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**FOREWORD**

 The questions " Why has God created mankind and what does He expect from us? " have utmost importance but answers haven't been found in modern society clearly. However, the Holy Quran provides answers to these questions explicitly. According to the Sacred Book, the Almighty Creator requests that human beings have faith in Him as well as live according to Divine Laws. This faith is the fundamental tenet of the Quran and, furthermore, this book reveals the qualities of those who are most worthy in the sight of God.

 Despite condemnation of religious sects in the Holy Book, factions have developed over time disrupting, rather than contributing to, unity and integrity in Islam. These separations, particularly due to mistaken interpretations, have caused divisions in our religion. As a result, brother has killed brother, Muslim has killed Muslim. Disagreements amongst sects, tariqas, and congregations have continued into modern times. These conflicts have been one of the main reasons that some societies have fallen behind in their evolution. That is why, Muslims must hold firmly to the rope of God and must learn the content of the Quran in order to obtain accurate religious knowledge.

 The topic of the Quran's message of love has not been a central them of thinking in the Islam World yet it receives attention in this book. Uninformed commentators compare Christianity and Islam on the subject of love and often raise this question: "While Christianity's main purpose is love, why should Islam be any different? " As a matter of fact, the Quran has more verses that refer to love than can be found in other Holy Books. Additionally, in this book, the Quran's perspective on the subject of the Hereafter is presented for readers' review.

 God Almighty, with your permission and grace, I sincerely wish that my work will prove useful for my society and all humanity.

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 Mesut KAYNAK

**WHAT DOES THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR EXPECT FROM MANKIND?**

 We should know the answer to this question. Indeed one who contemplates the glorious divine design, to feel the presence of the Supreme Being and mysteries of creation may see his own weaknesses and death. Where have we come from to this world and where are we going? Who has created us and why? What are our functions and duties? Is death the end of man? Is there a hereafter?

 We must reflect on the questions such as: How have we come into existence? First, we have been created. Then we live our lives on earth and one day we are going to be taken back without our control over any part of this progression. Have we come to this world by chance or do we have a mission?

**WHAT POWER HAS CREATED US**

 The Quran provides the answer as follows**: " Then His servants will be returned to God, their true Lord. Unquestionably, He is the judgment...** " (Anam 6/62).

 …**Indeed we belong to God and truly to God we will return**. (Baqarah 2/156).

 We see through these verses there is no power other than God who has wished to create man, and has endowed him to the highest degree on earth. Man happens to be created to represent the Divine Being and all that has been created in the world has been given to the subservience of man. The Quran states: **God brought whatever in the skies and whatever on the earth under your control and at your service, and He abundantly gave you His favour, apparent and hidden**… (Luqman 31/20).

**GOD STATES HIS LAWS VIA PROPHETS**

 **O mankind, there has to come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers!** (Yunus 10/57).

 **Follow, what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and do not follow other than Him. How seldom you take heed**. (A'raf 7/3).

 The Holy Qur'an states that the prophets have been sent to every community and charged with the mission to communicate to human being their Creator and the divine law in order for them to regulate their lives based on the principals of God's laws.

 The Qur'an as revealed to Muhammad describes the glorious divine design. In order that one may perceive the meaning of the verses, one should meditate on them. To try to know his Lord and to resign himself to God's will makes a man adept, one to whom will be opened the mysteries of creation. Islam is the religion which was declared to us and the word 'Islam' means 'resignation and complete surrender to God's will.

 The Quran states that the purpose of the universe is divine service to God. Indeed everything has been acting on a preordained system, and Islam is such an expression of the praise and gratitude of the all universe to the Almighty Creator.

**ALL CREATURES ARE IN DEVOTION**

 **The seven heavens and the earth, and whoever is therein, glorify Him.  There is not a thing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their praises**. …(Isra 17/44).

 **Don't you see that to God prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth and the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the moving creatures and many of the people?**...(Hajj 22/18)

 **Say: Everyone acts according to his own disposition**…(Isra 17/84).

 Contemplation is a natural predisposition of humans which, through the Quran, leads to devotion. These are states of the mind and soul akin to flotation in space proceeding to commemoration of God in prayer and invocation. On the other hand, prostration is compliance, bowing and humbling oneself before God.

 The meaning of the verses above has been clarified with the latest modern science. As it is known, the basic structure of an atom includes the nucleus (containing positively charged protons) and electrons (negatively charged) which move around the nucleus. The sun is the atomic nucleus, and the Earth, Mars, Saturn, Venus etc. which are within the Milky Way Galaxy have been revolving around the Sun eternally. Due to their own disposition from micro to macro all the forms move in a fixed relationship glorifying God. All that has been created praises their Creator and prostrates before Him.

 The Kaaba in Mecca, which was constructed by Abraham upon God's commandment, is the spiritual magnetic centre for the Islam World (and is known as the house of God). Every year it receives millions of pilgrims coming from the four corners of the earth to circumambulate it. In other words, while praying, they move around it's circumference like the electrons that gyrate around the nucleus of an atom.

 At this juncture, mention should be made of an extraordinary Sufistic savant Mawlana Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207-1273) in whose time neither the structure of the atom nor the solar system were understood. Despite this, he developed the practice of whirling, which intuitively perceived and emulated the rotations of atoms and the planets. Dervishes whirled around a central point, thus praying to God.

 **THE REASON WHY MANKIND WAS CREATED**

 **I created the jinn and mankind only that they might worship Me**. (Dhariyat 51/56)

 **Say, "Why would my Lord care for you if you do not pray to and invoke Him?..."** (Furkan 25/77)

 All matter in the universe, including mankind, is made up of atoms, each one composed of a nucleus and one or more electrons bound to the nucleus. The Quran describes this formation as the indispensable essence of worship. All the substances praise to God in a manner under the same rule of the Creator. However God requests humankind to use his willpower and pray consciously. Man has the innate sense of the divine so, once he understands the truth of creation, he starts to pray to God with total acquiescence. The faithful servant attains divine bliss by the God's response. The Quran says about these believers:

 **Therefore remember Me, I will remember you**… (Baqarah 2/152)

 **And if My servants ask you about Me indeed I am near. I respond to those who call Me...** (Baqarah 2/186)

**THE MOST WORTHY MAN IN THE SIGHT OF GOD**

 The Holy Quran states that those who have taqwa are the most worthy ones.

 **Surely, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you...** (Hujurat 49/13)

 **…God loves those who have taqwa**.. (Ali Imran 3/76)

 **Verily, God is with those who have taqwa and those who are well-doers**. (Nahl 16/128)

 **For the Pilgrimage, the months are well known... Take necessary provisions with you for the journey, and piety is the best provision of all**. (Baqarah 2/197)

 **O children of Adam! Surely, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment, but the clothing of piety that is best..**. (Araf 7/26)

 **Behold! The friends of God will certainly have nothing to fear, nor will they be grieved. Those whose hearts have been touched with the divine hand who have faith and chose to practice piety. For them are glad tidings, in the worldly life and in the Hereafter. The Word of God shall never change. That is the supreme triumph**. (Yunus 10/62-64)

 **And hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous**. (Ali Imran 3/133)

 Taqwa is an Islamic term meaning protection, forbearance, and fear. Taqwa requires a high state of intention and effort by which His servants take responsibility for protecting themselves from all kind of sins. It is total obedience to the Creator. In order to gain the love and approval of God one must follow his orders strictly and reject the things that God forbids. So the faithful servant becomes conscious of being created and develops feelings of thankfulness and gratitude toward His creator.

 Taqwa is the spirit and the essence of devotion. One who follows the Prophet as a guide performs flawlessly in faith and in actions. Those who make such an effort reach maturity thus saving themselves from the dark side of their character.

**FAITH IN GOD**

 Faith is a strong emotion based on love and acceptance of the existence of God, and on confidence that the entire universe has been created by him. The mystery of faith in God innate in man connotes loving the Almighty Creator with thankfulness and gratitude. Faith as a mystery may only be perceived by the heart which is beyond the mind. Hujurat 49/7: **"..... God has endeared to you the Faith, and has made it pleasing in your hearts...."** A man's faith is first kindled innately in his heart enabling him to know His Creator. Once this faith is made firm, the process of salvation begins. It is made manifest by the kindling in one's heart of that fire within one's heart and made whole by a reciprocal action inspired by God. **Belief in the Supreme** Being emanates from the kindling of the fire of love in the heart of the human being. Yunus 10/100*: «It is* *not possible for anyone to believe except by the permission of God*… *»* Taghabun 64/11: *«****…****Whoever believes in God (truly and sincerely), He guides his heart****…****»*

 Yusuf 12/103: **And most men will not believe though you desire it eagerly.** Those who are affected by bad attributes and evil can not ignite the light of faith in their hearts. As a consequence of this, they can not believe. Zukhruf 43 / 36 – 37 : *: « Whoever wilfully ignores the remembrance of the All-Merciful, We assign to him a devil, who becomes his closest comrade. Such devils certainly bar them from the way (of truth). Yet they think that they are rightly guided.* ***…****»*So these people can't pass the tests presented in everyday life, indeed, they can't elevate themselves from a miserable life. Baqarah 2/264: *«…and God does not guide those who deny the truth*.*..»*

 **Quran warns the nations who don't believe sincerely with the verses of Hujurat 49/14:** *«The Bedouin say, “We believe.” Say, “You do not believe. Rather, say, ‘We have submitted our wills to God,’ for belief has not yet entered your hearts. Yet if you obey God and His Messenger, He will not diminish for you aught of your deeds. Truly God is Forgiving, Merciful*. *..»*

 The majority of the people of some Islamic nations don't have belief in their heart because they could not light the faith. For the reason that lacking God's guidance they fall behind in their development.

 **Almighty Creator explains about his true believers in the verses of Anfal 8/2**: *« The true believers are only those who, when God is mentioned, their hearts tremble with awe, and when His Revelations are recited to them, it strengthens them in faith, and they put their trust in their Lord. »*

**CHARACTERISTICS OF ONE WHO HAS TAQWA**

 Our Lord wants His servants to have **faith** in their heart and live based on the characteristics of **taqwa**. Baqarah 2/177 explains taqwa's attributes:

 **... those with true righteousness are those who have faith in God and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set slaves free, and who establish salat and pay zakat; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in battle. Those are the people who are true. They are the people who have TAQWA**.

 Almighty God orders us to believe in him as well as the Last Day, the Angels, the Holy Books, the Prophets. For our salvation, he expects us to give away our wealth voluntarily, perform salat, pay zakat, keep our word when we promise and be patient in misfortune. Zumar 39/61: « *God will save those who were mindful of Him by the virtue of their successful choices* » In that case, we will be able to obtain this spiritual triumph only making our effort and actions.

