

International Islamic Federation
of Student Organizations



طريق الإيمان

عبدالمجيد الزنداني

باللغة الإنجليزية

THE PATH OF FAITH

Abdul Majid Aziz Al-Zindani

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE**

حقوق الطبع محفوظة
للاتحاد الإسلامي العالمي
لتنظيمات الطلابية
١٤١٥ هـ - ١٩٩٤ م



الموزع الوحيد لمنشورات الاتحاد بسبعين لغة:

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

نشر وتوزيع الكتاب والشريط الإسلامي بسبعين لغة

الإدارة العامة: ص.ب. ٥٥١٩٥ - الرياض ١١٥٣٤

هاتف ٤٦٥٠٨١٨ - ٤٦٤٧٢١٣ - فاكس ٤٦٣٣٤٨٩

المكتبات: الرياض ٤٦٢٩٣٤٧ - ١ / جدة ٦٨٧٣٧٥٢ - ٢ / الخبر ٨٩٤٥٨٢١ - ٣

World Wide Distributor of I. I. F. S. O. Publications in 70 Languages:

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

I. I. P. H.

Publishing And Distributing Islamic Books And Tapes In 70 Languages

HEAD OFFICE: P.O.Box 55195 - Riyadh 11534 - Saudi Arabia

Tel: (966-1) 4650818-4647213 - Fax: 4633489

BOOK SHOPS: Riyadh 1-4629347/Jeddah 2-6873752/Khobar 3-8945821

طريق الإيمان

عبدالمجيد عزيز الزنداني

باللغة الإنكليزية

الإتحاد الإسلامي العالمي للمنظمات الطلابية

١٤١٥ هـ - ١٩٩٤ م

THE PATH OF FAITH

Abdul Majid Aziz Al-Zindani

**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC FEDERATION
OF STUDENT ORGANIZATION
1415 A.H. - 1994 A.D.**

PART ONE

6

PART ONE

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH IN ALLAH

Who brought you into This World?

O people of intellect! what would be your judgement on the man who finds himself transported to a strange city or desert without any will or desire on his part, is aware that someone brought him here and is visited by messengers from that person to guide and direct him yet in spite of that he makes no effort to get acquainted with those who can to save and guide him but instead he wages war on them while they bear his attacks and he curses them while they try to befriend him?

The intelligent person will inevitably say that the first duty of this lost man who is brought into a strange world will be to search for the one who

brought him here and find out the reason for it and if there are messengers who claim to be sent by that person to guide him he must test their truthfulness and if he is convinced of their sincerity he must honour them and follow them. As for the one who is not concerned with himself or who brought him here or the messengers who are sent by Allah there is no doubt in his foolishness and stupidity.

If the intelligent man thinks about his life in this world and how he had been lifeless soil and became a perfect human being 'And of His signs is this: He created you of dust, and behold you human beings, ranging widely!' (30:20) and how vast is the difference between the world of lifeless soil which does not hear, see, think, move, do good, grow, procreate or possess any of the attributes of life and this living, moving human being who fills the earth with movement and life ... if the intelligent man thinks about the story of his transfer from the world of lifeless soil to the world of human beings and sees how the soil became a drop of sperm after first becoming food then how the sperm changed into a morsel of

flesh and acquired bones and how life and soul crept into this human embryo and how it emerged a baby and grew into manhood ... if he thought about all of that he would conclude that he had no choice in any of these matters and would know that his first duty was to get acquainted with the One in Whose hands lies the matter of his life and existence, the One Who brought mankind into this world without the permission or choice of mankind. 'O man! What hath made thee careless concerning thy Lord, the Bountiful. Who created thee, then fashioned thee, then proportioned thee? Into whatsoever form He will, He casteth thee.' (82:6-8)

So what is it, O man, that swerved you away from your Lord Who created you and fashioned you? Do you think that you came out of nothing? Or that it is this "nothing" which does not exist which gave you your form? Do you not know that 'nothing' cannot create anything and that you did not create any part of yourself? 'Or were they created out of naught? Or are they the creators?' (52:35). If then the matter of your existence, life and creation is in the hand of Allah, Who formed

and shaped you, then you must get acquainted with Him in Whose hand is your life and to Whose will you are subservient, and your acquaintance with Him must be the first duty on your shoulders, O men of intellect!

Whose property are we?

This hand with which you work, this foot on which you walk, this tongue with which you speak, this brain with which you think, and everything which you utilise and benefit from in your body and your life: whose property is it?

Rather, whose property are you? And whose property are we all?

Property means that the owner has the freedom to use it in whatever way he likes. Did you, therefore, choose to come into this world? Did you choose your mother and father? Did you choose your country? Or the age in which you were born? Did you choose your form and your physical, psychological and intellectual faculties? Or whether to be male or female? Do you choose to return to weakness again in old age after strength? Or ignorance after knowledge? Or

sickness after health? Or death after life? 'Allah is He who shaped you out of weakness, then appointed after weakness strength, then, after strength, appointed weakness and grey hair. He createth what He will. He is the Knower, the Mighty. (30:54) These are the most important aspects of your life and you do not own any of them because you do not have any choice in them. Do you, then, have any choice in these matters as regards your children, your relatives, your countrymen or your town? Do any of your parents or relatives or countrymen have any choice in these matters which Allah laid down for me, for you and for all mankind in the ages gone by, at the present time and in later times?

Therefore you and I are owned, and all of these nations and peoples, rulers and ruled are owned by the One who created them as He liked and brought them into this world and removed them from it and gave to each individual from amongst them the characteristics with which they were created.

Then look at your hands and feet, O men of intellect, did you create any part of their flesh,

blood or bones, or even a single hair? Then think, did you create any portion of any man's body besides your own? Or did the people or nation create any portion of your body or any one else's body? 'Lo! Those on whom ye call beside Allah are slaves like unto you.' (7:194) Now what is your view of a person who passes by an inn or a factory or a farm or an office whose owner has left it for a moment and he enters it and begins to rearrange its contents and moves from place to place without the permission of its owner? Surely every intelligent man will declare such a person to be out of his mind for using someone else's property without his permission. Now ask yourself whether you are out of your mind for using property which you do not own without the owner's permission.

If the intelligent man looks at himself he will find that he does not own any portion of himself and that he cannot use anything without first knowing its Owner and getting the guidance and orders from Him. 'His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!' (7:54). For this reason, man's first duty

is to know his Master and the messenger sent by That Master to him.

Why were we created?

If all the doctors of the world stood in one line and you were to ask them: "Were man's eyes created for a reason?" They would all reply in the affirmative and whoever belies that let his eyes be plucked out. If you were to ask them about the mouth, teeth, ears, nose, hands, feet, heart, lungs or about any small vein or cell in the body whether it was created for a reason they would all reply in the affirmative. If you asked them to explain they would say "it would take you decade to understand all the intricacies of the human body." If you asked them whether the reason for a part of the body is tied in with the body as a whole they will answer in the affirmative saying: "the reason for the mouth is that all the parts of the body may be fed; the reason for the lungs is that all the parts of the body may get oxygen; the reason for the heart is that all the parts of the body may get blood; the reason for the feet is that the whole body may move ..." thus

the creation of each part of the body has been perfected so that it may carry out a function which is beneficial to the body as a whole.

Since each part of you was created for a reason and all of your organs were perfected so that they may serve you as a whole then undoubtedly you yourself were created for a reason.

Do you know why you were created? Why the whole human race was created? If you do not know why you were created then you are more insignificant than a piece of paper. Paper was created for a purpose to write on. But as for you, there is no reason for your creation, in your opinion. Think about your position how you live and have no knowledge of why you were created.

The person who does not know the purpose of the things around him is a stupid person. The person who does not know the reason for the tailoring of the clothes he wears is even more stupid and more stupid than the first two is the person who does not know the purpose of his eyes, mouth, hands and feet. But the most stupid and most ignorant person on the face of this earth is the person who does not know the purpose of

his entire being or the purpose of his entire life! His life will come to an end on this planet and he will not know why he lived nor why he died! His life in his own view is not worth his boots because his boots have a purpose while he thinks that his life has no purpose! Nor does the life of the entire human race! 'Those who disbelieve take their comfort in this life and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire is their habitation.' (47:12). Thus they live as the poet says:

I came I know not from where.

But I came.

I saw before me a path so I walked.

I will remain walking whether I will or not.

How did I come?

How did I see my path?

I do not know.

And why I do not know I do not know.

If the misguided people do not know the purpose of their existence then we Muslims know the purpose, and if they do not know why they do not know then this is because the purpose of an invention lies in the inventor himself and is known by instructions from him. Similarly the

purpose of man's creation is hidden from us in our Creator Himself and is to be known by instructions which come from Him and Him Alone.

Man will therefore never know the purpose of his creation and existence except by instructions from his Creator and as long as man does not know his Creator, man's nobility will fall in his own sight and it will not be farfetched for him to call himself a speaking animal or a hedgehog. His Lord calls unto him 'Verily We have honoured the children of Adam.' (17:70) but man insists on degrading himself. For all these reasons man's first duty is to know Allah and to know His messenger.

Are we lost?

If man thinks about the life of people he will find the life of most of them testifying that they are lost. The sign of people who are lost is that you find them differing in their path, wavering in their minds, confused in their feelings, their proofs are thoughts, imaginations and fancies. This is the life of most people today.

States live in conflict and differences with one another and so also parties, groups and tribes within these states. We even see conflict and struggle among the various wings of a single party or group and conflict within a wing itself. Their life is like a desolate waste. What is the secret of this difference and life of waste? What is the secret of this conflict? If we reflected and pondered we would find that the cause of this difference lies in the fact that people differ in their principles and opinions. If we pondered on the cause of their differences of principles and opinions we would find that the cause lies in their difference in knowledge, character, understanding, experience and interests. All could lead to a difference of opinions.

If each person's opinions depend on his knowledge, character, understanding, experience and interest ... If people differ in all this and it is not possible to find two whose knowledge, character, understanding, intellect, experience and interests are one and the same, then it is not possible for people to be united unless we unite their opinions, and it is not possible for their opinions and

views to be united unless we unite them and make their knowledge, character, understanding, intellect, experience and interests exactly the same. This is impossible and thus it is inevitable that there should exist differences. It is impossible therefore to be unity amongst mankind. 'Yet they cease not differing ... save him on whom thy Lord hath mercy.' (11:118 - 119). What then is the solution to this?

The only solution is that man should recognise that he has a Creator, Whose knowledge encompasses everything, Who possesses the most perfect character and the greatest of attributes, Who possesses the most Beautiful Names, who is Al Khabîr (One who has intimate knowledge of everything) from Whose knowledge nothing has escaped or will escape, Who is the Most Merciful Lord, in front of Whom all mankind are equally His slaves "He liketh not ingratitude from His servants." (39:7). If mankind recognise their Lord and search for His guidance, they would leave behind their differences and save themselves from their evil consequences and they would live as slaves of Allah, united and holding

fast to the covenant of their Lord and guided by His guidance.

