

FEAR OF ALLAH

**You who believe! Fear Allah and let each self
look to what it has sent forward for Tomorrow.
Fear Allah. Allah is aware of what you do.
(Surat al-Hashr: 18)**

HARUN YAHYA

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TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation—and therefore, Allah's Existence—over the last 140 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 chance to read only one of our book, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

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

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

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

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

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

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INTRODUCTION

At this point, you are not alone in the room where you are reading this book. Even at times when you think you are alone you have never really been alone. Allah's appointed angels are constantly monitoring and inscribing everything that you do. The moment you say a word they write it down. Your every step, every thought, everything that you do, including obligations which have been postponed, are all recorded without omission.

These angels do not discriminate between minor or major actions. Even when you are asleep they are constantly with you. They fulfil their obligations without error. They are never forgetful or erroneous, they carry out their task faultlessly. By the same token, your appointed angels of death are also waiting. What are they waiting for? For your predestined time to be fulfilled. When your appointed time of death reaches you, it is they who will take delivery of your soul.

As well as these, there are other witnesses which we have not yet mentioned, the ones you do not think about, these are your secret witnesses; your hands and skin. On the Day of Judgment, all these witnesses will congregate, and with Allah's permission they will speak and give their testimony about you. If you happen to be one of those who did not fear Allah, or if you were not a cautious person they will, testify against you.

Humanity has been created to worship Allah and is constantly being tested. A person's temporal existence on average is about sixty years, it is not much time before one is eventually brought before Allah to give account for every second of one's life. When everyone learns of what they have earned on Earth through the evidence provided by these witnesses, Allah will then decide on the kind of eternal life appropriate for them. If a person possesses good deeds he will be given his Book in his right hand and that person will be eternally saved. However, if he is among those whose Books are given in their left hands, he will then say:

... If only I had not been given my Book and had not known about my Reckoning! If only death had really been the end! My wealth has been of no use to me. My power has vanished. (Surat al-Haqqa: 25-29)

From here on he will be apprehended, dragged facedown and taken to Hell, never to be released.

The reason behind this terrible end, is that people never imagined that their every action would be recorded and would one day be revealed and accounted for, hence they passed their lives carelessly without fearing Allah or His warnings. A person such as this who does not possess a definite form of belief in the Hereafter, in the Day of Judgment or in a terrorizing place of punishment for wrong actions and careless behavior, like Hell, will not mind ignoring Allah's boundaries.

This is why fear of Allah is a very strong indicator of faith in Allah and an important indicator of what to expect in the eternal Hereafter. The only way to safety is founded upon fearful awareness of Allah and scrupulous caution.

The Day of Judgment is a fearsome reality to be reflected upon with awe so that it becomes impossible to remain unaffected by it. However, this fear is only applicable to people of faith and is a particular type of fear because Allah has described what will happen on the Day of Judgment in numerous Qur'anic verses; the scribes, witnesses and the enormous congregation of people. This is an absolute certainty, which is unconditionally accepted by true believers who are fearful of facing such a terrifying ordeal.

Everything you do is immediately recorded, even as you are reading this book. You are fast approaching the day when you will be called by Allah to account for your actions. So we hope to be amongst those who have earned Allah's pleasure through fearful awareness of Him:

... Take provision; but the best provision is *taqwa* of Allah. So have *taqwa* of Me, people of intelligence! (Surat al-Baqara: 197)

(*Taqwa* means consciousness, awe or fear of Allah, which inspires a person to be on guard against wrong action and eager for actions which please Him. In this book, it will be translated as "fearing Allah" or "guarding against evil" or "righteousness" according to the context.)

ALLAH COMMANDS IN THE QUR'AN THAT HE BE FEARED

Fearing Allah is not, as assumed by some people, an exclusive trait of prophets and those who are especially near to Him but rather it is a feeling carried within the hearts of all believers, and a feeling that should be held by all humanity. Allah's command in the Qur'an is clear:

You who believe! Fear Allah and let each self look to what it has sent forward for tomorrow. Fear Allah. Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat al-Hashr: 18)

Our Prophet (saws) also called attention to this issue in many of his sayings, reminding the believers always to fear Allah:

"Fear Allah wherever you are; if you follow an evil deed with a good one you will obliterate it; and deal with people with a good disposition." (Tirmidhi)

Allah has created all humanity and is extremely well acquainted with them and knows them better than they know themselves. He knows what everybody keeps secret even within the most secret of secret recesses of their beings. He is very well aware of the types of misgivings the soul experiences and types of games that will be played out by the self because He is the creator of every soul and has given it boundless ability to do evil, and inspiration to avoid such evil so that it may be justly tried. Allah has also created Satan as part of this test and has granted him a set of specific qualities to be used in the pursuit of his objective.

It is for this reason that a believer's greatest support in life's trial is fear of Allah because this will enable a person to behave as Allah requires, to work towards pleasing Allah, to protect oneself from the temptations of Satan and the lower self with awareness of and resistance to their stratagems and games. Such a disposition does not suit Satan's attempts to manipulate the limitless desires of a person's lower self.

It is for this reason that a person's lower self, with Satan's encouragement, will before all else try to distance him from fearing Allah. They will want to introduce distractions which turn people away from fearing Allah and caution with respect to Him by suggesting that this is unnecessary or even incorrect and that love of Allah and possessing a pure heart is what really matters. However, a conscientious reciter of the Qur'an will see with ease that suggestions such as these have no realistic basis, and that they contain a totally deviant and deceptive objective, because Allah has commanded believers to fear him in the Qur'an in the clearest form possible. This command is found in numerous Qur'anic verses:

... Fear Allah and know that Allah is fierce in retribution. (Surat al-Baqara: 196)

... So fear Allah. And know that you will be gathered back to Him. (Surat al-Baqara: 203)

... Fear Allah and know that Allah has knowledge of all things. (Surat al-Baqara: 231)

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

You who believe! Fear Allah and seek the means of drawing near to Him, and strive in His Way, so that hopefully you will be successful. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 35)

As in the case regarding every other subject a believer will unreservedly and unconditionally strive to fulfil this command of Allah. Unlike those who are unaware of the Qur'an and who question the necessity or relevance of fearing Allah, they are not misled by the suggestions and promptings of Satan which give rise to confusing anxieties as to why a person who loves Allah should fear him. While the daily prayers and fasting are obligatory practices to be fulfilled in the best possible manner, fear of Allah is an essential spiritual state which the believer must strive with sincerity to engender within himself. Together with this, Allah has revealed in detail in the Qur'an the divine wisdom as to why man should fear Him. We will examine this subject in detail in the following chapters.

FEARING ALLAH AS DESCRIBED IN THE QUR'AN

You who believe! Fear Allah the way He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims.(Surah Al 'Imran: 102)

The verse **“fear Allah the way He should be feared”** proclaims a subject which has been treated in the Qur'an in the most open and detailed manner. What form of fear, what level of spiritual state, and the severity of the injunction have all been individually expounded in Allah's verses. Without doubt, it is one of the most important objectives of Qur'anic revelation:

This is a communication to be transmitted to mankind so that they may be warned by it and so that they will know that He is One God and so that people of intelligence will pay heed. (Surah Ibrahim: 52)

Now we will see how Allah should be feared through the verses of the Qur'an.

To fear Allah to the best of one's ability

So fear Allah, as much as you are able to, and listen and obey... (Surat at-Taghabun: 16)

In the Qur'an, Allah has explained in detail to humankind His eternal might, exalted rank and superiority, as well as the severe punishment He has prepared for those who have rebelled against Him. With this in mind one is expected to reflect profoundly on these realities with sincerity, and both one's intentions and actions should reflect an informed attitude towards them. This must be attempted actively, as indicated in the Qur'anic verse, to the best of one's ability. That is to say, one must appreciate Allah's might to the best of one's ability, and be mindful of His warnings of eternal punishment in Hell. In this way; fear of Allah will become a natural reality in one's heart. Similarly, a believer should, to the best of his ability, be fearful and cautious about not fulfilling obligatory worship as described in the Qur'an, as well as committing unlawful acts, because the things to be fearful and cautious about have also been explained in detail in the Qur'an:

In this way We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an and explained therein in detail some of the warnings so that hopefully they will guard against evil or it will spur them into remembrance. (Surah Ta Ha: 113)

Here is another very important point to be clarified: fear of Allah is not a feeling which can only be achieved by going through numerous and difficult spiritual stations. On the contrary, it is a deepfelt sensation inevitably felt by anyone who reflects with an open mind. A person wishing to possess a true fear of Allah could achieve this through one sincere act of reflection. That is to say, a person who reflects even for a second about death and the consequences to be faced after death can develop this combined sense of fear, awe and respect. This is entirely dependant on the person's insight and their capacity for sincerity.

Fearing Allah in the Unseen

To avoid confusion with other earthly fears, Allah has also described in the Qur'an the emotions and state of spirituality of a believer who fears Allah. A believer's fear of Allah is a fear that does not resemble any other fear; this fear is extremely deep and full of awe. This type of fear is unlike other fears and is not intended to give rise to pain and discomfort. Quite the opposite, it reminds people of their humility and servitude to Allah and opens and broadens the awareness and the intellect. This fear enables a person to attain a very high level of upright conduct.

This fear will increase a believer's ardent desire for the Hereafter and incite hope and eagerness. Fear of Allah also increases many times over a believer's closeness to and love of Allah; it is an essential feeling which allows the experience of great spiritual pleasures. The Qur'an makes mention in many verses of the deep awe that believers possess:

Those who fear their Lord in the Unseen will have forgiveness and an immense reward. (Surat al-Mulk: 12)

[People of intelligence are] ...afraid of their Lord and fear an evil Reckoning. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 21)

[The Garden is for] those who fear the All-Merciful in the Unseen and come with a contrite heart. (Surah Qaf: 33)

[Prophets are] those who convey Allah's Message and fear Him and do not anyone but Allah. Allah suffices as a Reckoner. (Surat al-Ahzab: 39)

Feeling hope with fear

Although a believer fears Allah, he should never forget Allah's compassion, mercy and forgiveness, or that He is the One Who due to His generosity accepts repentance. This will in turn be the reason for possessing a sincere sense of hope, whilst experiencing genuine fear. A deep fear of Allah will give rise to a profound level of reflection on these attributes of Allah, enabling Allah's superiority and greatness to be even more keenly

appreciated, resulting in a greater closeness to Allah. One will acquire a greater perception of Allah's mercy, His grace and His immense forgivingness.

Therefore, a true believer will turn and supplicate to Allah in a spiritual state full of fear and hope:

Their sides eschew their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. And they give of what We have provided for them. (Surat as-Sajda: 16)

This is an indication that fear of Allah has never been a feeling to cause hopelessness and pessimism. In many verses of the Qur'an it is declared that a Muslim should be in a constant state of hopefulness:

Call on Him fearfully and eagerly. Allah's mercy is close to the good-doers. (Surat al-A'raf: 56)

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

On the other hand, hopelessness is a characteristic of disbelievers, which is also indicated in various Qur'anic verses:

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

You who believe! Do not make friends of people with whom Allah is angry, who have despaired of the Hereafter as the disbelievers have despaired of the inhabitants of the graves. (Surat al-Mumtahana: 13)

WHY DO BELIEVERS FEAR ALLAH?

To understand why believers fear Allah, it is very important to understand that fear of Allah is a feeling which incites a believer's faith, eagerness, love and respect for Allah. This fear guards a person against adopting attitudes which Allah does not approve, curbs the overflowing desires of the self and reigns in boundless evils. When experienced from a positive perspective, this fear gives constant rise to good actions and attitudes.

This fear distances the believer from Allah's punishment, and draws him towards Allah's pleasure and mercy, which results in great spiritual satisfaction. It inspires in a believer the need to respect Allah's boundaries, gives him an uncompromising determination in seeking Allah's approval and a constant vigilance. Subsequently, the fear of a believer in this world will save him from the fear of the Last Day and the eternal fear and terror of Hell. A Qur'anic verse declares:

Those who give away their wealth by night and day, secretly and openly, will have their reward with their Lord. They will have their reward with their Lord. They will feel no fear and will know no sorrow. (Surat al-Baqara: 274)

Believers who fear Allah's warnings and punishment and who adhere with absolute vigilance to His order and judgment will possess a superior morality, which Allah approves of: modesty, tolerance, thoughtfulness, devotion, a pure intellect and a deep awareness of the surpassing excellence of Allah's creation. Such people will display exemplary conduct and possess a high awareness and great sensibility. In essence, fear of Allah spiritually enriches the believer. It increases their inner sight, and engenders a noble spiritual state enhanced by subtle intimations of divine wisdom; it is the key to eternal reward and happiness.

They fear Allah's exalted rank

A believer who has an awareness of Allah as described in the Qur'an and who sincerely reflects on His attributes will immediately begin to experience that inner awe that is due to Allah's exalted rank and superiority. Allah's majesty, vastness and infinite power will create within the believer a fear full of absolute awe and amazement.