 While the servant of God is improving the skills of having taqwa he starts to get rid of the ego's bad attributes including Shirk (is the sin of practicing idolatry or polytheism, the worship of anyone or anything besides the singular God ), cruelty, impiety, lying, prurience, idolatry to the ego, mocking, gossiping etc. Evil qualities never leave one before moral qualities are developed. As the spiritual attributes are achieved one by one, the evil traits abandon the person. After all, the taqwa's qualities, based on positive power, can't live together with the ego's bad attributes. The dominant one destroys the rest.

 Every Muslim has to learn taqwa's characteristics and has to perform with effort and exertion. If one can't perform it suitably then one has to resign himself to God's mercy and grace. The Quran Taghabun 64/16 says: **«So be mindful of God as much as you can».** Loving God requires loving all that He has created. Attaining increased merit in the sight of God is possible so long as we provide service to the others who are the issue of the Mighty Creator.

 In order to obtain taqwa's attributes, approximately ten primary worship conditions from the Holy Quran must be observed. 1) Infaq and love, 2) Salat (Prayer), 3) Zakat, 4) Forgiveness and appeal for mercy 5) Patience, 6) Fasting, 7) Beneficence, 8) Keep one's word, 9) Justice and Honesty, 10) Knowledge

**TEN FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS OF TAQWA**

**1) INFAQ AND LOVE**

 **Those who spend in prosperity and adversity**... (Ali Imran 3/134)

 **Indeed who has taqwa are in (the blissful) gardens of paradise, amid springs … And (they accepted the fact that) the deprived and the destitute had a rightful share in their wealth** ...(Dhariyat 51/15, 19)

 Infaq is sharing one's assets with needy people. It is incumbent upon everyone without discriminating between the poor and the rich. It is considered one of the most worthy practices not only for the welfare of others but also for its positive impact over the all creation. It is the expression of one's love for God, of his reliance on and resignation to Him. Infaq is not limited to financial aid but extends to the generosity of saying a beautiful word or displaying a smiling face. To console an aggrieved person, to help an old strengthless one or to make a visit to a sick one are some examples of acts of helpfulness. While Zakat, alms and fitre are charitable deeds whose quantities are measurable, infaq has no limits because it is connected to the heart.

 Those who have taqwa always share their assets with others regardless of whether the times are prosperous or impoverished. This manner leads to increasing holy morality. The Quran states the principle of help like this: Baqarah 2/219: «*They will ask you what they should give away. Say, ´ What is left over (after you have spent on your dependents’ needs)..*. ».

 Who should be the receiver of charity? The Quran illuminates us with the verses of Baqarah 2/215 : *«… The possessions you donate should be for parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, those who are left helpless, and the stranded traveller...»* Therefore our priority must be poor people, the needy among our relatives and a helping circle that should be enlarged more and more.

 Infaq contains **benevolence**, **working** **hard and loving all that has been created**.

 **Compete for the charity work**. Benevolence as a type of infaq means disposition to do good things and encourage the welfare of others for the love of God. The Quran states: Ali Imran 3/114-115 : «… *they compete with one another in good deeds. Whatever good they do, they will never be denied the reward of it; and God knows well those who have taqwa*..» The Quran declares that we should compete with one another in charitable activities. What works should be considered charitable? To construct a mosque, hospital or school, to provide cloth to needy people, to feed hungry people, to marry off people, philanthropy, to extend capital, to donate to such associations as Red Crescent, Society for the Protection of Children, Education Foundation or to found a charitable foundation, to write edifying books, to conduct scientific research and so on. These are significant charitable deeds.

 Infaq includes also **perform** **good deeds** which are highly laudable in the sight of God and means all kinds of ideas and activities aimed at peace and serving the people. Bayyinah 98/7 : *« Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds. Those are the best of creatures.»*

 Those who work, thinking about contributing to humanity neither for money nor fame, demonstrate a good deed. If a health worker gives attention to poor people for free, he surely performs a good deed. If a teacher works with dedication and love without waiting for any material reward in return for teaching his students to become efficient and beneficial when they grow up, he has been contributing to the happiness of society. Another example is Hayrettin Karacan who serves society by raising questions about environmental issues. He warns related foundations and the people in order to find the solutions. Aren't all of his efforts for the happiness of the community?

 Almighty God gives the condition of eternal life indiscriminately to Muslims, Jews, and Christians who have the Holy Books. Maidah 5/69 : *«… Indeed, the believers, Jews, Sabians and Christians—whoever ˹truly˺ believes in God and the Last Day and does righteous deeds there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve*. »

 In these verses without any discrimination over factors such as Book, Prophet or specific religious rules, only three conditions are applied: **1) Believe in God 2) Believe in the Last Day 3) Perform good deeds**. The good tidings of the salvation have been stated according to the verses to all man or woman if they fulfil these three conditions.

 **Working hard.** Infaq, charity and good deeds require systematic labour.

 *Inshirah 94/7 : « So when you are done (with your duties), then work hard (for other duties). »*

 *Najm 53/39-41 : « that man will have nothing but what he strives for; and that ˹the outcome of˺ their endeavours will be seen ˹in their record. Then he will be rewarded with a reward complete »*

 *Naba 78/11: « and we made the day for earning a livelihood. »*

 *Tawbah 9/105: « And say: Work; so God will see your work and (so will) His Messenger and the believers*; …»

 The Quran admonishes believers against laziness and strongly advocates the value of hard work.

 **To love all created**. One of the characteristics of those who have taqwa is to be soft-hearted and loving as they reflect their Almighty Creator. Ali İmran 3/119 : *« O believers! You are the ones who love them, although the unbelievers don't love you*.. » The Quran which is the symbol of love and compassion has made a description. According to the verses of the Quran, believers love all humanity regardless of whether they are faithful, unfaithful, friend or enemy. Although unbelievers don't love believers, the faithful ones have full of love for all humanity and all creatures due to the Creator. So all people, all animals, all plants and all creature even if their existence be known or unknown must be loved because of the Almighty Creator. Just Yunus Emre the great Sufism poet said: « *We love the creatures, due to the Creator.»*

**2) SALAT (THE RITUAL PRAYER)**

 **… Performs the prayer and pays the welfare tax... These are the ones who have taqwa** (Baqarah 2/177)

 **For all believers prayer is indeed a sacred duty linked to particular times of day.** (Nisa 4/103)

 Salat (ritual prayer) is the fundamental act of adoration and is mandatory for all Muslims since God commanded it certainly and obviously. While praying, each Muslim praises his Almighty Creator who has granted him an infinite number of gifts. Salat helps us overcome stress and ambition and to resist evil, deviance and other such things which darken our lives. As well, it provides endless physical benefits as it is performed with bodily movements. Once salat has been performed over time due to the increasing strength of faith, evil inclinations are transformed into their contraries. Pride disappears while prostrating during salat.

 **Remembering of God (dhikr o zikr)**. Salat is the most important duty performed for remembering God. Ta ha 20/14: *«… maintain your prayer to remember Me*.» So the purpose of performing the prayer is remembering God. Ankebut 29/45: «… *Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book, and pray regularly. Prayer restrains indecency and wrongdoing. And surely remembering of God is the greatest*…». Araf 7/205 : « *Remember your Lord within yourself, in all humility and awe, without raising your voice, morning and evening. Do not be one of the unaware* …». The more one remembers Him the more he manifests his adoration for Him. Ali Imran 3/191: «*Those who remember God standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation and God*…» Furthermore Quran states: Nur 24/37: « *Those who are not distracted by trade or sale from remembering of God. .*»

 So, God accompanies the man who continuously remembers his Lord in all sincerity. This act by a person doesn't prevent him from carrying out his job. It provides the basis for gaining infinite happiness by the flame of the Divine's Love connecting to the flow of Almighty God. Ra'd 13/28: « … *Truly, hearts find peace only remembering of God*.".»

**3) ZAKAT (WELFARE TAX)**

 **… Performs the prayer and pays the welfare tax... These are the ones who have taqwa** (Baqarah 2/177)

 **And from their properties was given the right of the petitioner and deprived.** (Dhariyat 51/19)

 **Zakat** is a sort of plentifulness and purification. It is a mandatory tax for wealthy Muslims and one of the five Pillars of Islam. Zakat is a sum equal to one fortieth of the person's savings, after paying for essentials, to be given annually. God has stated in the Quran that the impoverished one has absolute right to the assets of the prosperous. Giving of Zakat does not cause a decrease in one's wealth; indeed the reverse is true as it increases one's income in a spiritual way. Performing Zakat helps the giver to discipline himself and distances him from evil wishes. The connection of love is established between the giver and the receiver instead of the contrast between the wealthy and the poor as giving Zakat. Rum 30/39 : *«…  Yet, the ´zakat´ you give seeking the pleasure of God increases manifold (in value).....* .»

**4) FORGIVENESS AND APPEAL FOR MERCY**

 **Those who have taqwa… who restrain their anger and pardon others.** … (Ali İmran 3/134)

 …**Truly God is Relenting, Most Merciful...** (Taubah 9/118)

 Asking forgiveness means supplication to God in order that He forgives sins. Those who have taqwa with a magnanimous heart forgive the offenses committed against them just like God Almighty who is the most merciful and all forgiving. The Quran states this principle in the verses of Araf 7/199 : « *Show forgiveness (on your part); Instruct what is right; turn away from those who are ignorant*..» Generally the Quran recognizes the importance of tolerance but exerts believers to go farther by extending forgiveness.

**5) PATIENCE**

 **...those who are patient in adversity, illness and in battle...They are the people who have taqwa...** (Baqarah 2/177)

 …**We shall certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives, and crops. But (Prophet), give good news to those who are patient**. (Baqarah 2/155)

 **Patience** is the power of endurance to face adversity or to face pain with fortitude. Man is pre-destined to experience grief as a matter of creation. If one is resigned to endure his afflictions willingly and to accept that it is God's plan, he will have God's favour. This is the way of attaining maturity.

 Yunus 10/109 : «*And follow what is revealed to you, and remain patient and steadfast in your way until God will judge. And He is the best in giving judgment.»* Performing the divine rules requires one to bear some inconvenience and suffering which is hard on the person. It requires one to make self-sacrifice in recognizing the obligation to overcome some habits and desires. Patience is the secret to overcoming all these difficulties . In the end the Almighty God is going to be the best judge. Ali İmran 3/146 : «…*Surely God loves the patient*.»