Allah says: 'And We have revealed the Scripture unto thee only that thou mayst explain unto them that wherein they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.' (16:64). For all the above reasons man will not leave aside his differences until he recognises his Lord. Thus his first duty is to know his Lord.

If we were to think about the secret which creates in man the feeling of fear of the unknown which may happen to him in his future or after his death and if we were to think about the secret of that disturbance which permeates the lives of the unbelievers in this age we would find it in the fact that they are living in this world, not knowing any reason for their lives, not knowing Who created them, not knowing the path which will please their Creator, and not knowing what awaits them after death. They are groping in confusion and unable to find ease, and they will never find ease in life or pleasure in life unless they recognise their Lord and repose faith in Him.

Allah says: "O (thou) soul, in rest and satisfaction!

"Come back thou to thy Lord, well pleased (thyself) and well pleasing unto him!

"Enter thou among my devotees!

"Enter thou My Heaven! (89:27-30)

Thus man's first duty is to know his Lord and Creator.

If we were to think about the secret which caused this conflict and struggle between men we would see that it is due to men's ignorance of their Creator and His reason for creating them. This is because Allah created endless desires in every man such that the earth is not sufficient to satisfy a single desire of man. If someone is told that he has been made the owner of half of the earth he would say: "I want the other half." What is the result of these endless desires which are ablaze in the hearts of men? Conflict is the result and there is no refuge from it in the rejection of faith in Allah because the unbeliever thinks that all he has of life is this world and its pleasures and this is all he can enjoy. Thus the things in this world are not sufficient to satisfy his desires and

pleasures. How can they be, when he finds that there are millions of others just like himself, each one wishing to own the world for himself and subjugate it to his command. Thus it is inevitable that there should be conflict over the desires for the world and its fleeting pleasures. This conflict must inevitably be found in the homes between brothers and it must inevitably be found in the village or district between families. Conflict must inevitably be found between different regions, tribes and societies. It must inevitably be found between states and allies in every corner of the globe.

This is the reality! Who does not live in conflict lives in preparation for conflict. And there is no escape from it in the shade of unbelief. Every-time man remembers death and thinks that it will surprise him at any moment, he feels that his life is short and he goes of like a mad, greedy man increasing his conflict and rivalry in order to gain the biggest slice of the pleasures of this world before his life ends. Thus conflict leads the worldly desires and in this conflict all weapons and tricks are used no matter how dirty or

treacherous.

This is the reality! There is no escape from it in the shade of unbelief. The only way out is by resorting to faith since the one who has faith knows that his Lord has created for him enough to satisfy his desires and his aspirations for a paradise which stretches as wide as the heavens and earth and in which Allah has prepared for the believers all that their hearts may desire and all that may please their eyes and they will dwell therein forever.

Allah says: '(Ye) who believed Our revelations and were selfsurrendered (Muslims).

Enter the Garden, ye and your wives, to be made glad.

Therein are brought round for them trays of gold and goblets, and

Therein is all that souls desire and eyes find sweet.

And ye are immortal therein.' (43:69 - 71)

The believer knows that he will not attain such perpetual felicity nor will he be safe from the punishment of hell unless he passes the test of obedience to his Lord which he undergoes

throughout his life on this planet. The believer knows that he will not pass this test unless he follows the commands of his Creator and Master and keeps away from that which He has prohibited. The believer knows that his Lord has ordered him to take his share of the pleasures of this world through the halal means in which there is no cheating, deception, exploitation or injustice and that he should have enough to satisfy himself and his dependents and that he has a duty toward those who fall short of their needs in this world. Thus you see the believer is a diligent worker, a noble rival, and a cooperative, concerned helper. In this way the believer lives in a society in which friendship becomes widespread instead of enmity, cooperation instead of separation, love instead of hate, nobility instead of meanness, chastity instead of vulgarity, generosity instead of niggardliness, concern instead of exploitation, justice instead of tyranny, humility instead of haughtiness, contentment and happiness instead of anger, confusion and misery.

This was the state of Muslims when they were believers, strong in their faith, and these wonder-

ful qualities have been in constant decrease in the Muslim societies and their decrease is commensurate with the weakening of faith in the hearts of its possessors. Nevertheless, they will once again become prominent when faith once again kindles the hearts so there must be faith in Allah and His prophet if conflict is to stop between men and if a righteous Islamic life is to reappear as it had once appeared. Thus the most important duty and the first duty of man is to know Allah, God Almighty.

What do we expect in the Death Yard?

Allah says: 'Wheresoever ye may be death will overtake you, even though ye were in lofty towers.' (4:78)

You are therefore only a son of death and you are awaiting the appointed time when you will be called to leave this world similar to the person who is sent with a large group into the death yard and awaits his turn from which there is no escape. Death will visit you at a specific time for you may enter the morning alive and by evening you are amongst the dead or you may enter the evening

alive and by morning you are amongst the dead.

Allah says: 'And the agony of death cometh in truth. (And it is said unto him): This is that which thou wast wont to shun.' (50:19)

You are no more than a limited amount of days, O man. Each time a day passes you are diminished and you draw nearer your end. 'Say (unto them, O Muhammad) : Lo! the death from which ye shrink will surely meet you, and afterward ye will be returned unto the Knower of the invisible and the visible, and He will tell you what ye used to do.' (62:8) You shall leave willingly or unwillingly, and the kings, rulers and rich shall leave as their like left who belonged to the past nations and as the poor and weak leave and the nations will leave as the previous nations left, for mankind is nothing but slaves of the One Who gave them life and Who caused them death without their permission or choice. You shall leave behind your wealth, influence, family, friends, knowledge, deeds, experience, health and beauty. Your body shall return to the state in which it began. The moment will come when your bones will be bared of your flesh, your veins

and intestines will disintegrate and your living body will become a handful of bones under a pile of dirt. You will remain in this state for ages just as other people who died before you. Have you therefore asked yourself about the reality of your permanent destiny and have you understood what will become of you in your long future?

You and all the nations and peoples of the earth are expending your utmost energies to secure a future which can be counted in years and very soon its months and days come to an end. But what have you prepared for your permanent future and is there a future? Is there a life after this life? Is that life connected with this life? What is the path of success and salvation? What is it that guarantees this information for us? Surely The One who created us in the first place from earth will not have any difficulty in bringing us to life again after we have once again become earth. There is no doubt that He, Whose reason for creating us and creating us in stages is obvious, also has a reason for causing us to die and it will become obvious when we go into our new phase after death. Surely He Who perfected

the creation of man from a drop of sperm will not leave him to go in vain. Surely He who established the Truth in the heavens and on earth will establish the Truth in whatever actions man did, whether good or bad, and He will reward the doer of good and punish the doer of bad on the Day of Judgement. Surely He Who sent the prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners of the Day of Judgement after death in every nation will not break His promise and will vindicate His prophets. The signs of the approach of the Hour have appeared in the world exactly as Muhammad, on whom be peace, foretold. It only remains for us to see the Hour as we have seen its signs today. It was proven that the earth keeps a record of our actions (sound and image) and nothing has been kept or recorded except to be displayed once again.

Allah says: 'When Earth is shaken with her (final) earthquake.

And Earth yieldeth up her burdens,

And man saith: What aileth her?

That day she will relate her chronicles.' (99:1 - 4)

Surely He Who began creation and repeats it is capable of repeating Our creation a second time as He did at first.

The matter is thus very grave ... it is indeed a matter of the permanent future and the permanent destiny.

Either a life of bliss ... or a life of blaze.

The fear of your unknown future will not leave you until you have ascertained the veracity of Allah's messengers and assured that whatever they tell you is the Truth from your Lord Who gave you life, and will cause you to die and be resurrected. Only then will your thoughts calm down, your life find happiness and your uneasiness for your unknown future. But none of that will be until you first believe in Allah and His messenger. For all these reasons man's first duty is to believe in Allah and recognise Allah's messenger to him.

The Strongest Bond

The intelligent man is he who feels his weakness compared to the strength of his Creator Who does with him whatever He likes: his Lord is the

Creator and Master while he is the created and the slave, his Lord is the Strong, the Mighty and the Bestower while he is the weak, the fearful and the needy; his Lord is the Independent and he is the dependent; his Lord is the Ruler, the Sovereign and the Conqueror while he is the subdued, the obedient to his Lord's command.

Man is perplexed, hesitant and ignorant while his Lord is the Knower, the Guide Who taught man what he knew not.

How dire is the need of the created, the slave, the weak, the fearful for his Creator, the Master, the Strong, the Faithful, the Mighty, the Bestower.

How dire is the need of man, the dependent, the subdued, the submissive for his Lord, the Independent, the Ruler, the Sovereign, the Conqueror.

How dire is the need of the slave, the perplexed, the confused, the ignorant for the guidance of his Lord, the Guide, the Knowledgeable.

Man is in extreme need of realising a permanent bond with his Lord. If he realises it he will

save himself from all anxieties and will live in the shade of his Lord's protection, confident, at ease and happy as is seen in the lives of the true believers and has been learnt in the history of the true Muslims. But this happiness, this protection, these divine graces, this help and this reassurance will not be realised unless the greatest bond is realised between the created and his Creator. This is the bond of faith which the created reposes in his Creator. Thus faith in Allah and faith in His messenger is essential for it is he who expounded the intricacies of this bond.

In this way we know that man's first duty is to recognise his Lord and his Lord's messenger to him.

Light Which Dispels the Darkness

- He who does not recognise his Creator lives in darkness.
- He who does not recognise his Master Who does with him whatever He wants lives in darkness.
- He who does not recognise the purpose of his creation and existence lives in darkness.

- He who does not recognise the guidance and light which came from his Lord lives in darkness.
- He who does not recognise his destiny to which he travels every day and which he will reach after death lives in darkness.
- He who does not recognise the path to live in the shade of his Lord's pleasure and protection lives in darkness.
- He who does not recognise the way out of these clouds of darkness will remain in them and never come out.

If the intelligent man thinks and ponders he will surely find that his need for guidance and light to take him out of this darkness comes before all his other needs.

If the intelligent man reflects on his Creator he will see that his Creator has guided everything to its most appropriate place which accords with its nature. You see every vein and every nerve in man's body, every limb and every organ has been created in the most suitable place and has been guided to its proper function. It is the same with all the parts of a plant such as the veins, leaves,

flowers, branches and fruits. It is the same with all the parts of the animals and all the parts of the earth whether, water, air, soil, mountains, night, day, summer, winter, autumn or spring and so it is with all the stars in the sky and all its planets. In short, He has determined the creation of everything and guided each to what accords with its creation. Because the Creator is He:

‘Who createth, then disposeth
Who measureth, then guideth.’ (87:2-3)

‘Who gave unto everything its nature, then guideth it aright.’ (20:50).

