervently as an expression of love of God; it is not imposed by coercion. It seems from this false hadith that a child can be compelled to pray before he even reaches the age of 10. What possible benefit can there be in imposing an obligation on a child who is not yet acquainted with God, who is unaware of the purpose of his existence in this world and who is ignorant of the Creator and the secrets of creation? What you need to do in order to make a child religious is not to force him to worship, but to show him evidence of the existence

and oneness of God and to make him understand and love God and the faith. Once he understands these things, a child will realize that he is an entity with a responsibility to God, and then he will be grateful and will start worshiping Him with enthusiasm. In that case, worship will be performed sincerely, with great love and zeal.

However, if a child who is as yet unacquainted with God is forced to perform the obligations of a religion whose wisdom he does not yet know, and if he is then beaten for not doing so, that child will in all probability harbor a secret loathing of that religion and its acts of worship for the rest of his life. Since he may spend the rest of his life with that terrible prejudice, he will be wrongly acquainted with God and will not try to see and understand the true pronouncements. Beating a child whose mind still has difficulty in comprehending so much and forcing him to observe acts of worship, instead of bringing him closer to God with love and beauty, will only make an opponent of Islam out of this child and this will harm the Islamic world. Yet fanatics who have turned their backs on the Qur'an fail to see this.

This hatred we have described is also manifested in practice. The children of some scholars who live their lives totally dedicated to fanaticism either become hostile to religion later in life or sink into a kind of degeneration that is rarely seen in society. They will mock or express detestation of Islam in almost all they say. Even many atheists have a respect for religion, but they have no such respect and are filled with anger. The main reason for this is that the idea of "compelling people to worship," which appears nowhere in the Qur'an, is imposed on the child in the name of "Islam" from a very early age.

The Killing of People Who Do Not Give Alms

Taking alms from people by force and declaring war on and killing them if they resist: Narrated Abu Huraira: Abu Bakr said, "By God! If they (pay me the Zakat and) with-hold even a she-kid which they used to pay during the life-time of God's Apostle, I will fight with them for it." ... (Sahih Bukhari, 536)

Giving alms is an obligation pronounced in the Qur'an. Like every religious obligation, it is made compulsory for Muslims and is performed sincerely because of love of God. Accordingly, a Muslim will also give away some of what he owns, as an act of good conscience, not allowing someone else to remain in need and thereby experience difficulty. This is something done honestly and sincerely and it is a requirement of being a Muslim.

What makes a religious observance an observance is that it is done willingly, with love and with passion. God has the power to make everyone wealthy and to provide for them, but He tests the behavior of rich and poor people by making some of them poor. The poor have a responsibility to exhibit fortitude and to turn to God in gratitude no matter what, while the rich have a responsibility to give thanks and to take care of the poor.

God states in the Qur'an that people who believe in Him and the Day of Reckoning will give alms. Therefore, like all religious observances, giving alms is something that must be done with a sincere faith in God, not through threats of death:

... those who perform the prayer and give alms, and have faith in God and the Last Day – We will pay such people an immense wage. (Qur'an, 4:162)

Feeding the poor is one of the greatest responsibilities of Muslims in the Qur'an. However, the commandment concerning failure to discharge that responsibility is not as described in the fabricated hadiths:

According to the hadith in question, someone who is unwilling to give alms for any reason must be compelled to do so by use of force and half of his possessions be confiscated. First of all, someone whose possessions are confiscated has not performed a religious observance because something that a person does not do of his own free will is not a religious observance. Secondly, using force to make him perform an observance is something totally

incompatible with the Qur'an. It may also be instrumental in causing that person to feel anger against the faith and believers, and may thus harm the community of the faithful.

The truly barbaric thing, of course, is the pronouncement that someone who refuses to give alms should be killed. That pronouncement appears nowhere in the Qur'an, and it is simply murder. The Qur'an forbids the use of force in religion. In addition, the Qur'an forbids the taking of human life, except under justified circumstances such as self-defense. As revealed in the Qur'an;

... if someone kills another person – unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth – it is as if he had murdered all mankind.... (Qur'an, 5:32)

As we have seen, murder is a grave crime in the view of Islam. So those who heedlessly turn such a weighty matter as murder into a commandment of the faith are both slandering Islam and our Prophet (pbuh) and also committing a terrible sin. This false hadith is important in showing how such superstition conflicts with the true commandments of Islam.

The Imprisonment and Starvation of Those Who Do Not Fast

Someone who deliberately fails to fast is not an unbeliever, but must be imprisoned and given no food or water. (Ash-Sharh as-Saghir 1/239) (Kifayat al-Talib 2/252) (Al-Mughni 2/408)

This fabricated hadith conflicts with the faith and conscience for the same reasons cited above:

1. It seeks to force people to perform an observance that should be performed with love;
2. It flies in the face of the verse that says there is no compulsion in the religion;
3. It is based on violence, the exact opposite of the affection at the heart of the faith;
4. Instead of encouraging people to love God and worship, the main aim of the faith, it encourages people to feel anger and hatred for religion and worship.

In addition to all these, fasting is an act that some people cannot observe out of weakness, and that is not compulsory for the sick. God makes this important condition about fasting clear in the following verses:

[Fast] for a specified number of days. But any of you who are ill or on a journey should fast a number of other days. For those who are able to fast [but with hardship], their ransom [substitution] is to feed the poor. And if someone does good of his own accord, it is better for him. But that you should fast is better for you, if you only knew. (Qur'an, 2:184)

... Any of you who are resident for the month should fast it. But any of you who are ill or on a journey should fast a number of other days. God desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you. ... (Qur'an, 2:185)

These two verses, which are quite explicit pronouncements concerning fasting, say that people who are unable to fast during the month of Ramadan because they are sick or traveling can make up the number of days they were unable to fast at a later time, and if people are completely unable to fast because they are sick or because they cannot endure it easily, they can compensate for this by feeding the poor. God reveals in the verse that, **"God desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you."**

For people to insist that they should still fast despite this easy and explicit commandment regarding the sick and others who will find it difficult to do so means wronging themselves. The Qur'an prohibits a Muslim from doing something that will be harmful to him.

Setting up a repressive system through false hadiths that contradict the Qur'an, despite this explicit pronouncement in the Qur'an, is important in revealing the practices involved in the fanatical mindset. These people foolishly dislike the affectionate language in the Qur'an (surely God and the Qur'an are beyond that) and try to manufacture their own religions based on their own dark worlds. That is why they try to add this repressive superstition onto the faith.

Someone may be sick or feeble; it goes without saying that people's constitutions are all different. Many people are tested with various diseases in this world. Although with His sublime love, God makes allowances for the sick and feeble, people are still compelled to fast by force in some countries on the basis of these false hadiths. It is also not hard to imagine an environment in which someone who is too sick to fast is imprisoned and kept without food and water. In such a situation there is no doubt that the person's sickness will worsen and he will soon die. Thus the fanatical mindset strives to impose such despotism at the cost of endangering people's lives.

The Killing of People Who Abjure the Faith When Drunk

If the one who is intoxicated abjures the faith, it is valid. But that person must not be killed until he recovers his senses and is called on to repent. (Imam Shafi'i Kitab al-Umm, vol. 6, p. 148; Al-Insaf, vol. 10, pp. 331-332; Mughni al-Muhtaj 4/137; Hashiyat al-Dasuki 4/363; Ibn Qudama al-Mughni 9/25-26)

According to this fabricated hadith, someone who has drunk alcohol and is intoxicated has abjured the faith if he says as much while in that state of unawareness. This is a horrifying idea. Obviously, someone who is intoxicated cannot be expected to speak rationally or logically, and will be unaware of what he is saying. That person clearly cannot be held responsible for what he says. However, the fanatical mindset commands, on the basis of this fabricated hadith, that this person should be killed. Once again, a false practice that appears nowhere in the Qur'an becomes a commandment, and murder is decided upon.

This false and terrifying mentality is refuted by the Qur'an. God addresses "believers" in the verse, **"You who have faith! Do not approach the prayer when you are drunk, so that you will know what you are saying..."** (Qur'an, 4:43). It is clear that some among these people had drunk alcohol and become intoxicated. These people are people who pray. All this can clearly be seen from the verse. Since a person needs to know what he is saying during the prayer, be lucid and establish a profound bond with God, and since it is impossible for a person to concentrate in that way if he is drunk, and since he cannot be held responsible for what he says or does, God forbids people to pray for so long as they are drunk. The term in the verse **"... so that you will know what you are saying,"** emphasizes that someone will not know what he is doing while he is drunk and will "not know what he is saying." Therefore we are given to understand that a person should continue praying only once this state of unawareness has passed.

Someone may claim to be abjuring the faith at a time when his reason is clouded, such as in a state of intoxication, and may talk in a totally illogical manner. What matters is what the person says and does once reason has been restored. Moreover, a person may genuinely have abjured the faith and may explicitly say as much. To use that as a pretext for killing him is both fanaticism and a slander against the Qur'an. The Qur'an curses that brutal mentality.

By making such a pronouncement about drunkenness in the Qur'an, Almighty God is saying that doing something forbidden is not an obstacle to a Muslim loving God and performing his religious observances. This verse is also an indication of Islam's affectionate and loving attitude to everyone. Yet the fanatical mindset that desires death at every opportunity has manufactured its own false commandments despite this explicit pronouncement in the Qur'an.

The Killing of Those Who Speak Improperly about the Prophet without Calling on Him to Repent

Anyone who insults the Prophet must be executed at once without being called on to repent. (Ibn Taymiyya)

Ibn al-Mundhir said: All scholars are agreed on the killing of anyone who insults the Messenger of God (pbuh). (Anwar Shah, al-Kashmiri, "Ikfar al-Mulhidin", p. 64; "Tanbihul Ghafilin," p. 14)

Abdullah narrates: They are to be executed without being called on to repent. Halid b. Walid killed a man who insulted the Messenger (pbuh) and he did not incite him to repent. (Ibn Taymiyya)

Someone speaking improperly of God, the prophets and spiritual values is not, of course, something to be approved of. However, all people are not the same. Some people are atheists and are prejudiced against religion for various reasons; some have been brought up with anger, some are ignorant and some know nothing about the Qur'an. It is therefore possible for people to have prejudices against religion for a variety of reasons, and there are many such people who live in a state of rage and hatred today.

There are people who hold all kinds of opinions in this world we come to in order to be tested, and our test as believers consists of being together with these ideas, opinions and people.

The duty of a Muslim is to tell people, no matter how prejudiced or angry they may be, about the moral virtues in the Qur'an in a kindly manner and then leave the final decision up to them. Sometimes the other party will be affected by this fine behavior and may realize the error of his ways and put himself right. This is a fact revealed in another verse of the Qur'an:

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. (Qur'an, 41:34)

In this verse, Muslims are commanded to respond to bad behavior with goodness. The result of this is that "if there is enmity between you and someone else, he will be like a bosom friend..."

If the other party still persists on speaking and behaving badly, however, then what needs to be done is explained in the Qur'an:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, "Peace"; (Qur'an, 25:63)

It has been sent down to you in the Book that when you hear God's signs being rejected and mocked at by people, you must not sit with them till they start talking of other things. If you do you are just the same as them. (Qur'an, 4:140)

As we have seen, the commandment set out in the Qur'an is not to sit down with such an ignorant community when one encounters them, to take one's leave from them and say "Peace"; in other words, to remind them of the peaceful path.

Two features are emphasized in the verses. These people are regarded as too ignorant to have any dealings with and have rejected the truth despite being warned many, many times. A Muslim who has a duty to preach - and therefore to constantly speak the truth - in this instance has no dealings with such people, and merely moves away from them.

Another element in the verse concerns not sitting down with them "till they start talking of other things." Therefore, these people may always be in a Muslim's immediate vicinity and have constant dealings with him. So once they start speaking of other matters he can continue to enjoy close relations with them.

This means that Muslims are not expected to resort to the savage method cited above. They must depart from them when they speak improperly, but tell them the truth so long as they heed advice.

Another piece of evidence showing how these fabricated hadiths conflict with the Qur'an is the "prevention of repentance." God calls on people to repent on all subjects in the Qur'an. He frequently states in verses that repentance is a matter between the person concerned and God and that God is All-forgiving and Compassionate. Those who repent are frequently praised in the Qur'an. So how can a person be prevented from repenting? How can someone be prevented from seeking God's forgiveness? How can people ignore our Lord's verse that reads, "**... He is the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful.**" (Qur'an, 2:37) and deprive others of the right to feel regret and seek God's forgiveness?

Nobody has any such right, of course.

In another verse our Lord reveals:

... except for those who repent and put things [themselves and others] right and make things [what is sent down] clear. I turn towards them. I am the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 2:160)

Those people who foolishly deny the fact that God is "the Most Merciful" and seek to impose their own fabricated hadiths on the subject are acting in open contravention of the Qur'an.

The Superstition of "Accursed Animals" in the Religion of the Fanatics:

Kill the dogs, apart from the dog for hunting and the dog for the security of the herd... (Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Malik's Muwatta, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasai)

It is your duty [to kill] the jet-black (dog) having two spots (on the eyes), for it is a devil. (Sahih Muslim, Book 10, Hadith 3813)

It is said that the donkey brays for it sees satan. (Sahih Muslim, Book 35, Hadith 6581)

Another hadith is that rats are actually a group of Bani Isra'il, for which reason when the milk of the camel is placed before them, they would not taste it at all. (Sahih Muslim, Book 42, Hadith 7135, 7136)

One hadith is that the crow is a mischief-doer. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 54, Hadith 531; Musnad Ahmed ibn Hanbal 2/52)

The pigeon is a devil. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 41, Hadith 4922; Ibn Majah)

The gecko is a sinner. (Sahih Muslim 2239/145, Ibn Majah 3230, Sunan Abu Dawud 5262)

He who kills a gecko with the first stroke there are seventy rewards for him. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 41, Hadith 5243; Sahih Muslim, Book 26, Hadith 5566)

The stoning to death of monkeys that "commit adultery" (Sahih Bukhari 63/27) – (another false hadith is that a monkey that committed adultery was stoned to death and that one of the Companions took part in the stoning.)

A donkey that sees satan, a Jewish rat, a crow doing mischief, a devilish pigeon, an adulterous monkey, poor black dogs and geckos that need to be put to death; a summary of the terrible life far removed from the Qur'an offered by the fanatical mindset. This outlandish mentality commands that all dogs apart from hunting and sheepdogs should be killed, and that house dogs, and lap dogs and guard dogs, some of the sweetest animals in the world that God has created in so many breeds and with feelings of love and protection, must all be killed. As revealed in the Qur'an, however, "**The seven heavens and the earth and everyone in them glorify Him. There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise but you do not understand their glorification. He is All-Forbearing, Ever-Forgiving.**"

(Qur'an, 17:44) it is impossible for these life forms that glorify God in a way we cannot understand, and that are specially created for paradise with all their beauty, to be sinners or the devil incarnate. How can a rat possibly be Jewish? And what is wrong with being Jewish anyway?

Furthermore, how can a monkey commit adultery? Does a monkey have any moral values or an institution of marriage in which he must remain faithful? Does he have the self-awareness to understand all these things and responsibility thereof? So how can a monkey be accused of adultery? This is a profoundly ignorant claim to make; yet the fanatics even go so far as to defame the Companions and try to use them as evidence for their false allegations.

Of course these are all fabricated hadiths, and it is impossible for such cruel rules to have any place in the Qur'an. God states in the Qur'an that there were dogs with the Companions of the Cave and Ar-Raqim, whom He praises very greatly in the Qur'an:

You would have supposed them to be awake whereas in fact they were asleep. We moved them to the right and to the left, and, at the entrance, their dog stretched out its paws... (Qur'an, 18:18)

They will say, "There were three of them, their dog being the fourth." They will say, "There were five of them, their dog being the sixth," guessing at the Unseen. And they will say, "There were seven of them, their dog being the eighth." Say: "My Lord knows best their number. Those who know about them are very few." ... (Qur'an, 18:22)

Muslims can obviously have a guard dog or a pet dog with them.

There are also other animals mentioned in the Qur'an.

1. According to the Qur'an, animals must be treated with love and affection:

He [Solomon] said: "Truly do I love the love of good [or these horses] because of the remembrance of my Lord"—[repeating these words as the horses raced away,] until they were hidden by the veil [of dust]. [Solomon said:] "Return them to me!" And he set about stroking their shanks and necks. (Qur'an, 38:32-33)

Then, when they reached the Valley of the Ants, an ant said, "Ants! Enter your dwellings so that Solomon and his troops do not crush you unwittingly." He smiled, laughing at its words, and said, "My Lord, keep me thankful for the blessing You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and keep me acting rightly, pleasing You, and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your servants who are the righteous." (Qur'an, 27:18-19)

2. Animals in the Qur'an are cited as works of God and signs leading to faith:

Have they not looked at the camel – how it was created? (Qur'an, 88:17)

God is not ashamed to make an example of a gnat or of an even smaller thing. As for those who have faith, they know it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who are unbelievers, they say, "What does God mean by this example?" He misguides many by it and guides many by it. But He only misguides the deviators. (Qur'an, 2:26)

Mankind! An example has been made, so listen to it carefully. Those whom you call upon besides God are not even able to create a single fly, even if they were to join together to do it. And if a fly steals something from them, they cannot get it back. How feeble are both the seeker and the sought! (Qur'an, 22:73)

3. The Qur'an notes that animals have intelligence:

Then God sent a crow which scratched at the earth to show him how to conceal his brother's corpse. He said, "Woe is me! Can I not even be like this crow and conceal my brother's corpse?" And he became one of those who suffer bitter remorse. (Qur'an, 5:31)

4. God reveals in the Qur'an that animals act in the light of revelation:

Your Lord revealed to the bees: "Build dwellings in the mountains and the trees, and also in the structures which men erect. Then eat from every kind of fruit and travel the paths of your Lord, which have been made easy for you to follow." From inside them comes a drink of varying colors, containing healing for mankind. There is certainly a sign in that for people who reflect. (Qur'an, 16:68-69)

5. The proofs of creation in animals are described in detail in the Qur'an:

There is instruction for you in cattle. From the contents of their bellies, from between the dung and blood, We give you pure milk to drink, easy for drinkers to swallow. (Qur'an, 16:66)

6. We are told that animals are created in diverse forms as a source of beauty:

And mankind and animals and livestock are likewise of varying colors. Only those of His servants with knowledge have fear of God. God is Almighty, Ever-Forgiving. (Qur'an, 35:28)

Have they not seen how We created for them, by Our own handiwork, livestock which are under their control? (Qur'an, 36:71)

7. We are told that animals prostrate themselves to God and glorify Him:

Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and everyone on the earth prostrates to God, and the sun and moon and stars and the mountains, trees and beasts and many of mankind? But many of them inevitably merit punishment. Those God humiliates will have no one to honor them. God does whatever He wills. (Qur'an, 22:18)

Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and earth glorifies God, as do the birds with their outspread wings? Each one knows its prayer and glorification. God knows what they do. (Qur'an, 24:41)

As we have seen, God speaks in the Qur'an of many different kinds of animals that glorify Him as intelligent and glorious examples of creation and describes the loving, affectionate attitude of the prophets. The perverse conception of religion of the fanatics that stresses a hatred for animals is nowhere to be seen in the Qur'an.

We also see examples of valuing and loving animals in the life of our Prophet (pbuh), the applier of the Qur'an. Our Prophet (pbuh) was full of love and affection toward animals, in such a way as to definitively refute the fanatical mindset. Some of the actions of our Prophet (pbuh) that show his affection toward animals are as follows:

Our Prophet's (pbuh) Love of Animals

Our Prophet (pbuh) Did Away with the Cruel Customs that Mistreated Animals

The ignorance in society when our Prophet (pbuh) began preaching was also reflected in people's treatment of animals; they would use live animals as targets for archery practice, and cut off ears and tails and even brand them to distinguish their animals from those of other people. When they were hungry out in the desert, they would slice open a camel's hump, extract a piece of fat from it and then stitch it up again.

Our Prophet (pbuh) completely did away with these unpleasant customs of the society of ignorance. He taught that animals also deserved compassion. All practices that mistreated animals were put to an end to by our Prophet (pbuh).

Our Prophet (pbuh) Forbade Animals from Being Overworked

Our Prophet (pbuh) forbade the overworking of animals. Addresses and poetic ceremonies performed with people facing one another sitting on the backs of animals for several hours, which had been going on for hundreds of years, were forbidden. Owners were only allowed to ride animals for so long as they truly needed. Our Prophet (pbuh) issued a warning, saying;

Don't make the backs of animals your chairs. God gave these to your command only on the condition that you go with them easily to places you would not been able to go by yourselves without extreme trouble. He also created the ground. Meet your other needs on the ground. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Jihad 61, [2667])

Another hadith reads;

Ride your animals gently and only when they are fit to be ridden, and let them go free when it is meet that they should rest. Do not use them as chairs for talking to one another on the roads and streets (do not spend hours talking to one another while seated on them). (Ahmad, III, 439)

Working Animals' Right to Rest

Our Prophet (pbuh) gave working animals the right to rest in the same way as human beings, and stressed the need for animals to rest and meet their needs when rest stops were called along the road.

Our Prophet (pbuh) Prohibited the Abuse and Mistreatment of Animals

Our Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever kills a sparrow or anything bigger than that without a just cause, God will hold him accountable on the Day of Judgment." (Sunan Abu Dawud, 2/11) and commanded that "birds' nests should not be damaged and their eggs and chicks should not be taken." (Sahih Bukhari, 139)

Our Prophet (pbuh) stopped someone who was beating the animal he was riding on and stated that this was a violation of the law of God. "God did not create animals for you to do that to them," he said. (Musnad Ahmad, 4/131)

Our Prophet's (pbuh) Affection toward a Mother Dog and Her Puppies

As our Prophet (pbuh) was marching with his 10,000-man army, he saw on their way a dog that had just given birth with her puppies. He summoned Djuail, son of Suraka, and commanded;

"You will wait in front of the mother dog and her puppies and by keeping their sentry till all the army has passed, you will protect them from being run over." (ash-Shami, Subul al-Huda Wa-al-Rashad, VII, 51)

Thanks to the Prophet's (pbuh) affection the 10,000-man army changed its course in order not to disturb the dog and her puppies.

A Saying of the Prophet (pbuh) Reflecting His Love of Animals: "The life of all dogs are respected"

Not only the beneficial dogs, the life of all dogs are respected and immune as long as they do not cause harm and do not turn violent and aggressive. (Hashyatu'l-Bayjarmi Ala'l-Manhaj-al-Maktabatu'sh-Shamila, I/474)

Our Prophet's (pbuh) Cat, "Muezza"

Our Prophet (pbuh) had a cat called "Muezza." He loved Muezza so much that one day, when Muezza was dozing on the sleeve of the Prophet's (pbuh) robe, the Prophet (pbuh) chose to cut that part of his robe off rather than wake her up.

In addition, the name Abu Hurayrah, who narrated many hadiths from the Prophet (pbuh), means "father of the kitten."

Our Prophet's (pbuh) Affection toward a Mother Bird and Her Young

We were on a journey and during the Prophet's absence, we saw a bird with its two chicks; we took them. The mother bird was circling above us in the air, beating its wings in grief. When Prophet Muhammad returned he said, "Who has hurt the feelings of this bird by taking its chicks? Return them to her." (Sahih Muslim)

The Baby Goat

Our Prophet (pbuh) said this to a man who was milking a goat:

Leave some milk for the kid of the goat when you milk. (Majmua'z-Zawaid, 8:196)

A Starving Camel and Its Owner

Our Prophet (pbuh) entered an orchard belonging to one of the Muslims of Medina and saw there a camel groaning in hunger, and was deeply troubled by this. He approached the camel and stroked it and then asked who its owner was. He then warned the owner by saying,

Do you not fear God in respect of this beast which God has placed in your possession? (Sunan Abu Dawud, Jihad, 44)

In another hadith our Prophet (pbuh) says,

Fear God in respect of these dumb (animals). (Sunan Abu Dawud, Jihad, 44/2548)

A Sleeping Antelope

During a campaign, our Prophet (pbuh) saw an antelope sleeping in the warm shade. He commanded one of his companions to wait there and ensure that the animal was not disturbed until everyone had passed. (*Malik's Muwatta, Hajj, 79; Sunan an-Nasai, Hajj, 78*)

A Donkey Branded on the Face

One day on the road our Prophet (pbuh) saw a donkey that had been branded on the face and said, "God curse the one who branded it." (Sahih Muslim) and he recommended that branding should be done without hurting the animals.

Treating Animals Well

A man on a journey was thirsty and descended into a well and drank from it. When he came out of the well he saw a dog who was also very thirsty and was licking the ground with his tongue. Thinking that the dog was thirsty just like him, he went down into the well again and brought water up in his leather socks for the dog to drink from. At that, Almighty God forgave him his sins. The Prophet (pbuh) was asked if acts of charity even to the animals were rewarded by the Almighty. He replied: "Yes, there is a reward for acts of charity to every beast alive." (Sahih Bukhari)

When his companions asked, "Will we earn merit if we give animals water to drink?" the Messenger of God answered, "There is merit to be earned from giving water to all living things." (Tajrit, Vol. VII, p. 223)

The reason why we are citing the hadiths in question as valid evidence is that they are compatible with the Qur'an. The reason why our Prophet (pbuh) was so affectionate toward animals is the education he received from the Qur'an. Our Prophet (pbuh) was surely the person best able to appreciate that God created numerous life forms, each one lovelier and more skillful than the next, as proof, beauty and a blessing. He clearly saw how God manifested His names of the Compassionate and Merciful and His glorious artistry in living things. Our Prophet (pbuh) showed through his own actions how the compassion and affection recommended in the Qur'an, which praises love, should be seen in a Muslim. One can also see this in the advice that our Prophet (pbuh) gave concerning compassion:

Those who are merciful will be shown mercy by the Merciful. Be merciful to those on the earth and the One above the heavens will have mercy upon you. (Sunan at-Tirmidhi, 1924)

Someone who is devoid of gentleness and kindness is devoid of all goodness ... (Sahih Muslim, Birr, 76)

Therefore, the peddlers of superstition look in vain for cruelty toward animals in Islam or in the actions of our Prophet (pbuh), and instead engage in fraud on the subject in order to persuade others of their nonsensical views. The Qur'an is the Book in which a perfect love for human beings, animals and plants is described, and our Prophet (pbuh) lived by the Qur'an throughout his life.

The Foul Nature of the Fanatic

Anas b. Malik reported that some people belonging (to the tribe) of 'Uraina came to God's Messenger (pbuh) at Medina, but they found its climate uncongenial. So God's Messenger (pbuh) said to them: If you so like, you may go to the camels of Sadaqa and drink their milk and urine. ... (Sahih Muslim, Book 16, Hadith 4130)

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "If a house fly falls in the drink of anyone of you, he should dip it (in the drink), for one of its wings has a disease and the other has the cure for the disease." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 54, Hadith 537)

Narrated Ibn 'Abbas: The Prophet said, "When you eat, do not wipe your hands till you have licked it, or had it licked by somebody else." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 65, Hadith 366; Sahih Muslim, Book 23, Hadith 5037)

Narrated Maimuna: God's Apostle was asked regarding ghee (cooking butter) in which a mouse had fallen. He said, "Take out the mouse and throw away the ghee around it and use the rest." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 236; Malik's Muwatta, Book 54, Hadith 54.7.20; Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 27, Hadith 3833)

These false hadiths, of which only a few examples are given here, are important evidence of the filthy and horrible life styles of people with a fanatical mentality. With these fabricated hadiths, fanatics foolishly slander even our Prophet (pbuh). These false hadiths acted upon by the fanatics also reveal these people's conceptions of cleanliness and good manners. God has never permitted anything so disgusting. According to the Qur'an, Muslims have a duty to be spotlessly clean, to keep their homes clean, to wear clean clothes and to eat clean food. According to the Qur'an,

Muslims are clean but polytheists are filthy; fanatics who live lives apart from the Qur'an, that invent a faith other than that sent down by God and that therefore ascribe equals to Him meet that description very well indeed. God reveals in verses:

You who have faith! The idolaters are unclean... (Qur'an, 11:28)

... God places a blight on those who do not use their intellect. (Qur'an, 10:100)

As we have seen, God speaks in verses of a community who fail to use their intellect. That is an excellent description of fanatics who go along with superstition despite the truths in the Qur'an. God afflicts with a terrible blight communities that go along with superstition without using their minds, and that manufacture a whole different religion despite having the Qur'an in their hands, even though they know that this fabricated faith is false. That is really what happens. Because of their foolishness, fanatical communities believe in all the filth set out in the false hadiths above and live lives steeped in foulness.

Of course there are some people among them who live such lives unwillingly, largely out of ignorance, and such people are actually in the majority; therefore, we need to consider them separately from the mindless fanatical communities in question. They always need an education based on the facts set out in great detail in this book, based on evidence from the Qur'an, in other words.

According to the Qur'an, what God wants from Muslims is for them to have a highly detailed and immaculate conception of cleanliness. Some of the verses of the Qur'an calling on Muslims to be clean read as follows:

Purify your clothes, shun all filth. (Qur'an, 74:4-5)

Mankind! Eat what is good and lawful on the earth. And do not follow in the footsteps of satan. He truly is an outright enemy to you. (Qur'an, 2:168)

... A mosque founded on piety from the first day has a greater right for you to stand in it. In it there are men who love to purify themselves. God loves those who purify themselves. (Qur'an, 11:108)

You who have faith! Eat of the good things We have provided for you and give thanks to God if you worship Him alone. (Qur'an, 2:172)

But as for those who have faith and do right actions, We will admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever and ever. In them they will have spouses of perfect purity ... (Qur'an, 4:57)

They will ask you what is lawful for them. Say: "All good things are lawful for you..." (Qur'an, 5:4)

Today all good things have been made lawful for you. ... (Qur'an, 5:5)

Say: "Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He has produced for His servants and the good kinds of provision?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Resurrection." In this way We make the signs clear for people who know. (Qur'an, 7:32)

Those who follow the Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel, commanding them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong, making good things lawful for them and bad things unlawful for them... (Qur'an, 7:157)

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 those who stand and bow and prostrate." (Qur'an, 22:26)

There are many verses of the Qur'an that command Muslims to be clean and we have only cited a few of them here. There is one particular point being emphasized in verse 32 of Surat al-A'raf, however, which is that in the same way that there are those who make fine clothing and ornaments unlawful for Muslims, there are also those who make good kinds of provision unlawful for them. Indeed, careful inspection of the life style of the fanatic shows that it is these people with their extremist mindset that would make cleanliness unlawful for Muslims.

According to the Qur'an, a Muslim must be the cleanest and best-groomed person. He must dress well and in a contemporary style, he must eat clean food and must keep his home clean; simply put, he must be clean at all times. Our Prophet (pbuh) was exceptionally immaculate. Any attempts to defame such a fastidious person as our Prophet (pbuh) in the manner described above are certainly a grave offense in the Sight of God. Fanatics, however, behave as if they were ignorant of this.

Let us now look at what our Prophet (pbuh) really said in order to expose the error of the fabricated hadiths cited above. Some trustworthy hadiths on the subject of our Prophet's (pbuh) cleanliness and fastidiousness read as follows. (These hadiths are regarded as accurate because they are compatible with the Qur'an):

Islam is clean. Therefore, you should keep yourselves clean, too. Only the clean people can enter paradise. (Ahmad Diya'al-Din al-Kamushkhanawi, Ramuz al-Ahadith, vol. 1, 96/2)

A believer is not dirty. (Sahih Bukhari)

Clean everything well. Cleanliness leads to faith, and faith leads to paradise. (al-Tabarani)

Cleanliness is half of faith... (Sahih Muslim, Book 2, Hadith 432)

Narrated Salman al-Farsi: I read in the Torah that the blessing of food consists in ablution before it. So I mentioned it to the Prophet (pbuh). He said: "The blessing of food consists in ablution before it and ablution after it." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 27, Hadith 3752)

He who eats onion and garlic and leek, should not approach our mosque for the angels are harmed by the same things as the children of Adam. (Sahih Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 1147)

Wash your clothes, groom your hair, clean your teeth and dress well with clean clothes. Have cleanliness! (Ibn 'Asakir)

Whoever eats garlic or onion should keep away from our mosque or should remain in his house. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 12, Hadith 814)

The key to the prayer (salah) is cleanliness ... (Sunan Abu Dawud, Taharah, 31: Tirmidhi, Taharah, 39)

Dress well so the blessings that God has bestowed on you can be seen! (al-Tabarani)

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: The Apostle of God (pbuh) commanded us ... that mosques should be kept clean and be perfumed. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 2, Hadith 455)

When God bestows a blessing on His servant, He likes that blessing to be visible on that servant. (al-Tabarani)

Abu Sufyan said: Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, Jabir bin 'Abdullah, and Anas bin Malik told me that when this verse: "In it (the mosque) are men who love to clean and to purify themselves. And God loves those who make themselves clean and pure." [9:108] was revealed, the Messenger of God (pbuh) said: "O Ansar! God has praised you for your cleanliness. What is the nature of your cleanliness?" They said: "We perform ablution for prayer and we take a bath to cleanse ourselves of impurity due to sexual activity, and we clean ourselves with water." He said: "This is what it is. So adhere to it." (Sunan Ibn Majah, Chapter No: 2, Hadith 355)

Of the things of this world, women and perfume have been made dear to me, and my comfort is in prayer. (al-Nasai, 3939, from the hadith of Anas ibn Malik (ra))

A Dirty Conception of Faith and A Low-Quality Conception of Being a Muslim

Under the influence of various fabricated hadiths, fanatics adopt a life style that regards all manner of disgusting things as legitimate and filth as a way of living, and also develop a quite terrifying total lack of quality. For that reason there is a widely spread – and regrettably "fashionable" - lack of quality in some Islamic communities. In the light of that conception of lack of quality, a Muslim emerges as someone who looks dirty, ill-kempt, uncared for, careless, crude; a far cry from beauty and kindness, and as someone who attaches no importance to beauty or manners, and who even lacks any understanding of such things. If you notice, great care is always taken that such an impression should prevail whenever the word "Muslim" is mentioned.

It is no surprise, of course, that these people should have such a low-quality and squalid life style when one looks at their conception of Islam: There can certainly be no expectation of quality from a mentality that forbids women from even plucking their eyebrows (this will be discussed in due course), that insists on people licking their hands after eating rather than washing them, and that maintains that a bowl of soup with a fly in it is healthy. This false conception of religion shaped by false hadiths is so widespread that a Muslim is criticized by these people for looking pleasant and high quality.

This trickery under the name of Islam has pervaded the entire community of Islam in one way or another, and this ghastly appearance also makes other communities uneasy, of course.

However, there is a glorious quality in the Qur'an. As the most perfect applier of the Qur'an, our Prophet (pbuh) was of the best quality and was the most intelligent person of his time. He was always clean. He always wore the best quality and cleanest clothes and always behaved in the kindest way. Were our Prophet (pbuh) alive today, he would doubtlessly be the best quality person of our own time as well because our Prophet's (pbuh) guide was the Qur'an, and the Qur'an addresses keeping to the highest quality at all times.

It is very important to make it clear that quality is not something that can be established with money, possessions or stylish clothes: Quality is an attribute that can be attained by valuing cleanliness, care and beauty, through perfection in behavior and attitudes, and through respect, affection and rationality and proper moral virtue. A person can wear the same clothes every day, but he will be high quality if he puts them on clean every day and treats them with care. Someone may not share another's ideas, but he will be high quality if he respects that other person's ideas and treats them with affection. Behavior is one of the most important ways of determining someone's quality; someone who cannot bear filth, avariciousness or low quality behavior is already a person of naturally high quality. Someone who speaks well, praises beauty, who takes every opportunity to recognize the superior nature of science and elegance, and who naturally values the other party is a high-quality person.

All these attributes that require quality have, to a large extent, been forgotten in Islamic societies; the reason for that is the main error into which these communities have fallen: that they have abandoned the Qur'an. Societies have emerged that value quantity over quality, hatred over love and filth and carelessness over cleanliness and good grooming. The only cure for this peculiar affliction is the Qur'an. One of the most urgent matters at the moment is to show the societies in question the superior quality of the Muslim, with supporting evidence from the Qur'an. So long as no evidence is produced from the Qur'an, the communities in question will continue to turn away from democracy, to be communities of anger, to spread lack of quality and to attach no importance to art and cleanliness. This is a scourge that is increasing by the day.

Chapter 3

Fanatics' Hatred of Women

Women Are One of the Finest Blessings in This World

One of the most striking examples of the lovelessness and harshness of the fanatical mindset is these people's attitude towards women. Because of all the superstition they fabricate, fanatics, who regard women as an inferior species, exclude women from society and are unable even to bear the sight of them on the streets. In the pages that follow we shall be setting out the fanatics' attitude toward women, citing various fabricated hadiths on the subject, and then seeing how their false perspective is diametrically opposed to the Qur'an and the true word of our Prophet (pbuh). The fabricated hadiths in question will give a much better idea of the utterly immoral way in which women are oppressed in many Muslim countries. The horrendous mentality that bans women from leaving their homes, that orders them to walk by the walls when they are outside, that interferes with every detail of their clothing, that doesn't allow them to drive, that puts little children in charge of women only because in their shallow thinking women are not smart enough, that doesn't allow women to be in rooms that look down on the street, that puts the blame on women if they are raped, that decides who they should marry, that considers it acceptable for women to be beaten up by their husbands, that doesn't allow women to divorce even in the case of severe violence, is a product of the aforementioned superstitions.

Underlying the fanatics' perspective toward women is the idea that women are deficient in faith and mind. The idea that women are semi-people and need to be governed and directed therefore prevails. For people who think like that, even the very existence of women is a menace and a cause of anger; they therefore feel the need to keep them covered up, excluded from society, deprived of all rights and declared non-persons to the maximum extent possible. They foolishly turn women into second-class citizens and prevent them from making decisions and becoming involved in social matters, and seek to turn them into a community under their own dominion because they know full well that women are quite capable of thinking in great detail, making rational judgments and drawing accurate conclusions by analyzing fine detail. Excluding women by false means has also made it possible for some fanatical types to spread their own falsehoods very easily.

Yet God has revealed that there is no differentiation between men and women in terms of piety and that men and women have equal responsibilities when it comes to doing good works, striving to disseminate moral virtues and waging an intellectual struggle on His path. According to the Qur'an, men and women are equal in terms of responsibility; however, the Qur'an also regards women as superior to men in terms of solicitude and worth, taking great care of them. Some verses which various fanatics and enemies of Islam always seek to portray as evidence against women are actually verses that reveal the superiority of women and the importance and value that our Lord attaches to them. We shall be looking at these verses in detail in due course.

One comparison that our Lord makes regarding women in the Qur'an shows how much He values them; He compares woman to a delicate plant, or a flower. This description of Mary (pbuh) is an explicit corroboration of the importance and value attached to women:

Her Lord accepted her with approval and made her grow in health and beauty [like a beautiful plant] (Qur'an, 3:37)

Caring for a lovely flower calls for the very greatest sensitivity. A lovely plant is delicate and valuable and requires great care and attention. That beauty of a flower, its delicacy, the care it needs and its value and importance neatly describe the place of women in the Qur'an. It is a fact that God has created all the plants and flowers in the world as elements of beauty, as delightful blessings, as symbols of cleanliness and beauty and as marvels of creation. The use of such an expression of beauty to refer to women, the way that God compares women with a symbol of cleanliness and beauty, is an excellent representation of the value attached to women.

Women in the Qur'an

A magnificent value is attached to women in those verses of the Qur'an that speak of her, and women are placed under special protection under all circumstances. In terms of responsibility, however, she is regarded as equal to man. A woman is placed under protection therefore, not because she needs that protection, but because she possesses a special value.