This fear is a natural fear, which grows in the heart of a believer who is conscious of Allah's high and exalted rank. The levels of this fear will increase in proportion to the depth of a person's faith and capacity for reflection. This kind of fear is referred to in the Qur'an as *hashyat* (to fear with awe).

Allah is the possessor of infinite strength, infinite knowledge and possesses infinite wisdom. He does what He wills when He wills. He will not be questioned about what He does, but He will question people about what they have done. Our Lord is rich beyond

need of any being. However, all of creation is dependent on Him. Everybody and everything is created from nothing and it is Allah Who ensures their existence. He is the owner of everything and everybody. If He willed to do so, He could exterminate everyone and replace them with other creatures. He never forgets anything. If Allah wishes for something to be, He merely says, “be” and it will be. Nothing can ever tire Him. For an intelligent person to adopt an attitude of indifference toward Allah for even a moment would be out of the question, let alone taking up a rebellious stance against Him Whose superiority is infinite.

A person who recognizes Allah as described in the Qur’an and who appreciates His strength will be overwhelmed with awe at His vastness and adopt the attitude of humility and caution that is due to Him. A believer who knows Allah’s greatness, majesty and strength is also aware of His other attributes such as “The Avenger” “The Compeller” “The Punisher” and “The Degrader.” He will also know that any attitude or speech which is contrary to His commands will not be without response from Him. The believer will act in the knowledge that Allah is at all times aware of everything, that He is all surrounding and all encompassing, and that He is closer to him than his jugular vein.

As a result of the believer’s sincerity, Allah will reward him by His infinite Mercy with affirmation in this world, and in the Hereafter with Paradise:

For those who fear the Station of their Lord there are two Gardens. (Surat ar-Rahman: 46)

Most certainly, to appreciate Allah as is due, it is necessary to possess a very good understanding of His Qur’anic signs (verses) as well as being able to recognize His signs in the physical world. From the tiniest atom or cell to the greatest stars or galaxies, possessing detailed knowledge in relation to Allah’s creation increases a person’s fear of Him. By being aware of these things one gains an even greater appreciation of Allah’s infinite wisdom, power and knowledge as manifested in the intricacies of the countless things He has brought into existence, and one is also better able to grasp the utter uniqueness of His power to create. This in turn would serve as a means of increasing many times over the fear of Allah. Thus, Allah reveals this secret in the Qur’an:

... Only those of His servants with knowledge have fear of Allah. Allah is Almighty, Ever-Forgiving. (Surah Fatir: 28)

They fear Allah’s warnings

In another verse Allah advises the believers to fear His warnings as they would fear His exalted rank:

**... That is the reward of those who fear My station and fear My threat.
(Surah Ibrahim: 14)**

Allah has promised to those who do not believe in and obey Him, who never pay regard to what is pleasing to Him and who do not recognize His commands and prohibitions, an endless, spiritual and physical punishment. A true believer knows that no one in this world is safe from Allah's punishment. It is because of this that he is fearful of being subjected to the intolerable and infinite punishment of Hell, which Allah has promised to those who repudiate belief. The spiritual state of the true believers is described in the Qur'an in the following manner:

**[Believers are] those who affirm the Day of Judgment. Those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord. No one is safe from the punishment of his Lord.
(Surat al-Ma'arij: 26-28)**

The souls of those believers who truly fear Allah tremble on hearing recited those verses of Qur'an which refer to the Fire. On the other hand, those who refuse to believe cannot properly comprehend the meanings of the Book of Allah, even if they do read it. Therefore, only true believers will perceive in these Qur'anic verses Allah's warning to them of the torments of Hell. The only people who will pay heed to the Qur'an, fearing Allah's punishment and act cautiously, are the true believers. As a result, they model themselves not on other people, but rather, on those God-fearing believers who are praised in the Qur'an, and the prophets.

These people do not grow arrogant or over confident, thinking to themselves, "these verses cannot possibly apply to me, since I am a believer." On the contrary, as a result of their faith, they will constantly hope for redemption and Allah's mercy, as emphasized in the following verse:

... they call on their Lord in fear and ardent hope. (Surat as-Sajda: 16)

About this issue, Prophet Muhammad (saws) said:

"When the heart of a believer is filled with these two feelings of hope and fear, Almighty Allah fulfils his hope and saves him from what he fears." (Ibn Majah)

In order to protect people from Hell, Allah's numerous warnings and reminders are to be found in the Qur'an. In the hope that the rejectors may become fearful and become cautious in their behavior, they have been warned with the punishments they will face in the Hereafter. This is emphasized in the Qur'an:

... “The real losers are those who lose themselves and their families on the Day of Rising.” Is not that clear loss? They will have awnings of Fire above them and awnings below them. By that Allah strikes fear into His servants: “O My servants, fear Me!” (Surat az-Zumar: 15-16)

The reality is that Allah has warned people, either through His verses or by the mediation of His prophets or even through particular incidents which occur as warning experiences. He will invite them and frighten them with His punishment. **“... We frighten them, but it only increases them in their excessive insolence.”** (Surat al-Isra’: 60) The verse clearly shows that for those who persistently reject faith, Allah’s warnings are of no benefit, rather they encourage them to greater outrageousness. When the time comes, the punishment they have denied will manifest as certain truth. Allah declares in one of His verses:

Woe to you, and woe! Then woe to you, and woe! Does man reckon he will be left to go on unchecked? (Surat al-Qiyama: 34-36)

Those who distanced themselves from fear of Allah during their time on Earth and denied Allah’s punishment, will be given their records in their left hand after they are called to account, at which time they will be judged accordingly and will be sentenced to infinite punishment and driven to Hell in groups. They will be in a state of total psychological collapse as they are dragged to the gates of Hell. Allah describes the moment in His verses in the following manner:

Those who do not believe will be driven to Hell in companies and when they arrive there and its gates are opened its custodians will say to them, “Did Messengers from yourselves not come to you, reciting your Lord’s Signs to you and warning you of the meeting on this Day of yours?” They will say, “Indeed they did, but the decree of punishment is justly carried out against the disbelievers.” They will be told, “Enter the gates of Hell and stay there timelessly, for ever. How evil is the abode of the arrogant!” (Surat az-Zumar: 71-72)

In this manner, they will enter through the gates of Hell to remain there forever. The gates of Hell will be drawn closed and locked. There will be no possibility of escape, and their bodies and souls will be subjected to infinite, unbearable pain. However, none of the punishments they will be subjected to will kill them. After each exposure to the Fire their scorched flesh will be renewed and the punishment will continue. They will long for the punishment to come to an end, but they will receive the following answer:

They will call out [to the custodian of the Hell], “Malik, let your Lord put an end to us!” He will say, “You will stay the way you are.” (Surat az-Zukhruf: 77)

The punishment of Hell is of different types, each one of which is beyond human powers of imagination. The deviators will be firewood for Hellfire, they will be tormented by it. Their faces will be rolled over in the Fire, with hands tied they will be thrown into a narrow space in the fire where they will be boiled and branded. Whilst in this state they will be scourged with cudgels made of iron, they will wear shirts of tar and will sleep on beds of fire covered with fire. They will eat bitter thorny bush and poisonous zaqqum and will drink blood and scalding pus. The boiling water they will be made to drink will lacerate their bowels, the Fire will sear their faces, their lips will be drawn back from their teeth, and they will sigh and gasp. All these are just one perspective on the physical punishments of Hell.

The people of Hell will also be subjected to the psychological equivalent of the pain they suffer physically. Simultaneously they will feel helplessness, hopelessness and remorse, and they will be subjected to degradation, disgrace, abasement, humiliation, anger, rage and quarrel. At the same time, the punishments inflicted upon them will devour, and destroy them.

Under this multiple onslaught of pain and suffering, each one of them will be alone as enemies one to another. They will constantly curse one another. Their insane screaming, bawling, begging, moaning and groaning will merge into a deafening howl.

It would be easy to imagine that those subjected to this punishment are creatures of another kind. However, this is not so, they are people who once inhabited the Earth who you may have seen walking along the street, some of whom you may recognize and know personally. Nothing has changed except that at a time they least expected, the angels of death have taken their souls and they have found themselves answering and paying for the sins they have committed. Amongst Allah’s creatures, it is only the true believers who are aware of Allah’s great warning and whose condition is one of fear and hope:

[The servants of the All-Merciful are] those who say, “Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of Hell, its punishment is inescapable pain.” (Surat al-Furqan: 65)

They fear losing Allah’s approval and love

The true believer who possesses an intimate and profound love of Allah knows very well that the most important nourishment for this love is again an intimate, profound fear which is full of respect. True believers, who have tasted the indescribable spiritual pleasures of loving Allah, are very afraid of committing any offence or error that might endanger that love or, worse still, arouse the displeasure or enmity of their Most Beloved, Allah.

Fear of Allah is inextricably linked to love of Allah. Love of Allah can only be achieved with nearness to Allah, which becomes a reality when one develops an intimate and sincere attachment to Him. However, nearness to Allah is not possible without His love and approval, and this is gained by protecting His boundaries and fulfilling His commands. This however, is not a position that can be arrived at without first establishing fear of Allah, because the soul of a person who does not fear Allah will constantly be drawn towards doing things which Allah does not approve of and being neglectful and indifferent towards those things which Allah desires of us. It is for this reason that the only way to gain Allah's approval is through fear of Him.

This order of things is established by Allah. Hence, to imagine that one will earn His love and approval before one has acquired fear of Him is a sign of great self-deception. Before all else, Allah has ordered people to fear Him. To overlook this imperative and to say that one only needs to love Allah makes no sense. People who assert that they love Allah whilst they remain indifferent to what may be displeasing to Him are, in reality, deceiving themselves in their attempts to ease their own consciences. The love of Allah they refer to is a figment of their imagination and is superficial in nature. People who truly love Allah are extremely meticulous and decisive when it comes to the matter of adhering to His commands and prohibitions. Arguing that fear of Allah is unnecessary is in fact no different from saying, "there is no need for fasting, prayer and worship." Such people resort to a variety of excuses not only on the matter of fearing Allah but also in order avoid fulfilling many of Allah's other commands.

They know that Allah could respond even on Earth

The Qur'an is full of references to Allah punishing some people as a result of the sins they have committed on Earth. Despite Allah's providing them with ample opportunities to avoid it, those who have persisted in their denial of belief have suffered the consequences of Allah's response whilst still on Earth for what they have done and have remained as prime examples for other people.

A prime example of this is the story of Qarun, who was given great wealth by Allah. As a result of this vast wealth he became arrogant and developed an exaggerated sense of his own self-importance. People were initially convinced of Qarun's great power and were in total admiration of him, however, later on, when he met his demise as a result of his fierce pride, they finally understood the truth. In a totally unexpected and unprecedented manner, Qarun was destroyed as a direct result of his rebelliousness, and made a clear object lesson for all mankind to learn:

He went out among his people in his finery. Those who desired the life of this world said, "Oh! If only we had the same as Qarun has been given! What immense good fortune he possesses." (Surat al-Qasas: 79)

We caused the Earth to swallow up both him and his house. There was no group to come to his aid, besides Allah, and he was not someone who is helped. Those who had longed to take his place the day before woke up saying “Allah expands the provision of any of His servants He wills or restricts it. If Allah had not shown great kindness to us, we would have been swallowed up as well. Ah! Truly the unbelievers are nor successful.” (Surat al-Qasas: 81-82)

The story of Qarun and other accounts in the Qur'an of many a magnificent and powerful community that have been unable to protect themselves from Allah's punishment draw particular attention to the fact that Allah has punished them here on Earth. This reality is explained in many Qur'anic verses:

Have they not travelled in the Earth and seen the final fate of those before them? They had greater strength than them and cultivated the land and inhabited it in far greater numbers than they do... (Surat ar-Rum: 9)

... Did he not know that before him Allah had destroyed generations with far greater strength than his and far more possessions?... (Surat al-Qasas: 78)

How many generations We have destroyed before them who had finer furnishings and a better outward show! (Surah Maryam: 74)

The thing that distinguishes a true believer from other people is their consciousness of all these issues, they fear Allah with inner awe and behave cautiously. When they make a mistake or even commit a wrong action, they are aware that Allah could respond immediately and so they turn to Him in a state of remorse and repentance, begging Him for forgiveness.

A true believer is very fearful of Allah but at the same time puts his trust in Allah's infinite mercy. This sensibility comes purely as a result of reflecting on the Hereafter.