If the intelligent person ponders over this he will find that the Creator guided what is smaller than himself and what is bigger and he will logically conclude that his Lord did not leave him without guidance.

If the intelligent person ponders over his creation and formation he will find that Allah created him in need of air and provided it for him, in need of water and provided it for him, in need of light and provided it for him, in need of food and provided it for him, in need of clothing and bed and provided them for him, in need of

blood, flesh, bones, teeth and all other parts of his body and created them all for him. He created him with the need to excrete waste matter from his body and provided the passage for it. If the Creator did not neglect to provide guidance for the smallest part of the human being then the intelligent will have no doubt that He did not leave them in need of guidance without providing it. Surely man is in dire need of light which will lead him out of the darkneses of ignorance, confusion, ruin, alarm and doubt about the most important affairs of his life and existence. When man creates a piece of equipment he only sends it with someone who can explain the wisdom of its creation and how it is to be used. The Creator of man, therefore, cannot leave man without explanation and guidance, and indeed light and guidance did come from our Lord but the disbeliever pretends to be blind and follows his desire.

Allah says: 'Now hath come unto you light from Allah and a plain Scripture..Whereby Allah guideth him who seeketh His good pleasure unto paths of peace.

He bringeth them out of darkness unto light by His decree, and guideth them onto a straight path.' (5:15 - 16).

There is no nation to which Allah did not send an apostle 'and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them' (35:24) and the recorded history of man bears testimony that every nation has a religion, whether it is in its original purity or is distorted by time. There is no excuse for anyone for Allah has sent a light to His slaves by which they can be saved from the darknesses and with this light He sent His noble prophets to deliver it to mankind. Thus there is no justification for anyone to insist on living in the dark.

Allah says: 'Messengers of good cheer and of warning, in order that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers.' (4:165).

This conclusive proof still exists today and it is the Qur'an, which is being spread throughout the atmosphere by dozens of radio and television stations in exactly the same manner as Allah revealed it. Allah has protected it from all distortions and it is This Qur'an which is memo-

rised in the hearts and which the scholars in every age have spent endless efforts to preserve and teach. What, then, is the excuse of those who continue to live in the dark and what will be their excuse on the Day when their Lord will question them? As Allah says: 'Till, when they come (before their Lord), He will say: Did ye deny My revelations when ye could not compass them in knowledge, or what was it that ye did?' (27:84).

Surely in the guidance which has come from our Lord there is a complete answer to all the questions man may have, and in it is a healing for all the diseases of the heart, and in it is complete satisfaction for all those who possess intellect.

The intelligent people have accepted the guidance of their Lord and recognised that it is the truth. 'Those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth and leadeth unto the path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise. (34:6). Thus have they responded after having recognised and learnt. So what excuse is there to reject faith after others have accepted it? 'And those who argue concerning Allah after He hath been acknow-

ledged, Their argument hath no weight with their Lord, and wrath is upon them and theirs will be an awful doom.' (42:16).

A Light Which Guides The Seekers

Just as the intelligent have responded to Allah's light, similarly, the researchers of the modern sciences in the East and West have returned to the pale of faith in God after having been chased from religion by the monks, priests and clergymen. The latter people had wanted to impose the religion of their own making on the minds of the researchers by force and these had abandoned religion in its entirety. But everytime they attempted to flee from faith in God they encountered His splendour and His signs revealed themselves to them. Everytime they fabricated a theory in support of atheism, Allah uncovered for them some truths which played havoc with those spurious theories and the Divine portents forced them to return as missionaries calling towards faith in Him after they had acted as missionaries for atheism. It is very sad that many people in the Muslim lands have

been deceived by the theories of atheism which these researchers had been spreading to stop people from religion and belief in God, and they are still deceived by them though they know that the researchers only did that to escape from a religion concocted by the priests. But these poor deluded people are unaware that Muhammad, peace be upon him, clarified what they had distorted and pointed out the falsehood of the Christian faith a few centuries before these researchers could discover those falsehoods. These poor deluded people are unaware, especially in the Muslim lands, that the outstanding scientists in the East and West have joined those who condemn atheism and its falseties and are calling for faith in God.

A professor in Biochemistry declared that those scientists who believe in God feel a great sense of satisfaction everytime they make a new discovery which supports their belief in God and it increases their understanding and perception of the power of God over creation.

A world famous natural scientist during the years 1925 to 1946 declared in an article entitled

“God’s existence is an absolute fact” that the atheists and freethinkers seem to have a blind spot in their brain which prevents them from seeing that all factors, whether living or lifeless, could have no meaning if one does not accept the existence of God.

A famous British astronomer declared that everytime the sphere of science widens more proofs come to light of the existence of an Eternal Creator Whose power is unlimited.

A French Chemist declared that he would resort to the Academy of Sciences to strengthen his faith in God whenever he felt that it was threatened.

A member of the American Association of Natural Sciences declared that everything in the universe testified to the existence of God and proved His power and greatness. He also said that when scientists engage in the study of the laws of nature they are in fact doing nothing more than studying God’s creation and the effects of His power.

Allah has exposed the signs and proofs of His existence to the scientists as He has exposed to

them some of the wonders of the Qur'an and miracles of the prophet, peace be upon him, which are enough to convince them of his prophethood. Here are the groups of researchers and scientists in the East and West who have believed in Islam and the groups continue to increase day after day. Here are the Islamic centres which have been opened in many European and American cities and the thing which increases our faith in this religion is that those who enter it enter with knowledge while those who leave it leave out of ignorance.

The Approach of The Reckoning

If you are in need of Faith, O intelligent man, as has already been explained, then you are in need of it to escape the punishment of the Fire and be amongst the dwellers of Paradise, and because Allah refuses to accept the Muslim and the sinner on the same level, and because He Who created the heavens and the earth in truth will inevitably establish the balance in all of man's affairs, and because He Who preserved you from the time you were a small sperm will

not allow your life to go waste, and because this defective stage of man's life will not be complete and the wisdom behind it will not be clear except with the other life, and because the records which are kept by the earth must be presented once again, ¹and because man's wants will not be satisfied except with what the Creator has prepared for him in the Hereafter because these wants were created for the Hereafter, and because it is easy for Him Who originated creation to repeat it once again, and because He Who decreed life and death sent truthful messenger's and supported them with proofs and clear signs and they informed us of our destiny, about Allah's punishment for the sinners in a Fire whose fuel is men and stones and about the supreme bliss in a Paradise whose expanse is that

-
1. Researchers have been able to film man's actions 15 minutes after their occurrence. This is from the earth's records which are preserved. Allah says about the earth: 'On that day it will speak its news because your Lord has inspired it. On that day mankind will issue forth in scattered groups to see their deeds.' The prophet explained that the earth shall witness against mankind all they have done on it.

of the heavens and earth; the apostle Muhammad, peace be upon him, informed us that he was the seal of prophets and that the reckoning has drawn close; he spoke to us of the signs of the approach of the Hour which will come after him and we are seeing that they have already begun to take place; no-one in the past would have believed that they would occur except for the fact that it was Allah's messenger who spoke about them on instructions from his Lord, and today we are seeing them exactly as he spoke of them, and tomorrow the occupants of Hell will see what their Lord had promised them and the occupants of Heaven will see what their Lord had promised them. Here are a few of the signs which Allah's messenger told us about:

1. The appearance of Wondrous things which never occurred to the mind. This is the age of wonders in inventions, principles, morals and organisations. In this age we have seen many great things which would never have occurred to our minds. The messengers of Allah informed us of this time so that our thoughts do not become confused and our hearts not swayed by extraordinary events. He said: "The Hour will not rise until you see great

matters which you never saw before and which never occurred to your minds.”² He also said: “Before the Hour rises you will see great things which you do not know and you will say: ‘Were we spoken to of this?’ So when you see this then remember Allah Almighty and know that it is the first signs of the Hour.”³

2. The poor, barebacked, barefooted shepherds will build lofty buildings. No man who is a non-believer or is ignorant of Hadith would have believed that the barefooted shepherd who owns not a shoe or clothing or food would be able to build huge buildings and view with others in the height of their buildings until we saw petrol coming from the land of the poor barefooted shepherd and suddenly they are vying with one another to erect buildings. The messenger of Allah spoke the truth when he informed us of these

2. Narrated by Ahmad, Al. Bazzar and Al Tabarani on the authority of Samurah b. Jundub.

3. Narrated by Al Tabarani and Al Bazzar on the authority of Samurah.

centuries before their occurrence. "When you see the poor, barefooted shepherds vying with one another in buildings then expect the Hour."⁴

3. The designing of homes as how clothing is designed. No-one in the past would have thought that people would spend so much effort to design their walls and houses and fashion them as how clothing are fashioned because this causes extreme difficulty and because it is not an important matter. Now our age has come and we see the design which Allah's messenger spoke of when he said: "The Hour will not rise until people build houses and design them as the design of tailored clothes."⁵
4. The parts of the earth draw closer. It would never have occurred to anybody's mind that the parts of the earth would draw closer so that one may see those distant parts all at the same time as happened to the

4. Narrated by Al Bukhari and Muslim.

5. Narrated by Al Bukhari in "Al Adab al Mufrad".

prophet and as he prophesied. He said: "The earth was folded in for me and I was shown its Eastern most and Western most parts and my Ummah shall reach the extent of all that was brought before me."⁶

He also informed us that the earth would be drawn close in latter times: "The Hour will not rise until time gets shorter and the earth is folded in."

Here it is that the earth has been folded in and the rider in a rocket can see all parts of the earth and mankind can see it with him. Distances have become shorter and this is what is meant by the earth's folding in and time getting shorter. Sounds are heard from far off places and pictures are being transmitted and all this means the folding of the earth and the shortening of time. These are all signs of the Hour as the truthful prophet informed us.