In the Qur'an, a woman can work if she pleases, but she is not obliged to work. As we see in the example of the Queen of Sheba, women can even rule over states. As we see in the example of Mary (pbuh), a model for all other women, a woman in the Qur'an is superior in her fortitude and determination at times of difficulty. A woman in the Qur'an is a queen, an entity who must always be given pride of place. In terms of its perspective toward women, the Qur'an is therefore the finest guide for the entire world.

In the time of our Prophet (pbuh), women were involved alongside men in all areas of life. The fact that the blessed wife of our Prophet (pbuh), Khadija (ra), was a well-known and respected businesswoman in the region is an important piece of information in terms of showing the active role that women could play in social life. In the time of our Prophet (pbuh), female and male companions enjoyed equal responsibility in the instruction of people who had newly come to Islam, in the establishment of social order and even in war. The kindness, love, warmth and goodness that our Prophet (pbuh) showed his wives are the finest model for the whole world. It is clear that our lovely Prophet (pbuh), who ran races with his wives, who bent down to help them climb up onto the backs of donkeys, who praised the superiority of women at every opportunity and who rested his head on his wife's shoulder while watching entertainment, would never permit the dreadful practices of the fanatics. There is also no doubt that by casting doubt on the Companions by fabricating false hadiths in the name of the Messenger of God (pbuh), the fanatics are slandering both him and the Companions and are assuming a heavy responsibility on themselves.

The reason why women in the religion of the fanatics are so different to women described in the Qur'an will immediately become apparent when we examine some fabricated hadiths. A clear and definitive response to each fabricated hadith is also provided from the Qur'an.

Ways that the Fanatics Slander Women

The Idea that Women Are Deficient in Intelligence and Faith

O women! You curse frequently, and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. (Sahih Bukhari, Chapter 24, Hadith 541)

God said: ... I also make her stupid, although I had created her intelligent, and must make her suffer pregnancy and birth with difficulty (The History of Al-Tabari: General Introduction and From the Creation to the Flood, translated by Franz Rosenthal [State University of New York Press, Albany], Vol. 1, pp. 280-281)

There is no mention in any verse of the Qur'an of women being weaker than men in terms of intelligence. On the contrary, by referring to "believing women and believing men," God tells us that they have equal responsibility in His Sight; in other words, that they are similar in terms of intelligence and conscience. Moreover, as in the example of the Queen of Sheba, women can even be rulers of states taking decisions on the most important matters. In addition, it is not having a different anatomy that makes a person more intelligent, but their fear of God, love of God, depth of faith and conscience. God always inspires the truth in the conscience of every human being, man or woman. Therefore, what makes people intelligent and devout is not whether they are men or women, but whether they abide by what is revealed to their consciences and, as revealed in this verse, **"You who believe! If you fear God, He will give you discrimination [between right and wrong]..."** (Qur'an, 8:29) their fear of God: That is the sole measure of intelligence in the Qur'an. Therefore, in the same way that a man is not superior solely for being a man, a woman is not deficient in intelligence and faith simply because she is a woman. However, as we have said many times, the religion of the fanatics is totally different to the Qur'an and is full of slanders.

The way that they slander God Himself with the fabricated hadiths in question shows the extremes to which the fanatics will go. Nothing along the lines of "... I make her stupid, and must make her suffer pregnancy and birth with difficulty" appears in the Qur'an, so what is the status of these words alleged to be the words of God? Where is this revelation, alleged to have come from God, if it does not appear in the Qur'an? The greatest danger of the religion of the fanatics is that they speak lies in the name of God and are therefore capable of such slander.

Pregnancy is regarded as a sacred state in the Qur'an, for which reason mothers are also regarded as sacred in it. Our Lord's verses on the subject read:

We have instructed man concerning his parents. Bearing him caused his mother great debility and the period of his weaning was two years: "Give thanks to Me and to your parents. I am your final destination." (Qur'an, 31:14)

We have instructed man to be good to his parents. His mother bore him with difficulty and with difficulty gave birth to him; and his bearing and weaning take thirty months. Then when he achieves his full strength and reaches forty, he says, **"My Lord, keep me thankful for the blessing You bestowed on me and on my parents, and keep me acting rightly, pleasing You. And make my descendants righteous. I have repented to You and I am truly one of the Muslims."** (Qur'an, 46:15)

Mary (pbuh) became pregnant by the will of God and was patient in the face of all the difficulties she encountered during that pregnancy; because of that fortitude and her devotion to God she has been made superior to all the women of the world:

And when the angels said, "Mary, God has chosen you and purified you. He has chosen you over all other women." (Qur'an, 3:42)

The Messiah, the son of Mary, was only a messenger, before whom other messengers came and went. His mother was a woman of truth... (Qur'an, 5:75)

In exhibiting their own horrifying ways of thinking about women by talking about "stupidity," and referring to pregnancy and childbirth as punishments from God, the fanatics are at the same time foolishly insulting Mary (pbuh), the Companions and all other devout women praised for their superior virtues.

A difficult pregnancy and giving birth in pain is one of the tribulations of this world, and one that requires great fortitude, strength and willpower to bear. God reveals that a mother who displays fortitude in the face of this difficulty is very valuable in His Sight. For that reason, a mother who displays submission to God and love of Him despite all such difficulties is a very superior entity. This value attached to mothers is one of the moral values in the Qur'an.

As we have seen, there are ways in which women are even superior to men in the Qur'an, therefore the idea that they are "deficient in intelligence and faith" is a grotesque slander by the fanatics. God addresses men and women equally in terms of responsibility. That is one the reasons why male and female believers are addressed at the same time in numerous verses. One such verse reads:

Men and women who are Muslims, men and women who are believers, men and women who are obedient, men and women who are truthful, men and women who are steadfast, men and women who are humble, men and women who give the alms, men and women who fast, men and women who guard their private parts, men and women who remember God much: God has prepared forgiveness for them and an immense reward. (Qur'an, 33:35)

As seen in this verse, there is no distinction between men and women when it comes to such basic elements of being a Muslim as fearing God, remembering God, being loyal to God, having fortitude and giving alms; there is not the slightest suggestion in the Qur'an that women possess any less of any of the characteristics of a believer. Whether people are men or women they have a responsibility to fear God with all their might, love Him with a profound passion and earn His approval.

The Idea that Women Are Crooked

Woman has been created from a rib and will in no way be straightened for you; so if you wish to benefit by her, benefit by her while crookedness remains in her. And if you attempt to straighten her, you will break her, and breaking her is divorcing her. (Sahih Muslim, Book 8, Hadith 3467; an-Nasai)

The creation of human beings is described in detail in the Qur'an:

We created man from the purest kind of clay; then made him a drop in a secure receptacle; then formed the drop into a clot and formed the clot into a lump and formed the lump into bones and clothed the bones in flesh; and then brought him into being as another creature. Blessed be God, the Best of Creators! (Qur'an, 23:12-14)

No verse of the Qur'an says anything about woman being created from a rib bone and being crooked. In contrast to these terms employed by fanatics, our Almighty Lord reveals that men and women were created "in the best of forms:"

It is God Who made the earth a stable home for you and the sky a dome, and formed you, giving you the best of forms, and provided you with good and wholesome things. That is God, your Lord. Blessed be God, the Lord of all the worlds. (Qur'an, 40:64)

The words "if you attempt to straighten her, you will break her" in the false hadith in question implies that she is crooked in both body and mind and can never be put right; however, no such words appear in the Qur'an. This shows the basis of the fanatics' anger-filled attitude toward women.

The lesson we receive from the Qur'an is this; everyone, man or woman, has flaws and can make mistakes. According to the Qur'an, these flaws should be corrected by pointing them out in kindly language, showing the person what is right and wrong, and addressing the conscience of the person in question. Nobody has the right to cast anyone aside and say, "This person can never be put right." Someone who does that and regards himself as superior may see that the person he regarded as "incorrigible" is actually in a better position than him in the hereafter. Only God knows who is on the true path.

The fanatics' superstitious belief that women are flawed and deficient right from the outset has been strengthened by the idea that it is also impossible for them to change subsequently. Many false hadiths therefore contain false information to the effect that good women are very few in number and that most women are not worthy of paradise.

Hadiths and Claims Fabricated to Debase Women

A pious woman among other women is like unto a raven marked with a white leg. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 20)

One out of 99 women is in paradise, the rest are in hell. (Sahih Bukhari)

O womenfolk, you should give charity and ask much forgiveness for I saw you in bulk amongst the dwellers of hell... (Sahih Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 142)

The false hadiths in question make it clear how women are belittled and regarded as second-class citizens in societies made up of fanatics. Following the fabrication of these hadiths, some Islamic communities turned into societies of fear and fanaticism that despised and belittled women and shut them up indoors. Women being regarded as second-class citizens led to communities developing a terrible lack of civilization, cultural deformities, lack of taste and emptiness; the representatives of that fanatic mentality never grew or developed. Many countries in the Middle East today are in the middle of that cultural deformity and lack of quality produced by that terrifying perspective. Yet the religion in the Qur'an is lovely, plain, high-quality and peaceable.

The fanatics in question have completely failed to grasp that God attaches great value to women, the jewels of paradise, in both this world and the hereafter. Most important of all, they never sought guidance from the Qur'an.

None of the terms in the false hadiths in question appear anywhere in the Qur'an. God described people with impaired morals, who do evil and commit unlawful deeds in detail in the Qur'an, and none of these descriptions say anything about them referring particularly to women.

For example, God reveals in the Qur'an that a great many people will not believe, and that a great many of those who do will ascribe equals to Him:

Alif Lam Mim Ra. Those are the signs of the Book. And what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the Truth. But most people have no faith. (Qur'an, 13:1)

Most of them do not have faith in God without associating others with Him. (Qur'an, 12:106)

In another verse, God reveals that despite His creating all possible means for people to learn from, the majority of people still do not learn, but continue with the same moral degeneration:

We have variegated it for them so they might pay heed but most people spurn anything else but disbelief. (Qur'an, 25:50)

As we have seen, neither these nor any other verses of the Qur'an say anything about people with poor morals and behavior being women, in the way that fanatics allege. People who behave immorally are not classified on the basis of their gender in any verse. There is nothing in any verse saying that women are more immoral or that fewer women will enter paradise. The information in false hadiths is all fraudulent and fabricated in order to spread hostility toward women. The Qur'an absolutely and definitively refutes the false hadiths in question.

The Idea that Women Are a Barrier to People Living by the Faith

Were there no women, God would be worshiped properly. (Suyuti, Sahih Bukhari, Ibn-i Adiyy, Abu Khatim, Ibn-i Jawzi, Muhammed Nasuriddin and Ibn-i Hibban all accept this hadith.) (Silsilat al-Ahadisuzzaif: 74, Tenzihusharia: 1/62, Al-Leali: 2/59)

Were it not for women, all men would go to paradise. (Ibn-i Arrak and As-Saqafi do not accept the hadith. [Jamiussaghir: 2/113])

Let us first of all recall one very important point; the misogynistic mindset described in the false hadiths appears absolutely nowhere in the Qur'an.

Moving on to the content of the fabricated hadiths above, it is not women or other blessings of this world that prevent people who are weak in, or devoid of faith, from living by religious moral values, but their own weakness of conscience, mind and will. God has created this world as a test. In the same way that people are tested throughout their lives with troubles, difficulties, diseases and weaknesses, so they are also tested by blessings and good things. Women are one of the blessings and jewels of this world. Like every blessing, however, how that blessing is evaluated depends on the moral values of the person possessing that blessing. God reveals in the Qur'an that the blessings of this world are created as a test:

To mankind the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colors: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. The best homecoming is in the Presence of God. (Qur'an, 3:14)

Like women, children, gold, silver, splendid animals, farmland and wealth are all blessings of this world and provided for people to enjoy. However, a person who has faith will also be aware that all these blessings really belong to God, that all the blessings found in this world are transitory, and that the most and finest forms of all blessings are to be found in paradise. None of these blessings therefore turn such people away from God or prevent them striving on His path. If a person falls into heedlessness on account of any of these blessings and no longer seeks God's approval in all things, then this is something stemming from his own weakness of faith; it is not the fault of the blessings, but of the person himself. It is therefore the person himself who will have to face the consequences, so long as he does not correct himself. It will do no good to a person trying to blame someone else in the hereafter.

Therefore, a man who seeks to hold women responsible, on the basis of these false hadiths, for all his own errors, sins and evil deeds, is merely deceiving himself. According to the Qur'an, faith means that a person must serve God properly, no matter what the conditions or circumstances. Nobody will be able to use the idea that, "I was unable to worship properly because of women" as an excuse in the hereafter. As we are told in a verse, **"... man will be clear proof against himself in spite of any excuses he might offer"** (Qur'an, 75:14-15) In other words, no matter what excuses a person may come up with, he is still perfectly aware of the truth. Some people who blame women for their own lapses on the basis of these false hadiths are of course perfectly well aware that they are being hypocritical and making up the whole idea. Ignoring the fact in this world will change nothing in the Presence of God, where **"... Every self will be paid in full for what it earned. They will not be wronged."** (Qur'an, 3:25)

The Idea that One Should Never Be Guided by Women

Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 88, Hadith 219)

Obedience to women is regrettable. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 35)

Seek women's advice, and then do the exact opposite of what they say. (Al-Maqasid al-Hasana: 248, Tazkirat al-Mawzuat: 128, Tenzihus Sharia: 2-204, Silsilat al-Ahadith: 432)

Do not seek women's advice, but oppose them. Oppose them, because prosperity lies in opposition to women. (Religious Information for Women 44,45 Suyuti, al-Laali II, 147; Ibn Arrak, Tenzihus Sharia II, 210)

Whoever obeys his wife, God will cast him face down into hell. (Ibn Arrak II, 215)

People who entrust the administration of their affairs to a woman will never be saved (prosperous). (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 188)

Ruin is the end of men who obey women. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 203)

Those who are under the reign of women will not reach salvation. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 271)

As we have seen, one of the most important reflections of the way in which fanatics despise women is their fervent wish never to see them in positions of authority. They are therefore opposed to women rulers; they are even against the notion of women being consulted at all. They have this idea that everything women think and everything they do is wrong. This is part of their unpleasant stratagem of excluding women from society. The fabricated hadiths above have also served that end and in many countries fanatical communities in which such perverse ideas prevail and which are hostile to women have formed. Yet that mentality is diametrically opposed to the practices of our Prophet (pbuh) in the Qur'an, and is in manifest conflict with Islam.

For example, as the peddlers of superstition spread the foolish idea that "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler," God cites the Queen of Sheba, a female ruler, in the Qur'an.

Despite all the superstition about "not consulting women," the Queen of Sheba was the sole ruler who made all the final decisions on matters of state. Verses report the leadership qualities of the Queen of Sheba as follows:

However, it was not long delayed, and then it said, "I have comprehended something you have not and bring you accurate intelligence from Sheba. I found a woman ruling over them who has been given everything. She possesses a mighty throne." (Qur'an, 27:22-23)

That is how the Queen of Sheba, a female ruler who governed her people, was described to the Prophet Solomon (pbuh). After the Prophet Solomon (pbuh) had sent the Queen of Sheba a letter of invitation, she consulted the leading members of her people who sent the following reply:

They said, "We possess strength and we possess great force. But the matter is in your hands so consider what you command." (Qur'an, 27:33)

As we have seen, in the Qur'an women can rule states and be rulers and have their decisions and commands enforced. The conceptions of women in the religion of the fanatics and the Qur'an are totally at odds with one another.

When fanatics shamelessly insult women through these false hadiths, they are unaware that they are also insulting Mary (pbuh), the devout female believers in the Qur'an, the blessed wives of our Prophet (pbuh) and his female Companions. It must not be forgotten that a mentality that so despises women turns that contempt toward all women.

We can clearly see how different the lives of the fanatics are from the Qur'an when we look at the position of women in the time of our Prophet (pbuh).

For example, the wife of the Prophet (pbuh), Khadija (ra) was one of the wealthiest merchants of Mecca. She sent trading caravans to Damascus and employed people for that purpose. In the Medina period, women worked as leather workers, manufacturers of thread, weavers, pharmacists, tailors and perfume sellers and took an active part in all spheres of life. Women took part in wars alongside men, and even served in the front line when necessary.

Raita bint Abdillah says to the Prophet (pbuh): "O Messenger of God, I am a craftswoman. My husband (Abdullah ibn Masud) and my child have nothing; I sell the products I make with my own artistry" and asks whether her expenditure on her family will earn merit. The Prophet (pbuh) replies, "Of course there is merit in your expenditure on them." (Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-Tabaqat, VIII, 290; Abu Nu'aym, Hilya, II, 69; Ibn al-Asir, Usd al-Gaba, VII, 121.)

As we have seen, the women of the time of our Prophet (pbuh) provided for their households and had authority in the life of the family; our Prophet (pbuh) praises their efforts.

Quayba bint Sa'd, of the people of Aslam tribe, is reported to have treated the sick and injured in the time of our Prophet (pbuh); in other words, women in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) worked as doctors. Indeed, Asma bint Umais, a highly intelligent, educated and experienced woman who migrated to Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia), is known to have been a very good doctor. Ummu Salama says that Asma bint Umais made

medicine for the Prophet (pbuh) from "plants and olive oil brought from India and Yemen." That account also says that Asma learned to make that drug in Abyssinia. (Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-Tabaqat, II, 236.)

The names of some of the women who sold attar of flowers in Medina in the time of our Prophet (pbuh) are known. One of these, Mulayka Ummu as-Saib al-Saqafiyya, entered into the presence of the Prophet (pbuh) in order to sell scents; this clearly shows us that women in the time of our Prophet (pbuh) worked as sales people.

The position of the female companions who took part in battles alongside all other Muslims is described as follows in one of the accounts that set the matter out quite perfectly:

Polytheists who took advantage of the negligence of the believers entered in such a way that a group of 10-12 people charged with protecting the Messenger of God had to also enter the fighting. At one moment our Prophet (pbuh) was left alone, with only Nasiba with him. That isolation lasted 40-50 seconds. One of the polytheists seized the moment and attacked, but Nasiba slew him with her sword. A second polytheist attacked the Messenger of God. That polytheist was double-armed. No matter how much she struck, she could not kill him. She received a sword blow from her shoulder to her lower back. Other believers then arrived and neutralized that unbeliever. Those few seconds were so important! Nasiba received 11 wounds at Uhud. Yet she never left until the end of the battle.

As we have seen, in stark contrast to the false hadiths, women in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) were present in even the most crucial places such as the battlefield. Female companions occupied such eminent positions as protecting the Prophet (pbuh) in battle. The way that our Prophet (pbuh) regarded it as appropriate for women to assume the role of protecting him in such a dangerous and life-threatening situation is an important indication of how much he trusted the intelligence and conscience of the female companions in question.

Not only male believers, but also female believers are addressed in the verse **"You who believe! Do not say, 'Ra'ina' [be our shepherd], say, 'Undhurna' [watch over us] ..."** (Qur'an, 2:104). In this verse, women, as well as men, are advised not to say, "be our shepherd." This means that in the Qur'an, women are not regarded as entities needing to be looked after and governed by men because of their weakness of mind, but on the contrary as strong, intelligent people, capable of standing on their own two feet and whose conscience is to be trusted. However, many people in some Islamic countries that have been shaped by these false hadiths that have been brought in over the course of centuries are devoid of that conception: Therefore, when we say, "Men and women enjoy the same rights in the Qur'an," those who vehemently deny that knowingly or unknowingly rebel against God's verses.

The Defamatory Idea that Women Are Second-Class Citizens and that God Has Left Women Backward

Since God has left women backward, you must leave them backward, too. (al-Tabarani)

If I were to command anyone to prostrate anyone else, I would command women to prostrate their husbands, for God has invested the latter with rights in respect to the former. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 119)

The hatred of women that has persisted for hundreds of years in the fanatics' mentality has brought a great mass of people to slander God and our Prophet (pbuh). Notice that there is no reference in these false hadiths to women enjoying equal rights with men according to the Qur'an, superiority lying not in gender, but in mind and conscience and in fear of God; neither is there any mention of the existence of Qur'anic verses in which the rights enjoyed by women are protected.

These commandments and accounts are deliberately avoided, and there is never any mention of women being entities who are glorified in the Qur'an. Therefore, these words that have deceived Muslims for hundreds of years, and alleged to be the words of our Prophet (pbuh) himself, have led to a perverse mentality becoming ascribed to Islam. In this way they have defamed Islam and our Prophet (pbuh) for hundreds of years.

Yet the idea of women being left backward by God, may He forbid, appears in not one single verse of the Qur'an. On the contrary, God reveals in the Qur'an, through words such as **"believers, those who believe, anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer..."** that all believers, male and female, have the same responsibilities, with no allowances made for gender. In verse 95 of Surat an-Nisa', God says;

Those believers who stay behind – other than those forced to by necessity – are not the same as those who struggle in the Way of God, sacrificing their wealth and themselves. God has given those who struggle with their wealth and themselves a higher rank than those who stay behind. God has promised the Best to both, but God has preferred those who struggle over those who stay behind by an immense reward. (Qur'an, 4:95)

As we have seen, the verse speaks of believers having a responsibility to wage an intellectual struggle on God's path throughout the course of their lives. However, that responsibility is imposed equally on men and women. By addressing all "believers," God holds all Muslims, men and women, responsible for discharging that religious obligation. If a Muslim woman performs that obligation better than men, then that woman will be superior to all men in the Sight of God. If a Muslim man does it, then he will be superior in the Sight of God because of his piety; there is no differentiation between the genders here. On the contrary, superiority lies in conscience, intelligence and sincerity.

Therefore, just like all the others, these false hadiths too are at total variance with the pronouncements found in the Qur'an and the value attached to women in the Qur'an. First of all, Muslims prostrate themselves to none but God. The only powers to which a Muslim will bow his head and obey are God and His Prophet.

For a Muslim woman, her husband is a helpless servant whom she loves for God's sake and for whom she feels respect and compassion to the extent compatible with being a Muslim. Her love and respect are directionally proportional to her husband's sincere devotion to God, the strength of his faith and his zeal and determination on His path. There is no question of her feeling respect for her husband simply because he is a man, as there is in the rotten mentality of the fanatics. For a Muslim man and woman, marriage is also a vow that applies to the hereafter. A Muslim woman can, therefore, only feel love, respect and affection for a husband who is virtuous and someone she hopes that God will be pleased with in the hereafter. She would never feel that love and affection if the opposite applied. Even thinking of such a love or using it in a sentence for comparative purposes is absurd for a Muslim.

Allegations Prohibiting Women from Adorning Themselves

God curses those ladies who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those ladies who remove the hair from their faces and those who make artificial spaces between their teeth in order to look more beautiful... (Sahih Bukhari, Book 60, Hadith 408)

Ibn Umar reported God's Messenger (pbuh) cursing the woman who added false hair and the woman who asked for tattoos. (Sahih Muslim, Book 24, Hadith 5300)

The Apostle of God (pbuh) forbade ten things: Sharpening the ends of the teeth, tattooing, plucking hair, ... (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 32, Hadith 4038)

The main ideas behind the fanatical mindset that seeks to portray women as repulsive, ugly, ill-groomed and second-class citizens stem from these false hadiths. This appearance that fanatics have imposed on women under the name of religion has led to them being regarded as ill-groomed and even no longer human and devoid of beauty, cleanliness and fine speech.

The picture of a Muslim woman drawn by the false hadiths above is one that makes it impossible for a woman to have any place in social life. Under that model, if a woman is a Muslim it is unacceptable for her to be attractive, clean and well-groomed. The fanatical mindset that portrays that notion as a sign of piety thus turns woman into an entity

that cannot enter into society because of her appearance and also deprives her of the opportunity of talking about the faith for the same reason.

Just think; what woman would wish to live by a model under which Muslim women are represented by a woman who pays no attention to grooming, who attaches no importance to cleanliness, who never even thinks of dealing with the hairs on her face yet is not even embarrassed to go where other people are? Or who would want such a person to talk about religion? So how can a woman who believes that religion forbids looking attractive, clean and well-groomed, and that she will be cursed by God for doing so, want to have anything to do with such a faith?

This is one of the main reasons why Islam is all too often literally thought of as a sinister faith best kept well away from, particularly in Western societies. The fanatics have imprisoned Muslim women in an entirely fabricated model that has absolutely no place in the Qur'an, and thus seeks to prevent them living by and preaching Islam. Whereas in the same way that a Muslim woman has a duty to speak of the moral virtues and love of the Qur'an, she also has a responsibility to show these virtues through her behavior and attitudes, to live by them plainly speaking. In talking about being a Muslim she must look good, and in explaining that being a Muslim means love, she must genuinely embody that love; in that way, someone who really needs to know the beauties of the faith must know that this faith will bring all these delights with it and must be able to see them with his own eyes. That is also the way it is described in the Qur'an. The Qur'an speaks of Muslims wearing fine and spotlessly clean clothes and using the finest clothing and accessories when they meet together.

Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts, and fine apparel... (Qur'an, 7:26)

Children of Adam, put on your adornment in every mosque... (Qur'an, 7:31)

In addition, the Qur'an describes in glorious detail the cleanliness, fine grooming, beauty and elegant clothing of the people of paradise, and particularly the women.

Just like closely guarded pearls. (Qur'an, 37:49)

... They will be adorned in them with bracelets made of gold and wear green garments made of the finest silk and rich brocade... (Qur'an, 18:31)

... they will be adorned with gold bracelets and pearls, and where their clothing will be of silk... (Qur'an, 22:23)

They will wear green garments of fine silk and rich brocade. They will be adorned with silver bracelets. (Qur'an, 76:21)

As will clearly be seen from the few verses quoted here, God employs the beauty of women, the smoothness of their skin from which all hairs have been removed, in the words "**Just like closely guarded pearls**," as a measure of beauty, and reveals that this is how the women of paradise will be. This means that God regards smooth and clean skin as beautiful. God loves beauty, cleanliness, elegance, adornment and pleasant clothing, and wishes to see His servants in that form. There is no question that our Prophet (pbuh) would regard as beautiful the things that God regards as attractive and would encourage and advise Muslim women along those same lines.

It must not be forgotten that there may be women who have to resort to such grooming methods for reasons other than esthetic ones. For example, women may have to wear wigs after such difficult forms of medical treatment as chemotherapy. This is perfectly normal, and even necessary, and this is an excellent way of looking after themselves for the women in question. Fanatics, however, try to do away with this beauty and making life easier by means of these false hadiths.

In the same way, there is no prohibition in the Qur'an regarding tattoos in various patterns, the correction of asymmetrical eyebrows for instance through tattooing, or the removal of hairs on the face; that would in any case violate the spirit of the Qur'an. Fanatics who would force a pretty young girl to go out with excess facial hair, who would embarrass her in front of other people and who would strive to make her ugly rather than attractive are

therefore unable to represent beauty in any way. Yet God encourages believers to be well-groomed, attractive, elegant and clean in verses.

The Fanatics' Idea of How Muslim Women Should Treat Their Husbands

When a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond and he (the husband) spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning. (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim)

If a woman spends the night deserting her husband's bed (does not sleep with him), then the angels send their curses on her till she comes back (to her husband). (Sahih Bukhari, Book 62, Hadith 122)

O womenfolk, if you knew the rights that your husbands have over you, every one of you would wipe the dust from her husband's feet with her face. (Reported as sahih by Ibn Hibban, and with a jayyid isnad by al-Bazzar. See Ibn al-Jawzi, Ahkam al-nisa', p. 311.)

By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, if from his foot to the crown of his head there was a wound pouring forth pus, and she (the wife) came and licked that, then she would (still) not have fulfilled his right. (Ibn Hajar al-Haytami 2/121 Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, V, 239)

Any woman who asks her husband for a divorce with no good reason will be deprived of even smelling the scent of paradise. (Reported by Tirmidhi, 2/329, abwab al-talaq, 11; Ibn Hibban, 9/490, Kitab al-nikah, bab ma'ashirah al-zawjayn)

There are three people whose prayers will not be accepted, neither their good works: ... a woman whose husband is angry with her, until he is pleased with her again ... (Reported by Ibn Hibban in his Sahih, 12/178, Kitab al-ashribah, 2, fasl fi'l-ashribah)

She who does not observe the rights of her husband will have failed to observe the rights of God. (Shir'a)

A woman who hurts her husband will be under the curse of God until she makes him contented. (R. Nâsihîn)

If we consider these hadiths one by one;

O womenfolk, if you knew the rights that your husbands have over you, every one of you would wipe the dust from her husband's feet with her face. (Reported as sahih by Ibn Hibban, and with a jayyid isnad by al-Bazzar. See Ibn al-Jawzi, Ahkam al-nisa', p. 311.)

By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, if from his foot to the crown of his head there was a wound pouring forth pus, and she (the wife) came and licked that, then she would (still) not have fulfilled his right. (Ibn Hajar al-Haytami 2/121 Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, V, 239)

When we look at these two false hadiths, we see that Islam is portrayed as depicting women as supposedly second-class entities condemned to submit to their husbands' every whim (surely our Lord, the Qur'an and Islam are beyond that); according to that devilish way of thinking, the husband has such dominion over a woman that she will never be able to repay him, not even if she wipes the dust from his feet with her face or licks his body clean of pus. Despite this weird mentality, for hundreds of years, nobody felt the need to even question why a husband should enjoy such rights over a woman, and that led to this blind, superstitious belief putting down deep roots; so much so that most Muslims have regarded that kind of twisted logic as legitimate.

Under this foul way of thinking, women have been forced to fulfill the ignorant concept known as "a woman's duties" toward their husbands even if they are deeply unhappy with those husbands' appalling behavior and lack of moral values. They have been despised and mistreated, and the precious few rights they enjoyed have been restricted

to the point of irrelevance. The idea that they are second-class and feeble entities condemned to oppression has been imposed on them by force, and that perspective has become institutionalized in Islamic societies.

For centuries, nobody stood up and said, "There is no such way of thinking or belief in the Qur'an. Men and women are equal. God bestows wide rights and freedoms on women in the Qur'an." On the contrary, for centuries, the mentality of superstition has imposed non-Qur'anic practices on some ignorant Muslims through a variety of falsehoods spoken supposedly in the name of God and the faith, such as, "This is what the faith commands. God and the angels will curse those who do not do it. Such people will be sinners. They cannot earn God's approval or enter paradise." The characters of most Muslim women have been annihilated by husbands brought up with the teachings of the fanatical mindset because in the religion of the fanatics, women have no choice but to obey their husbands and do whatever they want. The great majority are not allowed to read, work, enter into social life or even so much as look out of a window. Therefore, since they are made physically and psychologically dependent on their husbands, and since the customs and traditions that prevail in that segment of society also nourish the fanatical mindset, it is next to impossible for women to free themselves from that repression.

We need to ask here, what it is about men in these fanatical societies governed by superstitions that cause men to view themselves as wholly superior and adopt the perspective that women are little more than chattel? In the view of the Qur'an, superiority lies solely in piety, and the reward for that is to be hoped from God. How can a man have such dominion over a woman that she can never repay him even if she licks the pus off of his body? Who created those rights that can never be repaid, and why? What can bestow any rights on him apart from this superiority of piety? God certainly bestows no such privilege on him, and thus that privilege appears nowhere in the Qur'an: So where did this claimed superiority come from? How did "every husband" without exception come to enjoy this lofty position, irrespective of whether he is devout or irreligious, a believer or a polytheist, a sinner or a tyrant?

It is the false hadiths in question that have bestowed this false elevation onto men and that have been made part of Islam by the fanatical mindset. They have spread and imposed that mindset, which is not in the Qur'an and which is cursed by God, in the name of the faith. Most Islamic communities, and even most women who have been indoctrinated in these Islamic communities, simply cannot comprehend any other way of thinking. That is one of the worst scourges that the religion of the fanatics has inflicted upon the world.

The Rights and Superiority Bestowed on Women in the Qur'an Are Nowhere in the Religion of the Fanatic

In societies under the influence of fanaticism, women cannot enjoy the broad rights and authorities recognized as belonging to women in the Qur'an. Indeed, women living in these societies are wholly unaware even of the existence of those rights and freedoms. The women in question are brought up far removed from the moral values of the Qur'an. One consequence of that exclusion is that most of them are unable even to read and write. There is therefore no way in which they can know that what they are living by is not Islam, but the pseudo-religion of fanaticism. However, not only these miserable women, but also many countries of the world all imagine that these fanatical practices that have persisted for centuries actually stem from the Qur'an. They imagine that, may God forbid, the Qur'an describes a faith in which women are worthless, ignorant, oppressed, devoid of character, deprived of all rights and forced to submit to their husbands without question. Yet none of these slanders appear anywhere in the Qur'an.

Let us continue to respond to the slanders against women that appear nowhere in the Qur'an, but are perceived of as part of Islam because of false hadiths:

The Position of a Woman Who Divorces Her Husband

Any woman who asks her husband for a divorce with no good reason will be deprived of even smelling the scent of paradise. (Reported by Tirmidhi, 2/329, abwab al-talaq, 11; Ibn Hibban, 9/490, Kitab al-nikah, bab ma'ashirah al-zawjayn)

Firstly, the Qur'an explicitly describes the conditions and rules that apply for spouses to divorce one another (This will be discussed in detail in due course). God recognizes the right to divorce of both sides. Yet there are no statements regarding a woman who divorces her husband being unable to enter paradise as in the above false hadith. This is manifest proof that the hadith is entirely fabricated. There can be no question of our Prophet (pbuh) making unlawful something that God has made lawful and bringing in a commandment that is the exact opposite of what God commands. Therefore, in the event that a woman wishes to divorce, God bestows that freedom on her in the Qur'an. The conditions for divorce are revealed in verses that contain countless precautions intended to protect the woman, materially and psychologically, both before and after divorce. Therefore, the statement that a woman who asks her husband for a divorce "will be deprived of even smelling the scent of paradise" is totally false and defamatory. It is the product of a devilish logic that has nothing to do with Islam.

It is highly important to note that Islam consists of Divine pronouncements, the word of God, that fully address human nature and the human mind and soul. All the verses in the Qur'an contain pronouncements that lift difficulties from people, prevent oppressive practices, ensure that a person's free will and mind are involved and are in complete agreement with human nature. None of these pronouncements impose any difficulties on men or women. On the contrary, they resolve disagreements, injustices and inequalities among people. They lift the heavy chains from them. They ease people's souls. They establish bonds of love and friendship, rather than enmity and hatred. Most important of all, they permit the emergence of a noble and virtuous human model bound to God in complete submission to Him.

Yet the model of marriage that appears in the false hadiths in question reflects a conception far outside the moral values of the Qur'an. According to the Qur'an, there can be no compulsion or coercion between married couples. If a disagreement arises, it is to be corrected through the commandments of the Qur'an. The most important thing is for both parties to the marriage to abide completely by the moral values of the Qur'an and to strive to resolve their differences as much as possible. If incompatibility should persist, however, then both sides have the right to divorce.

It is also revealed in a verse that in the event of divorce both sides will be under the protection of God:

If a couple do separate, God will enrich each of them from His boundless wealth. God is All-Encompassing, All-Wise. (Qur'an, 4:130)

As we have seen, in the Qur'an, after a man and a woman decide to divorce of their own free will they continue to live freely. There is not a single verse in the Qur'an to suggest that a woman cannot enter paradise if she divorces her husband.

A Woman Being Regarded as a Sinner until Her Husband Is Pleased with Her

A woman who hurts her husband will be under the curse of God until she makes him contented. (R. Nasihin)

She who does not observe the rights of her husband will have failed to observe the rights of God. (Shir'a)

There are three people whose prayers will not be accepted, neither their good works: ... a woman whose husband is angry with her, until he is pleased with her again ... (Reported by Ibn Hibban in his Sahih, 12/178, Kitab al-ashribah, 2, fasl fi'l-ashribah)

The references in the above fabricated hadiths to women "... failing to please their husbands or not observing their rights" are again in blatant opposition to the verses of the Qur'an. If a Muslim woman behaves toward her

husband in a manner that is not compatible with the moral values of the Qur'an, then she loses God's approval, not that of her husband; what truly matters for a Muslim is the loss of God's approval. For that reason, the important thing for a Muslim is not the approval of his or her spouse, but that of God. So according to the Qur'an, once a Muslim woman has made good her error and earned the approval of God, it is of no importance to her whether her husband or anyone else approves of her. Indeed, if the other person has a Muslim nature, he will naturally be pleased with this state of affairs as that will be pleasing to God.

However, the general perspective of these false hadiths is strikingly reminiscent of marriages from the Time of Ignorance, based entirely on polytheism, rather than on God and the commandments of the Qur'an. As we have already said, a married man and woman in the Qur'an are select people who fear God, and who possess noble and superior moral values. That is what marriage is based on in the Qur'an. So long as they remain married, their feelings of love, affection, respect, compassion and loyalty to one another grow stronger all the time. God reveals in the Qur'an that love, compassion, modesty and tranquility must all be present together in marriage:

Among His signs is that He created spouses for you of your own kind so that you might find tranquility in them. And He has placed affection and compassion between you. There are certainly signs in that for people who reflect. (Qur'an, 30:21)

There are thus enormous differences between the model of marriage set out in the false hadiths with its conflicts, intense disputes, belittlement and humiliating actions, and the model of marriage in the Qur'an.

It must not be forgotten that in Islam, goodness is shown, not for the hope of reward from other people, but for the approval of God, and Muslims hope for a recompense for their good deeds from God alone. God reveals that morality as follows in a verse:

Those who give their wealth to purify themselves – not to repay someone else for a favor done – desiring only the Face of their Lord Most High. They will certainly be satisfied. (Qur'an, 92:18-21)

Therefore, according to the Qur'an, a woman will try to please only God and give thanks to Him and will desire His approval. Her only Lord is our Almighty Lord, not her husband. A mentality that tells a woman to engage in all sorts of horrible actions in order to repay her husband therefore stands in total opposition to the Qur'an.

Women Being Unable to Go out, and the Idea They Are Prone to Deception by Satan

A woman is 'Awhrah (i.e. should not be exposed); and whenever she goes outdoors, satan receives her. (Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban and Sunan Abu Dawud)

Woman is the mainstay, the beauty and fineness of society. It is a great blessing for a society to have women in it, for them to have the right to speak out and be in charge, to be involved in decision-making mechanisms and to have their opinions sought. Woman has been specially created by God to be able to perform detailed analysis, make complex decisions, think of all precautions beforehand and to be highly considerate and intelligent. That is why the value attached to women in Islam is so high. Once that is fully understood, Islam will be properly comprehended across the world.

It is for these reasons that internal and external forces have striven for hundreds of years to cause damage within Islam, especially on the subject of women. Using fabricated hadiths and superstitious practices, as well as various customs and traditions referred to as "rules" that actually have no place in Islam as a shield, they have tried to give the impression that a woman is a second class, despised, repulsive and dangerous entity prone to leading people into sin.

In the above false hadith, for instance, a woman is described as being predisposed to immorality, unable to control herself, weak-willed, unreliable in faith and prone to devilish promptings. That is the reason for all the talk of women

being allowed out as little as possible, being kept under supervision and having a strong tendency to immorality in the event that they do go out, thus giving the idea that their every action needs to be monitored.

Yet it is perfectly clear that these fabricated words were never spoken by our Prophet (pbuh). It is the fanatics, with their deep enmity towards women, who spout fatuous falsehoods and ascribe them to our Prophet (pbuh), who in point of fact entrusted his life to women in battle, set aside space for women in assemblies and who felt a profound love and respect for them. In the time of our Prophet (pbuh), as we have already seen in detail, women took their place in battle, were present in all kinds of social environments, engaged in business and were among the leading preachers of the faith. The verses of the Qur'an contain not the slightest suggestion that women are too dangerous or inherently foolish to be allowed out of doors; on the contrary, in the Qur'an God reveals the psychopathic nature of the fanatic attitude to women and how that mentality engaged in fiendish activities in the time of our Prophet (pbuh):

When any of them is given the good news of the very thing which he himself has ascribed to the All-Merciful [i.e. of a baby girl] his face darkens and he is furious. (Qur'an, 43:17)

When the baby girl buried alive is asked for what crime she was killed, (Qur'an, 81:8-9)

When one of them is given the good news of a baby girl, his face darkens and he is furious. He hides away from people because of the evil of the good news he has been given. Should he keep her ignominiously or bury her in the earth? What an evil judgment they make! (Qur'an, 16:58-59)

The verses in question provide an all too illuminating description of the terrifying nature of the fanatics' attitude towards women and show how much this attitude is cursed by God. A mentality that was filled with rage and turned black when it learned that its child was a daughter and that went even further, committing infanticide by burying that child alive existed in the past, and they will have to give account in the hereafter for their actions as described in verses 8 and 9 of Surat at-Takwir. This enmity toward women is a source of great anger in the Sight of God.