 Tawakkul (Trust in God). Patience implies also the state of being resigned and of being submissive to God and reliant on Him. Ahzab 33/2-3 : «*Follow which is revealed to you from your Lord… Rely upon God.. God is enough as a guardian*» Make it a principle to live with the Divine Laws based on the Quran and rely on God to grant his favour. God is the real ally.

**6) FASTING**

 **…God commanded fasting for you just as he commanded it for those who came before you so that you might be mindful of God..** (Baqarah 2/183)

 Fasting, one of the five pillars of Islam, means to abstain completely from foods, drinks and intimate intercourse during an entire day from early dawn till sunset. This helps a man to be the master of himself and strengthens his will. It lasts for the entire holy month of Ramadan. It doesn't mean we torture our body yet we serve God in loving obedience to him. One who fasts suppresses his desires by the consciousness of duty, devoting oneself to God.

 Fasting has been shown to have many health benefits to such as to circulation and to the digestive and neural systems.

**7) BENEFICENTS**

 **Surely those who have taqwa are in paradises and springs... Indeed they were good doers before this**. ( Dhariyat 51/15-16)

 **Paradise is prepared for those who have taqwa... And God loves the good-doers**. (Ali İmran 3/133-134)

 The beneficent reflects divine attributes. Thinking beautiful thoughts, doing good deeds, having forgiveness, feeling the presence of God without expecting any reward from Him: these are the signs in a man who is beneficent. One of the beautiful names of God is also beneficent as a source of the all favours and kindness. The Lord has created man in the best form and man reflects God so the beneficent reflects divine attributes.

 God Almighty shows his grace to mankind through the angels and jinn, also shows through the beneficent. Qasas 28/77 : «*Be charitable, as God has been charitable to you.!*... »

**8) KEEP ONE'S WORD, FULFIL COMMITMENT**

 **… and those who keep their word whenever they promise anything. These are the ones who have taqwa**.. (Baqarah 2/177)

 **Believers! Fulfil your promises and pacts**!... (Maidah 5/1)

 Keeping one's word means to keep a promise, fulfil a commitment or to be trustworthy. Agreement is the basis of all relationships. Words given, contracts or agreements must be kept. This is the only way to keep peace. Keeping ones word with God ensures eternal salvation. However if one goes back on his word he creates strife.

 Baqarah 2/124 : «…*Those who don't fulfil their promise are unjust..»*

 Saff 61/2-3 : «…*Why do you say something which you don't do? It is a big sin in the sight of God that you say something which you don't do*..»

**9) JUSTICE VS HONESTY**

 **O believers! Be steadfast for the sake of God witnessing with justice; and let not the hatred of a certain people prevent you from acting justly. Be fair! It is nearer to taqwa**. (Maidah 5/8)

 Justice is the maintaining of what is just and behaving in line with Divine Laws. Believers must pay attention to God's laws. To feel dislike toward someone or to feel anger toward him mustn't be the reason for withholding justice. Nations' sustainability and serenity depend on justice and honesty.

 No matter who the parties are, justice must be served without any discrimination. Nisa 4/135 states : «…*Be maintainers of justice and witnesses for the sake of God, even though it is against yourselves or your parents and near relatives, and whether the person rich or poor...Do not pursue your desires to deviate from justice*!..»

**10) KNOWLEDGE (THE VERSES OF THE QURAN)**

 **In fact, only those among His servants who possess knowledge fear from God…** (Fatır 35/28)

 ...**And fear God, and know that God is with the pious.** (Baqarah 2/194)

 In the verses above there is a description about those who have taqwa. Taqwa implies fear and dread of God however the believers heart nests both fear and immense love for their Creator. Possessors of taqwa are the most loved by God as they know the divine laws best.

 One performs with pleasure what his beloved one requests. In fact he has fear of committing an offense. He holds himself back from the things that the beloved one doesn't want. If the beloved one is God then the precision is greater. Islamic savants think that a child's love, trust and fear for his parents are similar to the feelings of taqwa possessors to God. Children don't have only love for their parents but also fear.

 God Almighty says that the verses of the Quran are knowledge. Rad 13/37 : «…*We have sent down this (Qur'an) as a code of clear judgement after the knowledge that has come to you (Muhammad)…»* The source of knowledge is the Sacred Books. In Islam knowledge is the verses of the Quran. There are two kinds of knowledge: Theological knowledge and Practical knowledge.

 Theological knowledge is God's word that governs the universe and human beings. It gives the answers to such questions as: where have we come from to earth? what are our duties and where are we heading after death? He is the one will resurrect us on Judgment Day and we will see the truth. Believers who have theological knowledge may come to know God by following His path. The Quran's very first verse reveals the commandment " Read! ". Alak 96/1-5 : « *Recite (Read)! in the name of your Lord created man from a clinging substance. Recite! Your Lord is the most generous who taught by the pen*. »

 God wants us to read the Quran and apply His rules however merely reading is not enough to edify ourselves. We must mediate and ponder on it. The original Quran is in Arabic making it difficult for us to understand the meaning of the content properly. Fortunately there are a lot of recognised translations that have cleared up this issue. This is the knowledge that enables us to attain the heights of civilization. Rahman 55/1-2 states: *« The most merciful taught the Quran* » As I did it at very young age with the grace of God, I recommend the system I used for the readers. Just taking a little bit of time daily is enough for learning the divine knowledge by reading the Quran. Indeed God is the direct teacher.

 To love God Almighty requires that we love our fellow beings since they have been created by Him. To love one's fellow being means to serve him through the practical knowledge such as medicine, engineering, physics, mathematics, law, environmental science, astronomy so on. People who are from these disciplines must be revered and supported. The prophet emphasized the giving of importance to knowledge with this hadith: « *Seek knowledge even as far as China..»*

**THE REWARD OF TAQWA: GARDENS OF EDEN**

 **Those who have taqwa will enter the Gardens of Eden, along with all who are righteous of their parents, spouses and children. From every gate the angels will come to them, saying, “Peace to you, because you persevered in patience. Now how excellent is the Final Home.”** (Rad 13/23-24)

 Almighty Creator warns his servants with this verse: «*So be pious to God as best as you can*..»…(Taghabun 16). And, if they perform it as well as they can God, promises them the Gardens of Eden where they will enter with their righteous parents, spouses and children.

**MAINTAIN UNITY IN ISLAM**

 **Those who have divided their religion and become sects, you are not with them in anything. Their matter will be with God...** (Anam 6/159)

 **Don't be one of those who divided their religion into many sects. Each faction exulting in what it possessed**. (Rum 30/32)

 **Follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and do not follow any masters other than Him**…(A'raf 7/3 )

 **Hold fast the Rope of God (The Quran) all together...Do not be like those who, after they had been given clear evidence, split into factions and differed among themselves: a terrible punishment awaits such people**. (Ali İmran 3/103,105)

 The verses above have utmost importance. Almighty God warns denominations, sects and congregations which appeared after the first four khalifas. Their aim was to achieve dominance and derive benefits from the religion. **Don't divide your religion into factions**!

 Instead of ensuring unity and integrity in Islam, hundreds of sects have arisen each claiming that its interpretation is the most accurate one. Based on these allegation brother has killed brother and Muslim has killed Muslim. In some countries such as Syria, Egypt and Iraq sectarian conflicts have continued until now with this becoming the main reason for those countries falling behind in their development. However aren't Muslims brothers among them? Hujurat 49/10: « *The believers are indeed brothers. Therefore make reconciliation among your brothers, so that you may receive mercy.* »

 Ankara University The Faculty of Divinity Head of the Department of History of Islamic Sects Prof. Dr. Hasan ONAT, stated in the conference of Inonu University in 2012 regarding sectarian conflicts:

 The Quran warns not to divide the religion however Muslims have been splitting into hundreds of sects and factions. Every group believes that they lead the way to salvation. These sects have been formed in first place to gain mastery and get benefits.

 The sects are perceived like religion. Through more than 14 centuries of the history of Islam there have been hundreds of instances of sectarian violence in such places as Syria, Iraq, Bahrain, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hundreds of people have experienced violence and death only for belonging to different sects that perceive their own beliefs to be like a religion. If Muslims kill each other despite the teachings of the Quran this has to be called ignorance.

 Learning Islam from sects or factions instead of from the Quran and Hz. Prophet examples is a serious predicament. It is a natural result that a religious interpretation stays under the shadow of the tradition and this tradition becomes the religion. The worst result is the religion begins to split instead of unite.

 They are spending their energy going at one another tooth and nail. Muslims could have expended their energy for the purpose of creating a wonderful civilisation. But thousands of people have lost their lives for no reason. A magnifical cultural heritage has disappeared because of the fanaticism of sects. The same danger still exists today. Any kind of sect, tariqa or faction can not identify with Islam. »

 In order to get accurate religious knowledge, the rope of the God has to be held fast and the content of the Quran has to be learned. Muhammad 47/24: «*Do they not then reflect on the Quran?*... » Jathiyah 45/19,20: «*God is the Patron of the righteous (who have taqwa). This Quran is an enlightenment for the people, and eye-opener*....» In the sight of God the most worthy one who has taqwa, knows the divine laws and performs them precisely.

## TEACHING ABOUT THE QUR'AN IN SCHOOLS (As an optional subject)

 The Quran warns! Ali İmran 3/103-105: *«* *Hold fast the Rope of God (The Quran) all together...Do not be like those who split into factions and differed among themselves: a terrible punishment awaits such people.**»* After the Prophet departed from life, the 4 khalifets, hundreds of small sects, tariqas, and congregations developed over time. Their effect was to disrupt, rather than contribute to, unity and integrity in Islam. However, the Quran has to be the main and reliable source for reaching the truth. Man has to turn to the Quran to find out the truth.

All students, from primary to high school, could have the chance to learn the content of the Quran if it is made available as an optional subject. There are many renowned theological experts in our society. Books can be prepared, appropriate to age and learning capacity, to facilitate the job of the teachers. So with the guidance of the Lord a new faithful, wise and diligent generation will emerge.

## DO THEY NOT THEN REFLECT ON THE QURAN? (Muhammad 47/24)

God Almighty describes the divine design and provides answers through revelations. The first verse revealed began with the word 'READ!' With this verse God drew attention to the importance of acquiring religious knowledge. Therefore man's first duty is to read and acquire the knowledge and wisdom. The Quran provides answers for many questions such as: What are our functions and duties? Is there a hereafter? Is death the end of man? So man will be able to learn many answers through the Book and will have knowledge about the universe and the Creator through His own words.

