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Why Would a "Merciful God" Punish People in Hell Forever?

What kind of "Mercy" is that?

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Why Would a "Merciful God" Punish People in Hell Forver?

What Kind of "Mercy" is that?

One has to first understand the concepts of **JUSTICE** and **MERCY** in order to understand the rewards and punishment.

First, God is Merciful. He told us, "My Mercy prevails over My Wrath". It is a promise that God's mercy will always have precedence over his anger and punishment. However, does that mean it won't exist? Are the evil to be rewarded equally with the righteous?

Now comes the **JUSTICE**. God's perfect and complete Justice prevents Mercy from usurping the rights of the righteous. For it is NOT just to reward evil as righteousness.

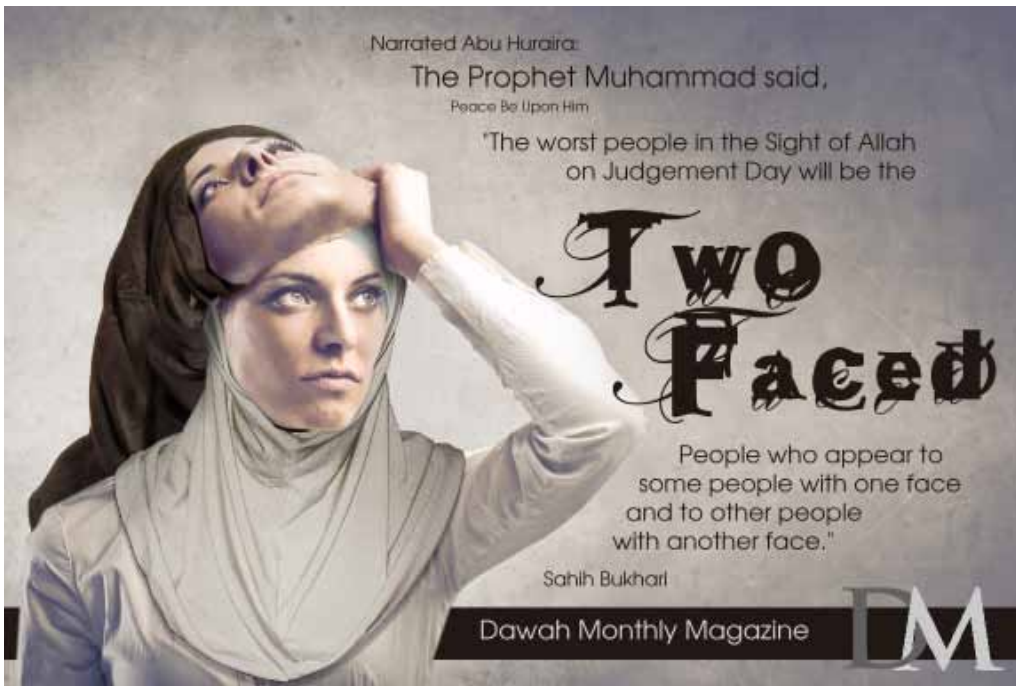
God's Mercy comes into play in relation to reward and punishment through sending warners/messengers with Divine Revelation instructing mankind as to righteous behavior, how to avoid punishment and what will earn reward.

Also, in death there is mercy for those who commit evil. First, God allows time to make repentance after which He is willing to completely forgive all past sins...His Mercy prevails over His Wrath. Second, when it

becomes manifest that a prolonged life will not resort in repentance, rather the person will delve into more and more sin and evil--God causes him to die thereby cutting off his means of committing more evil and as such reduces the amount of punishment he would deserve. His place in Hell will be in a position of less punishment than that if he lived longer committing more evil...thus, again, His Mercy prevails over His Wrath. He protects those people from committing more evil thereby reducing the punishment deserved.

God is Merciful and Loving. He is also Just and Fair. He does not treat the righteous the same as the evil. Nor does He allow evil to exist in-and-of itself. Evil only happens if there is some benefit in it, some way. And once evil becomes apparent as the only course of action and deeds, God cuts the person off from it (ends the life) so as to prevent more evil which deserves greater punishment.

Allah has warned us, sent messengers and books, and preserved knowledge of Him and His system of belief for OUR OWN benefit. Who is willing to accept this guidance, give up the desires of this life and ask Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness to pass into Paradise? Allah we ask You to make us among those whom You bless with Mercy and Forgiveness and right guidance. Ameen.



Who Made You?

Right now, you're probably sitting in a room... look around... Everything around you.. Your chair. Your desk. Your television. Your clothes. The very room itself. The house this room is in. Everything that you see is a created object. Everything that we see has been made. You see a painting; you know that there's a painter. You see a sculpture; you know that there's a sculptor. You see a table; you know there's a carpenter. Everything in our experience is made. And yet, when we look at creation and the perfection of creation, some people just say... 'Well... the Big Bang Theory...' or they say.. 'oh, evolution'....

Ok, the Big Bang and Evolution.. let's take a look at both of these...

The Big Bang Theory is that all the matter in the universe coalesced into a hyper-dense core. Which then in an explosion of energy and matter burst apart and spread into what has become the known universe. So that's the origin of the universe..

ok now... Couple of questions. Where did all the matter and energy that coalesced, come from to begin with? This might explain the design of why the universe is in the shape it's in.. why its expanding.. why the stars are there.. but it doesn't explain where all this matter and energy came from to begin with. It doesn't dismiss the possibility of a creator. Lets say the Big Bang Happened.. Ok, a fire cracker explodes but who sets it off? Yes, the big bang may be responsible for the universe as we know it but who organized that series of events? some people will say nothing or chance events.. others will see the sense in this and say 'oh yeah sure, it makes sense that this event was organized.. When you look at how this universe is organized.. the perfection, the balance., to say this is just a random event means that you just dont' know the universe. You haven't studied the complexities of the universe. This planet, if it was the smallest distance closer to the sun would be uninhabitable because it'd be so hot.. the smallest distance away and it'd be an ice ball.. the spin on this planet creates a gravity which is a perfect balance to keep us on the surface... a little more or less we wouldn't exist..

You have study the universe to understand it's complexities.. Again, who organized that series of events?

Now, about evolution and coming from monkeys.

Again, when we ask, 'who made us?'.. The answer comes in two parts.. 'The Big Bang' and 'Evolution.'

There are a number of answers to that.. of course, one is that Darwin himself even began to question



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evolution toward the end of his life and for good reason.. For example, let's say I'm an ophthalmologist. I work on the eye. My specialty, ophthalmology, is divided into different specialties. We have people that specialize in the cornea, glaucoma, UVitis, retina, refractive surgery, cancer of the eye, etc, etc. This is a very small organ, but it's highly complex. So much so that it's specialty is divided into multiple sub-specialties. When Darwin started studying the eye, he started questioning evolution. and the reason why was because the eye is such a complex structure that it can't work without all it's elements working together. Meaning, if there's any problem with the iris, the lens, the retina, the optic nerve, etc. All of these elements would have had to have evolved at exactly the same time in perfect coordination to give rise to this structure and he couldn't conceive of that having happened. Many scientists can't. But the real answer is similar to the one about the big bang.. As Muslims we have no problem with the big bang, we just understand that it was under the design of our creator. At the same time, we have no problem with evolution, meaning

the process of natural selection. animals and human beings adapt to their circumstances. The difference between the Islamic view and what you're taught in the classroom is that we don't believe humans evolved from Monkeys. The animal kingdom, with it's difference species may have gone through evolution. Of course, we have no problem with that. dinosaurs walked the earth. Birds were seven feet high. The different species changed over time according to their circumstances. Again, this is all within the design of Our Creator. And this is a concept that has recently become popularized in Science as 'Intelligent Design.' Because many scientists are speaking out against The concept of evolution saying that these systems are too complex to have evolved. It could have only been the result of Intelligent Design. And who is that Designer?

See "The Big Questions" starting on Page 4

The Big Questions, Part 1

In The Beginning

At some point in our lives, everybody asks the big questions: “Who made us,” and “Why are we here?”

So who did make us? Most of us have been brought up more on science than religion, and to believe in the Big Bang and evolution more than God. But which makes more sense? And is there any reason why the theories of science and creationism cannot coexist?

The Big Bang may explain the origin of the universe, but it doesn't explain the origin of the primordial dust cloud. This dust cloud (which, according to the theory, drew together, compacted and then exploded) had to come from somewhere. After all, it contained enough matter to form not just our galaxy, but the billion other galaxies in the known universe. So where did that come from? Who, or what, created the primordial dust cloud?

Similarly, evolution may explain the fossil record, but it falls far short of explaining the quintessential essence of human life—the soul. We all have one. We feel its presence, we speak of its existence and at times pray for its salvation. But only the religious can explain where it came from. The theory of natural selection can explain many of the material aspects of living things, but it fails to explain the human soul.

Furthermore, anyone who studies the complexities of life and the universe cannot help but witness the signature of the Creator. Whether or not people recognize these signs is another matter—as the old saying goes, denial isn't just a river in Egypt. (Get it? Denial, spelled “de Nile” ... the river Ni ... oh, never mind.) The point is that if we see a painting, we know there is a painter. If we see a sculpture, we know there's a sculptor; a pot, a potter. So when we view creation, shouldn't we know there's a Creator?

The concept that the universe exploded and then developed in balanced perfection through random events and natural selection is little different from the proposal that, by dropping bombs into a junkyard, sooner or later one of them will blow everything together into a perfect Mercedes.

If there is one thing we know for certain, it is that without a controlling influence, all systems degenerate into chaos. The theories of the Big Bang and evolution propose the exact opposite, however—that chaos fostered

perfection. Would it not be more reasonable to conclude that the Big Bang and evolution were controlled events? Controlled, that is, by the Creator?