As we have seen, the fanatical mindset that overflows with enmity toward and hatred of women has never altered its misogynistic attitude toward them for hundreds of years. Since these people knew that the verses of the Qur'an did not support their wicked way of thinking, they instead sought to wreak harm through these fabricated hadiths: That is the main reason for the existence of these horrifying false hadiths about women in particular.

In another fabricated verse on the subject, the fanatics seek to train women by starving them almost to death and not letting them wear attractive clothes. According to that diseased mentality, if a woman is starved and only given old and shabby clothes to wear she will be less inclined to want to go outside. The false hadiths in question read:

Let women go hungry, but not enough to harm them, and with only few clothes, though do not go to extremes in that. That is because if women can eat their fill and dress well, there is nothing they like more than going out and walking around. But if they are relatively hungry and naked, there is nothing better for them than sitting at home. (Ibn al-Jawzi, Mawdu'at, II/282283; Suyuti, al-Laali, II/154 Ibn Arrak, Tenzihus Sharia, II/212213)

Strengthen your control of women through (providing them with) insufficient clothing, for when a woman comes to have excessive dresses and ornaments, she tends to roam outside home. (Nahj al-Fasahah, p. 216)

A man may have lost his teeth and become ugly while his wife happens to be young and very beautiful. It is possible that such a woman, who may have gone out to the market or to other places where she may have been invited, sees handsome men and upon her return home is reluctant to be responsive to her husband's amorous advances. This is the result of the visit of a woman to markets and social gatherings to say the least. (Imam Sharani, al-Uhud al-Qubra)

The description of women in the false hadiths in question is an abnormal creature, literally one of an animal that cannot control itself anywhere it goes, that tends to act in the light of its own instincts rather than out of faith in, and fear of, God and that therefore needs to be kept in check by various precautions. Such a description is exactly that the fanatics have of women.

What concerns us is the perspective of the Qur'an, not that of the fanatic. The Muslim woman described in the Qur'an fears God. She therefore knows very well how she should dress in which environment, how to protect her chastity and honor, and how to behave in the shops, at the market and during celebrations. The Qur'an is all she needs to know. She has no need of a man to tell her in order to know that, nor to tell her what to wear or eat. It is God Who will decide, not a mortal man. Men are given no such authority or license anywhere in the Qur'an. Men are given no privileges or attributes to allow them to claim that they possess such rights anywhere in the Qur'an. Since God addresses female believers in the Qur'an in the same way that He does male believers, a woman will see and understand what our Lord says to her in the Qur'an and strive to act on it in the most perfect way.

In order to act on the morality described in the Qur'an, all a woman needs is to fear God. Those people who maintain that piety can only be established when imposed by a man seek to make sure those superstitious traditions and customs dating back to pre-Islamic times dominate life.

In addition, God reveals in the Qur'an that Muslims, be they men or women, should eat and drink everything that is lawful - without being extravagant of course - come to the mosque in the finest clothes, wear jewels and be clean and well-groomed.

Children of Adam! Put on your adornment in every mosque and eat and drink but do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate. (Qur'an, 7:31)

There are no verses about a woman not going out of doors. On the contrary, it can clearly be seen from verses that the social responsibilities that God imposes on women require that they play an intensive role in social life. Those fabricated hadiths are therefore at complete variance with the Qur'an.

The Idea that A Woman Is Misfortune and Annuls Prayer

The Apostle of God (pbuh) said: When one of you prays without a sutrah, a dog, an ass, a pig, a Jew, a Magian, and a woman cut off his prayer... (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 2, Hadith 704)

Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people). (Sahih Bukhari, Book 9, Hadith 490)

Evil omen is in three things: The horse, the woman and the house. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 52, Hadith 110)

If there is any evil omen in anything, then it is in the woman, the horse and the house. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 52, Hadith 111; Sahih Muslim, Book 26, Hadith 5528)

We need to consider these fabricated hadiths in the light of the above remarks. To belittle women, whom God says He has created in the finest form, by comparing them with dogs, donkeys and pigs, and to describe them as "evil omen", is incompatible with the values of the Qur'an. Muslim women are blessed people, praised and shown as role models, and loved and respected in the Qur'an, and are described as blessings throughout the Qur'an.

In addition, the way that animals such as dogs and horses, which are very nice and also of much help to human beings, are described as creatures with evil omen annulling acts of worship is also a sign of the horrible manifestation of the rationale in question.

What is more, there is no such concept as fortune or misfortune in Islam; these concepts are part of polytheism. Good and evil both come from God. Nothing created has any power of its own and none can be fortune or misfortune for human beings. Believing in misfortune is simply a part of the polytheistic character, and God tells us it is really those people who have ill fortune:

... No indeed! Their ill fortune will be with God. But most of them did not know. (Qur'an, 7:131)

Some of the clearest examples of the changes in meaning set out in detail in the preceding sections appear in these hadiths.

While it has been regarded as sufficient to transmit the sense of the hadith, failure to hear the beginning and end of the hadith has also sometimes led to a loss of meaning. For example, two people came to Aisha (ra) and said to her that Abu Hurayrah narrates that the Prophet (pbuh) used to say that *ill fortune is to be found only in women, horses and houses*. At this Aisha (ra) replied: *"By God Who revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet! The Prophet never said this; what he did say was that the People of the Ignorance hold this opinion."*

Another accurate Bukhari hadith narrated by 'Aisha (ra) on the subject is as follows:

The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, "prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people)." I said, "You have made us (i.e. women) dogs. I saw the Prophet praying while I used to lie in my bed between him and the Qibla."

Our Beloved Prophet (pbuh) used to pray when Aisha (ra) was in front of him. We can thus understand that the superstition in question is a grave slander against the Prophet (pbuh), one that Aisha (ra) totally refuted after his demise.

Examples of the Fanatical Mindset that Compares Women to Animals

The race of women consists of ten species, and the character of each (of these) corresponds and is related to the distinctive quality of one of the animals. One (species) resembles the pig, another the ape, another the dog, another the snake, another the mule, another the scorpion, another the mouse, another the pigeon, another the fox, and another the sheep. (from Counsel for Kings by Imam Ghazali)

Here we need to ask; what kind of opinion of a woman could a man who believes in such nonsense possibly have? How can he love and respect his wife? How could such a person feel anything other than hatred for the person who should be the closest to him in this world? How could he attain the love that is so important in the Qur'an if he literally regards his own wife as an animal?

He cannot, of course. Yet in the Qur'an, God speaks of the importance of a special kind of love and compassion between spouses:

Among His signs is that He created spouses for you of your own kind so that you might find tranquility in them. And He has placed affection and compassion between you. There are certainly signs in that for people who reflect. (Qur'an, 30:21)

On that basis, we can expand our discussion a little: Generally speaking, someone whose opinion of his wife is framed by such horrible details will doubtlessly think of his own mother, sister or daughter in the same way. His love and respect for them will be a reflection of the sick perspective in those false words, and his relationships with them will inevitably be based on contempt.

The description of women in the false hadiths obviously encourages hatred, rather than love. It is impossible to feel respect for the woman described in the false hadiths in question. Not a word is said about love. This great emotion, which God describes as essential in the Qur'an, the love that is the whole purpose behind God's creation of the universe, has literally been forgotten. What kind of faith is it that has so many enemies, and particularly women?

Such a faith is most definitely not the true faith in the Qur'an.

In addition, one of the most important things in the Qur'an is to hold favorable opinions of others. It is a sin to jump to conclusions without evidence and witnesses. Therefore, in the view of the Qur'an, it is wrong to think of people as "perfidious, eager for fine clothes, predisposed to steal, cunning, proud and tricky" just because they are women. It is an outrageous lie, and a sin. In order to be able to say that someone is a cheat, we need to witness their trickery and dishonesty; in order to be able to accuse someone of theft, we need to prove that they have stolen someone else's property. In the view of the Qur'an, it is slander to make such accusations, in the absence of any

evidence or witness, solely on the grounds that a person is a woman. However, the fanatics are unaware of the commandments in the Qur'an and are therefore unable to see the perverse logic in the fabricated hadiths because they live by an entirely different and false faith.

The next section contains rebuttals of the claims made by those who seek evidence from the Qur'an to foolishly restrict and debase women.

Verses Addressing the Wives of Our Prophet (pbuh)

We now need to make one important point very clear; the Qur'an contains verses addressing the wives of our Prophet (pbuh). In order to prevent strife and possible misunderstandings, God kept the wives of our Prophet (pbuh) separate from other women in his time. As it is revealed in the Qur'an:

Wives of the Prophet! You are not like other women provided you have piety. 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 prayer and pay alms and obey God and His Messenger. God desires to remove all impurity from you, People of the House, and to purify you completely. (Qur'an, 33:32-33)

In these verses, the wives of our Prophet (pbuh) have separate responsibilities on the subjects of life-style, speech, clothing and the like; people looking at these verses sometimes interpret them as being generally addressed to all Muslim women. Yet these verses are not addressed to all Muslim women, and the wives of the Prophet (pbuh) are specifically set apart from other women.

Conclusion: The Qur'an Attaches the Greatest Value to Women

The main reason for our discussion of the fabricated hadiths concerning women in this chapter is to show the false belief widespread in some Islamic communities and what its true origin is. In this way, those who abide by these views in the name of Islam, and those who are opposed to Islam because of them will be able to see that this oppression of women has absolutely no place in the Qur'an.

However, some people try to find evidence in the Qur'an for the belittlement of women. That stems from the misinterpretation of various verses of the Qur'an, the misinterpretation of various personal annotations made in parentheses and from such misinterpretations being generally made in the light of the fabricated hadiths cited above. Yet when one looks at the Qur'an alone it is impossible to find any of the ideas that the fanatics come up with in the light of their own desires. In order to understand this better, we shall be looking at verses which they have for years sought to portray as supporting evidence for their enforced enclosure and beating of women and women being treated as second-class human beings. When one looks at these through the eyes of a Muslim who abides by the Qur'an, and not through the eyes of a fanatic, when the verses are interpreted according to their true meanings, when that false faith of the fanatics is excluded, then everyone will clearly see that the system that attaches the greatest value to women is the system found in the Qur'an.

Responses to Those Who Look for Evidence from the Qur'an in Order to Restrict and Belittle Women

The Addition of the Word "Headscarf" to Translations of the Qur'an As a Means of Restricting Women

One of the issues that fanatics bring up most of all is that women should cover themselves up. The conception of religion and faith of certain people, who exhibit almost no sensitivity to a great many commandments of the faith, who fail to observe even its most fundamental requirements but who are scrupulous when it comes to abiding by the Sunnah - the hadiths in other words - generally takes the form of "the headscarf=religion." However, does the headscarf, which some people literally regard as the sole symbol of the faith, appear in the Qur'an?

Many scholars say that they draw their remarks about the headscarf and covering up from the Qur'an, and point to various verses on the subject. The fact is, however, that the word "headscarf" appears in not one single verse. The 31st verse of Surat an-Nur, which these people try to use to back their claims, is, in truth, a verse that explains how women are given complete freedom. Therefore, we first need to see how the Qur'an is interpreted in translations and commentaries, and what the accurate explanation is.

Surat an-Nur Verse 31, 1st Part

Say to the believing women that they should lower their eyes and guard their chastity and not display their adornments – except for what normally shows – and draw their head-coverings across their breasts. They should only display their adornments to their husbands or their fathers or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons or other women or those they own as slaves or their male attendants who have no sexual desire or children who still have no awareness of women's private parts. Nor should they stamp their feet so that their hidden ornaments are known. Turn to God every one of you, believers, so that hopefully you will have success. (Qur'an, 24:31)

In almost all translations the verse appears as, "... and draw their head-coverings across their breasts," but the word "headscarf" actually does not appear in the original Arabic verse. The verse speaks of "covering." We can see this more clearly from looking at the meanings of the original Arabic words:

"... draw their head-coverings across their breasts ..." (Qur'an, 24:31)

“Waqul lilmu/minati yaghdudna min absarihinna wayahfathna furoojahunna wala yubdeena zeenatahunna illa ma thahara minha walyadribna bikhumurihinna AAala juyoobihinna wala yubdeena zeenatahunna illa libuAAoolatihinna aw aba-ihinna aw aba-i buAAoolatihinna aw abna-ihinna aw abna-i buAAoolatihinna aw ikhwanihinna aw banee ikhwanihinna aw banee akhawatihinna aw nisa-ihinna aw ma malakat aymanuhunna awi alttabiAAeena ghayri olee al-irbati mina alrrijali awi alttifli allatheena lam yathharoo AAala AAawrati

alnnisa-i wala yadribna bi-arjulihinna liyuAAalama ma yukhfeena min zeenatihinna watooboo ila Allahi jameeAAan ayyuha almu/minoona laAAaallakum tuflihoona”wi alttifli allatheena lam yathharoo AAala AAawrati alnnisa-i wala yadribna bi-arjulihinna liyuAAalama ma yukhfeena min zeenatihinna watooboo ila Allahi jameeAAan ayyuha almu/minoona laAAaallakum tuflihoona

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءَ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ وَتَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

يَضْرِبْنَ ya-dribna: ya-dribna: derived from the verb "daraba," means "to strike, beat, leave (something), cover, close up."

خُمُرِهِنَّ khumuri-hin-na: derived from "khamara." "Khamra" means "wine, intoxicating." In this verse the word means "covering." It is generally used to mean "all kinds of covering, curtain, screen; shelter; pretext."

جُيُوبِهِنَّ juyooobi-hin-na: Plural form of the word "juyub." It means chest, breast, pocket, chest area, cavity, collar.

Let us now look word by word at the part of the verse reading "**wal-ya-dribna bi-khumuri-hin-na 'ala juyooobi-hin-na,**" translated as "**... and draw their head coverings across their breasts.**"

"Khimar" / Cover

The word "khumur" used as evidence for the headscarf covers a broad range of meaning, and is the plural form of the word "khimar," meaning "covering," and is derived from the root "**khamara,**" meaning "**to cover.**"

Dictionaries generally translate the word "khimar" as meaning "cover," suggesting "anything which covers something."

Therefore, the word translated as "head coverings" in the verse in fact means just a "cover", and the word "head" appears nowhere at all in the verse.

"Yadribna" / To strike

This verb in the verse is translated by those who wish to portray the headscarf as being commanded in the Qur'an as, "that they should draw, that they should release." The reason for that is to be able use the words "and draw their head coverings across their breasts" in order to justify their preconception that the verse refers to a headscarf already existing on the head. The fact is, however, that the verb means no such thing, and is properly used as follows:

The verb "yadribna" is derived from the root "daraba." Daraba means "to strike, to beat, to leave, to cover, to close." The verse is referring to the covering of the chest region with a covering when it says "that they should cover (walyadribna) their breasts (juyubihinna) with their coverings (bikhumurihinna)."

In the Qur'an the verb "yudnina" is used when the meaning purported is "that they should lengthen, release, or let down." This verb however appears in no part of this verse.

"Juyub" / Collar opening

The word "juyub" is the plural form of the word "jayb," which means "pocket" (it is used in the explanations such as "to open a pocket in a shirt", "to put into a pocket" or "to remove from pocket")

It is also used to mean the breast, bosom, heart, pocket, purse, opening.

The word "juyub" appears three times in the Qur'an. "Juyub" is used in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, while the singular form of the word, "jayb," appears in two places in the story of the Prophet Moses (pbuh). It is used as follows in those two verses:

The singular form of the word "juyub", "jayb," appears twice in the story of the Prophet Moses (pbuh):

Put your hand into your bosom (fee jaybika). It will emerge pure white, ... (Qur'an, 27:12)

Put your hand into your bosom (fee jaybika). It will emerge pure white ... (Qur'an, 28:32)

The word "juyub" in these two verses is used to mean the "**bosom**" of the Prophet Moses (pbuh). Looking at all these facts together, it is clear that when used together with the word "**khimar**," the word "**juyub**" means to cover up the bosom. The verse contains no reference to "covering up the head."

Therefore, the true meaning of the passage generally interpreted to mean, "**... that they should draw their head-coverings across their breasts,**" is in fact, "**that they should cover their breasts with their coverings.**" The commandment in the verse refers to the covering of the breasts, not the head.

Misleading or Incorrect Translations Based on Fabricated Hadiths

In order to be able to produce a commandment referring to the "headscarf" from verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, various misleading interpretations have sometimes been employed by commentators while translating the verse. The aim behind that is to be able to adapt the verse in the light of fabricated hadiths that we will be analyzing soon (surely the verse is beyond that). The main misleading interpretation in question was brought about by the mistranslation of "... that they should draw their head coverings..."

A False Interpretation: "That They Should Draw Their Head Coverings"

As we have seen from examining the Arabic, this passage, interpreted in some translations to mean, "**... that they should draw their head-coverings across their breasts,**" contains a reference neither to a "head-covering" nor "drawing down." Nonetheless, some people desirous of interpreting the verse along those lines fall into serious contradictions and errors in terms of meaning because their interpretations conflict with the Qur'an. Many of them

make surprising comments along the lines of "They drew the headscarves they were already wearing on their heads across their breasts," maintaining that the women already had a covering on their heads. In order for Muslim women of the time to "already have a covering on their heads," there would have to be a commandment to that effect in the Qur'an: Yet nowhere in the Qur'an does it say anything about the headscarf. It is therefore impossible for the women of the time to have had scarves on their heads as a religious commandment. The idea of the "scarf already on their heads" in some commentaries is therefore a serious logical flaw. Let us now look at these flaws of logic:

1- In order to back up the idea of "a scarf already worn on the head," some commentators suggest that the reference to the "jilbab," that is burqa, in verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab was revealed before verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, and that Muslim women therefore already wore scarves on their heads. As we shall be seeing in detail, the jilbab is a piece of cloth that covers the entire body, from head to foot; its purpose is essentially to cover the entire body. If we remember that verse 31 of Surat an-Nur commands women to cover up their breasts, we can see that there is no possibility of the chest of a woman wearing the jilbab being uncovered in any way, so the verse is not addressing women who cover their entire head and body. The people making that claim seem to have forgotten this very important and fundamental point.

2- Women in Arab societies of the time moved around unclothed and that is why the verse was sent down. Following that verse, Muslim women began covering their previously exposed chests. Let us recall that the word "juyub" in the verse means bosom, and that the true sense of the passage in question is "that they should cover their breasts with their coverings."

3- According to some commentators who insist on the idea of a "pre-existing head covering," the women in question have "already" covered their heads with scarves, yet, according to their way of thinking, their chests are somehow completely uncovered! According to this peculiar way of thinking, women managed to think of covering their heads, but not of covering their breasts (surely Muslims are beyond that). They were supposedly scrupulous when it came to covering their heads, but walked around naked. That is the inevitable conclusion from these commentators' idea of "the pre-existing headscarf." With this interpretation, these people are maintaining that women "with their chests exposed but their heads covered up" are being advised to pull those head coverings down to cover up their chests. This terrible flaw of logic is the result of trying to include the idea of the headscarf in the Qur'an.

4- According to this strange idea, "the pre-existing headscarf" must be so long that it can be pulled down in such a way as to completely cover the chest from both sides. Therefore, each one of the women who were apparently wandering around topless at the time must "already" have been wearing the headscarf, which was as long as a full body covering. The misinterpretation of the verse along the lines of "that they should draw their head coverings" has thus led the proponents of this idea into a logical fallacy. That is the consequence of trying to impute another meaning onto this explicitly clear verse.

False hadiths fabricated in order to add the headscarf to this verse result in even worse logical distortions. This will be described in later sections.

What Needs to Be Known about the Meanings of the Arabic Versions of Verses and Accuracy of Interpretations

Care needs to be taken over various elements if an Arabic text is to be properly understood, or accurately translated into other languages:

1- Care over the Use of Words in Arabic

One subject requiring attention if the criteria involving women covering their body parts is to be properly understood is how the word "cover" is used in Arabic.

The word "cover" is generally used in Arabic together with an emphasis on the object to be covered up. For example, when the word table is used alongside the word to cover, the result is a tablecloth. In the same way, the use of the word **"to cover"** ("**khimar**") alongside the word **"head"** ("**ra'as**") gives the word **"khimaru-ra'as"** meaning **"head covering."** If the Qur'an commanded women to cover their heads, one of the expressions that need to be used would have to be **"khimaru-ra'as."** However, no such statement appears.

In verse 6 of Surat al-Ma'ida, which is about ritual purification before prayer, the word head is expressed with the word "ra's."

You who believe! When you get up to perform your prayer, wash your faces and your hands and your arms to the elbows, and wipe over your heads, and your feet to the ankles. (Qur'an, 5:6)

Arabic transliteration: ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo itha qumtum ila alssalati faighsiloo wujoohakum waaydiyakum ila almarafiqi waimsaahoo **biruoosikum**

Ra's (head) is the singular form of ruoos, 'heads' in Arabic. The word biruoosikum in the verse means 'your heads'.

It is clear that had God commanded women to cover their heads, that command would have been set out explicitly and unequivocally in the Qur'an. However, examination of the verses regarding women's clothing contains no such emphasis regarding the head.

2- Examination of Words in the Qur'an Through Other Verses

In examining the Qur'an, one needs to look at how a particular word is used with other words in the verse and in other verses.

The word used alongside the word **"khimar"** ("**cover**") in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur and which emphasizes the subject is **"juyub."** **As we have seen above, this word is used to refer to the bosom region in all the other verses in which it appears.** The area that needs to be covered up according to the verse is therefore the bosom, not the head.

3- Care Being Taken Over Ascribing Meaning to Arabic Words in Parenthesis

Arabic has a much larger vocabulary than many other languages, and it is exceedingly rich in terms of meanings: Much can be said with few words, and a word can have very different uses, and therefore meanings. Therefore, many interpretations are added in parenthesis even though the meaning of the verse is quite clear; additions are made and meanings are shaped according to the individual interpretations of the translator.

Let us recall here that since the people who translate the Qur'an generally have traditional conceptions of Islam, which regard hadiths as the foundation of the faith, and since these people's translations are generally highly esteemed, individual interpretations emerging in translations of verses are generally traditional and shaped in the light of fabricated hadiths. Such translators who add remarks in parenthesis have a tendency, conscious or otherwise, to alter the meaning of verses in line with that of such false hadiths.

When we look at the translations of verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, we see that although the word "head-covering" appears nowhere in it, the word is used by commentators either directly in the text or else in parenthesis. Although the word "head" or "ra'as" does not appear in the verse, and the word "bosom" is used in combination with the word "cover," meaning that the area to be covered up is clearly the bosom, the word "khimar," meaning "any covering," is translated as "head-covering." The instruction in the verse is thus altered; this altered meaning has been made widespread and become the traditional interpretation, and the conclusion is thus drawn that women need to cover their heads.

When this interpretation that was added only later by commentators is done away with, however, it is clear that the verse is explicitly referring to the covering up of the bosom. Anyone reading the verse will encounter that meaning alone.

Surat an-Nur Verse 31, 2nd Part

Say to the believing women that they should lower their eyes and guard their chastity and not display their adornments – except for what normally shows – and draw their coverings across their breasts. They should only display their adornments to their husbands or their fathers or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons or other women or those they own as slaves or their male attendants who have no sexual desire or children who still have no awareness of women's private parts. Nor should they stamp their feet so that their hidden ornaments are known. Turn to God every one of you, believers, so that hopefully you will have success. (Qur'an, 24:31)

"Misinterpretations Regarding "Women's Adornments"

Another subject that God draws our attention in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur is women's "adornments." The passage in the verse that reads, "**... so that their hidden ornaments are known**" means that they should not display their breasts, and is not a reference to their heads.

However, this is reflected very differently in some hadiths and in some commentaries on the Qur'an through additions in parentheses or the distortion of the meanings of words. Let us have a look at these:

The Idea that Women Are Instruments of Trial

The true meaning of the first part of the word "zeenatahunna" in this verse is "adornment or ornament," and the suffix "hunna" indicates that this is being addressed to women.

In their own opinions, some scholars say, "Women's bodies are decorative and attractive, for which reason the verse is referring to their entire bodies." From that starting point they claim that women should cover all their bodies up; in truth, the verse is actually saying no such thing.

Some people come up with a very different interpretation to what the Qur'an is saying and say, "*This refers to the parts of the body where beads and decorations are displayed, for which reason it is unlawful to look at the regions where these are displayed.*" Others go even further and say, "*It is unlawful to look at a woman's cut hair or nail*

clippings." They then go on to produce very odd ideas such as, *"Looking at just one part usually leads to looking at the whole."* (Ibn Hajar, al-Zawajir)

Even though the verse is perfectly explicit, countless very different and odd interpretations have been produced from the term "... so that their hidden ornaments are known." These interpretations vary according to people's way of thinking, and sometimes depending on their perspective toward women. Mindsets that seek to shut women away, pacify them, make them ugly and keep them away from society and humanity, to make them second-class citizens and – may God forbid - turn them into entities that live only to serve men and not God, have tended to want to eliminate women entirely by means of the single word "ornament." Through these false interpretations of verses of the Qur'an, many people have departed from the essence of the faith and have regarded the Qur'an as an incomprehensible book, and when these additions have been taken together with fabricated hadiths, the result has become an interpretation of faith very different to that seen in the Qur'an.

However, the term "hidden ornaments" in the verse is very clear, and refers to two areas that are kept hidden, the sexual organs and the breasts. In the 31st verse of Surat an-Nur, God names the people in the presence of whom women do not have to hide their 'ornaments' and with this verse, God gives extensive freedom to women.

The Error of Making Adornments and Accessories Unlawful

Some people maintain that the "ornaments" in the verse are things like "beads, jewels and other accessories." This is significant in grasping the error and oddity of various interpretations based on false hadiths. According to this astonishing claim, a man's instincts are so primitive that the sight of a single bead is enough to drive him out of control. So according to that mindset, beads should be banned at once in order to keep "men," supposedly barbaric entities, reined in!

This frightening way of thinking in point of fact is very revealing regarding the fanatics' view of the Muslim male. Yet a Muslim man is an entity that fears God and the reason he will refrain from unlawful actions is not because some things have been banned, but because they will be displeasing to God. A Muslim man is not a being who will lose all control when he sees an uncovered woman or a handful of beads, or who lives in the light of animal instincts; to claim that he represents a worst slander of a Muslim male.

The interpretations in question are actually highly significant in terms of exposing the barbaric mentality of the fanatics. When we set aside the interpretations of the fanatics and limit ourselves solely to the Qur'an we can quite clearly see what the word "ornament" means.

How Is the Word "Ornament" Used in the Qur'an?

In complete contrast to the fanatics' idea of banning ornaments and objects such as necklaces and earrings, God reveals in the Qur'an that He creates such adornments for believers and that indeed they should go to the mosque looking well-groomed and well-dressed:

Children of Adam! Put on your adornment in every mosque ... (Qur'an, 7:31)

In the verse, **"Say: 'Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He has produced for His servants and the good kinds of provision?...'"** (Qur'an, 7:32) God reveals the existence of a mindset that would forbid those things made lawful by Him. In the next part of the verse, **"... Say: 'They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Resurrection.' In this way We make the signs clear for people who know."** (Qur'an, 7:32) He stresses that ornaments are lovely blessings bestowed on Muslims in this world, and that they will belong to believers alone in the hereafter, thus making it clear that believers are the ones worthies of such delights. The fact that fanatics try to prohibit Muslims from enjoying these pleasures, even though God regards them as worthy of believers, shows how directly they fly in the face of the mindset of the Qur'an.

Another verse in which ornamentation is referred to reads:

Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts, as well as to be an adornment to you, but the garment of piety—that is best! That is one of God's signs, so that hopefully you will pay heed. (Qur'an, 7:26)

The Region Referred to in Verse 31 of Surat an-Nur

In the above verses, God is referring to the use of ornaments and adornments. However, as explained in detail, the word "ornament" in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur has nothing to do with beads or anything like that; the verse cites family life of women as an example and shows the kind of freedom given to women in the family. Let us now examine the relevant section of the verse word by word:

... They should only display their adornments to their husbands or their fathers or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons or other women or those they own as slaves or their male attendants who have no sexual desire or children who still have no awareness of women's private parts. Nor should they stamp their feet so that their hidden ornaments are known. Turn to God every one of you, believers, so that hopefully you will have success. (Qur'an, 24:31)

The word "ornaments" here does not refer to beads or accessories, but very obviously to the private parts and the people to whom these "ornaments" may be shown are then listed. These include servants who have no need of women (who have no sexual desire or are impotent) and children who as yet have no awareness of women's private parts. The fact that especially the children who have no awareness of women's private parts are mentioned shows that the word "adornments" refers to those parts.

The language used in the Qur'an is most pure and perfect. The words are used with great care, they are delicate and this can be immediately understood when examined in detail. The private parts are described in accordance with the delicacy and literary artistry of the Qur'an, and are described as adornments.

One of the main pretexts raised by some commentators in order to produce their interpretation of the headscarf in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur is various fabricated hadiths. These false hadiths so deeply and blatantly contradict the verse that it can be very easily seen with a clear analysis. Let us now examine how the false hadiths in question conflict with the Qur'an, how they mislead the community of Islam on the subject of the head-covering and the feeble logic they contain:

Fabricated Hadiths on the Subject of the Head-Covering and Their Internal Inconsistencies

As we have seen with all the evidence, verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, which some people try to portray as evidence for the headscarf, in fact contains no reference to the word "head-covering" at all. However, with the inclusion of some false hadiths into the literature of Islam, this misconception has spread and come down to the present day. The false hadiths fabricated by fanatics are riddled with significant flaws of logic and contain many inconsistencies. Let us now have a look at some examples:

Aisha (ra) said: "When verse 24:31 was revealed, the women of the migrants from Mecca took their garments and tore pieces of cloth from the edges of their skirts and covered their heads with them." (Sahih Bukhari; Sunan Abu Dawud, Beyhaqi, VII, 88)

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: May God have mercy on the early immigrant women. When the verse "That they should draw their veils over their bosoms" was revealed, they tore their thick outer garments and made veils from them." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 32, Hadith 4091)

Satiyya binti Shayba narrates this memory she heard from Aisha (ra): We were with Aisha, talking about Quraishi women and their virtues. Aisha: Verily, Quraishi women have some virtues. But, I swear by God, I have never seen any women more virtuous than the women of Ansar who believed in the Book of God strongly and firmly. When the verse of the Surah Light they should draw their veils over their bosoms was revealed, believer men went to their homes reciting that verse. They read the verse to their wives, daughters, sisters and other relatives. Each woman made headscarves out of their clothes, by believing and affirming the Book of God. The next morning, the women performed the prayer of fajr (the early Morning Prayer). It looked as if there were crows on their heads. (Sahih Bukhari, Tafsir Sura (The Commentary of the Surahs) 24:12; Sunan Abu Dawud, Libas (Cloth): 29)

As we have seen, these hadiths all claim that when verse 31 of Surat an-Nur was revealed, Muslim women immediately tore pieces from their skirts and **wrapped them round their heads**. That is where the first violation of logic begins. Now let us look at the flaws of logic in these false hadiths and how they conflict with the Qur'an:

- As we have already seen in detail, the term in the verse "**... they should put their coverings across their bosoms**" refers to women covering their breasts. The hadiths in question, however, say that when this verse was sent down Muslim women immediately cut pieces from their garments and covered their heads with them, not their breasts; yet the verse says nothing about covering the head. None of the hadiths in question says anything Muslim women obeying the actual command in the verse, covering up their breasts, in other words.

- According to the description here, women tore pieces from their skirts, but instead of covering their breasts, as commanded in the verse, they wrapped them round their heads. In order to agree with the mistaken interpretation of "draw down their head-coverings," the pieces they cut from their skirts must have been so large that they were able to cover their heads and also descend to their chests.

- According to this account, the women's chests are exposed, but they have covered their heads twice. Yet as we have seen with all the evidence, **verse 31 of Surat an-Nur was revealed "only" to tell women to cover their breasts**.

- We have already seen how some commentators interpret the term "draw down their head-coverings" in such a way as to justify their idea of an "already existing head-covering." They make that claim in order to justify the idea that the verse contains the word "head-covering" and maintain that the women addressed by the verse are already wearing head-coverings. The fact is, however, that the false hadiths in question claim that the women made head-coverings for themselves by cutting up their skirts when the verse was revealed. How it is that these false hadiths, which the commentators in question regard as their main support, conflict so much with their own accounts?

They conflict with their own accounts because the faith of those who wish to add false commandments to Islam other than the true commandments found in the Qur'an are full of profound flaws of logic. All superstitious accounts clash with the Qur'an, and they all involve great contradictions. The deceptive interpretations produced solely in order to justify the idea of the head-covering in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur, even though the verse is perfectly clear and easy to understand, show the scale of what is happening. The interpretations made in the light of the false hadiths in question and the conclusions produced from them are all quite terrifying:

As we will explain later in detail, in the Qur'an, women are advised to cover their entire bodies when necessary so as not to be bothered. However, God left it to women to decide if the conditions require such a measure. According to the Qur'an, when women must go where they think they might be verbally or physically bothered or harassed, they wear a jilbab which will cover them from head to toe, and not hug their figure.

Let us also remember here that the hadith collection refers to men and women purifying themselves from the same bowl in the time of our Prophet (pbuh). (See Sahih Bukhari, Wudu 43; Sunan Abu Dawud, Kitab al-Taharah 39; Sunan ibn Majah, Taharah 36; an-Nasai, Taharah 56) Since the areas purified are the feet, the arms as far as the

elbows, the face and the head, it appears from the hadiths that women were alongside men and had their heads uncovered. However, the one unifying feature of the otherwise fractious fanatics is that they completely ignore those hadiths that do not suit them.

Since our sole guide is the Qur'an, and the accounts given in the Qur'an are as explicit as can be, women being present alongside men with their heads uncovered is a behavior entirely compatible with the Qur'an.

Forbidden Things Are Not Left Obscure in the Qur'an

In looking at the fanatical mindset that produces the idea that "even a woman's nail clippings are forbidden," it is important to clarify one important point: God has revealed what is forbidden with very clear and unequivocal descriptions in the Qur'an. For example, Muslims learn that it is forbidden to eat pork in the verse **"He has only forbidden you carrion, blood and pork and what has been consecrated to other than God..."** (Qur'an, 2:173). There is no question of a Muslim being unsure, of two minds or in need of interpretation and comment regarding the commandment "He has forbidden you..." Another example concerns interest. This is definitely forbidden for Muslims in the verse, **"... God has permitted trade and He has forbidden usury..."** (Qur'an, 2:275). Nobody can enter into a debate on the subject in the face of the verse or try to claim that "interest is indistinguishable from business."

Therefore, we learn what is forbidden directly from the verse itself, not from the deductions of various commentators, comments added in parenthesis or fabricated hadiths. Verse 31 of Surat an-Nur is crystal clear in that sense. Yet the commentators' error of adding interpretations in parenthesis to verses has been made many times, particularly with regard to this verse. For example, some commentators, influenced by the imams of schools and making up their own provisions, add the words "... apart from such visible areas as the face and hands" to this verse in parenthesis. There is nothing in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur that suggests that a woman's hands, face or hair should be covered. It is Verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab that tells women to temporarily cover themselves completely with jilbab if they consider it necessary based on their circumstances.

The Desire to Shut Only Women and Their Bodies Away

For whatever reason, under the influence of fabricated hadiths the fanatics' interpretations have always been along the lines of shutting women away indoors or covering their bodies up. The main justification they cite is their arousing nature; yet the fact remains that the male body is just as attractive to women as the female body is to men. Since, according to the Qur'an, there is no distinction between the genders in terms of moral responsibility, there is no logic in trying to cover up women out of a fear that men might be aroused by them. If the problem were the arousal of men, then would it not be far more logical for men to shut themselves up indoors or to go out wearing a covering that prevented them from seeing what was around them? Given the probabilities of their own arousal, they should elect to eliminate the risk entirely rather than covering women up.

All kinds of detail could be applied on this subject. For example, if some people will think that a woman's voice is arousing and that she should be prevented from speaking, the same should apply to men. If a woman's words or the songs she sings should not be listened to, then bearing in mind that women can be excited by a man's voice, that restriction should also apply to men. If the fanatic mentality wishes to declare that its false rules are valid, and if it insists on trying to convince people of them, then it should impose the same measures on men.

However, the logic that applies in Islam is that of the Qur'an of course, and there are no such restrictions in the logic of the Qur'an. These restrictions that the fanatics wish to enforce have doubtlessly been fabricated for the purpose of imposing controls and limiting freedoms, and simply serve to create enormous troubles for communities, and ultimately lead to disaster in the societies in which they themselves live.

As in all matters, men and women are equal in terms of chastity. Adultery is forbidden for women and for men. As God reveals in verse 35 of Surat al-Ahzab, **"... men and women who guard their chastity,"** men have the same

obligation to be chaste and pure as women do. However, the way to achieve this is not by shutting people up, not letting them out, and not letting them meet or speak. The way to do it is for them to adopt the moral values of the Qur'an. Human beings are not wild creatures that act out of instinct and go where their desires lead them; human beings are entities with the capacity to distinguish right from wrong through their intelligence, their awareness and, most important of all, the moral values taught them by God and their love and fear of Him.

Therefore, what determines whether a person will behave in a chaste manner is not how much someone else reveals of their body or how much he can see of their hair, but his fear of God and moral values. God reveals in a verse, "... so that God will know those who fear Him in the Unseen..." (Qur'an, 5:94) that He will test people even where nobody can see them. Therefore, using compulsion, shutting people away indoors and generally using violence will not ensure that. Faith, moral values and worship are matters of the heart alone.

The Qur'an Refers to the Jilbab, Not to the Headscarf

As can be seen from all the detailed analysis above, under the influence of specious statements and forced accounts from various commentators, verse 31 of Surat an-Nur is used as supposed evidence for the idea of the head-covering, which has literally turned into a taboo. It is amazing how a verse that says nothing about head covering, provides no information about the head and yet explicitly describes the covering up of the bosom can be interpreted in such a very different manner.

Something else which is quite astounding is that many people who regard the head-covering, which is never mentioned in the Qur'an, as the sole obligation in the faith never speak of verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab, which does speak of outer garments. They have turned the head-covering, which does not appear in the Qur'an, into a commandment and yet totally ignore the commandment regarding the outer covering which does appear in the Qur'an.

Let us now look at how the outer covering does indeed appear in Surat al-Ahzab and why the proponents of the head-covering choose to ignore it:

Surat al-Ahzab Verse 59

O Prophet! Tell your wives and daughters and the women of the believers to draw their outer garments (jilbab) closely round themselves. This makes it more likely that they will be recognized [as free righteous women] and not be harmed. God is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Qur'an, 33:59)

The meaning of the Arabic word in the verse, "jilbab," is a sheet or garment that covers the body from top to bottom. This verse from Surat al-Ahzab is therefore very clearly describing a garment that covers the head and the entire body. There is one reason cited for the wearing of such a garment, and that is for Muslim women to be recognized as free and chaste.

This means that some environments are not suitable for women to be able to move round in or dress freely. The structure of a society and the moral level of the people within it may sometimes lag behind that of the civilization. Some communities condemn women who walk around not completely covered and may even go so far as to inflict verbal or physical abuse on them. Under normal conditions, Muslim women will not go to such places unless they have no choice. Yet when they have to, it is essential for Muslim women to show that they are Muslims and chaste if they are to avoid unwelcome consequences. The jilbab worn by Muslim women in such environments is just such a measure.