In the Qur'an Allah makes mention of those people who have quite the opposite attitude. Even though the coming punishment is plain to see, they fail to connect it to the reality of their own predicament and persist in their wrongful conduct. Their situation is described in the Qur'an as follows:

When they saw it as a storm cloud advancing on their valleys they said, “This is a storm cloud which will give us rain.” No, rather it is what you desired to hasten—a wind containing painful punishment, destroying everything at its Lord's command! When morning came you could see nothing but their

dwellings. That is how We repay the people of the evildoers. (Surat al-Ahqaf: 24-25)

In conclusion when we look at the Qur'an we see that bad deeds, as long as the one who commits them doesn't repent and cease immediately as is due to Allah's exalted justice, do not go unpunished. However, this punishment sometimes reaches people here on Earth, and sometimes is revealed on the Day of Reckoning. Those who show ingratitude and persist in what they do, are never safe from the punishment that Allah is able to inflict upon them within an instant. This reality is described as follows in the Qur'an:

Do you feel secure against Him causing the shore to swallow you up or sending against you a sudden squall of stones? Then you will find no one to be your guardian. Or do you feel secure against Him taking you back into it another time and sending a violent storm against you and drowning you for your ingratitude? Then you will find no one to defend you against Us. (Surat al-Isra': 68-69)

Prophet Muhammad (saws) expresses Allah's exalted justice as follows:

"By Him in Whose hand my soul is, you must enjoin what is reputable and forbid what is disreputable, or Allah will certainly soon send punishment from Himself to you. Then you will make supplication and not receive an answer."
(Tirmidhi)

People cannot live their entire lives irresponsibly, because they are accountable to Allah. To go against this would be to incur the severity of Allah's punishment. To persist consciously with such behavior is clear evidence of failure to appreciate the totality of Allah's power. If Allah willed, He could at any moment withdraw all of the blessings He has bestowed upon mankind. This is referred to in the Qur'anic verses cited below:

If We wished, We could put out their eyes. Then, though they might race for the path, how would they see?

If We wished, We could transform them where they stand so they would neither be able to go out nor return. (Surah Ya Sin: 66-67)

The reality is that everything a person owns, every breath he takes, every second of his life he owes to Allah, and because true believers are aware of these realities they are constantly mindful of exceeding Allah's limits.

They fear being caught ill-prepared for death

Death is a reality. On average, a person will remain on Earth for approximately sixty years following which the eternal life commences. This eternal life will be lived either in the Garden (Paradise) endowed with endless blessings, or in the Fire (Hell), which has been created

especially to inflict pain on body and soul. Whenever Allah wills, He can end a person's life on Earth and move him to the Hereafter and there is no doubt that this decision can become a reality within a blink of an eye.

A person can never know when he will die, the time his trial will end or the moment of his final judgment. As a result he should be quite fearful and cautious about being caught out unprepared when that moment arrives, being unable to account for his actions and being burdened with obligations that he has either neglected or postponed and not taken seriously. When the angels of death arrive there is no further possibility to complete unfinished obligations or to compensate for work that should have been completed. The deeds done up to that moment will either be to one's profit or loss and one will be called to account and held responsible for them or rewarded for them, as the case may be.

Death is a reality from which there is no return. Every person is allowed to **“live long enough for anyone who was going to pay heed to pay heed”** (Surah Fatir: 37). When the appointed time of death arrives, no matter how much a person begs and pleads he will not be given another chance. No additional time will be granted him to fulfil the responsibilities towards Allah that he had not fulfilled up to that time. To prevent true believers from becoming heedless and negligent Allah has cautioned them:

Give from what We have provided for you before death comes to one of you and he says, “My Lord, if only you would give me a little more time so that I can give charity and be one of the righteous!” Allah will not give anyone more time, once their time has come. Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat al-Munafiqun: 10-11)

People should never be satisfied with themselves and what they have done insofar as they remain conscious of death becoming a reality at any moment and being caught ill-prepared for an end that has no return. One should spend every moment striving to protect Allah's limits.

They fear the Day of Judgment

The fear of Allah and the Day of Judgment nurtured by those possessing faith is described in the following Qur'anic verse:

Those who fear their Lord in the Unseen and are apprehensive about the Hour. (Surat al-Anbiya': 49)

In addition, in another Qur'anic verse Allah makes mention of the inner fear of the believers:

In houses which Allah has permitted to be built and in which His name is remembered, there are men who proclaim His glory morning and evening, not

distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the performance of prayer and the giving of alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Surat an-Nur: 36-37)

For both the people who have remained far removed from fearing Allah throughout their lives, and those who believed and have behaved cautiously, their earthly actions will be shown to them one by one. Furthermore, without omitting even the slightest detail, on that day those who have lived an irresponsible life without fearing Allah and without acting cautiously will understand what they are destined for:

That Day people will emerge segregated to see the results of their actions. Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. Whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it. (Surat az-Zilzal: 6-8)

As a result of their fear and remorse, they will want to die and cease to exist. Their ruinous existence is described in the following verses of Qur'an:

But as for him who is given his Book in his left hand, he will say, "If only I had not been given my Book and had not known about my Reckoning! If only death had really been the end! My wealth has been of no use to me. My power has vanished." (Surat al-Haqqa: 25-29)

But as for him who is given his Book behind his back, he will cry out for destruction but will be roasted in a Searing Blaze. He used to be joyful in his family. He thought that he was never going to return. But in fact his Lord was always watching him! (Surat al-Inshiqaq: 10-15)

Following this, the deeds contained in the individual records will be weighed on sensitive scales, which Allah has prepared for the Day of Judgment. Not an atom's weight of injustice will be done. If one is not amongst the cautious, one's scales will be light and one will be apprehended, chained and sent to the place one deserves. Not only will nobody help each other, one will not even be able to help oneself. The pain of one's helplessness will engulf one's entire being:

But as for him whose balance is light, his motherland is Hawiya. And what will convey to you what that is? A raging Fire! (Surat al-Qari'a: 8-11)

On that day, people who lead their lives on Earth without fear of Allah will have all their sins laid before them one at a time. Not only the deeds committed but also all the evil deeds that they may have intended. When that time comes they will not be able to do

anything about the remorse they will experience Even their attempts at denial will fail since their hearing, sight and skin will begin to speak in evidence against them as decreed by Allah:

It may be that those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims. (Surat al-Hijr: 2)

The fear that true believers feel ensures that they continue to behave cautiously and conscientiously, being fully aware that Allah's verse will be manifested on that day. It is for this reason that so long as one remains on the Earth one must be wary of involvement in anything that one cannot give an acceptable account for. In fact, it is inconceivable that a person possessing a sound intellect could act contrary to this. Allah's knowledge is everywhere and envelops and penetrates everything. He is closer to a person than his own jugular vein, whilst specially assigned angels record everything without missing the slightest detail. For a person to be preoccupied with the worthless and transitional affairs of this world at the expense of forgetting the Day of Judgment is the greatest heedlessness possible.

From the moment we open our eyes in the morning it means that Allah has created a new day and another chance for us. We should be mindful of the moment when we will be accountable to Allah, and start the day with sincere intentions. Our intention however, should be to distance ourselves from behavior and actions which Allah does not approve of. No one would like to find himself amongst those who when the moment arrives will be apprehended and sent to an endless punishment crying, "If only..." and "How I wish...."

Mankind! Fear your Lord and fear a day when no father will be able to atone for his son, or son for his father, in any way. Allah's promise is true. So do not let the life of this world delude you and do not let the Deluder delude you concerning Allah. (Surah Luqman: 33)

WHAT KIND OF MORAL VALUES DOES A PERSON WHO FEARS ALLAH POSSESS?

Children of Adam! We have sent down clothing to you to conceal your private parts, and fine apparel, but the clothing of righteousness —that is best! That is one of Allah’s Signs, so that hopefully you will pay heed. (Surat al-A’raf: 26)

In numerous verses of the Qur’an many examples have been provided of the attitudes and behavior of true believers who fear Allah. In the light of these examples the basic moral values possessed by those who fear Allah will be examined below.

They only fear Allah

In accordance with the verse “... **you should not fear them but rather fear Me—and so that I can complete My blessing to you so that hopefully you will be guided**” (Surat al-Baqara: 150), the true believer does not fear anyone or any community other than Allah. He will know that benefit and loss, good and bad can only come from Allah, that all the incidents he will encounter are only the will and creation of Allah in accordance with the fate predetermined for him by Allah.

This particular quality could be seen in all of the prophets who while communicating Allah’s religion were on most occasions opposed by entire nations but made not even the slightest concession. Allah mentions this quality in the verse cited below:

[Prophets are] those who convey Allah’s Message and fear Him and do not anyone but Allah. Allah suffices as a Reckoner. (Surat al-Ahzab: 39)

A person who has faith in Allah will take on and implement for himself the superior example of the prophets.

They strive to please Allah alone

A true believer lives his life in the knowledge that Allah is the judge of everything; that He is the sole owner of power and strength, and everything comes into existence by His will. For this reason true believers will know that to seek the approval of created beings who, in reality, do not possess power or strength, is of no use whatsoever. To fear Allah and seek His approval in this world will provide protection from the terrifying punishment of the Hereafter:

Is someone who pursues the pleasure of Allah the same as someone who incurs displeasure from Allah and whose refuge is Hell? What an evil destination! (Surah Al 'Imran: 162)

A time will arrive when every deed, big and small, will be revealed and when a person's hands and skin will testify against him. A true believer lives his life according to this reality and will absolutely never compromise under any circumstances.

The attitude of the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) (as) is a very good example. The Prophet Yusuf (as) was able to preserve his chastity against a powerful woman who desired him. Despite all her threats and intrigues, he preferred to go to prison rather than overstep Allah's boundaries. Allah informs us of Yusuf's (as) superior strength of character in the Qur'an:

She [the governor's wife] said, "You see! It's him you blamed me for. I tried seducing him but he refused. If he does not do what I order him, he will be put in prison and brought low." He [Yusuf] said, "My Lord, the prison is preferable to me than what they call on me to do. Unless You turn their guile away from me, it may well be that I will fall for them and so become a man of ignorance." (Surah Yusuf: 32-33)

They always act conscientiously

A person who is a servant of Allah will not put his own needs and desires above the expectations of his Lord. He knows that if he does so despite knowing the truth, he may incur Allah's punishment on Earth and in the Hereafter. As long as he remains fearfully aware of this danger, he will be safe from displaying the kind of attitude that would bring him within the range of the verses cited below:

However, those who do wrong pursue their whims and desires without any knowledge. Who can guide those whom Allah has led astray? They will have no helpers. (Surat ar-Rum: 29)

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

They emulate all the good qualities described in the Qur'an

A person who fears Allah will display those attitudes that relate to good character such as loyalty, faithfulness, righteousness, honesty and sincerity. The Qur'an makes

frequent mention of true believers who exhibit superior character traits. They are models of humanity that all believers should all strive to emulate. However, as long as someone has no fear of Allah, they can never truly appreciate these characteristics because the moment they meet with a conflict of interest they will inevitably sink to the level of their own immediate advantage, instead of rising to the best of conduct as described in the Qur'an. They are simply unable to experience the kind of anxiety over displeasing Allah, or being accountable to Him, or entering Hell and facing the consequences of their bad behavior, that would enable them to behave better.

They observe Allah's limits even if no one is looking

Someone who is profoundly aware of Allah will again be fearfully cautious about doing anything that would displease Him, whether anyone else is present or not, because they are aware that any wrongdoing they commit Allah will know of it, whether it is done openly or in secret. Allah knows both the open and the hidden, and even the most secret of secrets and will be revealed and accounted for. Those who are fearfully aware of Allah know that He will present them with situations intended to test the sincerity of their caution. In one of His verses, Allah directs the true believers to:

Abandon wrong action, outward and inward. Those who commit wrong action will be repaid for what they perpetrated. (Surat al-An'am: 120)

In every situation they turn to Allah

True believers who are fearfully aware of Allah are extremely sensitive when it comes to receiving a response from Him. When any negative incident happens to them or when they feel their work is going badly, or when they are experiencing distress, they will immediately examine themselves as to whether or not they have done anything to displease Allah. Through their supplications they will seek and beg forgiveness from Him. The combination of their longing to gain Allah's approval with the fear they feel at the prospect of incurring His displeasure, has developed into a superior perceptiveness.

In this regard the attitude of the Prophet Dawud (David) (as) constitutes a great example. In the Qur'an the profound respect displayed towards Allah by Prophet Dawud (as) is revealed by the following incident as related in the Qur'an:

Has the story of the litigants reached you? How they climbed up to the Upper Room and came in on Dawud who was alarmed by them. They said, "Do not be afraid. We are two litigants, one of whom has acted unjustly towards the other, so judge between us with truth and do not be unjust and guide us to the Right Path. This brother of mine has ninety-nine ewes and I have only one." He said, "Let me have charge of it," and got the better of me with his words. He [Dawud] said, "He has wronged you by asking for your ewe to add to his ewes.

Truly many partners are unjust to one another—except those who believe and do right actions, and how few they are!” Dawud realized that We had put him to the test. He begged forgiveness from his Lord and fell down prone, prostrating, and repented. So We forgave him for that and he has nearness to Us and a good Homecoming. (Surah Sad: 21-25)

Although Prophet Dawud’s decision (as) was absolutely just and there was no doubt about it, he turned to Allah with fear of displeasing Him and nevertheless sought His pardon. It is not possible to imitate an inner fear such as this, which is pure and sincere. Such fearful awareness is only for those who measure Allah as He should be measured, who fear the loss of His approval because of their love and awe of Him.

