

THE PAINS OF THE FALSE WORLD

**The life of this world is nothing but
a game and a diversion. The abode
of the Hereafter—that is truly
life if they only knew.
(Qur'an, 29:64)**

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CONTENTS

Introduction

Are You Aware You Are Living in a False World?

The Lives of Believers Who Have Understood
the Transitory Nature of the Blessings of this World

The True Sphere of Life: The Hereafter

Conclusion

The Deception of Evolution

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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 books, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

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

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

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

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

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

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 pen-name 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 his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the Final Scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (saas), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), 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 effect in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

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

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

INTRODUCTION

Throughout every moment of our lives, we encounter countless blessings and beauties created for us by Allah: the air we breathe, the varied and impressively lovely sights in nature, the splendid beauty in animals, plants and flowers are all examples of this incontestable fact. They, along with many other wonders of the natural world, all have a powerful impact upon the human soul. Yet there is one important fact about the beauties of this world which needs to be understood by man. As our Lord has revealed in His Book, **"the life of this world is just the enjoyment of delusion"** (Surah Al 'Imran, 185).

The illusory and transitory nature of the life of this world stems from the fact that it is not permanent, that it will one day come to an end. As the Qur'an states, **"He Who created death and life to test which of you is best in action"** (Surat al-Mulk, 2), Allah has created the Earth and the blessings of the world in order to test man, to separate those who are committed to behaving in a godly manner from those who embrace evil rather than good. Each of us will remain here for only a short time and can only enjoy these blessings for a limited period, according to Allah's will. It is the Hereafter in which people will live their true lives. This is how Allah has revealed in the Qur'an that the Hereafter represents one's true life:

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The abode of the Hereafter—that is truly Life if they only knew. (Surat al-'Ankabut, 64)

It is therefore a major error for any person to become disproportionately infatuated with the world's transitory blessings during his brief existence in this life. Recalling that the benefits of this world are ultimately worthless, Allah has issued a warning:

... taking the goods of this lower world, and saying, "We will be forgiven." But if similar goods come to them again they still take them. Has not a covenant been made with them in the Book, that they should only say the truth about Allah and have they not studied what is in it? The Final Abode is better for those who guard against evil. Will you not use your intellect? (Surat al-A'raf, 169)

In one of his hadiths, the Prophet Muhammad (saas) also set out the difference between Paradise and this world with his characteristic eloquence:

*Narrated Abu Huraira: **The Prophet (saas) said, "A place in Paradise as small as a bow is better than all that on which the sun rises and sets (i.e. all the world)."*** The same hadith is reported in these terms by Anas bin Malik, **"A place in**

Paradise as small as the bow or lash of one of you is better than all the world and whatever is in it." (Bukhari)

As revealed by our Prophet (saas), the blessings in this world are merely miniscule manifestations of the blessings of Paradise. No matter how attractive, impressive and permanent the blessings of the life of this world may appear, we must never forget this important truth which lies behind every single one of them. One must know that becoming caught up in the false adornments of this world—which itself is but a mere deception—will lead to disappointment in this world and a horrible fate in the next. At all times, one must act in accordance with that knowledge.

Allah has promised that He will give **"a good life"** to those who seek the Hereafter. There, they will experience the true life promised to them in the Qur'an. (Surat an-Nahl, 97) On the other hand, there is a **"dark and narrow life"** for people in the life of this world:

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

Believers are aware of these truths revealed in the Qur'an. They know that all that they experience within this world is part of a test set for them by the Lord of the Worlds. For that reason, they feel no great passion for the blessings of this world, which at first glance appear to be so attractive. They instead spend their whole lives in such a way as to attain the Hereafter promised to them. They view Allah's approval as their aim and attach only such value to the life of this world as necessary. Their lives therefore pass pleasantly and their hearts, filled to the brim with love for the Creator, are at peace. On the other hand, those people who are unaware of these truths—or know them but choose to ignore them—generally suffer troubles and unhappiness due to their passionate attachment to a false world.

In this book, we shall be considering—by using examples which may be encountered at any time and any place—the unnecessary sufferings and woes of those who are deceived by the false baubles of this world. We shall also explore ways in which these can be avoided and the trouble-free lives of believers who spend all their energies on attaining the Hereafter, their true abode. Recalling Allah's revelation in the Qur'an, **"Anything you have been given is only the enjoyment of the life of this world and its finery. What is with Allah is better and longer lasting. So will you not use your intellect?"** (Surat al-Qasas, 60), we shall be inviting people to lead lives better suited to the approval of Allah.

ARE YOU AWARE YOU ARE LIVING IN A FALSE WORLD?

Reason is the most important distinguishing feature between believers and unbelievers. Reason, an intellectual gift from Allah, is a characteristic of servants who believe in Him. It develops in proportion to an individual's faith and fear of and submission to Him. Fear of Allah and sincere faith endow the individual with an understanding which allows him or her to act in accordance with the good pleasure of Allah at every moment of his or her life. Using their conscience, such people choose to behave in the manner most compatible with the Qur'an, as a result of which they acquire a high standard of behavior which prevails throughout their lives. Allah has revealed this mercy on believers in the Qur'an:

You who believe! If you fear [and respect] 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)

On the other hand, no matter how clever an unbeliever may be, so long as he lacks faith, he can never possess the reason with which to correctly comprehend the nature of the world in which he lives, nor what he needs to do as a consequence. That is because reason is a very different thing to intelligence; it cannot be acquired by hard work and experience, nor by solving mathematical problems or by occupying one's self in complicated academic processes. Reason is a power of comprehension and understanding which comes about by the will of Allah and belongs only to those who have faith. Allah has revealed in many verses of the Qur'an how deniers lack true reason. Some of these read as follows:

... Those who did not believe invented lies against Allah. Most of them do not use their intellect. (Surat al-Ma'ida, 103)

The likeness of those who do not believe 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)

The worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf and dumb who have no intellect. (Surat al-Anfal, 22)

One of the principal reasons that unbelievers imagine this world they live in to be real, forget about the Hereafter and seek only to fulfill their earthly desires is that, as revealed in the verses, they have "no intellect." They therefore imagine that their whole lives are restricted to this world. Their narrow-minded perspectives on events and other judgments are nearly all directed towards this world. They see only the superficial aspects of the life of this world, are unable to comprehend its true purpose and spend their lives being totally forgetful of the Hereafter. Allah reveals the following about such people in the Qur'an:

They know an outward aspect of the life of this world but are heedless of the Hereafter. Have they not reflected within themselves? Allah did not create the heavens and the Earth and everything between them except with truth and for a fixed term. Yet many people reject the meeting with their Lord. (Surat ar-Rum, 7-8)

However, the fact is that via the verses of the Qur'an, Allah has provided information about the true face of the life of this world and has warned people not to be seduced by it.

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

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The Hereafter is better for those who guard against evil. So will you not use your intellect? (Surat al-An'am, 32)

In other verses, Allah has reminded people that they are ignoring the Hereafter, where they will spend their real lives:

No indeed! But you love this fleeting world and you disregard the Hereafter. (Surat al-Qiyama, 20-21)

There can be no doubt that such behavior will inflict eternal losses upon those who do not reflect upon the magnitude of Allah's words.

Imam Ghazali, a worthy Islamic scholar and man of high wisdom, once issued a reminder on this subject, describing how the transitory blessings of this world were dull and worthless compared to those to be granted by Allah in the Hereafter. Ghazali called upon people to seek the good pleasures of the Hereafter:

... In contrast to those peoples' stations, the ranks of the rulers in this world are small and dull—incomparably so. Allah speaks thus of the sultanate of the Hereafter, "**Seeing them, you see delight and a great kingdom [sultanate]**" (Surat al-Insan, 20).

Elevate the goods of the Hereafter, which Allah has described as such a great sultanate! Full well you know that the world and those things in it are few and worthless. Life is short, the span of the blessings of this world is short and very brief. Yet we muster our souls and possessions to acquire that very little and enjoy it for so short a time. Some of us achieve this, and others fail but envy those who do. They never look to see how they endanger their souls and possessions to acquire this. (Imam Ghazali, Minhajul Abidin, p. 319)

REAL LIFE LIES IN THE HEREAFTER

It is through the guidance of the Qur'an that people learn the purpose behind their creation. They understand how they should serve Allah and they appreciate the truths about life itself. As set out in the preceding pages, we are informed in the Qur'an that **"the true life"** is that of the Hereafter. As revealed in the verses, therefore, the world we are living in at present is merely a "diversion," "a place of trial." When a person crosses over to the life of the Hereafter, all that will remain of this world will be brief memories in his or her mind. Compared to the Hereafter, the life of this world resembles "the blink of an eye," as in the following example:

Imagine that you are sitting happily by the banks of a river one lovely spring day. Imagine that a light breeze makes the air cool and refreshing. Can you hear the delightful sound of the bubbling waters? Can you see the wonderful flowers, each more lovely than the last? Imagine that you are talking to a dear friend as you enjoy these beauties; imagine you are smelling the pure scent of the flowers on the air and listening to the sweet chirping of the birds. Imagine that as you are enjoying all these sensations you then wake up and find yourself lying in bed. In such a case, you would realize that everything you imagined to be real was in fact nothing but a dream: a figment of your imagination, which suddenly evaporated.