This is of course something a woman will decide on for herself. The democratic and modern societies today generally do not meet this description of "unsafe places." Therefore, women in Western societies do not generally feel the need to cover themselves up; that being said, there may also be people in such societies that do indeed pose a threat to women. So if a woman does not think she is safe she may well choose to cover herself up, even in a Western

society, because the essential condition mentioned in the verse is to prevent Muslim woman from being misjudged and oppressed according to the way she dresses.

Espousing the Head-Covering but Never Mentioning the "Jilbab"

To move on to the subject of the head-covering, a woman can say, "The head-covering appears in the Qur'an and I see it in verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab," and wear one if she wishes. By doing this, she prefers the head-covering to a full covering and interprets covering up in that sense. Yet someone who says, "The head-covering appears in the Qur'an and I see it in verse 31 of Surat al-Nur," is not telling the truth. This is a danger, because our Lord refers to those who regard lawful things as unlawful and distort the verses of the Qur'an. It may be a grave offense in the Sight of God to claim that a commandment that does not appear in the Qur'an is actually in it, even though one is well-aware of the truth.

The surprising thing is that some people who regard the head-covering as a literal symbol of the faith and defend it in no uncertain terms almost never mention the reference to the full covering in the Qur'an.

Indeed, some people who measure religious devotion in terms of head covering and who measure superiority in terms of head covering - even though God says superiority lies in piety - never mention the real commandment about the jilbab in the Qur'an. Although the Qur'an says nothing about the head-covering but contains an explicit commandment about the jilbab, they prefer to espouse something which is not in the Qur'an. It is quite astonishing how the head-covering can mean so much in people's eyes while nothing is said about the jilbab.

Which Important Topics Do Some of the Passionate Defenders of the Headscarf Never Talk About?

As we explained with the quoted verses, women are ordered to wear a jilbab that covers their bodies when conditions require it. However, it is left to the women's choice to decide if it is necessary. Furthermore, a woman can just say that she is obeying verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab by wearing a headscarf and may choose to wear a headscarf instead of jilbab. Everyone should respect this decision. But it is wrong and dishonest to claim that the headscarf is made obligatory in the Qur'an, when in truth it is not, and to drive perhaps millions of women away from religion due to this persistence. Such people have one feature in common: though they portray themselves as extremely pious people with their relentless persistence about the wearing of the headscarf, which is not a commandment of the Qur'an, they don't show the same commitment or zeal when it comes to other commandments in religion or about matters that are vital to Muslims. For example:

- Darwinism – They don't care about the fact that the majority of people have lost their faith as a result of Darwinism. They are not bothered by the fact that students are being told 'there is no God' (God is above such claims) at schools and don't even think about taking intellectual steps against this inculcation.
- Prayer (Salat) – Most of these people do not pray or most of the time postpone it. However, according to the Qur'an, there are specific times for prayer and prayer should be performed at those times. Surprisingly, these people are not bothered by the fact that they themselves or their spouses or children don't pray, and display an incredulous indifference about it.
- Spending in the way of God – God orders us in the Qur'an to donate what is more than needed. In many verses, Muslims are commanded to be each other's guardians, which means that Muslims should protect and

take care of everyone who needs help. However, those who incessantly talk about the headscarf surprisingly try to explain away this subject: They have made convenient spending models, stating, for instance, that it is sufficient to spend 1/40 of their wealth, which is not in the Qur'an, and thus avoid spending in the way of God.

- Islamic Union – The unity of Muslims is a religious obligation for Muslims, just like prayer and fasting. However, these people live as if this obligation does not exist at all and never talk about Islamic Union or urge Muslims to unite.
- Miracles of creation – They don't seek to help people gain earnest faith in God through science and reason. Most of the time, they only talk about Islamic history. They talk about the sacrifices of our Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions as impossible practices that cannot be achieved by other Muslims.
- Love of God, fear of God – They don't make intellectual efforts to make people understand and love God. They don't remind people of God's artistry and His infinite beauty, and they do not invite people to give thanks to God, to be loving and self-sacrificing.
- Persecuted Muslims – To these people, Muslims suffering in Syria, Iraq or Libya are merely evening news. If an extraordinary oppression takes place, they hold short meetings, chant empty slogans, and then carry on with their daily lives. However, it is incumbent upon all Muslims to make an intellectual effort to prevent oppression and end the philosophy of violence.
- They are indifferent to the blasphemy in the media - Most of these people, who talk about it for days when something happens related to the headscarf issue, display an incredulous indifference when religious values are disrespected. These people are not bothered by the fact that people say bad words about God (God is surely above such remarks). Consequently, they do not use their legal rights against such acts or words, or make a move to intellectually answer them.
- Mahdi movement – Our Prophet (pbuh) talked about the Mahdi movement in an extensive manner with more than 600 hadiths. Giving the glad tidings of the Mahdi is crucial in removing the air of lethargy surrounding many Muslims. However, these people who claim to love the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) meticulously hide his miracles and avoid telling people about his hadiths concerning the End Times.
- Second coming of the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) - The second coming of the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) to Earth is clearly proclaimed in the Qur'an. However, these people pretend as if this fact does not exist. They don't feel the joy of knowing that a prophet will return after 2000 years.
- Reign of Islamic moral values – The reign of Islamic moral values in the world is one of the greatest glad tidings that God gives in the Qur'an. Muslims should work to be instrumental in the realization of this beauty. However, these people completely ignore God's order and almost never mention this topic.

A Muslim Woman Knows How to Dress in Accordance with the Qur'an

One important point that needs to be made here is that a Muslim woman knows perfectly well how to dress in accordance with the Qur'an so there is no need for a man to tell women how to dress. A man has no right whatsoever to interfere in what a woman wears, much less tell her how to dress or judge her. God has not given man that right. Today, this is an important matter that needs to be brought up and emphasized, especially in Muslim societies.

A woman may wear the head-covering, or cover herself up entirely or uncover her head or wear low-cut clothes. Once she says, "I am a Muslim," nobody has the right to judge her. It is known only in the Sight of God which is more virtuous. It is sincerity that counts in the faith, not clothing. In the same way that someone who covers up entirely may be insincere and go to hell, a woman who wears low-cut clothes may also earn the right to enter paradise. It is God alone Who will decide.

When people adopt guides other than the Qur'an, problems arise that are unsuited to human nature and will invariably make trouble of one kind or another. These also cease to be individual problems and can transform into social conflicts or problems. The distinction based on forms of dress – such as with or without the head-covering, or low-cut clothing versus covering up entirely - is a false perception that has no place in the Qur'an and leads to tensions in society. God reveals in a verse that according to the Qur'an, superiority lies not in dress and external appearance but in piety, or taqwa (acting out of a fear of God):

Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts, as well as to be an adornment to you, but the garment of piety—that is best! That is one of God's signs, so that hopefully you will pay heed. (Qur'an, 7:26)

Faith is lived and made reality in the heart. Faith manifests itself through moral virtues, a person's warmth, affection, generosity, forgiving nature, quality, culture, manners and conception of art and science; in short, in everything. It is therefore important to evaluate people through their moral values, not by their external appearance.

No matter what their external appearance, people who say, "I am a Muslim" are all precious Muslims. It is wrong to discriminate between them. Nobody has the right to discriminate.

The "Two Women = One Man" Error

One of the misunderstood issues that some people seek to use as evidence against Islam is the idea that "a woman is worth half a man." Some opponents of Islam have made the interpretation that "a man's witness testimony and rights are worth those of two women." Fanatics have also made use of this misinterpretation, putting it into practice and branding women as worth "half" what men are worth. However, as in so many other areas, the opponents of Islam and the fanatics are also seriously mistaken on this subject.

God makes a man's witness testimony and that of a woman equal in the Qur'an. The Qur'an says nothing about "a man's testimony being worth that of two women." For example, four witnesses are needed for adultery to be established, and the Qur'an says nothing about these being four women or two men, or four men or eight women. It only speaks of four witnesses. In other words, four witnesses are enough, be they men or women, and there is no distinction between them.

As with all matters, when testimonies conflict, woman is regarded as superior in the Qur'an, and her word is to be trusted. When women are accused of adultery, for example, when there is a discrepancy between the woman's statement and the man's, the woman's witness testimony is favored. A woman is even regarded as innocent on the basis of her own testimony. Relevant verses of the Qur'an read as follows:

Those who make an accusation against their wives and have no witnesses except themselves, such people should testify four times by God that they are telling the truth and a fifth time that God's curse will be upon them if they are lying. And the punishment is removed from her if she testifies four times by God that he is lying. (Qur'an, 24:6-8)

The fact that woman is held superior to man in terms of witness testimony is a very significant one that is not well-known. It describes the essence of the Qur'an and its perspective toward women. The mistaken ideas of the fanatics and the opponents of Islam are very different, however. Let us look at the true meanings of the verses that fanatics who regard women as worth half a man use as evidence when it comes to women's witness testimony and inheritance rights:

Women and Witness Testimony in Loans

The only exception in the Qur'an regarding women's witness testimony is that regarding loans. In order to grasp the exception here, we need to look at verse 282 of Surat al-Baqara in which loans are described:

You who believe! When you take on a debt for a specified period, write it down. A writer should write it down between you justly. No writer should refuse to write; as God has taught him, so he should write. The one incurring the debt should dictate and should have fear of God his Lord and not reduce it in any way. If the person incurring the debt is incompetent or weak or unable to dictate, then his guardian should dictate for him justly. Two men among you should act as witnesses. But if there are not two men, then a man and two women with whom you are satisfied as witnesses; then if one of them forgets, the other can remind her. Witnesses should not refuse when they are called upon. Do not think it too trivial to write down, whether small or large, with the date that it falls due. Doing that is more just in God's Sight and more helpful when bearing witness and more likely to eliminate any doubt – unless it is an immediate transaction hand to hand, taken and given without delay. There is nothing wrong in your not writing that down. Call witnesses when you trade. Neither writer nor witness should be put under pressure. If you do that, it is deviancy on your part. Have fear of God and God will give you knowledge. God has knowledge of all things. (Qur'an, 2:282)

This verse sets out the rules on borrowing, and says that "... when you take on a debt for a specified period, write it down," and that "no writer should refuse to write." The end of the verse also says that "... neither writer nor witness should be put under pressure." Being a witness on matters such as borrowing, where material interests are at stake, is something that people prefer to avoid. However, God wishes men to assume the whole responsibility for this unwelcome duty, and wishes "... two men to act as witness." Note that the verse says nothing about "finding two male or four female witnesses." It simply speaks of "two men acting as witnesses." This risky and onerous responsibility is imposed directly on men. In this way, women, who are more susceptible to pressure, are protected from this unwelcome duty.

According to this verse, only if two men cannot be found, but one man is available, is the condition imposed of "one man and two women." In this way, a woman is not left on her own in the face of a risky situation involving financial self-interest and calculations, such as borrowing. The possibility of a man and a woman ending up opposed to one another in the event of an adverse situation arising is thus avoided.

For example, let us imagine there is a misunderstanding concerning the amount of the loan or the method of repayment. If the two witnesses were to give different testimonies, the woman would end up lining up against the man, and in that circumstance when one of the two is definitely lying, she will come under intense stress and pressure. God has prevented women, whom He places under protection against all external pressures in the Qur'an, from being exposed to such a state of affairs. The presence of a second female witness to support her will eliminate that pressure. In the event that one man and two women are witnesses, when the number rises to three, the responsibility will be more widely distributed and the stress of bearing witness will be reduced. So people with ulterior motives who want to bring pressure to bear will have to deceive two out of three people, not one out of two parties, and that will make their pernicious task much harder.

It is a well-known fact that responsibilities concerning money, especially in today's societies, are matters where one person can easily slander another, carelessly launch accusations against the other side and leave the other party under a cloud of suspicion. The precaution taken against this represents a guarantee for women in many respects. Some people find it easy to regard women as weak and to defame them. Such situations, in which money is involved, represent one of the climates in which such people may well attribute crimes to a woman and slander her. But if the loan is witnessed by two women, that eliminates the danger of such false accusations.

This also represents a source of security for a woman in psychological terms. It can be very risky to forget such details as the amount of the loan or repayment terms when witnessing such a transaction. Since Muslims have a responsibility to be impartial witnesses, they also have a responsibility to be fully aware of, and not forget, the details concerning the loan borrowed. In this way, this responsibility that one woman might have to bear is divided between two. Even if a woman has a very good memory and takes precautions not to forget - and women are much more punctilious than men on such matters - the presence of another party will still free her from that psychological burden.

That psychological burden and the possibility of forgetting also apply to men, of course. Yet it is always women who are protected in the psychological and material senses in the Qur'an. Our Lord has created women as entities who attach great importance to details, who take even minor responsibilities very seriously, and who are generally punctilious and highly responsible. Therefore, the burden that a woman will feel, especially during material borrowing, will be very heavy due to the form in which she is created. Almighty God has brought in such a source of easing in order to protect her and prevent her coming under psychological pressure. This is another manifestation of the lofty value that our Lord places on women.

It must not be forgotten that a woman, the Queen of Sheba, is described as a head of state in the Qur'an, and she is emphasized as a powerful decision-maker. This means that in the view of the Qur'an, women are intelligent enough and have sufficient strength of character to govern a state. Therefore, those persons who interpret the above verse, which explicitly protects women on the subject of borrowing, to mean that women are lacking in intelligence are expressing their own wishes, ignoring the commandment in the Qur'an. Yet for us, the only measure is that of the Qur'an.

Women's Inheritance Rights

The way that women enjoy half the share of men under inheritance law is another subject frequently misinterpreted by many people. Some people who fail to grasp the spirit of the Qur'an, the basic essentials of Islam and the protectiveness and affection of our Lord seek to provide evidence for their own claims by analyzing verses describing the distribution of inheritance separately instead of as a coherent whole. Yet inheritance law is actually another sign of how women are protected in the Qur'an.

The verses about women's share of inheritance are as follows:

Men receive a share of what their parents and relatives leave and women receive a share of what their parents and relatives leave, a fixed share, no matter whether it is a little or a lot. (Qur'an, 4:7)

God instructs you regarding your children: A male receives the same as the share of two females. If there are more than two daughters they receive two-thirds of what you leave. If she is one on her own she receives a half. Each of your parents receives a sixth of what you leave if you have children. If you are childless and your heirs are your parents your mother receives a third. If you have brothers or sisters your mother receives a sixth, after any bequest you make or any debts. With regard to your fathers and your sons, you do not know which of them is going to benefit you more. These are obligatory shares from God. God is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Qur'an, 4:11)

As shown in the first verse, inheritance in Islam is a right enjoyed both by men and by women. The second verse describes the distribution of that inheritance, based on people's needs and responsibilities.

Looking at the Qur'an as a whole, we see that the maintenance of the mother, wife, daughter or sister is a responsibility bestowed not on them, but on a son, husband, father or brother; this applies throughout a woman's entire life. In other words, a son, husband, father or brother is responsible for a woman under his protection until the end of her life.

For example, when a woman gets married she is given a dowry by her husband. In the view of the Qur'an, the dowry is given directly to the woman, not to the family. After marriage, the physical maintenance of the woman and her children is the total responsibility of the man. As we shall be seeing in detail in due course, that maintenance and financial responsibility continues, even in the event of divorce. Any and all expenses not imposed on woman are therefore the responsibility of a man.

The fact that the financial care of a woman is the responsibility of a man does not mean that any restrictions are imposed on her, however. It does not also mean that woman is a needy entity. The precautionary measure here is a symbol of the value attached to women and is intended that a woman never suffers throughout her life. A woman is

free to live as she wishes, free to work or not, earn money or not, start a business or not and govern a company and even a state, just as she wishes. Her being under male protection in financial terms does not restrict her social life, stop her from being free or sealed up indoors like a prisoner. A woman being under the protection of a man also does not mean that he has any right of command over her; the Qur'an says nothing about a man being able to command a woman. The financial responsibility imposed on men is intended to ensure that women, who are under special protection in the Qur'an, never suffer throughout their lives.

However, in the view of the Qur'an, a woman has no such responsibility toward anyone. In the same way that she has no responsibility for the maintenance of anyone else, she is also under no obligation to take care of herself. She need not work if she does not wish to; she has no such obligation.

In addition, a woman has the right to spend her own possessions as she wishes. Even if she is rich, she is under no obligation to contribute to the family budget. She is under no obligation to assume any financial responsibility for her children. Even if a woman is richer than the man, his financial obligation nonetheless persists.

A woman can put her share of an inheritance to work if she so wishes, or spend it on herself, or save it. But a man is under an obligation to use his share for the maintenance and care of the woman. The maintenance, well-being and comfort of his wife, children and sister - if he has any - are entirely his responsibility. Let us remember that this is intended, not because a woman needs it, but to prevent her from being wronged throughout her life.

Considered in the light of the facts explicitly stated in the Qur'an, if man and woman were given equal shares of inheritance, the balance would be impaired against the man since he has an obligation to take care of the family, while the woman is under no such obligation.

The following provision in the verse is also very important, "**... after any bequest you make or any debts.**" If a deceased person has left a legacy behind, any action must be in line with that legacy. The deceased may have left all his property to the woman and nothing to the male members of the family: In that event, the bequest will be valid and everything will go to the woman.

There is special wisdom in the way that God places financial responsibility for women upon men. If God so wished, no such burden would be imposed on men and women would be responsible for their own maintenance, and even that of their children, in the absence of any financial guarantee. That would be a great responsibility and a heavy psychological burden. No such material burden is imposed on women in the Qur'an.

A Woman's Right to Divorce

The first essential point needing to be made on the subject of divorce is that the practices of those fanatics who refuse to admit a woman's right to divorce are absolutely wrong. According to the fanatical mindset, no matter how unhappy or oppressed a woman may be, she still has no right to divorce. The frightening mentality of the fanatics - that seeks to oppress women and portray men as superior - is currently put into action in countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Not only does such a mindset have no place in the Qur'an, it is also a violation of the spirit of the Qur'an. Nowhere in the Qur'an is there any provision to the effect that "only the man can divorce his wife." Indeed, verses 228 and 241 of Surat al-Baqara speak of women who have divorced. Divorce is a right bestowed on women as well as men.

Interestingly, some commentators or interpreters of the Qur'an add a parenthesis to the term "divorced women" making it read "women who have been divorced by their husbands." This error stems from such commentators regarding the verses of the Qur'an as insufficient, itself a consequence of their inability to free themselves from a fanatical conception of Islam, and striving to adapt these verses to that same mindset. We have already seen how many of the additions in parentheses are part of an attempt to adapt the Qur'an to the radical mentality. Some people, who know that they cannot alter the verses to suit their own ends, try to produce the same impression by the use of

parenthesis. Yet when we disregard these comments in parentheses the verses of the Qur'an carry a totally explicit message.

Divorce and the Protection of Women Thereafter

The care and protection of women after divorce is important evidence in terms of the superiority attached to women in the Qur'an. Our Almighty Lord has protected all women's rights in circumstances in which they might be wronged – such as divorce – and has placed them under protection for their entire lives. Even if he has divorced her, a man has a responsibility to protect and look after his former wife until the end of her life, even if the woman has no need of it.

Women Being Kept Happy and Content in the Event of Divorce

For people who live in the light of the desires of their lower selves, divorce means the total cessation of relations with the other party. Such people believe that once relations based on self-interest have come to an end there is no longer a need to show the other person any care or concern. Since they generally lose all feelings of love and respect for the person they abandon, they act solely in the light of preserving their own interests and are quite capable of ignoring the troubles and difficulties faced by the other party. This is of course a moral defect seen in people who do not live by the values of the Qur'an. Our Almighty Lord described how women should be treated with love and affection and proper moral values after divorce:

When you divorce women and they are near the end of their term, then either retain them with correctness and courtesy or release them with correctness and courtesy. ... (Qur'an, 2:231)

You who believe! When you marry believing women and then divorce them before you have touched them, there is no term for you to calculate for them, so give them a gift and let them go with kindness. (Qur'an, 33:49)

Both verses refer to "courtesy" and "kindness." This means that the man still has a responsibility to treat a woman with kindness after divorce; a woman may not be working, may have no financial means and may have nowhere to live. These verses place a divorced woman under protection, and offer the options of retaining them with correctness and courtesy or else releasing them, again with correctness and courtesy.

The man has to treat the woman properly under both conditions.

Women Being Given Financial Security after Divorce

In the Qur'an God forbids a divorced woman being left alone, unprotected and financially unsupported. In the view of Islam, whether a woman is wealthy or not, she still has to be given financial security after divorce. Her ex-husband has a responsibility to ensure this.

Verses which refer to the need to ensure the financial security of divorced women read as follows:

Divorced women should receive maintenance given with correctness and courtesy: a duty for all who have piety. (Qur'an, 2:241)

... give them a gift – he who is wealthy according to his means and he who is less well off according to his means – a gift to be given with correctness and courtesy: a duty for all good-doers. (Qur'an, 2:236)

He who has plenty should spend out from his plenty, but he whose provision is restricted should spend from what God has given him. God does not demand from any self more than He has given it. God will appoint after difficulty, ease. (Qur'an, 65:7)

As seen in these verses, a rich person or someone of much more limited means both have a responsibility to protect the wives they have divorced. Even if they never see that person again for the rest of their lives, even if they have no more material or psychological expectations from them, they still have a responsibility to place them under financial protection and treat them with kindness. Almighty God reveals that ensuring women's material security must also be done sincerely, willingly and with a good grace:

Give women their dowry with a good heart. But if they are happy to give you some of it, make use of it with pleasure and goodwill. (Qur'an, 4:4)

Assets Given to Women Must Not Be Taken back after Divorce

Our Almighty Lord has revealed in verses that in the event of divorce the man must not take back anything he gave his wife while they were married:

If you desire to exchange one wife for another and have given your original wife a large amount, do not take any of it. Would you take it by means of slander and outright crime? How could you take it when you have been intimate with one another and they have made a binding contract with you?" (Qur'an, 4:20-21)

... It is not lawful for you to keep anything you have given them... (Qur'an, 2:229)

God reminds men in these verses that by marrying women they have promised to take care of them; He reveals that because of that promise they have no right to demand anything back, even if they have given women "a large amount." A Muslim who abides by the Qur'an will know that this is a promise made to God, and will therefore discharge his responsibility in the finest way. In the verse "**It is not lawful for you to keep anything you have given them,**" God clearly prohibits any other course of behavior.

Ensuring Women Have a Place to Live after Divorce

In order that a woman should not find herself in difficulties after divorce, and to ensure that she is protected, Almighty God advises the man to keep her close to him. It is revealed that this should make it possible for him to keep watch over her in times of danger. After divorce, the believer has the important responsibility of providing for her until she can find a place to stay of her own and ensuring that no harm comes to her:

Let them [the women you have divorced] live where you live, according to your means. Do not put pressure on them, so as to harass them. If they are pregnant, maintain them until they give birth. If they are suckling for you, give them their wages and consult together with correctness and courtesy. But if you make things difficult for one another, another woman should do the suckling for you. (Qur'an, 65:6)

Due to the importance of the subject it needs to be repeated here: Those protective measures cited herein of course do not mean that a woman is unable to look after herself; this is nonsense put forward by some prejudiced people in order to attack Islam. The verses are referring to superior moral values. What is under discussion here are kindly moral values and attaching superiority and value to women. Looking after a woman means making her feel that she is

very respected and valued. God shows the value and protection He places on women in practical terms. It is also forbidden in the verse to "**... put pressure on them so as to harass them.**" As stated in the verse, "**... consult together with correctness and courtesy,**" God advises good relations being maintained between people who have divorced. Considering the difficult position in which women find themselves today in society in general, or in social life, the need for and importance of these measures recommended in the Qur'an becomes much clearer.

Women Not Being Inherited by Force

One of the commandments about the protection of women in the Qur'an regards their not being inherited by force. God reveals that:

You who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women by force. Nor may you treat them harshly so that you can make off with part of what you have given them, unless they commit an act of flagrant indecency. Live together with them correctly and courteously. ... (Qur'an, 4:19)

In this verse, God forbids any pressure being put on women, and any measure that might create difficulties for them in material terms.

The Value Placed on Mothers

Motherhood is praised in the Qur'an. Respect for parents, treating them well and protecting and watching over them in their old age, as at all times, are particular responsibilities imposed on true believers in the Qur'an, and there are a number of verses on the subject. Some of these read:

We have instructed man to honor his parents, ... (Qur'an, 29:8)

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him, and that you should show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "Ugh!" to them out of irritation and do not be harsh with them but speak to them with gentleness and generosity. (Qur'an, 17:23)

In the Qur'an God advises Muslims to treat their parents with respect and kindness; yet mothers are especially valued. God reveals in another verse that:

We have instructed man concerning his parents. Bearing him caused his mother great debility and the period of his weaning was two years: "Give thanks to Me and to your parents. I am your final destination." (Qur'an, 31:14)

Indeed, every mother engages in several months of self-sacrifice to bring her child into the world. As God reveals in the verse, she carries the baby inside with great difficulties and then gives birth to that child with great discomfort. Then, with great altruism, she assumes the task of ensuring that her child is protected and comfortable in all respects. Moreover, she expects no reward for doing all this, and she even pushes her own needs into the background. God is reminding us of these facts and telling us that mothers are very valuable entities indeed.

The Slander of Male Superiority and the Nonsense about Beating Women

Some people seek to produce evidence from the Qur'an about supposed male superiority over women, their beating of women, and cite the following verses in that respect:

Men have charge of women because God has made the one excel the other and because they spend their wealth on them. Right-acting women are obedient [to God], guarding the unseen as God has guarded. If there are women whose disobedience you fear, you may admonish them, refuse to sleep with them, and then beat them. But if they obey you, do not look for a way to punish them. God is All-High, Most Great. If you fear a breach between a couple, send an arbiter from his people and an arbiter from her people. If the couple desire to put things right, God will bring about a reconciliation between them. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Qur'an, 4:34-35)

The Idea of Male Superiority

The word "baadahum" in the verse "God has made the one excel the other," verse 34 of Surat an-Nisa', clearly addresses a mixed society made up of men and women. Therefore, the true meaning here is "God has made some men and some women excel other men and other women." This means that God has given each one of them different abilities and characteristics.

The passage interpreted into English as, **"Men have charge of women because God has made the one excel the other and because they spend their wealth on them."** refers, not to male superiority to women, but solely to physical differences. The words **"... because they spend their wealth on them"** remind us of men's responsibility to take care of women in the material sense, as we have already seen in some detail. The Arabic of the passage **"Men have charge of women"** is "Arrijalu qawwamoona aala annisa-i."

The real meaning of this Arabic statement is "Men watch over women," or **"Men have a responsibility to take care of matters of livelihood for women."**

The word "qawwam" in the verse is translated by many commentators to mean "overlord or master." However, in all the other verses in which the word appears, it has just one meaning, "to watch over and protect." As readers will remember, we have already seen how one needs to understand the use and meaning of words in Arabic, a very rich language, in verses by looking at how they are employed in other verses. That also applies to the word "qawwam."

The word "qawwam" is derived from the root "qwm." Looking at all the verses in which forms of this root appear, you will not find one in which it is used to mean "overlord or master." Indeed, the word "hukkam" is used for governors and rulers in the Qur'an. On that basis, we may easily conclude that the true meaning of the word in the verse in question is "to watch over and protect."

We can see this better when we look at the Qur'an in general. As we have already said, women are generally given a superior position in the Qur'an, and they are free, but also protected against the possibility of any difficulty. The defense of women, their protection in the material sense and preventing them from being exposed to difficulties are all responsibilities incumbent upon men (this has been set out in detail in earlier sections). Therefore, as the term "qawwam" makes clear in the verse in question, men have a duty to protect women, always and under all circumstances. This verse, which some fanatics seek to use as evidence for male superiority, is a very important one that actually describes the superiority of women.

The False Idea of the "Beating of Women"

The original Arabic word in verse 34 of Surat an-Nisa' that reads **"If there are women whose disobedience you fear, you may admonish them, refuse to sleep with them, and then beat them"** that is translated as "beat" in numerous texts is "idribuhunn(a)." The root is the verb "daraba" and "daraba" may be the word with the widest meaning in Arabic. In addition to meaning "to beat," it is also used in "minting money" and "going on strike." Let us consider a comparable example in English; when someone says "the doorbell went off," it does not generally mean that the doorbell is no longer functioning and therefore no longer of use, but that someone is waiting for us to open the

door. When words (or phrases) with broad meaning are used, it is therefore very important to analyze with reason and common sense the way they are used, the context and the true meaning.

One of the most widely employed meanings of the word "daraba" is to travel and to go out. Indeed, the verb "daraba" is used in verses of the Qur'an referring to traveling, going on a journey or departing from somewhere for a period of time. For example;

When you are travelling (*darabtum*) in the land, there is nothing wrong in your shortening your prayer if you fear that those who are irreligious may harass you. (Qur'an, 4:101)

We revealed to Moses, "Travel with My servants by night. Strike a dry path for them through the sea. Have no fear of being overtaken and do not be afraid." (Qur'an, 20:77)

It is for the poor who are held back in the Way of God, unable to travel (*darban*) in the land.... (Qur'an, 2:273)

You who believe! Do not be like those who are unbelievers and say of their brothers, when they are going on journeys (*darabu*)... (Qur'an, 3:156)

When you are traveling (*darabtum*) in the land... (Qur'an, 4:101)

The word "daraba" is clearly not being used in the sense of "to beat" in these verses. The same thing applies to verse 34 of Surat an-Nisa', which we are considering here. When we analyze the word "daraba" in the light of this verse, there are three different meanings we need to look at: 1) Remove them from the home, 2) Force them to go outside from where they are, or 3) Beat them.

In order to understand the sense in which the word *daraba* is used in verse 34 of Surat an-Nisa', we need to return to the term "**If there are women whose disobedience you fear,**" at the beginning of the verse. The word "*nushuz*" is translated to mean "rebellion and disobedience" in many texts. Some commentators who take every opportunity to try and include the idea of humiliating women in verses about them, either put "obedience to men" in parenthesis or else try to give that idea through misleading translations. Yet the word "*nushuz*" means unfaithfulness, from a woman flirting with someone who is not her husband up to the level of illicit sexual relations. Therefore, the next part of the verse describes how the husband should treat his wife who has been unfaithful to him. The man is told first of all to advise the woman not to behave unfaithfully. If that is unsuccessful, the husband is advised to sleep separately from her. However, if the woman still persists in illicit relations and commits adultery, then the best thing to do is to try removing the woman from the home entirely.

It is obvious that the Qur'an, in which women are specially protected, will not contain any practices resembling beating women. When we look at it logically, beating a woman who insists on being unfaithful to her husband despite all his admonitions will do nothing but anger that woman, who has in any case betrayed him; that would create new problems rather than resolving the issue. But removal is one solution. A woman may think more logically while she has been sent away, may feel regret in the face of this behavior and may look at matters in a healthier manner. The verse also says that the husband must not take other measures against her if she repents the error of her ways.

In this section, translated in the words "**But if they obey you, do not look for a way to punish them,**" there is again attempt to shape the issue on the basis of "a woman who obeys a man." Yet according to the accurate translation, what the passage actually means is "if they heed your advice and behave in a faithful manner." The criterion here is not a woman's obedience to a man, but "faithfulness," a responsibility attendant upon both sides in a marriage.

ADNAN OKTAR: It is a sin to beat up women. Almighty God does not tell [you] to beat up women. God says: "First admonish them and then separate your beds." Women can do that, too. "If they still persist in that behavior, then remove [them] from home." For example, take them to their father's or mother's house. If that still does not help,

appoint a judge; appoint people from both sides as judges. Let them try to make peace between you. If that doesn't work either, get a divorce, says God. There is no such thing as beating up. They turned Islam into a complicated religion. In truth, there is no headscarf, no wife beating in the Qur'an. You cannot find it in the Qur'an; it doesn't exist. This is an attempt to defame Islam and the Qur'an. This is Satan's plot. He is trying to destroy Islam. Satan is trying to end God's true religion. We will not let that happen. *(Excerpt from Mr. Adnan Oktar's conversations on A9 TV on February 7, 2017)*

Other Misconceptions concerning Women

Another of the misconceptions concerning women concerns the Prophet Adam (pbuh) and his wife. The Qur'an says nothing about Adam's wife deceiving him and causing him to sin. We see from reading verses 11 to 28 of Surat al-A'raf that it was Satan who deceived Adam and his wife.

In the same way, the Qur'an says nothing about woman being created from a man's rib. The fabricated hadith that represents the origin of this claim has been described in earlier sections.

Another misconception is that the Qur'an is addressed to men alone. In fact, more than 90% of the Qur'an addresses believers with expressions such as "you who believe," which refer to both men and women in general. In the same way that there are some verses addressed to men alone, there are others that address only women. Some other verses of the Qur'an are addressed directly and only to our Prophet (pbuh).

Sayings of Our Prophet (pbuh) in Praise of Women

The Qur'an must of course be our guide if we are to properly understand the place of women in Islam. Since our Prophet (pbuh) applied the Qur'an alone, we can be certain of the veracity of those hadiths which describe practices compatible with the Qur'an. These trustworthy hadiths contain meanings and practices completely at variance with those of the fabricated hadiths that exhibit a frightening attitude toward women and are totally divorced from the spirit of the Qur'an. Some of the hadiths that are very probably trustworthy because of their compatibility with the Qur'an are as follows:

Made beloved to me from your world are women and perfume, and the coolness of my eyes is in prayer. (Ahmad and an-Nasa'i)

Only a person of nobility and honor will value woman. Only bad and base people will despise them... (Ibn 'Asakir)

The best of you are those who are best to their women. (Ibn 'Asakir)

Do not torture your wives! They are entrusted to you by God. Be mild towards them and do favors! (Sahih Muslim)

God loves him who gets on well with his wife and banters with her and He increases their sustenance. (I. Lâli)

The most perfect believer in faith is the one who is the best of them in good conduct. The best of you is the one among you who treats his wife the best. (Imam Ghazzali, Ihya Ulum-Id-Din [The Book of Religious Learnings] [New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2001], 2:32)

The best of you is the one who is the best to his wives, and I am the best of you toward my wives. (Imam Ghazzali, Ihya Ulum-Id-Din [The Book of Religious Learnings] [New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2001], 2:32)

The blessing of emancipating a slave is written in the deed-book of him who looks at his wife with a smiling face. (R. Nâsihîn)

On Doomsday, I will be the enemy of him who hits his wife unrighteously. He who hits his wife will be rebellious towards God and His Messenger. (R. Nâsihîn)

Chapter 4

The Fanatics' Hatred of Art

As we saw in the preceding section, fanatics who recognize only their own dark and sinister mindsets, rather than the Qur'an, as the essence of the faith have invented thousands of fabrications to keep women in particular away from the Qur'an, worship, intellectual struggle and preaching. The main reasons why Islamic communities soon became corrupted after the time of the Prophet (pbuh) is that these communities turned away from the Qur'an, and their defamation of women is a manifestation of that. Due to that mistaken way of thinking, Islamic communities became backward; however, a second factor was always involved in that retardation – the fanatics' hatred of art.

Before describing the fanatics' hatred of art, let us remind ourselves of the fact that constitutes the basis of the fanatical mindset. In one verse our Lord speaks of "... people who make lawful things forbidden:"

Do not say about what your lying tongues describe: "This is lawful and this is forbidden," inventing lies against God. Those who invent lies against God are not successful. (Qur'an, 16:116)

Today there are of course people who, in their own eyes, disregard what is forbidden, who regard such things as lawful and whose main criterion is certainly not fear of God. However, people who make forbidden "in the name of religion" what God has made lawful are in an entirely different category altogether. These people make it impossible to do what the Qur'an says is permissible, restrict freedoms and ban what is otherwise perfectly legitimate. As we have been seeing from the beginning of this book, with supporting evidence, they actually dislike the religion in the Qur'an (surely the Qur'an is beyond that) and are striving to invent a faith of their own.

These people have prohibited concepts such as joy, humor and art, which are praised in the Qur'an and created as a blessing:

The Idea that Joking, Humor and Laughter Must Be Avoided

Imam al-Sadiq said, "Loud boisterous laughter is from satan." (al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 664, no. 10)

Abu Abdullah said: "Avoid (excessive) joking and humor since it takes away the light of faith." (al-Kafi)

The Imam said, "In laughing do not allow your teeth to become visible." (al-Kafi)

"Do not laugh too much, for laughing too much kills the heart." (Sahih al-Jaami', 7312; at-Tirmidhi, 2305; Ibn Majah, 4193)

It is narrated from him from ibn Faddal from al-Hassan ibn al-Jahm from Ibrahim ibn Mehzam from those whom he has mentioned (in his book) from abu al-Hassan: "Yahya (John) ibn Zakariya would weep and would not laugh. Jesus, son of Mary would laugh and weep. What Jesus did was better than what Yahya would do." (al-Kafi)

Imam al-Sadiq said, "The laughter of a believer is a smile." (al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 664, no. 5)

These false hadiths very well describe the terrifying and chilly world of the fanatics. Readers will remember that in the beginning of this book we looked at how the dark world of the fanatics manifests itself in all places, and how it appears, not just in the outside world, but inside their hearts, in their pernicious attitudes to women, flowers or cats.

The false hadiths cited here reveal how far removed the fanatics are from happiness, laughter and humor which is a great blessing, part of human nature and one of people's greatest needs. It is clear that, in the presence of a system that prohibits laughter, people who learn from these false hadiths that the prophets supposedly never laughed can become closely bound up with such a perverse and fanatical faith.

Yet in the Qur'an, Muslims are forbidden to grieve. A Muslim is the happiest person in the world because he knows how to submit to God, bear himself with fortitude, give thanks and surrender himself to God. He will have no worries about the future; he will know that the difficulties that befall him are all for the best and be aware that everything happens within destiny and know that death is not the end, but the moment when one meets God and the eternal life. God gives believers of the glad tidings of paradise in the Qur'an. All these things are cause for Muslims to rejoice. God wishes us to exhibit the moral values of paradise in this world as well because these are the values that please Him.

According to the Qur'an Grief and Unhappiness Are Attributes of Unbelievers Alone

Let them laugh little and weep much, in repayment for what they have earned. (Qur'an, 11:82)

They will say, "Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us. We were misguided people." (Qur'an, 23:106)

As we can see, unhappiness is equated with the unbelievers in the Qur'an. In the hereafter these people will blame their misguidance on "their wretchedness overcoming them." Therefore, unhappiness is not something that God desires. Unhappiness is equated with the unbelievers in the Qur'an, and joy is equated with the believers.

In other verses, God reveals that there will be people who spurn the advice of the Qur'an because of their unhappiness:

He who has fear will be reminded; but the most miserable will shun it, (Qur'an, 87:10-11)

Almighty God has prohibited sorrow to all Muslims:

Do not give up and do not grieve. You shall be uppermost if you are believers. (Qur'an, 3:139)

Fanatics try to invalidate these verses of God on the basis of fabricated hadiths. They regard Muslims as suited to the unhappiness that God equates with the unbelievers. They seek to destroy joy, the greatest need of the soul and body. This is not something that God desires, however. God has created paradise as an abode of joy.

The Joy in Paradise and the True Meaning of Sorrow

God has created in paradise, our eternal abode, the way of life that He likes and loves; the life that our Lord praises and loves in paradise is therefore the ideal way of life for us. God reveals that people in paradise are in a state of joy:

As for those who had faith and did right actions, they will be made joyful in a verdant meadow. (Qur'an, 30:15)

Fanatics wish to deprive "joyful" Muslims of this joy of paradise while in this world by way of these false hadiths. They are not even aware of the true meaning of sorrow. To grieve in the face of an event is equivalent to saying "I wish it had not happened" and that, whether a person is aware of it or not, whether he does it knowingly or not, is rebellion against destiny. Fanatics should be aware that by making grief legitimate they are opposing God's commandment and the destiny created by Him.