When we look at the conduct of the prophets and true believers, we see that they are all servants who respectfully fear Allah and who strenuously avoid His punishment. However, at the same time, there is present behind this awe, a very intimate love and friendship. Their continuous and consistent praise and exaltation of Allah is an indication of their total love and attachment to Him.

THE QUALITIES THAT A BELIEVER GAINS BECAUSE HE FEARS ALLAH

A high standing with Allah

... The noblest among you in Allah's sight is the most righteous. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat: 13)

Without a doubt a person's standing with Allah will be in accordance with his appreciation of Him, the amount of his good actions, his implementation of the Qur'an's injunctions, his goodness of character and the sincerity of his belief. Without fearful awareness of Allah, one cannot fulfil these qualities of character and behavior. Hence, the degree of fear of Allah in someone's heart is a key indicator of his rank with Allah.

The ability to discriminate between right and wrong

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

The ability to distinguish right from wrong and the increase in understanding that goes with it are, without a doubt, the greatest and most valued blessings to be bestowed upon a true believer on Earth.

If someone is granted the intelligence to be able to distinguish right from wrong, their every word, their every attitude, their every decision and their every reaction will be insightful and correct. Because someone who fears Allah can immediately distinguish between right and wrong, they will behave in accordance with what is most pleasing to Allah in everything they do. They will not be affected by indecision, uncertainty, hesitation, anxiety, or confusion. In total contrast to this however, those who have not been given the ability to discriminate are destined for ruin, both on Earth and in the Hereafter.

A double share from Allah's mercy

You who believe! Fear Allah and believe in His Messenger. He will give you a double portion of His mercy and grant you a Light by which to walk and forgive you. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Hadid: 28)

In the Qur'an Allah promises to all His servants who fear Him and behave cautiously that their lives will be blessed, both temporally and spiritually. As expressed in the Qur'anic verse: **"... Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him."** (Surat al-Ma'ida: 119) For a true believer, that Allah should include him in His mercy is without doubt above everything else.

It should not be forgotten that during our lives on Earth, Allah may grant us happiness, abundance, blessing, comfort, and security. In the Hereafter, however, those who fear Allah will receive His infinite mercy and will be provided with far greater blessings, which those on Earth could never be compared with.

Acceptable worship

Recite to them the true report of Adam's two sons when they offered a sacrifice and it was accepted from one of them but not accepted from the other. The one said, "I shall kill you." The other said, "Allah only accepts from the righteous [who fear Him]." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 27)

Here one of the sons of the Prophet Adam (as) states that Allah accepts the sacrifice of those who fear Him. Someone who does not possess fear of Allah is, by definition, unable to give the acknowledgement due to the omnipotence of Allah, and is unable to feel the respect he should feel towards Him. As a result of their distorted view of existence and the inevitable corruption of character and behavior that goes with it, the efforts of people such as these will almost certainly amount to nothing in Allah's sight. For this reason, Allah requires above anything else that an individual's character be built upon fearful awareness of Him and seeking His approval. Any approach based upon denial of this will no doubt end in disappointment, as indicated in the Qur'an:

Who is better: someone who founds his building on fear of Allah and His good pleasure, or someone who founds his building on the brink of a crumbling precipice so that it collapses with him into the Fire of Hell? Allah does not love wrongdoers. (Surat at-Tawba: 109)

It is not possible that the worship of people who do not possess fearful awareness of Allah and whose conduct is unacceptable, will be as devoted and sincere as it ought to be. Behind every task or act of worship they undertake there will always lie the desire to show off or to impress, or to project a better image than others. Therefore, everything they do throughout their lives will amount to nothing if they do not turn to Allah and change their ways.

The enjoyment of ease in one's affairs

... Whoever fears Allah—He will make matters easy for him. (Surat at-Talaq: 4)

Allah will always enable true believers who are mindful of His disapproval and who observe His limits, to enjoy His mercy, protection and support. He will open the way for them in all of their undertakings. In the words of another Qur'anic verse: **"We will ease you to the Easy Way."** (Surat al-A'la: 8) Allah, openly or otherwise, will make matters easy for His servants in every way, be it worldly or spiritually.

Allah provides the way out of difficulty

... Whoever fears Allah—He will give him a way out. (Surat at-Talaq: 2)

For Allah's pious and fearful servants, no predicament is ever insoluble or insurmountable. By Allah, they are capable of overcoming every obstacle by using the intelligence and understanding He has provided them with. Even in the apparently most difficult situations, Allah will eventually show them a way out, and however long their difficulty lasts, they will not be left alone. This is Allah's promise to the believers.

Allah erases their wrong actions, forgives them and multiplies their reward

That is Allah's command which He has sent down to you. Whoever fears Allah—He will erase his bad actions from him and greatly increase his reward. (Surat at-Talaq: 5)

After their death when they are called to account, for true believers there will be an easy reckoning. This is because believers have lived their lives on Earth in accordance with the guidance of our Lord Who created them. Most certainly they are not without fault, they may even have sinned but Allah, the possessor of infinite mercy, has stated in the Qur'an that He will forgive them:

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

Therefore, those people whom Allah has forgiven will receive an even greater reward for what they have done on Earth; they will be admitted to the Garden which is full of countless blessings.

Allah's infinite compassion will be demonstrated to the true believers even on Earth. As a result of their fearful caution, their attachment to Him and the good actions they have carried out, the reward for their kindness and sincere behavior will be increased many fold. Even though they owe a debt of worship and obedience anyway for the life He has given them in the first place along with all of the countless blessings that go with it, Allah by the vastness of His generosity sees fit to reward them purely from His matchless kindness and benevolence.

THE REWARDS FOR THOSE WHO FEAR ALLAH

They are given joyful tidings whilst on Earth

As for those people who lead their lives on Earth without fearful awareness of Allah, we will examine below, in the light of the Qur'an, the inexplicable fears they experience and the awesome severity of Allah's majesty. Those, on the other hand, who fear Allah and are cautious, will, in direct contrast, attain in the Hereafter total security from all types of fear and lead their lives under Allah's protection and grace. Those true believers who throughout their lives have felt a deep foreboding at the prospect of the Fire when the Day of Judgment arrives, will be kept far away from every kind of fear and will be absolutely safe. Whilst Allah gives these glad tidings in the Qur'an, on the Last Day He will address His servants and announce many more glad tidings:

"My servants, you will feel no fear today; you will know no sorrow." As for those who believed in Our Signs and became Muslims: "Enter the Garden, you and your wives, delighting in your joy."

Platters and cups of gold will be passed around among them and they will have there all that their hearts desire and their eyes find delight in. You will remain in it timelessly, for ever.

"That is the Garden you will inherit for what you did."

"There will be many fruits in it for you to eat." (Surat az-Zuhkruf: 68-73)

In other Qur'anic verses, Allah will give these glad tidings through the mediation of his angels, which will be without a doubt an incredible joy for believers who so intensely hope for the Garden:

The angels descend on those who say, "Our Lord is Allah," and then go straight: "Do not fear and do not grieve but rejoice in the Garden you have been promised. We are your protectors in the life of this world and the Hereafter. You will have there all that your selves could wish for. You will have there everything you demand. Hospitality from One who is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Surah Fussilat: 30-32)

The Qur'an stresses that these glad tidings, which last for eternity and are full of goodness, will be attained by those who truly believed during their lives on Earth.

A beautiful life

The lives of those who do not believe in Allah, who do not fear him and who do not behave cautiously will, in keeping with the punishment they deserve, be deprived of the abundance and blessings reserved for believers:

If only the people of the cities had believed and guarded against evil, We would have opened up to them blessings from heaven and Earth. But they denied the truth so We seized them for what they earned. (Surat al-A'raf: 96)

However, those who believe in Allah with fearful awareness, and have shown good character in their conduct, will be given glad tidings in the life Hereafter of Heaven, and in this world will benefit in the best possible manner from Allah's kindness and abundance:

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

Similar to the way in which the infinite punishment of the disbelievers begins whilst on Earth, for cautious, true believers, the promised infinite goodness will also begin to manifest. As a result of abundance and beauty being amongst the foremost features of the Garden, Allah will provide His beloved, fearful servants with a taste of these blessings during their lives on Earth in order to increase their longing and desires for the Garden.

By the same token, Allah will protect the believers from every form of anxiety and distress during their lives because of their adherence to His commands and prohibitions, because of their living according to His religion and, most importantly, because of their constant reliance on Him, their patience, and their longing for the Hereafter. Instead of distress, Allah causes to descend upon their hearts a feeling of peace and security. In every act of worship or good conduct, big or small, they are aware that Allah is watching them and, that the recording angels record it all in the book of their deeds, hence, they experience a tranquillity that is brought about by the knowledge that in the Hereafter they will be rewarded for it all.

On the other hand, however, there is another point that should not be forgotten: the world is a place of trial. Most certainly, a true believer could be confronted with various hardships and crises. However, whatever the situation, for a believer who fears Allah these difficulties turn out to be a mercy and a reward. A good example of this is the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) (as) who, having been accused of lying and in spite of being on the point of being thrown into the fire by his people, he did not make even the slightest compromise in his beliefs or waver in his submission or in his trust in Allah.

Without doubt being burnt alive is a terrible punishment but in the case of Prophet Ibrahim (as) Allah had ordered the fire to be "coolness and peace" for him and it did not cause him any pain or suffering. Distress, harm and misfortune are a punishment or warning which

occur only as a result of a person's own incorrect manner and bad behavior: **"Any disaster that strikes you is through what your own hands have earned..."** (Surat ash-Shura: 30).

Otherwise, for a sincere believer who fears Allah to the best of his ability and who is constantly mindful of Allah's approval in his conduct, punishment is not an issue.

All the hardships which true believers experience in this world are confronted as tests which only enhance the respect and fearful awareness they have towards Allah, as well as further increasing their desire for the Garden. A true believer is aware that these hardships are created for him as a trial and a learning experience, and as opportunities for displaying good conduct, exercising patience and as long as he relies on Allah, as an opportunity for reward in the Hereafter. The Qur'an mentions the particular quality of being able to view all events as an opportunity, in connection with those who truly believe and who are fearfully aware of Allah:

When those who fear Allah are asked, "What has your Lord sent down?" their reply is, "Good!" There is good in this world for those who do good, and the abode of the Hereafter is even better. How wonderful is the abode of the righteous [who fear Allah]. (Surat an-Nahl: 30)

The death of a true believer who has lived on Earth in righteousness will be good and easy, his afterlife will commence with the welcoming of angels, and its continuation will be the comfort and ease that awaits every true believer.

An easy reckoning

True believers will compete for good deeds throughout their lives because of their fear of facing a dreadful reckoning in the Hereafter. They will guard Allah's boundaries meticulously. The Qur'an describes this fear of the true believers thus:

They fulfil their vows and fear a day whose evil will spread far and wide. They give food, despite their love for it, to the poor and orphans and captive [saying], "We feed you only out of desire for the Face of Allah. We do not want any repayment from you or any thanks. Truly We fear from our Lord a glowering, calamitous Day." (Surat al-Insan: 7-10)

In the Hereafter Allah will brighten the faces of those who fear Him and the accounting they will give to Him will be eased. The book of their deeds will be given to them in their right hands and the reckoning they feared will be made easy:

As for him who is given his Book in his right hand, he will be given an easy reckoning and return to his family joyfully. (Surat al-Inshiqaq: 7-9)

When the reckoning comes to an end, true believers will be in a state of happiness for having escaped the punishment of Hell. As indicated in the verse above, they will return to their loved ones with joy.

An everlasting life in the Garden

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

What is the Garden promised to the righteous [who fear Allah] like? It has rivers flowing under it and its foodstuffs and cool shade never fail. That is the final fate of the righteous [who fear Allah]. But the final fate of the disbelievers is the Fire. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 35)

Believers who fear an encounter with the infinite punishment of Hell, and who are mindful of not rebelling against Allah, will gain the reward of those who fear and act cautiously as Allah has promised, and they will be sent to enter their eternal home:

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

For the true believers who enter the Garden, the most joyful surprise and the greatest source of happiness and excitement above all else, will be a verbal salutation from Allah:

"Peace!" A word from a Merciful Lord. (Surah Ya Sin: 58)

Allah will address the true believers in the Garden as follows:

My devotees, you will feel no fear today; you will know no sorrow. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 68)

Allah, Who created mankind, is more aware than we are of what we would enjoy most as a reward for having believed in Him, and these very things are what will await the believers in the Garden. Hence, the immense blessings of the Garden and the wonders it

contains lie far beyond the scope of human imagination. Infinite blessings will be offered to believers the likes of which no eyes have ever seen and no ear has ever heard; for the rest of eternity everything they encounter will meet with their every desire:

... They will have whatever they wish for with their Lord. That is the great favor. (Surat ash-Shura: 22)

The Qur'an describes every aspect of everlasting life for the believers in the Garden, such as their places of residence, their clothing, their spouses, the beauty of the surroundings, the foodstuffs and various other delights that await them.