6. Narrated by Al Tabarani in "Al Kabir" on the authority of Abu Musa al Ash'ari.

5. The speech of wild beasts, the talking of lifeless things and the carrying of news of the wife to the husband.

Can the wild beasts talk? This was impossible in relation to those who lived before us. But these days they have now begun to talk. Some cats have begun to express themselves, and tomorrow other wild beasts will follow. But this is one of the signs of the approach of the Hour, as the messenger of Allah informed us, and tomorrow the Hour will be here just as today some of its signs are here. Likewise, no-one would have believed that lifeless things could talk but today they talk. It was far from people's minds that lifeless things would be able to know the state of the home and convey its news to the husband after he has left the house. Now inventors have been able to make a gadget for spying which transfers the news from any place to the bearer of this gadget by means of a special frequency. Tomorrow it will be improved and it will be worn in the shoe in the form of its tongue as we have seen radios

already in the form of eyeglasses. But this, too, is one of the signs of the Hour, as the prophet said: "By Him in Whose hands is my soul, the Hour shall not rise until wild beasts talk to man and a man's shoe lace and tongue speak to him and tell him of what his family did after him."⁷

6. An Upsurge of Knowledge with Ignorance of Religion.

It was a natural thing in the past that when literacy spread knowledge and understanding spread and when the amount of governors became plenty, there were plenty of honest men among them because honesty used to be the criterion for the posts of governor and ruler. But this age has brought us the contrary of that, as the prophet said: "One of the signs of the Hour is the abundance of literate people and the lack of people with understanding, the abundance of governors

7. Ahmad narrated it in his Musnad on the authority of Abu Sa'id al Khuddri. Al Tirmidhi also narrated it and said it was a good, sound and strange hadith, while Al Hakim and others said it was sound according to Muslim's stipulations.

and the lack of honest people.”⁸

Knowledge used to be proof of one’s strength of faith and ignorance proof of one’s weak faith but now the opposite is true, as the prophet prophesied: “In latter times there will be ignorant worshippers and sinful literates.”⁹

7. The Abundance of Wealth, The expansion of Commerce and The Spread of Literacy.

The prophet said: “One of the conditions of the Hour is that wealth will spread, commerce will expand and the pen will be uppermost.”¹⁰ The pen being uppermost is a sign of literacy being widespread.

8. Women becoming naked, their swaying and their doing of their hair like the humps of camels.

It would never have occurred to anyone that Muslim women would shed their clothes and

8. Al Tabarani narrated it on the authority of ‘Abd al Rahman al Ansari.

9. Abu Na’im narrated it in his “Al Hulyah” and Al Hakim on the authority of Anas.

10. Al Nasa’i narrated it on the authority of ‘Umar ibn Taghlib.

sway and adopt any means to excite the passions of men. But the movement toward nakedness is obvious despite the abundance of clothing. These tight clothes make the women look naked and these light, revealing clothes expose their bodies and these short dresses uncover most of their legs despite the abundance of cloth which is supposed to cover what is exposed. There are also the mixed swimming pools in which women can be seen naked except for a small piece of covering over her private parts and breasts! All of the above-mentioned women are clothed yet naked! Most women wear high-heeled shoes to make their bodies lean toward the front so that men's heads and hearts may lean with them. Along with this nudity and swaying there are also the different hairstyles which make their heads look like camel humps. Our prophet, on whom be peace, informed us of all this and his words seem the outlines of the picture we are seeing now.

He said: "Two categories from my Ummah

whom I have not seen will be in the Fire of Hell. A group of men with whips like the tails of cows with which they beat the people, and women who are clothed yet naked, leaning and causing others to lean, their heads are like the swaying humps of camels.”¹¹

9. Men dressing like women and women dressing like men.

No-one in the past would have thought that men would dress like women and vice-versa especially those in the tribal desert life where baby girls used to be buried alive out of shame. But Allah’s prophet spoke of that and said that it is one of the signs of the Hour: “One of the signs of the Hour is that men will dress like women and women will dress like men.”¹²

10. The Rearing of dogs, dislike for the rearing of children, and the spread of immorality. No-one could have imagined that people

11. Muslim narrated it.

12. Abu Na’im narrated it in his “Al Hulyah” and others in a similar manner.

would hate to rear children from their own loins and would love to rear dogs especially in the tribal Arabian environment where they used to take pride in sons and having many children. But Allah removed the curtains of time by bestowing prophethood on His messenger and he informed us that that is a sign of the last Hour: "When the Hour approaches a man would prefer to rear a puppy rather than rearing his own son, the elders will not be respected and the youngsters will not be shown mercy and the children of adultery will be plentiful so much that a man would grasp a woman on the open path. They would be wearing sheepskins over wolves' hearts, the best of them being the flatterer."¹³

These are a few of the signs which we have seen. The traditions of the prophet tell us of much more and we have seen many of them. He who told us of the signs of the Hour many

13. Al Tabarani and Al Hakim narrated it on the authority of Abu Dharr.

centuries before they appeared is the same who told us of the Hour and what will happen in it. All of this urges and pushes the intelligent to think about his destiny as all the prophets explained it just as it urges him to think about this world which he is living in and its purpose.

This World and its Reality

If you ponder over your past years you would realise the value of this life because when you are about to enter your grave and you remember your life which will end with your death you would then realise that you were only a traveller in it, as the noble prophet informed you when he said: "Live in this world as if you are a stranger or a wayfarer." So, O you traveller, have you prepared what you will need for your future abode or were you too preoccupied with acquiring what is in excess of your needs that you neglected what you need for the morrow? Ask yourself what will benefit you practically from among the things you fight over? Yours is nothing but what you ate and used up, or wore and tore, or gave in charity and

invested. You will go out leaving everything. If everyone who lived on the earth before us were to come together we would see thousands of people disputing over a single piece of earth, each one claiming that he is the owner, he had acquired it and it was among his property! Who, then, is the real owner? God Almighty said: 'Lo! and it is We, even We, Who quicken and give death and We are the Inheritor. And verily We know the eager among you and verily We know the laggards. Lo! Thy Lord will gather them together. Lo'. He is Wise, Aware.' (15:23 - 25)

If you thought a lot about yourself and recognised your Lord and His messenger to you, you would know then that this world is nothing but a place of test and trial and people come into it one after another so that those who are obedient to their Lord might be distinguished from the sinners then they will all leave it just as they entered it. 'Now have ye come unto Us solitary as We did create you at the first, and ye have left behind you all that We bestowed upon you ... (6:95).

And if you knew the Hereafter and its reality

you would know and long for life in it and save yourself from its dangers.

The Hereafter

If this world extends for a limited amount of days, then the Hereafter is everlasting; if this world is mixed with sorrow, then the Hereafter is sheer bliss. Allah says: 'And the Garden is brought nigh for those who kept from evil, no longer distant.

(And it is said): that this is that which ye were promised. (It is) for every penitent and heedful one.

Who feareth the Beneficent in secret and cometh with a contrite heart. Enter it in peace! This is the Day of immortality.

There they have all that they desire, and there is more with Us.' (50:31 - 35)

But those who disbelieve in their Lord will have a severe punishment. When they stand before Him they will plead to be sent back into the world so that they may do good and not as they had done before. But the reply will come that they were given sufficient time to take heed

and messengers were sent to warn them but they were not afraid of that day when they would have no helper. Allah says: '... for them is the fire of hell; it taketh not complete effect upon them so that they can die, nor is its torment lightened for them. Thus We punish every ingrate.

And they cry for help there, (saying): Our Lord! Release us: We will do right, not (the wrong) that we used to do. Did not We grant you a life long enough for him who reflected to reflect therein? And the warner came unto you. Now taste (the flavour of your deeds), for evil-doers have no helper.' (35:36 - 37).

Faith is the Path of Action to Success and Salvation

But you, O intelligent one, will not be able to make sincere effort to achieve the everlasting bliss with your Creator and you will not be able to do the necessary things to be saved from the painful doom which awaits you in the abode to which you are drawing closer daily unless you are a believer who is truthful in his faith, one who has emerged from the uncertainty of the doubters

about whom Allah says: 'And when it was said: Lo! Allah's promise is the truth, and there is no doubt of the Hour's coming, ye said: We know not what the Hour is. We deem it naught but a conjecture, and we are by no means convinced.' (45:32).

Thus faith is a must, and there must also be the proofs upon which the structure of faith stands. The proofs are plentiful, but where are the people of intellect? And where are the people of pure hearts?

Knowledge is the Path of Faith

If man is truthful to himself and knows that the most important thing in this universe is that he should recognise his Lord and his Lord's messenger and that this is the path to happiness in this world and the next, then he must strive to learn the proofs of faith for Allah has made knowledge the path of faith. He said: 'Know, therefore, that there is no god but Allah.' (47:19).

He also said: 'Is he who knoweth that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth like him who is blind? But only men of understanding

heed.' (13:19).

The Danger of Blind Imitation in Faith

Allah explained that blind imitation of ancestors without knowledge is a loathful quality for which the unbelievers are condemned. He said: 'And when it is said unto them: Follow that which Allah hath revealed, they say: We follow that wherein we found our fathers. What! Even though their fathers were wholly unintelligent and had no guidance? (2:170).

He explained that the path to faith in what was revealed to Muhammad, on whom be peace, is knowledge and that one who does not have knowledge of his faith is blind and the blind can be led by any person in any direction. Allah says: 'Is he who knoweth that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth like him who is blind? But only men of understanding heed.' (13:19). Thus it is easy for a Muslim who blindly follows others in matters of faith to respond to any call or any idea because he is blind. He has lost the reality of faith by allowing his faith to be based on imitation and has been deprived of its

light. This is reflected in the actions of the Muslim imitators and their ways of worship for they worship Allah on an edge (of a precipice) and upkeep only aspects of Islam while they disregard others because they are difficult or because they are shaky in their faith. Allah says: 'And among mankind is he who worshippeth Allah upon a narrow marge so that if good befalleth him he is content therewith, but if a trial befalleth him, he falleth away utterly. He loseth both the world and the Hereafter.' (22:11). This traditional faith cannot stand up to the doubts planted by those who stir up doubts in this age. Many tests have come to us which no-one can be saved from except he who knows his religion, as prophesied by Allah's messenger: "There will be tests from which no-one will be saved except he who knows his religion."

Faith is the Path of Happiness and it increases with Pious Actions

Whoever wishes happiness for himself and salvation for mankind must have faith. Whoever wishes a good life and pious actions in this world

must have faith, for pious actions are the fruits of faith. Whoever wishes happiness in the Hereafter and salvation from the punishment must have faith, and whoever acquires faith through knowledge and insight he must nurture and protect it with pious deeds for faith "increases by acts of obedience and decreases by sins." This is the guidance given to us by the prophet, may Allah bless him and his household and companions and all who call to his way until the Day of Judgment.

Civilization in Distress and there is No Exit except By Faith.

Man lives today in the shade of a disbelieving civilization, lost and unable to find any meaning or purpose for his life. He learnt from civilization how to live but civilization never tells anyone why he was created, or why he lives. Modern civilization is like a shipbuilder who built a perfect ship and decorated it then called the people to board it; he explains all the things he has prepared for them on the ship, tells them where to eat and what to drink, where to sleep, where to play, how they should fulfill their needs, etc. But when he is

asked where his ship is going he replies "I don't know."

Likewise, today's civilization teaches man how to live but it does not know why man lives! or what is the purpose of his existence! There is no exit for mankind from this loss in this world except by contacting their Creator because it is only He Who knows why He created them. He created them for a reason in His mind, and the created cannot know what is in their Creator's mind except by instructions from their Creator. 'Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind.' (5:116).

And as long as man does not know his Creator he will remain in his own view of lesser importance than a piece of paper and more worthless than a hedgehog.