Faith is one of the greatest blessings that God can bestow on a person. For someone who has faith, the peace and happiness created in his heart by that faith are above all other things, even if he is deprived of the blessings of this world and is tested with the greatest of difficulties, and even if the circumstances all seem to be against him. God bestows peace and health on the heart that turns to Him, and happiness on the soul. It is impossible for someone who does not turn to God to be truly happy, even if he maintains otherwise. God may bestow the blessings of this world on such a person as part of the test and that person may seem to enjoy many blessings and delights. He may experience temporary desires and happiness. However, the longing in his soul will never allow him permanent happiness, or inner peace. In verse 28 of Surat ar-Ra'd, God says; **"... those who have faith and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of God. Only in the remembrance of God can the heart find peace."** Peace of mind depends on the bond to God alone.

Therefore, someone who truly believes in God is truly happy. Happiness is a secret that is compatible with human nature and that keeps a person healthy and sound. The cells remain healthy by means of happiness. The reason why happiness has such a positive effect is that all things which are compatible with human nature are good things recommended by God. God has created laughter, joy and happiness as good things. Sorrow, on the other hand, has severely damaging effects that lead to physical and psychological harm.

The Idea of Avoiding Humor

It will be useful to touch on the prohibition of humor here. Successful humor is an art; people who achieve it are generally people who produce great works by combining art and intelligence. Humor sometimes brings joy to one's surroundings. It can sometimes express criticism that cannot be made openly in a more covert but acceptable and conciliatory way. When employed in a way that bestows joy on the other party, that advises with sincerity but that also speaks to the heart, humor is a great blessing. Like all forms of art, humor is a blessing that expands people's horizons and brings delicacy and subtlety to communities. Humor is also a fine aspect of democracies. Fanatics are led into a life with no delicacy; a crude and soulless life, by turning their backs on such a blessing.

Everything that the fanatics claim on the subject of joy, laughter and humor, as described above, is wholly refuted by the Qur'an. Our Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions acted in a manner compatible with this spirit of the Qur'an and experienced the joy and happiness bestowed by faith:

A'isha (ra) said that she accompanied the Prophet (pbuh) on a certain journey. The Prophet (pbuh) asked the people to move on, and they marched ahead. Then the Prophet (pbuh) said to her, "Come on, let us have a race." A'isha says that she ran and remained much ahead of him. The Prophet (pbuh) kept quiet for some time. ... Again she accompanied the Prophet (pbuh) on some journey. The Prophet (pbuh) again asked the people to march ahead, and they moved ahead. Then the Prophet (pbuh) again asked her to have a race with him. This time the Prophet (pbuh) defeated her and she lagged behind. Now the Prophet (pbuh) laughed and said, "This is in reply to our previous defeat." (Ahmad, Safwat as-Safwah, vol. I, p. 68)

Abu Osama said he used to joke with him. (Sunan Abu Dawud; at-Tirmidhi)

Abu Hurayra (ra) said, the Prophet (pbuh) would protrude his tongue to al-Husain ibn Ali who in turn would wriggle with joy when he saw it.

Abdullah bin Haris said that he had not seen anyone else who was more humorous than the Messenger of God (pbuh).

When some of his companions said to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh): "O Prophet Muhammad, you also joke with us!" He replied: "Yes, I do. But I only tell the truth." (at-Tirmidhi)

'Anas (ra) said that someone asked him if the Prophet (pbuh) made jovial remarks. Ibn 'Abbas replied in the affirmative. (Ibn Asakir and al Kanz Vol IV p. 43)

'Anas (ra) said: "The Messenger of God (pbuh) was the nicest and the most humorous of people."

The Allegation that Music and Poetry Are Forbidden

Ibn 'Asakir relates from Anas (ra) that the Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever listens to a female singer, molten lead will be poured into his ears on the Day of Judgment." (Dha'ifu-Jami' As-Saghir Lil-Albani no. 5410 and Ad-Dha'ifah no. 4549)

It would be better for you were your insides full of vomit and blood rather than poetry. (M. al-Masabih 4/4809)

Whoever listens to the sound of singing will not be permitted to listen to the spirits in paradise. (Kanzu 'Ummal no. 40660, 400666 and Qurtubi no. 14/53-54)

Singing produces hypocrisy in the heart. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 41, Hadith 4909)

God has made singing, being paid for it, money from it and teaching and listening to it forbidden. (Muhammad al-Ghazali, Nabawi Sunnah)

Contrary to all these fabricated hadiths, there is no commandment whatsoever in the Qur'an that prohibits music, dancing and entertainment. God has made happiness, pleasure and joy lawful for Muslims. Dance means rhythm and harmony. God has created the entire universe with a rhythm; even birds, insects and butterflies dance. Birds sing lovely songs with a sound and rhythm one can never get enough of. It is a great delight to listen to them. The sound of the sea, the pulse of nature, the sighing of the trees, all are rhythmic. God loves rhythm, dance, music and lovely voices. Paradise was also created with that rhythm. All the trees, plants and animals in paradise will dance. One hadith that reveals this says:

It is related from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (ra) that, he said from the Basra pulpit: "God will send news to the people of paradise and ask: 'Has God kept His promise to you?' At that moment, they will look at the ornaments, clothes, fruits, spotless spouses and rivers bestowed on them and will not be able to help saying: 'God has kept His promise to us.' The angel will three times ask, 'Has God kept His promise to you?' When they see that the promise given them has been kept down to the finest detail, they will say 'Yes!' The angel will reply, 'There is one thing more.' Almighty God will manifest Himself to His servants and lift the veil from their eyes. When they see Him, all rivers will rejoice, the trees will wave and murmur, the mansions will give off sparks, the streams will flow fast and bright, fine scents will pervade the courtyards and mansions, and the smell of musk and camphor will be smelled on all sides. Birds will sing, and maidens will dazzle the eyes with their beauty. (Ash-Sharani, Mukhtasar Tazkirah al-Qurtubi, p. 370)

God thus inspired the beauty of paradise and the joy of harmonious music in paradise in our Prophet (pbuh). How can a delight that God has created in paradise and that He praises be unlawful for human beings? It cannot, of course.

There is folklore and dance all over Turkey. There are folk dances known as the *horon*, *halay* and *zeybek*. People dance all over the world. A world in which music and dance are forbidden is incompatible with human nature. That would leave a huge gap and a loss of blessings. Trying to forbid a blessing that is praised by and pleases our Almighty Lord represents a calamitous failure to understand God and His sublime artistry.

The Dishonesty of Fanatics Who Seek to Ban Music

In discussing these things, we also need to look at the fanatics' own lives. Since they have invented a false prohibition that appears nowhere in the Qur'an, a great many of these people are in a constant state of contradiction and falsity in their daily lives (those who are genuine are surely apart from that description, however).

- Those people who say, "Music is forbidden" generally keep music stations turned on the whole time, and even enjoy music themselves.
- When these people attend weddings they happily dance and sing or hold henna nights.
- These people generally listen to music in their cars.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with listening to music all the time or dancing at weddings; on the contrary, these things are delightful blessings. The way that these people we are criticizing here use religion to back up their prohibitions on music is entirely false and reflects their own dishonesty. It is important to be aware of the true face of those who issue prohibitions in the name of religion and their position is described in verses of the Qur'an. Our Almighty Lord describes the state of those who adopt faiths other than the Qur'an as follows:

They invented monasticism – We did not prescribe it for them – purely out of desire to gain the pleasure of God, but even so they did not observe it as it should have been observed. To those of them who had faith We gave their reward but many of them are deviators. (Qur'an, 57:27)

In this verse, God is saying that this false invented religion does not appear in His book, and that those who invent that religion do not themselves abide by it. We can therefore learn about these people's hypocrisy from the Qur'an. Their private lives always corroborate this fact revealed in the Qur'an. Many people may imagine that the people in question actually lead lives full of fear of God. There may very well be some people among them who sincerely believe this, but that is not the case. Indeed, the sincere ones among them will eventually learn and live by the Islam of the Qur'an. It is impossible for someone to be honest and yet live by a false religion because we have God's promise:

You who have faith! If you have fear of God, He will give you discrimination and erase your bad actions from you and forgive you. God's favor is indeed immense. (Qur'an, 8:29)

As revealed in this verse, an honest person will have the understanding to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

God Loves Music, and Causes His Servants to Love It

Music and dance are blessings of paradise made lawful in Islam. It is God Who creates music, songs, musical instruments, fine costumes, adornments, dance and all lovely things. He makes people love all these blessings and has created the soul in such a way as to enjoy these delights.

The Torah also describes how the Prophet David (pbuh) sang psalms to the accompaniment of lyres, timbrels, cymbals and sistrums, and how he danced before God; it also says how there were people who envied that dancing. In the same way that there are people in Muslim societies today who try to ban what is lawful, so we learn from the Torah of the existence in those days of people who foolishly tried to ban music and dancing among the Jews. They even foolishly criticized the actions of a prophet.

... David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with castanets, harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals.... (Torah, 2. Samuel, 6:5)

Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the Ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. As the Ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal¹, daughter of Saul, watched from a window. And when she saw King David LEAPING AND DANCING before the LORD, she despised him in her heart. (Torah, 2. Samuel, 6:14-16)

When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!" David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, Who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when He appointed me ruler over the

¹ Michal, daughter of Saul, is one of the wives of David

LORD's people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor." (Torah, 2. Samuel, 6: 20-22)

They moved the Ark of God from Abinadab's house on a new cart, with Uzzah and Ahio guiding it. David and all the Israelites were celebrating with all their might before God, with songs and with harps, lyres, timbrels, cymbals and trumpets. (Torah, 1. Chronicles 13:7-8)

So all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD with shouts, with the sounding of rams' horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps. As the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him in her heart. (Torah, 1. Chronicles 15:28-29)

People at that time, including the Prophet David's own wife, looked down on his enjoying himself and dancing with great joy. Yet God praises this fun-filled environment in the Torah, and the way that the Prophet David obeyed God's commandments about music and dance means that he behaved in the very best way. However, those who looked on from the outside, who had no faith in David's prophethood and who strove to fabricate a fanatic religion of their own invention, criticized this behavior of his.

The same criticism directed against the prophets is also turned against the Muslims of the Qur'an today. Preferring bigotry over the faith in the Qur'an has been one of the worst scourges over the course of history; women, dance and music are some of the areas where this scourge is most pronounced.

Yet, as with the example of the Prophet David (pbuh), our Prophet (pbuh) also delighted in music and dance, a blessing from God. Indeed, the hadiths speak of our Prophet's (pbuh) companions dancing, and there are even reports of the Prophet (pbuh) himself encouraging dancing and fun. Since these are in agreement with the Qur'an, there is every likelihood that these words in the hadiths, just a few of which are quoted below, are trustworthy.

Narrated by Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari: Amir ibn Sa'd said: "Going in and finding Qarazah ibn Ka'b and Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari at a wedding where girls were singing" I said, "Is this being done in the presence of you two who are companions of God's Messenger (pbuh) and were present at Badr?" They replied, "Sit down if you wish and listen along with us, or go away if you wish, for we have been given license (or permission) for amusement at a wedding." (At-Tirmidhi Hadith 3159)

Narrated Salama: We went out with the Prophet to Khaibar. A man (from the companions) said, "O 'Amir! Let us hear some of your Huda (camel-driving songs.)" So he sang some of them (i.e. a lyric in harmony with the camels' walk). The Prophet said, "Who is the driver (of these camels)?" They said, "Amir." The Prophet said, "May God bestow His Mercy on him!" (Sahih Bukhari, Book 83, Hadith 29)

Aisha (ra) relates: The Messenger of God (pbuh) called on the women of Ansar at a wedding. They were singing songs... (Sunan Ibn Majah, Nikah: 21, Sahih Bukhari, Nikah: 48, al-Maghazi: 12)

Narrated Ar-Rubai bint Muauwidh: The Prophet (pbuh) came to me after consuming his marriage with me and sat down on my bed as you (the sub-narrator) are sitting now, and small girls were beating the tambourine and singing... (Sahih Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 336)

Narrated by Aisha (ra): I had a girl of the Ansar whom I gave in marriage, and God's Messenger (pbuh) said, "Why do you not sing, Aisha, for this clan of the Ansar like singing?" (At-Tirmidhi Hadith 3154)

Anas narrates that when the Prophet (pbuh) first came to Medina the Ansar came out, men and women. ... The women of Banu al-Najjar came out banging their drums and singing: "We are the girls of the Sons of Najjar. O delight of Muhammad for a neighbor!" The Prophet (pbuh) came out and said: "Do you love me?" They replied: "Yea, by God, O Messenger of God!" At this he said: "God knows that my heart loves you." (Sunan Ibn Majah, book of Nikah, Hadith 1889)

The Idea that Painting and Sculpture Are Unlawful

The people who will receive the severest punishment from God will be the picture makers. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 72, Hadith 834)

Whoever makes a picture will be punished by God till he puts life in it, and he will never be able to put life in it. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 34, Hadith 428)

The most grievously tormented people on the Day of Resurrection would be the painters of pictures. (Sahih Muslim, Book 24, Hadith 5270)

The painter of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, "Make alive what you have created." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 93, Hadith 646)

The angels do not enter a house where there are pictures. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 34, Hadith 318)

All the painters who make pictures would be in the fire of hell. The soul will be breathed in every picture prepared by him and it shall punish him in the hell. (Sahih Muslim, Book 24, Hadith 5272)

Through these false hadiths the fanatics make painting and sculpture unlawful for Muslims. Indeed, according to some fabricated hadiths, painters are regarded as among those who will suffer the worst torment in the hereafter. According to this perverse perspective, these people have attributed divinity to themselves, may God forbid, by imitating His creations. Yet what possible connection could there be between a painter or sculptor producing a work of art and claims of divine status? If a painter or a sculptor does make such a perverse claim, that can only be because of weakness of mind or soul, not because of the art he produces. And that is a possibility that applies to all people and all members of professions.

All the beauties in nature are works of art made by our Almighty Lord. We realize how glorious art can be by looking at these works of our Lord's. In fact, almost every technology present in the world has been developed by imitating God's creation. The existence of things created is a blessing for technology. For example, people imitate birds and some species of fly created by God when manufacturing airplanes. Since these planes were inspired by living things, they possess perfect flying abilities and maneuverability. This is an advantage because there are already perfectly functioning models in nature. This is a gift bestowed by God as a blessing on all engineers. Despite all the scientific advances that make our lives easier and more comfortable, today's world of technology is simply a copy of these works of art in nature. God has created the models in nature and the technological copies of them as blessings for us.

The reason for the way that fanatics target the art of sculpture in particular actually lies in a tradition inherited from the past. In the past, when idol-worship was widespread, some rulers took measures against making statuettes in order to prevent people from worshipping idols. These measures, intended to avert potential dangers in these societies in the past, were literally propagated as a commandment of the faith, even though there is no such prohibition in the Qur'an. That is one of the worst pieces of damage caused by some people who prefer their traditions to the Qur'an.

We do not deprive ourselves of fire or the Sun just because Magians worship fire and other people worship the Sun, or we don't kill cows just because Hindus have sacred cows, so it is a genuinely primitive way of thinking to ban all statues just because there are some pagans who worship idols. What is wrong is to deify objects and other entities, and people who do that are those who commit unlawful deeds, not the objects themselves.

The arts of painting and sculpture that the fanatics prohibit for Muslims are most definitely not unlawful according to the Qur'an, the Book that is the guide for all Muslims. God loves art and causes His servants to love it; He has created the whole universe with art. There are no verses in the Qur'an that make fine arts such as painting and sculpture unlawful. On the contrary, works of art are praised in the Qur'an.

Statues and works of art praised as examples of majesty in the palace of the Prophet Solomon (pbuh) appear as follows in the Qur'an:

They made for him anything he wished: high arches and statues, huge dishes like cisterns, great built-in cooking vats. "Work, family of David, in thankfulness!" But very few of My servants are thankful. (Qur'an, 34:13)

The fanatics who ban these arts – despite these verses of the Qur'an – need to say what they think about the Prophet Solomon (pbuh), who had extraordinarily lovely statues in his palace.

These peddlers of superstition have wreaked great damage on Islamic societies. The Islamic world never managed to develop after the spread of such superstition about sculpture and painting. Societies that cannot develop art remain frozen, soulless and atrophied; they are closed to novelty. They gradually lose their creativity, their ability to think practically and their understanding of detail. Coldness and lack of taste are reflected in the places where they live and the way in which they behave toward one another. As a result of their turning their backs on art, monotony, coldness and lack of taste, devoid of grace, predominate in the dark world of the fanatics.

The Idea that Gold and Silk Are Prohibited

The Prophet of God (pbuh) took silk and held it in his right hand, and took gold and held it in his left hand and said: both of these are prohibited to the males of my community. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 32, Hadith 4046)

Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari reported: Messenger of God (pbuh) said, "Wearing of silk and gold has been made unlawful for males and lawful for the females of my community." (At-Tirmidhi)

The fanatics have forbidden silk and gold and have fabricated numerous hadiths about this. Yet there are no verses of the Qur'an in which gold and silk are prohibited. On the contrary, gold and silk are described as blessings of paradise in several verses in the Qur'an:

They will have Gardens of Eden with rivers flowing under them. They will be adorned in them with bracelets made of gold and wear green garments made of the finest silk and rich brocade, reclining there on couches under canopies. What an excellent reward! What a wonderful repose! (Qur'an, 18:31)

But God will admit those who have faith and do right actions into Gardens with rivers flowing under them where they will be adorned with gold bracelets and pearls, and where their clothing will be of silk. (Qur'an, 22:23)

They will enter Gardens of Eden where they will be adorned with gold bracelets and pearls, and where their clothing will be of silk. (Qur'an, 35:33)

There are hadiths showing that silk cloth was also used in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

Narrated Sa'd: I saw a man riding on a white mule and he had a black turban of silk and wool. He said: The Apostle of God (pbuh) put it on me. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 32, Hadith 4027)

Abu Dawud said: Twenty Companions of the Apostle of God (pbuh) or more put on khazz [silk]. Anas and al-Bara' b. 'Azib were among them. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 27, Hadith 4028)

As we have seen, Muslims were regarded as deserving of beauty and fine clothing in the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh).

Of course these things were in the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh) because our Prophet (pbuh) encouraged and loved a blessing that is praised in the Qur'an. One of the main pieces of evidence that the false hadiths here are

fabrications is the way they prohibit, as a command of our Prophet (pbuh), something that is never mentioned in the Qur'an: Such a thing is of course out of the question.

Gold is an adornment, and as we have already seen, God praises the beauty of adornment in the Qur'an. As revealed in the verse, "**Children of Adam, put on your adornment in every mosque...**" (Qur'an, 7:31), Muslims are encouraged to dress nicely and use adornments.

Let us remind ourselves that adornments are made lawful for everyone, men and women, without distinction, in Surat al-A'raf:

Say: "Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He has produced for His servants and the good kinds of provision?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Resurrection." In this way We make the signs clear for people who know. (Qur'an, 7:32)

The Idea that Make-up, Grooming, Cleanliness and Looking Attractive Are Unlawful

Fabricated Hadiths that Prohibit Pleasant Scent

The prayer of a woman who uses perfume for this mosque is not accepted until she returns and takes a bath like that of sexual intercourse (perfectly). (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4162)

If a woman uses perfume and passes the people so that they may get its odour, she is so-and-so, meaning severe remarks. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4161)

If a woman wears perfume for anyone other than her husband, her prayer will not be accepted unless she washes that scent from her body as if washing off sexual intercourse. (Man La Yahzaruhul Faqih, v. 3, p. 440)

Using perfume for other than one's husband brings a woman shame and fire (of hell). (Nahj al-Fasaha, 2382)

Fabricated Hadiths that Prohibit Tattoos, Removal of Facial Hair, Esthetic Dental Work

God has cursed those women who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those who remove their face hairs, and those who create a space between their teeth artificially to look beautiful. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 72, Hadith 815)

Fabricated Hadiths that Prohibit Wigs, Eyebrow Plucking, Tattoos

God has cursed such a lady as lengthens (her or someone else's) hair artificially or gets it lengthened, and also a lady who tattoos (herself or someone else) or gets herself tattooed. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 72, Hadith 820)

The Messenger of God (pbuh) cursed the woman who does tattoos and the one who has them done, and those who pluck their eyebrows. (Sunan Ibn Majah, Chapter 11, Hadith 1989)

Fabricated Hadiths that Prohibit Women from Going out of Doors in Attractive Clothes

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: "O Fatimah! The angels of the seven heavens and the seven earths curse the woman who decorates herself, dresses up and goes out of her house so that men may admire her beauty. She becomes the target of Divine wrath when she is alive. When she dies it is ordered that she be thrown into hell." (Shahabul Akhbar, Dastaan-e-zanaan, p. 11)

Imam al-Sadiq: "For someone to be brought low and disgraced, it is enough to wear clothes that will spread their fame (in such a way as to attract people's attention and cause them to point that person out)." (Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.78, p. 252)

Hazrat Ali: "Wear thick clothing (that does not reveal the body) because people who wear thin clothing also possess thin (weak) faith." (Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.79, p. 298)

The Messenger of God (pbuh) forbade women to wear clothes that would attract people's attention and from wearing accessories that make noise when they went out. (Mustadrak al-Wasail, Vol.14, p. 280)

Fabricated Hadiths that Maintain that Women Lose Paradise by Preoccupying Themselves with Gold and Clothes

I looked into paradise and the minority of its inhabitants were women. So I asked, "Where are the women?" And I was told, "They are preoccupied with two red things: gold, and saffron," meaning jewelry and dyestuff for clothes.

Fabricated Hadiths that Maintain that Women Should not be Given Nice Clothes

Help women by not giving them nice clothes to wear.

The reason for quoting all these fabricated hadiths is to be able to show how women are despised in the religion of the peddlers of superstition, and how they are regarded as foolish, lacking in character and generally irrelevant. Considering women inferior and feeling anger towards them is, as explained before, one of the most horrible aspects of the pre-Islamic societies of ignorance. Misogyny was rampant among pagans as particularly pointed out in the Qur'an and God condemns their hatred:

When one of them is given the good news of a baby girl, his face darkens and he is furious. He hides away from people because of the evil of the good news he has been given. Should he keep her ignominiously or bury her in the earth? What an evil judgement they make! (Qur'an, 16:58-59)

While the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was alive, he prevented the misogyny of the pagans and the hypocrites. As a matter of fact, the Prophet's (pbuh) love and respect of women was one of the things that infuriated the hypocrites and pagans the most. These people couldn't sever their ties with their pagan traditions, which viewed women as second-class beings and so they couldn't accept the Prophet's (pbuh) love for women. Hypocrites and pagans got almost insane with jealousy when they saw how pretty the female believers were, how faithful to and in love they were with the Prophet (pbuh), how they found extreme happiness and peace with him. After the Prophet's (pbuh) demise, this madness and jealousy drove them to oppress women and they worked to drive women away from Islam with nonsensical superstitions.

These commands, some of which are mentioned above and which appear nowhere in the Qur'an, are depicted by way of these false hadiths as if they were a part of the faith. In this way, not only is female beauty done away with, a model of society in which their wisdom and character is also taken away is thus described. From then on, the lives of those who are already frozen, soulless and loveless become increasingly more atrophied. When female beauty, one of the greatest blessings of this world, is done away with, both their own souls and their idea of society sink to the bottom. As we have discussed in detail in preceding sections, by disregarding women's minds and ignoring the ideas of women, who are capable of sharp and detailed thinking, capable of taking precautions and with a much wider understanding than that of men in a great many regards, the societies in question are deprived of many benefits. The most disturbing thing is that women in these societies also believe in this false religion and see nothing wrong with regarding themselves as inferior. The women in question have become used to looking no different from men and being exceedingly ill-groomed, to having no opinions on anything, to being ignorant and leaving all decisions to men and generally submitting to men.

The fact is, however, as we have already seen, that God refers in verses to those who render adornments and nice things unlawful. Such people behave in contravention of the Qur'an:

Say: "Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He has produced for His servants and the good kinds of provision?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Resurrection." In this way We make the signs clear for people who know. (Qur'an, 7:32)

As we have already seen in detail, women are delightful and valuable in the view of the Qur'an; female beauty is a blessing. Female intelligence can lead societies to very broad horizons. God has bestowed all these beautiful attributes on women; He praises them and protects them. These fraudulent statements in the fabricated hadiths above are completely rejected by the Qur'an.

It must not be forgotten that the people who try to ban beauty and the blessings beloved of God are fanatics. It is therefore a very great mistake to condemn those who think that the world of the fanatics is the true one and thus criticize the true Islam out of this ignorance. The people who really abide by the Qur'an are those who know that beauty and adornment are blessings from God, not those who want to ban them.

If the Spirit of the Fanatics Dominated This World...

Let us now have a look at what kind of world might await the fanatics in the light of these prohibitions. If the bans on painting and sculpture of the peddlers of superstition were applied in daily life, there would be no paintings, pictures or even advertising posters anywhere in the world. Therefore,

- No illustrations could be used with written preaching materials.
- There would be no illustrations in school text books.

- There would be no pictures on bank notes.
- There would be no glorious paintings or wall decorations in palaces.
- There would be no illustrated descriptions of the human body in anatomy classes.
- There would be no schools of fine arts or the like.
- There would be no illustrated newspapers, magazines, books or web pages. Watching TV would be forbidden, since that consists almost entirely of images.
- With the banning of media organizations, we would have to forego the innumerable benefits to be obtained from the media. It would also be impossible to preach moral values, and tell people of goodness and truth, as required by the Qur'an.

Make-up, Grooming, Cleanliness, Modernity and Culture, "Quality" for Short, Are All Requirements of Islam

Of course a Muslim must be well-groomed, clean and attractive, because beauty, grooming and taking pleasure in art are all characteristics beloved of God and, as set out in the verses cited above, are all blessings bestowed on believers. There is nothing in the Qur'an to suggest that it is unlawful for women to wear make-up and be well-groomed. Indeed, women used to go out looking as attractive and well-groomed as possible in the time of our Prophet (pbuh). Women wore make-up at that time, too: Men, too, including our Prophet (pbuh) in particular, wore kohl on their eyes. As one hadith reveals:

Narrated Aisha (ra): The Messenger of God (pbuh) applied kohl to his eyes while he was fasting. (Sunan Ibn Majah, Chapter 9, Hadith 1678)

Muslim women in those days used lipstick, rouge and kohl and painted their hands and nails with henna. Women and men used special dyes to color their hair. Our Prophet (pbuh) used to encourage people to dye their hair, and even dyed his own.

Zainab said: I went to Um Habiba, the wife of the Prophet (pbuh) when her father, Abu-Sufyan bin Herb had died. Um Habiba asked for a perfume which contained yellow scent (Khaluq) or some other scent, and she first perfumed one of the girls with it and then rubbed her cheeks with it. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 63, Hadith 251) (Khaluq is pinkish-yellow in color and serves as a kind of rouge.)

Other hadiths on the subject are as follows:

In a Tabarani tradition it is commanded "to change the hair color so as to oppose the foreigners." (2111)

Narrated Abu Huraira: God's Apostle said, "The Jews and the Christians do not dye (their grey hair), so you shall do the opposite of what they do (i.e. dye your grey hair and beards)." (Sahih Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 668; Sahih Muslim, Book 24, Hadith 5245)

Anas bin Malik said, Abu Bakr dyed his hair with Henna' and Katam (i.e. plants used for dying hair). (Sahih Bukhari, Book 58, Hadith 257)

Anas b. Malik said, Abu Bakr and Umar dyed hair with henna. (Sahih Muslim, Book 30, Hadith 5779)

Narrated under the authority of Sohayb al-Khayr: The Prophet (pbuh) said "The best dye you use for your hair is this black substance which enhances your women's love to you and reflect a more dignified image to deter your enemy." (Sahih Muslim)

Hadiths also tell us that yellow was the hair color that was most pleasing to our Prophet (pbuh):

Narrated Abdullah ibn Abbas: When a man who had dyed himself with henna passed by the Prophet (pbuh), he said: "How fine this is!" When another man who had dyed himself with henna and katam passed by, he said: "This is better than that." Then another man who had dyed himself with yellow dye, passed by, he said: "This is better than all that." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4199)

O Ansar, dye your hair red and yellow, and be different from the A'ajim (Persians). (Narrated by Ahmad, 21780)

(The Companions) generally saw fit to dye their hair yellow. These included Hazrat Ali, Ibn Umar and Abu Huraira. Some dyed it with henna and katam, and some with a black dye. Among those who preferred black were Hazrat Uthman, Hazrat Hassan, Hazrat Husain (the two sons of Ali), Uqba ibn 'Amir, Ibn Sirin and Abu Burda.

Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar: ... "I saw the Apostle of God (pbuh) dyeing with yellow color, and nothing was dearer to him than it. He would dye all his clothes with it, even his turban." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 32, Hadith 4053)

Abu Qatadah (ra) once asked the Messenger of God (pbuh): "I have long hair, should I comb it?" The Prophet (pbuh) replied: "Yes, and look after your hair." Hence Abu Qatadah used to sometimes apply oil twice a day (i.e. apply oil and comb it) because of the order of the Prophet (pbuh). (Imam Malik has narrated this Hadith Mishkaat p. 384)

Narrated AbuDharr: The Prophet (pbuh) said: "The best things with which grey hair are changed are henna and katam." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4193)

In the time of our Prophet (pbuh), instead of nail polish, there are numerous accounts of women painting their nails with henna. Our Prophet (pbuh) is also said to have encouraged his own wives to do that.

Narrated Aisha: A woman made a sign from behind a curtain to indicate that she had a letter for the Apostle of God (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) closed his hand, saying: "I do not know if this is a man's or a woman's hand." She said: "No, a woman." He said: "If you were a woman, you would make a difference to your nails, meaning with henna." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4154)

Narrated Aisha (ra): When Hind, daughter of Utbah, said: Prophet of God, accept my allegiance, he replied; "I shall not accept your allegiance till you make a difference to the palms of your hands..." (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 33, Hadith 4153)

Women Are Lovely Beings, of course They Must Be Well-Groomed

Of course women must be attractive and well-groomed, and of course their behavior must be very noble. This means quality, and quality leads to people respecting that person. That does not mean one has to be pretty or rich, but rather that one should desire to adopt the spirit of cleanliness of the Qur'an and be clean and well turned out. Muslims must be well groomed such as to complete the light upon them, and must enhance their respect and esteem and quality by looking good. Everyone in the world would be hugely affected by the sight of a respected, cultured and self-confident Muslim woman. This is something that God desires and approves of.

Make-up is an important means of looking well-groomed and attractive, and is a blessing from God. God loves all forms of beauty. That is why women, flowers, trees, butterflies and birds have all been created to be attractive. We greatly admire the harmonious colors on a butterfly's wing, its extraordinary symmetry and harmonious patterns. Women are also an adornment of this world, and even the most attractive. In the same way that a butterfly was created to be delicate by our Lord, so women are created to be delicate. That beauty bestowed on them as a blessing emerges

through grooming, and they thus become highly valuable. The beauty that addresses the heart and eye of a woman who doesn't take care of her appearance and attaches no value to herself will also be valueless.

People who seek to ban the use of make-up have generally lost the spirit of pleasure. In the same way that there is no art, pleasure, joy or beauty in their murky world, since they regard women as entities that need to be locked away and eliminated, they prefer them to be ugly than attractive. Let us therefore ask, what progressive and modern person or society could possibly choose a religion that makes women valueless and ill-kempt? Who would want to represent such a faith? Who would espouse such a faith?

That is why some Western communities are opposed to the fanatics, but they are mistaken in thinking that this faith is actually Islam.

The Horrifying Nature of the Misogyny of the Fanatical Mindset

We have seen how the fanatical mentality is opposed to female beauty and women's grooming and how they do everything in their power to keep women away from social life. However, there is even a sicker aspect of the misogyny of the fanatical mindset. The fanatical mentality that took away the beauty and attractiveness of women turned its attention to young boys. According to this perverted thinking, not only women but also young boys should be kept under pressure (because according to this mindset, boys are as dangerous as women). This mentality claims that young boys are seductive and that their presence can be dangerous and lead to sins. This is an extremely twisted way of thinking. Regrettably, this horrible and evil perversion has nestled inside the fanatical thinking, totally remote from the Qur'an. As you will see in the following pages, this perversion is largely discussed in fabricated hadiths and accounts as well as in the lectures of some scholars. These sources reveal a sick mentality that looks at innocent, little children with lustful eyes and that talks about people running away and hiding when they see a young boy. People with this mentality claim that handsome boys are much more dangerous than women and that boys are supposedly accompanied by satans. This fact one more time clearly shows that fanatical mindset embodies an incredibly sick, twisted and perverted mentality. Now let's see the details in various sources:

The Perversion that Leads to Running inside and Locking the Doors upon Seeing a Boy

It is related that while Abdullah Ibn Umar was sitting one day in front of his house, he sees a shiny faced, handsome young boy and runs inside to lock himself inside the house. After a while he calls out asking "Did that fitnah [trial] pass by?" and they respond saying, "he is gone." Then he goes out again. People standing there ask him, "What happened to you, did you hear something about this from the Prophet (pbuh)?" He responds saying, "Yes, I did. It is forbidden to look at, to speak to and to sit with such boys." (Imam al-Ghazali, An Exposition of the Hearts (Makashifat-ul-Quloob))

One of the worst things about the fanatical mentality is that they slander the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) by lying in an attempt to justify their sick and twisted behavior. The Prophet (pbuh) never said anything about young boys being dangerous, nor did he say that it was wrong to talk to them or be in their presence. On the contrary, with his well-documented compassion and affection for children, he set a beautiful example to the entire Islamic community.

The Lie that Young Boys are Accompanied by Eighteen Satans

It is written in Fatawa-i Khayriyya, "When there is the danger of fitna, a father can keep his beautiful discreet son who has reached the age of puberty in his own home and under his own discipline. He may not let him go out on a travel or for education or on hajj (pilgrimage) without a beard. He protects him like a woman. But he does not veil him. In streets there are two devils near every woman. And there are eighteen devils near a boy. They try to mislead those who look at these." (Huseyin Hilmi Işık, Endless Bliss (Se'adet-I Ebediyye), Fascicle 4, p. 62)

The fanatical mindset seeks to put handsome young boys under pressure, just as it seeks to lock up women in the home, to keep them from going to school or talking to anyone. Saying that they should not cover their faces with a veil clearly demonstrates the extent of their perverted view of these children. The fanatical mentality, which doesn't stop even after trying to cover up women in a way not commanded in the Qur'an, debates whether boys should wear a face veil and claims that they should not be sent to school or allowed to go on pilgrimage. What is even worse is that they claim that 'young boys are accompanied by eighteen satans'. This claim accuses all young boys of being 'evil' and that makes it almost impossible for these children to live comfortably and safely in society. A mentality that believes handsome young boys are evil creatures cannot create a happy, healthy, peaceful and prosperous society.

The Perversion that Claims Boys Can Be 19 Times More Seductive than Women

His Highness Imam Muhammad went to the bathhouse one day. A young boy came in and sat down. Imam Muhammad asked who he was. He was told that the boy was a bath attendant. He rebuked his students and had the young bath attendant taken out. He decreed the following when he was asked about the reason of this act: "The lust felt for a woman is the same in men but with a pretty beardless young boy, it is nineteen (19) times more!" It is forbidden to look at a beardless young boy even without feeling lust because it causes one to look at him with lust. Touching him is even a bigger sin than lust." (Ismail Hakki Bursevi, Rūḥ al-bayān (the Spirit of Elucidation) 4/452-553)

In this account, in a completely twisted and sick way, it is claimed that the lust for young boys is more than that for women. For those who possess a fanatical mentality, a mentality which does not consider women as smart, conscientious or respectable human beings, the existence of boys is also almost a crime. They go so far as to claim that one would be aroused by boys 19 times more than by women, and forbid one to even look at their faces, let alone be next to them. Clearly, a person who sees every other person as a potential cause of sin and threat cannot have a healthy mind or a healthy life.

The Perversion that Claims 'Young Boys Are Same as Women' And 'Boys Can Be Lusted After just like Women'

It states in Al-Hindiyya "When a young boy reaches puberty, if he hasn't a bright face [if he has facial hair] his ruling is the same with men, if he has a bright face [if he doesn't have facial hair] his ruling is with women. His entire body from head to toe is awra [privates that need to be covered]..." (Ibn 'Abidin, Radd Al-Muhtar 'ala al-Durr al-Mukhtar)

Whether or not one is sure about looking with or without lust, it is forbidden to look at beautiful-faced boys as well, just as it is to look at women. That is because young boys are beautiful like women and they are

lusted after, just as women are lusted after. Besides there is much more opportunity to get together with young boys than to get together with women. (Al-Fatawa al-Hindiyya)

Seeing boys like women is a deeply perverted way of thinking. Millions of boys study at thousands of schools and are taught by tens of thousands of teachers. No teacher looks at these children with lust or in a perverted manner; they wouldn't even imagine something like that. However, in the dark world of bigotry, every kind of perversion and horror exists.

It is plain to see how terrifying a world is envisioned by the fanatical mindset, considering that they even view young boys as women. There is no place for beauty, love or friendship in such a world. There is no art, free-thinking or creativity in that world. The people in that world are fearful, withdrawn, nervous people who consider everything a crime. It is impossible for a society to be happy and content when it is dominated by such mentality. The only way to eliminate this dark world is to hold fast to the Book of God and to live by the beautiful spirit of the Qur'an.

The Claim that a Young Boy's Voice is Forbidden

It is haram [forbidden] for every [na-mahram] man to listen to the voice of women, girls or beautiful boys when he is with them and looking at them. A pure heart is distressed at the sight of such scenes, and is stained; the nafs [the lower self] enjoys them, gets stronger and becomes excessive. The Shaitan helps the nafs and shahwa [sensual desire]. (Huseyin Hilmi Işık, Endless Bliss (Se'adet-I Ebediyye), Fascicle 4, p. 165)

Seeing little boys as sexual objects is an indescribable abomination and perversion. The fanatical mentality about the matter is truly horrifying. It says that even upon hearing the voice of a young boy "the lower-self will be excessive" and therefore it bans their voices in a bid to prevent this so-called 'danger'.

The radical mentality that is against female beauty, that seeks to shut women away in houses and that seeks to make them extremely unattractive and ill-groomed, does not stop there and considers boys just as dangerous. It goes as far as claiming that dolls and even water carboys can be 'seductive.' Clearly, the next step in the misogyny created by such a non-Qur'anic mentality is building a perverted world where it is forbidden even to look at the faces of little boys. God explains in a verse how tangled and twisted the superstitious religions of such people are:

In the same way their idols have made killing their children appear good to many of the idolaters, in order to destroy them and confuse them in their religion. If God had willed, they would not have done it; so abandon them and what they fabricate. (Qur'an, 6:137)

In an Islamic understanding which is based on superstitions and fabrications, everyone can make personal interpretations based on their own ideas. Muslims, however, are obliged to follow only what God sent down, that is, the Qur'an.

So judge between them by what God has sent down and do not follow their whims and desires deviating from the Truth that has come to you.... (Qur'an, 5:48)

Muslims Have the Right to Wear Attractive Stylish Clothing and Own Fine Cars and Nice Homes

Our Prophet (pbuh) and his companions were the highest-quality, most modern-looking and cleanest people of their time. Were our Prophet (pbuh) alive today, he would be the highest-quality person of our time. He would wear the most modern and attractive clothing of the day, would live in the most modern and pleasant home and would drive the finest cars. He would be known to all for his excellence. Indeed, the hadiths report that our Prophet (pbuh) wore the most select and impressive clothing of his time, and wore a gold-embroidered robe:

"He went out in a gold-embroidered robe and said: O Mahrama! This is what I have kept for you..." (Great Hadith Collection, Jam al-Fawaid, Min Jami al-Usul and Majma az-Zawaid, Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Sulayman, Ar-Rudani, Iz Publications, 2nd edition, Istanbul 2009, pp. 257-261-262-265-271-272-273)

Those people who try to make a religion out of their traditions based on superstition generally regard themselves as unworthy of anything attractive and act out of feelings of inferiority, and therefore do not regard themselves – or Muslims in general – as deserving of attractive stylish clothes, nice homes and fine cars. There is no problem with anyone living in a luxury home, having a good car and wearing the nicest clothes yet these people lose their reason and common-sense when Muslims do these things. Their sense of inferiority also increases their anger. They not only look at the outside with anger, but also at Muslims.