In one Qur'anic verse the eternal lives led by those who fear Allah and the terrifying end to be faced by those who do not fear Allah are compared:

An image of the Garden which is promised to the righteous [who fear Allah]: in it there are rivers of water which will never spoil and rivers of milk whose taste will never change and rivers of wine, delightful to all who drink it, and rivers of honey of undiluted purity; in it they will have fruit of every kind and forgiveness from their Lord. Is that like those who will be in the Fire timelessly, for ever, with boiling water to drink which lacerates their bowels? (Surah Muhammad: 15)

There is no doubt that someone who is conscious and aware needs only to reflect on the scenario for a moment in order for both hope in and fear of Allah to intensify.

The greatest reward: Allah's eternal satisfaction with them

Allah has promised the men and women of the believers Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever, and fine dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. And Allah's good pleasure is even greater. That is the great victory. (Surat at-Tawba: 72)

The greatest spiritual pleasure experienced by believers when they enter the Garden is the reality that from that moment on Allah is pleased with them, that He loves them, that He will never punish them, and that they will be His friends for eternity. To have gained Allah's approval will be the source of a joy and happiness infinitely superior to any earthly comparison. Allah's pleasure is what brings the ultimate sweetness to the blessings of the Garden. Although the rewards of the Garden are wonderful in themselves, what is more delightful still is the joy of being affirmed by The Lord of all the Worlds as being worthy of receiving His kindness. The Qur'an states:

O self at rest and at peace, return to your Lord, well-pleasing and well-pleased! Enter among My servants! Enter My Garden. (Surat al-Fajr: 27-30)

THE REASONS FOR FAILING TO FEAR ALLAH

Say: “Who provides for you out of heaven and Earth? Who controls hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the whole affair?”

They will say, “Allah.” Say, “So will you not guard against evil?” (Surah Yunus: 31)

As openly revealed by Allah in His verses, when those people who possess only superficial belief are asked about it, they will admit their belief in Allah, but the fearful awareness of Him will be found wanting. The clearest proof of their condition is that neither in their speech nor in their behavior do they display the least sign of fear or caution with respect to Allah. There are well-known reasons underlying this.

The lack of a true appreciation of Allah

Generally amongst the populace an understanding of religion based on hearsay is widespread. The majority of people have not familiarized themselves with Allah’s own descriptions of Himself and His attributes as they appear in the original source of religion, namely the Qur’an. Yet Allah has introduced Himself to us in the Qur’an in the clearest and most authentic manner possible. The knowledge of most people regarding Allah consists of what they have heard from their respective families, relatives and from here or there. As a result of this, people’s understanding regarding Allah varies widely.

The interesting point about this is that it has never occurred to a great many people that the things they have heard and been taught in their immediate environments could be incomplete or even totally incorrect. Even if it has occurred to them, they would be most unlikely to go out of their way to do the research that would be required in order to ascertain the truth. This is a serious mistake which could result in going to the Fire as a consequence of not identifying Allah correctly or giving proper recognition to His many great attributes.

This kind of people think of Allah in general terms with respect to His attributes of The Forgiver (Al Ghaffar), The Helper (An Nasr), The Provider (Ar Razzaq), the Subtle One (Al Latif), The Preserver (Al Hafiz), The Merciful (Ar Rahim) and The Protector (Al Muhaymin). Limiting their focus to attributes such as these simply results in an unbalanced sense of comfort and complacency, since Allah has other attributes such as The Avenger (Al Muntaqim), The Punisher (Al Muazzib) and The Subduer (Al Qahhar). However, the people mentioned above would not know what these attributes of Allah actually mean. They cannot think of our Lord in these terms. They do not realize that these attributes will be brought to bear upon their actions, their behavior and their conversations.

Even though they may be aware of some of Allah's attributes by name, they remain unaware of their full import and the manner in which they are going to impinge upon their eternal lives. Either they have a one-sided view of Allah's many attributes, or they imagine that they do not apply to them in any way.

For example, if an injustice has been perpetrated on them, they believe that in the Hereafter Allah, with His infinite justice will seek retribution for this injustice. However, they fail to realize that they too will be faced with Allah's punishment if they do not believe in the Qur'an and act by it as they should. Mankind was created to worship Allah, but if they reject the purpose of their creation, they will without doubt face the consequences of this disbelief. The most severe of punishments is required for such an enormous transgression, hence the existence of Hell. Hell, being the most terrible place ever created is the arena for punishments whose severity lies far beyond man's powers of imagination. It subsumes and surpasses many times over the greatest agonies imaginable on Earth.

These people we describe do not have fearful awareness of Allah and behave carelessly; they are heedless of their own consciences and are completely lacking in understanding. They have no proper perception of Allah's strength and His power, His majesty and His vastness, His exaltedness and His greatness. Hence, they fail to experience the kind of inner awe and deep trepidation appropriate to the prospect of being exposed to His wrath. As a result of this, they do not strive to earn Allah's approval or to implement His commands to the best of their abilities. Neither do they abide by His prohibitions, preferring to lead carefree lives. They fail to show the gratitude and appreciation required for the blessings Allah has given them, therefore ungratefulness becomes a permanent feature of their beings. In the end however, the price for living a careless life on Earth will be paid with an eternal life of fear and torment.

The mistaken beliefs of the disbelievers about the Hereafter

As well as being unable to give Allah the recognition due to Him, many ignorant people also possess deficient knowledge and many false beliefs about the Garden and the Fire. These people enjoy their lives on Earth to their hearts' desire, they rebel against Allah and then, they assume they will be forgiven after spending a short period in Hell. However, the end that awaits them is much more painful than they assume, because Hell is an abode of punishment which may last for eternity for those extreme disbelievers who do not heed Allah's warnings. Allah emphasizes that Hell has been created for disbelievers and for those people who persist in their disbelief. The Qur'an makes it clear that there is no way back for them:

Hell lies in wait—a homecoming for the profligate, remaining in it for countless aeons. (Surat an-Naba': 21-23)

The pain and sufferings of Hell are beyond imagination. Hell is a frightening environment where Allah's attribute as the Subduer (Al-Qahhar) becomes manifest in all its severity and where the punishments that are inflicted far exceed anything imaginable on Earth. For an individual who is barely capable of withstanding the pain of a drop of boiling water, or cold temperatures or even the slightest hunger, to claim that they could bear such forms of punishment without too much difficulty is a clear indication of their complete lack of awareness and understanding. As we have said from the outset, anyone who imagines that Allah's punishment is a matter to be taken so lightly, is someone who has no idea whatsoever of the reality of Allah's power.

Being fooled by their allotted time on Earth

In order that people might be properly tested, Allah has granted us all a fixed period of time in the temporal world. He sends us warnings and grants us every opportunity to repent and to correct the mistakes we may have made. However, for people who do not live by the religion, this very generosity is yet part of what lies behind their inability to fear Allah as they should. In order to avoid the consequences of their actions, people are in general extremely careful when it comes to behavior which brings an immediate comeback. Let us look at the following example.

Let us suppose that a person is working for a company on a good salary, and has been given an important set of targets to meet, knowing that failure to achieve these targets would be likely to result in the termination of his employment with this company. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to guess how much sheer effort and determination would go into the task. The very thought of the loss he would face in the event of losing his job would ensure that any lesser approach to it would be entirely out of the question. He would do everything possible, even to the extent of sacrificing his comfort, his sleep and even abandoning other assignments in order to meet his objectives and escape the enormous distress that would result from failure. This is all very well but the question is whether such people feel the same level of urgency with respect to the much greater reality of having to account to Allah? The truth is that the vast majority do not because they do not see death and the Hereafter as imminent realities, according to them the life they are leading is much more realistic.

Yet in a Qur'anic verse the allotted time on Earth given to people is referred to as follows:

If Allah were to take mankind to task for what they have earned, He would not leave a single creature crawling on it, but He is deferring them until a specified time. Then, when their time comes, Allah sees His servants! (Surah Fatir: 45)

These people imagine that when they do something which Allah does not consent to they will instantly be punished with “raining brimstone,” when this turns out not to be the case they see it as a licence to continue with their excesses. This illogical thinking can be seen in people of the disbelieving communities who have lived at every period throughout history, and whose reasoning is described by Allah in the Qur’an in the following way:

... And [they] say to themselves “Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?” Hell will be enough for them! They will roast in it. What an evil destination! (Surat al-Mujadala: 8)

This distorted point of view is held by the majority of people who do not believe and people whose belief is only superficial. These people who think they will not be punished for their actions, and who therefore think they are extremely clever, are in fact being gradually pulled towards their punishment from a direction unknown to them:

But as for those who deny Our Signs, We will lead them, step by step, into destruction from where they do not know. (Surat al-A’raf: 182)

In similitude to those open and obvious punishments which Allah has mentioned in the Qur’an, subtle and hidden punishments can overtake a person at any time, even whilst still on Earth. An example of such a case is when someone who is in the habit of displaying attitudes or moral conduct which are offensive to Allah, is suddenly struck by a debilitating illness. Needless to say, these afflictions are not confined to the physical senses; the fear which Allah will cause to grip the heart or just sheer stress, will suffice in order to make an individual’s existence extremely uncomfortable. Therefore Allah has drawn attention in the Qur’an to fear being a type of punishment:

Allah makes an example of a city which was safe and at peace, its provision coming to it plentifully from every side. Then it showed ingratitude for Allah’s blessings so Allah made it wear the robes of hunger and fear for what it did. (Surat an-Nahl: 112)

Whilst behaving in a manner which Allah does not approve of, no person can ever be sure that misfortune is not hovering above him, ready to strike at any moment. There is no protection against any of Allah’s punishments. Allah has informed us of this reality in the Qur’an:

Do the people of the cities feel secure against Our violent force coming down on them in the night while they are asleep? Or do the people of the cities feel secure against Our violent force coming down on them in the day while they

are playing games? Do they feel secure from the plan of Allah? No one feels secure from the plan of Allah except for those who are lost. (Surat al-A'raf: 97-99)

The same warning is reiterated in another verse:

Do you feel secure against Him causing the shore to swallow you up or sending against you a sudden squall of stones? Then you will find no one to be your guardian. Or do you feel secure against Him taking you back into it another time and sending a violent storm against you and drowning you for your ingratitude? Then you will find no one to defend you against Us. (Surat al-Isra': 68-69)

It should not be forgotten that mankind is in a state of helplessness, and that we are completely dependent on Allah for everything. The distresses of trials and hardships can only be faced by relying on Allah and receiving strength from Him. However, those who do not accept the reality of their limited capacity and who do not fear Allah are left by themselves to confront their punishments and misfortunes, both the overt and the hidden ones. Given that the human make up does not possess the capacity to withstand these afflictions, the only safe and successful route is to fear Allah to the best of one's ability and to lead a life consciously based on fearful awareness of these realities.

Assuming that only the very rebellious will be subjected to punishment

Despite the majority of people knowing that following their death, Allah will call them to account for the lives they have led, and that after this reckoning they will be sent to either the Garden or the Fire, they make no preparation for their life in the Hereafter. Although these people assert their belief in the existence of the Hereafter, the lifestyles they lead are hardly any different from those of the outright disbelievers. Furthermore, they display not the least hint of embarrassment about it.

The lifestyles of both groups are, to all intents and purposes, identical in appearance, attitudes, behavior, goals and ambitions. The only difference between them is that the one claims to be Muslim, while the other makes no such claim. In spite of the former group's willingness to assert their belief in the Qur'an, their failure to abide by the judgments of the book they claim to believe in causes them no sense of discomfort or awkwardness whatsoever.

The reason for their apparent state of indifference to the openly contradictory nature of their position is their further assertion that their hearts are pure and that they cause no harm to anyone.

Their attitude is based on the confident belief they will never be sent to the Fire, in other words they view themselves as certain candidates for admission to the Garden. What is also particularly interesting are the criteria they have come up with in order to define the type of person who will enter the Fire, and the corresponding arrogance with which they declare everyone else as fit for the Garden.

According to them, the people deserving of the Fire are the criminals and delinquents one generally sees on television or in the papers such as murderers, thieves, terrorists, and assorted deviants who are determined to cause harm to others. Those excluded from this list, the “average person,” who constitute the majority of humanity however, assume all their sins will be immediately forgiven.

It is the nature of the criteria they themselves have selected which has given rise to the assumption that they are of the people of the Garden, given that they have not committed murder or stolen anything and that they are not terrorists. Thus despite their claims to being Muslims, neither their willingness to commit all forms of transgression, nor their unwillingness to worship, nor their unwillingness to abide by the Qur’an and to lead their lives safely within the limits established by Allah, arouses within them any sense of fear or nervousness. The simple reason for this is their mistaken assumption that none of these actions or omissions constitute sufficient cause to be sent to the Fire.