(Read) Recite! in the name of your Lord who created man from a clinging substance. Recite! Your Lord is the most generous who taught by the pen. (Alak 96/1-5)

Recite the Qur'an slowly and distinctly !(Muzammil 73/4)

This Quran is an enlightenment for the people, and eye-opener. (Jadhiyah 45/20)

The main reason that some Muslim societies have fallen behind in their evolution is that **they haven't carried out the first commandment of the Quran which is "Read".** The result is that they have not acquired knowledge.

Reading and listening to the divine laws in Arabic is delightful; however, for those who don't know Arabic, reading its translated versions and acquiring the meaning of those verses are transcends other pleasures and is of utmost importance.

## WHAT DOES GOD ALMIGHTY EXPECT FROM MANKIND?

Our Lord would like to see His servants believe in Him and to perform righteous acts. In other words, to have taqwa, to strive to be virtuous and love for human kind.

**1)** Being one of those who have taqwa!Hujurat 49/13: *« the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him. »* Taqwa; meaning protection**,** forbearance, andfear. One who has taqwa dutifully obeys His commands and abstains from the forbidden. To attain the attributes of taqwa in the sight of Quran there are ten basic precepts.: 1) Infaq (benevolence), 2) Salat ( the ritual prayer, 3) Zakat, 4) Forgiveness and Appeal for Mercy, 5) Patience, 6) Fasting, 7) Beneficence, 8) Keeping One's word, 9) Justice and Honesty, 10) Knowledge.Regarding worship, the Quran states: Dhariyat 51/56: *«… I only created jinn and mankind to worship Me.…»*

2) Strive to be virtuous!Najm 53/39-41: **«Certainly that man gets nothing but what he strives for, and very soon his effort is going to be seen. Then he will receive for it the fullest reward.** *»*

**They who have believed and done righteous deeds- those are the best of creatures.**  **(**Bayyinah 98/7)

**Keep working, do your deeds**...( Taubah 9/105)

Man is expected to work hard and generate meritorious valor led by science and technology.

God Almighty commanded to His Prophet about work: Inşirah 94/7: *« (Prophet) when you are free from one task, embark upon the next task, still labor hard. »*

3) Love human beings!Ali İmran 3/119: *«****«*** *O believers! You are the ones who love them, although the unbelievers don't love you... »* The believers love all mankind regardless whether they are friend or enemy. All human beings, animals, plants and whatever is created must be loved by reason of the fact the Almighty Creator. As mystical

great poet Yunus Emre said: *«I love the creatures, due to the Creator.»*

**You will surely be questioned about what you did. (Nahl 16/93)**

We, the guests of the all merciful Creator on earth, are being tested about all the acts we have performed throughout our lives. Zalzalah 99/7-8: *«* *So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good deeds will see the good result of it, and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see the result of it.. »*

For those who rebelled and preferred the lowly life then Hell will be the abode. (Naziat 79/37-39)

For those who do good there is goodness... They are the companions of Paradise.(Yunus 10/26)

## A PERFECT GENERATION WILL BE GROWN BY TEACHING THEM THE QURAN

Young students who suppose that they owe their existence in this world to their parents, discover the creative power for their actual Creator through the Quran. Lokman 31/14: *«…Be grateful to Me first and then to your parents; all will return to Me*. *»* As the servantdiscovers that he has been created by his Lord, he attaches to Him with all gratitude and appreciation. Hujurat 49/7: «…*But God made you love faith and He adorned it in your hearts …»* As the feeling of appreciation of the young one increases day by day, it **ignites the light of faith** in his heart. The faith is made firm by a reciprocal action inspired by Almighty God.

...Whoever believes in God, He guides its heart to the truth. (Taghabun 64/11)

...Surely God will guide those who have faith towards a Straight Road . (Hac 22/54)

Yunus 10/100: *«No soul can ever believe except with God's permission…»* The servant begins a successful and blissful life by attaining the apporval of his Lord. **By the guidance of his Lord**, the young student grows up **diligent, insightful, honest and warm hearted**. As a result of his good deeds, producing value, and being a respected citizen after his educational life, he will enter Paradise in the next world by the grace of God. **And** **whoever turns himself away from God and ignores living requirements of the Quran he will become an intimate companion of the devil. They will never find the right path.** (Zukhruf 36-37). This is why the content of the Quran has to be taught in all primary, secondary and high schools as an optional subject.

# CLEAR REVELATION OF DECISIVE VERSES

It is God who has revealed the Book to you in which some verses are CRYSTAL CLEAR statements. These are the essence of the Book, while others are allegorical (open to interpretation). Those whose hearts are perverse, follow the unclear statements in pursuit of their own mischievous goals by interpreting them in a way that will suit their own purpose. And no one knows its true interpretation except God. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in the Book. The whole of it is from our Lord:" ...»(Ali İmran3/7)

 Muhkam is an Arabic word meaning decisive. Mutashabih is another Arabic word meaning allegorical. The meaning of the decisive verses is crystal clear and they are fundamentals of the Quran. On the other hand the real meaning of the allegorical verses is not known by the most of the people.

 Even though there is no clear indication which verses are the decisive ones, Islam scholars maintain that those pertaining to faith and pious deeds, permissible and forbidden acts and the histories of the past nations must be the fundamental ones. There are some decisive verses that, while not completely understandable in the beginning, become fully transparent in the next parts of the Quran. Hud 11/1*: «…The Quran whose verses are made decisive, perfectly constructed , and then fully explained in detail. ˹It is˺ from the God who is All-Wise…»*  So, the Holy Book has to be read and analysed carefully.

 Opinions about Mutashabib (allegorical) verses relate to the following: 1) The time of Doomsday, 2) Certain characters such as Elif lâm mîm, 3) Verses of similar meaning, 4) Verses which are open to different interpretations, 5) Some words of ambiguous meaning, 6) Complex legal issues.

 The Holy Quran is the perpetual guide to believers until Doomsday. Over time, as the science of astronomy has progressed in the present age, allegorical verses are clarified. One of these was the discovery almost forty years ago that the sun moves in an orbit. Yasin 36/38: *«And The sun moves in its orbit. This is the dispensation of the mighty, all-knowing (God).»*  The Quran stated this scientific truth centuries ago however this was an allegorical verse until this discovery transformed the allegorical verse into a fundamentally decisive verse. There are more examples in the Quran that some allegorical verses have become basic fundamental verses.

 The Quran states that the allegorical verses need to be re-interpreted in line with the spirit of the messages of the fundamental verses and in the light of scientific developments.

**THE QURAN WAS SENT TO ALL MANKIND**

The Holy Quran was sent for the salvation and bliss of all mankind not only for people who live in Saudi Arabia. Saba 34/28 : *«... (O Prophet), We have sent you to mankind, to give them good news and forewarn them …»* The Quran was revealed in Arabic and the fundamental decisive verses were clearly stated. However, The process of learning Arabic is too long and difficult to allow most people to be able to read the Quran in its original language. People who live in non-Arabic countries of the world must follow Islam by reading the decisive verses of the Quran and the sunnah of the Prophet (habits and practices) in translation. Baqarah 2/185 : *«...* *God wants ease for you and does not want any hardship for you … »* The salvation of man lies in learning and living by the divine laws. Nisa 4/175: *«God will surely admit those who believe in Him and hold fast to Him to His mercy and bounty, and will guide them on to a straight way. »*

# JIHAD IN THE QURAN - WAR IN THE QURAN

 **JIHAD IN THE QURAN.** Jihad literally means striving with force. In the Quran jihad is striving forcefully in the path of God committing possessions and the self. This word doesn't mean "war", or "killing". In Arabic there are different words meaning war (kital, harb). The Prophet didn't command Muslims to make war against heathens or hypocrites and he didn't command Muslims to killing them either. Instead of this he strived to introduce and expand Islam by putting forth superhuman effort.*…* *There is no compulsion in religion…»* Baqarah 2/256

 O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell. (Taubah9/73)

 Do not yield to the disbelievers, but strive diligently against them with this ˹Quran˺.(Furqan 25/52)

 Those who have believed, and have emigrated, and have striven in the way of God with their wealth and their lives are greater in rank in the sight of God … (Taubah 9/20)

 Today the concept of Jihad is misused in the name of God. This tyranny initiated by the Omayyads, has played a crucial role throughout history through passion for power based on a wrong interpretation of the Quran. This has caused fragmentation among Muslims and today fanaticism for achieving supremacy has extended to other nations. This has been the wellspring in the exploitation of this misinterpretation the world over and innocent people are being killed, Islam has suffered harm.

 WAR IN THE QURAN

 In Islam war is permitted only if it becomes imperative and indispensable for defense against invasion. Unjust war or killing is forbidden. During the first years of the propagation of Islam, the Meccan heathens tortured the poor Muslim people, and forced this minority into the status of slaves and bondmaids. The Muslims who had to immigrate towards Afghanistan and Madinah were able to preserve their lives. Muhammad had to take refuge in Madinah too after the heathens failed in their attempt to kill him. War had become imperative and justifiable, as permission from God had been granted for the Muslims to defends themselves, according to this verse:

 Indeed, God defends those who believe. Surely God does not like whoever is deceitful, ungrateful. Permission to fight back has been granted to those who are attacked because they have suffered injustice. Certainly God has power to grant them victory. Those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of their rights, for no reason except that they say, " Our Lord is God." Verily, God will support those who support Him (through striving hard in His Cause). Truly God is All-Strong, All-Mighty. (Hajj 22/38-40)

 Meccan heathens sent a strong army to destroy emigrees in Madinah in 624. A small Muslim force faced the enemy which was better equipped in weaponry and superior in numbers. Despite this the Muslims achieved a victory in Badr, with the help of God, leaving many bodies, including Meccan commanders, and taking many others as prisioners. Anfal 8/17: *«… You did not kill them; it was God who killed them. You did not throw what you threw, it was God who threw. He did this as a favorable test for the believers. God is All-hearing and All-knowing. …»*

 …Kill them (in defence) if they attack you to kill …(Baqarah 2/191)

 Fight in the way of God with those who fight against you but do not exceed the limits. God doesn't like those who exceed the limits. (Baqarah 2/190)

 The Quran states the divine law about unjust killing as follows:

 ...Whoever kills a person who has not committed murder, or who has not committed corruption in the land; then it is as if he has killed all the people! And whoever saves a life, then it is as if he has given life to all the people. … (Maidah 5/32)

LOVE IN THE QURAN

**Love**, the primary reason for creation, is one of the principal notions of the Quran. it is an unprecedented feeling that the Almighty Creator reflects on His creatures from His Mercy and Grace. God Almighty, the origin of beauty and love, created the universe based on love and bestowed it on man as his most powerful feature. We can see illustrations of love in the behavior of mothers who fight to protect their children from a powerful aggressor just as a female animal will fight wild beasts to protect her young.