The Bedouin of Arabia tell the tale of a nomad finding an exquisite palace at an oasis in the middle of an otherwise barren desert. When he asks how it was built, the owner tells him it was formed by the forces of nature. The wind shaped the rocks and blew them to the edge of this oasis, and then tumbled them together into the shape of the palace. Then it blew sand and rain into the cracks to cement them together. Next, it blew strands of sheep's wool together into rugs and tapestries, stray wood together into furniture, doors, windowsills and trim, and positioned them in the palace at just the right locations. Lightning strikes melted sand into sheets of glass and blasted them into the window-frames, and smelted black sand into steel and shaped it into the fence and gate with perfect alignment and symmetry. The process took billions of years and only happened at this one place on earth—purely through coincidence.

When we finish rolling our eyes, we get the point. Obviously, the palace was built by design, not by happenstance. To what (or more to the point, to Whom), then, should we attribute the origin of items of infinitely greater complexity, such as our universe and ourselves?

Another argument to dismiss the concept of Creationism focuses upon what people perceive to be the imperfections of creation. These are the “How can there be a God if such-and-such happened?” arguments. The issue under discussion could be anything from a natural disaster to birth defects, from genocide to grandma's cancer. That's not the point. The point is that denying God based upon what we perceive to be injustices of life presumes that a divine being would not have designed our lives to be anything other than perfect, and would have established justice on Earth.

Hmm ... is there no other option?

We can just as easily propose that God did not design life on Earth to be paradise, but rather a test, the punishment or rewards of which are to be had in the next life, which is where God establishes His ultimate justice. In support of this concept we can well ask who suffered more injustices in their worldly lives than God's favorites, which is to say the prophets? And who do we expect to occupy the highest stations in paradise, if not those who maintain true faith in the face of worldly adversity? So suffering in this worldly life does not necessarily translate into God's disfavor, and a blissful worldly life does not necessarily translate into beatitude in the hereafter.

I would hope that, by this line of reasoning, we can agree upon the answer to the first “big question.” Who made us? Can we agree that if we are creation, God is the Creator?

If we can't agree on this point, there probably isn't much point in continuing. However, for those who do agree, let's move on to “big question” number two—why are we here? What, in other words, is the purpose of life?

cont'd page 9

Dr. Laurence B. Brown - www.TheRealityofGod.com

“If there is only one God, then why are there so many religions?”

God does not force anyone to submit to Him. He has laid out a clear path and then made it known to them the two ways (Heaven or Hell). The person is always free to make his or her own choice. There is no compulsion in the way of “Islam.” Whoever chooses to worship God without partners and is devoted to Him and is obeying His commands as much as possible, has grasped the firm hand hold that will never break. Whoever denies God and chooses some other way to worship or not

to believe at all, for them there is an eternal punishment that is most horrible (Hell).

All religions originated with God and then people began to add or take away from the teachings so as to take control over each other. Man made religions are an abomination before the Lord and will never be accepted. He will only accept true submission, obedience and in purity and peace to His commandments.

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Muslims, too, await the second coming of Jesus.
They consider him one of the greatest of God's prophets to mankind.

“If God created everything - Then who created God?”

According to the Quran, God tells us that He is the only creator and sustainer of all that exists and that nothing and no one exists alongside Him, nor does He have any partners. He tells us that He is not created, nor is He like His creation in anyway. He calls Himself by a number of names and three of them are:

A) *The First - (Al-Awal)*

B) *The Last - (Al Akhir)*

C) *The Eternal, who is sought after by His creation, while He has no need from them at all. (As-Samad)*

He always has existed and He never was created, as He is not like His creation, nor similar to it, in any way.

Islam as taught by
Prophet Muhammad
(peace be upon him)
is a continuation and
completion of the
religion of all
the prophets of God
including Noah,
Abraham, Moses,
David, Solomon,
and Jesus
(peace be upon them all)

“Where is God?”

Some religions teach that “God is everywhere.” This is actually called “pantheism” and it is the opposite of our belief system in Islam. God tells us clearly that there is nothing, anywhere in the universe that resembles Him, nor is He ever in His creation. He tells us in the Quran that He created the universe in six days (the length of these days is unknown) and then He rose up, above His Throne. He is there (above His Throne) and will remain there until the End Times.



The Qur'an on Human Embryonic Development

The miracle of embryonic development is mentioned in the Quran in such minute detail, much of which was unknown to scientists until only recently. It mentions the first stages of life after conception, the second stage of life after conception, and witnesses of scientists about these scientific facts of the Quran.

In the Noble Quran, God speaks about the stages of man's embryonic development:

"We created man from an extract of clay. Then We made him as a drop in a place of settlement, firmly fixed. Then We made the drop into an alaqah (leech, suspended thing, and blood clot), then We made the alaqah into a mudghah (chewed substance)..." (Quran 23:12-14)

Literally, the Arabic word alaqah has three meanings: (1) leech, (2) suspended thing, and (3) blood clot.

In comparing a leech to an embryo in the alaqah stage, we find similarity between the two[1] as we can see in figure 1. Also, the embryo at this stage obtains nourishment from the blood of the mother, similar to the leech, which feeds on the blood of others.[2]

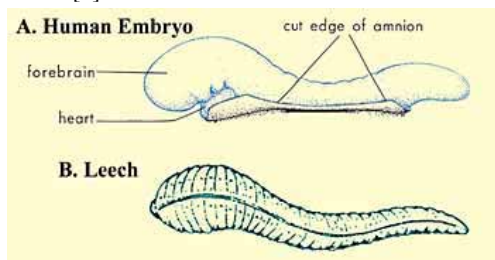


Figure 1: Drawings illustrating the similarities in appearance between a leech and a human embryo at the alaqah stage. (Leech drawing from Human Development as Described in the Quran and Sunnah, Moore and others, p. 37, modified from Integrated Principles of Zoology, Hickman and others. Embryo drawing from The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 73.)

The second meaning of the word alaqah is "suspended thing." This is what we can see in figures 2 and 3, the suspension of the embryo, during the alaqah stage, in the womb of the mother.

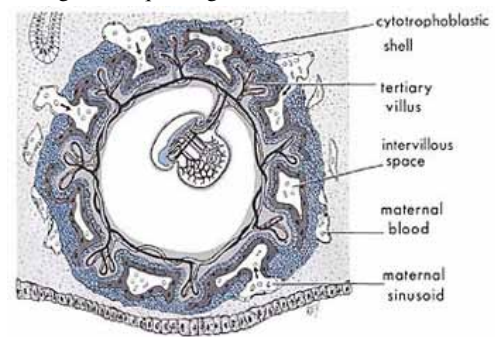
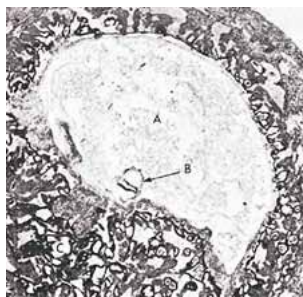


Figure 2: We can see in this diagram the suspension of an embryo during the alaqah stage in the womb (uterus) of the mother. (The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 66.)

Figure 3: In this photomicrograph, we can see the suspension of an embryo (marked B) during the alaqah stage (about 15 days old) in the womb of the mother. The actual size of the embryo is about 0.6 mm. (The Developing Human, Moore, 3rd ed., p. 66, from Histology, Leeson and Leeson.)



The third meaning of the word alaqah is "blood clot." We find that the external appearance of the embryo and its sacs during the alaqah stage is similar to that of a blood clot. This is due to the presence of relatively large amounts of blood present in the embryo during this stage[3] (see figure 4). Also during this stage, the blood in the embryo does not circulate until the end of the third week.[4] Thus, the embryo at this stage is like a clot of blood.

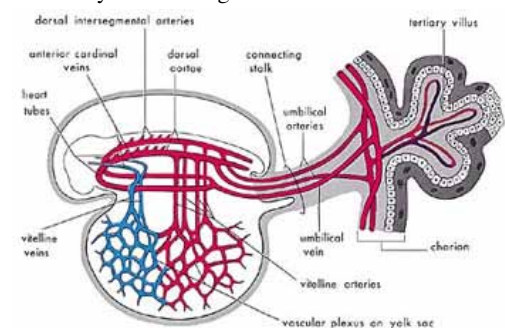
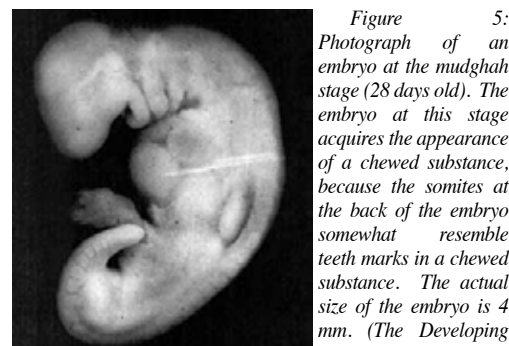


Figure 4: Diagram of the primitive cardiovascular system in an embryo during the alaqah stage. The external appearance of the embryo and its sacs is similar to that of a blood clot, due to the presence of relatively large amounts of blood present in the embryo. (The Developing Human, Moore, 5th ed., p. 65.)

So the three meanings of the word alaqah correspond accurately to the descriptions of the embryo at the alaqah stage.

The next stage mentioned in the verse is the mudghah stage. The Arabic word mudghah means "chewed substance." If one were to take a piece of gum and chew it in his or her mouth and then compare it with an embryo at the mudghah stage, we would conclude that the embryo at the mudghah stage acquires the appearance of a chewed substance. This is because of the somites at the back of the embryo that "somewhat resemble teethmarks in a chewed substance." [5] (see figures 5 and 6).