One of the characteristics of modern civilization is this frightful anxiety which upsets the life of individuals and societies and leads towards suicide or addiction to drugs or insane behaviour which fills the hearts of others with anxiety. The reason for this anxiety and fear is the absence of tranquillity and satisfaction with the life which

man is leading since everything which man utilises lies out of his sphere of ownership since he did not create anything and he does not know the Real Owner. Also because when death overtakes him it will destroy all his hopes and will take him into an unknown future, thus his case is like that of a man who is put to sleep in the carriage way of cars!

And the differences among men is caused by their differences in opinions and beliefs from which there is no escape as long as man continues to live far from Allah's guidance. The only exit is by faith.

And the presence of conflicts between men is a fruit of disbelieve, the only exit from which is faith.

Another characteristic of modern civilization is injustice and exploitation because the rulers, who issue laws to rule over the people, whether in the democratic parliaments or the central committees of the parties, make these laws to serve their own interests and fulfill their own desires. We have seen how the American people are subjugated to fulfill the interests of the Capitalists who know

how to win the elections, and we have seen how the Russian people are subjugated to fulfill the interests and desires of the Central Committee and the Communist party and its members who have special privileges and know how to suppress the people and impose the iron curtain over them. All the other systems of Kufr can be judged in the light of the above two.

It is not possible for injustice and exploitations to be removed from man's rule unless the rule is taken from his hand and legislation comes from the True Creator Himself Who does not show favouritism to any class or caste or nation or individual. Man is filled with passions and desires and it is not possible to remove the rulership from him and hand it over to the Creator Who is never partial.

The Islamic Shari'ah, its justice and its appropriateness have dazed the non-Muslim researchers of law and they could not help but testify to what they saw. In their testimonies is enough incitement for their nations to accept that the Islamic code of law is the only exit for them from their bottlenecks and corruptions. And in the testimo-

nies of these law experts is enough condemnation for the Muslims who do not establish the just Shari'ah laws among themselves.

Here are a few examples of them.

1. A professor of law at Harvard University, 1932, declared that the path of progress for the Islamic countries lay not in blind imitation of the West which separates religion from state but in the application of religious laws to personal and public life. He continued that the Shari'ah had within itself the scope for expansion to cater for the needs of modern life and that the problem did not lie in the inflexibility of Islamic law but in the non-utilisation of its inherent flexibility.
2. Principal of the Law College, Vienna, declared in 1927 that humanity was proud to have a man like Muhammad in its midst, who, despite his illiteracy, was able 13 centuries ago to produce a system of law which even the Europeans would boast of if they could reach its pinnacle after 2000 years.
3. In an international conference held in Au-

gust 1937 in the Hague it was announced that Islamic Law would be considered as a source of law and that the Shari'ah had become a source for the international courts and international law not because of the strength of its upholders but because of its inherent strength and appropriateness. The conference also announced that the Shari'ah was independent of other sources.

4. During the Week of Islamic Jurisprudence held in Paris, 1952, the representative of French lawyers declared that he could not reconcile the picture of backwardness which was painted about Islamic law and the things he had heard here which convinced him that Islamic law was capable of adapting to any circumstance.
5. The Society for International Law recognised Muhammad ibn al Hasan al Shaybani, disciple of Abu Hanifah, as the first founder of International law.

What would you say, O intelligent one, if you saw a group of people in a country who have turned their cars into ploughs and turned their

ploughs into vehicles for excursion, would you have any doubts that their actions are misguided?

This is exactly what man had done today. Men are transformed into women and vice versa due to the fact that they consider themselves animals no better than hedgehogs and after they have corrupted family life and morals. These are the dilemmas of modern civilization which in turn is the fruit of Kufr: frustration, anxiety, differences, conflict, tyranny, exploitation, corruption, degradation. Thus faith is a must to save the Muslims from these diseases which have afflicted them after they had been afflicted in their faith and it is essential for the unbelievers to save themselves from the dilemmas into which they were thrown by Kufr. Faith is essential because it is the binding duty of all Muslims and the responsibility of those who are the followers and inheritors of the prophets.

‘Our Lord! Lo! We have heard a crier calling unto Faith: “Believe ye in your Lord!” So we believed.’ (3:193)

PART TWO

PART TWO

'He Who Gave Unto Everything Its Nature, Then Guided It Aright.' (20:50).

If you reflect on your creation you will find that every part of you was created by your Creator for a known purpose and He made that creation suitable for the fulfillment of that purpose for which it was created. Look at your eyes, ears and stomach how suitable they are for their duties and how He guided them to perform their functions. The first sees, the second hears and the third digests the food, and all of them were created from one food.

Reflect on the pomegranate tree or the wheat crop or the date tree how Allah determined for each one of them a special creation and a special fruit and guided each one of them to produce its special fruit and take its own form in its roots, branches and blossoms though all of them are of the same matter. Allah says: 'And in the earth

are neighbouring tracts, vineyards and ploughed lands, and date palms, like and unlike, which are watered with one water. And We have made some of them to excel others in fruit. Lo! Herein verily are portents for people who have sense.' (13:4).

Consider the difference in the lives of fishes, birds, ants, germs and all other types of living creatures how Allah created them all from one matter and determined their lives to be in different places and different ways yet He guided each animal to what suits it and directed each part in it to perform its function. For example, He guided the birds' wings to lift them and the fishes' fins to filter the air for them, etc. Allah says: 'Allah hath created every animal of water. Of them is (a kind) that goeth upon its belly and (a kind) that goeth upon two legs and (a kind) that goeth upon four. Allah createth what He will. Lo! Allah is Able to do all things.' (24:45).

When you contemplate on the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets you will find each one of them was created with specific measures and was guided to its appropriate place and its path of

movement was drawn out carefully in accordance with its destiny and thus all the heavenly bodies were set in perfect balance. Allah says: 'Lo! Allah graspeth the heavens and the earth that they deviate not, and if they were to deviate there is not one could grasp them after Him. Lo! He is ever clement, Forgiving.' (35:41).

Thus if a star or a planet or the sun or the moon were to swerve from its path the system would be destroyed.

Anyone who studies this universe and ponders will know that the Creator Who invented everything has also guided each creation to fulfill its specific role. Allah says:

'Praise the name of thy Lord, the Most High,
Who createth then disposeth;
Who measureth, then guideth.' (87:1 - 3).

Allah quotes His prophet Moses as saying: 'He said: Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guideth it aright.' (20:50).

The Path of Faith

If we think about man we will find that his Creator has given him the capacity for knowledge

and distinction between Truth and Falsehood and what is harmful and what is beneficial. He created in him the instruments by which he can acquire knowledge and differentiate the Truth from Falsehood. So if he is keen to search for the Truth and is eager to follow it he will succeed and reap benefits. But if he ignores the command of Truth and flouts it he will be a plain loser. Allah says: 'Lo! We created man from a drop of thickened fluid to test him; so We make him hearing, knowing.

Lo! We have shown him the way, whether he be grateful or disbelieving.

Lo! We have prepared for disbelievers manacles and carcans and a raging fire.

Lo! The righteous shall drink of a cup whereof the mixture is of water of k̄āfūr.' (76:2 - 5).

He also says: 'And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that happily ye might give thanks.' (16:78).

After having decreed that man should be intelligent, capable of distinguishing, learned and capable of choosing and after having granted him

the instruments of knowledge and differentiation, his Lord ordered him to tread the path of knowledge and benefit from the instruments of knowledge which he possesses and that he should not follow any matter which he has no knowledge of. He declared that man will be held responsible for any deviation which he finds himself in after his Lord had created for him the means of knowledge and distinction between Truth and Falsehood. Allah says: '(O man), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart - of each of these it will be asked.' (17:36).

There is no excuse for man, therefore, if he treads the path of error for Allah says: 'Oh, but man is a telling witness against himself. Although he tender his excuses.' (75:14 - 15).

'So know that there is no God save Allah.' (47:19).

If your Creator is the One Who gave you your sight while you were a small piece of flesh and blood in your mother's womb, and provided you with the instrument to perceive the light while you were in the darkness of your mother's womb,

and made you capable by this instrument to see near and far and distinguish the things around you and you were thus able to move with purpose on this earth and see whatever comes towards you or goes away from you...

If your Creator is the One Who gave you your hearing while you were in a quiet world in your mother's womb and provided you with perfect, sensitive instruments of hearing by which you are able to know the speech which is directed to you, and others are able to explain to you what they want, and you are able to gather the knowledge of others and by which man is able to speak to his fellow man and establish good relationships with one another...

If your Creator is the One Who gave you your intellect, understanding and ability to distinguish between the right and the wrong and the harmful and the beneficial, and by means of this perceptive intellect you are considered superior to the animals which share with you in sight and hearing, and you are able to know what is beneficial to you and so you conquer mountains and seas and put to service plants and animals

and dive into the depths of the ocean and fly into the heights of the atmosphere and make your life comfortable in this world and make that of your enemies miserable - and without this perceptive intellect you would have been in a world of mad people, incapable of inventing things or building houses or tilling the land;

If you were to consider your life without sight, hearing and intellect you would see that you would be incapable of moving yourself from one place to another more suitable, or finding your food and drink or protecting yourself from danger and then death would be more attractive to you than such a blind, deaf and unintelligent life...

If all this is so, do you not see that your first duty is to make use of these instruments which your Creator has created in you so that you may acquire knowledge of your Creator and His messenger and acquaint yourself with the will of him Who created you? If Allah cut your hearing, sight and intellect from you then no man whom you may be related to, and no idol whom you worship in any of its forms would be able to

recover them for you. Allah says: 'Say: have ye imagined, if Allah should take away your hearing and your sight and seal your hearts, who is the God who could restore it to you save Allah? See how We display the revelations unto them! Yet still they turn away.' (6:46).

Thus the intelligent will see that he must use the instruments of knowledge which his Creator gave him to know his Creator's commands, to know that pleases Him, to know what message his Lord's messenger brought him. Allah says: 'Remember Allah, as He hath taught you that which (heretofore) ye knew not.' (2:239).

With this we would be with the obedient and grateful people who say: 'Be glorified! We have no knowledge saving that which Thou hast taught us! Thou, only Thou, art The Knower, The Wise.' (2:32).

Likewise the intelligent will see that his first duty is to obey his Lord's command when He said: 'So know that there is no god save Allah.' (47:19) so he will take his belief with knowledge and conviction until he becomes one of those who have firm faith which can never be shaken and

until he becomes one of the highly intelligent, who have seen the realities of faith in Allah and His messenger with knowledge and have raised themselves above the level of the blind who do not know that their Lord is the Truth and that their Lord's messenger is true and has brought them the truth. Allah says: 'Is he who knoweth that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth like him who is blind? But only men of understanding heed.' (13:19).