However, this is a terrible mistake, which may drag them to the pits of the Fire. These ignorant people conjure up values and priorities in the name of Islam, which are very different from those contained in the Qur’an. In other words, matters on which Allah places the greatest importance end up, according to their facile reasoning, being considered as marginal. Thus, their self-invented religious perspectives offer them a lifestyle which is completely at odds with a genuine fear of Allah. In the following Qur’anic verse Allah draws attention to the corrupt logic of these people:

Say: “Who provides for you out of heaven and Earth? Who controls hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the whole affair?” They will say, “Allah.” Say, “So will you not guard against evil?” (Surah Yunus: 31)

These people cannot adhere to the commands and prohibitions of the true religion because of their determined commitment to their own version of things. Hence, they continue to lead their lives under a false sense of security induced by the fatal misapprehension that they are destined for the Garden; they are merely fooling themselves. However, no matter how much they deceive themselves their conscience will always remind them of the true reality. When confronted with the realities of the Qur’an, they find it impossible to admit that they have wasted their entire lives with sins and grave mistakes, they absolutely refuse to listen to anyone who tries to clarify the situation for them. Therefore, in order not to have to dwell on it, they consciously distract themselves

by focusing on other issues. In other words, when anything comes up or a thought enters their minds that might cause them fear or anxiety, they immediately turn their attention elsewhere, preferring to remain in a state of imaginary safety. They attempt to block out thoughts of Allah, His threats, and His punishment, in other words, they exist in a state of perpetual denial of the reality of their predicament: the impossibility of escaping the inescapable justice of Allah. However hard they try, their mindless determination to avoid the truth will not save them from the fearsome conclusion awaiting them.

The idea that “Allah will forgive us anyway”

An evil generation has succeeded them, inheriting the Book, taking the goods of this lower world, and saying, “We will be forgiven...” (Surat al-A’raf: 169)

As indicated in this verse, despite not leading a life as prescribed by Allah, people assume that they will nevertheless be forgiven. Without a doubt, the foremost reason for this assumption is their inability to properly comprehend Allah’s attributes and His justice due to their reliance on a form of reasoning which has little or no Qur’anic foundation. Although Allah is forgiving and will forgive the wrong actions of His servants, the prerequisite for this forgiveness is outlined by Allah in the Qur’an as follows:

Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then quickly repent after doing it. Allah turns towards such people. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. There is no repentance for people who persist in doing evil until death comes to them and who then say, “Now I repent,” nor for people who die disbelievers. We have prepared for them a painful punishment. (Surat an-Nisa’: 17-18)

However, there are those who, having been repeatedly warned both openly and secretly, are aware of the truth and yet remain far removed from fearing Allah, and persist with their distorted claim that Allah will forgive them nevertheless. This kind of misapprehension is a clear example of Satan’s ability to mislead and deceive people. It is one of his many lures, which leads to all forms of wrong actions and falsities being continuously committed. Furthermore, Allah’s declaration that, **“No one is safe from the punishment of his Lord”** (Surat al-Ma’arij: 28), is clear proof that no one is guaranteed forgiveness in this way.

Seeing themselves as deserving of the Garden

There can be no doubt that a distorted understanding of the Qur’an will give way to a similarly distorted view of the Hereafter. Hence, the majority of ignorant people share the

common belief that they are worthy of the Garden. Many of these people possess no concept of being questioned for their actions following their death. According to them, even if such a possibility existed they think that they would be met with a positive outcome, thereby fooling themselves into a false sense of security.

Allah has given an example in the Qur'an of a garden owner who was arrogant and self-assured. He did not fear Allah and because of his wealth was extremely spoilt. The high yield of his gardens as well as their beauty served as a basis for his self-assurance. The sensation of power he derived from this seduced him into believing that his possessions were indestructible and everlasting, and he adopted a stance of absolute insolence:

He entered his garden and wronged himself by saying, "I do not think that this will ever end. I do not think the Hour will ever come. But if I should be sent back to my Lord, I will definitely get something better in return." (Surat al-Kahf: 35-36)

The owner of the garden serves as an example to people nowadays who in essence have forgotten the Hereafter and the Day of Judgment, and who have perpetrated excesses and disrespected the boundaries set out by Allah. Furthermore, faced with the prospect, as they see it, of eternal non-existence or possibly entering the Fire and facing its punishment, they deceive themselves with the idea that they will eventually enter the Garden. The behavior of those people whose shallow mentality permits them to deny the Day of Judgment when it suits them, and who by the same token, manage to imagine themselves worthy of the Garden, is a clear indication that they lack fearful awareness of Allah.

Their Claim to Love of Allah

Another reason why people do not fear Allah and act cautiously is their claim that they love Allah. However, the true love of Allah requires respect and distancing oneself from those things that the beloved dislikes, but what is interesting is that when we examine the lifestyle of these people none of these signs can be found. A person who sincerely loves Allah will above all else be extremely sensitive towards Allah's boundaries, he will love the things He loves and will be extremely cautious of those things that Allah dislikes. In every detail of his life, he will seek to please Him by demonstrating his deep respect, trust, and submission with absolute devotion. However, someone who professes that he loves Allah despite leading a life, which transgresses Allah's boundaries, cannot be speaking with sincerity. This insincerity will inevitably attract retribution and a severe punishment.

The important point here is that a verbal declaration of love of this kind is nothing more than an exercise in self-deception and an outward display of over confidence. Such attitudes are in complete opposition to the spirit and the message of the Qur'an.

Fear based upon Ignorance

Allah is well acquainted with people's circumstances and every hope, prayer and thought that goes through their minds. This being so, what needs to be done is to turn to Allah with sincerity and to seek His friendship. A sincere inner fear produces a predisposition that will ensure submission, encourage a state of positive morality and progress towards gaining Allah's love.

The fear of the people who do not live by the religion however, is different. Their sense of fear is temporary. When they are tested with a difficult situation, they remember Allah's wrath and fear the consequences. However, no sooner does Allah save them from their predicament, than they revert to their previous state of denial. With regard to this matter the Qur'an gives the following example:

It is He Who conveys you on both land and sea so that when some of you are on a boat, running before a fair wind, rejoicing at it, and then a violent squall comes upon them and the waves come at them from every side and they realize there is no way of escape, they call on Allah, making their religion sincerely His: "If You rescue us from this, we will truly be among the thankful." But then, when He does rescue them, they become rebellious in the Earth without any right to do so. Mankind, your rebelliousness is only against yourselves. There is the enjoyment of the life of this world and then you will return to Us and We will inform you about what you did. (Surah Yunus: 22-23)

As seen from the above example the fear of such people will not benefit them. In direct opposition to the believers, they will not learn and take heed or reflect upon the meaning of such events. Therefore, Allah informs us in the Qur'an that it is those who experience fearful awareness that will take heed:

He who has fear will be reminded. But the most miserable will shun it. (Surat al-A'la: 10-11)

Here we see that the insincere people mentioned in the above verses are from the second group of people. That is because they do not have a sense of profound inner fear towards Allah. The incidents they are confronted with will not lead them towards the right path. Allah has informed us in the Qur'an of the conduct of these people in countless verses. For example:

Say: "To whom does the Earth belong, and everyone in it, if you have any knowledge?" They will say: "To Allah." Say: "So will you not pay heed?" Say: "Who is the Lord of the Seven Heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne?" They will say: "Allah." Say: "So will you not guard against evil?" Say: "In Whose hand is the dominion over everything, He Who gives protection and from Whom no protection can be given, if you have any knowledge?" They will say: "Allah's." Say: "So how have you been bewitched?" The fact is that We have given them the truth and they are liars. (Surat al-Muminun: 84-90)

WHAT KIND OF MORAL VALUES DOES A PERSON POSSESS WHO DOES NOT FEAR ALLAH?

The quality of uprightness is only achievable by fearing Allah and adhering absolutely to His commands. For a person to possess and maintain an upright character, a strong love of Allah is needed together with a profound fear of Allah. With regard to fearing Allah as is due to Him, this is only made possible by constantly bearing in mind and reflecting on Allah's greatness, glory and grandeur, His high rank, infinite knowledge and power, and His unrestricted and unconditional sovereignty over all His servants, as well as having an absolute belief in Allah's promises, threats, the Day of Judgment and the intensity of its ordeals and the fearful and eternal punishment of Hell. This belief will make way for a strengthened fear of Allah. This fear will also ensure that one's attitude, behavior, movements and conversations, are in accordance and harmony with the moral standards which Allah approves of. A person who fears Allah will be in a constant state of vigilance when it comes to protecting His boundaries.

With regards to people who do not fear Allah, they are able to display any attitude, regardless of Allah's displeasure. Someone who has forgotten they will be accountable to Allah has no need or reason to be honest; to serve others, to be just and honorable, in short, to display good moral conduct. They are motivated exclusively by individual ambition and personal benefit. To consider benefiting others is irrelevant to them.

There is nothing people such as this would not do for their own advantage. Because of their inability to acknowledge Allah's power, the prospect of Allah's punishment does not serve as an incentive to amend their ways. Since they have no fear of Allah or His punishment, they do not adhere to any limits, they ignore Allah's prohibitions, displaying an oppressive attitude towards people, and going to excess in everything negative. Because they do not reflect on Allah's might and His ability to avenge, they transgress Allah's boundaries without a second thought.

It is for these reasons that those people who do not fear Allah are open to committing every possible sin and moral degradation. They do not adhere to Allah's religion and through their oppressive behavior, they deter other people from religion; they cannot stand to see the implementation of religious standards of morality. Without a doubt, the oppression practiced by these people will be responded to in kind in the Hereafter. Allah informs us in the Qur'an of these people and their demise:

Those who disbelieve and bar access to the Way of Allah have gone very far astray. Allah will not forgive those who disbelieve and do wrong or guide them on any path except the path of Hell, remaining in it timelessly, for ever and ever. That is easy for Allah. (Surat an-Nisa': 167-169)

Below, we will examine the distorted characteristics and peculiarities of the wrongdoers mentioned in the Qur'an who have no fear of Allah.

Their Similarity to Satan

Those people who, despite being fully aware of Allah's existence and power, do not behave in a manner which pleases Allah, and who in reality do not fear Him, share certain traits with Satan. People who are constantly under the suggestion and influence of Satan are almost bound to share a similar mentality and spirit. The clearest indication of this similarity is their state of blind denial. That is to say, they automatically display distorted and imbalanced reactions and attitudes that are detrimental to them, rather than acknowledge what is obvious and behave accordingly. The best example of this distorted behavior is seen in Satan's challenging attitude towards Allah. This incident is narrated in the Qur'an as an example for all humanity.

Allah created the angels and the jinn before creating Adam (as), the first man and prophet. They were engaged in constant praise and glorification of Allah. Then, Allah created Adam (as) and ordered the angels to prostrate themselves before him. The angels readily obeyed Allah's command and prostrated before Adam (as). However, Satan (*Iblis*), who was present with the angels, although he was one of the jinn, revolted against Allah's command and became rebellious towards Him. This is because Satan believed he was far superior to Prophet Adam (as). The Qur'an relates:

He [Allah] said, "Iblis, what prevented you prostrating to what I created with My own Hands? Were you overcome by arrogance or are you one of the exalted?" (Surah Sad: 75)

To which Satan replies:

"... I am better than him. You created me from fire but You created him from clay." (Surah Sad: 76)

Satan's bold disobedience towards Allah's order resulted in Allah cursing him and condemning him to the eternal punishments of Hell. Without a doubt, Satan's rebelliousness arises out of an incomprehensible state of spiritual contradiction. He has personally witnessed Allah's existence. Indeed, he spoke directly with Allah. He had certain knowledge of Allah's attributes, His power and the eternal punishment of Hell.

The uncanny similarity between Satan and all those who shun fearful awareness of Allah originates within them. To have clear knowledge of the existence of Allah, and still manage to deny Him and rebel against His authority, represents a truly astounding feat. Given Satan's direct and certain knowledge, one would expect him to have attained the

ultimate degree of faith and fear of Allah. By the same token, one would also expect him to have a level of constant awareness to match, giving rise to unparalleled respect and obedience to Allah. Instead, Satan displays an ugly boldness and daring.

In the verse below the Qur'an describes the situation of such people:

Say: "Who provides for you out of heaven and Earth? Who controls hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the whole affair?" They will say, "Allah." Say, "So will you not guard against evil?" (Surah Yunus: 31)

Another verse reveals their spiritual state and their lack of awareness as follows:

The likeness of those who disbelieve is that of the beast which, call out to it as one may, can hear nothing but a shout and a cry. Deaf-dumb-blind. They do not use their intellect. (Surat al-Baqara: 171)

Another topic these people unthinkingly deny is the resurrection. For a person who knows he was created from nothing and knows for sure he will eventually die, to ask how he will be resurrected, is without a doubt, bewildering and amazing. The Qur'an refers to The Day of Resurrection and describes the incredulous reaction of the people who deny it:

If you are surprised at their blindness, what could be more surprising than their words: "What, when we are turned to dust, shall we then be created all anew?" These are the people who reject their Lord. Such people have iron collars round their necks. Such people are the Companions of the Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 5)

Their Pride and Arrogance

When he is told to fear Allah, he is seized by pride which drives him to wrongdoing. Hell will be enough for him! What an evil resting-place! (Surat al-Baqara: 206)

The most identifiable feature of those people who do not fear Allah is their state of vacuous pride and arrogance. What lies behind this is the person seeing himself as being independent of Allah and attributing to himself characteristics which belong only to Allah. This is quite absurd, since mankind is weak and has many limitations. No matter how high and mighty he may consider himself, he will eventually get tired, get hungry, get thirsty, become sleepy, suffer headaches and other illnesses, his body will deteriorate as he gets older, and eventually he will die and his body will perish.