The Quran states that the relation between God Almighty and Man lies on the root of love.. Maidah 5/54 : *«…* *God loves as they love Him…»* This verse emphasizes the love between God and the servant. Reaching divine love is principally based on an unprejudiced feeling, quite removed from all expected benefits and dread. Bakara 2/165 : *«Yet there are some amongst mankind who take to themselves (for worship) peers other than God; they love them as they should love God. But those who have faith are overflowing with love for God..»* Believers may love all those things in line with the divine laws however love for God has to be above all other kinds of love. Those who have maturity have love for the Supreme Being above all.

**Faith and worship** are in fact an exchange of love between man and the Creator. Faith in God begins following the kindling of the fire of love in the heart of man. Hujurat 49/7 : *« God has endeared the Faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts …»* God responds the prayers of His servants by making real their wishes. Baqarah 2/152 : *«So Remember Me, and I will remember you.»*

 In the Quran the term for love is expressed as mercy (rahma) . This is an essential feature and attitude of God. Anam 6/54 : *« …your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself… »* and Araf 7/156 : *«…and My mercy encompasses everything. »*

The words rahma and rahman are derived from rahmat containing meanings such as beneficence, love and mercy extended by the Supreme Being. Almighty Creator's infinite love encompasses, and puts under His protection, the entire creation without discrimination between men-beasts, angel-evil, friend and foe. Indeed does not the creation rest upon the root of love?

 Who are those that**God favors**and who are those **that** displease Him? The Quran explains extensively the features that God expects in mankind.

####

#### Those that God favours :

Ali Imran 3/76 :**...God loves those who have taqwa.**

Ali Imran 3/76 :…God loves those who act righteously.

Maryam 19/96 :…The Lord of Mercy will bestow his love on those who believe and perform righteous deeds.

Baqarah 2/222:...God loves the repentant .

Ali Imran 3/146:…Surely God loves those who are patient.

Ali İmran 3/159:…God loves those who trust Him.

Hujurat 49/9 :… Surely God loves those who are fair (and just).

Baqarah 2/222:… God loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.

Those that displeases God:

Ali İmran 3/57 :**…God does not love wrongdoers.**

Ali İmran 3/32 :**…God does not love unbelievers.**

Maidah 5/64 :**…God does not love corruptors.**

Nahl 16/23 :**…Surely God does not love arrogants.**

Nisa 4/36 :**…God does not love the proud and the boastful;**

Anfal 8/58 :**…God does not love traitors.**

Anam 6/141 :**…God does not love extravagants.**

HUMAN LOVE

**Love**is a unique feeling that one experiences for someone or something. Love attained after overcoming trials and tribulations becomes the reason for endless felicitousness. Without love there can't be any sacrifice, neither any effort for creating work. A man brimming with love may feel an illusionary love for the world's ephemeral gifts. Created things deserve to be loved because they portray their Creator. As mystical poet Yunus Emre said : *« We love the creatures, due to the Creator.»* However, those who are contented with the level of only feeling love toward others will never experience the sublime feeling for the Creator of the world.

God expects that the feeling of love, his divine gift for man, is formed in His servants in keeping with His revelation. God told man what he should love through the Books. Man without guidance of the Quran can't know how he should demonstrate love. Baqarah 2/216 : *«* *Perhaps you may love something while it is bad for you, perhaps you may hate something while it is good for you,; God knows while you do not know*. *»* The feeling of love should be imagined as a path leading to Heaven by attentively climbing the steps of the ladder. This applies not only human beings but also to all that God has created. Man must give his love first of all to all believers, then animals, plants and whatever is created. The priority shall be given to parents. The love we have in our heart for the Prophet is the sign of being mature. However the ultimate true love is for God.

Human love in the light of the Quran consists of negative love as God's displeasure and Positive Love as God's pleasure. The utmost love is for the Prophet however the ultimate one is for God.

## NEGATIVE LOVE

**Negative Love**: feeling a passion for things that lie outside the realm of love objects identified in the Quran. Depredatory desires that deify human beings and inanimate things, addiction to worldly assets, lust for fame and status are among these inclinations of negative love. These feelings hinder man's development towards maturity leading him to be punished at the end of the day.

**Infatuation with Animate and Inanimate Idols**. Baqarah 2/165 : *«Yet there are some amongst mankind who take to themselves (for worship) peers other than God; they love them as they should love God..»* There are people who lavish affection upon animate and inanimate idols instead of obeying the divine laws. They worship prophets or saints or angels or jinns, and they visit tombs hoping the spirits of departed will bring some benefits to them. They make some sacrifices and make some religious ceremonies for them. This is a heathen practice, a capital sin and a blasphemy. This pointless infatuation with animate and inanimate idols darken the souls and makes people slaves to the Devil. Thus they fail the test in this world.

Passion for the worldly assets. Fajr 89/20 : *« you love wealth exceedingly*.*.»* Worldy assets are needed however they deserve only moderate relish. If people dote on goods and wealth focusing on accumulation of possesions, it means they have been captured by their nafs (ego, self). In fact this is a kind of deification. Instead of this, to share the assests surplus to their needs in good works on the path towards God, to give zakat and perform acts of charity are duties of the servants foreseen by God. Such possessions will not prevail in the afterlife.

Submission to unfavourable love of the self . Yusuf 12/30 : *«* *And women in the city said: “The wife of Al-Aziz is seeking to seduce her young captive, indeed she has fallen in love madly with him. We think she has clearly gone astray!.”»* Submitting oneself to this kind of temptation may consume a man leading him to do all kinds of mad things and bringing him to disaster. The absolute way to free oneself from such passion is to take refuge in the Almighty Creator.

Excessive Love for Worldly Goods. İnsan 76/27 : *«* *They love the fleeting life (the present, worldly life) and put behind them a Heavy Day. »* They yield their unending desires of their nafs. Jathiyah 45/23 : *«Have you seen him who has taken his own desire as his god?...»*. Deriving pleasure from fleeting worldy goods was made possible in order to ensure the perpetuation of life on earth consistent with divine design. However to indulge in lust, to let oneself show excessive love for one's children, to dote on wealth or to have passion for material assets like automobiles, to indulge in the pleasures of the feast, to be extremely ambitious for fame and positions, to let oneself to be carried by human weaknesses to the point of idolizing attributes to them status equivalent to God Almighty. And this is an inexcusable capital sin.

 Ali İmran 3/14 : *« Worldly desires, wives, children, accumulated treasures of gold and silver, horses of noble breed, cattle, and farms are all made to seem attractive to men.  All these are the bounties of the worldly life but God has the best place for people to dwell...»*

## POSITIVE LOVE

 **Positive love** consists of sentiments that please God. Love for faith, love for human beings, love for one's spouse, and especially love for one's parents. All these are among the features of maturity that are encountered as successive rungs on ladder leading towards maturity. Love of the Prophet is the explicit sign of a mature soul. Ali İmran 3/31 : *«(O Muhammad!) Tell people: 'If you love God then follow me, so God will love you and will forgive your sins..»*

 The servant who has experienced the preparatory phase will reach the level of perfection, the love for God, through **pious acts** and works that he has performed sincerely based on love. This is the ultimate **divine level** on the earth.

 Share with others the things you love most. Ali İmran 3/92 : *«You will never attain righteousness and happiness unless you spend from what you love»*

 The most commendable act for attaining God's favor is sharing one's most cherished goods, both material and immaterial, knowledge and spiritual values with those who are in need of them. This act requires self-sacrifice. Through these acts one's soul is purified and sublimated in the sight of God.

 Love of faith***.*** *Hujurat 49/7 : «… God has endeared to you the faith and has made it pleasing in your hearts.»* Love, the unique sentiment that has been given to mankind by God is beyond the mind, an irrational phenomenon. On the other hand faith is believing in God. God has caused His servants to find joy in the faith in their hearts and they believe in God sincerely. To believe in God only with the mind is not enough, the servant must love God with the heart also. In that case religion is an affair of pure love and the highest point, the purest form of the love, is the servant's love for his Almighty Creator.

 Love for human beings. Ali İmran 3/119 : *«O believers! You are the ones who love them, while they don't love you.»* The explicit characteristic of believers is a heart which is replete with love. Their hearts are soft and they always display goodness and beauty. They love all human being regardless of whether the others are believers or not, friend or foe. Even though the unbelievers don't love them, believers love them because of the Creator. Love for human beings, animals, plants and all createion is required because they symbolize the Creator. The great mystic poet Yunus Emre said: : *« I love the creatures, due to the Creator.»* The believer does not have the feeling of vengeance toward enemies even though they have maltreated him, he behaves with forbearance. Love between human beings is absolutely necessary for their maturation into perfection. This love is a step toward divine love which is the ultimate level.

 Love for one's Spouse. Rum 30/21 : *«…He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion …»* God has created every living creature and everthing in pairs. Human beings have also been created according to this rule and God has instilled the miraculous feeling of love between spouses. The believers must pray to God that he willl select spouses for them who will make them happy. Furqan 25/74 : *«…Our Lord! Bless us spouses who will be the joy of our hearts”»*

Sexual love between spouses is absolutely necessary for the perpetuation of life, contributes to attainment of maturity, and represents an intermediate phase between human and the divine loves. The sexual union between spouses links them to life. Spouses gain maturity by learning to make sacrifices for each other. That is why God Almighty has prohibited **adultery**. İsra 17/32 : *«Do not commit adultery! It is indeed an abomination and an evil path..»* Venereal diseases and particularly AIDS are punishments brought upon people by adultery.

 Marriage and sexual love are necessary for the maturation of human beings and also for the propogation of future generations. Those who fail to fulfil this are unable to engage in all the experinces requiered in this world. All the prophets experienced matrimony as an experience in preparation for divine love.

 Love for parents and children. İsra 17/23-24 : *«* *Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and always be kind to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age (while) with you, do not say to them a word of disrespect, nor scold them, but say to them kind words.  Treat them with humility and tenderness and say " My Lord, Have compassion and love on them both for they did take care of me and raised me up when I was a little child*.*.”»* God commands man to love and respect his parents, just secondary to prayer to Him. Reverence and serving them must be unconditional and with deep love and without waiting for any reward or compensation. Love for parents is the highest step in the ladder reaching to divine love. Compassion for them in fact is equal to love for God. In the verse a relationship has been emphasized between the old age of the parents and our state of childhood. We love our children sincerely and without waiting anything in return. The love for our parents has to be the same kind of love, given sincerely and without waiting for anything in return.