'These are as the cattle - nay, but they are worse!' (7:179)

Be careful, O intelligent one, not to be like the negligent who did not thank Him Who created them and their hearing, sight and hearts and they did not use these faculties to know their Lord but instead they turned away and failed to either see His signs in His creation or hear them in His revelation. They did not reflect on what they saw or heard so they failed to utilise their ears, eyes and hearts for the most important task for which the Creator created them. Consequently, they attached themselves to others instead of their Creator and they hallowed and sang the glories of

those who could neither repel harm from themselves nor bring themselves any benefits. They attached themselves to idols in the form of stones, trees, fire, cows, bulls, men, spirits, planets, stars, lightning, thunder, rain or other types of creation. The people of today have done likewise and attached themselves to a collection of all the previous idols and called it nature. They have humbled themselves in front of created beings and hallowed their changing theories while forgetting the One Who created them, gave them life and will cause them death.

‘And they worship instead of Allah that for which He hath sent down no warrant, and that whereof they have no knowledge. For evil-doers there is no helper.’ (22:71).

‘But Lo! Many are led astray by their own lusts through ignorance. Lo! Thy Lord, He is best aware of the transgressors.’ (6:119).

The reason is that they were negligent of the realities of faith and never learnt them nor did they utilise the blessings of hearing, sight and heart to learn the proofs of faith which have become clear to every researcher and evident to

all people of learning. When they neglected the truth nothing remained except falsehood for which there is no proof or evidence and which has no support except fancy and imagination.

‘Say: have ye any knowledge that ye can adduce for us? Lo! ye follow naught but an opinion, Lo! ye do but guess.’ (6:149). Since the negligent ones shelved their faculties of knowledge and did not utilise them to know their Lord, they missed the truth when it came to them and they continued to wander in a world of fancy and imagination and thus they rightfully deserved to enter the fire of hell at the end of their lives on this earth. ‘Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and humankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears wherewith they hear not. These are as the cattle - nay, but they are worse! These are the neglectful.’ (7:179), and on the Day of Judgment they will regret. ‘And they say: had we been wont to listen or have sense, we had not been among the dwellers in the flames.

So they acknowledge their sins; but far removed

(from mercy) are the dwelling in the flames.'
(67:10 - 11).

'Allah (Himself) is witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witnesses).' (3:18).

From what we have said it should be clear that He Who 'teacheth man that which he knew not' (96:5) and gave him the instruments of knowledge has also made the path of faith in Him and His messenger to come by means of knowledge and by the utilisation of these instruments. Thus He created in us the instruments which will lead us to faith in Him by means of a guaranteed path, the path of knowledge.

He said: 'So know that there is no God save Allah.' (47:19) **'Is he who knoweth that what is revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the truth like him who is blind? But only men of understanding heed.'** (13:19) **'Even as We have sent unto you a messenger from among you, who reciteth unto you Our revelations and causeth you to grow, and teacheth, you the Scripture and wisdom, and teacheth you that which ye knew not.'** (2:151).

Allah Almighty also warns us of following

ignorance: '(O man), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart - of each of these it will be asked.' (17:36).

Allah explained that ignorance leads to disbelief and ingratitude, and if it is supported by stubbornness then it results in the heart being sealed and incapable of understanding a tiny part of the truth which it has rejected.

Allah says: 'Thus doth Allah seal the hearts of those who know not.' (30:59).

By utilising our instruments of knowledge and directing them towards recognising our Lord and His messenger, we would be entering into the cadre of those who have testified to the oneness of Allah and whose testimony Allah has joined to His own for He, The One without partners, said: 'Allah (Himself) is witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witnesses).' (3:18).

'Thus Do We Expound the Revelations for People Who Reflect.' (10:24).

After we have learnt that knowledge is the path of faith, come let us see some of the details

which clarify the milestones along this path. We will see that when man wants to know a truth or learn a matter about which he is ignorant then he must follow one out of the following three paths:-

1. Observation and Reflection

Here he sees something, observes it and reflects on it, or he experiments, observes and reflects then derives the truth which had hitherto been hidden from him. For example, he sees that when fire is put over ice, it melts the latter. He may experiment with this until he arrives at the truth which had been unknown to him which is that heat melts ice, and he finds comfort in this piece of knowledge which derived by the use of his intellect. Or he may see the breeze blowing from a specific direction then he notices that the clouds came from the same direction. Upon this his intellect deduces that it is the breeze which blows the clouds and soon he finds comfort in this deduction of his intellect.

Or he may see a car from afar moving on the paved road, turning at the turns, slowing down when it is necessary and speeding up when it is

safe to do so and he sees its lights illuminating the way for it; thus he ponders and deduces that the car is in good condition for running otherwise it would not have been moving in spite of the fact that he has not seen the motor or other instruments of the car; he deduces that the lighting apparatus is in perfect condition even though he has not seen the apparatus in the car; that the driver is intelligent and sober since he drives the car with alertness; and that the driver is trained in the art of driving because he drives it with confidence.

When we see the branches of trees shaking and things falling to the ground, if there is nothing holding them then our minds conclude that it is the breeze which moves the branches and that it is the gravity of the earth which pulls the bodies which fall unto the earth although we do not see the breeze or the power of gravity. In this way engineers, doctors, experts, apprentices and mankind in general gather a lot of everyday knowledge and experiences by means of observation and reflection or experimentation and reflection which lead to the understanding of the truth.

This method is called the scientific method and the law which governs it is called the law of scientific knowledge. It can be stated as follows:

Observation of a phenomenon or experimentation plus reflection about what happens under observation equals a scientific truth.

Similarly, if we observe the effects of the natural laws and our minds reflect on them we would be able to know these laws in a correct scientific manner. In the very same manner we arrive at the knowledge of the Truth Who is Allah, may He be glorified.

If we observe His effects in all corners of the universe and we reflect on them we would then be able to know Him and our hearts would be comforted with such knowledge. 'Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and (in) the difference of night and day are tokens (of His sovereignty) for men of understanding.

Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say:) Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain. Glory be to Thee! Preserve us from the doom of Fire!' (3:190 - 191).

The effects of creation testify that they are the products of the Creator.

The effects of wisdom testify that they are the products of the Wise.

The effects of nourishment testify that they are the products of Nourisher.

The effects of life and death testify that they are the products of the Life giver and the Bestower of death.

The effects of mercy testify that they are the products of the Merciful.

The effects of preservation testify that they are the products of the Preserver.

The effects of control testify that they are the products of the Controller and Maintainer.

The effects of knowledge testify that they are the products of the Knower.

The effects of guidance testify that they are the products of the Guide.

The effects of strength testify that they are the products of the Strong.

The effects of power testify that they are the products of the Powerful.

The effects of profit and loss testify that they

are the products of the One Who bestows profit or loss.

The effects of independence testify that they are the products of the Independent.

The effects of permanence testify that they are the products of the Permanent and Everlasting.

The effects of unity testify that they are the products of the One, The Unique.

If we ponder over all the things around us in existence we would not be able to see anything with these qualities. But we would find them testifying by their very existence that they are the creation of the Being Who has these qualities. Thus we would know and recognise that "There is no-one worthy of worship except Allah."

By the same method when we study the proofs of the prophethood of Muhammad we will find that each proof presents clear evidence that he is the messenger of Allah. When we study the prophecies which came in the scriptures of other religions - some of which is still extant - we will find them testifying that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

And when we ponder over the Qur'an's

eloquence and perpetual freshness which dumfounded both Jinn and men and proved their inability to produce a chapter like it, we will find that it testified and still does that the Qur'an is from Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger.

And when we study the prophecies made by Muhammad in his lifetime and which have appeared after that in verification of his saying and continue to appear up to this day we will find a permanent, Truthful Testimony to the fact that he is the messenger of Allah.

And when we study the Islamic code of law (Shari'ah) and how it realised on the surface of the earth the most fortunate life ever known to man, which both Muslim and non-Muslim law experts declare to be suitable in every time and clime, which had ruled for centuries and was never found to be lacking or defective and which up to today is still suitable for the realisation of complete happiness for man ... and when we study what the experts of manmade law say that it is not possible for any manmade law to remain suitable for human life for more than a century,

we must naturally conclude that this shari'ah is suitable for all ages and all planes and anyone who studies it will conclude that it is the handiwork of One Who is intimately aware of the realities of the human being and the immutable laws of human nature which are still unknown to the makers of human law. We will find also that this is a testimony to the fact that Muhammad is God's messenger.

And when we study the life of Muhammad from its most authentic sources we will find that it can only be the life of a messenger who was sent by God.

These are some aspects of the study according to my knowledge, which lead the student - if he takes his study seriously - to a strong faith which is not to be shaken. He will find himself repeating and with full conviction: "I testify that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's messenger." But it will be a faith founded on awareness not a blind, traditional faith; a faith which produces good deeds and is not affected by doubts.

2. Listening and Pondering

This method of acquiring knowledge is the main one by which knowledge is transferred from one person to another. The teacher and lecturer transfers his information to his students or audience by means of their listening to him. Similarly, the technical expert, the doctor, the engineer, the consultant and the friend transfer their knowledge to their associates by means of their listening to them otherwise it would have been quite difficult for them to make others see what they have seen and hear what they have heard. In this manner the listeners are able to benefit from the knowledge of the scientists and acquire new and useful sciences. Now, if people readily take knowledge from the scholars by listening to their speeches, it is only because those scholars know what they do not know and are in positions of trust which make it easy for the people to accept what they say.

Most of the truths which people believe in the various branches of knowledge are those which they have gotten from those whose knowledge and truthfulness they trust. By the exact method,

which all intelligent people consider a sound method, comes belief in God also, and in exactly the same manner this belief gets clearer and firmer. This is because God chose a messenger, just as He had chosen messengers before, and showed him many of His signs. As He says: 'The heart lied not (in seeing) what it saw. Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he seeth?

And verily he saw him yet another time
By the lote-tree of the utmost boundary,
Nigh unto which is the Garden of Abode.
When that which shroudeth did enshroud the
lote-tree,
The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold.
Verily he saw one of the greater revelations of his
Lord.' (53:11 - 18) and God sent His messenger
to us to teach us what we were ignorant of in
relation to our Creator, our religion, our past,
our future and the purpose of our creation, which
would have been impossible for us to know of our
own.

Allah says: 'Even as We have sent unto you a messenger from among you, who reciteth unto

you Our revelations and causeth you to grow, and teacheth you the Scripture and wisdom, and teacheth you that which ye knew not.' (2:151).

But the believer accepts none but the messenger of Truth whose truthfulness he is sure about and whose has brought with him the proofs of his messengership from Allah. After getting the proof of this, the believer will accept all that he brings since he deserves most to be accepted since he conveys knowledge from the Lord of the heavens and the earth. It is He Who 'Surroundeth all things in knowledge.' (65:12), 'The knower of the Unseen. Not an atom's weight, or less than that or greater, escapeth Him in the heavens or in the earth, but it is in a clear Record.' (34:3), and it is by this means that we accept all the messengers (prophets) who have proven their prophethood and brought clear proofs to us. Allah says: 'We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs.' (57:25).