It is not possible for people to become arrogant and overweening so long as they remain aware that it is Allah Who created everything from nothing, and Who has provided us with all of the characteristics and the potential we possess, and that He is able to withdraw everything He has provided us with whenever He wishes, and that all living things are temporary and only His existence is eternal. However, only those people who forget their limitations and whose corrupted intellects fail to comprehend these matters would ever attempt to be so bold. This was the case with Qarun, whose behavior Allah has related in the Qur'an as an example to all mankind.

The reason behind Qarun's hubris and his inability to fear Allah, was his wealth. He had forgotten that all wealth belongs to Allah and if He wished He could reclaim this wealth. Instead, he imagined that these treasures had been acquired by him as a result of his own abilities.

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

As a repayment for his behavior, Qarun was punished whilst still on Earth to serve as an example to like-minded people. If, as he asserted, he was in possession of matchless strength and power, he would doubtless have saved himself from this punishment. However, neither his knowledge, his treasures, his community or his high esteem was able to save him from Allah's punishment.

We caused the Earth to swallow up both him and his house. There was no group to come to his aid, besides Allah, and he was not someone who is helped. Those who had longed to take his place the day before woke up saying, "Allah expands the provision of any of His servants He wills or restricts it. If Allah had not shown great kindness to us, we would have been swallowed up as well. Ah! Truly the disbelievers are not successful." (Surat al-Qasas: 81-82)

The tragic demise of Qarun constitutes an open and clear example to those who do not possess any fear of Allah, and who are caught up with being haughty. A pleasant

destination in the Hereafter however, is reserved for those sincere people who are not arrogant:

That abode of the Hereafter—We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the Earth or to cause corruption in it. The successful outcome is for the righteous [who guard against evil]. (Surat al-Qasas: 83)

Their Envy and Aggression

The haughtiness of those people who are completely lacking in fear of Allah is nurtured and cherished to such an extent by them that they imagine that everything is theirs for the taking. For this reason, they are envious of other people's privileges. As an example of this attitude the Qur'an relates the incident which transpired between the Prophet Adam's (as) two sons:

Recite to them the true report of Adam's two sons when they offered a sacrifice and it was accepted from one of them but not accepted from the other. The one said, "I shall kill you." The other said, "Allah only accepts from the righteous [who fear Him]. Even if you do raise your hand against me to kill me, I am not going to raise my hand against you to kill you. Truly I fear Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. I want you to take on both my wrongdoing and your wrongdoing and so become one of the Companions of the Fire. That is the repayment of the wrongdoers." So his lower self persuaded him to kill his brother, and he killed him and became one of the lost. (Surat al-Ma'ida: 27-30)

A person who fears Allah would be cautious and guard himself against his own inner passions. Apart from this, there is no other fear which requires the profound alteration of one's own character in a positive way. The brother who did not fear Allah succumbed to the unbridled passions of the self. As a result of the jealousy and anger over the fact that his sacrifice was not accepted, and the sense of rivalry he felt towards his brother, he ended up threatening to kill him and subsequently carried out the threat. This case serves as a warning of how dangerous it can be to turn away from fear of Allah, and to abandon oneself to the urges of the lower self.

Someone who does not fear Allah will, when feeling personally affronted, not hesitate to cause both physical and spiritual harm to those who have offended him. At the same time jealousy is a fundamental characteristic of Satan. When Satan was expelled from the presence of Allah, he displayed all the hatred and jealousy he felt towards Prophet Adam (as) and promised with all his might that he would drag into Hell all his future descendants. However, this promise is only applicable to Satan's associates and friends. For those believers however, who fear Allah and are mindful of their actions, this will have no effect whatsoever.

Their self-sufficiency

To be “self-sufficient” means that one has no need of anything, that one is without weakness or deficiency, and that one is accountable to no one. These attributes belong only to Allah. Human beings and other living creatures are inherently weak and constantly in need. They are subject to Allah’s purposes in the creation and are at every moment entirely dependent on Him for life and sustenance. However, as we have pointed out above, people who do not fear Allah are blinded to their own incapacities due to their closed minds and corrupted intelligence. It would never occur to them that they could be either deficient or at fault. Furthermore, because they are absolutely sure of themselves, they are never hesitant or anxious about committing wrong actions. Allah refers to this frame of mind in the Qur’an as being “unbridled.”

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

As well as these people seeing themselves as totally independent, they also see themselves as exempt from the calamitous consequences of their actions. For this reason, they persist in their reckless boldness. The greater Allah’s generosity to them, the more reckless they become. They do not realize that Allah is merely testing them, so that the longer they continue in this unbridled fashion, the greater the punishment they will be subjected to in Hell.

Do not let their wealth and their children impress you. Allah merely wants to punish them by them in this world, and for them to expire while they are disbelievers. (Surat at-Tawba: 85)

Because they are not aware of this reality, they mistake the opportunities and resources Allah has allowed them to enjoy as protection from His punishment. For example, they think a sturdy and luxurious car will protect them from accidents, injury or even death. They think a sound and strong building will protect them from earthquakes, catastrophes, or attacks. Of course, a person may choose to live in a sound building as a precaution, however, even the world’s most sound building will crumble when the time comes.

Such people also think that taking every conceivable preventative measure regarding their health and physical being will render them immune to affliction. However, this is an absolutely endless struggle. Even a single virus is sufficient to carry Allah’s punishment to these people. Similarly, the eruption of the tiniest blood vessel in the brain could be the beginning of the eternal punishment these people will endure. No other person and no other power can protect someone from Allah’s punishment. Allah declares in the Qur’an:

“... anyone who has My anger unleashed on him has plunged to his ruin.” (Surah Ta Ha: 81)

Those without fear of Allah do not even accept the inevitability of death. For these people, the death of a young person close to them, or even the unexpected death of important individuals or people in the public eye, is viewed as shocking and senseless. To have to see a previously healthy and able-bodied person become unrecognizable comes as a serious blow to people who would prefer to forget about death.

Likewise, for them to see a friend who they may have been with only a couple of days previously, found by the side of a road in an unrecognizable state, having been hit by a car, and then having to witness this body being put into a black body bag, zipped up from head to toe, will bring to mind many things they are trying to forget. To see someone of their own age, lifestyle and mindset, lying on the road with a crowd gathered around the body, would fill their hearts with the dreaded realization that they are totally unprepared for their own death and the Hereafter. A couple of days before they would have been showing off their “designer” clothing together and pursuing their professional ambitions, while claiming not to have any time for religion and cracking jokes about the Hereafter. All of a sudden, confronted with the sight of their erstwhile friend, they find themselves in quite a different state of mind. The emergency personnel will gather up for disposal his broken glasses, which were thrown to the ground, his damaged shoes and the fashionable accessories he was wearing. His once proud body will be taken immediately to a hospital mortuary to prevent decomposition and left there with other bodies. What was once a human being will, within a couple of days, be wrapped in a white cloth and placed into a hole in the ground.

However, for most of them this fear will be short lived. Within a short period they will revert to their previous mentality, seeing death as something that affects everyone but themselves. Despite seeing people around them dying, in spite of knowing that the Hereafter awaits them, in spite of the ageing of their own bodies and the step-by-step approach of the end, they do not fear Allah, and so refuse to think about death at all. For this reason, instead of using whatever little time they may have left to alter their ways and conform to Allah’s guidance, they choose to pursue an ever-increasing level of heedlessness.

Lives Full of Fears and Anxieties

For people who do not believe in or fear Allah the entire world is made up of chaos and coincidences. They think that everything happens by chance and that the events that occur around them are without rhyme or reason. Under such circumstances it is impossible to experience any lasting sense of true peace and tranquility, since at any moment they could be faced with some arbitrary misfortune. He has endless anxieties and fears regarding the future. For example, he could fall sick with an unexpected illness, lose all his wealth, or perhaps an unexpected catastrophe could befall him or his loved ones. Because

he imagines all events such as these happen willy-nilly, he never feels free of anxiety and apprehension over the possibility of them happening to him. What is more, the situation is made all the worse by the knowledge that the whole affair is entirely beyond his control, leaving him with an increased sense of helplessness and hopelessness.

Only someone who fears Allah will not succumb to these kinds of fear. Fear of Allah and belief in Him displaces all these other fears. To know that Allah is the Owner and Creator of everything, and that no event occurs except under the control and divine providence of Allah, knowing that Allah will protect and look after those who believe and trust in Him, leads to freedom from all sorts of fears and illusory needs. The Qur'an declares:

Allah has made a metaphor for them of a man owned by several partners in dispute with one another and another man wholly owned by a single man. Are they the same? Praise be to Allah! The fact is that most of them do not know. (Surat az-Zumar: 29)

People who do not believe in Allah and who subsequently do not fear Him, will experience a multitude of different fears with respect to other things and other people. They never think about being answerable to Allah for their actions but are keenly aware of their accountability to their superiors at work, their spouses, their mothers, their fathers and many other such people.

When the sense of fear, which should only be directed to Allah, is directed towards His creation instead, it reduces those concerned to an undignified position since the only being truly worthy of being feared is Allah. He is the owner of all strength and power and everything is subject to His will and control. Nothing comes into being except by His will and knowledge. Without His consent, nothing can harm anyone. Hence, there is no other being apart from Allah that should be feared.

As we observed earlier, people who fear other people rather than Allah do so because they see them as possessing strength and power that is independent of Allah. They make the enormous mistake of rejecting Allah and seeking assistance from His creation instead. As a result, not only do they not receive the assistance they seek, but their entire lives are blighted by damaging exposure to the ignorance, capriciousness and other human failings of those they have relied on in preference to Allah.

Allah has ordered those who have faith not to fear other people but only to fear Him:

... Do not be afraid of people, be afraid of Me. And do not sell My Signs for a paltry price... (Surat al-Ma'ida: 44)

... You should not fear them but rather fear Me—and so that I can complete My blessing to you so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surat al-Baqara: 150)

Their Unscrupulousness and Ingratitude

There are many examples in the Qur'an of the ungratefulness of those who do not fear Allah. However, perhaps the most telling of them concerns the Children of Israel and their unscrupulousness and ingratitude towards Allah and His messengers.

The Children of Israel were bestowed with blessings never before granted to any other people. They were shown innumerable miracles and despite having prophets emerge from amongst them, there remained rebellious elements who were unmoved by any of this. The Prophet Musa (Moses) (as) patiently attempted to educate them, but they did not arrive at true obedience to Allah and true belief. When they witnessed Allah's wrath, they sought His forgiveness, and when His wrath abated, they reverted to their wrongdoing, even adopting other gods apart from Him. Whilst their prophets were engaged in difficult struggles with the disbelievers, the hypocrites amongst the Children of Israel were more interested in securing their own advantages and personal gains, and were never really sincere in the fulfilment of their obligations to Allah and His religion.

In a gross display of ingratitude, they abandoned their prophet, Musa (as), leaving him alone at the most critical stage of his struggle, concentrating instead on their own wellbeing and livelihoods. Then, as if this was not enough, they also displayed the most insolent and ungrateful attitude towards him.

They said, "We will never enter it, Musa, as long as they are there. So you and your Lord go and fight. We will stay sitting here." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 24)

It can be seen clearly from this that people such as these do not possess fear of Allah, therefore, when they are faced with anything that conflicts with their own interests they immediately become rebellious. In spite of the protection they received from Allah and His messengers against the oppression of their most aggressive enemy, the Egyptian Pharaoh, in spite of the countless blessings and the constant invitations to faith and eternal salvation, all of this was forgotten in an instant.

THE CONSEQUENCES SUFFERED BY THOSE WHO DO NOT FEAR ALLAH

Consequences experienced on Earth

Allah will make those people who do not fear Him and who are not cautious of Him suffer both physical and spiritual distress in this world. In reality their lives will be reduced to one long series of physical and emotional disasters.

In spite of all their wrong actions some of them allow themselves to be deceived by the fact that they may have been blessed with gifts such as wealth or good looks. Hence they persist in their excesses, fooling themselves that things could not be better. However, they are unaware that everything they do is being recorded second by second, and that in Hell, Allah will present them with it all as a source of endless punishment. Allah describes their situation in the Qur'an:

So leave them in their glut of ignorance for a while. Do they imagine that, in the wealth and children We extend to them, We are hastening to them with good things? No indeed, but they have no awareness! (Surat al-Muminun: 54-56)

However, it is not the same for all of them. Some will experience their punishments on Earth. They will be in a state of constant loss as they go through sickness, accidents, disabilities, financial crises and loss of loved ones. Because they do not reflect on these incidents as tests from Allah, the distress they face becomes a form of punishment for them. Allah will never allow anything to go right for these people. They will constantly experience shortages and setbacks. No matter what they are engaged in big or small, it will result in material or spiritual loss. Subsequently, Allah concludes in the Qur'an that their reward will be a life of distress:

But if anyone turns away from My reminder, his life will be a dark and narrow one and on the Day of Rising We will gather him blind. (Surah Ta Ha: 124)

The state of spiritual darkness experienced by people who do not fear Allah is reflected in their faces. When this lack of spiritual light is coupled with their distorted speech, the troubled nature of their existence is obvious. They are the physical embodiment of spiritual decadence and corruption. Allah has referred to this in the Qur'an as "debasement":

But as for those who have earned bad actions—a bad action will be repaid with one the like of it. Debasement will darken them. They will have no one to protect them from Allah. It is as if their faces were covered by dark patches of the night. Those are the Companions of the Fire, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surah Yunus: 27)

Another loss these people are made to suffer is the subtle withdrawal of their intellect and ability to comprehend. They cannot comprehend even the most basic of realities. For example, they are unable to see the reasons behind their state of unhappiness, fear, anxiety and frustration.