Let us now imagine the same situation after you have woken up. Let us assume that you really are talking to a dear friend, enjoying all those sights and sounds by the banks of a sublime river.

If someone were to ask "which of the two would you prefer?" after you had experienced both, you would of course say, "the one after I had woken up." The reason is that what goes on in our dreams remains in our dreams and benefits a person nothing in real life. Nobody can seriously feel sorrow at what he or she has lost in a dream since he or she knows that these have no effect on real life. No matter how much delight a person takes in a dream, this can never give as much pleasure as when he or she is awake and in the real world.

In the same way, the life of this world is dream-like, very short and transitory when compared to the Hereafter. Like returning from the world of the imagination to the real world on awakening from a dream, the life of this world which seems so real now will shortly come to an end and your real, eternal life will begin in the Hereafter. This is how the Qur'an describes how people realize that they stayed only a short time in the life of this world:

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

In another verse, Allah has warned people by revealing that rather like the harvest which sprouts with the rain but then turns dry and brittle, the life of this world is a place of deception and will inevitably one day come to an end:

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

That being the case, to ignore this reality and to become embroiled in transient blessings of this world, and then to suffer the inevitable turmoil, would be an error of the most grievous nature. Believers know that the blessings of this world are a gift from Allah and must be used as means with which to attain His approval. In return for this godly approach, Allah makes everything that believers do auspicious and rewards them with eternal Paradise in the life of the Hereafter.

Those who make do with this world and who are unable to see its true face make little or no effort to attain the Afterlife. Since they imagine the world they live in to be real, they unwisely make all their plans with it in mind. Although Allah sometimes bestows blessings on them in the light of His wisdom, a severe loss still awaits them in the Afterlife, where they will experience their real lives. Allah has revealed the situation of these people, in the life of this world and that of the Hereafter, in the Qur'an:

If anyone desires to cultivate the Hereafter, We will increase him in his cultivation. If anyone desires to cultivate this world, We will give him some of it but he will have no share in the Hereafter. (Surat ash-Shura, 20)

... Say: "Enjoy your unbelief for a little while. You are among the Companions of the Fire." (Surat az-Zumar, 8)

No indeed! We have given these people enjoyment, as We did their fathers, until life seemed long and good to them. Do they not see how We come to the land eroding it from its extremities? Or are they the victors? (Surat al-Anbiya', 44)

Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves. Let false hope divert them. They will soon know. (Surat al-Hijr, 3)

People should pay attention to these reminders in order to stay clear of such a fate in the Hereafter.

THE BEAUTIES OF THIS WORLD ARE IMPERFECT AND FLAWED

This world is dream-like. In the same way that the taste and feeling of satisfaction imparted by the apple one eats in a dream are nothing compared to those of the apple one eats when one is awake, so the pleasure one receives from this world's actions is a poor man's version of its equivalent in the Hereafter. In the Qur'an, Allah warns people against the deceptive nature of the life of this world:

... 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)

Allah created man from clay and breathed His own soul into him; in other words, He created man from "nothing." Allah knows all of the characteristics of human beings and He is fully aware of their earthly desires. He knows of their weaknesses, wishes, the things they enjoy or need, their doubts and fears, in short everything, better than they do themselves. Allah reveals how close He is to us in another verse:

We created man and We know what his own self whispers to him. We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (Surah Qaf, 16)

Human beings always feel a deep longing for perfection in their souls. As a requirement of the testing they undergo, Allah, Who knows all their desires and passions, has created the life of this world with flaws and imperfections alongside its countless blessings. People, if they wish to be spiritually successful, must strive to overcome these imperfections and rid themselves of flaws in order to pass the test erected in front of them by the Lord. However, one must always bear in mind the fact that it is still impossible for them to achieve the desired level of perfection. Allah has made this perfection unique to Paradise and to those of His servants deserving of bliss.

In the life of this world, a struggle with a great many more imperfections is necessary just in order to survive; human beings, without exception, need to eat every day, sleep, protect themselves from illness, wash and take care of themselves. In exactly the same way, they need to use their reason and conscience at all times in order to protect themselves from the evils of earthly desires and to exhibit proper moral values.

As revealed in the Qur'an, **"He is Allah—the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Everything in the heavens and**

Earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise." (Surat al-Hashr, 24), Allah's creation is flawless. Our Lord has the power to accomplish all and to create everything He so desires. Yet He encourages human beings to think by creating flaws and imperfections in the life of this world.

When considered in its components and compared to the perfection of the life of Paradise, the wisdom in the imperfections in the life of this world can be more easily comprehended. To give an example, no matter what, an individual can go no longer than two or three days—if that—without sleeping. There then follows a gradual loss of consciousness and that person loses all touch with reality. Similarly, a person who goes several days without washing becomes dirty and will feel an immense physical discomfort. A person also needs to feed and look after him or herself on a regular basis in order to survive. Falling ill is another serious imperfection. That is because human beings are so helpless that even a germ or virus, so small as to be invisible to the naked eye, can result in sickness and oblige the individual to do nothing but rest for weeks on end. In such an event, the person becomes weak and takes little pleasure from most things. The individual concerned will no doubt become highly dependant on the help and care of other people.

On account of His infinite compassion, our Lord has also created the means by which people can overcome the imperfections they encounter in the life of this world; foodstuffs which confer strength and power, materials which can be used for cleaning and bodily maintenance, and medicines capable of curing illness are all manifestations of Allah's compassion for and protection of His creatures.

Alongside such physical imperfections in the life of this world, there are also spiritual ones: the way a person's heart may be troubled, and feeling of doubt or fear are examples of this. Moreover, earthly passions are never satisfied for long; an activity embarked on with enormous enthusiasm soon becomes wearisome. These are all just some of the imperfections specially created by Allah in this world.

However, let us also note that although the spiritual difficulties in the life of this world turn into great suffering for those without faith, believers live far distant from them. Human beings are created with a great many negative features in their desires; yet faith and a fear of Allah will shelter them from these evils and the weaknesses of their own passions, their own worldliness. Binding oneself to Allah with sincere faith and submission prevents a person from suffering such spiritual troubles as fatigue, despair and sorrow. On the other hand, the above-mentioned spiritual difficulties result in horrible crises for non-believers.

With all these flaws and imperfections He has created, Allah reveals to us the false face of this world which He has created solely to test us in our faith. The individual thus longs for a life in which there is no imperfection, in which everything is flawless and complete—for Paradise. In Paradise, people will live forever with no troubles of any kind,

never becoming weary and never become bored of that which they are given by Allah. As He reveals in the Qur'an:

They will say, "Praise be to Allah Who has removed all sadness from us. Truly our Lord is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Thankful: He Who has lodged us, out of His favor, in the Abode of Permanence where no weariness or fatigue affects us." (Surat al-Fatir, 34-35)

In another verse, Allah has revealed that in Paradise believers will find everything their hearts desire:

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." (Surah Fussilat, 30-31)

Since unbelievers do not believe in the existence of the Hereafter, they vainly try to fulfill this aspect of their desires from the life of this world. They wrongly think that the more blessings of this world they can acquire, the happier they will be. Therefore, as revealed in the verse, **"Leave the person I created on his own to Me alone, him to whom I have given great wealth, and sons who stay with him, and whose way I have smoothed. Then he wants Me to add yet more!"** (Surat al-Muddaththir, 11-15), they chase after the offerings of this world with great passion and cupidity.

However, the fact is that no number of material items will bring a person the happiness he or she seeks. That is because the emptiness in the hearts of unbelievers which they seek to fill with material values actually stem from the fact that they lead their lives far distant from Allah. Allah has created human beings in such a way that they can only find peace by remembering Him. Someone who fails to remember Allah wastes his or her life. Such people erroneously imagine that goods, property, rank or fame guarantee great happiness.

Only in the Hereafter will they realize the ultimate hollowness of the efforts they expended in this world. In return for their rejection of Allah in this world, they will encounter bitter suffering in the next. This is such a horrendous torment that they will happily give up all that was dear to them in this world to be freed from it: their families, their friends, the goods they were so deeply attached to and which they sought to add to by working day and night. Allah has revealed the situation of the unbelievers in the Hereafter:

If every self that did wrong possessed everything on Earth, it would offer it as a ransom. They will show remorse when they see the punishment.

Everything will be decided between them justly. They will not be wronged. (Surah Yunus, 54)

If those who did wrong owned everything on Earth, and the same again with it, they would offer it as a ransom to save themselves from the evil of the punishment on the Day of Resurrection. What confronts them from Allah will be something they did not reckon with. (Surat az-Zumar, 47)

... [T]hey can see each other. An evildoer will wish he could ransom himself from the punishment of that Day, by means of his sons, or his wife or his brother or his family who sheltered him or everyone else on Earth, if that only meant that he could save himself. But no! It is a Raging Blaze... (Surat Al-Ma'arij, 11-15)

It is those who have faith and who live for the good pleasure of Allah who will be saved both from the troubles of this world and the eternal suffering in the Afterlife. In the Qur'an, Allah gives those who demonstrate that morality the news of a pleasing life in both this world and the next:

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)

The great Islamic scholar Abdul-Qadir Gilani has also reminded people not to be led astray by the distractions of this world but to work to gain our Lord's approval and the Afterlife, and that in the event he has exhibited such moral values, a person will find the most auspicious of everything in the Hereafter:

Let not your main endeavors be such simple things as eating, drinking, dressing up and getting married. (That is because these are not ends in themselves, but means to achieve ends. Do not confuse the means with the ends.) Where is the endeavor of the heart and the secret? That is what one must know and find. Have no doubt but that this is nothing other than a desire for Allah. This must be your labor and your most important concern. In that event let your most sincere and serious endeavor be the Lord and the things in His sight...