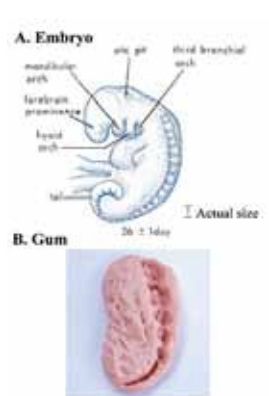


Persaud, 5th ed., p. 82, from Professor Hideo Nishimura, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan.)

Figure 6: When comparing the appearance of an embryo at the mudghah stage with a piece of gum that has been chewed, we find similarity between the two.

A) Drawing of an embryo at the mudghah stage. We can see here the somites at the back of the embryo that look like teeth marks. (The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 79.)

B) Photograph of a piece of gum that has been chewed.



How could Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, have possibly known all this 1400 years ago, when scientists have only recently discovered this using advanced equipment and powerful microscopes which did not exist at that time? Hamm and Leeuwenhoek were the first scientists to observe human sperm cells (spermatozoa) using an improved microscope in 1677 (more than 1000 years after Muhammad). They mistakenly thought that the sperm cell contained a miniature preformed human being that grew when it was deposited in the female genital tract.[6]

Professor Emeritus Keith L. Moore[7] is one of the world's most prominent scientists in the fields of anatomy and embryology and is the author of the book entitled The Developing Human, which has been translated into eight languages. This book is a scientific reference work and was chosen by a special committee in the United States as the best book authored by one person. Dr. Keith Moore is Professor Emeritus of Anatomy and Cell Biology at the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada. There, he was Associate Dean of Basic Sciences at the Faculty of Medicine and for 8 years was the Chairman of the Department of Anatomy. In 1984, he received the most distinguished award presented in the field of

anatomy in Canada, the J.C.B. Grant Award from the Canadian Association of Anatomists. He has directed many international associations, such as the Canadian and American Association of Anatomists and the Council of the Union of Biological Sciences.

In 1981, during the Seventh Medical Conference in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, Professor Moore said: "It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Quran about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a messenger of God." [8] (To view the RealPlayer video of this comment click here).

Consequently, Professor Moore was asked the following question: "Does this mean that you believe that the Quran is the word of God?" He replied: "I find no difficulty in accepting this." [9]

During one conference, Professor Moore stated: "... Because the staging of human embryos is complex, owing to the continuous process of change during development, it is proposed that a new system of classification could be developed using the terms mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah (what Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said, did, or approved of). The proposed system is simple, comprehensive, and conforms with present embryological knowledge. The intensive studies of the Quran and hadeeth (reliably transmitted reports by the Prophet Muhammad's companions of what he said, did, or approved of) in the last four years have revealed a system for classifying human embryos that is amazing since it was recorded in the seventh century A.D. Although Aristotle, the founder of the science of embryology, realized that chick embryos developed in stages from his studies of hen's eggs in the fourth century B.C., he did not give any details about these stages. As far as it is known from the history of embryology, little was known about the staging and classification of human embryos until the twentieth century. For this reason, the descriptions of the human embryo in the Quran cannot be based on scientific knowledge in the seventh century. The only reasonable conclusion is: these descriptions were revealed to Muhammad from God. He could not have known such details because he was an illiterate man with absolutely no scientific training." [10]

Footnotes:

- [1] The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 8.
- [2] Human Development as Described in the Quran and Sunnah, Moore and others, p. 36.
- [3] Human Development as Described in the Quran and Sunnah, Moore and others, pp. 37-38.
- [4] The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 65.
- [5] The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 8.
- [6] The Developing Human, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 9.
- [7] Note: The occupations of all the scientists mentioned in this web site were last updated in 1997.
- [8] The reference for this saying is This is the Truth (videotape). For a copy of this videotape, please visit www.islam-guide.com/truth.htm
- [9] This is the Truth (videotape).
- [10] This is the Truth (videotape). For a copy, see footnote no. 9.

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The Qur'an on Seas & Rivers

Modern Science has discovered that in the places where two different seas meet, there is a barrier between them. This barrier divides the two seas so that each sea has its own temperature, salinity, and density.[1] For example, Mediterranean sea water is warm, saline, and less dense, compared to Atlantic ocean water. When Mediterranean sea water enters the Atlantic over the Gibraltar sill, it moves several hundred kilometers into the Atlantic at a depth of about 1000 meters with its own warm, saline, and less dense characteristics. The Mediterranean water stabilizes at this depth[2] (see figure 1).



fresh and salt water, but did not mention it when speaking about the divider between the two seas?

Modern science has discovered that in estuaries, where fresh (sweet) and salt water meet, the situation is somewhat different from what is found in places where two seas meet. It has been discovered that what distinguishes fresh water from salt water in estuaries is a "pycnocline zone with a marked density discontinuity separating the two layers." [3] This partition (zone of separation) has a different salinity from the fresh water and from the salt water[4] (see figure 2).

This information has been discovered only recently, using advanced equipment to measure temperature, salinity, density, oxygen dissolubility, etc. The human eye cannot see the difference between the two seas that meet, rather the two seas appear to us as one homogeneous sea. Likewise, the human eye cannot see the division of water in

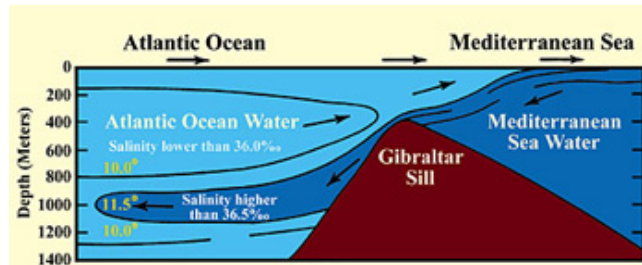


Figure 1: The Mediterranean sea water as it enters the Atlantic over the Gibraltar sill with its own warm, saline, and less dense characteristics, because of the barrier that distinguishes between them. Temperatures are in degrees Celsius (C°). (Marine Geology, Kuenen, p. 43, with a slight enhancement.)

Although there are large waves, strong currents, and tides in these seas, they do not mix or transgress this barrier.

The Noble Quran mentioned that there is a barrier between two seas that meet and that they do not transgress. God has said:

"He has set free the two seas meeting together. There is a barrier between them. They do not transgress." (Quran 55:19-20)

But when the Quran speaks about the divider between fresh and salt water, it mentions the existence of "a forbidding partition" with the barrier. God has said in the Quran:

"He is the one who has set free the two kinds of water, one sweet and palatable, and the other salty and bitter. And He has made between them a barrier and a forbidding partition." (Quran 25:53)

One may ask, why did the Quran mention the partition when speaking about the divider between

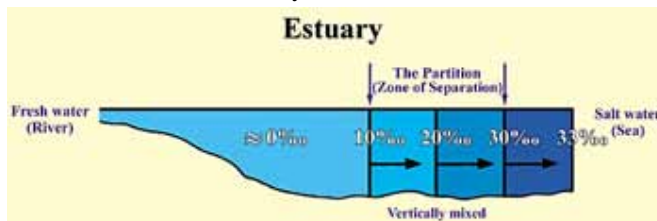


Figure 2: Longitudinal section showing salinity (parts per thousand ‰) in an estuary. We can see here the partition (zone of separation) between the fresh and the salt water. (Introductory Oceanography, Thurman, p. 301, with a slight enhancement.)

estuaries into the three kinds: fresh water, salt water, and the partition (zone of separation).

Footnotes:

[1] Principles of Oceanography, Davis, pp. 92-93.

[2] Principles of Oceanography, Davis, p. 93.

[3] Oceanography, Gross, p. 242. Also see Introductory Oceanography, Thurman, pp. 300-301.

[4] Oceanography, Gross, p. 244, and Introductory Oceanography, Thurman, pp. 300-301.

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The Big Questions, Part 2

The Purpose of Life

The first of the two big questions in life is, "Who made us?" We addressed that question in the previous article and (hopefully) settled upon "God" as the answer. As we are creation, God is the Creator.

Now, let us turn to the second "big question," which is, "Why are we here?"

Well, why are we here? To amass fame and fortune? To make music and babies? To be the richest man or woman in the graveyard for, as we are jokingly told, "He who dies with the most toys wins?"

No, there must be more to life than that, so let's think about this. To begin with, look around you. Unless you live in a cave, you are surrounded by things we humans have made with our own hands. Now, why did we make those things? The answer, of course, is that we make things to perform some specific function for us. In short, we make things to serve us. So by extension, why did God make us, if not to serve Him?

If we acknowledge our Creator, and that He created humankind to serve Him, the next question is, "How? How do we serve Him?" No doubt, this question is best answered by the One who made us. If He created us to serve Him, then He expects us to function in a particular manner, if we are to achieve our purpose. But how can we know what that manner is? How can we know what God expects from us?

Well, consider this: God gave us light, by which we can find our way. Even at night, we have the moon for light and the stars for navigation. God gave other animals guidance systems best suited for their conditions and needs. Migrating birds can navigate, even on overcast days, by how light is polarized as it passes through the clouds. Whales migrate by "reading" the Earth's magnetic fields. Salmon return from the open ocean to spawn at the exact spot of their birth by smell, if that can be imagined. Fish sense distant movements through pressure receptors that line their bodies. Bats and blind river dolphins "see" by sonar. Certain marine organisms (the electric eel being a high-voltage example) generate and "read" electric fields, allowing them to "see" in muddy waters, or in the blackness of ocean depths. Insects communicate by pheromones. Plants sense sunlight and grow towards it (phototropism); their roots sense gravity and grow into the earth (geotropism). In short, God has gifted every element of His creation with guidance. Can we seriously believe he would not give us guidance on the one most important aspect of our existence, namely our *raison d'être*—

our reason for being? That he would not give us the tools by which to achieve salvation?