This path is the second path of faith in Allah: it urges unto the first path, clarifies what is obscure and complements the people's knowledge of their Lord. It is the very path which the intelligent

people have accepted in their acquisition of knowledge from any learned person who is trusted in his knowledge; and our belief in the veracity of Muhammad's prophethood comes once again from this method - the method of hearing from so many different sources that it is impossible for all of them to fabricate the same lie. Thus if you hear the Chinese Muslim, the Indian, the Pakistani, the Iranian, the Iraqi, the Turk, the Syrian, the Lebanese, the Jordanian, the Palestinian, those in the Arabian peninsula, the Egyptian, the Sudanese, the Libyan, the Tunisian, the Algerian, the Moroccan, the Mauritanian, the Nigerian, the Senegalese, the Malian, the Chadian, the Somalese, the Ethiopian, the Tanzanian, the Eritrean, the Indonesian, the Malawese, and others speaking about the history of their countries and the history of Islam's entry into their countries and the leaders of the Islamic armies who entered their countries you would find one story supporting and confirming the other and it would be impossible for the peoples of these various countries, races and languages to agree to tell a lie together.

If we were to ask the Muslims in these various regions how was the faith of the victors and Islamic missionaries who entered their territories to preach Islam, the narrator of history will tell you that mankind never knew a victor who was stranger in faith and more fearful of the Hereafter than those Muslims and it is this faith which convinced the conquered nations about the veracity of their beliefs and their sincerity to their Lord and made them enter wholeheartedly into Islam and uphold its pillars of prayer, alms, fasting and pilgrimage. It is this which made them adopt the morals of Islam and apply the Islamic Law after becoming Muslims. All of this took place after there was enmity, wars, killing and eviction, then the enmity turned into brotherhood and the hatred into love; the fighting turned into peace and support from one and all for the religion of Allah against its enemies even though they might be their own fathers or sons. You will find this the same story which is told by the Muslims about the victorious companions of the prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

When the mind ponders over what it hears, it

will conclude that the Muslim nations' sincerity in their faith and zeal to hold on to it are witnesses of the sincerity of the victors' belief in their prophet, their eagerness to follow him and their sacrifice of wealth and lives in the cause of the spread of Islam without expecting rewards or thanks from the people.

If we ask the people of the East and West, North and South, they would all give one and the same reply. The later generations all testified to the same testimony given by the early generations. Thus we find before us clear proofs and abundant evidence of the basis upon which generation after generation testified in the East and West to the truthfulness of Muhammad's prophethood. Allah correctly said: 'Verily We have revealed unto thee clear tokens, and only miscreants will disbelieve in them.' (2:99). These proofs were collected by the Muslims in special books which are studied in all parts of the Islamic world under different titles such as "The proofs of prophethood" or "the Miracles of Muhammad" etc., and the knowledge of these proofs have been transmitted to us by those whom the

East and West acknowledge were sincere and truthful. They were those who were actually present and witnesses of those proofs and miracles while those who transmitted from them were recognised for their knowledge and piety as well as for their meticulous scholarship and research along the ages. Thus faith becomes deeprooted and reaffirmed after hearing the proofs and miracles which were transmitted from the most trustworthy sources by generation after generation of Muslims and the intelligent can find no option but to increase in certainty that Muhammad was the messenger of Allah.

3. Visible Interaction

This is the third method but only those people are able to benefit from it who are determined and possess strong faith and who are persistent in study, research and verification. People usually repose unshakeable faith in the reality which they see before their eyes, and this for them is the highest degree of acceptance.

Faith in Allah by this method is permissible for one who believes in Him, obeys Him and

responds to Him. For him Allah has opened a gate for direct interaction and viewing of His signs without the barrier of natural causes and effects. This, as known by believers, is by Allah's answer to one's supplication. I have personally experienced this scores of times as have millions of believers. We have seen it with our naked eyes in the Islamic communities with the phenomenon of "istisqa" or supplication for rain when the people are afflicted by drought. Every human being can see and experience his Lord's response to his prayer in the removal of a sickness which has baffled the doctors, or in the opening of an exit from a predicament which someone could not get out of, or the provision of sustenance after strenuous poverty, or any other form of mercy which Allah may bestow on any of His slaves. But this only comes about if one fulfills two conditions:

- i. Response to Him and following of His religion.
- ii. Faith in Him.

Allah says: 'And when My servants question thee concerning Me, then surely I am nigh. I

answer the prayer of the suppliant when he crieth unto Me. So let them hear My call and let them trust in Me, in order that they may be led aright.' (2:186).

Such a visible reality may be seen in Allah's answer to one under pressure who seeks help in Him with truthfulness and sincerity, as Allah says: 'Is not He (best) Who answereth the wronged one when he crieth unto Him and removeth the evil, and hath made you viceroys of the earth? Is there any God beside Allah? Little do they reflect!' (27:62).

Whoever attains this degree and reaches this path, finds himself among the believing slaves of Allah who enjoy the answer of the Lord of all the Worlds to their prayers. Be keen, therefore, O intelligent one, to be one of them; and be keen, O Muslim, to attain this degree by fulfilling its conditions, and when the Muslims attain this degree then Allah will fulfill for them all their wishes.

When the intelligent man ponders over this phenomenon - that of Allah's answer to His believing slaves - he becomes certain that the

One Who cured the sick without a known cause and after the supplication was no other than the One Who sees and answers, Who is Witness, Living, Everlasting, Eternal, Who answered the believers in past ages and still does so today and will do so on the Day of Judgment; He responds to the believer who calls on him in China and in Morocco; He hears the silent prayer which no-one around hears and He knows every language in which prayer is made to Him.

When the intelligent person ponders over that he concludes that he is interacting in visible reality with his Lord, the Hearer, the Answerer. Our faith in Muhammad as Allah's messenger increases when we move along this path of visible reality which actually occurred in the history of the Muslims and continues to happen in the lives of sincere Muslims.

Concerning what took place in history, was recorded by different nations, narrated by trustworthy sources and is partly recorded in the noble Qur'an, it can be seen in the divine help which Allah extended to His believing slaves who followed His messenger Muhammad. Allah

helped them over their enemies and realised for them the happiest life ever known to man* and in it all the affairs of mankind became proper, for they were the best nation evolved for mankind. Allah helped His slaves on the earth and fulfilled His promise to them which He detailed for them in the Scripture:

‘Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others); and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety

* One may think that happiness is realised by extra wealth and an abundance of material comforts. These no doubt are secondary causes which make life happy. But the primary causes are faith, pleasure in accepting Allah’s decree, ease of mind about the future and living within the framework of the high Islamic morals. Worldly pleasures are only a secondary cause of happiness since it is seen that many countries which have realised a high degree of these pleasures live in depression and worry, and many of their citizens resort to suicide to escape from their misery. It is the same with Muslims today who have deviated.

after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe nothing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants.' (24:55).

This was recognised in the fortune of the followers of Muhammad who remained truthful and sincere under all circumstances they underwent such as adversity and ease, fear and security, strength and weakness, throughout which time mankind could have seen in them good morals and an upright character.

This Qur'an itself is an evident sign testifying before everyone who ponder over its verses that it is from Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger. Whoever studies this Book, reflects on its contents and ponders over its verses will see clear signs which lead him to conclude that it is from Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger. Allah says: 'Will they then not meditate on the Qur'an, or are there locks on their hearts?' (47:24).** 'Say: this is my Way : I

** This Qur'an challenges its deniers to a practical experiment. Allah says: 'And if ye are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our slave (Muhammad), then produce a Surah of

call on Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever followeth me.' (12:108).

To conclude: it suffices to say that this is the path of faith, the path of knowledge and awareness. Whoever travels on it travels with insight and believes with insight, benefits from his hearing, sight and intellect and recognises his path which will take him to his Lord Who created him in the first place, to Whom he will return and in Whose hands lie his judgment. 'Proofs have come unto you from your Lord, so whoso seeth,

= the like thereof, and call your witnesses beside Allah if ye are truthful.

And if ye do it not - and ye can never do it - Then guard yourselves against the fire prepared for disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones.' (2:23 - 24) A characteristic of the Qur'an which one can comprehend easily is its eternal freshness for it never gets stale no matter how often it is recited. Can man produce a speech which never gets stale when it is repeated over and over? The answer is obvious: it is impossible for man. The Qur'an has many characteristics and features which nobody can imitate. In the past the unbelievers who ardently denied Allah's messenger were unable to imitate it and they had no choice but to believe after having described the Qur'an as magic. This experience remains with us and proves to us that the Qur'an is from no other than Allah Himself.

those realities to him and show him the clear proofs. After that he should sit with the torchbearers of faith if he really wants faith just as one would sit with the learned if he wants knowledge. He must be constant with them until his heart is filled with the realities of faith and his innerself is filled with the light of faith. Allah says: 'Restrain thyself along with those who cry unto their Lord at morn and evening, seeking His countenance: and let not thine eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who followeth his own lust and whose case hath been abandoned. Say : (it is) the truth from the Lord of you (all). Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve. Lo! We have prepared for disbelievers Fire. Its tent encloseth them. If they ask for showers, they will be showered with water like to molten lead which burneth the faces. Calamitous the drink and ill the resting - place!

Lo! as for those who believe and do good works,
Lo! We suffer not the reward of one whose work

is goodly to be lost.' (18:28 - 30).

If you are one of those who got their faith through imitation of their parents and grandparents, then hurry and take the same steps - you and your family - so that you may be able to fortify yourselves with the realities of faith and be of those who believe with knowledge. But if you remain as you are then you would have chosen the path which Allah criticized when He said: 'And when it is said unto them: Follow that which Allah hath revealed. they say: We follow that wherein we found our fathers. What! Even-though their fathers were wholly unintelligent and had no guidance?' (2:170). You would also have exposed yourself to an attack of the disease of disbelief which is wide-spread in this age or its doubts which afflicted many Muslims and caused them to apostasize and become disbelievers. Allah's messenger had foretold such a happening when he said: "There will be trials and tribulations from which none will be saved except those who know their religion."

Faith Increases With Acts of Obedience

When faith is firm in your heart you will feel the eagerness to do good deeds creeping into you, and when you embark upon good deeds and purify your intentions for your Lord you will find that your faith increases. If you come across any matter which baffles you then seek the help of other sincere believers and you will overcome your difficulty by Allah's leave. But beware of being a help for those who are corrupt and stick to your Lord's command: 'Help ye one another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression, but keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is severe in punishment.' (5:2).

The Obstinance of the Unbelievers

The obstinate unbeliever who despises the guidance, whom Satan has convinced that his interest lies in opposing faith, who is afraid that he may lose some of his benefits if faith wins, or is worried that he may not be able to maintain his deviant lusts in a virtuous life of faith, will not be

convinced by the foregoing proofs and arguments although it will only take him one of them, or half of one, to be convinced about a wordly matter. He would not hesitate, in his obstinacy, to raise doubts or invent all sorts of fallacious arguments to stop people from coming to Allah's way. You would see him attempting to confound one who is calling him to faith and stipulating stupid conditions. It is common to hear them saying just like the people of old: 'Show us Allah plainly.' (4:153).