The Hereafter is the opposite of this world. The Creator is the opposite of the people. Know how to turn from this world to the Hereafter, from people to the Creator...

Everything you abandon in this world you will find in a more auspicious form in the Hereafter. Be as ready as if you had but one more day to live..." (Abdul-Qadir Gilani, Gonul Incileri Ikazlar (Warnings of the Pearls of the Heart), translated into Turkish by Celal Yildirim, Bahar Yayinlari, pp. 27-29)

PASSION AND DESIRE ARE OBSTACLES TO HAPPINESS

Allah reveals in the Qur'an that people's earthly desires contain two distinct elements. One of these is the "conscience," which commands what is good and prohibits what is evil; the other is *fujoor*, which commands what is evil. The word *fujoor* means engaging in sin and rebellion: telling lies, turning one's back on what is right, disobeying just laws, moral collapse and that which is an affront to godliness. In other words, the concept referred to here as *fujoor* includes all the negative features of the human ego. In the Qur'an, Allah reveals that He has inspired both *fujoor* and conscience, which impels human beings to avoid the former:

And [I swear by] the self and what proportioned it and inspired it with *fujoor* [depravity] or *taqwa* [sense of duty], he who purifies it has succeeded, he who covers it up has failed. (Surat ash-Shams, 7-10)

The second important feature of immoral desires drawn attention to in the Qur'an is "passion" and "greed." Someone who contents himself with the life of this world and fails to consider the Hereafter is devoted to all he possesses with "passion" and "greed." He or she starts to live as if death and the Afterlife were far away. In fact, in societies which live far removed from the moral values of the Qur'an, peoples' passions are praised and honored. The more people are attached to the life of this world and the more efforts they make to attain its benefits, the more they are esteemed by others who share the same twisted mindset. Yet this is a grave error. Of course, a person must strive to have a pleasant life and must always seek to do his or her best. Yet that determination and will must be directed at the kind of life approved of by Allah. Otherwise it would be a terrible mistake, in forgetting our Lord, Who gives them all they possess, for people to be caught up in worldly desires and to live a life far removed from the moral values of the Qur'an.

Attention is drawn to unbelievers' passionate attachment to the things of this world in the verse, **"And you have an insatiable love of wealth"** (Surat al-Fajr, 20). In another verse, **"The enjoyment of this world is very brief. The Hereafter is better for those who guard against evil"** (Surat an-Nisa', 77), Allah reminds us that the blessings people are so passionately fond of are the enjoyment of the life of this world. The word "enjoyment" in this context means worthless things, ultimately condemned to vanish. The blessings of this world which people so greedily desire are false and worthless compared to those of the Hereafter.

THOSE DECEIVED BY THE FALSE WORLD ARE ALWAYS TROUBLED

Every event people experience throughout their lives, every word they speak, every image they see: they are all created by Allah, the Lord of the Universe. Knowing this and living by the comfort this knowledge inspires is one of the greatest joys of life and faith. People who are aware of Allah's dominion over the entire universe, who know that He will always create what is best and most auspicious, behave in a submissive and accepting way. Their hearts are therefore always at ease. They know that Allah creates everything in the light of a specific destiny, with goodness and wisdom, and act in all they do with the confidence this knowledge brings with it. This submissive attitude of believers is revealed in another verse:

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

No matter what may befall them, believers, who know that everything is under the control of Allah, never fall into despair in the face of any trouble or difficulty. They always try to see the positive aspect of everything. Everything a person will think or say throughout his or her life is set out down in the minutest detail by Allah before he or she is even born. The individual encounters these events set out for him or her when the time is right. Since believers know that everything in their destiny has been created in such a way as to have an auspicious conclusion, they are always submissive to that destiny and feel secure and at ease. In the Qur'an, Allah has revealed:

Nothing occurs, either in the Earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen. That is something easy for Allah. That is so that you will not be grieved about the things that pass you by or exult about the things that come to you. Allah does not love any vain or boastful man. (Surat al-Hadid, 22-23)

Those who are unable to comprehend these truths wrong themselves by being taken in by the enjoyment of this world. Since they make the mistake of thinking that events take place independently of Allah, they seek means of intervening in them. The way that events may appear to be going "badly" or "against them" is a source of constant sorrow and inescapable discontent for such people. On account of these erroneous beliefs, they are constantly stressed out; they lie awake at the slightest trouble, their nerves suffer and they undergo physical and spiritual harm. They resort to various means to rid themselves of these difficulties; they may seek relief by taking part

in amusements of various sorts or by not thinking at all. Yet, it is impossible for such measures to bring them true peace and happiness. That is because, as revealed by Allah in the verse, **"Those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace"** (Surat ar-Ra'd, 28). A person can only find peace by turning to Allah, submitting to our Lord and living by the moral values He ordains.

Although Allah has shown people the way to free themselves from dissatisfaction and to experience true happiness, those who deliberately turn their backs on this merely **"wrong themselves."** Allah reveals the situation of such people in another verse:

Allah does not wrong people in any way; rather it is people who wrong themselves. (Surah Yunus, 44)

In the same way that unbelievers who look for comfort and peace—to escape the stress and problems they suffer and to restore their good spirits—fail to find what they seek in this world, they also suffer a loss in the Hereafter which cannot be revoked. As they turn from the path of Allah, the things such people seek are described in the Qur'an as serving no other purpose than **"increasing their ruin"** in the Afterlife:

We did not wrong them; rather they wronged themselves. The deities they called upon besides Allah did not help them at all when Allah's command came upon them. They did nothing but increase their ruin. (Surah Hud, 101)

It must not be forgotten that in many verses of the Qur'an, Allah has revealed that He forgives people and accepts their repentance. A person may make many mistakes until finally becoming aware of these truths. Yet the important thing is to understand that he or she is on the wrong path, repent and attempt to live by the moral values ordained by our Lord. It is revealed in the Qur'an, in an address to his people by Prophet Salih (as), what they needed to do to attain the good pleasure of Allah:

To Thamud We sent their brother Salih. He said: "My people, worship Allah! You have no deity apart from Him. He brought you into being from the earth and made you its inhabitants. So ask His forgiveness and then repent to Him. My Lord is close and quick to respond." (Surah Hud, 61)

Our Lord also reveals, in another verse, that He will respond immediately to any prayer:

If My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me. They should therefore respond to Me and believe in Me so that hopefully they will be rightly guided. (Surat al-Baqara, 186)

UNBELIEVERS: THEY WEARY THEMSELVES AND LABOR IN VAIN

Nearly all people try to succeed in something in the life of this world. No matter how different the areas they interest themselves in may be, human beings all have one common aim: to be recompensed for their efforts and labors. Those who ignore the Hereafter believe that being rewarded for their labor in this world is worth all the problems involved.

However, the fact is that these people are ignoring one very important factor: the approval of Allah. What actually makes an action and its outcome valuable is Allah's approval of that individual and the action partaken in. Any effort expended or success achieved in an activity undertaken without aiming at His approval is only temporary, just like the life of this world. For that reason, Allah has described the efforts expended by unbelievers and such things as they do as "**mirage**." When these people proceed to the Afterlife they will see—unless Allah in His Mercy wishes otherwise—that all their labors and the efforts they took such joy in are all empty:

But the actions of those who do not believe are like a mirage in the desert. A thirsty man thinks it is water but when he reaches it, he finds it to be nothing at all, but he finds Allah there. He will pay him his account in full. Allah is swift at reckoning. (Surat an-Nur, 39)

As we have seen, unless a person acts bearing the approval of Allah in mind, even if he does the most important thing in the world, this may still be of no worth in the Lord's sight. So long as a person fails to act in conformity with the approval of Allah, the esteem felt for him or her by all those around or his or her recognition as a performer of good deeds cannot prevent those actions proving empty. This is how Allah describes in the Qur'an the position in the Hereafter of those who imagine that they are doing good deeds:

People whose efforts in the life of this world are misguided while they suppose that they are doing good. (Surat al-Kahf, 104)

After death, the misguided soul will come to realize that all that he chased after with such enthusiasm is ultimately worthless in comparison to the blessings of the Hereafter. This will be a cause of immeasurable and eternal disappointment. Learning

that a lifetime's efforts have all been for naught will make a general regret become an eternal regret. Allah describes the position of such people in the Hereafter in the following terms:

But such people will have nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire. What they achieved here will come to nothing. What they did will prove to be null and void. (Surah Hud, 16)