And would this guidance not be . . . revelation?

Think of it this way: Every product has specifications and rules. For more complex products, whose specifications and rules are not intuitive, we rely upon owner's manuals. These manuals are written by the one who knows the product best, which is to say the manufacturer. A typical owner's manual begins with warnings about improper use and the hazardous consequences thereof, moves on to a description of how to use the product properly and the benefits to be gained thereby, and provides product specifications and a troubleshooting guide whereby we can correct product malfunctions.

Now, how is that different from revelation?

Revelation tells us what to do, what not to do and why, tells us what God expects of us, and shows us how to correct our deficiencies. Revelation is the ultimate user's manual, provided as guidance to the one who will use us—ourselves.

In the world we know, products that meet or exceed specifications are considered successes whereas those that don't are . . . hmm . . . let's think about this. Any product that fails to meet factory specifications is either repaired or, if hopeless, recycled. In other words, destroyed. Ouch. Suddenly this discussion turns scary-serious. Because in this discussion, we are the product—the product of creation.

But let's pause for a moment and consider how we interact with the various items that fill our lives. As long as they do what we want, we're happy with them. But when they fail us, we get rid of them. Some are returned to the store, some donated to charity, but eventually they all end up in the garbage, which gets . . . buried or burned. Similarly, an underperforming employee gets . . . fired. Now, stop for a minute and think about that word. Where did that euphemism for the punishment due to an underperformer come from? Hmm . . . the person who believes the lessons of this life translate into lessons about religion could have a field day with this.

But that doesn't mean these analogies are invalid. Just the opposite, we should remember that both Old and New Testaments are filled with analogies, and Jesus Christ taught using parables.

So perhaps we had better take this seriously.

No, I stand corrected. Most definitely we should take this seriously. Nobody ever considered the difference between heavenly delights and the tortures of hellfire a laughing matter.

cont'd page 22

Dr. Laurence B. Brown
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The Origin of the Universe

The science of modern cosmology, observational and theoretical, clearly indicates that, at one point in time, the whole universe was nothing but a cloud of 'smoke' (i.e. an opaque highly dense and hot gaseous composition). [1] This is one of the undisputed principles of standard modern cosmology. Scientists now can observe new stars forming out of the remnants of that 'smoke' (see figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1: A new star forming out of a cloud of gas and dust (nebula), which is one of the remnants of the 'smoke' that was the origin of the whole universe. (The Space Atlas, Heather and Henbest, p. 50.)



Figure 2: The Lagoon nebula is a cloud of gas and dust, about 60 light years in diameter. It is excited by the ultraviolet radiation of the hot stars that have recently formed within its bulk. (Horizons, Exploring the Universe, Seeds, plate 9, from Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, Inc.)

The illuminating stars we see at night were, just as was the whole universe, in that 'smoke' material. God has said in the Quran:

"Then He turned to the heaven when it was smoke..." (Quran 41:11)

Because the earth and the heavens above (the sun, the moon, stars, planets, galaxies, etc.) have been formed from this same 'smoke,' we conclude that the earth and the heavens were one connected entity. Then out of this homogeneous 'smoke,' they formed and separated from each other. God has said in the Quran:

"Have not those who disbelieved known that the heavens and the earth were one connected entity, then We separated them?..." (Quran 21:30)

Dr. Alfred Kroner is one of the world's renowned geologists. He is Professor of Geology and the Chairman of the Department of Geology at the Institute of Geosciences, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany. He said: "Thinking where Muhammad came from . . . I think it is almost impossible that he could have known about things like the common origin of the universe,



because scientists have only found out within the last few years, with very complicated and advanced technological methods, that this is the case." [2] (To view the RealPlayer video of this comment click here). Also he said: "Somebody who did not know something about nuclear physics fourteen hundred years ago could not, I think, be in a position to find out from his own mind, for instance, that the earth and the heavens had the same origin." [3] (View the RealPlayer video of this comment).

Footnotes:

[1] *The First Three Minutes, a Modern View of the Origin of the Universe*, Weinberg, pp. 94-105.

[2] *The reference for this saying is This is the Truth (videotape). For a copy of this videotape, please visit this page.*

[3] *This is the Truth (videotape).*

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What is Islam?

ISLAM is an arabic word not translated when brought into English. If we look it up in an Arabic dictionary, it takes a series of words to represent the concept of the word. "Surrender, Submission, Obedience, Sincerity and Peace." We understand - Surrender, to give in; Submit, to go along with; Obey the commandments..... then to be Sincere... Since Islam requires sincerity, it can't be forced on anyone. If anyone is forced to do anything, it's no longer sincere. So the concept of Islam being spread by the sword or by force is impossible, since it requires sincerity. Then the word PEACE.. it's the peace the person has in their heart after they have done the other four. Meaning they have surrendered, submitted, have an obedience and sincerity, and now they will be in peace.... As for the word MUSLIM..in Arabic the 'MU' is placed in the front to indicate the one performing the action.. As in English we use 'ER'.. for example, walkER, talkER, swimmER, thinkER.... In Muslim, the MU is in front... someone who does ISLAM is a MU-Islam... MUSLIM....

The word Islam comes from the same root as the Arabic word "salaam", which means peace.

Unlike the names used for other religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity, the name for the religion of Islaam was both revealed by God and carries a deep spiritual meaning - only by submitting one's will to Almighty God can one obtain true peace both in this life and in the life hereafter. Islaam teaches that all religions originally had the same essential message - which was to submit whole-heartedly to the will of God and to worship Him and Him alone.

For this reason, Islaam is not a new religion but is the same divinely revealed Ultimate Truth that God revealed to all prophets, including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus.

Why Do Muslims say "Allah" instead of God?

Muslims say Allah because ALLAH doesn't exactly translate into English as GOD.... In english "God" only has one form.. GOD.. In Arabic the word GOD comes from ilah... ilah is anything worshipped... it can be a stick, a stone, things that someone makes, statues, charms, it can be the stars, the moon, money, their degrees, their position.. All of these things are ilaha.. gods.... In English there isn't a proper noun so they just capitalize the G... and say this is the proper noun... God.... In Arabic, ilah becomes Allah.. it doesn't just mean 'the god', that would be Al-ilah...

Who Are Muslims?

The Arabic word "Muslim" literally means "someone who submits to the will of God".

The message of Islaam is meant for the entire world and anyone who accepts this message becomes a Muslim.

Some people mistakenly believe that Islaam is just a religion for Arabs, but nothing could be further from the truth, since in actuality over 80% of the world's Muslims are not Arabs! Even though most Arabs are Muslims, there are Arabs who are Christians, Jews and atheists.

If one just takes a look at the various peoples who live in the Muslim World - from Nigeria to Bosnia and from Morocco to Indonesia - it is easy enough to see that Muslims come from all different races, ethnic groups and nationalities.

From the very beginning, Islaam had a universal message for all people. This can be seen in the fact that some of the early companions of the Prophet Muhammad were not only Arabs, but also Persians, Africans and Byzantine Romans. Being a Muslim entails complete acceptance and active obedience to the revealed will of Almighty God.

A Muslim is a person who freely accepts to base his beliefs, values and faith on the will of Almighty God. In the past, even though you don't see it as much today, the word "Mohammedans" was often used as a label for Muslims. This label is a misnomer and is the result of either wilful distortion or sheer ignorance. One of the reasons for the misconception is that Europeans were taught for centuries that Muslims worshipped the Prophet Muhammad in the same way that Christians worship Jesus. This is absolutely not true since a Muslim is not permitted to worship anyone or anything besides Almighty God.

but Allah is the actual name of the one and only god.. and there are no capital letters in arabic... Allah - is the one and only to be worshipped.. Arab Christians and Arab Jews also use the same word.. View an Arabic Bible and you'll see the word Allah used... In English the word GOD can also be multiplied (gods), be made male or female (god - goddess), another use (godfather - godmother)... Allah can't be multiplied, is neither male or female and is the one true creator and only one to worship. Le illahi illallah.. three is no god but Allah.

Living beings have to reproduce to continue their species. However, reproduction by itself often proves insufficient because, if living things fail to provide adequate care for their offspring, the newborn cannot survive. In other words, if living things did not feel the need to protect and look after their offspring and did not do this successfully, newborn creatures would not be able to look after themselves and would soon die.

When we look at nature, we see the majority of living things display amazing self-sacrifice in order to protect and provide the best of care for their offspring. Sometimes it is in a selfless form, incomparable to any form of sacrifice shown by human beings. Furthermore, these living things risk their lives for their young without a moment's hesitation. So, how did such self-sacrifice in animals develop?

Evolutionists claim that self-sacrifice displayed by living things, especially that shown towards their offspring, is instinctive behavior. What then does the word instinct mean?

Evolutionists define instinct as a sense of intuition inherent in living things. They claim that an inner voice whispers to a spider, a bird, a lion or a tiny insect to practice self-sacrifice to keep the generations going. In reply to a question regarding the source of this voice, they desperately say "mother nature". In the view of evolutionists, every phenomenon in nature is a miracle of nature.

However, it is evident that this claim is futile and meaningless, because nature, itself, is already a created entity consisting of the stones, flowers, trees, rivers and mountains familiar to all of us. It is obvious that these entities cannot come together to furnish a living being with a new trait, which is a product of intelligence.

As a matter of fact, even Darwin himself was aware of this logical failure from the very beginning. In his book *The Origin of Species*, which he wrote in 1859, he expressed his self-doubt about his own theory in the following words:

"I have thought that it would be more convenient to treat the subject separately, especially as so wonderful an instinct as that of the hive-bee making its cells will probably have occurred to many readers, as a difficulty sufficient to overthrow my whole theory." (Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, p. 233)

Research conducted by scientists on living things has revealed that they live in astounding harmony, coordination and collaboration with one another.