 A mother has a supreme status because of loving and devoting herself her children. She experiences the difficulties of bearing her child in her womb. And, after she brings her child into the world, she nourishes it without expecting any consideration in return and loves her child sincerely.

 Believers must pray and take refuge in God's mercy to bestow upon them children that will be respectful, hardworking, honest and righteous in performing deeds. Furqan 25/74 : *«* Furqan 25/74 : *«And those who pray " Our Lord, bestow on us children who pleases our eyes”»*

## LOVE OF THE LAST PROPHET

 God Almighty states in the Quran regarding Hz.Muhammad:

 Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; Your suffering distresses him: he is deeply concerned for your welfare and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers. (Taubah 9/128)

 The Prophet is closer to the believers than they are to themselves. (Ahâb 33/6)

 Holy Muhammad was sent to mankind as a mercy. He empathized with he suffering of men, he couldn't bear to see their sadness because he loved them heartily. He desired that they reform their ways and follow the path traced by God. Towards believers he was kinder (Ra'uf) and more merciful (Rahiym). Ra'uf and Rahiym are epithets used only for the Last Prophet by God amongst the Prophets. We must love our eminent Prophet, who was full of clemency and mercy, more than we love anything, including ourselves. To love the Prophet is, in a sense, to have reached a level of maturity and divine love.

 Prophets are perfect men selected from among the generations and endowed with characteristics possessed by no other human being.

 Indeed, God chose Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of Imran above mankind. They were descendants one of another. … (Ali İmran 3/33-34)

 Our Lord, as a law of creation, predestined some people to be prophets and endowed them with outstanding characteristics denied to other human beings. God first created Adam out of clay and sent Adam and Eve to the earth to reproduce. Then Noah, then Abraham and then many descendant of Abraham, including Muhammad, were assigned as prophets. Muhammad, who is the last of the line of prophets, was a symbol of perfection who attained maturity. Thats why God assigned him to deliver His messages to mankind through the Quran, the excellent one amongs the other Holy Books, which will never be changed or destroyed.

 Prophets are endowed with special characteristics and are the most worthy servants in the sight of God however they are not deities. Being humans they may make mistakes. Kasas 28/56 : *« O Prophet! You can not guide whoever you wish: but God guides anyone He wants, indeed He knows those who would accept guidance..»* The mission of the Prophets is only deliver the divine messages. Jinn 72/23 : *«My mission is only to deliver what I receive from God and make His messages known. »*

Indeed, God and His angels bless the Prophet, so, believers, Send your blessings on him (Muhammad), greet him with greetings and give yourselves to his way with perfect submission. (Ahzâb 33/56)

Salat; primarily meaning prayer, additionally and simultaneously is a blessing exended to our Prophet for loyalty and gladness. God and His angels bless the Prophet and command the believers to also send their blessings and greetings upon the Prophet. The blessing for the Prophet can be made as follows: "*O God! Send blessings upon Muhammad and His family*" Every daily prayer includes this pray.

Indeed you (O Muhammad) are of a high moral character. (Qalam 68/4)

Muhammad spent his life facing countless tribulations and making sacrifices. However, in respecting that unbelievers also face all sorts of oppression, he was a symbol of interminable patience. He distributed all his belongings among the needy and didn't leave any material legacy, his closest ones had financial difficulties after his departure from life.

Some disbelievers criticized the Prophet over his plurality of wives. Muhammad was twenty-five years old when he married Khadija, his first wife, who was a widow with two children. He lived happily for twenty-five years with this exaltad woman who spent all her goods for the expansion of Islam. They had six children. Since he had been given the mission of spreading Islam, after losing Khadija, he entered other marriages . All his life he had been an example with his morals, virtue and his sacrifices.God Almighty states His compliment for him with this verse also: *« Indeed you (O Muhammad) are of a high moral character.»*

O Prophet! We sent you as a mercy for humankind. (Anbiya 21/107)

*My mercy encompasses all things.* (Araf 7/156) The messenger of the last holy book had been sent to the entire universe, not to a particular community, as a mercy for the happines of mankind. Saba 34/28 : *«O Prophet, We sent you to mankind, to give them good news and forewarn them.»*

Say (O Muhammad): “If you ˹sincerely˺ love God, then follow me; So God will love you and forgive your sins**...(**Al-Imran 3/31)

To pattern ourselves on our Prophet, to emulate his worship, his morals, his relationships with others as much as we can, follow his footsteps to enable us to reach divine love. The ultimate extent of our reach is the possibility to imitate the Prophet as he is the living the Quran. Ahzab 33/21: *«The Messenger of God is an excellent model for anyone who puts his hope in God and the Last Day, and remembers God often..»* To follow the Prophet, contribute to purification of the nafs, gain divine attributes and, finally, reach maturity to attain divine love of the merciful and blessed God.

## ****LOVE FOR GOD****

Some verses from the Quran about this highly important topic:

… Those who believe are more ardent in their love of God… (Baqarah 2/165)

… Those who love Him and are loved by Him… (Maidah 5/54)

…"Our Lord, You are the Most Compassionate, Merciful-to-all!" (Hashr 59/10)

Your real ally is God!...(Maide 5/55)

According to the one of the hadiths, God revealed: " *I was a hidden treasure, I desired to be known, so I created the universe* " Love is the motive for creation. Love is the symbol of the mystery and one of the characteristics of God. It is love and not dread or self-interest that leads one to God. God is the true friend of man and indeed He created man as a khalifa. As a matter of the creation fact, love for created things such as the opposite sex, children, and wealth is normal. However this kind of love is considered as the preparatory stage along the path to divine love. The true love is love for the Almighty Creator. The Quran says: *“*… *Those who believe are more ardent in their love of God.”* The believers love their Creator effusively. Love for the human being is a sign that one has the capacity to scale the ladder of faith. *“Those who love Him and are loved by Him”* . This verse points out that love is the essence of the relationship between God and his servant. Love human beings, spouse, parents and children are steps on the ladder to maturity. Love for the prophet is the ultimate step and love for God is the peak.

The servant who reaches maturity begins to yearn for the entity from whom he had separated. As the nafs (self) purifies and sublimates through divine attributes, the servant begins to perceive the mystery of eternity. This is a process which has various stages consists of dual poles. On the one hand there is Almighty God who is the source of love and beauty and, on the other hand, there is the servant who has reached to the maturity with his luminous heart. Two poles converge towards each other but God is the first one to transmit His love. Shura 42/13 : *«…* *God chooses for Himself whoever He wills...»* Eventually the mystical union is realized whereby the servant achieves oneness out of plurality.

Without feeling love for human beings and all creation the servant can't experience divine love. Mankind and all creatures constitute the limitless attributes of God. Every created one owes its being to a cause derived from God's wisdom. Man occupies the pinnacle of all reasons for the creation mystery. Our Lord projected His sublime characteristics to man so in other words, man is considered as the mirror of the Creator. Love should be the essential element among human beings. Love is the divine guide that leads the part (man) to the whole (God).

Love should be directed toward all of creation not only toward human beings because all created things reflect the image of God. Beginning with believers, all mankind, animals, plants as well as the creatures of whose existence we are aware and unaware must be loved. The great mystical poet expressed this realitiy following: "*We love the creatures, due to the Creator"*

**One can't reach divine love without loving faith.** God has endowed man with the capacity to have insight into Him. Faith is the state that the servants wholeheartedly embrace in believing in the existence, power, and benevolence of God. Hujurat 49/7 : *«… God has endeared the Faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts*" Religion is a love affair between two poles ,the Almighty Creator and man. Baqarah 2:152 : *«… So you remember me and I will remember you... »* God Almighty, the source of love, answers the prays of His servants rapidly, turning their wish into reality immediately. However, as man is left free to choose between belief and unbelief, some partion of humanity has chosen unbelief under the influence of their nafs and satan. Yusuf 12/103 : *«… most of the people are not going to be believers.»*

The path to God Almighty goes through faith. Faith begins with a spark in one's heart and expands until becoming divine love. Man sublimates as long as he loves faith. Anfal 8/2 : *«* *The true believers are only those whose hearts tremble with awe when God is mentioned, whose faith increases when His revelations are recited to them.»*  The Quran states: Fath 48/4 : *«* *God sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers, so that they add belief to their belief…»* The peak of loving the faith is the point where man attains divine love. Baqarah 2/165: *«… Those who believe are more ardent in their love of God…»* Attaining divine beauty can be possible through the heart, elevating love for the faith beyond the limits of the mind and knowledge.

One can't reach divine love without loving Prophet. Almighty God stipulated that one's love for the Prophet preceeds attainment of divine love. God endowed the Prophet with special attributes and revealed the Quran through him. That the Prophet is the living Quran and the mirror of God has beautiful examples: Ahzab 33/21 : *«* *You indeed have in the messenger of God, an excellent example of conduct, for anyone whose hope is in God and the Last Day, and who engages much in the praise of God...»* One whose faith is deepest and unshakeable is the one who imitates him best. The servant becomes mature when his love for the Prophet becomes dominant. To love God is possible by loving and following His perfect image. Ali İmran 3/31 : *«Say (O Prophet)! : If you love God then follow me so God will love you and forgive your sins...»*

**One can't attain divine love without reaching maturity**. Love for God becomes possible after lifting the curtain of nafs that stands between the Creator and the Created. It is expected that we must abandon the evil attributes of nafs as well as embrace the divine attributes through our patience and effort before reaching the higher grades of love. This becomes possible by pious performance of taqwa in our lives. Ridding ourselves gradually from nafs such as the glamour of the fleeting world of gifts, allows us to assume certain features like love, infaq, regular prayer, repentance, patience, benevolence and knowledge. One becomes conscious of the fact that only love and reliance for the Absolute Being is essential; that love for the created is only a step towards divine love. According to one of the hadiths as follows: « *No space can encompasse me but the heart of my servant*.» The nafs wane and even disappear, in direct proportion to the love ignited in the believer's heart for God. The Prophet said: “*Die before you die*". It is considered that understanding this mystery will bring about waning of the evil attributes of nafs and lead to embracing divine attributes. Then, the servant reaches the summit of the stage in the world, according God's will. Fajr 89/27-30: « O soul at peace! Return to your Lord well-pleased and pleasing (to Him). Enter among My ( righteous) servants, enter My Paradise.»