There can be no doubt that nobody will wish their lifetime's endeavors come to nothing. The solution therefore is to strive not for a transitory world but for the true, eternal life of the Hereafter. If a person aims at attaining the approval of Allah in all that he or she does and expends all his or her endeavors in order to live by the moral values ordained by our Lord, then he or she may hope for full recompense for even the slightest good deed. In one verse Allah reveals the advice given by Prophet Luqman (as) to his son:

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

In another verse He reveals that He will increase from His favor to the right actions performed by believers:

As for those who believe and do right actions, He will pay them their wages in full and will give them increase from His favor. As for those who show disdain and grow arrogant, He will punish them with a painful punishment. They will not find any protector or helper for themselves besides Allah. (Surat an-Nisa', 173)

What a person on the wrong path therefore needs to do is to repent before it is too late and to turn to our Lord:

Respond to your Lord before a Day comes from Allah which cannot be turned back. On that Day you will have no hiding-place and no means of denial. (Surat ash-Shura, 47)

**ALLAH PUNISHES THE UNBELIEVERS,
BOTH IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT**

By Allah's will, people caught up in the false face of the world are not just recompensed for their errors in the Hereafter but during the life of this world also. Even the wealthiest or seemingly most knowledgeable person in the world will generally find no happiness in these attributes if he or she fails to live by the moral values of the Qur'an. On account of their denial, Allah fills the hearts of such people with unease, spiritual discomfort and restlessness. Although they live surrounded by blessings which appeal to their earthly desires they still take no real pleasure in them. No matter how happy and content they may appear, this is generally deceptive.

The unease experienced by unbelievers spreads into every area of their lives. Their failure to appreciate the might of Allah, to think about destiny and look on events with a positive eye, and to exhibit proper moral values all guarantee trouble for them. Moreover, since they are unable to understand how the moral values of the Qur'an offer the individual a perfect and peaceful life, they imagine that everyone in the world suffers just the same troubles as they do. Yet those troubles in fact stem entirely from their own imperfections. Allah has revealed in the Qur'an that on account of their denial, there is suffering for those who turn aside from the true path, in this world and the next:

... Anyone misguided by Allah has no guide. They will receive punishment in the life of this world and the punishment of the Hereafter is harsher still. They have no defender against Allah. (Surat ar-Ra'd, 33-34)

When we examine various aspects of the lives of unbelievers, the unhappiness which encompasses such people is clear to see. We can see how all-encompassing and influential this trouble is. Some peoples' greatest dream from childhood is to make a lot of money, become rich and spend that money howsoever they choose. This is so important to them that they will make any sacrifice to achieve that end. When their student years come to an end and they begin to find themselves undertaking serious responsibilities, they imagine that they are now in a position to deal with the difficulties life may confront them with.

Since they fail to consider that it is Allah Who gives human beings their daily bread and Who grants blessings and takes them away as He wishes, they wear themselves out in order to achieve such transitory benefits as wealth or position. They are essentially defeated by their own worldview. Much of the time, they are forced to give up things they love as they strive for this end which they believe will bring happiness and contentment. They may eventually attain the enjoyment of this world at the end of this chase for glory, through so much difficulty and trouble. Yet the outcome is again no different. In addition to all the trouble they experience in attaining their desires, they also begin to feel uneasy out of a fear of losing them. They have no idea how to be happy with what they have and make do with those blessings in their possession. They constantly complain about the situation they are in and lament over the things they do

not possess. Even the sight of someone wealthier, more cultured, more talented or apparently better looking than themselves is sufficient to undermine their morale.

They make great efforts not to allow their state of mind to show. They seek distraction and amusement and to free their souls from trouble in a variety of activities. They may indeed sometimes achieve happiness on a temporary and superficial level. At such times, they are happy on the surface; yet this is not a permanent happiness. They feel massive doubt and fear yet they are so careful not to show this to the world. Indeed, even if they forget their woes for a time, they can at any moment fall victim once again to despair, pessimism and sorrow because they do not submit themselves to Allah. When a jovial businessman suddenly remembers his debts; or a student regrets his poor marks; or the elderly look back on their lost youth; or the bereaved recall happy times they spent with their deceased friends—these thoughts can give rise to sorrow and numbness. And it is similarly sobering for any of them when they realize that death, the inevitable end, is approaching.

Whether these people are rich or poor, old or young, attractive or ugly makes no difference. Someone obliged to labor under difficult conditions from morning to night is in exactly the same position as another person who enjoys total well-being and has no need to assume any responsibilities at all. They constantly experience the difficulty of being unable to enjoy true interest, concern, love and affection from those around them. Since they imagine that the tasks they perform regularly every day and the responsibilities they bear will never come to an end, they feel a great weariness in their bodies, minds and hearts. They are indeed aware of how monotonous and meaningless their lives are and their inability to find a solution is a cause of major restlessness.

So long as they fail to believe in Allah, people in that position can never escape their doubts and troubles. They unequivocally fail to seek shelter in Allah. They do not abide by the road He has set out. They seek to adapt themselves to the lives they lead and regard troubles and difficulties as normal parts of life.

In truth, Allah is punishing the unbelievers for their deeds with all these troubles they experience while they are still alive. Since they ignore the life of the Hereafter, their true life, and turn to the false things of this world, the sufferings of this world are never-ending for them.

As revealed in the Qur'an: **"So Allah made them taste disgrace in the life of this world and the punishment of the Hereafter is far worse if they only knew."** (Surat az-Zumar, 26)

Even greater suffering awaits them in the Afterlife. They will realize the truth of the Hereafter but having ignored it in this world, it will be of no use to them whatsoever. They will be recompensed with the curse and torment of Allah for their deeds:

**The Companions of the Garden will call out to the Companions of the Fire:
"We have found that what our Lord promised us is true. Have you found that**

what your Lord promised you is true?" They will say: "Yes, we have!" Between them a herald will proclaim: "May the curse of Allah be on the wrongdoers, those who bar access to the way of Allah, seeking in it something crooked, and reject the Hereafter." (Surat al-A'raf, 44-45)

FALSE VALUES OF A FALSE WORLD

Those people who forget the Hereafter and imagine this world to be the be-all and end-all of existence have constructed for themselves a moral system far removed from that of the Qur'an. They may sometimes give the appearance of behaving in line with the attitudes ordained in the Qur'an but even while doing so, they still act with a worldly desire. For instance, people with such a view regard such virtues as truth, honesty, sincerity, helpfulness, humility, self-sacrifice and loyalty as means of looking good to those around them and assuming a specific place amongst them. They adopt certain modes of behavior with that end in mind. Yet that behavior is artificial and transitory since it is built on worldly interests. People who adopt a modest and altruistic approach towards their friends may turn into most proud, hypocritical and selfish individuals the moment they realize that this provides them with no advantages.

Moreover, people who live in such a way are constantly calculating their own interests. Before doing anything, they ask themselves, "What will people say if I do this, what will they think about me, what advantage can I attain from this behavior?" This is an indication that they are considering their own, their spouses', and their friends' wishes and desires, not the approval of Allah. Under such circumstances, virtues such as love, sincerity, goodness, friendship, compassion and patience cannot be permanent, and one sees only false versions of these, not the originals. All there is are temporary feelings that the society of the ignorant built on their false values, turning solely in the direction of the life of this world.

Love

Allah installs the emotion love in the human heart as He does many other feelings. What a human being needs to do is to direct this emotion in the best possible way: in the light of the recommendations given by Allah in the Qur'an. Since believers take the Qur'an as their guide, they direct their love towards our Lord, the Creator of themselves and all the blessings they enjoy, and towards believers who seek to gain His approval.

However, those who are caught up in the shenanigans of the life of this world are passionately devoted to the wrong things. For instance, they love **"people as they should love Allah."** Allah reveals this distorted love of unbelievers thus in the Qur'an:

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

For example, many unbelievers direct this distorted love to the most materialistic pursuits. Their love for property is passionately devoted to this transitory sphere and the very heart itself is thus infected by the shadows of meanness and selfishness. This attitude of unbelievers is revealed in these terms in the Qur'an:

Truly he is fierce in his love of wealth. (Surat al-'Adiyat, 8)

However, the fact is that Allah has revealed with the verses of the Qur'an that property is a subject of test belonging to the life of this world and has warned people against obsession with the material:

Know that your wealth and children are a trial and that there is an immense reward with Allah. (Surat al-Anfal, 28)

You who believe! Do not let your wealth or children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. Whoever does that is lost. (Surat al-Munafiqun, 9)

Aware of these facts, believers are not taken in by love of worldly goods. Since they know that it is our Lord Who endows them with the blessings they enjoy, this is a means whereby they give thanks to Allah. They use the material means given to them for good deeds which can gain Allah's approval, and seek more in order to use all that they have to please Allah. Prophet Sulayman (as), who was given an enormous treasury, expressed the purposes for which he wanted those blessings:

He [Sulayman] said: "Truly do I love the love of good, with a view to the glory of my Lord." (Surah Sad, 32)

There is no doubt that this virtuous behavior by Prophet Sulayman (as) shows the way in which believers should look at the riches of this world. People should always direct their love towards our Lord, Who protects them at all times and provides limitless blessings, according to His will.