Wherever one turns in nature, one is likely to see examples of this. For instance, some little birds utter a shrill alarm call when they see a bird of prey like a hawk or eagle approaching their flock, to warn their companions of the danger. In doing so, they attract the attention of the attacker to themselves. This behavior considerably reduces the chance of survival for the bird who sounded the alarm. But despite this, the bird puts its own life at risk for the hundreds of other birds in the flock.

A majority of animals undertake all kind of self-sacrifice for their young. For example the incubation period of penguins is during the polar winter. Female penguins lay only one egg, leave incubation to the males, and return to the sea. During the four months of incubation, the male penguin has to resist violent polar storms at times reaching speeds of 120 kilometers per hour. Making great sacrifices for four full months without

Instincts, Science, and Religion

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leaving the egg, the male penguin loses half of its body weight through lack of food. Although it goes without for months, it does not go hunting, and resists the violent storms without ever leaving the egg. After the end of the four months, the female penguin shows up with a huge store of food. She has not wasted time in the meantime, but has worked for her young and stored food for it. She empties her stomach and takes over the job of caring for the young.

The care provided by the crocodile, a particularly savage animal, for its offspring is also quite astounding. First, the crocodile digs a hole for the incubation of its eggs. The temperature of the hole must never rise above 30°C. A slight rise in temperature would threaten the lives of the offspring in the eggs. The crocodile takes care that the holes in which it places its eggs are located in rather shady places and goes to extraordinary efforts to keep the eggs at a constant temperature. Some crocodile species build nests of weeds on cold water. If the temperature of the nest still rises despite these measures, then the crocodile cools the nest by sprinkling urea on it.

The time when the eggs hatch is most important, because, in the event the crocodile failed to hear the noises coming from the nest, the young would be suffocated. The mother crocodile brings the eggs out and helps the offspring out of their eggs by using her teeth as tweezers. The crocodile, with her razor-sharp teeth, avoids the slightest movement likely to injure her young. The safest place for the newly born is the protective pouch in its mother's mouth which is specially designed to shelter half a dozen newly born crocodiles.

The meticulous care and concern a wild animal like the crocodile shows its offspring is only one of the examples

proving the invalidity of the evolutionist claim of the struggle for life which maintains that the strong survive while the others are defeated and disappear.

The dolphin is another animal known for its self-sacrificing behavior. Dolphins raise their offspring with great care from the moment they are born. As soon as the newborn dolphin is born, it has to go up to the surface of the water for oxygen. To provide this, the mother dolphin shows amazingly conscious behavior and, using the tip of her nose, gently pushes the offspring above the surface of the water.

Just before birth, the movements of the mother dolphin slow down considerably. For this reason, two other females always accompany the mother dolphin during birth. Always remaining on either side of the mother, the assistant dolphins assume the responsibility of protecting her from possible attacks by sharks that might be attracted by the smell of blood.

How can this instinct, defined by evolutionists as "a drive observed in animals but not completely understood", guide animals to become civil engineers while building their nests, perfect soldiers while protecting their young or colonies, and turn even the most aggressive species into compassionate and gentle creatures towards their young?

Indeed, Darwin also had difficulties in answering this query, which he, himself, put forward. He often left related questions unanswered too. In his book *The Origin of Species*, he asks the following questions:

Thirdly, can instincts be acquired and modified through natural selection? What shall we say to so marvelous an instinct as that which leads the bee to make cells, which have practically anticipated the discoveries of profound mathematicians? (Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, p.205)

As seen, Darwin's doubts on "Natural Selection" are quite precise. Although Darwin himself confesses that Natural Selection is not a reasonable explanation, the majority of evolutionists still insist on adhering to this fallacy.

Yet, every human being who observes nature with clear consciousness sees that living things are not brutal, tough or uncompassionate because of the so-called struggle for life. On the contrary, living beings are self-sacrificing because of the "inspiration" their Creator bestowed upon them.

As expressed in the 68th verse of the 16th chapter, which says:

"Your Lord revealed to bees..."

"God" the Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything in between, the Infinitely Compassionate and Oft-Forgiving has control over all living things. Their instincts, which Darwin was unable to explain within the scope of evolution, are actually the inspiration given by God to all living things.

All life in nature is created by God. All living things come into being by the Will of God and behave in compliance with His inspiration. The self-sacrificing behavior, kindness and care living beings display towards their young are merely the reflection of God's name, the "Compassionate". This is revealed in the 7th verse of the 16th chapter:

"Your Lord is All-Gentle, Most Merciful."

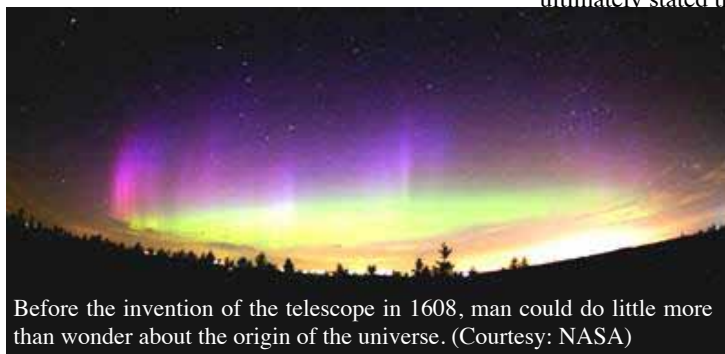
The Prophet himself stated:

"Indeed God specified one portion of His Mercy to the world, and with that a mother cares for her young, and wild animals and birds care for each other." (Saheeh Muslim)

The Qur'an on the Expanding Universe & the Big Bang Theory

Hubble's Law

For thousands of years, astronomers wrestled with basic questions concerning the universe. Until the early 1920's, it was believed that the universe had always been in existence; also, that the size of the universe was fixed and not changing. However, in 1912, the American astronomer, Vesto Slipher, made a discovery that would soon change astronomers' beliefs about the universe. Slipher, noticed that the galaxies were moving away from earth at huge velocities. These observations provided the first evidence



Before the invention of the telescope in 1608, man could do little more than wonder about the origin of the universe. (Courtesy: NASA)

supporting the expanding-universe theory.[1]

In 1916, Albert Einstein formulated his General Theory of Relativity that indicated that the universe must be either expanding or contracting. Confirmation of the expanding-universe theory finally came in 1929 in the hands



With the Hooker Telescope, Hubble discovered that the galaxies were moving away us. Above are photos of known galaxies. (Courtesy: NASA)

of the well known American astronomer Edwin Hubble.

By observing redshifts[2] in the light wavelengths emitted by galaxies, Hubble found that galaxies were not fixed in their position; instead, they were actually moving away from us with speeds proportional to their distance from earth (Hubble's Law). The only explanation for

this observation was that the universe had to be expanding. Hubble's discovery is regarded as one of the greatest in the history of astronomy. In 1929, he published the velocity-time relation which is the basis of modern cosmology. In the years to come, with further observations, the expanding-universe theory was accepted by scientists and astronomers alike.

Yet, astonishingly well before telescopes were even invented and well before Hubble published his Law, Prophet Muhammad used to recite a verse of the Quran to his companions that ultimately stated that the universe is expanding.

"And the heaven We created with might, and indeed We are (its) expander." (Quran 51:47)

At the time of the revelation of the Quran, the word "space" was not known, and people used the word "heaven" to refer to what lies above the Earth. In the above verse, the word "heaven" is referring to space and the known universe. The verse

points out that space, and thus the universe, happens to be expanding, just as Hubble's Law states.

That the Quran mentioned such a fact centuries before the invention of the first telescope, at a time when there was primitive knowledge in

science, is considered remarkable. This is more so considering that, like many people in his time, Prophet Muhammad happened to be illiterate and simply could not have been aware of such facts by himself. Could it be that he had truly received divine revelation from the Creator and Originator of the universe?

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The Big Bang Theory

Soon after Hubble published his theory, he went on to discover that not only were galaxies moving away from the Earth, but were also moving away from one another. This meant that the universe happened to be expanding in every direction, in the same way a balloon expands when filled with air. Hubble's new findings placed the foundations for the Big Bang theory.

The Big Bang theory states that around 12-15 billion years ago the universe came into existence from one single extremely hot and dense point, and that something triggered the explosion of this point that brought about the beginning of the universe. The universe, since then, has been expanding from this single point.

Later, in 1965, radio astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert

Wilson made a Noble Prize winning discovery that confirmed the Big Bang theory. Prior to their discovery, the theory implied that if the single point from which the universe came into existence was initially extremely hot, then remnants of this heat should be found. This remnant heat is exactly what Penzias and Wilson found. In 1965, Penzias and Wilson discovered a 2.725 degree Kelvin Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation (CMB) that spreads through the universe. Thus, it was understood that the radiation found was a remnant of the initial stages of the Big Bang. Presently, the Big Bang theory is accepted by the vast majority of scientists and astronomers.

It is mentioned in the Quran:

"He (God) is the Originator of the heavens and the earth..." (Quran 6:101)

"Is not He who created the heavens and the earth Able to create the likes of them? Yes; and He is the Knowing Creator. His command is only when He intends a thing that He says to it, 'Be,' and it is." (Quran 36:81-82)

The above verses prove that the universe had a beginning, that God was behind its creation, and all that God needs to do in order to create is to say "Be," and it is. Could this be an explanation as to what triggered off the explosion that brought about the beginning of the universe?