The range of punishments inflicted on those who do not fear Allah is endlessly varied. Allah created man and is perfectly aware of what will produce the greatest agony. Therefore, one can only try to imagine the pain and suffering occasioned by Allah's detestation:

... Allah's hatred of you, when you were called to faith but then chose disbelief, is even greater than your hatred of yourselves. (Surah Ghafir: 10)

Needless to say, nobody in their right mind would lay claim to behavior and attitudes which would lead them to the punishment of Allah. Man's inability to cope even with ordinary, everyday afflictions is clear proof of his weakness. For example, it is quite understandable that someone should find excruciating pain absolutely unbearable. However, it is also true that having to hear, even from a distance, the screaming of someone in agony is enough to cause indescribable distress. This is because mankind has not been created to endure spiritual and physical pain, fear or tension. We cannot withstand for long being enclosed in tight spaces, or being exposed to offensive odors, or the pain of a bad stomach ache or toothache. Let us bear in mind, these are not types of punishment but rather, ordinary afflictions which form a part of everyday life.

Despite these obvious realities, people in general lead a life far removed from fear of Allah due to their state of heedlessness and thoughtlessness. However, the spiritual and physical pains which are experienced on Earth are but a small example of the punishment they will face in Hell and serve only as an example and a warning. These people do not have any regard for Allah's infinite power and strength, however, when death reaches them, they will sense Allah's greatness with all its violence and severity and be gripped by a fear which is indescribable and incomparable to anything experienced on Earth.

Apart from individual punishments, the Qur'an is full of examples of groups of people who have perished under the punishments sent by Allah. These people perished in an instant due to their rebelliousness and non-compliance with Allah's limitations.

Allah has sent whirlwinds against some, which have ripped their homes apart, to others, he has sent a squall, which has levelled their cities to the ground. Concerning

earthquakes, so many groups of people have been buried with all their wealth, whilst others have been drowned, and others still have been turned to stone when encased in hot lava. (For further information, please see *Perished Nations* by Harun Yahya, Taha Publishers, London, 5th edition 2003)

Their Situation in the Hereafter

People have a very limited time on Earth of approximately sixty to seventy years. In the blink of an eye, fifty years of one's life have passed: one has finished school, found a proper job, bought a decent car, got suitably married, bought a house, had a couple of children and one's body is covered in wrinkles. With approximately five to ten years remaining, one senses the approach of death. However, what is striking is that some people will continue to deny its inevitability and become determined to lead the few years they have remaining without thinking about death. Allah cautions people who are in this situation:

How clear will be their hearing, how perfect their sight, on the Day they come to Us; whereas today the wrongdoers are clearly misguided. Warn them of the Day of Bitter Regret when the affair will be resolved. But they take no notice. They have no faith. (Surah Maryam: 38-39)

At the end of their prodigal lives these people assume they will gently surrender their souls to rest in eternal peace, but they are in for a rude awakening. Instead, when they least expect it, they will find themselves face to face with the angels of death assigned to them. These angels act on Allah's orders and are impervious to the begging and the pleading of their charges. When the angels of death come to take their souls with the violent shock of harsh blows to their backs and the searing pain, they will be perfectly aware of what is happening to them:

If only you could see when the angels take back those who disbelieved at their death, beating their faces and their backs [saying]: "Taste the punishment of the Burning!" (Surat al-Anfal: 50)

The crime committed by the disbelievers is a grievous one and their punishment will endure for all time. There will be no possibility of escape or release in death; in short, there is no means of rescue or salvation. This is because they have rebelled against Allah Who has created everything from nothing, the true Owner of everything, the Possessor of infinite power and knowledge, the Lord of the universe.

These people did not fear Allah whilst on Earth, so in the Hereafter He will subject them to fears the like of which they have never experienced or been faced with: they will be surrounded by fear, terror, and stress forever:

You will see the wrongdoers afraid of what they have earned, when it is about to land right on top of them... (Surat ash-Shura: 22)

These people who have led their entire lives heedlessly and whose end is fast approaching, will be assailed by a never ending fear and terror. Their lives are simply a drawn out prelude to the horrors to come at Allah's hands, Who has until then been **"merely deferring them to a Day on which their sight will be transfixed."** (Surah Ibrahim: 42) The fear they will endure on the Day of Judgment will be combined with bewilderment, as described in the Qur'an:

On the Day the Trumpet is blown and everyone in the heavens and everyone on the Earth is terrified—except those Allah wills, everyone will come to Him abject. (Surat an-Naml: 87)

On the Day of Judgment whilst people are in a state of panic, pregnant women will abort their babies because of this fear. The terror of the punishment they will be subjected to will render people mindless:

Mankind, fear your Lord! The quaking of the Hour is a terrible thing. On the day they see it, every nursing woman will be oblivious of the baby at her breast, and every pregnant woman will abort the contents of her womb, and you will think people drunk when they are not drunk; it is just that the punishment of Allah is so severe. (Surat al-Hajj: 1-2)

This is only the beginning. They will experience punishments which are beyond the power of imagination. Allah the Possessor of infinite power and justice will take revenge, bringing to bear His attribute of the Avenger (Muntaqim). Neither crying, begging, yelling, struggling, feeling remorse or imploring forgiveness will have any effect. Nobody will be able to assist the disbelievers. No matter what they do, it will not make any difference; whether they accept their sins and repent or not, whether they are steadfast or not, it is all too late. Allah has drawn attention to this hopeless struggle:

"Roast in it! And bear it patiently or do not bear it patiently. It makes no difference either way. You are simply being repaid for what you did." (Surat at-Tur: 16)

There is no way out for people who have reached this stage. Whilst they were on Earth they were constantly reminded throughout their lives with endless advice and fearsome warnings. Furthermore, they were given countless means and resources,

whereas the only thing required of them was that they should heed their consciences, fear Allah, and act with care.

They will plead for Allah's mercy, even though while they were on Earth their haughtiness and their pride prevented them from doing so, and also prevented them from preparing for their death and the accounting of the Hereafter. Therefore, on the Day of Judgment they are dragged along on their faces down to their place of punishment, where they will experience both physical and spiritual pains, the intensity of which they could never have imagined.

When the disbelievers are resurrected they will find their haughtiness has entirely evaporated and will be in a broken and sorrowful state. They will be driven into Hell and its doors will be closed behind them, and there they will be confronted with a scenario of pain and terror that defies any attempt at description before being thrown into the Fire itself. No pain on Earth could ever be compared with the agonies of Hell, since Allah has produced it as a punishment exceeding all punishments:

That Day no one will punish as He punishes and no one will shackle as He shackles. (Surat al-Fajr: 25-26)

Excruciating physical pain on the one hand, and unbearable spiritual agony on the other, will torture their victims. They will be constantly ill-treated, disgraced, degraded and belittled. The sense of hopelessness, of knowing that they will never ever emerge from Hell, will envelop their entire souls as they face an eternity of fear, terror and endless torment.

CONCLUSION

What a difference it would make to one's life if one were allowed to witness with one's own eyes the demons of Hell punishing their victims, the roaring of the flames, the mad yelling of the damned, their unbearable moaning and groaning, their writhing for breath and their frantic begging to be allowed to be returned to Earth.

Without a doubt, one would become a new person, one would rearrange one's entire life. The fact that everyone else might be oblivious to this reality would not prevent one from striving with all one's strength for the Hereafter. One would distance oneself from every form of behavior which is objectionable to Allah, and one would perform as many good actions as possible. One would shiver at the thought of committing the least transgression or making any remark that might jeopardize one's prospects in the Hereafter. One would immediately turn to Allah supplicating and begging for His forgiveness. The images of the things one had seen and heard would never leave one's mind, causing one to seek refuge with Allah for protection from a similar predicament.

To gain Allah's love and to be safe from His punishment such a person would devote all of his life, wealth and energy in His cause. Above all, he would be steadfast and determined to the death, even the worst hardship would become bearable. Nobody could distract him from his goal, he would be totally uncompromising in his pursuit of Allah's approval. He would take every opportunity to do as much as possible for his own benefit in the Hereafter. What other people do, what types of lifestyle they lead and what ideologies they follow would be of no concern to him whatsoever. With all his strength and all his effort, he would strive to gain Allah's love and affirmation. As well as being sensitive towards Allah's commands and prohibitions, he would also explain them to other people, advising and warning everyone he met as to the reality of life. His greatest goal, his life long ambition would be to gain Allah's friendship, submitting himself completely to Him. He would embody the type of fear described in the Qur'an:

... There are some rocks from which rivers gush out, and others which split open and water pours out, and others which crash down from fear of Allah... (Surat al-Baqara: 74)

If it is the fact that we have not seen Hell that is preventing some people from fearing Allah as they should and being cautious in their daily lives, it should suffice that He has indicated the existence of Hell repeatedly in the Qur'an, describing it in all its details and warning people against it.

When the time comes there will be no one who will not see Hell. Allah has made this absolutely clear. Only those who fear Allah will be saved from it, the others will be left in it on their knees:

There is not one of you who will not come to it. That is the final decision of your Lord. Then We will rescue the righteous [who fear Allah] and We will leave the wrongdoers in it on their knees. (Surah Maryam: 71-72)

However, there will be no benefit or advantage to be gained from seeing Hell at this point, because then, one is already beyond the point of no return...

THE DECEPTION OF EVOLUTION

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

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

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

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

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

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

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.
- 2) No scientific finding shows that the “evolutionary mechanisms” proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.
- 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.

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

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

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

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

“Life Comes From Life”

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

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

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

However, five years after the publication of Darwin’s book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin’s theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: “Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment.”¹

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

Inconclusive Efforts of the Twentieth Century

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

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.²

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

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.³

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁴

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

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁵

The Complex Structure of Life

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

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} is considered to be impossible in practical terms.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have

to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.⁶

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

Imaginary Mechanism of Evolution

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

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

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

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

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁷

Lamarck’s Impact

So, how could these “favorable variations” occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁸

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

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

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

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

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

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁹

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

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

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

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

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

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

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

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹⁰

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

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

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

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find—over and over again—not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹¹

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

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification.

If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.¹²

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

The Tale of Human Evolution

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

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

Evolutionists call man’s so-called first ape-like ancestors *Australopithecus*, which means “South African ape.” These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹³

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as “homo,” that is “man.” According to their claim, the living beings in the *Homo* series are more developed than *Australopithecus*. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century’s most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that “particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation.”¹⁴

By outlining the link chain as *Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another’s ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time.¹⁵

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neandarthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.¹⁶

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

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (*A. africanus*, the robust australopithecines, and *H. habilis*), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.¹⁷

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

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

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

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man’s fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible—and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.¹⁸

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

Darwinian Formula!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now for once, examine what kind of a superstition the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution asserts that life is formed by chance. According to this claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us think about that. When we bring together the elements that are the building-blocks of life such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium, only a heap is formed. No matter what treatments it undergoes, this atomic heap cannot form even a single living being. If you like, let us formulate an “experiment” on this subject and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without pronouncing loudly under the name “Darwinian formula”:

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids—which have no possibility of forming under natural conditions—and as many proteins—a single one of which has a formation probability of 10^{-950} —as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a human's formation. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope. They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons, figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with Allah's superior creation.

The theory of evolution, which claims the opposite, is a total fallacy completely contrary to reason. Thinking even a little bit on the claims of evolutionists discloses this reality, just as in the above example.

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

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

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

The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have

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

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

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

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

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

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music

industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

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

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

The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electro-chemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

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

A Materialist Faith

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

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

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

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

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.¹⁹

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

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

The Theory of Evolution: The Most Potent Spell in the World

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as “the most potent spell in history.” Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples’ powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of the Prophet Musa (pbuh) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, Allah has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur’an. In many verse, He reveals in many verses that some peoples’ minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara: 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A`raf: 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: “Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!” (Surat al-Hijr: 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, “magic” is the only possible explanation for

people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, the Qur'an relates the incident of Prophet Musa and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told Prophet Musa to meet with his own magicians. When Musa did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Surat al-A`raf: 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Musa and those who believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as the verse puts it.

We revealed to Musa, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A`raf: 117-118)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge also stated this:

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.²⁰

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

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

NOTES

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