One of the most noticeable signs of false love—love based on values other than those of the Qur'an—is the choice of friends. The fundamental logic behind the friendship of those who fail to consider the existence of the Hereafter is generally built upon ensuring the

greatest mutual benefit in this world. Both sides have specific characteristics sought by the other and they look for a friend who can offer them material and emotional benefits of various sorts. The aim is to attain respect and prestige in the eyes of wider society.

They attach considerable importance to the physical appearance, family situation, education and abilities of the person they select. Features of proper moral values such as love, respect and loyalty are generally of limited importance to the follower of godless love. In the absence of real love and respect in a friendship, there can of course be no true happiness. This also applies to the conception of marriage held by those who live far removed from the moral values of the Qur'an and, as with their friendships, relationships based on mutual advantage prevail.

However, the exact opposite applies to the believer. A person who believes in Allah loves and respects another to the extent of that individual's faith in and devotion to Him and proper moral values. That person hopes not for worldly interests or a temporary relationship with the other but for an eternal love compatible with the approval of Allah, Who has revealed that He will reward such people, together with their spouses, in the Hereafter:

The Companions of the Garden are busy enjoying themselves today, they and their wives reclining on couches in the shade. (Surah Ya Sin, 55-56)

"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. (Surat az-Zukhruf, 68-72)

Righteousness

In societies which live far removed from the moral values of the Qur'an, everyone has his or her own different ideas about the concept of righteousness. Yet the true definition of righteousness has actually been revealed in the Qur'an:

It is not righteousness to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, those with true righteousness are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travelers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who perform prayer and give the alms; those who honor their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the

people who are true. They are the people who guard against evil. (Surat al-Baqara, 177)

... Rather righteousness is possessed by those who guard against evil... (Surat al-Baqara, 189)

The way that some people who live unaware of the moral values of the Qur'an seek to portray themselves as lovers of what is good or as "pure-hearted" is actually aimed at easing their own consciences and gaining the esteem of other people. Whenever any of these people are going to do something good, they generally consider what they will obtain in return. If the person in need of help is well equipped with material means, they act at once, bearing in mind the material gains that this person may be able to confer on them later. When it comes to helping someone of little status or who lacks great material means, the misguided individual will perform a virtual profit and loss calculation. Upon realizing there is little benefit in the relationship for them, they find it more difficult to offer help and do good under such circumstances. Their assistance therefore comes slowly and they behave unwillingly or uninterestedly. Indeed, they may give no help at all.

In addition to all this, some people may also do good in order to make greater demands. They act not with the aim of gaining Allah's approval but from a wish to profit from people or the benefits of the life of this world. People of faith, on the other hand, act in a godly manner, placing their hope in Allah alone. As in all their actions, the aim whenever they perform a good deed is to gain Allah's approval. Our Lord has revealed that the return for this godly behavior for believers is more and better of what they have done:

Those who produce a good action will receive ten like it. But those who produce a bad action will only be repaid with its equivalent and they will not be wronged. (Surat al-An'am, 160)

Say: "Servants of Mine who believe! Fear your Lord. For those who do good in this world there is good and Allah's Earth is spacious. The steadfast will be paid their wages in full without any reckoning." (Surat az-Zumar, 10)

Those who do good will have the best and more! Neither dust nor debasement will darken their faces. They are the Companions of the Garden, remaining in it timelessly, for ever. (Surah Yunus, 26)

Everything in the heavens and everything in the Earth belongs to Allah so that He can repay those who do evil for what they did and repay those who do good with the very best. (Surat an-Najm, 31)

Friendship

The Qur'an states: **"If someone shuts his eyes to the remembrance of the All-Merciful, We assign him a satan who becomes his bosom friend."** (Surat az-Zukhruf, 36)

Allah reveals that those who turn their backs on religion become the friends of Satan. In another verse this fact is set out in these words: **"Children of Adam! Do not let satan tempt you into trouble as He expelled your parents from the Garden, stripping them of their covering and disclosing to them their private parts. He and his tribe see you from where you do not see them. We have made the demons friends of those who do not believe."** (Surat al-A'raf, 27) Satan brings those he makes friends with under his control and directs them in the ways of his own loathsome moral values.

People who win the friendship of satan instead of the approval of Allah are deprived of a great many blessings. One of these losses is the way that such people never have true friends. Friendship is a blessing given by our Lord to those who take Him as their friend. As revealed in the verse, **"Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who perform prayer and give the alms, and bow."** (Surat al-Ma'ida, 55), Allah grants these people the friendship of devout believers.

Satan's friendship, on the other hand, leaves a person permanently alone. That is because satan tells those he adopts as friends that lies, deviance, rebellion, denial and hatred are pleasant things. People under the influence of satan approach those around them with just that moral understanding. They will primarily act according to their own interests and agenda. Such a person's best friend is him or herself. It is therefore impossible for such people to build true and permanent friendships as alluded to in the Qur'an.

In a society which does not live by the moral values of the Qur'an, it is very hard to find a reliable and sincere friend from whom to seek help, to whom to entrust property or valuables or money or to confide in. Furthermore, this situation has become so widely accepted that many regard it as an immutable fact of life.

It is impossible for people to be at ease in such an insecure environment. That is because even when a friend seems to have been found, there always exists the danger that these "friends" may in fact be acting out of self-interest. This scenario is therefore far removed from true friendship. Some people look upon one another with envy in relation to jobs, cars or homes which they may covet. They may wish to achieve superiority over the other. They therefore take advantage of even the slightest opportunity to locate each others' weaknesses and rise above one another.

People who behave with such an understanding are aware that they are living in a most untrustworthy and insincere environment. They are perfectly aware that they have no friends in the true sense of the word. Yet since they fail to seek a solution by living by the moral values of the Qur'an, they are unable to escape their predicament. Neither will these people who fail to turn to the true path have any friends in the Hereafter. They will find the same uneasy, insincere, insecure environment they experienced in the world but multiplied many times over in the Hereafter. The position in the Hereafter of those who take satan as their friend in this world is revealed by our Lord:

Therefore here today he has no friend. (Surat al-Haqq, 35)

They will be bundled into it head first, they and the misled, and every one of Iblis's regiments. Arguing in it with one another, they will say: "By Allah, we were plainly misguided when we equated you with the Lord of all the worlds. It was only the evildoers who misguided us and now we have no one to intercede for us; we do not have a single loyal friend." (Surat ash-Shu'ara', 94-101)

Believers' friendships with one another are very powerful and long-lasting. That is because it is their sincere faith in and fear of Allah which bring believers together and make friends out of them. As revealed by our Lord in the verse:

Hold fast to the rope of Allah all together, and do not separate. Remember Allah's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of a pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way Allah makes His signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided." (Surah Al 'Imran, 103)

Believers are brothers. For that reason, the friendship based on faith continues, by the will of Allah, both in this world and for ever in the life of the Hereafter.

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

Patience

Although the words "endurance" and "patience" are often tied together, they actually represent two different concepts. Endurance has specific bounds and these vary according to the individual. When those bounds are exceeded, a person may abandon his or her moderate and calm approach in favor of various behavioral defects. Patience on

the other hand is a moral virtue stemming from fear of Allah, one which does not change with circumstances or events. It is only possible to be patient in the face of troubles or events by comprehending the infinite might of Allah and putting one's trust in Him by seeing the good in all that He creates. True patience is therefore a feature peculiar to believers and an element of good moral values which people who fail to live by the values of the Qur'an can never achieve. Believers are described as patient and submissive in the Qur'an:

[Believers are] those who are patient and put their trust in their Lord. (Surat an-Nahl, 42)

Those who patiently persevere in seeking the face of their Lord, and perform prayer and give from the provision We have given them, secretly and openly, and stave off evil with good, it is they who will have the Ultimate Abode. (Surat ar-Ra'd, 22)

Justice

Allah has revealed in the Qur'an that superiority among people rests solely upon godliness (Surat al-Hujurat, 13). In societies in which such elements as faith, fear of Allah and proper morality are ignored, the criteria by which superiority is measured are rather different. These people imagine that superiority lies with the most prominent members of society and can be acquired with the acquisition of goods and property, recognition or fame. Since this perspective is generally shared by most members of such a society, those without goods and property are generally thought of as "inferior" to those who are wealthy and enjoy wide circles of acquaintance.

The manner in which people treat those around them in such societies, the decisions they take, the way they evaluate events, and the conclusions they draw from them are all directly related to the perspective they hold. For that reason, it is impossible to speak of a true idea of justice among people who act in the light of that conception.