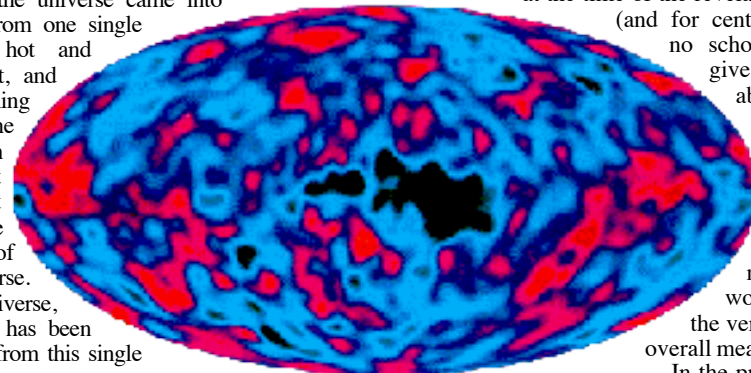
The Quran also mentions:

"Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, then We separated them, and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?" (Quran 21:30)

Muslim scholars who have explained the previous verse mention that the heavens and earth were once one, and then God caused them to separate and form into the seven heavens and Earth. Yet, due to the limitations of science and technology at the time of the revelation of the Quran

(and for centuries to follow), no scholar was able to give much detail about how exactly the heavens and earth were created. What the scholars could explain was the precise meaning of each word in Arabic in the verse, as well as the overall meaning of the verse. In the previous verse, the Arabic words *ratq* and *fataq* are used. The word *ratq* can be translated into "entity"

A microwave map of the leftover from the Big Bang that gave birth to the universe. (Courtesy: NASA)



"sewn to" "joined together" or "closed up". The meaning of these translations all circulate around something that is mixed and that has a separate and distinct existence. The verb *fataq* is translated into "We unstitched" "We clove them asunder" "We separated" or "We have opened them". These meanings imply that something comes into being by an action of splitting or tearing apart. The sprouting of a seed from the soil is a good example of a similar illustration of the meaning of the verb *fataq*.

With the introduction of the Big Bang theory, it soon became clear to Muslim scholars that the details mentioned with regards to the theory go identically hand in hand with the description of the creation of the universe in verse 30 of chapter 21 of the Quran. The theory states that all the matter in the universe came into existence from one single extremely hot and dense point; that exploded and brought about the beginning of the universe, matches what is mentioned in the verse that the heaven and Earth (thus the universe) where once joined together, and then split apart. Once again, the only possible explanation is that Prophet Muhammad had truly received divine revelation from God, The Creator and Originator of the universe.

Footnotes:

[1] *The First Three Minutes, a Modern View of the Origin of the Universe, Weinberg.*

[2] *When the light an object emits is displaced toward the red end of the spectrum. (<http://bjp.org.cn/apod/glossary.htm>)*

THE MIRACLE OF IRON

Iron is one of the elements highlighted in the Quran. In the chapter known Al-Hadeed, meaning Iron, we are informed:

“And We also sent down iron in which there lies great force and which has many uses for mankind...” (Quran 57:25)

The word “anzalna,” translated as “sent down” and used for iron in the verse, could be thought of having a metaphorical meaning to explain that iron has been given to benefit people. But, when we take into consideration the literal meaning of the word, which is, “being physically sent down from the sky, as this word usage had not been employed in the Quran except literally, like the descending of the rain or revelation, we realize that this verse implies a very significant scientific miracle. Because, modern astronomical findings have disclosed that the iron found in our world has come from giant stars in outer space.[1]

Not only the iron on earth, but also the iron in the entire Solar System, comes from outer space, since the temperature in the Sun is inadequate for the formation of iron. The sun has a surface temperature of 6,000 degrees Celsius, and a core temperature of approximately 20 million degrees. Iron can only be produced in much larger stars than the Sun, where the temperature reaches a few hundred million degrees. When the amount of iron exceeds a certain level in a star, the star can no longer accommodate it, and it eventually explodes in what is called a “nova” or a “supernova.” These explosions make it possible for iron to be given off into space.[2]

One scientific source provides the following information on this subject:

“There is also evidence for older supernova events: Enhanced levels of iron-60 in deep-sea sediments have been interpreted as indications that a supernova explosion occurred within 90 light-years of the sun about 5 million years ago. Iron-60 is a radioactive isotope of iron, formed in supernova explosions, which decays with a half life of 1.5 million years. An enhanced presence of this isotope in a geologic layer indicates the recent nucleosynthesis of elements nearby in space and their subsequent transport to the earth (perhaps as part of dust grains).”[3]

All this shows that iron did not form on the Earth, but was carried from Supernovas, and was “sent down,” as stated in the verse. It is clear that this fact could not have been known in the 7th century, when the Quran was revealed. Nevertheless, this fact is related in the Quran, the Word of God, Who encompasses all things in His infinite knowledge.

The fact that the verse specifically mentions iron is quite astounding, considering that these discoveries were made at the end of the 20th century. In his book Nature’s Destiny, the well-known microbiologist Michael Denton emphasizes the importance of iron:

“Of all the metals there is none more essential to life than iron. It is the accumulation of iron in the center of a star which triggers a supernova explosion and the subsequent scattering of the vital atoms of life throughout the cosmos. It was the drawing by gravity of iron atoms to the center of the primeval earth that generated the heat which caused the initial chemical differentiation of the earth, the outgassing of the early atmosphere, and ultimately the formation of the hydrosphere. It is molten iron in the center of the earth which, acting like a gigantic dynamo, generates the earth’s magnetic field, which in turn creates the Van Allen radiation belts that shield the earth’s surface from destructive high-energy-penetrating cosmic radiation and preserve the crucial ozone layer from cosmic ray destruction...”

“Without the iron atom, there would be no carbon-based life in the cosmos; no supernovae, no heating of the primitive earth, no atmosphere or hydrosphere. There would be no protective magnetic field, no Van Allen radiation belts, no ozone layer, no metal to make hemoglobin [in human blood], no metal to tame the reactivity of oxygen, and no oxidative metabolism.

“The intriguing and intimate relationship between life and iron, between the red color of blood and the dying of some distant star, not only indicates the relevance of metals to biology but also the biocentricity of the cosmos...”[4]

This account clearly indicates the importance of the iron atom. The fact that particular attention is drawn to iron in the Quran also emphasizes the importance of the element.

Moreover, iron oxide particles were used in a cancer treatment in recent months and positive developments were observed. A team led by Dr. Andreas Jordan, at the world famous Charité Hospital in Germany, succeeded in destroying cancer cells with this new technique developed for the treatment of cancer—magnetic fluid hyperthermia (high temperature magnetic liquid). As a result of this technique, first performed on the 26-year-old Nikolaus H., no new cancer cells were observed in the patient in the following three months.

This method of treatment can be summarized as follows:

1. A liquid containing iron oxide particles is injected into the tumour by means of a special syringe. These particles spread throughout the tumour cells. This liquid consists of thousands of millions of particles, 1,000 times smaller than the red blood corpuscles, of iron oxide in 1 cm³ that can easily flow through all blood vessels. [5]
2. The patient is then placed in a machine with a powerful magnetic field.
3. This magnetic field, applied externally, begins to set the iron particles in the tumour in motion. During this time the temperature in the tumour containing the iron oxide particles rises by up to 45 degrees.

4. In a few minutes the cancer cells, unable to protect themselves from the heat, are either weakened or destroyed. The tumour may then be completely eradicated with subsequent chemotherapy.[6]

In this treatment it is only the cancer cells that are affected by the magnetic field, since only they contain the iron oxide particles. The spread of this technique is a major development in the treatment of this potentially lethal disease. Iron has also been found to be a cure for people suffering from anemia. In the treatment of such a widespread diseases, the use of the expression “iron in which there lies great force and which has many uses for mankind” (Quran, 57:25) in the Quran is particularly noteworthy. Indeed, in that verse, the Quran may be indicating the benefits of iron even for human health. (God knows best.)

Footnotes:

[1] Dr. Mazhar U. Kazi, *130 Evident Miracles in the Qur’an* (New York, USA: Crescent Publishing House: 1998), 110-111; and www.wamy.co.uk/announcements3.html, from Prof. Zighloul Raghib El-Naggar’s speech.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Priscilla Frisch, “The Galactic Environment of the Sun,” *American Scientist*, January-February 2000, www.americanscientist.org/template/AssetDetail/assetid/21173?fulltext=true.

[4] Michael J. Denton, *Nature’s Destiny* (The Free Press: 1998), 198.

[5] www.inm-gmbh.de/cgi-bin/frame/frameloader.pl?sprache=en&url=http://www.inm-gmbh.de/htdocs/technologien/highlights/highlights_en.htm.

[6] “Nanotechnology successfully helps cancer therapies,” *IIC Fast Track, Nanotech News from Eastern Germany*, Industrial Investment Council, October 2003; www.iic.de/uploads/media/NANO_FT_Nov2003_01.pdf

The Earth's Atmosphere

"By the sky which returns." (Quran 86:11)

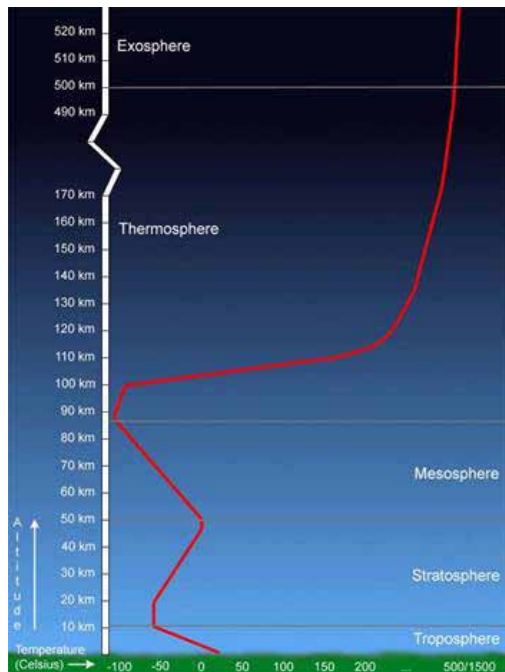
"[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling..." (Quran 2:22)

In the first verse God swears by the sky[1] and its function of 'returning' without specifying what it 'returns.' In Islamic doctrine, a divine oath signifies the magnitude of importance of a special relation to the Creator, and manifests His majesty and the supreme Truth in a special way.