Of course Muslims must do all in their power to protect people in difficulties and strive to please God as much as possible in that regard. However, that does not mean that they have to be ill-kempt, dirty and scruffy. A Muslim has a significant preaching power just because of his appearance. The more he looks clean, high-quality, polite, and modern, the more extroverted he is, and the more joyful he is and open to new ideas, the more perfect his preaching of the faith will be. That life style will of course prevail in his entire life, not just preaching. In the view of the Qur'an, Muslims already have an obligation to live in that way, and indeed they take pleasure from doing so.

Instead of that horrible way of life in which women are despised, they will be affected by a peaceable conception of Islam in which quality prevails and will begin to feel love, rather than fear and that is what is compatible with the Qur'an. Indeed, in the time of our Prophet (pbuh), people who saw his glorious quality, joyful and modern behavior and appearance were always extraordinarily affected. It is a known fact that our Prophet (pbuh) always wore Byzantine robes and other fine clothes when greeting foreign envoys. Our Prophet (pbuh) also sent Dihya al-Kalbi on various trips to introduce Islam to other peoples. Dihya al-Kalbi was incredibly handsome and always wore very expensive and high-quality clothes in the places where he went to preach Islam. Due to his appearance and his great quality the people would pour out onto the streets in the regions where he went to preach, and would be hugely impressed by him. The aim here was for people to see that Islam values beauty and quality.

Some hadiths of our Prophet's (pbuh) regarding Muslims dressing well and being of good quality are as follows:

Abu'l-Ahwas related the following on the authority of his father, Malik bin Nadlah: "I came to the Prophet (pbuh) wearing old clothes, and he said: 'Do you have any property?' I said: 'Yes!' He asked: 'What kind?' I said: 'I have every kind, i.e., camels, cattle, horses, and sheep.' [The Prophet] said: 'If God gives you wealth, then let it show on you.'" (Imam Ahmad recorded this hadith from Sufyan bin `Uyaynah, from Abu Az-Za`ra' `Amr bin `Amr, from his uncle Abu Al-Ahwas `Awf bin Malik bin Nadlah from his father, Malik bin Nadlah.)

Narrated from Jabir (ra): We went to the Battle of Anmar with the Prophet (pbuh) ... O Messenger of God, we have a friend from Medina. We also prepared him. He follows behind and protects us. The man came with two torn pieces of clothing. When the Prophet (pbuh) saw him he asked, "Does he have nothing else to wear than these two torn pieces of clothing?" "He has two other pieces of clothing I gave him in his bag." "Call him and tell him to put those on." I called him over, and he put those on. As the man turned to go, the Messenger of God (pbuh) said: "Is it not better for him (instead of wearing old clothes when he has new ones)?" The man heard this and said, "O Messenger of God! Should I also wear new clothes when I go on jihad on the path of God?" "Yes, even when waging jihad on the path of God." (Great Hadith Collection, Jam al-Fawaid, Min Jami al-Usul and Majma az-Zawaid, Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Sulayman, Ar-Rudani, Iz Publications, 2nd edition, Istanbul 2009, pp. 257-261-262-265-271-272-273)

Chapter 5

Jews and Christians in the Religion of the Fanatics

The fanatics' terrifying way of thinking, that we have particularly seen in the context of war and women, can also be observed in their attitudes toward the People of the Book, Jews and Christians. It is once again the fabricated hadiths that have for years poisoned Muslim societies that have harbored intense enmities toward Christians and Jews. On account of these false hadiths, related as if they were said by the Prophet (pbuh) himself, Muslim communities have ignored righteous Jews and Christians, who are praised in the Qur'an, and have lived in literal ignorance of the fact that Jews and Christians must remain under the protection of Muslims. On account of this mistaken way of thinking they have come to deny those verses of the Qur'an in which sincere Christians and Jews are described. In the view of Islam, denying any verses of the Qur'an means to abjure the faith, and they have even managed to underestimate that.

This section discusses the true meaning of verses of the Qur'an that the fanatics and some opponents of Islam seek to use as evidence for hostility toward the People of the Book in Islam, as well as the fabricated hadiths that are the real cause of the enmity toward Jews and Christians that has been encouraged down the years. We also need to remember the following very important fact; Christianity and Judaism are true faiths that were sent down before Islam, and according to the Qur'an, all Muslims have a responsibility to accept all the true faiths and true prophets. One verse states:

Say, "We have faith in God and what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham and Ishma'el and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes, and what Moses and Jesus were given, and what all the prophets were given by their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them." (Qur'an, 2:136)

There is no doubt that these true faiths have gradually been misinterpreted by fanatical mindsets, and that this distortion has been extended to the sacred scriptures themselves. However, when we look at the Qur'an, which will remain uncorrupted until the Day of Reckoning, we understand that we must believe in Christianity and Judaism in their first and original forms, and act accordingly.

Some Muslim communities that still harbor policies of enmity of frightening dimensions toward Christians and Jews, despite the above verse and other verses of the Qur'an that praise the People of the Book, are representatives of this fabricated fanatical faith, not of the Islam of the Qur'an.

Some people fall into this error knowingly, and others unknowingly. The purpose of this book is to warn those who do fall into this error and to show them the way to be saved from it, and to show some opponents of Islam that the religion they are against is not the true Islam.

In contrast to all the claims made by the fanatics, the Qur'an curses enmity toward the People of the Book and advises love for them. Let us now look at the evidence for this:

Responses from the Qur'an to Those Who Look to the Qur'an for Enmity toward the Jews

The Jews in particular, one of the People of the Book, have for years been at a loss to understand some Muslims' hostility toward them. They have imagined that there must be such a commandment in the Qur'an and that the Muslims in question are acting in the light of that; some of them have therefore always blamed Islam. They are unaware that the Qur'an actually curses people who are inimical to the Jews.

There are two main allegations that the Jews find being made against them, that the Jews are cursed and that they are comparable to monkeys and pigs (surely our Jewish brothers and sisters are beyond that). The fanatics, in their own minds, base these claims on the Qur'an. Let us now look and see what the Qur'an really says:

The Comparison with "Monkeys and Pigs" and What the Qur'an Really Says about the People of the Book

The People of the Book occupy a special place in the Qur'an. God praises sincere Jews and Christians and reveals that He will reward them in the hereafter. All the People of the Book are entrusted to Muslims. That entrusting expresses the feelings of love and affection that Muslims should feel. It does not mean that the People of the Book are in need of protection, however.

Some fanatics look to the verses of the Qur'an in an effort to find evidence for their hostility toward the Jews and that is also the greatest card in the hands of some Western opponents of Islam. These people encourage enmity toward the Jews by foolishly pointing to verses in the Qur'an and saying that the Jews are cursed and compared to "monkeys and pigs." When we look at the Qur'an, however, the people who are cursed and compared to animals are polytheists who have emerged from among the Jews and engage in hypocrisy and aggression.

Let us examine the verses of the Qur'an on the subject:

In verse 60 of Surat al-Ma'ida, God refers to a community that He rendered "monkeys and pigs." In the light of the preceding verses, this community consists of people from among those who were "given the Book," from among Christians and Jews, in other words:

Examination of Verse 60 of Surat al-Ma'ida:

You who have faith! Do not take as friends [patrons] any of those given the Book before you or the disbelievers who make a mockery and a game out of your religion. Have fear of God if you are believers. (Qur'an, 5:57)

When you call to prayer they make a mockery and a game of it. That is because they are people who do not use their intellect. (Qur'an, 5:58)

Say: "Shall I tell you of a reward with God far worse than that: that of those whom God has cursed and with whom He is angry – turning some of them into monkeys and into pigs – and who worshipped false gods? Such people are in a worse situation and further from the right way." (Qur'an, 5:60)

These verses are addressing a community that has emerged from within the People of the Book; however, this community has worshiped false gods. They are deviators who have insisted on committing unlawful deeds and have mocked the faith. The term "People of the Book" is used solely to identify the society from which these two-faced

people have emerged, not to suggest that the People of the Book as a whole are guilty of such things (surely they are beyond that).

We can see the entire description when we look at the verses before verse 60 of Surat al-Ma'ida. Verse 57 says, **"Do not take as friends [patrons] any of those given the Book before you or the disbelievers who make a mockery and a game out of your religion."** The term "before you" means before the Muslims, and the words "given the Book" mean Christians and Jews, and the verse refers to people **who are disbelievers and who make a mockery of the religion** from among Christians and Jews. Let us reiterate that this is not a general reference to the entirety of Jews and Christians, but to an irreligious, aggressive and mocking community that has emerged from among them. Such a community is a grave threat and scourge, not only for Muslims, but also for Jews and Christians. It should also be noted that such a group can emerge from among the Muslims just as it can emerge from among the People of the Book.

In order that the word "disbeliever" that appears in the verses cited here and below should not be misunderstood, the subject needs to be made clear: Someone may believe in a religion or may not. He is free to choose, and this is a matter he will decide on according to his own conscience. A believer will never seek to impose his beliefs on someone who does not believe in that religion. Such compulsion is explicitly forbidden in the Qur'an. Indeed, as we have seen in preceding sections, a Muslim has a responsibility to protect an unbeliever, even at the cost of his own life.

However, if that unbeliever mocks and laughs at the faith, and thus seeks to harm believers and their values, if he abandons love and affection and behaves in a hostile manner instead, and even becomes aggressive, then he is committing an offense against God. The unbelievers in the verses here possess those very qualities and have overstepped the bounds. God compares these people to monkeys and pigs because they are hypocrites that oppress and cause difficulties for believers.

Jews Who Are Praised

As we have seen, examination of the verses before verse 60 of Surat al-Ma'ida shows the attributes of this community. Examination of the verses that follow reveals the qualities of true Jews and Christians in the eyes of the Qur'an:

Those who have faith and those who are Jews and the Sabaeans and the Christians, all who have faith in God and the Last Day and act rightly will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 5:69)

There are glad tidings in this verse and they are directed toward Jews and also toward Christians who believe in God and do good deeds. God is foretelling that those Jews and Christians who are sincere and who believe in Him will taste no fear. This is the good news of paradise for them because God is promising that they will know no sorrow; God places them in a lofty place. God is expressing His love of them.

Examination of Verse 166 of Surat al-A'raf

Ask them about the town which was by the sea when they broke the Sabbath – when their fish came to them near the surface on their Sabbath day but did not come on the days which were not their Sabbath. In this way We put them to the test because they were deviators. (Qur'an, 7:163)

When a group of them said, "Why do you rebuke a people whom God is going to destroy or severely punish?" they said, "So that we have an excuse to present to your Lord, and so that hopefully they will gain fear of God." (Qur'an, 7:164)

Then when they forgot what they had been reminded of, We rescued those who had forbidden the evil and seized those who did wrong with a harsh punishment because they were deviators. (Qur'an, 7:165)

When they were insolent about what they had been forbidden to do, We said to them, "Be apes, despised, cast out!" (Qur'an, 7:166)

When we look at the verses that precede verse 166 of Surat al-A'raf, we see they are directly addressed to the Children of Israel. A community that has emerged from the Children of Israel, from among the Jews in other words, is not abiding by the Sabbath (Saturday). They are forgetting and disregarding the reminders given them in the name of the faith and are rebelling by insisting on doing something that they should not. Therefore, these people are in a state of direct denial of their own religion. This is a community that has emerged from Jewish society and that refuses to pay heed.

Looking at these verses, there is one community of honest and sincere Jews and another, among these Jews, that represents a community of deniers who refuse to pay heed. For example, in verse 164 there are Jews who persistently warn this community and call them to the truth. Their aim is to summon them to the true path **"so that hopefully they will gain fear of God."** Verse 165 states that this honest community that forbid the evil were saved. Those who were cast down were the unbelievers who refused to listen to advice and who made problems for the sincere Jews.

Before these verses, God praises righteous Jews in these terms:

Among the people of Moses there is a group who guide by the truth and act justly in accordance with it. (Qur'an, 7:159)

God praises a community from the people of Moses, who act justly and guide to the truth because of this behavior. There is much wisdom in God's sending this verse. It describes in a perfect manner the attitude that Muslims should adopt towards sincere Jews.

Examination of Verse 65 of Surat al-Baqara:

Remember when We made the covenant with you and lifted up the Mount above your heads: "Take hold vigorously of what We have given you and pay heed to what is in it, so that hopefully you will have fear of God." (Qur'an, 2:63)

Then after that you turned away, and were it not for God's favor to you and His mercy, you would have been among the lost. (Qur'an, 2:64)

You are well aware of those of you who broke the Sabbath. We said to them, "Be apes, despised, cast out." (Qur'an, 2:65)

The Sabbath is a prohibition unique to the Jews. We can therefore tell that this community referred to in the verse must have emerged from among the Jews. The verses before the above verses refer to people who made life difficult for the Prophet Moses (pbuh) throughout the time in the wilderness, and the description here is similar to that given in the Torah. After describing the behavior of this community of deniers that created many problems for the Prophet Moses (pbuh), we are told that they were told to "remember the commandments of the Torah and behave accordingly." Nonetheless, they turned their backs on that advice. God despises these people who broke the Sabbath, who defied the Torah, in other words.

As can be seen, these people are those who disobeyed the Torah, even though a covenant was made with them: In other words, they are not Jews, but deniers. Their recklessness on the subject of the Sabbath confirms this. One characteristic of these people is that in addition to being deniers, they constantly make trouble for the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and sincere Jews. That is why they are worthy of contempt.

Another notable fact here is that in the verse immediately before these, sincere Jews and Christians are praised and given glad tidings for the hereafter:

Those with faith, those who are Jews, and the Christians and Sabaeans, all who have faith in God and the Last Day and act rightly, will have their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 2:62)

As we have seen, sincere Jews and Christians are regarded as deserving of praise in the Qur'an. Muslims will also love those whom God loves. In addition to being an obligation, that is also a natural feeling in the heart and conscience. For that reason, as is repeated many times in the Qur'an, and as is required by these verses, Muslims must love and protect Christians and Jews and treat them with affection. As can clearly be seen, God makes no distinction between sincere Jews and Christians and sincere Muslims in these verses. This verse eliminates all hostility toward the People of the Book.

The Error of the Jews Being Cursed

First and foremost, to say that "all Jews are cursed" is totally incompatible with the justice of God and the faith created by Him. Firstly, Judaism is a true faith and was revealed to the Prophet Moses (pbuh), who is also a prophet for Muslims. God speaks of Jews and Judaism in the Qur'an. He praises sincere Jews. According to the Qur'an, Muslims have a responsibility to love and protect the People of the Book. Some verses of the Qur'an are directly addressed to the Children of Israel and the People of the Book. This means that there will be Jews and Christians who read – and heed – the Qur'an. Yet according to the fanatics, it is unacceptable for a Jew even to hold the Qur'an in his hand.

Second, everyone comes to this world to be tested. Their positions in the hereafter will be determined according to the results of that test. God reveals that this world is a place of testing as follows:

He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action. He is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. (Qur'an, 67:2)

Therefore, a Muslim is subjected to the same test as a Jew. To suggest that a child born to a Jewish family, totally unaware of the world, is cursed is completely against the justice of God. The idea of a cursed people en masse is a twisted concept peculiar to pagan beliefs. To imagine that a child who has not yet been tested is irrevocably cursed, and to expect such injustice from God (surely God is beyond that), means that one has failed to understand His justice, compassion and mercy. Those who claim that "the Jews are cursed" are capable of using this perverse way of thinking against all Jews, making no allowance for whether they are children or adults. But how do the fanatics look to the Qur'an for evidence for the idea that "all Jews are cursed"?

An Examination of Verse 88 of Surat al-Baqara:

They say, "Our hearts are uncircumcised." Rather, God has cursed them for their denial. What little faith they have! (Qur'an, 2:88)

A look at the preceding verses shows that the people being addressed here are a community from among the people of the Prophet Moses (pbuh), from among the Jews. The reason for that community being cursed is made perfectly clear: "their denial"... The community here is a community of deniers who have betrayed Judaism and even gone to such extremes as to try to kill their prophet, as shown by the above verses. In the same way that aggressive deniers from among Muslims are cursed in the Qur'an, so are those who emerge from among the Jews because they disturb the social order and peace. It is therefore only the rebellious, aggressive and cruel deniers who are cursed, not Jews or Muslims.

Examination of Verse 155 of Surat an-Nisa'

We lifted up the Mount above their heads in accordance with the covenant they had made, and We said to them, "Enter the gate prostrating," and We said to them, "Do not break the Sabbath," and We made a binding covenant with them. (Qur'an, 4:154)

Because of the fact that they broke their covenant, and rejected God's signs, and killed the prophets without any right to do so and said, "Our hearts are uncircumcised," God has stamped their hearts for their denial, so they do not have faith except for very few. (Qur'an, 4:155)

In the preceding verses a community of deniers from among the People of the Book is described. The promise secured from this community, who were forgiven by God despite all their excesses, is cited in verse 154 of Surat an-Nisa'. Verse 155 then reveals they went back on their word, returned to their denial and killed the prophets. These are the reasons why they are cursed.

Subsequent verses again refer to a Jewish community, and God distinguishes between those who are deniers and those who possess deep faith:

But those of them [the Jews] who are firmly rooted in knowledge, and the believers, have faith in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you: those who pray and pay alms, and have faith in God and the Last Day – We will pay such people an immense wage. (Qur'an, 4:162)

To those Jews who are deniers and behave to excess are applied different provisions in the same way that different provisions apply to Muslims who are deniers and behave excessively. However, God explicitly excludes sincere Jews, and says that He will "pay them an immense wage." How could this Jewish community whom God praises and says that He will reward possibly be cursed? How can someone possibly stand up and say that "All Jews are cursed and they must all be killed" when God praises them? The problem with the fanatics is that they do not appreciate God properly, do not understand the Qur'an and have fallen into the trap of fabricated hadiths on the subject that we shall be looking at in the section that follows.

Let us remind ourselves of one very important point here; someone may be a denier in this world but so long as he does not act in hypocrisy and seek to cause sedition, does not oppress believers, does not attack innocent people and lives an honest and respectful life, he is still under the protection of Muslims: This is a responsibility imposed on Muslims through the Qur'an. The community that is cursed, however, is one that has betrayed the community of believers, has behaved hypocritically in other words, and has even killed prophets. God regarded their killing prophets as grounds for cursing them. He also describes them as a community that stabs believers in the back by "breaking their covenant." These people also represented a threat to the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and to devout believers. In other words, this community of deniers is cursed, not from emerging from among a Jewish society or because of their denial alone, but because of their crimes in the Sight of God. It is important for this difference to be properly understood.

The Idea of Not Taking Jews and Christians As Friends

One of the verses of the Qur'an that fanatics and some opponents of Islam in the West point to as supposed evidence for enmity toward Jews and Christians is in Surat al-Ma'ida:

You who have faith! Do not take the Jews and Christians as your friends [patrons]; they are the friends of one another. Any of you who takes them as friends is one of them. God does not guide wrongdoing people. (Qur'an, 5:51)

The word "friend" appears two times. The original Arabic of the word "friends" in the passage "Do not take the Jews and Christians as your friends [patrons]" is "awliyao." The real meaning of this word is "guardians, those

responsible under the law, saints, lords, owners or rulers." The original Arabic word translated as "friends" in the passage "Any of you who takes them as friends" is "yatawallahum." The meaning of this word is "who undertakes to care for, who assumes charge of." When we look at the original Arabic meaning we can easily see that the references to "friends" in this verse really means "rulers." What is forbidden for Muslims here is for them to come under the rule and management of Jews and Christians. (*Prof. Dr. Bayraktar Bayraklı, Text of the Qur'an*)

The wisdom here is not at all hard to understand: Although all Divine faiths share the same monotheistic belief and are built on the same foundations, they have their own ways of worshiping and have their own commandments. Therefore, there is a very high probability that a Muslim under the administration of a Jew or a Christian will experience difficulties in terms of worship and practices. That is the reason for the commandment in this verse.

However, another important point needs to be clarified: This verse applies to places where Muslims are the majority. People from all sorts of beliefs take part and should take part in the administrations of Muslim countries. For instance, in the Ottoman Empire, many Christians and Jews served as the grand vizier (akin to today's Prime Minister), while the Ottoman army was placed under the command of Armenian pashas many times. However, the verse explains that in a Muslim-majority society, legislation and law enforcement should not be given solely to a person with a different faith and the entirety of the Muslim population should not be entrusted to that one single person. This is in fact a peaceful and necessary measure to maintain the society's faith and orderliness. Nevertheless, if a Muslim is living in a society made up mostly of Christians, Jews or people of other beliefs, they should certainly respect the administration and laws of that country, be loyal to the state of the land he lives in and pay its citizenship duties just like everyone else.

Misunderstandings About War and the Jizya

Fight those of the people who were given the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Day and who do not make forbidden what God and His Messenger have made forbidden and do not take as their religion the religion of Truth, until they pay the jizya with their own hands in a state of complete abasement. (Qur'an, 9:29)

People who are misinformed about the true Islam generally maintain that only the People of the Book are obliged to pay the jizya (a kind of tax) referred to in the verse above and that this is an injustice against non-Muslims. They interpret the words "fight [them] ... until they pay the jizya with their own hands" to mean that Muslims must fight the People of the Book unless they convert to Islam and pay the jizya. They are therefore suspicious of the Qur'an and Islam (surely the Qur'an and Islam are beyond this).

However, there is a serious misunderstanding here.

First of all, it needs to be made clear that the jizya is a kind of tax. Everyone living in a country has an obligation to pay taxes. In other words, if someone is living in a Muslim country, he has to pay taxes, whether or not he is a Muslim, and irrespective of his religion. There is no discrimination regarding Muslims in a Muslim country not having to pay taxes, but the People of the Book having to pay them. All citizens have a responsibility to pay their taxes.

What matters for us on the subject of the jizya is not how it was applied by Muslim states in the past, but how it appears in the Qur'an. When we examine the commandment in verse 29 of Surat at-Tawba, what we see is this:

The people referred to in the verse are "**... those of the people who were given the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Day and who do not make forbidden what God and His Messenger have made forbidden and do not take as their religion the religion of Truth,**" in other words, those people who have emerged from among the Christian and Jewish communities and do not believe in God and the Last Day and do not recognize the faith and the prophets. In other words, they are unbelievers. As we have reiterated many times before, everyone is free to believe or not. The Qur'an forbids any compulsion where the religion is concerned. A Muslim has an obligation to respect unbelievers the same as everyone else, and is charged with protecting them in verse 6 of Surat at-Tawba. According to

the Qur'an, an unbeliever's guilt lies in his being aggressive, his striving against believers and in spreading strife. It is this feature of the community of unbelievers in question that is referred to in verse 29 of Surat at-Tawba we are looking at in this section. According to the verse, these people **"... do not make forbidden what God and His Messenger have made forbidden."** They therefore heed no prohibitions, spread corruption and behave aggressively.

Let us now think: Muslims and non-Muslims – and even idolatrous pagans – all live together in peace in a state under Muslim rule (this is what happened in all city states under our Prophet's (pbuh) administration; all agreements made by our Prophet (pbuh), including the Charter of Medina, are impeccably democratic, bringing equality to all members of the state and protecting all their rights). However, among the citizens of that state, there are also people who, in addition to being unbelievers, constantly flout the laws, do not regard what is forbidden as forbidden and therefore encourage communities toward degeneracy, are aggressive toward devout communities, give rise to disturbance in the society and who rebel against the state's own laws despite benefitting from all the benefits and opportunities it provides. They are quite comfortable under Muslim rule; they are well looked after and protected. Yet they still commit a grave offense by spreading corruption. Not only are they of no use to the state, they also do not pay taxes, which is in fact a liability of theirs. They give rise to anarchy in the community, engage in terrorist acts, and make attempts on the lives of other people, devout people in particular, in the same community. When such conditions arise, war with such a community is inevitable if they refuse to repent of their actions and submit to the state.

Verse 29 of Surat at-Tawba is referring to such spreaders of corruption and anarchy within society. These people are a threat, not only to Muslims under Muslim rule, but also to Christians and Jews in that society (and indeed, everyone else). Therefore, using force against them and putting an end to their corruption is also essential to make life more comfortable for the Jews and Christians living in that society. It is irrelevant whether these communities of unbelievers and spreaders of corruption emerge from among Christians, Jews or Muslims. An unbeliever is someone who has already abandoned religion, and he cannot therefore be regarded as comparable to Muslims or to the People of the Book. There is this commandment to fight the spreaders of corruption **"... until they pay the jizya"** because paying the jizya is a sign that they have accepted the rule of the state. After that, they will clearly not violate the laws of the state or spread corruption again.

What Does the Expression "The Religion with God Is Islam" Mean?

The religion with God is Islam. Those given the Book only differed after knowledge had come to them, envying one another. As for those who reject God's signs, God is swift at reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:19)

Those who do not know about the nature and the meaning of the religion of Islam usually interpret this verse as the rejection of Christianity and Judaism, and thus make a big mistake. Islam, as a word, means 'submission'. Islam is not a religion that started with the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh); all the prophets since the Prophet Adam (pbuh) communicated the religion of Islam. In other words, Islam started with the Prophet Adam (pbuh). As explained in the verse, the Prophet Abraham (pbuh), too, was a Muslim:

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a man of pure natural belief – a Muslim. He was not one of the idolaters. (Qur'an, 3:67)

All Divine religions are Abrahamic religions. These religions since the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) are named as Islam. In other words, the religion lived at the time of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) was the religion of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh).

The tenets of Divine religions have always remained the same. This is because it has always been the one and the same religion, although different sharia and practices were sent through different prophets in time. God states in a verse how He sent different sharia to societies:

... We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you. (Qur'an, 5:48)

Even if the sharias change, the true religion of the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) is always based on the same tenets. These tenets have never changed since the Prophet Adam (pbuh), and they are the same in the Qur'an, and in the original versions of the Gospel and the Torah.

Another Misunderstood Concept: Taqiyya (Dissimulation)

Taqiyya means "concealing, precaution, guarding." The concept appears as follows in the Qur'an:

Those who reject God after having had faith – except for someone forced to do it whose heart remains at rest in its faith – but as for those whose breasts become dilated with disbelief, anger from God will come down on them... (Qur'an, 16:106)

This verse is describing a very special state of affairs; it is permissible for someone to say that he denies God or conceal his faith on a temporary basis even though he actually believes in order to escape oppression. Dissimulation has no other meaning in the Qur'an.

Yet some people with a badly distorted understanding of Islam apply dissimulation in a very different way, and it is also understood very differently by some opponents of Islam. Some people with a superstitious understanding of Islam seek to use dissimulation as a tactic meant to govern their entire lives, and are easily able to resort to non-Islamic practices even when their lives are not in danger and pretend, thanks to the relevant false hadiths involved, to treat people they actually regard as enemies as friends instead.

Some opponents of Islam or people who are suspicious of Islam because of radicalism generally stress this and claim that one should never believe what a Muslim says about peace and love and that Muslims are in fact preparing for a major conflict. They maintain that the Muslims in question apply the dissimulation described in the Qur'an in that way, and that Muslims who are really impatiently preparing for war merely pretend to be envoys of peace and love. Therefore, in these people's eyes, every Muslim who speaks of peace and love is lying.

The main problem with the view of both parties is that they are in fact ignorant of the Qur'an.

There is one very important condition attached to the dissimulation that appears in the Qur'an: **"... except for someone forced to do it whose heart remains at rest in its faith"...** The condition attached to dissimulation in the verse concerns a person being in danger, under difficult circumstances, and concealing his faith to escape persecution; not to conceal rancor and enmity. Almighty God reveals in the Qur'an how there was a member of Pharaoh's family who had faith, but who concealed it:

A man among Pharaoh's people who had faith, but kept his faith concealed, said, "Are you going to kill a man for saying 'My Lord is God...'" (Qur'an, 40:28)

This person who concealed his faith was in clear and present danger. He lived alongside Pharaoh, the cruelest despot of his time, and concealed his faith, or dissimulated, because he was under the threat of death. This is compatible with the condition attached to dissimulation in the Qur'an. That person concealed his faith, even though he was a believer, because he was under severe threat. That is the only way, in the view of the Qur'an, in which dissimulation is acceptable.

Practices under the name of dissimulation on the part of some peddlers of nonsense, and some opponents of Islam who imagine that these practices are compatible with Islam, attempt to block the way to peace and love because they are far removed from the Qur'an. Dissimulation being perceived and applied differently from its true definition made

in the Qur'an supports the current climate of war and conflicts that brings violence to the world. By doing this, the impression is given that peace will never come, and that mass slaughter and savagery will continue.

This way of thinking is as much a violation of logic as of the Qur'an. Imagine a Muslim who dedicates his whole life to peace and brotherhood and making friends with people, for God's sake, who is threatened because of that by the advocates of war and the radicals, who endangers his life, convinces Jews and Christians to be his friends despite the damaging effects of Islamophobia, and gives up his money, means and youth for the sake of that friendship. And then imagine he suddenly decides to slaughter the people he brought together in the face of so many difficulties and with whom he established bonds of love! That is a totally perverse perspective. If someone has such devilish ideas and is intent on slaughtering people, then he could easily find an easier opportunity to do it. He can act on that devilish idea anywhere and anytime. If he intends to do that in the name of religion, then there are already that kind of people who misuse religion to murder others.

A Muslim cannot live his life with a lie. That is unlawful according to Islam. A true Muslim always lives in accordance with the Qur'an. In the light of the verses of the Qur'an, Muslims have a duty to bring love to the world (Qur'an, 19:96), to establish peace in the world (Qur'an, 2:208), and to bring about unity and union (Qur'an, 8:73). They are commanded to protect even the unbelievers, if necessary at the cost of their own lives (Qur'an, 9:6). They have a responsibility to be friends and brothers of the People of the Book, who occupy a special place in the Qur'an. They have a responsibility to embrace them, because they love them and because that is what God commands and because they say, "God is One." They are not commanded to slaughter them and force them to convert to their own faith. Those who falsely misuse the concept of dissimulation to portray Islam as a religion of war will fail in their insidious plan, because evil plots are created as doomed to fail. Despite all the scenarios of war, representatives of the three faiths will bring peace on the world. God always bestows victory on the truth, and desires peace and love. He has created mankind and the whole universe on the basis of love.

We have seen the true meaning of the verses that the fanatics and opponents of Islam seek to use as evidence for enmity toward Jews. Now let us look at the fabricated hadiths used to impose antipathy toward Jews, hadiths which they believe in unconditionally:

Fabricated Hadiths about Christians and Jews and Clarifications Based on the Qur'an

The Idea of Killing Jews Who Enter Adolescence

Narrated Atiyah al-Qurazi: I was among the captives of Banu Qurayzah. They (the Companions) examined us, and those who had begun to grow hair (pubes) were killed, and those who had not were not killed. I was among those who had not grown hair. (Sunan Abu Dawud, Book 38, Hadith 4390)

With this fabricated hadith, all Jews who have reached puberty are commanded to be killed. Islam is a religion that regards unjust killing as the greatest crime, that promises sincere Jews a great reward and that advises love and affection. Killing a person "who has committed no crimes whatsoever" when he has reached adolescence, only because he is Jewish, can by no means be a provision of Islam, let alone the fact that this religion of peace commands

forgiving even when crimes have been committed. Of course there is no such commandment in the Qur'an; such an idea is a calumny against the Qur'an and the fine faith of our Lord. That would be murder in the view of the Qur'an. As long as he does not sincerely believe it out of ignorance, a person who considers such a false hadith as a provision and applies it is not a Muslim, but a murderer. The fact that the fanatics believe in this command regarding the unconditional killing of Jews, when God praises sincere Jews, shows the scale of their ignorance.

The Idea of Making Jews Responsible for the Sins of Muslims

"On the Day of Resurrection, my Ummah (nation) will be gathered into three groups. ... One sort will come bearing on their backs heaps of sins like great mountains. ... God will say: 'Unload the sins from them and put the same over the Jews and Christians...'" (110 Hadith Qudsi Chapter 1, Hadith 8; mentioned in Mustadrak of Hakim)

Let us respond to this false hadith with the Qur'an: All Muslims who arrive with mountains of sins will be judged for their own sins, and the Jews will be judged with their sins. Nobody will be able to load his sins onto someone else. He will be questioned only about his own sins. This is revealed explicitly in the Qur'an:

Whoever is guided is only guided to his own good. Whoever is misguided is only misguided to his detriment. No burden-bearer can bear another's burden. ... (Qur'an, 17:15)

In another verse of the Qur'an, God issues an explicit pronouncement regarding anyone who tries to load his own sins onto another:

Anyone who commits an error or an evil action, and then ascribes it to someone innocent, bears the weight of slander and clear wrongdoing. (Qur'an, 4:112)

Everyone will be responsible for his own actions in the hereafter. God reveals, **"Have fear of a Day when you will be returned to God. Then every self will be paid in full for what it earned."** (Qur'an, 2:281) So no injustice will be inflicted on anyone in the hereafter. Nobody will be able to say, in the Presence of our Lord, "my sins have been transferred to him, so I am without sin." He will be unable to repeat this shameless perspective there because his conscience will know that this idea is in fact a fraudulent one.

The Idea that Food Is Spoiled because of Jews

Had it not been for the Children of Israel, food would not have become stale, and meat would not have gone bad. (Sahih Muslim, Book 8, Hadith 3472)

This false hadith is a very significant piece of evidence for understanding the mindset that fabricates such hadiths and for showing how fraudulent they are. The fabricated hadiths we have been discussing throughout this book are the product of that mindset. It is of course not surprising that a mentality that alleges that food would not spoil and meat would not go off were there no Jews in the world also has terrifying ways of looking at women, animals, art and all social life. The false hadith in question is also evidence of how hadiths that are contemptuous of and hostile toward Jews are fabrications. A belief system that maintains that a community that is mentioned and is praised in the Qur'an, and that is descended from the Prophet Moses (pbuh), can cause food to spoil and meat to go off, can most definitely not belong to a true faith. We also need to remember that our Lord makes it lawful to eat food prepared by Jews and Christians in verse 5 of Surat al-Ma'ida. The perspective that we are looking at, that differs from that in the Qur'an, is very definitely a fanatical one. The profound collapse of logic here is enough to illustrate the fanatics' distorted logic in general.

The Idea that Two Faiths Should Not Co-exist in Arab Lands

The last statement that the Prophet (pbuh) made was: "O Lord, perish the Jews and Christians. ... There shall be no two faiths in Arabia." (Malik 511:1588)

This false hadith is again a terrible defamation of our Prophet (pbuh). Almighty God speaks of the existence of Christianity and Judaism in the Qur'an and reveals that the Qur'an was sent down in order to confirm these two true faiths. The Qur'an does not invalidate the tenets of these two faiths, but confirms them. This important information is given in several verses. One reads:

He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel. (Qur'an, 3:3)

The Qur'an tells us that there will be Jews and Christians in this world and as set out in the lines above, some of these will be a sincere and select community made so by God. God makes it lawful in the Qur'an for Muslims to marry Christian and Jewish women and to eat at table with them (this will be set out in detail shortly). In addition, our Almighty Lord states that the closest people to Muslims in terms of love are "Christians." Those people who spread the idea "May God perish the Jews and Christians," as if these were the words of our Prophet (pbuh), when God actually praises and speaks of rewarding and the existence of these communities, are assuming responsibility for a terrible slander. The false hadith in question is totally refuted by the words of praise for the People of the Book in the Qur'an and by our Prophet's (pbuh) behavior toward the People of the Book. We shall shortly be looking at verses of the Qur'an and the behavior of our Prophet (pbuh) on that very subject.

The Idea that Calling Someone a Jew Is an Insult and that Cursing Jews Is a Source of Reward

Narrated Abdullah ibn Abbas: The Prophet (pbuh) said, "When a man calls another a Jew give him twenty lashes." (At-Tirmidhi, Hadith 1024)

Let he who does not have money to give to the poor curse a Jew instead, the reward he earns will be the same. (Ad-Daylami, Ibn 'Adiyy)

The intention in these fabricated hadiths is to portray the term "Jew" as an insult. Cursing a Jew is depicted as a source of reward, the idea being to spread hatred of Jews in this way. It is clear why the fanatics live by such a different faith; the Qur'an, which says that sincere Jews will be rewarded in the hereafter and that praises their sincerity, is far removed from these people's world.

The source of the hatred for Jews and Christians is the intellectual bankruptcy spread by this superstition. This is the most important matter that those who seek to spread complaints about fanaticism in the form of opposition to Islam need to concentrate on. By lining themselves up against true Islam and sincere Muslims, they are trying to eliminate the one great weapon that could obliterate the mindset of the fanatics, and therefore preparing a disaster that will bounce back to strike them.

The Idea of Forcing Them onto the Narrow Part of the Road

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger (pbuh) as saying: "Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it." (Sahih Muslim, Book 26, Hadith 5389)

This hadith, fabricated against the commandments of a true faith that commands love, kindness and, most especially, protection toward the People of the Book, represents severe violence and is also a defamation of our Prophet (pbuh). A way of thinking that totally conflicts with the actions of our Prophet (pbuh), who treated Jews and Christians with enormous love and affection, is described in this fabricated hadith as if it came from his own mouth.

The Gharqad, the Tree of the Jews

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger (pbuh) as saying: "... the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say: 'Muslim, or the servant of God, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him;' but the tree Gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews." (Sahih Muslim, Book 41, Hadith 6985)

Perhaps the most frequently employed hadith in the context of enmity toward the Jews is this false hadith about the Gharqad tree. According to this hadith, a Jew must be killed when he hides behind a rock or tree. It makes no difference in this logically impoverished way of thinking if the Jew in question is innocent and free of any sin. The Jew may be a child, devout or someone full of love. Again according to this false hadith, when a Jew hides behind a tree, no matter what his personal qualities, the rocks and trees will tell a Muslim of this, and that Jew must be killed, without exception, even if he is a little child.

However, this is murder in the view of the Qur'an. If someone who regards himself as a Muslim believes these fabricated hadiths and kills a Jew hiding behind a tree on the grounds that "the tree told me to do it," the Jew may go to paradise, but the Muslim will be punished for the sin of murder in the hereafter unless he repents of his action. This is also such a dreadful system that those who believe in it could easily make false statements that "the tree told me" or "the rock told me," and commit murder on that basis. When asked why, they may cite the command issuing from the rock and there will not be anyone who holds them to account under such a system. They in any case do not operate their system on the basis of the Qur'an. Theirs is a system that regards killing, humiliation and forcing people onto the narrow part of the road as legitimate. Yet the Qur'an despises these false systems:

What is the matter with you? How do you reach your judgment? Will you not pay heed? Or do you have some clear authority? Bring your Book, then, if you are telling the truth! (Qur'an, 37:154-157)

Let us now see how these fabricated hadiths concerning Jews and Christians are refuted by the Qur'an and the practices of our Prophet (pbuh):

Muslim Men Can Marry Women of the Book; Muslims Can Eat the Food of the People of the Book and They Can Eat the Food of Muslims

Muslims can marry members of the People of the Book, and they and Muslims can eat food prepared by the others:

Today all good things have been made halal [lawful] for you. And the food of those given the Book [Jews and Christians] is also halal for you and your food is halal for them. So are chaste women from among the believers and chaste women of those given the Book before you [Jews and Christians], once you have given them their dowries in marriage, not in fornication or taking them as lovers. But as for anyone who rejects faith, his actions will come to nothing and in the hereafter he will be among the losers. (Qur'an, 5:5)

This verse describes the value that Muslims place on the People of the Book with various pieces of important detail. According to this verse, a Muslim man is allowed to marry a woman of the People of the Book. This is a significant permission, because as commanded in the verse, **"Corrupt women are for corrupt men and corrupt men are for corrupt women, good women are for good men and good men are for good women..."** (Qur'an, 24:26), Muslims have a responsibility to marry good, clean people. This indicates that Jews and Christians are also good, clean people.