Such a thing is out of the question for those who have faith. Believers always act by taking the moral values revealed by Allah in the Qur'an as their yardstick. They therefore always attach the greatest weight to justice and truth. They do not judge people according to worldly values but according to whether they have the requisite fear of Allah and to their moral values. They favor not the powerful and those with material means but always what is right and those in the right. They make no concessions on justice, even if this works against them and those closest to them. They decide not according to earthly values but in the manner ordained by Allah, Who has revealed the yardstick regarding justice in the Qur'an thus:

You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat an-Nisa', 135)

Conclusion

In relation to unbelievers, what has been explained in this chapter reflects only a small part of their self-defeating outlook on life. The basic logic in these peoples' lives operates by bearing only worldly interests in mind. They never wish to consider the existence of the Hereafter and what they will encounter there. When reminded of death and the Afterlife, they usually make all kinds of excuses not to think about them. They never seek to understand that the world in which they live is only a transitory place of testing, and that their spouses, children, families, houses, cars and everything else around them are all parts of that test. Accepting the truth of that would mean relegating their desires for the enjoyment of this world. Those who deny the Hereafter in order not to have to accept this fact are described thus in the Qur'an:

These people say: "There is nothing more than our first death. We will not be raised up a second time. Bring us our fathers if you are telling the truth." (Surat ad-Dukhan, 34-36)

These people will feel an intense and irrevocable sorrow when they find themselves face to face with the truths they denied in this world. This is how Allah reveals that sorrow in the Hereafter of those who rejected this truth:

They will say: "If only we had really listened and used our intellect, we would not have been Companions of the Blaze." (Surat al-Mulk, 10)

In order not to be subjected to the regret described in the verse, every human being must think about these facts before death and shape his or her life in a manner that will be pleasing to Allah. They must grasp the transitory nature of the world we live in and evaluate every moment of their lives accordingly.

THE LEADERS OF THE FALSE WORLD WHO CALL OTHERS TO THE FIRE

Right through the course of history, there have been leaders who have misdirected those around them. They have been taken as role models by wider society and their alleged successes have been the subject of envy. These people, who rebel against Allah and reject His verses, have used their material means to turn others away from the path of Allah. Allah refers to these people as **"leaders, summoning to the Fire"** (Surat al-Qasas, 41) in the Qur'an.

Pharaoh and Qarun, reported to have lived in the past in the Qur'an, are examples of this. In the verses **"They followed Pharaoh's command but Pharaoh's command was not rightly guided. He will go ahead of his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them down into the Fire. What an evil watering-hole to be led to!"** (Surat al-Hud, 97-98), Allah reveals how on the Judgement Day Pharaoh will lead his people to the flames.

The common characteristic between Pharaoh—a major deterrent lesson for all the peoples that have come after him—and Qarun is that they possessed great wealth but used it unwisely, treading not on Allah's path but on satan's. As a result, both were punished by Allah. That is because nothing people possess in the life of this world, neither their wealth nor their close friends nor their status in society, can save them from Allah's retribution in this world or the next. For that reason, all the effort people make to deny the truth merely rebounds against their own selves. In the Qur'an, Allah reveals that prominent affluent people who become spoiled in their well-being, such as Pharaoh and Qarun, actually only succeed in establishing an order which works against themselves:

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

Qarun, who boasted of his wealth and property and grew proud against Allah, also suffered a terrible defeat. All that he owned availed him nothing. Qarun's position is revealed thus in the Qur'an:

He [Qarun] 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, 78)

Similarly, Pharaoh's dominion also came to naught in the face of Allah's punishment; Allah destroyed Pharaoh, his palace, all his goods and his army:

... And We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people made and the buildings they constructed. (Surat al- A'raf, 137)

Such was the case with Pharaoh's people and those before them. They denied their Lord's signs so We destroyed them for their wrong actions. We drowned Pharaoh's people. All of them were wrongdoers. (Surat al-Anfal, 54)

All these verses show that no matter how powerful a person may be in the life of this world, all human beings are completely helpless in the face of the might of Allah. Since some people are unable to see the true face of the world, they form an inflated impression of prominent members of society. They sometimes seek to adopt the mistaken behavior of people they admire. They often do this simply on account of the said individual's wealth. These people are often taken as role models and obsessed fans will attempt to imitate them. They may regard such peoples' faulty behavior as justified or even support it, even though it contravenes the general norms of that society. This disastrous mentality was the kind of perspective the people around Qarun possessed. It is revealed in the Qur'an that, impressed by Qarun's wealth, these people said the following:

He [Qarun] 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)

As we have seen, leading figures among the unbelievers, who had a negative influence over the societies in which they lived, called on those around them to live by the ungodly system of satan and used all the means at their disposal to lead others to perdition with them. The fact is, however, that Allah has made every individual responsible for living in faith, calling those around him or her to the truth and ensuring that they avoid evil. The opposite will inflict grave responsibilities on that person in the sight of Allah and in the Hereafter. Allah has revealed that people who lead others to denial instead of setting a good example and calling them to the true path may be charged with those peoples' sins in addition to their own in the Hereafter:

So on the Day of Resurrection they will carry the full weight of their own burdens and some of the burdens of those they misguided without knowledge. What an evil load they bear! (Surat an-Nahl, 25)

Once the Judgment comes, the followers of the callers to the Fire will see in the Hereafter fate of those people they adopted as role models in the life of this world—simply on account of their wealth, standing or superior status in society—and will suffer a terrible regret. They will understand that these people whom they imagined to be powerful and superior are actually helpless and powerless.

They, the followers, will seek the help of the followed in the Hereafter just as they did in the life of this world. Both will wish for salvation from the eternal torment of Hell. But they will be powerless to do anything to save themselves. Allah has revealed this discourse amongst the unbelievers in the Qur'an:

When they are squabbling with one another in the Fire, the weak will say to those deemed great: "We were your followers, so why do you not relieve us of a portion of the Fire?" (Surah Ghafir, 47)

Those deemed great will say: "All of us are in it. Allah has clearly judged between His servants." (Surah Ghafir, 48)

All this information provided by Allah in the Qur'an shows how the **"leaders summoning to the Fire"** assume an enormous responsibility in the life of this world. It explains how they will be punished in the Hereafter. What the individual who becomes aware of these facts needs to do is to employ all the means at his or her disposal in the life of this world in order to attain Allah's approval and mercy. Paradise is Allah's promise. Allah has related the prayers of the believers on this subject:

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

Allah has also given glad tidings: Those who set good examples to others will move to the forefront, and people who exhibit such moral qualities and draw close to our Lord will be rewarded in Paradise.

And the Forerunners, the Forerunners. Those are the Ones Brought Near in Gardens of Delight. (Surat al-Waqi'a, 10-12)

THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS WHO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE TRANSITORY NATURE OF THE BLESSINGS OF THIS WORLD

In the preceding chapters, we revealed the attitudes of those people taken in by the enjoyment of the transitory world, together with the reasons for them, and also considered, with examples, the differences between believers and unbelievers. In this chapter, we shall be considering, in more detail, the power of understanding of believers and the superior moral values they live by.

THEY ADOPT THE LIFESTYLE APPROVED OF BY ALLAH

The believers know that the life of this world is a test and that the blessings of the world are made to appear attractive as an element of that test. Since they are aware of the transitory nature of all these blessings, they expend their energies in order to attain their eternal, true lives and Paradise. On account of His great mercy, our Lord allows His servants who expend great efforts for the Hereafter to make use of the blessings of this world in the best possible manner.

In the Qur'an, Allah has revealed the manner of life that people should lead and the moral values which they should adopt. As revealed in the verse, **"I only created jinn and man to worship Me."** (Surat adh-Dhariyat, 56), someone who understands that the purpose behind creation is to serve Allah attains the best possible path, both in this world and the next, by taking the Qur'an as a guide. Such people use all the means at their disposal in the life of this world in order to please Allah and attain His true path. As a consequence, they also acquire the moral values approved of by Allah and live a life that will be pleasing to Him. Allah has praised these moral values of believers in the Qur'an in the words:

Who could say anything better than someone who summons to Allah and acts rightly and says, "I am one of the Muslims"? (Surah Fussilat, 33)

On account of these superior moral values, believers enjoy very pleasant lives: the exact opposite of the troubled lives led by unbelievers. They take great pleasure in all they do and in every blessing available to them. They are content with whatever event Allah places in their path. As well as living so happily in the life of this world, they are also a blessing to other people with their pleasant and assured behavior. They are exceedingly sensitive, helpful and affectionate to other people. They help their parents,

orphans, the poor, stranded travelers and anyone in need solely because they seek Allah's approval. This feature of believers is revealed in these terms in the Qur'an:

They will ask you what they should give away. Say: "Any wealth you give away should go to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor and travelers." Whatever good you do, Allah knows it. (Surat al-Baqara, 215)

... Whatever good you give away is to your own benefit, when you give desiring only the face of Allah. Whatever good you give away will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged. (Surat al-Baqara, 272)

Believers, who live by the moral values of the Qur'an, exhibit pleasing attitudes at every moment of their lives. They act in accordance with these moral values in instances of injustice they may encounter in their daily lives. Even in cases which might damage their own interests, they still support what is right and true.

They are also very honest in their business dealings. Due to their fear of Allah they behave in the manner ordained in the verse, **"Give full measure when you measure and weigh with a level balance. That is better and gives the best result"** (Surat al-Isra', 35).

They are also fastidious about maintaining the bounds set by Allah and are fearful of transgressing Allah's laws. Among people who have no fear of Allah and belief in the Hereafter, one can encounter mutual deception in business life and partnerships and attitudes aimed at unfair profits. It is revealed in the Qur'an how Prophet Dawud (as) addressed the litigants who came to him in these terms: **"Truly many partners are unjust to one another—except those who believe and do right actions, and how few they are!"** (Surah Sad, 24). Here, the Qur'an is drawing attention to this environment of insecurity and injustice which prevails among unbelievers.