The second verse describes the Divine Act that made the sky a 'ceiling' for the dwellers of earth.

Let us see what modern atmospheric science has to say about the role and function of the sky.

The atmosphere is a word which denotes all the air surrounding the earth, from the ground all the way up to the edge from which space starts. The atmosphere is composed of several layers, each defined because of the various phenomena which occur within the layer.



This image shows the average temperature profile through the Earth's atmosphere. Temperatures in the thermosphere are very sensitive to solar activity and can vary from 500°C to 1500°C. Source: Windows to the Universe, (<http://www.windows.ucar.edu>), the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR). ©1995-1999, 2000 The Regents of the University of Michigan; ©2000-04 University Corporation for Atmospheric Research.

Rain, for one, is 'returned' to Earth by the clouds in the atmosphere. Explaining the hydrologic cycle, Encyclopedia Britannica writes:

"Water evaporates from both the aquatic and terrestrial environments as it is heated by the Sun's energy. The rates of evaporation and precipitation depend on solar energy, as do the patterns of circulation of moisture in the air and currents in the ocean. Evaporation exceeds precipitation over the oceans, and this water vapor is transported by the wind over land, where it returns to the land through precipitation."[2]

Not only does the atmosphere return what was on the surface back to the surface, but it reflects back into space that which might damage the flora and fauna the earth sustains, such as excessive radiant heat. In the 1990's, collaborations between NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science (ISAS) of Japan resulted in the International Solar-Terrestrial Physics (ISTP) Science Initiative. Polar, Wind and Geotail are a part of this initiative, combining resources and scientific communities to obtain coordinated, simultaneous investigations of the Sun-Earth space environment over an extended period of time. They have an excellent explanation of how the atmosphere returns solar heat to space.[3]

Besides 'returning' rain, heat and radio waves, the atmosphere protects us like a ceiling above our heads by filtering out deadly cosmic rays, powerful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the Sun, and even meteorites on collision course with Earth.[4]

Pennsylvania State Public Broadcasting tells us: *"The sunlight that we can see represents one group of wavelengths, visible light. Other wavelengths emitted by the sun include x-rays and ultraviolet radiation. X-rays and some ultraviolet light waves are absorbed high in Earth's atmosphere. They heat the thin layer of gas there to very high temperatures. Ultraviolet light waves are the rays that can cause sunburn. Most ultraviolet light waves are absorbed by a thicker layer of gas closer to Earth called the ozone layer. By soaking up the deadly ultraviolet and x-rays, the atmosphere acts as a protective shield around the planet. Like a giant thermal blanket, the atmosphere also keeps temperatures from getting too hot or too cold. In addition, the atmosphere also protects us from constant bombardment by meteoroids, bits of rock and dust that travel at high speeds throughout the solar system. The falling stars we see at night are*

not stars at all; they are actually meteoroids burning up in our atmosphere due to the extreme heating they undergo."[5]



This is an image of Earth's polar stratospheric clouds. These clouds are involved in the creation of Earth's ozone hole. Source: Windows to the Universe, (<http://www.windows.ucar.edu>) at the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR). ©1995-1999, 2000 The Regents of the University of Michigan; ©2000-04 University Corporation for Atmospheric Research.

Encyclopedia Britannica, describing the role of Stratosphere, tells us about its protective role in absorbing dangerous ultraviolet radiation:

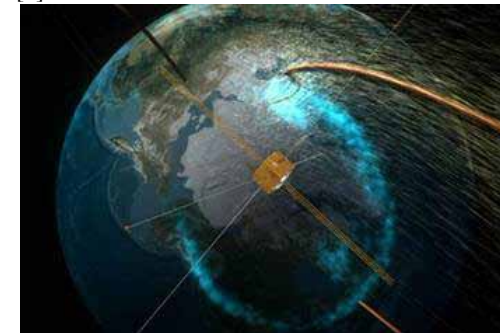
"In the upper stratospheric regions, absorption of ultraviolet light from the Sun breaks down oxygen molecules; recombination of oxygen atoms with O2 molecules into ozone (O3) creates the ozone layer, which shields the lower ecosphere from harmful short-wavelength radiation...More disturbing, however, is the discovery of a growing depletion of ozone over temperate latitudes, where a large percentage of the world's population resides, since the ozone layer serves as a shield against ultraviolet radiation, which has been found to cause skin cancer."[6]



This is an image which shows the Earth and its atmosphere. The mesosphere would be the dark blue edge located on the far top of the image underneath the back. (Image courtesy of NASA)

The mesosphere is the layer in which many meteors burn up while entering the Earth's atmosphere. Imagine a baseball zipping along at 30,000 miles per hour. That's how big and fast many meteors are. When they plow through the atmosphere, meteors are heated to more than 3000 degrees Fahrenheit, and they glow. A meteor compresses air in front of it. The air heats up, in turn heating the meteor.[7]

Earth is surrounded by a magnetic force field, a bubble in space called "the magnetosphere" tens of thousands of miles wide. The magnetosphere acts as a shield that protects us from solar storms. However, according to new observations from NASA's IMAGE spacecraft and the joint NASA/European Space Agency Cluster satellites, immense cracks sometimes develop in Earth's magnetosphere and remain open for hours. This allows the solar wind to gush through and power stormy space weather. Fortunately, these cracks do not expose Earth's surface to the solar wind. Our atmosphere protects us, even when our magnetic field does not. [8]



An artist's rendition of NASA's IMAGE satellite flying through a 'crack' in Earth's magnetic field.

How would it be possible for a fourteenth century desert dweller to describe the sky in a manner so precise that only recent scientific discoveries have confirmed it? The only way is if he received revelation from the Creator of the sky.

Footnotes:

- [1] Al-Samaa', the Arabic word translated here as 'sky' includes earth's atmosphere as indicated by the verse 2:164.
- [2] "Biosphere." Encyclopedia Britannica from Encyclopedia Britannica Premium Service. (<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?tocId=70872>)
- [3] (<http://www.spof.gsfc.nasa.gov/stargaze/Sweather1.htm>)
- [4] Atmospheric, Climate & Environment Information Programme of the Manchester Metropolitan University at (<http://www.ace.mmu.ac.uk/eae/Atmosphere/atmosphere.html>)
- [5] (http://www.witn.psu.edu/articles/article.phtml?article_id=255&show_id=44)
- [6] "Earth." Encyclopedia Britannica from Encyclopedia Britannica Premium Service. (<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?tocId=54196>)
- [7] (<http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/solarsystem/meteors-ez.html>)
- [8] (<http://www.firstscience.com/SITE/ARTICLES/magnetosphere.asp>)

The Qur'an and Mountains

A book entitled Earth is a basic reference textbook in many universities around the world. One of its two authors is Professor Emeritus Frank Press. He was the Science Advisor to former US President Jimmy Carter, and for 12 years was the President of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC. His book says that mountains have underlying roots.[1] These roots are deeply embedded in the ground, thus, mountains have a shape like a peg (see figures 1, 2, and 3).

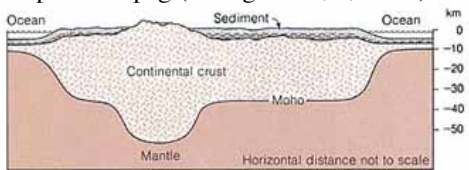


Figure 1: Mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground. (Earth, Press and Siever, p. 413.)

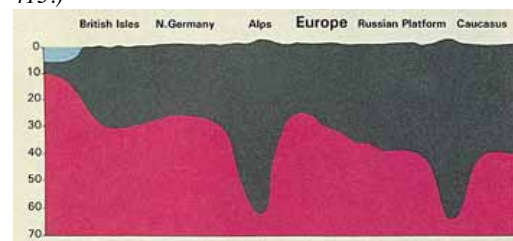


Figure 2: Schematic section. The mountains, like pegs, have deep roots embedded in the ground. (Anatomy of the Earth, Cailleux, p. 220.)

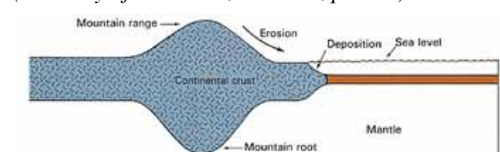


Figure 3: Another illustration shows how the mountains are peg-like in shape, due to their deep roots. (Earth Science, Tarbuck and Lutgens, p. 158.)

This is how the Quran has described mountains. God has said in the Quran: **“Have We not made the earth as a bed, and the mountains as pegs?” (Quran 78:6-7)**

Modern earth sciences have proven that mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground (see figure 3) and that these roots can reach several times their elevations above the surface



of the ground.[2] So the most suitable word to describe mountains on the basis of this information is the word ‘peg,’ since most of a properly set peg is hidden under the surface of the ground. The history of science tells us that the theory of mountains having deep roots was introduced only in the latter half of the nineteenth century.[3]

Mountains also play an important role in stabilizing the crust of the earth.[4] They hinder the shaking of the earth. God has said in the Quran:

“And He has set firm mountains in the earth so that it would not shake with you...” (Quran 16:15)

Likewise, the modern theory of plate tectonics holds that mountains work as stabilizers for the earth. This knowledge about the role of mountains as stabilizers for the earth has just begun to be understood in the framework of plate tectonics since the late 1960's.[5]

Could anyone during the time of the Prophet Muhammad have known of the true shape of mountains? Could anyone imagine that the solid massive mountain which he sees before him actually extends deep into the earth and has a root, as scientists assert? A large number of books of geology, when discussing mountains, only describe that part which is above the surface of the earth. This is because these books were not written by specialists in geology. However, modern geology has confirmed the truth of the Quranic verses.