In addition, there is a very important criterion in this verse. A Muslim will intend to take a Jewish or Christian woman as his wife, to call her "darling, beloved," to start a family with her, to spend his life with her and even to spend the eternal life with her. This is the sole person throughout his life with whom he will share all his troubles and all his happiness. These two look after one another when they are ill, and trust one another.

According to the fanatics' way of thinking, a person should suddenly feel enmity toward the woman he calls "beloved," with whom he spends his life and entrusts his own life to, the mother of his children, and suddenly declare her to be cursed only because she is a Christian or a Jew. How can he decide, after spending his whole life with her, to say, "This tree has told me that my wife is a Jew and that she is hiding behind it," and then kill her? One would have to be profoundly psychologically disturbed to do that. This verse describes the love to be shown to a Jew or Christian by a rational Muslim who heeds the Qur'an.

The verse also bestows a special authorization on Muslims: the authority to eat food prepared by the People of the Book. This is very important. As we know, Muslims have to pay great attention to certain prohibitions when preparing food; pork, and meat from an animal that has not been slaughtered in the name of God, is prohibited in Islam. The fact that food prepared by Jews and Christians is made lawful shows that these people are to be trusted. The same thing also applies to Christians and Jews, and the verse makes food prepared by Muslims lawful for them.

It will also be useful to refer to another expression of friendship here. The People of the Book and Muslims can eat together under the same roof, be one another's guests, sit down at the same table and play host to one another. This is a description of friendship. What is being described is not an environment based on hatred and killing, but one of love, friendship and brotherhood.

The references in this verse are ones that no fanatic would ever sign up to. This permission granted through the Qur'an is both unlawful in their world, and also a terrifying scenario. Ask the fanatic whether one can marry someone from the People of the Book, or sit down and eat with them as their guest, and he will furiously reject it. Fanatics do not act in compliance with the provisions of the Qur'an, for they deny that it is the Qur'an that imposes commandments.

This is not the only verse to set out the position of the People of the Book. God praises the People of the Book in many of the Qur'an's verses. The related verses include:

Among the people of Moses there is a group who guide by the truth and act justly in accordance with it. (Qur'an, 7:159)

They are not all the same. There is a community among the People of the Book who are upright. They recite God's signs throughout the night, and they prostrate. They have faith in God and the Last Day, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and compete in doing good. They are among the righteous ones. They will not be denied the reward for any good thing they do. God knows those who have fear of God. (Qur'an, 3:113-115)

Among the people of the Book there are some who have faith in God and in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them, and who are humble before God. They do not sell God's signs for a paltry price. Such people will have their reward with their Lord. And God is swift at reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:199)

Those We gave the Book before this have faith in it.

When it is recited to them they say, "We have faith in it; it is the truth from our Lord. We were already Muslims before it came." (Qur'an, 28:52-53)

But those of them [the Jews] who are firmly rooted in knowledge, and the believers, have faith in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you: those who perform their prayers and pay alms, and have faith in God and the Last Day – We will pay such people an immense wage. (Qur'an, 4:162)

Those with faith, those who are Jews, and the Christians and Sabaeans, all who have faith in God and the Last Day and act rightly, will have their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 2:62)

Those who have faith and those who are Jews and the Sabaeans and the Christians, all who have faith in God and the Last Day and act rightly will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Qur'an, 5:69)

... You will find the people most affectionate to those who have faith are those who say, "We are Christians." That is because some of them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant. When they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they recognize of the truth. They say, "Our Lord, we have faith! So write us down among the witnesses. How could we not have faith in God, and the truth that has come to us, when we long for our Lord to include us among the righteous?" God will reward them for what they say with Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever. That is the recompense of the good-doers. (Qur'an, 5:82-85)

God made a covenant with the tribe of Israel and We raised up twelve leaders from among them. God said, "I am with you. If you perform your prayers and pay alms, and have faith in My messengers and respect and support them, and make a generous loan to God, I will erase your wrong actions from you and admit you into Gardens with rivers flowing under them. Any of you who are irreligious after that have gone astray from the right way." (Qur'an, 5:12)

As these verses clearly show, pure and sincere Jews and Christians are praised with fine words in the Qur'an and are promised a fine reward by God; God says that He will take these people into paradise. This is an expression of His love for them. How can a Muslim be the enemy of someone whom God loves, is pleased with and welcomes into paradise? That is impossible according to the Qur'an. Such enmity is a crime according to the Qur'an. Therefore, the fanatics who adopt false hadiths as their guide – despite the verses of the Qur'an clearly demonstrating the contrary – are committing an offense in the view of Islam by spreading hostility toward the People of the Book.

Muslims' Invitation to the People of the Book

Only argue with the People of the Book in the kindest way – except in the case of those of them who do wrong – saying, "We have faith in what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to you. Our God and your God are One and we submit to Him." (Qur'an, 29:46)

Say, "People of the Book! Come to a proposition which is the same for us and you – that we should worship none but God and not associate any partners with Him and not take one another as lords besides God." If they turn away, say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Qur'an, 3:64)

These verses show that the duty of Muslims is not to disparage the People of the Book, force them into a corner, feel hatred for or even kill them. It is simply to summon them to the oneness of God in the most pleasant manner. Monotheism is the fundamental doctrine in all three faiths. Muslims can meet with and speak to the People of the Book, preach to them and call on them to believe in the oneness of God and all the sacred scriptures that have been sent down. Communication, preaching and friendship exist among them. According to the Qur'an, a Muslim has a responsibility to speak kindly to a Jew or a Christian when he sees one and to invite him to believe in the oneness of God using very kind words, rather than jostling him into a corner.

The Just Behavior of Muslims toward the People of the Book

God does not forbid you from being good to those who have not fought you in the religion or driven you from your homes, or from being just towards them. God loves those who are just. (Qur'an, 60:8)

As we have just seen, people who strive against believers, make difficulties for them and try to kill them or exile them from their lands, no matter which community they may emanate from, Jewish, Christian or Muslim, are despised in the Qur'an. Muslims have a responsibility to treat everyone else, those who are not wicked in other words, justly. Justice may sometimes require a person to act against his own interests but maintaining justice, even if it works against one, is nonetheless a great virtue. Muslims cling to that virtue as a commandment from God. This responsibility is set out as follows in another verse:

You who have faith! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for God alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives... (Qur'an, 4:135)

This requirement means that Muslims have a responsibility to sometimes set aside their own rights and defend those of Jews and Christians, and even of unbelievers. The system of justice in the Qur'an is therefore diametrically opposed to the perverse fanatical idea that claims that "anyone who curses a Jew will be rewarded."

The status of the People of the Book in the Qur'an is clear. The supposed hadiths cited in this section are in direct conflict with the Qur'an. We can clearly see this in the actions of our Prophet (pbuh) and of all those Muslims who adopt his actions as their role models:

Muslims Are Obligated To Protect Churches and Synagogues; It Is a Sin To Attack Places of Worship

Churches, synagogues and mosques are places where people worship God. It is a terrible crime in the Sight of God to murder innocent people in churches, synagogues or mosques as they worship God. The people who go to these places are pious people who pray to God, and all the houses where God is praised are sacred to the religion of Islam. The visitors of these houses may be Jews, Christians or Muslims. The important thing is that they all believe in God and they are all pious. Muslims should respect the sacred places of the People of the Book where they worship God and must protect these temples. It doesn't matter if those places belong to Christians or Jews. These places are precious and sacred for Muslims too, because God is praised in them, and for this reason these places must be

protected by all believers. Muslims should never allow anyone to harm churches or synagogues or for them to be converted to other venues and must, before anyone else, work to ensure that these places of worship continue to exist. In the Qur'an, God explains the importance of places of worship:

Those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying, "Our Lord is God." If God had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where God's name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. God will certainly help those who help Him – God is All-Strong, Almighty. (Qur'an, 22:40)

Consequently, attacking places of worship, as we sadly see in various places in the Islamic lands, is a terrible crime according to the Qur'an, and is something that no Muslim can approve. As you will see in the following pages, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) instructed churches and synagogues to be protected even in wartime and thus protected the sacred spaces of the People of the Book. The treaties he made are preserved today in some historical churches. Places of worship of the People of the Book were protected also during the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and Muslims played a role even in the construction and restoration of these places.

Our Prophet's (pbuh) Relations with the People of the Book

- There are accounts of our Prophet (pbuh) attending wedding feasts of the People of the Book, visiting them when they were sick and giving them presents.
- When the Christians of Najran visited him, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) spread out his robe on the ground for them to sit on and welcomed them in that fashion.
- One of the wives of our Prophet (pbuh) was Marya bint Sham'un (also known as Maryam al-Qubtiyyah), a Coptic Christian from Egypt.
- Our mother Safiyya bint Huyayy, one of the wives of the Prophet (pbuh), was the daughter of the chief of the Jewish tribe Banu Nadir of Medina, Huyayy ibn Akhtab.
- The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) allowed the Jews to become a party to the Constitution of Medina signed with the clans of the Aws and Khazraj, thus ensuring the survival of the Jews as a separate religious group among the Muslims.
- Under the article, "The Jews of Banu Awf are a community along with the believers. To the Jews their religion, and to the Muslim their religion," of the Constitution of Medina, the foundation of the respect that Muslims have for the Jews' traditions and beliefs was laid in the time of our Prophet (pbuh). Articles 26-33 of the same constitution state that members of the People of the Book enjoy the same rights as Muslims, while article 16 states that no injustice is to be inflicted on them.
- In the year 630 A.D., our Prophet (pbuh) issued the following command to envoys of the King of Himyar who came to Medina to announce that they had become Muslims: "If a Jew or Christian becomes a Muslim, he becomes equal to believers [enjoys the same legal rights with Muslims]. Whoever wants to remain as a Jew or Christian, he is not interfered." (Ibn Hisham, as-Seera, II, 586)
- The Christians of Najran sent a delegation of 60 members to Medina. When the delegation arrived at Medina they entered the presence of our Prophet (pbuh), and when the time for prayer came they desired to visit the mosque. The people objected to this, but the Prophet (pbuh) made the mosque available for them. They turned to the East and prayed. (Ibn Hisham, as-Seera, Beirut, I, 573-574; Hamidullah, The Prophet of Islam, I, 619-620)
- The rights of the People of the Book were placed under protection in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) under treaties made with Jews and Christians. Whenever a disagreement arose in later times, the

People of the Book would point to these treaties. For example, when the Christians of Damishq had a problem, they showed their treaty to Hazrat Umar, the caliph of the time, and requested a solution. This is a known fact appearing in history books.

- The text of a covenant of our Prophet (pbuh) with the Christian Ibn Harith ibn Ka'b and his people contains the passages; "To Sayyid Ibn Harith ibn Ka'b, his co-religionists, and all those who profess the Christian religion, be they in East or West, in close regions or faraway regions, be they Arabs or foreigners, known or unknown. ... I commit myself to support them, to place their persons under my protection, as well as their churches, chapels, oratories, the monasteries of their monks, the residences of their anchorites, wherever they are found, be they in the mountains or the valleys, caves or inhabited regions, in the plains or in the desert. I will protect their religion and their Church wherever they are found, be it on earth or at sea, in the West or in the East, with utmost vigilance on my part, the People of my House, and the Muslims as a whole. ... No Christian will be made Muslim by force: And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (29:46). They must be covered by the wing of mercy. Repel every harm that could reach them wherever they may find themselves and in any country in which they are."
- The charters given by our Prophet (pbuh) to the People of the Book from Adruh, Makna, Khaybar, Najran and Aqaba' also show that the lives and property of the People of the Book were under the protection of Muslims and recognized their freedom of belief and worship.
- When our Prophet (pbuh) first started preaching he first encountered a number of Christians in Mecca. Indeed, one of the first people to speak to our Prophet (pbuh) and Hazrat Khadija in the first days of the revelation was Waraqa bin Naufal, a Christian with handwritten copies of the Gospel. (Sahih Bukhari)
- Churches that were destroyed in the time of the caliphs were restored by Muslims, and permission was given for new synagogues and churches to be built. For example, the Monastery of St. Sergios that had been burned by Patriarch Mar Amme was rebuilt in the time of Hazrat Uthman.
- Muslims used to perform the Friday prayer in the Church of St. John in Damascus after the conquest of Syria. Christians performed their own religious observances there on Sundays. Members of both faiths used the same place of worship in peace.
- When the Companions were traveling, they would stay in monasteries on their routes, and there are articles on the subject in treaties with the People of the Book.

The Gospel and the Torah in the Qur'an

A Muslim must believe in all the prophets and all the Divine books. Muslims are commanded in the Qur'an not to discriminate between one prophet and another, and anyone who disobeys that instruction is regarded as not abiding that verse and having abjured the faith. Therefore, in the same way that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is our prophet as Muslims, the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) and the Prophet Moses (pbuh) are also our prophets. In the same way that we are all followers of Muhammad, so we are also followers of Jesus and Moses. This is one of the main and most important preconditions for being a Muslim.

In the same way that the Qur'an speaks of Jews and Christians, so it also speaks of the Torah and the Gospel. God praises these Divine scriptures in the Qur'an. As we have already seen, the Qur'an was sent down, not in order to do away with these sacred texts, but as a "confirmation" of them. Although these books contain sections that have been misinterpreted over the passage of time, those parts that are compatible with the Qur'an are again confirmed by it. This

is explicitly set out in many verses of the Qur'an: **"He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel."** (Qur'an, 3:3)

Therefore, we Muslims have a responsibility to be guided by the Qur'an and believe that these books come from the Presence of God. Every commandment, practice or word confirmed by the Qur'an is a guide for Muslims.

Regarding the true books praised by the Qur'an as invalid on the basis of the false hadiths produced by the fanatics is unacceptable in Islam. The guide of true Muslims is the Qur'an, and the Qur'an pronounces as follows on the Torah and the Gospel:

Say, "We have faith in God and what has been sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes, and what Moses and Jesus were given, and what all the prophets were given by their Lord. We do not differentiate between any of them. We are Muslims submitted to Him." (Qur'an, 2:136)

We sent down the Torah containing guidance and light, and the prophets who had submitted themselves gave judgment by it for the Jews – as did their scholars and their rabbis – by what they had been allowed to preserve of God's Book to which they were witnesses. Do not be afraid of people, be afraid of Me. And do not sell My signs for a paltry price. Those who do not judge by what God has sent down, such people are disbelievers. (Qur'an, 5:44)

And We sent Jesus son of Mary following in their footsteps, confirming the Torah that came before him. We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light, confirming the Torah that came before it, and as guidance and admonition for those who have fear of God. (Qur'an, 5:46)

But before it there was the Book of Moses as a model and a mercy. And this is a corroborating Book in the Arabic tongue so that you may warn those who do wrong, and as good news for the good-doers. (Qur'an, 46:12)

He has sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming what was there before it. And He sent down the Torah and the Gospel, previously, as guidance for mankind, and He has sent down the Furqan [the One discriminating the truth from the wrong]. ... (Qur'an, 3:3-4)

The people of the Gospel should judge by what God sent down in it. Those who do not judge by what God has sent down, such people are deviators. (Qur'an, 5:47)

This is a Book We have sent down and blessed, confirming what came before it, so that you can warn the Mother of Cities [Mecca] and the people around it. Those who have faith in the hereafter believe in it and safeguard their prayers. (Qur'an, 6:92)

They do not measure God with His true measure when they say, "God would not send down anything to a mere human being." Say: "Who, then, sent down the Book which Moses brought as a light and guidance for the people?" You put it down on sheets of paper to display it while concealing much. You were taught things you did not know, neither you nor your forefathers. Say: "God!" Then leave them engrossed in playing their games. (Qur'an, 6:91)

And We have sent down the Book to you [O Muhammad] with truth, confirming and conserving the previous Books. So judge between them by what God has sent down and do not follow their whims and desires deviating from the Truth that has come to you. We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you. So compete with each other in doing good. Every one of you will return to God and He will inform you regarding the things about which you differed. (Qur'an, 5:48)

If only they had implemented the Torah and the Gospel and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they would have been fed from above their heads and beneath their feet. Among them there is a moderate group but what most of them do is evil. (Qur'an, 5:66)

We gave Moses the Book after destroying the earlier nations, to awaken people's hearts and as a guidance and a mercy so that hopefully they would pay heed. (Qur'an, 28:43)

They said, "Our people, we have heard a Book which was sent down after Moses, confirming what came before it, guiding to the truth and to a straight path." (Qur'an, 46:30)

Among the People of the Book there are some who have faith in God and in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them, and who are humble before God. They do not sell God's signs for a paltry price. Such people will have their reward with their Lord. And God is swift at reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:199)

"I come confirming the Torah I find already there, and to make lawful for you some of what was previously forbidden to you. I have brought you a sign from your Lord. So have fear of God and obey me." (Qur'an, 3:50)

This [the Qur'an] is not a narration which has been invented but confirmation of all that came before, a clarification of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for people who have faith. (Qur'an, 12:111)

God describes the Torah as "awakening people's hearts and guiding to mercy" and as a "light and guidance" in the Qur'an. He describes the Gospel as "containing guidance and light, confirming the Torah that came before it," and as "guidance and admonition for those who have fear of God." The true Torah and Gospel are praised as light and guidance; this is what the Qur'an pronounces and it does so explicitly. Those who say anything different and who claim that these books are invalid are, as we have seen, speaking falsehoods.

We can see this also from the practices of our Prophet (pbuh):

Our Prophet's Practices concerning the Torah and the Gospel

Narrated Abu Huraira: The people of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew and then explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. (Sahih Bukhari, Book 92, Hadith 460)

Al-Hafiz al-Zahabi related that Abdullah ibn Salam, a convert to Islam from Judaism, came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said "I read the Qur'an and the Torah (last night)." He replied, "Read one in one night and the other on another night." (al-Thalabi, Al-Iman al-Thalabi Tathkarar al-Huffadh, Vol. 1, p. 27)

Abdullah ibn Amr, one of the close companions of the Prophet (pbuh), would frequently read the Torah. One night he dreamed that he was holding oil in one hand and honey in the other, and that he sometimes ate from one hand and sometimes from the other. Abdullah ibn Amr described his dream to the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) interpreted his dream as meaning the two books, and his reading sometimes from the one and sometimes from the other. (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 6, Hadith 987, p. 439)

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri: We asked the Prophet (pbuh): "O the Messenger of God! May we relate accounts from the Children of Israel?" He said, "Yes, you may relate accounts from the Children of Israel. There is no problem. Know that if you relate accounts from them, there is more interesting information as well." (Musnad of ibn Hanbal, 111/12, Hadith 11034)

The Jews Enjoy the Right to Live in the Holy Land in the Qur'an

Since some Muslim communities are unaware of the verses of the Qur'an and are exceedingly ignorant on the subject of Islam, they strive to remove the Jews from the Holy Land or to wipe the state of Israel off the map. They are unaware that in doing this they are rebelling against the Qur'an.

According to the Qur'an, the Jews have the right to live in the Holy Land. Verses on the subject read:

Remember when Moses said to his people, "My people! Remember God's blessing to you when He appointed prophets among you and appointed kings for you, and gave you what He had not given to anyone else in all the worlds! My people! Enter the Holy Land which God has ordained for you. Do not turn back in your tracks and so become transformed into losers." (Qur'an, 5:20-21)

We said to the tribe of Israel after that, "Inhabit the land and, when the promise of the hereafter comes, We will produce you as a motley crowd." (Qur'an, 17:104)

As clearly shown in the verses of the Qur'an, both the Torah and the Qur'an state that Jews must exist in the Holy Land. Indeed, it is a good thing for there to be Jews in the Holy Land, and that is a source of joy for true Muslims. It is an exceedingly fine thing to see a promise made by God 3,000 years ago coming true and witnessing what was foretold by the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) and the Prophet Moses (pbuh). God revealed that, "The Jews will be in those lands" thousands of years ago, and we can see that miracle manifested now. This is a wonderful state of affairs to be observed with fervor and joy.

It is of great importance to state that God imposes one essential condition on sincere believers, both in the Qur'an and the Torah – "Peace." There will be Jews in the Holy Land; there will also be Muslims and Christians there, and they will altogether ensure that love and peace prevail across the region. They will live in brotherhood. There is plenty of room for all. Nobody will be forced from his home or driven away. That will not happen. God always wants peace for all of us.

In order for there to be peace, hunger for land and enmities need to come to an end, and the fanatical mindset has to be eliminated. The true faiths, religious moral values, the believers and the Qur'an are all essential to that end. Conflicts based on a desire for land or ideology always grow and assume the most terrible dimensions. What can do away with all this is proper education in the true understanding of faith using the Qur'an as its point of reference. This education can eliminate all these errors and absorb all enmities. Once people's mindset has changed, there will be no grounds for hostility or war and the only way to achieve that change in mindset is through education.

Afterword

The scourge of radicalism is currently afflicting the entire world, from the furthest point West to the furthest point East. When this problem first raised its head, many Western countries imagined it could be easily dealt with. But that is not what happened because radical Islam is a belief system nourished by fabricated hadiths and many Islamic countries and Islamic scholars believe in those fabricated hadiths, even if they condemn war and violence. It is therefore very difficult for the solution to radical Islam to come from those countries and scholars.

Using military means to deal with radicalism has been tried many times, and has failed on every occasion. It is a feeble and foolish policy that has slaughtered thousands of innocent people, has left thousands more without home or country and has inflicted even worse instability on countries. The main attribute of armed radicals is not their using their weapons well, but their following a false ideology. Seeking a solution only by killing, while ignoring their false ideology, will serve no other purpose than inflicting even greater disasters on the world and strengthening the radicals still further as has indeed happened to date.

The only way of eliminating this savage and dangerous belief system that plagues almost the entirety of the Islamic world is the true Islam. No other means of winning people over, no weapon and no threat are any solution to the problem. There simply is no other solution than the true Islam.

Those who seek a solution to radicalism must take the first step by avoiding behavior and initiatives that condemn Islam and the endless suspicions of it. They must listen to those who speak with the Qur'an. They must forge an alliance with such people to tell the world the truth. They must not fall prey to defeatism and apathy by saying, "What good can we do?" They must not forget that radical communities gather supporters solely by spreading their false ideas across the world through social media. They must remember that the truth will spread even faster, and must establish a strategy of proper education without delay. Let us remember that this can only be done by Muslims of the Qur'an who abide by the true Islam and are purged of all superstitious concepts.

Let us recall an important fact stressed at the beginning of this book: The Islam we espouse is not an Islam that has been modernized or made more moderate over the course of time (surely Islam is beyond that). The Islam we espouse is the true Islam in the Qur'an. We have a duty to propagate anew the true Islam that much of the Islamic world has forgotten if the world is to know peace and tranquility. Those who respond to violence with violence or who dream of a world with no Islam because of the actions of a handful of radicals will always unknowingly create more radicals and face ever greater savagery. These people need to know that the world can never be without Islam. The peace and love for which the world longs can only come through Islam. We have the Qur'an, the true and immutable Book of Islam for that; the only thing needing to be done is to educate people with the Qur'an.

APPENDIX

The Deception of Evolution

The theory of evolution, in other words Darwinism, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of creation, but is in truth nothing but a failed, unscientific nonsense. The theory of evolution has its origins in pagan superstitions dating back to the time of ancient Egypt and Sumeria. Like these superstitions, the theory of evolution explains the origin of the universe and life through coincidences, and it has nothing to do with science. This theory, which claims that life emerged through coincidences from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence demonstrating the miraculous order in the universe and in living things, as well as by the discovery of about 700 million fossils revealing that evolution never happened. Furthermore, the theory of evolution is incapable of explaining the formation of even a single protein, the main building block of life. Science has proven that it is impossible for a protein to come into existence through coincidences. In this way, the fact that God created the universe and the living things in it has been confirmed by science as well. The worldwide propaganda carried out today to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of 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 to 30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded and this fact has been stated by a large number of scientists. Many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry, paleontology, genetics, zoology and archeology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and explain the origin of life through the fact of creation.

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 continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

Challenges That Devastate Darwin

As a pagan doctrine going back as far as ancient Egypt and Sumeria, the theory of evolution came to the fore most extensively once more in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859. In this book, Darwin in his own way opposes the fact that God created different living species on Earth separately, for he erroneously claimed that all living beings had an imaginary 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 his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected would solve these difficulties. He indicated this expectation again and again in his book. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties and refuted the basic assumptions of the theory one by one.

The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic headings:

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.

2) There is no scientific finding that indicates 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 haphazardly on Earth 3.8 billion years ago, supposedly having appeared as a result of coincidences. How a cell comprising a wide range of organelles such as vacuoles, mitochondria, lysosomes and Golgi apparatus could come into existence in a puddle of mud, 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 focus on the first step of the supposed evolutionary process. **How did the aforementioned "first cell" originate?**

Since the theory of evolution ignorantly denies creation, it maintains that the "first cell" originated as a product of blind coincidence within the laws of nature, without any plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have haphazardly produced a living cell out of nowhere. 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. That is because 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. In that period, 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 were assumed to be evidence of life originating from inanimate materials. 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.** At the time Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, **five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results, after long studies and experiments, which disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."** (Sidney Fox, Klaus Dose, *Molecular Evolution and The Origin of Life*, W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, 1972, p. 4)

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted Pasteur's 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.

Futile Efforts in 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 chance. 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. (Alexander I. Oparin, Origin of Life, Dover Publications, New York, 1936, 1953 and 2003 (reprint), p. 196)

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 those gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experimental 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.** (*"New Evidence on Evolution of Early Atmosphere and Life," Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, vol. 63, November 1982, 1328-1330*)

After a long silence, **Miller, himself confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.** (Stanley Miller, *Molecular Evolution of Life: Current Status of the Prebiotic Synthesis of Small Molecules*, 1986, p. 7)

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, accepted 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? (Jeffrey Bada, Earth, February 1998, p. 40)

The Complex Structure of Life: Not Even a Single Protein can Come Into Existence by Chance

The primary reason why evolutionists ended up at such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms Darwinists deemed to be the simplest have outstandingly complex features. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all our man-made technological products. **Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world not even a single protein of a cell, let alone a living cell itself, can be produced by bringing non-living materials together.**

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by mere coincidence. However, there is no need to explain the situation with too many details. Evolutionists are at a dead-end even before reaching the stage of the cell. That is because the **probability of just a single protein, an essential building block of the cell, coming into being by chance is mathematically "0".**

The main reason for this is the need for other proteins to be present if one protein is to form, and this completely eradicates the possibility of chance formation. This fact by itself is sufficient to eliminate the evolutionist claim of chance right from the outset. To summarize,

- 1. Proteins cannot be synthesized without enzymes, and enzymes are all proteins.**
- 2. Around 60 proteins assuming the task of an enzyme need to be present for a single protein to be synthesized. Therefore, proteins are essential for proteins to exist.**
- 3. DNA manufactures the protein-synthesizing enzymes. Proteins cannot be synthesized without DNA. DNA is therefore also needed for proteins to form.**
- 4. All the organelles in the cell have important tasks in protein synthesis. In other words, for proteins to form, a complete and fully functioning cell needs to exist with all its organelles.**

Evolutionist science writer Brian Switek admitted that the origin of life remains to be unaccountable by evolutionists as follows:

How life began is one of nature's enduring mysteries. (Brian Switek, "Debate bubbles over the origin of life", Nature, February 13, 2012)

Harvard chemist George Whitesides made the following confession in his acceptance speech of the Priestley Medal, the highest award of the American Chemical Society:

The Origin of Life. This problem is one of the big ones in science. ... Most chemists believe, as do I, that life emerged spontaneously from mixtures of molecules in the prebiotic Earth. How? I have no idea. (George M. Whitesides, "Revolutions In Chemistry: Priestley Medalist George M. Whitesides' Address", Chemical and Engineering News, 85: 12-17, March 26, 2007)

The DNA molecule, located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is a magnificent databank. If the information coded in DNA were transcribed on paper, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of 500 pages each.

A very interesting insurmountable predicament emerges at this point for the evolutionists: 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 must exist at the same time for replication. This razes the scenario where life originated by itself to the ground. 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. (Leslie E. Orgel, "The Origin of Life on Earth," Scientific American, vol. 271, October 1994, p. 78.)

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated spontaneously through blind coincidence, then it must be accepted that life was created. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

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

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

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

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

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur. (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, The Modern Library, New York, p. 127)

Lamarck's Fallacy

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. (*Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species: A Facsimile of the First Edition, Harvard University Press, 1964, p. 184*)

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 was left 'alone' and consequently rendered completely ineffective 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 selection.

Today, the model that Darwinists espouse, despite their own awareness of its scientific invalidity, is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living species were formed through 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 horrific images that appeared after the nuclear explosions in Chernobyl, Hiroshima and Nagasaki are the exact results brought about by mutations. The organisms with proper structures either died or were severely damaged by mutations.

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. (B. G. Ranganathan, Origins?, Pennsylvania: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1988, p. 7.)

According to the claims of Darwinists, mutations must produce proportionate and coherent changes all over the body. For example, as per the claims of Darwinists, if an ear is formed on the right side as a result of chance mutations just as they claim, chance mutations should also form a second ear on the left side that shares the same symmetry and properties, and hears just as well. The hammer, anvil and stirrup must each come into existence in the same perfect and equal state. Random mutations must form heart valves on both sides in the same way; the valves and auricles produced by random mutations must be formed simultaneously and equally compatible with one another; they must be flawless, in their proper places. Huge discrepancies would appear if this symmetry and order could not be maintained in every organ of the body. Bizarre structures with its one ear upside down, one unusual tooth, one eye on the forehead while the other on the nose, would appear. But living organisms do not possess such imbalances. According to the

claims of the Darwinists, everything formed by mutations must be symmetrical and compatible. However, all mutations are harmful. In the past, it was assumed that 99% of the mutations were harmful while the remaining 1% was neutral. Yet new researches revealed that those 1% of mutations that take place in those regions of the DNA that do not code proteins and were thus assumed to be harmless, are in fact harmful in the long run. That is why scientists named these mutations as 'silent mutations'. **It is impossible for mutations that are absolutely harmful to form rational, compatible, symmetrical organs at the same time.**

Mutations can be likened to shooting at an intact structure with a machine gun. Shooting at an intact object will completely ruin its structure. One of the bullets proving ineffective, or curing a pre-existing infection in the body by cauterizing it, does not change the result. The organism would already be ruined by the remaining 99 bullets that hit it.

Lynn Margulis, a member of the US National Academy of Sciences, has made the following confession regarding the evident harmful effects of mutations:

New mutations don't create new species; they create offspring that are impaired. (Lynn Margulis, quoted in Darryl Madden, UMass Scientist to Lead Debate on Evolutionary Theory, Brattleboro (Vt.) Reformer, February 3, 2006)

Also in an interview in 2011, Margulis emphasized the fact that "there is no evidence" indicating that mutations modify organisms and thus give rise to new species:

[N]eo-Darwinists say that new species emerge when mutations occur and modify an organism. I was taught over and over again that the accumulation of random mutations led to evolutionary change-led to new species. I believed it until I looked for evidence. (Lynn Margulis quoted in "Lynn Margulis: Q + A," Discover Magazine, April 2011, p. 68)

As Margulis stated, there is not a single evidence showing that random mutations lead to evolutionary changes, which in turn lead to the emergence of new species.

Indeed, no beneficial mutation – one that would advance the genetic code – has ever been observed. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It is now 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 there is no evolutionary mechanism, no such imaginary process called "evolution" can take place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The fossil records constitute the clearest evidence showing us that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place.

According to the unscientific supposition behind this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species (evolutionists have yet to offer an explanation on how this species came into existence) turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this imaginary transformation took millions of years and proceeded gradually.

If this were the case, innumerable intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles would 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 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 would 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... (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, New York: D. Appleton and Company. p. 161)

However, **Darwin, having written these lines, was also well aware of the fact that no fossils of these intermediate forms had yet been found.** He regarded this as a major difficulty for his theory. That is why, in one chapter of his book titled "Difficulties on Theory," he wrote:

Firstly, 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?... (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, New York: D. Appleton and Company. p.154, 155)

Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? (Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, New York: D. Appleton and Company. p. 246)

Darwin's Shattered Hopes

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 the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that **life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.**

Renowned 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. (Derek V. Ager, "The Nature of the Fossil Record," Proceedings of the British Geological Association, vol. 87, 1976, p. 133)

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. Furthermore, this is very strong evidence that **all living things are created.** The only explanation of a living species emerging instantaneously and completely 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. (Douglas J. Futuyma, Science on Trial, Pantheon Books, New York, 1983, p. 197)

Today, there are 700 million unearthed fossils. **All these fossils reveal that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the Earth.** It is as if the fossils are saying "We did not evolve through evolutionary processes." That means, contrary to Darwin's supposition, "the origin of species" cannot be explained by evolution, but is explained by 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 four to five million years ago, some "transitional forms" between 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 "Southern ape". These living beings are actually nothing but an 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. (Solly Zuckerman, *Beyond the Ivory Tower*, Toplinger Publications, New York, 1970, 75-14; Charles E. Oxnard, "The Place of Australopithecines in Human Evolution: Grounds for Doubt", *Nature*, vol. 258, 389)

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 an imaginary evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proven that there is any evolutionary relationship between these different classes.

By outlining the chain's links as *Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* all lived at different parts of the world at the same time. (Alan Walker, *Science*, vol. 207, 7 March 1980, p. 1103; A. J. Kelso, *Physical Anthropology*, 1st ed., J. B. Lipincott Co., New York, 1970, p. 221; M. D. Leakey, *Olduvai Gorge*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971, p. 272)

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. *Homo erectus* and ***Homo sapiens* co-existed in the same region and era.** (Jeffrey Kluger, "Not So Extinct After All," *Time*, 24 June 2001)

This situation 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. (S. J. Gould, Natural History, vol. 85, 1976, p. 30)

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 textbooks, that is, frankly, 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 a 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. (Solly Zuckerman, Beyond the Ivory Tower, New York: Toplinger Publications, 1970, p. 19)

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

Why a Muslim Cannot be an Advocate of Evolution

Based on the knowledge of the 1940s and 1950s, some Muslims imagine that evolution is a theory supported by science, and try to reconcile it with Islam employing a strange logic which suggests that 'Muslims knew about evolution long before Darwin.' This logic is a product of serious lack of knowledge. Science has proven the invalidity of evolution. The fact science reveals is the fact of creation.

The fact that Muslims believe in, and the Qur'an clearly states, is that God created everything. Therefore, it is impossible for a Muslim to advocate the theory of evolution, which is a pagan superstition dating back to the time of the ancient Egyptians and Sumerians, explaining everything with coincidences.

God surely could have created the living organisms through evolution if He had wished so. However, the Qur'an does not contain any such information or any verse supporting the gradual formation of life forms as claimed by evolutionists. Had such a manner of creation existed, we would have seen it in the verses of the Qur'an with its elaborate explanations. But on the contrary, God informs us in the Qur'an that life and the universe is created miraculously with God's commandment, 'Be'.

He is the Originator of the heavens and earth. When He decides on something, He just says to it, 'Be!' and it is. (Qur'an, 2:117)

The fact God heralds in the Qur'an is that mankind was created out of nothing, in the finest form:

We created man in the finest mold. (Qur'an, 95:4)

He created the heavens and the earth with truth and formed you, giving you the best of forms. And He is your final destination. (Qur'an, 64:3)

The Prophet Adam (pbuh) and All Mankind Existed in the Spiritual Realm Before the Universe Was Created

In the Qur'an, God informs us He created mankind in the spiritual realm even before the creation of the Universe and called everyone to testify:

When your Lord took out all their descendants from the loins of the children of Adam and made them testify against themselves 'Am I not your Lord?' they said, 'We testify that indeed You are!' Lest you say on the Day of Rising, 'We knew nothing of this.' (Qur'an, 7:172)

As it is seen, God informs us in the verse that mankind was brought into being before the universe, that they were created flawlessly and were fully developed, and that they testified and promised that God is their Lord. According to

the information imparted by the verse, fully developed, talking, hearing, promising, testifying human beings existed with all their organs and all their physical characteristics even before the universe was created.

The original Arabic verse is as below:

“Ve iz ehaze rabbuka min benî âdama min zuhûrihim zurriyyatahum wa asyhadahum alâ anfusihim, a lastu birabbikum, qâlû balâ, syahidna, an taqûlû yaumal qiyâmati innâ kunnâ an hâzâ gâfilîn (gâfilîna).”

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ
وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى
شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

ve iz ehaze: And when (He) took out

(iz: you know, remember, then, at that time, ... when... because, as, hence)

rabbuka: your Lord

min benî âdama: from the children of Adam

min zuhûri-him: from their loins

zurriyyatahum: their descendant, their lines, their lineage

wa asyhadahum: and made them testify

alâ anfusi-him: against themselves

a lastu: am I not?

bi rabbikum: your Lord

qâlû: they said

bala: yes

syahidna: we testify

an taqûlû: lest, so that you say not

yaumal qiyâmati: the Day of Rising

innâ: certainly we, genuinely we

kunnâ: we are, ... we were

'an hâza: of this

gâfilîn(a): unaware, knew nothing

The Arabic word 'zurriyyat' (descendant) used in the verse, is used 18 more times in the Qur'an. The meaning of this word in all the verses it is used in is 'mankind' or 'human generation' as all the Islamic scholars unanimously agree. In this verse, there is a reference to the descendants of Adam - the line of the Prophet Adam (pbuh)- meaning all human beings that have lived and will live on Earth. That is because, had that been a promise taken only from the person of the Prophet Adam (pbuh), the verse would have read 'When your Lord made Adam testify.' As the verse

states **'When your Lord took out all their descendants from the loins of the children of Adam', there is a reference to all the descendants of the Prophet Adam (pbuh), meaning all mankind.**

The Arabic word 'iz' (meaning; remember that time, when) refers to the time when this address was made to the descendants of the Prophet Adam (pbuh), meaning to all mankind. The word 'iz' is a preposition used while talking about an incident that took place in the past. It means 'remember this incident that took place in the past'. What is meant here is the testimony, the promise all humankind gave in the past, even before the universe was created.

In another verse of the Qur'an, it is stated that people will die twice and will be given life twice:

They will say, 'Our Lord, twice You caused us to die and twice You gave us life. We admit our wrong actions. Is there no way out?' (Qur'an, 40:11)

The first death and life mentioned in this verse is the way people -in a sense- die after they gave this promise in the spiritual realm, and then are given life by God using their parents as instruments and are sent to this world. The second death is the physical death that we know of in this world. After that, people will be given life for the second time in the Hereafter.

When this is the case, the 'gradual formation of mankind' claims of those who assert that creation through evolution is mentioned in the Qur'an become utterly invalid. Humans did not come into existence in a gradual manner. The whole of mankind, the Prophet Adam (pbuh), and all the other prophets existed in the spiritual realm even before the whole universe was created. The claim that the Prophet Adam (pbuh) and the rest of mankind turned into modern man through a set of evolutionary processes does not hold any truth.

The Prophet Adam (pbuh), just like the rest of humanity, existed in the spiritual realm even before the universe was created, and then was created in Heaven, later to be sent to the Earth:

Your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to create a human being out of clay. When I have formed him and breathed My Soul into him, fall down in prostration to him!' (Qur'an, 38:71-72)

But satan made them slip up by means of it, expelling them from where they were. We said, 'Go down from here as enemies to each other! You will have residence on the earth and enjoyment for a time.' (Qur'an, 2:36)

In another verse of the Qur'an, God informs us about the promise given by all mankind in the spiritual realm as follows:

Remember God's blessing to you and the covenant He made with you when you said, 'We hear and we obey.' Have fear of God. God knows what the heart contains. (Qur'an, 5:7)

Those who gave their promises to God in the spiritual realm were not part human and part other creatures, with incomplete forms and undeveloped limbs. They were complete and conscious humans. This is a clear proof that creation through evolution does not exist in the Qur'an.