What do these obstinate people want? They want to see Allah now with their eyes which are in their heads. But can these weak, limited eyes see Allah openly? Come let us look at the power of the eye, which the unbelievers stipulate should see Allah before they believe : is the eye capable of seeing the air which touches it and which extends for hundreds of kilometers in front of it? Does it see the earth's gravity and can it? The answer is no.

Can it see the waves which are being emitted at this moment by radio, T.V. and wireless stations throughout the world? The answer is no.

Can it see the soul which lives in living bodies and causes the difference between the living and the dead? Can it see the mind which causes the difference between the sane and the insane? The answer is no.

Can it see the power which causes a magnet to attract a piece of iron? The answer is no.

Can it bear a powerful light directed towards it from a torchlight or a lamp? The answer is no.

This eye, therefore, cannot see many things which are near to it and it cannot bear an intense light near to it.

Can this limited eye, then perceive things which are far away or can it bear an intense light which is far away? Let us see.

Can the eye see who is in an adjacent place? The answer is no.

Can it see the continents all at one time? The answer is no.

Can it see all the stars in the sky? The answer is no, it only sees a few, and when the light of the moon appears it sees even less. Allah says: 'Then look again and yet again, thy sight will return unto thee weakened and made dim.' (7:4).

Can the eye bear the sight of the sun in broad daylight? The answer is no.

Therefore this eye is weak and limited: it cannot see what is far from it nor can it bear the light which is intense nor can it perceive those innumerable formless things which are near it. How can it then see Allah?

Let us see. The distance between us and the sun is ninety-three million miles approximately and light traverse it in about eight minutes because light travels 300,000 kilometers per second. The light of the nearest star - not planet - reaches us after about four years and five months. The light from others take a hundred years, from others a million, from yet others a billion and so on. How far away are these stars from us then? Read with me Allah's saying: 'Nay, I swear by the places of the stars - And lo! that verily is a tremendous oath, if ye but knew.' (56:75 - 76) We have just learnt how great these places are in reality.

All of these stars are within the first heaven, for Allah says: 'And verily We have beautified the world's heaven with lamps, and We have

made them missiks for the devils.' (67:5). After this decoration come the first heaven and its thickness then a void between it and the second heaven. Then come the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh heavens. Then comes the "kursi" which surrounds the seven heavens and, as the hadith says, the seven heavens in relation to the "kursi" are like seven dirhams in a shield. Then comes the magnificent throne ('Arsh) in relation to which, the seven heavens and the "kursi" are not equivalent to a ring thrown into the desert, as stated in the Hadith.

What do the unbelievers want, then?

They stipulate in order to believe that they must see Allah Who is seated on His Throne ('Arsh) with an eye which cannot see who is in the adjacent place or the stars in the sky nor can it perceive the air which surrounds it in all directions.

The unbelievers wish to bear the light of Allah with their eyes which cannot bear the sight of the sun. Allah is "the light of the heavens and earth" (Qur'an 24:35), and He told us the story of Moses, whose people insisted on seeing Allah

with their naked eyes (4:152); when Moses asked Allah to show Himself to him, Allah informed him that he could not see Him and placed him before a practical test so that he may be a sign for those who were insisting. He said: 'And when Moses came to Our appointed trust and his Lord had spoken unto him, he said: My Lord! Show me (thyself) that I may gaze upon thee. He said: Thou wilt not see Me, but gaze upon the mountain! If it stand still in its place, then thou wilt see Me. And when his Lord revealed (His) glory to the mountain He sent it crashing down, and Moses fell down senseless. And when he woke he said: Glory unto Thee! I turn upon thee repentant, and I am the first of (true) believers.' (7:143).

Thus we see a mountain being unable to bear the effects of Allah's manifestation. How, therefore can the unbelievers see Him with an eye which cannot bear the direct light of a lamp or the sun.

It is ignorance, obstinacy and pride in their hearts which make them reject the truth, for they do know that their sights are weak and limited

and they do not make this stipulation in order to believe in many other matters besides belief in Allah. Teachers and lecturers speak everyday to their students about hundreds of matters which the students have not seen yet they believe them. Similarly, doctors, engineers and other experts say things which the unbelievers accept without asking to see them with their naked eyes. They do not see heat but there is no doubt that heat exists since they see its effects on ice. The radio waves which produce the sounds we hear from the radio are not seen by them nor do they believe in their existence. It would have been sufficient to use the same methods to believe in God as they used in the other cases:

1. To learn from trustworthy specialists in this field, in other words the prophets of Allah, whom Allah sealed with His final messenger, Muhammad, peace be upon him, after having ascertained the truthfulness of their prophethood and the proofs of their claim.

2. To see the effects of the Creator on His creation throughout the heavens and the earth, for it is not possible for the obvious wisdom in the

universe to be without a Wise Creator, for the knowledge to be without a Knower, etc. But it is only obstinacy, ignorance and pride. 'And they denied them, though their souls acknowledged them, for spite and arrogance.' (27:14).

Allah says about such people and their likes: 'Thus do We make it traverse the hearts of the guilty. They will not believe in it till they behold the painful doom.' (26:200 - 201).

Suggestion and Conditions

There is a group of stubborn unbelievers who have not studied the proofs which Allah made clear to His slaves in His creation and by sending His messengers. But they rebelled against Him Who created them from a despicable drop of sperm. They consider themselves to have attained a degree which enables them to suggest to Allah the type of proofs which will be acceptable to them. They thus began to put forward their suggestions and lay down their conditions for their acceptance of faith. If Allah had responded to them they would have been even more obstinate and they system of the

heavens and earth would have become chaotic because this one would have stipulated that Allah should make the night into day, another would have stipulated that He should turn women into men, a third that He should kill his enemy, or let him get married to so - and - so, make him a prophet etc. etc. Allah truthfully says: 'And if the Truth had followed their desires, verily the heavens and the earth and whosoever is therein had been corrupted.' (23:71).

But the ignorant cannot make Allah slip. He has established the proofs for mankind and made them easy to understand. He created mankind with ears, eyes and hearts, which the believers utilise but which the unbelievers insist on rejecting. What excuse will they, therefore, have before their Lord? 'And those who argue concerning Allah after He hath been acknowledged, their argument hath no weight with their Lord, and wrath is upon them and theirs will be an awful doom.' (42:16).

Here are some scenes of those who make suggestions and stipulations as the Qur'an depicts them for us:

The Jews said to Moses: 'And when ye said: O Moses! We will not believe in thee till we see Allah plainly; and even while ye gazed, the lightning seized you. Then We revived you after your extinction, that ye might give thanks.' (2:55 - 56).

The unbelievers of Quraysh said to Allah's messenger: 'And they say: We will not put faith in thee till thou cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us;

Or thou have a garden of date-palms and grapes and cause rivers to gush forth therein abundantly.

Or thou cause the heaven to fall upon us piecemeal, as thou hast pretended, or bring Allah and the angels as a warrant;

Or thou have a house of gold; or thou ascend up into heaven, and even then we will put no faith in thine ascension till thou bring down for us a book that we can read. Say (O Muhammad) : My Lord be glorified! Am I naught save mortal messenger?' (17:90 - 93).

The Jews of Medina advised one another to make one of these stipulations: 'And a party of the People of the Scripture say: believe in that

which hath been revealed unto those who believe at the opening of the day, and disbelieve at the end thereof, in order that they may return; And believe not save in one who followeth your religion - say (O Muhammad): Lo! The guidance is Allah's guidance - that any one is given the like of that which was given unto you or that they may argue with you in the presence of their Lord. Say (O Muhammad): Lo! the bounty is in Allah's hand. He bestoweth it on whom He will. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.' (3:72 - 73).

Thus envy and rebelliousness led the Jews to reject the clear proofs which Allah presented them at the hands of a prophet who was not from among the Jews. They are a group which stretches throughout the ages and in different places but they all adopt the same attitude towards the messengers of Allah: 'And thus have We made in every city great ones of its wicked ones, that they should plot therein. They do but plot against themselves, though they perceive not.

And when a token cometh unto them, they say: We will not believe till we are given that which

Allah's messengers are given. Allah knoweth best with whom to place His message. Humiliation from Allah and heavy punishment will smite the guilty for their scheming.

And whomsoever it is Allah's will to guide, he expandeth his bosom unto Islam (the surrender), and whomsoever it is His will to send astray, He maketh his bosom close and narrow as if he were engaged in sheer ascent. Thus Allah layeth ignominy upon those who believe not.' (6:124 - 126).

These are the ringleaders in every age and place; they invent doubts to divert the people from Allah's guidance and they make stipulations which prove their rejection of Truth, for they demand that each one of them should have a position and be treated in the same way as Allah treats His prophet : 'Allah knoweth best with whom to place His message.' (6:125).

These proud and obstinate fellows will only have disgrace and humiliation. But those whom Allah knows to have an inclination for the guidance and a love of truth, Allah will open his chest and expand it for the recognition and

acceptance of Islam, while those whom He knows will not believe or accept the guidance, He will open for them the path of misguidance. Allah explains this Himself: 'While as for those who walk aright, He addeth to their guidance, and giveth them their protection (against evil).' (47:17). He also says: 'So when they went astray Allah sent their hearts astray. And Allah guideth not the evil-living folk.' (61:5).

Thus you will see the sign of the misguided is that he flees from the gatherings of Islam and he is very peeved by reminders and exhortations and his peevishness increases in his chest until it reaches a high degree of discomfiture such as one who flies into the air with his plane until the atmospheric pressure restricts his chest to such an extent that he finds no way out but to use artificial equipment to ease the pressure. How truthful are Allah's verses in the selection of a simile to describe such people!

Whoever wishes guidance, therefore, let his chest expand to accept Islam and let him search for the proofs of faith. Let him also beware of the doubts cast by the obstinate sinners, and he

should ask about those who are travelling on the path of faith so that he may accompany them until they all reach the end of the straight path where they will find: 'A paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who ward off (evil).' (3:133).

O you who wish to travel to paradise, this is the path of faith so tread on it, and you must adopt the companionship of those who have faith so that they may be of help to you in your journey. Beware of travelling along the path which will lead to hellfire and beware of taking as companions those who have taken themselves along the path to hell, for you will be sorry.

'On the day when the wrong-doer gnaweth his hands, he will say: Ah, would that I had chosen a way together with the messenger (of Allah)! Alas for me! Ah, would that I had never taken such a one for friend! He verily led me astray from the Reminder after it had reached me. Satan was ever man's deserter in the hour of need.' (25:27 - 29)»

This is the path of faith - the path of knowledge and proof - the path of ascendance into the higher

degrees:

‘Allah will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to high ranks.’ (58:11).

And praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.



**International Islamic Federation
of Student Organizations**