O young men! There is a POWER that loves and protects us more than our parents, spouses and children: He is called GOD ALMIGHTY. We take refuge in Him because of our biggest difficulties. We should understand and implement the Qur'an in our lives as a guide so that we may be blessed by God both in the world and and in the next life.

THE NEXT WORLD

 **The next world** begins with death and continues eternally**.** Belief in the next world means that one will be accountable for his acts in this world. Death is not the extinction of a perfect entity who has the khalifat grade in the world, it is a process of metamorphosis. Almighty God clarified the next world with many verses:

 **…** **Indeed, Resurrection is a promise binding upon Him; but most of mankind do not know**.(Nahl 16/38)

 **Do you think that We have created you without purpose  and that you would never return to Us?** (Muminun 23 /115)

 **…** **Who is more trustworthy with His word than God?** (Taubah 9/111)

 The next world will be better than the short worldly life. Worshipping God and developing the soul as a divine mystery will be continued. The next world basically includes **beyond the grave**, and after the **Doomsday**

1-BEYOND THE GRAVE

 **Beyond the grave**; The state beyond the grave is a sort of sleep until Doomsday in another physical form in the presence of God. As there will be no concept of time, the souls will percieve that they have spent only a short time in this stage. İsra 17/52 : *« It will be the day when He calls you, and you respond by praising Him and think you have been there only a short time*." *»* There will be both punishment and reward and continued development of the soul as preparation for the state after the Doomsday. The Holy Quran does not give the details about this intermediate state.

**END OF LIFE ON EARTH**

 **Every soul will taste death. We test you all through the bad and the good, and you will be returned to Us.** (Anbiya 21/35)

 **It is not permitted for a soul to die except by the permission of God in an appointed record..** (Ali İmran 3/145)

 Death is a destiny predetermined by Our Lord for the mankind and all other living creatures. As part of the mystery of God, some of us have been given longer life while some have been given shorter. Fatr 35/11 : *«…*  *No living thing has his life extended in years, or its life is shortened, but it is written in a divine book..»*

**COME BACK TO GOD**

 Death is the severance of soul from body through the angel of death. The body is buried. The flesh of the mortal body decomposes and vanishes in the ground. Man's immortal soul departs from the world towards God through the angel in charge. The Quran tells us this as following:

 **Your soul will be taken by the Angel of Death, who is in charge of you . Then you will be returned to your Lord.** (Sajdah 32/11)

 **The death you are running away from will inevitably come to you. Then you will be returned to God, and He will inform you of what you used to do.** (Jumuah 62/8)

 God informs man about the evil acts and good deeds of his life in the world. Those who didn't perform the divine laws in their worldly life will not be have a chance to return to the world to perform good deeds. It will be too late. Muminun 23/99-100 : *«* *When death comes to one of them, he says, "My Lord, send me back so that I may do good works in the world I have left behind*. *Never! It is only a ˹useless˺ appeal they make. And there is a barrier behind them until the Day they are resurrected..” »*

**THE STATE BEYOND THE GRAVE**

 The state beyond the grave is a sort of sleep. As in their earthly state people are alive while sleeping, this state of being alive will continue in the next phase. But this stage is not a passive waiting phase since, indeed, the development of the soul will continue. It is a preparatory phase before reaching the superior phases. The dreams that will be dreamt there will correspond to the facts of life. Nightmares may be interpreted as torment. Blissful dreams may be interpretated as reward. Certainly God knows the real truth.

 As there will be no concept of time so, even though the souls stay there for millions of years, they will perceive it to be very brief.

 **God will ask them, "How many years did you remain on earth?"** **They will reply, “We remained ˹only˺ a day or part of a day. Ask those who keep account.” God will say: “You indeed remained there for a short time, if you only knew that.”**(Müminun 23/112-114)

 The souls who live in another dimension on the presence of God will stay there till Doomsday. As the phase beyond grave is a sort of sleep and the souls are under the supervision of God, they can't return to the earth again. So those who believe that they talk with the souls deceive people who believe in them.

 So, the state beyond the grave will be continued till Doomsday when the souls will wake up and unite with their new bodies after God calls out them. Naziat 79/13-14: *«*  *it will be only a single shout. And they will be awake and above ground..»*

**PUNISHMENT AND REWARD BEYOND THE GRAVE**

 Beyond the grave there will be both punishment and reward. Man will be punished or rewarded depending on his acts in the world. Those who have performed evil acts will suffer in fire. On the other hand those who have attained God's favor will be rewarded.

 **We will punish the unjust.  Then he will return to his Lord who will punish him with a terrible punishment.** (Kahf 18/87)

 **They are exposed to the fire morning and afternoon, and on the Day when the Hour will come, it will be commanded: "People of the Pharaoh, suffer the most severe torment."** (Mümin 40/46).

 The fire may not be the fire that we know, it may be an energy, something like radiation or microwave which will torment the soul. God Almighty knows the real truth. As the verse states, Pharaoh and who follows him will suffer severly till Doomsday. In this dimension there will be torment or reward based on their acts in the world.

 **O peaceful and satisfied soul! Return to your Lord well-pleased and pleasing (Him). And enter among My (rightous) servants, enter My Paradise.** Fajr 89/27-30).

 In the verse above it is expressed that such men who are about to die already deserved Paradise. He is subject to the invitation of God to return to his Creator pleased and pleasing. The servant who performs the divine laws sincerely is favored by God and finally will be returned to his Creator. The soul attains eternal bliss and begins life in the intermediate phase pending acceptance ino Paradise. The Quran does not reveal details about this stage however it is believed that the soul will remain in paradise forever with a new body.

**DOOMSDAY (QIYAMAH)**

 The Quran gives some descriptions about Doomsday. According to the Quran not only the earth but also the whole stellar system will be destroyed first and then will undergo a transformation. Resurrection will be realised and all creatures will come into God's presence for judgement.

 When will doomsday take place? Only the Almighty Creator knows the answer to this question. Araf 7/187 : *«* *They ask you about the hour, when will be its taking place? Say: The knowledge of it is only with my Lord. No one can reveal it except He. Heavy will be its burden through the heavens and the earth. All of a sudden it will come to you..»*

 **When the deafening noise will occur**... (Abasa 80/33)

 **When the inevitable day of judgment will suddenly come... When the earth will be violently shaken...and the mountains will be powdered to dust, they will become scattering dust particles.** (Vaqiah 56/1-6

 **When the sky breaks apart , and when the stars fall , scattering , and when the sees are erupted.** (İnfitar 82/1-3)

 These verses express that not only the earth but also the stars in the sky will be transformed as well. There are some descriptions about the Qiyamah through the surahs of Takwir, Infitar and Inshikak. Everything will start with a terrifying sound, the sun will be extinguished, the stars will disperse and all living creatures will die out.

 The Daily Sabah published a photograph on 22.10.1997 showing the clash of stars observed by the Hubble telescope. It had occurred 63 million light years from the Earth and was shown with the caption "Doomsday". Even though this clash had taken place millions of years ago, its image had just reached us. This may give us an important idea about our future.

 The millions of stars and planets that form part of these two galaxies disperse by a clang into an infinite number of atoms after which they generate a new galaxy with new stars and clouds of hydrogen that spread for miles and miles into space. Astronomers stated that they detected clues regarding the first stages of the formation of the universe and added that a new galaxy which had been newly formed after the clash required a long time to reach its final shape.

 The conclusion of these images is this: The Milky Way galaxy, which includes the sun and the earth, will clash with another galaxy and, because of the clash, new stars and a new globe will be generated which will contain Paradise and Hell. The data provided by the Hubble telescope match up with the data in the Quran which had been revealed 1400 years ago.

# ****2-AFTER THE DOOMSDAY (QIYAMAH)****

 After doomsday, God Almighty will transform our earth to another formation of earth by recreating it again. Ankabut 29/19 : *« Did they not observe how God initiates the creation then reproduces it? That is easy for God. »* Man will be recreated by uniting his soul and his body to give an account in front of his Lord of his actions in the world. Those who committed evil acts will enter Hell while those who performed good deeds will enter Paradise.

 **O mankind! Indeed you are laboring toward your Lord with great exertion and you will meet Him.** (Inshiqaq 84/6)

 Even though man desires to see and meet his all-merciful Creator, it is not possible in this world. However in the next life the good tidings will be real.

 Saba 34/1 : *«…In the hereafter, too, all praise belongs to Him*...*»* The verse states that all creatures will pray to God in the next life too and evolution will be continued. Dhuha 93/4 : *« Bear in mind that the Hereafter home is better for you than the present place..»*

**RECREATION OF OUR EARTH**

 Although the celestial world, the stars and the earth, will be dispersed in the day of Doomsday there are good tidings as well because God will recreate the earth and the stars like He had created them for the first time. Anbiya 21/104 : *« The Day when We will roll up heaven as written scrolls are rolled up. We will bring the creation back into existence as easily as We originated it in the first instance. This is a binding promise on Us, and assuredly We fulfill whatever We promise*.*.»*

 **On the Day the earth is transformed into another earth, and the heavens as well.** (İbrahim 14/48)

 **Travel through the earth and see how He brought creation out of nothing. Then God will originate the Everlasting Life. God has power over all things.** (Ankabut 29/20)

 As we see excitedly from the verses, a new earth consisting of Paradise, Araf and Hell will be constructed where all human beings and all creatures will dwell. Just as every new creature will be better than the one which had been created before, our new earth will be more splendid than the earlier one. All living creatures will be resurrected for judgment.

**RESURRECTION**

The flesh of the body which experienced worldy life ends, decomposes and vanishes in the grave. However the soul carries all the characteristics of man and remains in a kind of sleeping state until the Qiyamah. As a result our earth will be transformed to a new one on Doomsday. Ankabut 29/19 : « Have they not seen how God originates the creation then resurrects it? That is certainly easy for God. »

 We come to know through the Quran that, just as the earth was created for the first time, so man will be created with the soul being united with a new body. Zumar 39/68: *« the Trumpet will be blown, and everyone in the heavens and earth will fall down senseless except those God spares. Then it will be blown a second time and at once they will be standing upright, looking on.. »*

 Some examples of the verses explaining resurrection as following:

 **And the Last Hour is sure to come there is no doubt about it. And God will surely resurrect all who are in the graves.** (Hajj 22/7)

 **When souls will be reunited with the bodies.** (Takwir 81/7)

 **Then it is only a single scream, and they will wake up suddenly and they will appear on the surface.** (Naziat 79/13-14)

 **Certainly you have come to Us alone as We created you at first.** … (Anam 6/94)

**HOW WILL RESURRECTION TAKE PLACE?**

 Some examples of The Holy Quran about the resurrection are, as following:

 **And remember when Abraham said: My Lord! Show me how you give life to the dead.” God responded, “Don't you believe?” Abraham replied, “Yes I do but it is just to make my heart at peace..” God said "Take four birds, kill them and cut them into pieces. Then put pieces of each on a mountain and call them. They will come quickly to you. Know that God is Strong and Wise."**  (Baqarah 2/260)

 **They ask: Who will give life to these bones when they have rotten away? He will give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He has full knowledge of every creation!”** (Ya Sin 36/78-79)

 The Quran emphasizes the answer to the unbelievers, through many verses, that resurrection will be easy for the Creator as He created everything for the first time.