Those Muslims Who Advocate Evolution Are Unable To Explain the Creation of Angels and the Jinn

When those who claim that mankind developed through an evolutionary process are asked about how angels and the jinn were created, their answer will be, 'God created them out of nothing'. It is quite astonishing that these individuals, who are aware of and acknowledge the fact that angels and the jinn are creations of God, fail to realize that God created mankind in the same manner. It is highly surprising that they fail to see that Almighty Lord, Who created angels with His command 'Be', created mankind in the same manner. Likewise, God creates angels in human form, instantaneously. The angels who visited the Prophet Abraham (pbuh) had the appearance of fully developed and flawless human beings and were created instantaneously.

God informs in the Qur'an that the jinn, unlike mankind, were created from fire:

He created man from dry earth like baked clay; and He created the jinn from a fusion of fire. (Qur'an, 55:14-15)

As God reveals in the Qur'an, the creation of angels is also quite different from the creation of mankind. In the following verse, God informs us about the creation of angels:

Praise be to God, the Bringer into Being of the heavens and earth, He Who made the angels messengers, with wings – two, three or four. He adds to creation in any way He wills. God has power over all things. (Qur'an, 35:1)

As clearly understood from the statement in the verse, angels also have a very distinct appearance, very different from that of humans. Additionally, God informs us in the Qur'an that both angels and the jinn were created before mankind. It is very easy for God to create. Our Lord is the One Who creates out of nothing and without cause. Just as He created the jinn and angels out of nothing and in distinct forms, so did He create mankind as a separate creature out of nothing, without any need for evolutionary processes. The same is also true for other life forms such as animals and plants. Here is the explicit truth explained in the Qur'an: God created all beings instantaneously and out of nothing without subjecting them to evolution; in other words, without turning them into other species.

Muslims Who Advocate Evolution Cannot Offer Any Explanation for the Miracles Mentioned in the Qur'an

God informs us in the Qur'an that when the Prophet Moses (pbuh) threw his staff to the ground, by God's will, it turned into a living snake.

As we are informed in the verses, when the Prophet Moses (pbuh) throws his staff to the ground, an inanimate tree branch turns into a living snake, and when he takes it in his hand, it reverts back to an inanimate tree branch, and when he throws it once more to the ground, it again comes to life. In other words, an inanimate matter comes to life and then becomes lifeless, and then comes to life again. With this miracle, God shows us the constant creation. God commands in the verses:

He threw it down and suddenly it was a slithering snake. He said, 'Take hold of it and have no fear. We will return it to its original form.' (Qur'an, 20:20-21)

'Throw down what is in your right hand. It will swallow up their handiwork. Their handiwork is just a magician's trick. Magicians do not prosper wherever they go.' (Qur'an, 20:69)

'Throw down your staff.' Then when he saw it slithering like a snake he turned and fled and did not turn back again. 'Have no fear, Moses. In My Presence the Messengers have no fear.' (Qur'an, 27:10)

When the Prophet Moses (pbuh) threw his staff to the ground, as a blessing of God, an inanimate piece of wood turned into a very much alive creature that slithered and swallowed the conjurations of the others; in other words, a creature with a functional digestive system. This transformation took place instantaneously. Thus, God showed people an example of how living organisms are created out of nothing. An inanimate matter came to life by God simply willing it, in other words, with His command 'Be'. This miracle that God granted to the Prophet Moses (pbuh) shattered the superstitious evolutionary beliefs of the Egyptians of the time with a single blow, and even those who were against the Prophet Moses (pbuh) realized the truth at that very moment, renouncing their superstitious beliefs and believing in God.

Furthermore, God informs us in the Qur'an about how the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) made a clay object in the shape of a bird and breathed into it, and how the bird came to life by God's Will:

Remember when God said, 'Jesus, son of Mary, remember My blessing to you and to your mother when I reinforced you with the Purest Spirit so that you could speak to people in the cradle and when you

were fully grown; and when I taught you the Book and Wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel; and when you created a bird-shape out of clay by My permission, and then breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission...' (Qur'an, 5:110)

A bird came to life without being bound to any cause, by God's leave and miracle. A living bird emerging from inanimate matter is one example of Almighty God's peerless, causeless and sublime creation. Through this miracle bestowed upon him by God, the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) revealed the illogicality and invalidity of evolutionist thinking also. It is impossible for those who try to arbitrarily reconcile Islam with evolution to offer an explanation of these miracles of our Lord.

Just as God did not create the jinn, angels, the women of Heaven (houris), the male servants of Heaven (gillmans), the children of Heaven, palaces and gardens of Heaven, hell and its guardians through evolution, so did He not create mankind through evolution. God created every detail in Heaven; the high palaces, ornaments, gardens, birds, foods and infinite blessings instantly and out of nothing without any evolutionary process. The mansions in the Heaven, rivers of milk, thrones and jewels of Heaven were all created by God's command "Be". No cause is needed such as foremen, tailors or craftsmen for those to appear. Just as the fruits of Heaven such as date palms and figs or the jewels of Heaven such as pearls and mother-of-pearls were not created by means of evolution in Heaven, they are not created by means of evolution in this world either. Creation is not through evolution, neither in this world, nor in Heaven. (For further information, refer to: *Why Darwinism Is Incompatible with the Qur'an*, Harun Yahya (Adnan Oktar))

Darwinian Formula!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now examine what kind of an irrational belief the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution claims that life is formed by chance. According to this irrational claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they supposedly 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 treatment 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 what evolutionists really claim about the "Darwinian formula":

Let evolutionists put plenty of the 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 even exist under normal conditions, but that they think is necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids and as many proteins - not a single one of which can by any means be formed by chance - 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 or even trillions of years. Let them be free to use anything they believe to be necessary for a living being's formation.

No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a living being. 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, multicolored butterflies, or any of the other millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any living being.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form a cell by coming together. They cannot make a new decision and divide this cell into two, then make other decisions and create the professors who invented the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Life only comes with God'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 about 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 the theory of evolution 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 upside down on the retina in the eye. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electrical signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision". These electrical signals are then perceived in this center as an image. Given this brief technical explanation, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that it is completely dark inside the brain, 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-black darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and so distinct that even the technology of the twenty-first century has not been able to attain that clarity and sharpness. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as you now see, with any other device? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television manufacturer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises have been 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 from a three-dimensional perspective which adds 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 artificially three-dimensional. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce as sharp and distinct vision as that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a comparative loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by haphazard events. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of coincidences, 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 unconscious 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 is valid for the ear as well. 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 electrical signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing is finalized in the center of hearing in the brain.

The situation of 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 the outside is, 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 the noises in a crowded place.** However, if the sound level in your brain were measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to prevail there.

As is the case with sharp imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. Sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, many electronic devices and music systems sensing sound are all the results of such efforts. Despite all 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, highest-fidelity systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even with these devices, when sound is recorded, some of it is lost; or notice how when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a slight interference or static even 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 static as does a music set; 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 video or audio 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 This Consciousness That Sees and Hears within the Brain Belong?

Who watches an alluring world inside 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 an answer to the most important question: 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, or neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is composed of matter, cannot answer this question.

For **this consciousness is the spirit, the soul created by God**, 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 answer should reflect on Almighty God, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He fits this entire universe into a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Superstition

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 **intermediate forms the theory necessitates have never existed**. So, these certainly require that the theory of evolution be pushed aside as a disproven theory. This is how many ideas, such as the geocentric model of the universe, have been taken out of the realm of science throughout history.

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

Because this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief in some circles. These circles are **blindly devoted** to a 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]... (Richard Lewontin, "The Demon-Haunted World," The New York Review of Books, January 9, 1997, p. 28)

These are explicit statements demonstrating that **Darwinism is a dogma** kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being except for matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter brought life into being. It claims that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of interactions between matter, such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, or out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary to both reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to ignorantly defend it just so as not to acknowledge, in their own eyes, the evident existence of God.

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 God**, 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

It should be openly stated first and foremost that 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 true science, is quite impossible to embrace.

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 Hubble; such artists as Frank Sinatra and Charlton Heston; 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 necessitates an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the totems worshipped 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, God 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. God has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2:6-7)

... 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. (Qur'an, 7:179)

God informs us in the Surat al-Hijr that these people are under a spell that they do not believe even if they see miracles:

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!" (Qur'an, 15:14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keeping people from the truth, and remaining unbroken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible, illogical scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "spell" is the only possible word to use when people from all over the world believe 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 its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, in the Qur'an God relates the incident of the Prophet Moses (pbuh) and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by use of spells. 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. (Qur'an, 7:116)

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. (Qur'an, 7:117-118)

The Prophet Moses' throwing his staff of inanimate wood and then that staff coming to life and instantly overthrowing the deceptions of the Pharaoh and his followers is like breaking the spell of evolution. 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 of evolution 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 advocating the theory of evolution for some sixty 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. (Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, p. 43)*

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "coincidences" are 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 now rapidly beginning to be lifted from 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.

They said, 'Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.' (Qur'an, 2:32)

RESİM ALTI YAZILARI

s.15

TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

s.16

One of the main causes of Islamophobia is radicalism. Those who imagine that radicalism is Islam are in fact making the gravest error by opposing Islam and are fighting against the only possible solution to radicalism.

s.20

The problem with much of the Islamic world today is that it has abandoned the Qur'an. Every pronouncement by people described as "leaders of the faith" has been adopted as a rule, and so every religious community has its own different practices.

s.23

There are two ways to be certain if a hadith was really said by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or if he really did what is claimed in an account or narration: It must comply with the Qur'an, or the event foretold in the hadith must have taken place. Statements or practices that are in contradiction with the Qur'an were definitely not said or carried out by the Prophet (pbuh).

Ortaköy Mosque: A 19th-century mosque situated at the Bosphorus Strait. Sultan Abdülmecid commissioned architect Nigoğayos Balyan in 1853 to build the mosque. It is an excellent example of Baroque architecture.

s.27

The Sharia of the Qur'an requires that a Muslim be modern, well-groomed, noble, wise, cultured, democratic, open-minded, respectful of all ideas and full of love. The Sharia of the Qur'an is based on brotherhood, peace and love. War, cruelty, hatred, anger and conflict are all forbidden to Muslims in the Qur'an. Those who wish to know the true Sharia must look to the Qur'an alone.

s.35

"Waging jihad" in Islam means to educate the other side, to teach moral virtue and to strive to turn people away from evil. Those who murder in the name of jihad are not acting in the light of the Qur'an.

s.43

Muslims lived as a minority in the pagan society of Mecca and were exposed to much oppression. Many Muslims were physically tortured, some were martyred, most had their homes and possessions pillaged and they were subjected

to constant insults and threats. Yet Muslims continued to live without resorting to violence, merely keeping their distance from the idolaters and calling on them to live in peace.

s.45

The pagans of the time were unable to harm Muslims from powerful and prestigious families, such as Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Uthman. However, they barbarically mistreated and tortured poor and helpless Muslims, in a way never seen before.

s.52

All the wars described in the Qur'an were defensive wars that took place in that region under circumstances that necessitated defensive action. The verses for defense were sent down for those specific conditions of the times.

s.60

The Constitution of Medina was the first pluralist and the most democratic constitution in history, showing the protective attitude of Muslims toward the rights and laws of members of all other faiths and even idolaters.

s.63

In verse 191 of Surat al-Baqara, Muslims are only given the right to defend themselves. According to the Qur'an, war is allowed only in the form of self-defense when there is an attack.

THESE HATEFUL IMAGES DO NOT REFLECT ISLAM

s.65

Jews and Christians are defined as the People of the Book in the Qur'an. Muslims are obliged to approach the People of the Book with love and compassion.

s.70

In verse 6 of Surat at-Tawba, Muslims are told to help an idolater who seeks shelter with them and asks for their help, even at the cost of endangering their own lives.

s.78

Under Islamic law, war is only permissible for defensive purposes, and prisoners must be released when it is over. This is a practice not even found in the international law of war. Indeed, prisoners from past conflicts are still being kept under harsh conditions in prisons such as Guantanamo Bay.

s.89

VIOLENCE, HATRED AND LOVELESSNESS ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF RADICALS. THEY HAVE NO PLACE IN ISLAM.

The reason why Islam is misunderstood even though it encourages laicism, democracy and peace, is the non-Qur'anic mentality of the radicals.

s.90

It is usually radical groups that are encouraged to wage war, but those who need war for their own evil ends manage them all.

s.92

Some supposed religious leaders are pawns set in motion when needed to create war and turmoil. They are supervised by various intelligence units and play a role in bringing about the war with which they are charged.

s.94

Say: "Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Falsehood is always bound to vanish." (Qur'an, 17:81)

John William Godward's oil painting "The Signal," 1918

s.103

The hadiths claimed to have been narrated from our Prophet (pbuh) were first written down two or three centuries after his death.

s.105

Ludwig Deutsch's oil painting "The Learned," 1901

s.110

Osman Hamdi Bey's oil painting "Theologist," 1907

The founders of the four schools are of course worthy Islamic scholars. However, the foundation of the four schools was in fact based on mutually conflicting hadiths. Each school based itself on the hadiths it preferred.

s.111

Osman Hamdi Bey's oil painting "Girl Reciting Qur'an," 1880

s.117

Ludwig Deutsch's oil painting "At Prayer," 1923

s.123

According to the fabricated hadiths and agreements of scholars, the Qur'an is not generally to be read, only to be placed somewhere high up and never taken down again.

s.125

TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

s.126

Is it not enough for them that We have sent down to you the Book which is recited to them? There is certainly a mercy and reminder in that for people who believe. (Qur'an, 29:51)

s.127

You who believe! Do not make forbidden the good things God has made lawful for you, and do not overstep the limits. God does not love people who overstep the limits. (Qur'an, 5:87)

s.131

It is various false and fabricated hadiths that represent the source of violence in the name of Islam. These hadiths and practices are diametrically opposed to the content and spirit of the Qur'an. These hadiths that represent the basis of superstition must therefore be identified and precautionary measures be set out in a rational manner.

WHEN MUSLIMS LIVE BY THE QUR'AN, THERE WILL NO LONGER BE SUCH LOVELESS AND HATEFUL SCENES ...

s.136

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES That Order That Alcohol-Drinkers Should Be Killed

s.137

According to the Qur'an, when a Muslim drinks alcohol, he will be committing a sin, but he will not divorce himself from Islam and he will not be an unbeliever. That person can repent for his sin. God has always shown people the way for redemption. However, in the non-Qur'anic Islamic understanding, there is no reason to make an effort to win people. On the contrary, that mentality seeks to punish and oppress people.

IN THE QUR'ANIC ISLAM, THERE IS NO COMMANDMENT THAT SAYS PEOPLE WHO DRINK ALCOHOL SHOULD BE KILLED.

s.138

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES That Order That Alcohol-Drinkers Should Be Killed

IN THE QUR'ANIC ISLAM, THERE IS NO COMMANDMENT THAT SAYS PEOPLE WHO DRINK ALCOHOL SHOULD BE KILLED.

s.139

The fabricated hadiths and accounts regarding the killing of people who drink alcohol are diametrically opposite to the message and spirit of the Qur'an. They all contradict the Qur'an and therefore do not belong to the religion of Islam.

s.140

False hadiths on the practice of stoning to death were fabricated in order to include the commandment of the Torah about the stoning of adulterers in Islam and to justify such a revolting practice.

s.141

John William Waterhouse's oil painting "Thisbe," 1909

s.145

The claim the fanatics make by means of fabricated hadiths, that a goat ate the verse about adultery, implies that, may God forbid, God was unable to protect the verse (surely God is beyond that). That is equivalent to rejecting the verses, doubting the word of God and abjuring the faith.

THERE ARE NO COMMANDMENTS IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAY ADULTERERS SHOULD BE KILLED OR SHOULD BE STONED TO DEATH.

s.146

STONING TO DEATH IS AN UN-ISLAMIC, PAGAN TRADITION THAT HAS NO PLACE IN THE QUR'AN.

The penalty of stoning to death applied in countries such as Iran, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia under the name of "Islamic Sharia," is a violation of Islam and the Qur'an, and is indeed murder. The picture above shows stoning in Iran.

s.148

Vasily Polenov's oil painting titled "Jesus and the Woman Taken in Adultery," 1888

s.149

STONING TO DEATH IS AN UN-ISLAMIC, PAGAN TRADITION THAT HAS NO PLACE IN THE QUR'AN.

s.150

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES About the Killing of Adulterers

THERE ARE NO COMMANDMENTS IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAY ADULTERERS SHOULD BE KILLED OR SHOULD BE STONED TO DEATH.

s.151

When fabricated hadiths are followed instead of God's word, the Qur'an, a horrible worldview arises. Fabricated hadiths about stoning to death are examples of this horrible system.

s.152

Our Prophet (pbuh) ruled only with what God sent down and never did anything like stoning adulterers to death. Such hadiths are not authentic.

s.153

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES About the Killing of Adulterers

THERE ARE NO COMMANDMENTS IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAY ADULTERERS SHOULD BE KILLED. HADITHS ABOUT STONING TO DEATH ARE FABRICATED.

s.154

According to the Qur'an, in order to establish that a man or a woman is engaged in the act of adultery, there have to be four witnesses at the scene during the moment of the act. Also, four of them have to witness the act simultaneously. Since this is practically impossible, the punishment of hitting eighty times with a stick is only of a deterrent nature.

s.155

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES About the Killing of Adulterers

THERE ARE NO COMMANDMENTS IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAY ADULTERERS SHOULD BE KILLED. HADITHS ABOUT STONING TO DEATH ARE FABRICATED.

s.156

There are no commandments in the Qur'an that say adulterers should be killed. These so-called hadiths are slandering the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) never ruled against the Qur'an.

s.157

FABRICATED HADITH SOURCES About the Killing of Adulterers

THERE ARE NO COMMANDMENTS IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAY ADULTERERS SHOULD BE KILLED. HADITHS ABOUT STONING TO DEATH ARE FABRICATED.

s.159

The killing of those who persist in stealing is another product of fabricated hadiths that has no place in the Qur'an. This is also murder.

Albert Samuel Anker's oil painting "Old age," 1885

s.161

It is impossible in a society that abides by the genuine Sharia of the Qur'an for there to be rich people as well as poor ones. The rich always protect those in need and have a responsibility to give to the poor.

s.165

In the Islam described in the Qur'an, everyone is free to believe or not believe, as they so choose. However, because of the false conception of Islam given by radicalism, some Western magazines frequently carry reports concerning Islamophobia.

s.166

THERE IS FREEDOM OF FAITH IN THE QUR'AN. THESE HADITHS THAT COMMAND THE KILLING OF THOSE WHO ABJURE THE FAITH ARE FABRICATED.

Islam is based on willing acceptance and consent. Forcing people to adopt a belief produces only hypocrites, not believers. There is no commandment in the Qur'an that suggests that those who abjure the faith should be killed.

s.167

HADITH SOURCES about the killing of those who abjure the faith

s.168

HADITH SOURCES about the killing of those who abjure the faith

s.169

THERE IS FREEDOM OF FAITH IN THE QUR'AN. THESE HADITHS THAT COMMAND THE KILLING OF THOSE WHO ABJURE THE FAITH ARE FABRICATED.

In the Islam described in the Qur'an, everyone has the freedom to believe or not to believe as they wish. The only duty of a Muslim is preaching the good moral values. It is God Who guides whom He wills; guidance belongs to Him alone.

s.171

Nobody can obviously be forced to pray in a faith in which there can be no compulsion on any subject.

Alphons Leopold Mielich's oil painting "Prayer at the Muhammad Ali Mosque"

s.172

HADITH SOURCES about the killing of people who stop praying

THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION. THERE IS NO COMMANDMENT IN THE QUR'AN THAT SAYS A PERSON WHO DOES NOT PRAY SHOULD BE KILLED.

s.173

These hadiths are fabrications. It is clear in the Qur'an that a Muslim should respect and feel compassion towards everyone; be they prayers or non-prayers.

s.186

Ludwig Deutsch's oil painting "The Chess Game," 1896

s.193

Almighty God cites in the Qur'an various kinds of animal as intelligent and glorious examples of Creation that remember Him, and He praises the prophets' love and affection for animals.

s.205

According to the Qur'an, Muslims have a responsibility to be clean, to keep their homes clean, to wear clean clothes and to eat clean food. According to the Qur'an, Muslims are clean but idolaters are dirty. Fanatics who live their lives outside the Qur'an, who abide by a faith other than that sent down by God and who therefore ascribe equals to Him certainly meet that definition.

s.211

Art, quality and cleanliness are championed and encouraged in the Qur'an. Our Prophet (pbuh) was the most high-quality and modern person of his time as he followed the Qur'an in the most perfect manner. A crude, artless, ugly, dirty life is a spiritual disaster caused by a non-Qur'anic Islamic understanding.

s.213

Quality is not a condition to be met through money, possessions or stylish clothes. Quality is a feature that can be acquired through cleanliness, care, valuing beauty, immaculate behavior, affection, rationality, respect and moral virtue. The true Islam of the Qur'an requires this conception of quality. The world of the fanatics, on the other hand, is as filthy and low quality as it can be. This is a consequence of defying the Qur'an.

s.221

John William Godward's oil painting "Rich Gifts Wax Poor When Lovers Prove Unkind," 1916

s.223

Mary (pbuh) fell pregnant in a miraculous manner by the will of God. Throughout her pregnancy, she bore all her difficulties with fortitude, and she was made superior to all the women of all the worlds because of that fortitude and her devotion to God.

Sassoferrato's oil painting "The Virgin in Prayer."

s.224

The idea that women are "deficient in mind and faith" is a slander from the religion of the fanatics. God addresses men and women equally in terms of responsibility. This is one of the reasons why many verses are addressed to male and female believers at the same time.

William-Adolphe Bouguereau's oil painting "Mother and Children," 1879

s.227

According to the Qur'an, people should be advised of their errors in a kindly and gentle language, and these should be corrected by addressing the person's conscience, showing them right and wrong.

Frederic Leighton's oil painting "Light of the Harem," 1880

s.234

And [I have been ordered] to recite the Qur'an. Whoever is guided is only guided to his own good; if someone is misguided just say, "I am only a warner." (Qur'an, 27:92)

Woman in the Qur'an can be a head of state, a ruler, and can make decisions and issue commands regarding business. Woman in the religion of the fanatics is the exact opposite of the nature of woman in the Qur'an.

John William Godward's oil painting "The Bouquet," 1899

s.236

John William Godward's oil painting "The Peacock Fan," 1912

s.238

In the Qur'an, a woman is defined as a person who is solid of character, who is strong, sensible and intelligent and whose conscience can be trusted.

s.241

John William Godward's oil painting "The Belvedere," 1913

s.247

The Qur'an speaks of Muslims wearing fine and spotlessly clean clothes and using the finest clothing and accessories when they meet together.

s.248

Muslims always being well-groomed, clean, elegant and attractive are features specially emphasized in verses.

s.250

In the mentality of the fanatics, women have an obligation to abide by the ignorant idea of "performing wifely duties" for their husbands, even if they are not happy with their treatment and morality.

John William Godward's oil painting "A Souvenir," 1920

s.253

John William Godward's oil painting "A Tryst," 1912

s.257

Frederic Leighton's oil painting "Wedded," 1882

s.259

John William Godward's oil painting "Autumn," 1900

Women in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) provided for their households and had a voice in the family life; our Prophet (pbuh) praised these activities.

s.262

NEWSPAPER

DEATHS ON THE RISE

s.263

The devilish attitude to women of the fanatical mentality, that is filled to overflowing with hatred and hostility toward women, has remained unchanged for hundreds of years.

THERE IS NO OPPRESSION OF WOMEN IN THE QUR'AN. THESE HORRIBLE SCENES RESULT ONLY WHEN THE QUR'AN IS NOT FOLLOWED.

s.267

A woman must learn how to live, not from a man, but from the Qur'an.

John William Godward's oil painting "On the Balcony," 1911

s.269

Despising women, whom God says He has created in the finest form, and comparing them to dogs, asses and pigs, and describing them as a misfortune is totally incompatible with the moral values of the Qur'an. Muslim women are saintly people who are praised in the Qur'an, cited as role models, who are loved and respected and who are blessings.

John William Godward's oil painting "Nerissa," 1906

s.270

How can someone who lives by the fanatical mindset feel anything other than hatred for his wife, the person who should be the closest to him of all in this world?

John William Godward's oil painting "Idleness," 1900

s.273

Fabricated hadiths encourage hatred rather than love.

John William Godward's oil painting "The Love Letter," 1913

s.274

According to the Qur'an, the man and the woman in a marriage must both be select, noble and virtuous people who fear God. That is the basis of marriage in the Qur'an.

John William Godward's oil painting "Dolce Far Niente," 1889

s.284

TURKISH-ARABIC DICTIONARY

The word "juyub" in verse 31 of Surat an-Nur means "breast" and the word "khumur" means to cover. The verse is referring to covering the breasts. There is nothing in the verse about covering the head.

khumur

khumur

s.285

TURKISH-ARABIC DICTIONARY

juyub

juyub

s.290

There is no reference in the Qur'an to a headscarf. Nonetheless, some commentators have tried to produce a forced commandment from the Qur'an about covering the head in order to make this compatible with fabricated hadiths.

s.297

Some people go so far as to maintain that the word “ornaments” in the verse refers to decorative accessories such as beads. This interpretation is highly significant in revealing the mistaken and odd nature of interpretations based on false hadiths. The reference to “hidden ornaments” in the verse indicates the sexual organs and breasts.

s.301

Some people who translate the Qur'an from a traditional conception of Islam tend to produce changes in meaning, either through the use of parentheses or by directly changing the meaning of the text itself. Although verse 31 of Surat an-Nur says nothing about a head-covering, these people have not hesitated to refer to the headscarf either in parenthesis or directly in the text. Yet once this interpretation is done away with, the verse clearly refers to covering up the chest.

s.306

1

The three hadiths talk about the revelation of the verse in the words “When the verse ‘That they should draw their veils over their bosoms’ was revealed ...”. According to the description in these fabricated hadiths, the women already had a veil on their heads, let their veils hang down but left their breasts uncovered.

ACCORDING TO THE FABRICATED HADITHS

WOMEN ALREADY WEAR HEADSCARVES

THEIR BREASTS ARE EXPOSED

2

According to the phrase added to the verse in the fabricated hadith, women already had a veil covering their heads and they would use the excess parts of that large fabric to cover their breasts so that their breasts would also be covered.

ACCORDING TO THE ADDITION MADE TO THE VERSE IN THE FABRICATED HADITH

It is claimed that women already had a veil covering their heads and that they would use the excess parts of that large fabric to cover their breasts too.

3

Nevertheless, according to all three hadiths, the women did not cover their breasts with the large and long covering on their heads. Let's see what these fabricated hadiths claim that the women did, instead.

ACCORDING TO THE ADDITION MADE TO THE VERSE IN THE FABRICATED HADITH

It is claimed that women already had a veil covering their heads and that they would use the excess parts of that large fabric to cover their breasts too.

NEVERTHELESS, ACCORDING TO ALL THREE HADITHS, THE WOMEN DID NOT COVER THEIR BREASTS WITH THE LARGE AND LONG COVERING ON THEIR HEADS

s.307

4

According to the fabricated hadiths, it is claimed that when the verse was sent down, the women cut off pieces of their skirts or clothes, and added another layer of headscarf to their heads, which was already covered.

5

The fabricated hadith reads, “[they] took their garments and tore pieces of cloth from the edges of their skirts and covered their heads with them...” In other words, the fabricated hadith suggests that the women did not cover their breasts using the veil that was already covering their heads, but instead they cut pieces from their skirts and garments and covered their heads the second time. This way, they did not follow the supposed command of ‘covering with the excess fabric coming down from your head’, which they claimed to be God’s order.

THEY CUT OFF PIECES FROM THEIR SKIRTS AND COVERED THEIR HEADS WITH A SECOND HEADSCARF

With the phrase in the fabricated hadiths, “[they] took their garments and tore pieces of cloth from the edges of their skirts and covered their heads with them...”, it is suggested that women covered their heads the second time.

THEIR BREASTS EXPOSED

6

These fabricated hadiths claim that women covered their already covered heads a second time. However, these explanations imply that their breasts were still exposed. In other words, by means of these hadiths, they introduced a new commandment, which was not in God’s verse. In addition, they did not even act by this newly introduced commandment.

This flawed logic is a clear testament to the fact that God foils the stratagems of those who produce superstitions.

ACCORDING TO THE FABRICATED HADITHS

WOMEN HAD THEIR HEADS COVERED WITH TWO LAYERS OF HEADSCARF

AND HAD THEIR BREASTS EXPOSED

s.312

According to the Qur'an, women temporarily cover themselves completely with a jilbab, if they think that the situation calls for it. They themselves decide if that is necessary or not using their own reasoning, faith and conscience.

s.314

If she so wishes, a woman can say, "The practice of head-covering does appear in the Qur'an and I can see it in verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab," and choose to cover her head. She may prefer the headscarf to covering the whole body and interpret covering up in that way. However, it is untrue to say that this is what verse 31 of Surat al-Ahzab commands because the Qur'an says nothing about the headscarf.

s.315

The reference to wearing "jilbab" in verse 59 of Surat al-Ahzab is entirely at the discretion of the Muslim woman. Since women feel safe in democratic and civilized societies, they do not generally feel the need to wear the jilbab and cover up entirely. Some women, however, may not feel at ease even in such communities and may prefer to cover up entirely. The important thing is to prevent a woman from being misunderstood or harassed because of the way she dresses.

s.321

A woman may cover herself up entirely or wear low-cut clothing. Once she says, "I am a Muslim," nobody has the right to judge her. In the eyes of the Qur'an, superiority lies not in one's clothing, but in one's piety.

s.323

John William Godward's oil painting "Endymion," 1893

s.325

Responsibilities concerning money are risky matters, especially in present-day society, that can easily result in a person being defamed, accused of wrongdoing or becoming the object of suspicion.

s.327

God regards men and women as enjoying equal status as witnesses in the Qur'an. Nowhere does the Qur'an say, "One male witness is equal to two female witnesses."

s.331

The fact that the financial support of a woman is the responsibility of a man does not significantly restrict that woman. The precaution here is a symbol of the value attached to women.

s.335

Under the fanatical mindset, women are regarded as second-class beings needing to be locked away or imprisoned. Frightening practices of the fanatical mindset, which seeks to oppress women and depict men as superior to them, are currently applied in practice in many Islamic countries. Yet that terrible mindset is the diametric opposite of the Qur'an, and is totally incompatible with the true Islam.

s.338

There are verses of the Qur'an that impose the duty to guarantee the financial security of a divorced woman. Even if he has divorced her, a man has a responsibility to protect and take care of her until the end of her life, even if she has no need of that.

s.349

Although there are campaigns aimed at raising awareness of violence against women in the press and broadcasting media, it has to date proved impossible to prevent across the world. The reason for that is there is no activity on the level of ideas and based on the Qur'an against the mindset that represents the foundation of such violence.

s.350

16-year-old Malala Yousafzai was shot in the head and neck on her way home from school because of her blog in which she described the oppression of the population by the Taliban. Thankfully, Malala was restored to full health after lengthy treatment and is still fighting for the education rights of young girls.

s.351

There is no commandment in the Qur'an about beating women. There has never been any violence against women during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

s.353

TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

s.357

The main reason why Islamic communities soon began to degenerate after the time of our Prophet (pbuh) is that they abandoned the Qur'an.

s.359

Fabricated hadiths clearly show how people with a fanatical mindset are deprived of the blessing of happiness and humor and laughter, one of human beings' greatest needs.

s.361

What believers need to do at this time when great efforts are being made to spread and legitimize sadness is to usher in peace, together with joy.

s.364

All fanatics' negative claims concerning joy, laughter and humor are refuted by the Qur'an. Our Prophet (pbuh) and the Companions lived in a state of great happiness, in line with the spirit of the Qur'an.

s.369

There is folklore and folk dance all over the world. Dance is a form of entertainment that people feel the need for. A world in which music and dance are banned is incompatible with human nature.

s.379

The technological world and all forms of scientific progress that make life more comfortable for us are all copies of works of art in nature. God creates the originals in nature and technological copies of them as blessings for us.

s.389

In the religion of the peddlers of nonsense, women are despised and regarded as mindless, unimportant and devoid of character. These ideas, which have no place in the Qur'an, are portrayed as part of the faith through the fabricated hadiths in question.

s.393

If the prohibitions of the peddlers of nonsense regarding painting and sculpture were implemented in daily life, there would be no pictures, paintings or statues anywhere in the world, no advertising posters, court art or visual media.

BAN LIST

ART

MUSIC

NEWSPAPER

DANCE

PAINTING

SPORTS

SCULPTURE

BALLET

CINEMA

THEATRE

TECHNOLOGY

CARTOON

LOVE

BALE

ART

MUSIC

NEWSPAPER

PAINTING

TECHNOLOGY

LOVE

CINEMA

DANCE

THEATRE

SPORTS

CARTOON

SCULPTURE

s.399

Women must be attractive and well-groomed, and they must always behave in a classy manner. That is what quality means, and that leads to other people showing them respect.

s.407

The fanatical mindset that took away the beauty of women turned its attention on little boys, too. This mentality claims that young boys can be seductive and that their presence is therefore a potential crime and a danger.

Obviously, this is an extremely perverted view.

s.410

Those who seek to make a religion out of traditions consisting of nonsense do not generally regard themselves as worthy of beauty and generally act out of deeply-rooted feelings of inferiority. They do not regard attractive stylish clothing or fine homes and cars as befitting themselves or other Muslims.

s.412

People will be more influenced by an image of a peace-loving, high-quality Muslim rather than that other lifestyle dominated by squalor. When they see that, they will begin feeling love rather than fear. And that is what is compatible with the Qur'an.

s.422

God reveals in verses that He will never allow sincere Jews and Christians who devoutly believe in Him to know fear.

s.431

God makes a distinction for sincere Jews in verses and reveals that He will give them a great reward. How can anyone curse a Jewish community that God says He will reward and that He praises?

Jean-Leon Gerome's oil painting "Solomon's Wall, Jerusalem"

s.443

While God praises sincere Jews in the Qur'an, the fanatics believe in a so-called commandment that states they should be killed without question.

s.447

A belief system that maintains that the presence of a community mentioned and praised in the Qur'an and descended from the Prophet Moses (pbuh) causes food to spoil and meat to go bad can never be part of a Divine faith.

s.449

Arab lands are holy places where the three faiths co-existed and were protected by our Prophet (pbuh). It is obvious that our Prophet (pbuh) would never say that Jews and Christians, of whose existence God speaks and whom He praises, should be destroyed. Those fabricated hadiths are all slanders against our Prophet (pbuh).

s.453

If someone who regards himself as a Muslim shoots a Jew behind a tree on the grounds that "the tree told me to do it," on the basis of what the false hadiths say, the Jew who is killed may go to paradise, but unless that Muslim repents, he will be punished in the hereafter for having committed murder.

s.455

Muslim men can marry members of the People of the Book. Food prepared by them is lawful for Muslims, and food prepared by Muslims is lawful for them.

s.457

The fact that food prepared by Jews and Christians is lawful for Muslims is a guarantee that these people can be trusted. That same criterion also applies for Jews and Christians, and according to what the verse says, food prepared by Muslims is also lawful for them.

s.469

Based on the Qur'an, Muslims believe that all the Divine Books have been revealed by God. For Muslims, every commandment, practice and word confirmed by the Qur'an is a means of guidance.

s.479

Jews, as well as Christians and Muslims, will be present in the Holy Land, and together they will make peace and love reign in the region. That is what God wants from us and what we must strive for.

s.489

French biologist Louis Pasteur

s.490

Russian biologist Alexander Oparin

American chemist Stanley Miller

s.491

As accepted by renowned evolutionist sources, the topic about the origin of life poses the greatest predicament for the evolution theory.

s.493

The DNA in the nucleus of the living cell is a databank consisting of various sequences of four different nucleotide bases. The codes of all physical characteristics belonging to that living being are stored in that molecule. When human DNA is transcribed on paper it is assumed that it would make a library as large as 900 volumes of encyclopedias. Such an extraordinary amount of data completely renders the claims about coincidental formation invalid.

s.496

FALSE

Lamarck claimed that giraffes evolved from a species similar to antelopes and that their necks grew longer while they were trying to eat the leaves of high trees. However, this claim of Lamarck's is refuted by scientific findings and took its place in history as a false assumption.

s.498

antenna

eyes

mouth

legs

Evolutionists have been trying to form an example of useful mutation by subjecting flies to mutations since the beginning of the century. All they attained as a result of decades of studies are crippled, diseased and defective flies.

On the left: Head of a normal fruit fly

On the right: A mutated fruit fly

s.502

LIVING FOSSILS REFUTE EVOLUTION

Fossil records demonstrate that life forms came into existence instantaneously with all their physical characteristics and did not undergo the slightest change in time. Fish have always existed as fish, bugs have always existed as bugs, reptiles have always existed as reptiles. The claim asserting that species have evolved gradually has no scientific validity.

Sunfish

Period: Cenozoic era, Eocene epoch

Age: 54-37 million years

Sea Urchin

Period: Paleozoic Era, Carboniferous epoch

Age: 295 million years

Crane fly

Period: Cenozoic era, Eocene epoch

Age: 48-37 million years

s.506

FALSE

s.507

Evolutionist newspapers and magazines often print pictures of imaginary "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.

s.519

When we compare the eye and the ear with camera and sound recording systems, we see that our organs have much more complex and perfect structures than those mentioned technological devices.

s.521

A person looking out the window at scenery sees the image of the scenery inside his brain, not the one outside.

LIGHT

ELECTRICAL SIGNAL

The light reaching the human eye is turned into electrical signals by the cells in the eye and comes to the visual cortex behind the brain. A 'consciousness' inside our brains perceives these electrical signals reaching the brain as a scenery.

A SCENERY COMPRISED OF ELECTRICAL SIGNALS

s.522

The images in the brain are merely a collection of perceptions formed by electrical signals. No external world, no light or sound exists in the brain.

s.526

Today, the beliefs of Darwinists are as incomprehensible as the weird and unreasonable beliefs of those who worshiped alligators in the past. Darwinists ignorantly regard coincidences and inanimate, unconscious atoms as if they have creative powers. Moreover, they adhere to this superstitious belief as one would adhere to a religion.

ARKA KAPAK

This book you are holding is hugely important because it describes things you have never heard before about Islam and sets out the true reason for the radical terror currently plaguing the world.

This book explains why a terrorist will kill someone in the name of Islam, sets out why there are such intense efforts in the name of Islam to exclude women from the outside world and clarifies the toxic and dangerous ideological perspective that maintains the need for "enmity" toward almost every community in the name of Islam. And it reveals a most important truth; this toxic mindset does not belong to Islam at all. Islam lies in the Qur'an, not in superstitions, or in various fabricated hadiths or the consensus of scholars: The religion described in the Qur'an demands love, democracy, quality, joy and peace.

This fact, known to few people in the world, is set out in this book. It describes the false faith and sinister world of the fanatics from their own source materials, while defining the true Islam with explicit evidence from the Qur'an. The book is an excellent resource for anyone seeking a solution to radical terror, hostility to democracy, the lack of quality and the seemingly interminable rage we see in so many corners of the world in the name of Islam. The only solution to a damaging concept of religion based on superstition is to eliminate that superstition through the truth. The solution lies in this book.

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 God's existence and unity and the Hereafter; and to expose irreligious systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies. His more than 300 works, translated into 73 different languages, enjoy a wide readership across the world.

By the will of God, 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. The seal on the cover of the books is the Prophet's (pbuh) seal. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (the last of the prophets). The author uses this seal as a symbol of taking the Qur'an and the peaceful and loving morality of the Prophet as his guide.