The proper behavior of those who believe can be seen in whatever environment they may be found. Their modesty, forgiveness and tolerance, and the way they respond to wickedness with goodness are all features of the superior moral virtues of believers. Allah reveals that believers respond to wickedness inflicted on them with patience and goodness thus in the Qur'an:

They will be given their reward twice over because they have been steadfast and because they ward off the bad with the good and give from what we have provided for them. (Surat al-Qasas, 54)

Ward off evil with what is better. We know very well what they express. (Surat al-Muminun, 96)

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

Believers respond with a forgiving approach when they encounter negative behavior and act in such a way as to set an example, be useful and point to proper moral values. This is how Allah reveals to believers the moral values of which He will approve:

Make allowances for people, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. (Surat al-A'raf, 199)

The repayment of a bad action is one equivalent to it. But if someone pardons and puts things right, his reward is with Allah. Certainly He does not love wrongdoers. (Surat ash-Shura, 40)

Mockery, which can frequently be seen among people who have no belief in the Hereafter, is one of the forms of behavior which believers avoid. As a requirement of the verse, **"You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to faith! Those people who do not turn from it are wrongdoers."** (Surat al-Hujurat, 11), they adopt such an attitude towards anyone, no matter what the circumstances.

In a society where people live by the moral values of the Qur'an, fear Allah, think about the Hereafter and seek to gain the approval of our Lord, a peaceful and secure life prevails. The attitudes of believers, who have assumed the moral values of the Qur'an, the best suited to human nature, represent excellent examples for everyone. This message may—by the will of Allah—be a means by which the hearts in question warm to faith and adopt the moral values of the Qur'an.

One of the main reasons for believers having such pleasing moral values is their fear of Allah. At the same time, because they value the life of this world only as much as Allah has ordained, they never become caught up in passions and desires or exhibit extreme behavior. They make every effort to live by the moral values which Allah has revealed, those of which He approves of. They never forget that the blessings created by Allah on Earth are merely to test people and are simply the enjoyment of the life of this world. Thanks to this understanding, it is easy for them to exhibit the best behavior at all times.

BELIEVERS STRIVE FOR THE HEREAFTER AND ARE NOT DECEIVED BY THE ATTRACTIVE APPEARANCE OF THE WORLD

Believers know that Allah is the true Lord of all the blessings they possess in the life of this world and that He has given them so that they may engage in godly works. Therefore, they employ all their means in giving thanks to Allah and strive gallantly to earn His approval. Our Lord has given the glad tidings that in return for this grateful attitude of believers, He will reward them by increasing their blessings still further:

And when your Lord announced: "If you are grateful, I will certainly give you increase, but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is severe." (Surah Ibrahim, 7)

For believers who comprehend the transitory nature of life, neither their material means, nor their jobs, nor their family and friends can prevent them from remembering Allah and working to earn His approval. Allah has revealed these characteristics of believers in Surat an-Nur:

Not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of prayer and the payment of alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Surat an-Nur, 37)

No matter how many blessings and means Allah gives them in this world, nothing is more important to believers than gaining Allah's approval. That is because according to the stipulation in the Qur'an which reads: **"Say: 'If your fathers or your sons or your brothers or your wives or your tribe, or any wealth you have acquired, or any business you fear may slump, or any house which pleases you, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait until Allah brings about His command. Allah does not guide people who are deviators.'"** (Surat at-Tawba, 24), they are aware that this will cause them losses in this world and the next.

The Qur'an says: **"Were it not that humanity might all become one community, We would have given those who reject the All-Merciful silver roofs to their houses and silver stairways to ascend and silver doors to their houses and silver couches on which to recline, and gold ornaments. All that is merely the trappings of the life of this world. But the Hereafter with your Lord is for those who guard against evil."** (Surat az-Zukhruf, 33-35). Those who believe know that all the splendor of the blessings of this world is only temporary and that the finest of blessings exist in the Hereafter, the true home of the believer.

Our Lord imparts the happy tidings of Paradise with its matchless beauty for His servants who understand the false nature of this world compared to the Hereafter and who set about gaining His approval with sincere and righteous actions:

Their recompense is forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever. How excellent is the reward of those who act! (Surah Al 'Imran, 136)

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

THEY ARE HAPPY IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT

Allah has promised that He will give believers who lived in accordance with the moral values of the Qur'an pleasant lives both in this world and in the Hereafter. The Almighty has revealed that this is a great salvation and happiness:

There is good news for them in the life of this world and in the Hereafter. There is no changing the words of Allah. That is the great victory! (Surah Yunus, 64)

He said: "Go down from it, all of you, as enemies to one another! But when guidance comes to you from Me, all those who follow My guidance will not go astray and will not be miserable." (Surah Ta Ha, 123)

As revealed in the verses **"And there are others who say, 'Our Lord, give us good in this world, and good in the Hereafter, and safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire.' They will have a good share from what they have earned. Allah is swift at reckoning."** (Surat al-Baqara, 201-02), believers who are aware of this truth pray for Allah to make them happy both in this world and the next.

With Allah's infinite justice and compassion in this world and the next, believers are happy and at ease. Allah only endows His faithful servants with such a beautiful thing because they take Him as their only God and believe without wrongly ascribing partners to Him. Our Lord has revealed in the Qur'an that so long as they abide by the moral values He has chosen for them, He will reward His faithful servants in this world and give them security after their fears:

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

In another verse, Allah has revealed this happy news thus:

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 those who guard against evil. (Surat an-Nahl, 30)

THE TRUE SPHERE OF LIFE: THE HEREAFTER

We have so far concentrated on the way that the world is a temporary and deceptive place, full of seductive delusion and false baubles. It has also been explained that it is the eternal life in the Hereafter that will be the true abode. In this chapter, we shall be seeing how the Hereafter, the true sphere of life which every human being will come to after death and live for all eternity, will be a very different thing for believers and unbelievers.

THE ORIGINALS OF ALL THINGS ARE IN THE HEREAFTER

The definition in the Qur'an of the Afterlife as the "true life" is a matter which all people should consider, which all people should reflect upon. This expression in the Qur'an reveals that everything we imagine to be real in the life of this world is in fact very different. This life we live, the values which people spend a lifetime following, and all the beautiful things they seek to acquire are all "false" in comparison to the Hereafter. In other words, this world is full of false passions, false emotions, false successes, false loves and false friendships for those who do not seek the approval of Allah.

Believers, on the other hand, will experience in this world the happiness of hoping for Paradise, joy in the Afterlife and the "true" and "complete" versions of such emotions as joy and happiness. That being the case, a person needs to ask him or herself this: "If everything I experience in this world is false and I can only encounter the originals of them in the Hereafter, why should I make do with what is transitory and deceptive and lose, because of them, their eternal and original counterparts? Why should I not strive to attain beauties which will never fade and which will exist for ever?"

If a person asks him or herself that question with all due sincerity and answers it with the same sincerity, then he or she will strive for the truth and live a happy life in this world and also in the next. The answer to these questions that every rational person will give is, of course, "My most important aim in this world is to abide by the approval of Allah and to strive for my true life, which will last for all eternity in the Hereafter." Another question which every person capable of seeing this must ask him or herself with the same logic is that addressed by the person to his people, as revealed in the Qur'an:

"Why indeed should I not worship Him Who brought me into being, Him to Whom you will be returned?" (Surah Ya Sin, 22)

Human beings will eventually be directed to Allah and will encounter the original counterparts of all worldly things in the Hereafter. For that reason, they must sincerely consider the Hereafter, revealed as the "true life" in the Qur'an, and to live by the moral values of the Qur'an by giving thanks to our Lord, Who gave human beings such a great blessing with His infinite mercy and kindness.

THE HEREAFTER: PAIN FOR UNBELIEVERS, HAPPINESS FOR BELIEVERS

Everything which the human being desires lies waiting for him in the Afterlife, providing he spends his life in this world pursuing the pleasure of Allah. In the life of Paradise, there will be the blessings of infinite abundance and beauty. At the same time, believers will also experience enormous spiritual joy in Paradise and will feel such emotions as happiness, love, joy, peace and security in a far more powerful manner than in their earthly lives. Unbelievers, on the other hand, will experience pain and unimaginable torment in Hell, described in the Qu'ran as a fire **"fueled by men and stones."** Allah has revealed in the Qur'an that the Hereafter will be full of severe torment for unbelievers but full of blessings for the believers:

When Our signs are recited to such a person, he turns away arrogantly as if he had not heard, as if there was a great weight in his ears. So give him news of a painful punishment. (Surah Luqman, 7)

Their Lord gives them the good news of His mercy and good pleasure and Gardens where they will enjoy everlasting delight. (Surat at-Tawba, 21)

The sufferings the unbelievers will experience in the Hereafter will be incomparably greater than those in this world. Unbelievers will be punished with a torment they have never imagined and the like of which they have not previously experienced. The expression **"blazing fire"** is used in several verses of the Qur'an in order to describe the fierceness of the flames of Hell. In other verses, that fierceness is described as follows:

But no! It is a Raging Blaze. Stripping away the limbs and scalp. (Surat al-Ma'arij, 15-16)

Unlike this fierce torment in Hell, a very happy and peaceful environment has been prepared for the people of Paradise. Allah, in His mercy, has created Paradise for His faithful servants in the best and most perfect manner. Allah is pleased with them and will reward them with eternal joy. In the Qur'an, the following is stated:

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)

Allah has revealed the difference between Paradise and Hell in another verse:

An image of the Garden which is promised to those who guard against evil: 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)

Imam Ghazali has invited people to think rationally on this matter by considering in his commentaries the sharp differences, as regards to pains and blessings, between Paradise and Hell:

Know that there is another home (And that is Paradise) in contrast to sorrow and sadness (i.e. flame), the abode of Hell you know. Consider the blessings and joys it will impart. That is because he who is far removed from one of these will definitely find a decision in the other. Think long and hard about the terrors of Hell and fix them in your heart. Also think long and hard about the eternal blessings promised to the people of Paradise and fix a hope in your heart. Drive earthly desires with the whip of fear and bring them to the true path by means of hope. In this way you will attain a great existence and be saved from a painful torment. Consider the people of Paradise, on whose faces is the beauty of the blessings of Paradise.