 **God will resurrect man as He revive the earth in the spring while it is dead in the winter. God is (The One) Who has sent the winds to raise the clouds. We drive them towards a dead land and (thereby) We revive the earth after its death . (The Resurrection) will also be executed in the same way.** (Fatır 35/9)

**THE LAST JUDGEMENT**

 Hashr means gathering of people in the day of judgment to be interrogated about their acts in front of God. Naml 27/87 : *« And on that Day the trumpet will be blown, and whosoever is in the heavens and on the earth will be terrified, and all will come to Him in utter humility*.*.»*

 On the judgment day all human beings will come together. They will have to account for their actions in the presence of God Almighty who had created them out of nothing and granted them all kinds of worldly gifts. Anam 6/62 : *« Then they are ˹all˺ returned to Allah—their True Master. Behold, unquestionably He is the judgement.…»*

 **…** **And We gather all ˹humankind˺, leaving none behind.** Kahf 18/47)

 **So whoever does an atoms weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.** (Zalzalah 99/7-8)

 The next life will begin for man as soon as the interrogation has finished. Those who performed evil acts in the world will enter Hell, those whose sins and good deeds are equal will enter the Araf while, finally, those who performed good deeds and believed in God will enter Paradise.

 **… Some of them are miserable, others joyful. Those who are miserable, they are in the fire staying there forever, as long as the heavens and the earth will endure, except what your Lord wills. And those who are happy they will be in Paradise. They will remain in it for as long as the heavens and the earth endure —except what your Lord may wish.  An (eternal) gift without an end.** (Hud 11/105-108)

**INTERCESSION BELONGS TO GOD**

 The Prophets or pious of God may attempt intercession by carrying out acts of prayer on behalf of the evil doer causing him to hope for forgiveness. According to the Quran all intercession belongs to God and He will not accept any mediation by any of His servants.

 **…A day when no soul will stand in place of another, no intercession will be accepted for it, nor any ransom…** (Baqarah 2/48)

 **Say, ‘All intercession belongs to God…** (Zumer 39/44)

 Some muslims believe that The Prophet will intercede on behalf of Muslims who have committed cardinal sins on the basis of some hadiths. However God Almighty has charged the Prophets only with the role of delivering His messages.

 **Muhammad** **is no more than a messenger, there were many other messengers before him …** (Ali İmran 3/144)

 **(Muhammed) Say: "I have no power over any good or harm to myself …**(Araf 7/188)

 **…The Messenger’s duty is only to deliver ˹the message˺ clearly.** (Ankebut 29/18)

 Our Lord has permitted to some Prophets or Pious to talk for the benefit of some people but has not permitted intercession. Ta Ha 20/109: *« On that Day, intercession will be useless except from those to whom the Lord of Mercy has granted permission and whose words He approves.»*

**HELL**

 Hell is a place where unbelievers and those who performed evil acts will be punished. The Quran doesn't define explicitly what hell is like however it states that there will be sorts of suffering and pain. Some examples of the verses that define the hell:

 **Surely, those who reject Our revelations and show arrogance to it, the gates of heaven will not be opened to them, nor they will enter Paradise until the camel passes through the eye of a needle (i.e., impossible). This is how We punish the criminals.** (Araf 7:40)

 **The hypocritical men and the hypocritical women are all alike. They encourage what is bad and dissuade from the good, and tighten their purses (when it comes to spending in the way of God). They forgot God; so He forgot them.. God has reserved for hypocrites, whether men or women, and for unbelievers, the fire of Hell, where they will abide forever. God has cursed them and they will have everlasting punishment.**(Taubah 9/67-68)

 Angels, named Zabania, will be assigned very severe duties and obey whatever God has commanded them. The punishment they will mete out will serve to tame those who are to be punished.

 **(Hell) There are nineteen angels appointed as guards over it... We have assigned only angels as keepers of the Fire...** (Mudathir 74/30-31)

 **…over (hell fire) which are (assigned) angels, severe and stern, who do not disobey whatever God has commanded them, and carry out what they are commanded**.(Tahrim 66/6)

 Those who have failed to discipline their souls in the world and performed evil actions wil be subjected to taming by suffering in Hell. This punishment will serve to tame and purify the individual. Our Lord's endless mercy even extends to hell as it extends to the entire universe. According some hadiths, those who have served their punishment will be received into Paradise. However only God knows the truth.

**ARAF (INTERMEDIATE STAGE)**

 Araf, is the borderland between heaven and hell for those whose sins and good deeds are exactly equal in quantity. They have to wait in this stage for a while before entering to either Paradise or Hell. They turn towards Hell hoping not to join with its inhabitants but they see on the other hand the inhabitants of Paradise and hope to be with them.

 The most valuable in the sight of God like the Prophets or the pious will have permission to talk on judgment day. They will notify those who deserve to be one of the inhabitants of Hell and they will also report the intercession of God to those who are to enter Paradise as the verse Ta Ha 20/109 says:

 **…On A‘raf (the Heights) there are dignified people who recognize everyone through their foreheads, and they call out to inhabitants of the Paradise that have not entered it yet but they hope (to do so): "peace (and well-being) upon you,". And when their eyes are turned towards the companions of Hell, they say "Our Lord, do not place us with the wicked people!"**

 **And the people of the Heights call out to the men whom they would recognize by their foreheads. (Now you see that) neither your populace nor your vanity have availed you!”**

 **O inhabitants of Hell! (Then pointing the people of Paradise, they will say) Are these the ones you swore would never be shown God's mercy?” ˹Finally, those on the heights will be told:˺ “Enter into Paradise where you will never feel any fear or sadness.”** (Araf 7/46-49)

 God`s mercy and grace will extend to the inhabitants of Araf in order to cleanse them from their sins as He is the most merciful.

**PARADISE**

 **Paradise** is a place or state where the righteous people will live blissfully forever after death. The Quran doesn't provide details about Paradise however explains with metaphors. Zukhruf 43/71 : *«… and everything the heart desires and pleases the eye will be there …»* The words of peace will be heard in Paradise and the inhabitants will have their provision continuously. Maryam19/62 : *« They will not hear therein any meaningless words, but only the words of peace. And they will have their provision therein, morning and evening.. »*

 The Quran explains those who will enter Paradise by saying:

 **As for those who believe and perform righteous deeds, certainly We do not waste the reward of those who do good deeds**. **They will have Gardens of Eden; beneath them rivers will flow…**(Kahf 18/30-31)

 **The believers, both men and women, they are allies to one another. They command what is right and forbid what is wrong, and establish salat and pay zakat, and obey God and His Messenger… God has promised them Gardens of Eden to live there forever…** (Taubah 9/71-72)

 **Gardens of Eden is for those who have taqwa. They will enter there, like the righteous ones from their fathers, their spouses, and their children. And the Angels will enter to them from every gate. (With the salutation) Peace be upon you because you were patient.” How excellent is the Ultimate Abode!.** (Rad 13/23-24)

 **We have created the women and men of Paradise  into a new creation young and beuatiful.** Vaqiah 56/35-38 : *« We have specially created the women of Paradise and made them virgins with full of love for their husbands, and equal in age, for the blessed ones.»* Men and women who performed good deeds in the world will enter Paradise. They will be transformed out of ugliness or wrinkles. They will be the same age, beautified and refreshed that have deserved a blissful life. Based on some certain hadiths the age will vary between 30 and 32 which is the best period. In the Paradise there will not be old people.

 The inhabitants of Paradise will pursue their trade as well as they will continue to pray to the Creator. Yasin 36/55 : *« On that Day, the residents of the Paradise will be busy in joyful things;.»* We see through these verses that Paradise is not only for living without doing anything. The development of the soul will continue so there will be working as well in a blissful life. Saba 34/1 : *«… All praise and gratitude are for God in the heavens as well…»*

 There will be only peaceful talk in Paradise. Maryam 19/62: *« There they will hear only peaceful talk, nothing bad; there they will be given provision morning and evening*. *»*  They will remain in the Paradise forever.Hud 11/108: *«They will live there for all the time that the heavens and the earth can bear, except as what your Lord wills …»*

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**MESUT KAYNAK**

 Mesut Kaynak was born in Izmir- Cesme in 1929. He studied at Sehit Fethi Bey Primary School, Tilkilik Secondary School and Ataturk High School before proceding to Mimar Sinan University Faculty of Fine Arts from which he graduated in 1956. He served for some years in the public sector, namely in the Department of Public Works in Istanbul before launching into private business in house building. He married in 1960 and has one daughter and two grandchildren.

 His first work, entitled God’s Admonitions, was printed in 1992. In 1998 it was followed by Love in the Qur'an, with publication reaching its fourth edition. The Daily Radikal distributed Love in the Quran as a gift to its readers at the time of the Ramadan Religious Festival in 2000. Women in the Quran was printed in 2002. Congruities and Incongruities between the Bible and the Qur’an was printed in 2007. These books have been distributed free. Furthermore, in order to allow readers to obtain these books, with their English translations, [www.kurandasevgi.gen.tr](http://www.kurandasevgi.gen.tr/) was launched.

 These books have been sent to libraries of all Turkish universities as well as some public libraries. They have been incorporated into the formal collections of most  of the libraries of the universities to make them available for researchers.

 His interest in explaining little known aspects of Christianity motivated Mr Kaynak to engage in a dialog with Istanbul Protestant Church Foundation's spiritual leader about Islam and Christianity. As a result of this meeting he prepared a book titled Questions and Answers in the Bible.

 His most recent book, containing many important topics, was written in 2011. Titled Admonitions from the Qur'an, this important work was first sent to Faculties of Divinity of Turkish universities. Distribution is planned to all high school libraries in our country with presentation already completed to high school libraries in Istanbul and the regions of Aegean, Mediterranean, Middle Anatolia, Black Sea, East Anatolia and south-eastern Turkey. It has been sent to all deputies of the Grand National Assembly in January 2019.

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