Footnotes:

[1] Earth, Press and Siever, p. 435. Also see Earth Science, Tarbuck and Lutgens, p. 157.

[2] The Geological Concept of Mountains in the Quran, El-Naggar, p. 5.

[3] The Geological Concept of Mountains in the Quran, p. 5.

[4] The Geological Concept of Mountains in the Quran, pp. 44-45.

[5] The Geological Concept of Mountains in the Quran, p. 5.

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The Qur'an on the Cerebrum

God has said in the Quran about one of the evil unbelievers who forbade the Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, from praying at the Kaaba: **“No! If he does not stop, We will take him by the naseyah (front of the head), a lying, sinful naseyah (front of the head)!” (Quran 96:15-16)**

Why did the Quran describe the front of the head as being lying and sinful? Why didn't the Quran say that the person was lying and sinful? What is the relationship between the front of the head and lying and sinfulness?

If we look into the skull at the front of the head, we will find the prefrontal area of the cerebrum (see figure 1). What does physiology tell us about the function of this area? A book entitled Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology says about this area, *“The motivation and the foresight to plan and initiate movements occur in the anterior portion of the frontal lobes, the prefrontal area. This is a region of association cortex...”*[1] Also the book says, *“In relation to its involvement in motivation, the prefrontal area is also thought to be the functional center for aggression....”*[2]

So, this area of the cerebrum is responsible for planning, motivating, and initiating good and sinful behavior and is responsible for the telling of lies and the speaking of truth. Thus, it is proper to describe the front of the head as

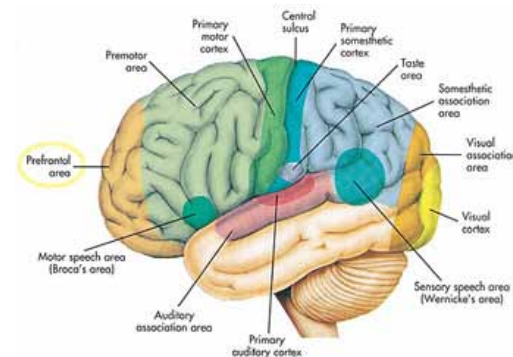


Figure 1: Functional regions of the left hemisphere of the cerebral cortex. The prefrontal area is located at the front of the cerebral cortex. (Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology, Seeley and others, p. 210.)

lying and sinful when someone lies or commits a sin, as the Quran has said, **“...A lying, sinful naseyah (front of the head)!”**

Scientists have only discovered these functions of the prefrontal area in the last sixty years, according to Professor Keith L. Moore. [3]

Footnotes:

[1] Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology, Seeley and others, p. 211. Also see The Human Nervous System, Noback and others, pp. 410-411.

[2] Essentials of Anatomy & Physiology, Seeley and others, p. 211.

[3] Al-E'jaz al-Elmy fee al-Naseyah (The Scientific Miracles in the Front of the Head), Moore and others, p. 41.

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The Big Questions, Part 3

The Need for Revelation

In the previous two parts of this series, we answered the two “big questions.” Who made us? God. Why are we here? To serve and worship Him. A third question naturally arose: “If our Creator made us to serve and worship Him, how do we do that?” In the previous article I suggested that the only way we can serve our Creator is through obeying His mandates, as conveyed through revelation.

But many people would question my assertion: Why does mankind need revelation? Isn't it enough just to be good? Isn't it enough for each of us to worship God in our own way?

Regarding the need for revelation, I would make the following points: In the first article of this series I pointed out that life is full of injustices, but our Creator is fair and just and He establishes justice not in this life, but in the afterlife. However, justice cannot be established without four things—a court (i.e., the Day of Judgment); a judge (i.e., the Creator); witnesses (i.e., men and women, angels, elements of creation); and a book of laws upon which to judge (i.e., revelation). Now, how can our Creator establish justice if He did not hold humankind to certain laws during their lifetimes? It's not possible. In that scenario, instead of justice, God would be dealing out injustice, for He would be punishing people for transgressions they had no way of knowing were crimes.

Why else do we need revelation? To begin with, without guidance mankind cannot even agree on social and economic issues, politics, laws, etc. So how can we ever agree on God? Secondly, nobody writes the user manual better than the one who made the product. God is the Creator, we are creation, and nobody knows the overall scheme of creation better than the Creator. Are employees allowed to design their own job descriptions, duties and compensation packages as they see fit? Are we citizens allowed to write our own laws? No? Well then, why should we be allowed to write our own religions? If history has taught us anything, it is the tragedies that result when mankind follows its caprice. How many who have claimed to banner of free thought have designed religions that committed themselves and their followers to nightmares on Earth and damnation in the hereafter?

So why isn't it enough just to be good? And why isn't it enough for each of us to worship God in our own way? To begin with, peoples' definitions of “good” differ. For some it is high morals and

clean living, for others it is madness and mayhem. Similarly, concepts of how to serve and worship our Creator differ as well. More importantly and to the point, nobody can walk into a store or a restaurant and pay with a different currency than the merchant accepts. So it is with religion. If people want God to accept their servitude and worship, they have to pay in the currency God demands. And that currency is obedience to His revelation.

Imagine raising children in a home in which you have established “house rules.” Then, one day, one of your children tells you he or she has changed the rules, and is going to do things differently. How would you respond? More than likely, with the words, “You can take your new rules and go to Hell!” Well, think about it. We are God's creation, living in His universe under His rules, and “go to Hell” is very likely what God will say to any who presume to override His laws with their own.

Sincerity becomes an issue at this point. We should recognize that all pleasure is a gift from our Creator, and deserving of thanks. If given a gift, who uses the gift before giving thanks? And yet, many of us enjoy God's gifts for a lifetime and never give thanks. Or give it late. The English poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, spoke of the irony of the distressed human appeal in The Cry of the Human:

And lips say “God be pitiful,”

Who ne'er said, “God be praised.”

Should we not show good manners and thank our Creator for His gifts now, and subsequently for the rest of our lives? Don't we owe Him that?

You answered “Yes.” You must have. Nobody will have read this far without being in agreement, but here's the problem: Many of you answered “Yes,” knowing full well that your heart and mind does not wholly agree with the religions of your exposure. You agree we were created by a Creator. You struggle to understand Him. And you yearn to serve and worship Him in the manner He prescribes. But you don't know how, and you don't know where to look for the answers. And that, unfortunately, is not a subject that can be answered in an article. Unfortunately, that has to be addressed in a book, or maybe even in a series of books.

The good news is that I have written these books. I invite you to start with The Eighth Scroll. If you've liked what I've written here, you'll love what I've written there.

Dr. Laurence B. Brown
www.TheRealityofGod.com

Surah Al-Fatiha

In Islam, sura Al-Fatiha (“The Opener”) is the first chapter of the Quran. Its seven ayat (verses) are a prayer for God's guidance, and stress His Lordship and Mercy. This chapter has an essential role in Salaat (daily prayer); Muslims should recite the sura Al-Fatiha 17 times a day in Fard (compulsory) Salaat, at the start of each unit of prayer. In Islam, the place of the Al-Fatiha in the heart of Muslims is akin to the place of the “Lord's Prayer” in the heart of Christians: both have the same intent in connecting with God, and address similar themes of sincerity, respect, love, guidance, forgiveness and adoration of God.

English Interpretation:

1. In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
2. All praise and thanks is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds –
3. The Beneficent, the Most Merciful,
4. Master of the Day of Judgement
5. You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help.
6. Guide us to the straight path –
7. The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked Your anger or of those who are astray.

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*And seek help through patience
and prayer, and indeed, it is
difficult except for the humbly
submissive to Allah.*

Qur'an 2:45

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The Books of God

God has revealed his books to various Prophets for the guidance of their nations. Muslims must believe in all these books.

“We have sent thee inspiration, as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him: we sent inspiration to Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon and to David we gave the Psalms.” Quran 4:163

The Four Main Books are:

Book	Prophet
Torah	Moses
Psalms	David
Gospel	Jesus
Quran	Muhammad

There were also smaller books called *Sahifas* (scrolls) that were revealed to many Prophets such as Prophet Abraham and Prophet Solomon.

The Prophet Muhammad's Last Sermon *(peace be upon him)*

This sermon was delivered on the Ninth Day of Dhul Hijjah 10 A.H. in the 'Uranah valley of Mount Arafat' (in Mecca).

After praising, and thanking Allah he said:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and TAKE THESE WORDS TO THOSE WHO COULD NOT BE PRESENT HERE TODAY.

O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as Sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your LORD, and that HE will indeed reckon your deeds. ALLAH has forbidden you to take usury (interest), therefore all interest obligation shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity. Allah has Judged that there shall be no interest and that all the interest due to Abbas ibn 'Abd'al Muttalib (Prophet's uncle) shall henceforth be waived...

Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your

women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People, listen to me in earnest, worship ALLAH, say your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in Zakat (charity). Perform Hajj if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white; except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not, therefore, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember, one day you will appear before ALLAH and answer your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone.

O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, and understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the QURAN and my example, the SUNNAH and if you follow these you will never go astray.

All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly. Be my witness, O ALLAH, that I have conveyed your message to your people".

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