Souls are permanent, thereby finding what they desire. In Paradise they neither fear nor are downcast. They are free of the fear of death.

Then consider the chambers of Paradise and the height and variety of the degrees of Paradise. That is because the Hereafter is the greatest in terms of degree and in terms of virtue. In the same way that in this world people are different in terms of external religious observances and esoteric pleasing moral values, so there will be differences in the rewards and punishments people will receive for their deeds in this world. If you wish to attain the highest degrees in Paradise then try to ensure none exceed you in worship of and obedience to Allah." (Imam Ghazali, Kalplerin Kesfi [The Discovery of Hearts], pp. 534, 535, 539)

As we have seen, a person has two alternatives for the Afterlife: He or she will choose either Hell, with nothing but eternal and indescribable suffering, or Paradise, with the greatest happiness and beauty. All rational people will of course choose Paradise, "a place full of happiness and infinite blessings." That is because nobody wishes to spend all eternity without the possibility of salvation except by the will of Allah, in a place devoid of all physical and spiritual beauty, in a state of constant suffering, sorrow and regret. Any normal individual will prefer to live in happiness for all eternity with those he or she loves, in a place consisting solely of blessings and happiness, and where no difficulty, trouble, evil or imperfection is created.

The Hereafter is an absolute reality revealed by our Lord. In order to be saved from terrible suffering in the Hereafter and to attain a happy and prosperous end, people need to apprehend this truth. They must spend the time allotted to them in the life of this world in doing good deeds to gain the approval of Allah and trying to attain the moral values beloved of Him.

Let us also note that nobody must rest content with what he or she has already performed. Nobody can be certain that his or her past deeds will be sufficient for salvation. From that point of view, a person must both be joyful out of a hope of entering Paradise and also increase the level of godly deeds performed out of a fear of Hell. As revealed by Allah in the verse: **"Wealth and sons are the embellishment of the life of this world. But, in your Lord's sight, right actions which are lasting bring a better reward and are a better basis for hope."** (Surat al-Kahf, 46)

In the knowledge that a constant effort is nearer to gaining the approval of Allah, a person must continue to engage in godly works. As in the words of the prayer of Prophet Ibrahim (as) revealed in the Qur'an, **"And make me one of the inheritors of the Garden of Delight,"** (Surat ash-Shu'ara', 85), a person must pray to be rewarded with Paradise by Allah.

CONCLUSION

With characteristic wisdom, the revered Islamic scholar Imam Ghazali has recommended all people to question their consciences:

You must know that this world is not actually everlasting. Either you will leave it, or it will leave you! Hassan says that: "Even if the blessings of this world continue, your life will one day come to an end. That being the case what is the meaning of chasing after the life of this world and spending one's valuable life in doing so?"

If you think rationally, you will see that this world is not everlasting. The benefits it brings cannot compensate for the damage and troubles it will inflict. In the same way that the body grows weary and departs in this world, so your heart is also occupied. In the Hereafter is a terrible suffering and long reckoning. In understanding these truths you will abandon the excess things of this world and make do with those necessary for you to worship the Lord.

... Can the serving and worship of the Lord, with Whom you will remain alone and for ever, be abandoned in favor of other people? That Lord Who meets the needs of the day, is everyone's support and everyone's shelter in times of trouble and violence. He is everyone's partner and everyone stands in need of His mercy. ((Imam Ghazali, Minhajul Abidin, pp. 145, 157, 147)

As has been described throughout the course of this book, a person's life in this world will inevitably come to an end one day. As Imam Ghazali recalls, the benefits of the life of this world will be unable to make good the damages and troubles which will be suffered by those who waste their time on the sphere of this world.

It is revealed in the Qur'an that Allah will ask such people how many years they lived on the Earth and their reply is revealed thus:

He [Allah] will say: "How many years did you tarry on the Earth?" They will say: "We tarried there for a day or part of a day. Ask those able to count!" He will say: "You only tarried there for a little while if you did but know!" (Surat al- Muminun, 112-14)

These verses show that when a person goes to the Hereafter, a person will understand that he or she has spent far less than a day in this world and even **"just one hour of a single day"** (Surat al-Ahqaf, 35). All that will remain of his or her long years of endeavor in the life of this world will be a few brief memories in the mind, and everything belonging to this world will vanish.

Despite this, unbelievers will proceed to the Hereafter under a heavy load. In the verse **"Those who deny the meeting with Allah have lost, so that, when the Hour comes upon them suddenly, they will say: 'Alas for what we neglected**

there!' They will bear their burdens on their backs. How evil is what they bear!' (Surat al-An'am, 31), Allah reveals that unbelievers carry the burden of their sins on their backs. In other verses Allah reveals that unbelievers will remain under this burden for all eternity:

... We have given you a reminder direct from Us. Those who turn away from it will bear a heavy burden on the Day of Resurrection. Remaining in it timelessly, for ever. What an evil load they will bear on the Day of Resurrection! (Surah Ta Ha, 99-101)

Alongside all these truths, a person can proceed from the life of this world to that of the Hereafter at any time. As recalled in the verse, **"Wherever you are, death will catch up with you, even if you are in impregnable fortresses..."** (Surat an-Nisa', 78).

Death is inevitable. A person may well die at an entirely unexpected moment, and will then be unable to consider these truths, even if he or she wishes to. This will lead to an indescribable regret.

If, on the other hand, a person sets aside a brief time to consider all the truths recounted here, while there is still time, he is more likely to step towards that which will bring him great joy and blessings in both this world and the next. Imam Ghazali has reminded people to question their consciences in this way:

There have been so many people who have been caught by death suddenly before their last breath has left their bodies. The fact is though that all you have consists of but a breath; neither a day nor yet an hour! Turn to repentance and obedience to Allah before even that breath is over. Death may find you before you can breathe a second! One must not pause to think too long on the subject of the necessities of life. You may not live long enough to need them. Therefore the time you spend on that will be wasted, and your endeavors will be in vain. That means that all a person's endeavors for a second day, a second hour, a second breath, will all prove empty, because there is no guarantee of attaining them. (Imam Ghazali, Minhajul Abidin, p. 118)

Death may come at any moment. Before that happens, every human being has an opportunity to see the truth and to abide by it. As revealed by Allah in the verse **"He Who responds to the oppressed when they call on Him and removes their distress, and has appointed you as inheritors of the Earth. Is there another deity besides Allah? How little you pay heed!"** (Surat an-Naml, 62), our Lord is He Who meets all peoples' needs and answers their prayers with His infinite mercy.

What someone who wishes to attain the Hereafter needs to do is to become one of those who make serious endeavors and who are revealed in the Qur'an to receive a beautiful reward:

But as for anyone who desires the Hereafter, and strives for it with the striving it deserves, being a believer, the striving of such people will be gratefully acknowledged. (Surat al-Isra', 19)

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 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 (as) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of the Prophet Musa (as) 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, 117-18)

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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Back cover

There is one important fact about the beauties of this world which needs to be understood by man. As our Lord has revealed, "The life of this world is just the enjoyment of delusion" (Surah Al 'Imran, 185).

It is therefore a major error for any person to become disproportionately infatuated with the world's transitory blessings during his brief existence in this life. In the Qur'an, Allah reveals that the benefits of this world are ultimately worthless, and promises that He will give "a good life" to those who seek the Hereafter. On the other hand, there is a "dark and narrow life" for those who are unaware of these truths.

Believers are aware of these truths revealed in the Qur'an. They know that all they experience is part of a test set for them by Allah. They feel no great passion for the blessings of this world. They instead spend their whole lives in such a way as to attain the Hereafter promised to them.

In this book, by using examples which may be encountered at any time and any place, the unnecessary sufferings and woes of those who are deceived by the false baubles of this world are considered. Ways in which these can be avoided, and the trouble-free lives of believers who spend all their energies on attaining the Hereafter are explored. Recalling Allah's revelation in the Qur'an, "Anything you have been given is only the enjoyment of the life of this world and its finery. What is with Allah is better and longer lasting. So will you not use your intellect?" (Surat al-Qasas, 60), people are invited to lead lives better suited to the approval of Allah.