

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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When you speak, tell the truth and hold the scales even, though the person concerned be your kinsman.

Be strict in observing justice and bear witness only for the sake of Allah, even if it should occasion loss to you or your parents or your kinsmen or sons, etc. Let not the enmity of a people towards you incite you to injustice or falsehood. Truthful men and truthful women will have a great reward from Allah. They exhort one another to hold fast to the truth. Those who do not keep company with the untruthful.

Steadfastness

One of the natural qualities of man is steadfastness during illness and under afflictions. He has recourse to patience after much complaining and sorrowing. It is natural that a person cries and groans under affliction and in the end, after giving vent to his grievance, he beats a retreat. Both these conditions are natural but are not in any sense part of a moral quality. In this context the relevant moral quality is that when one suffers a loss, one should consider it as rendering back to God that which He had bestowed, and should utter no complaint about it. One should affirm that it was a bounty of God which He has recalled and that one is

reconciled to God's pleasure. In this context, God Almighty's holy Word, the Holy Quran, admonishes us thusly:

وَتَبْلُوَنَكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ
وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالشَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ مُّصِيبَةٌ
قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن
رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ¹⁰⁶

That is, O believers we shall surely try you with somewhat of fear, and hunger, and loss of wealth, and lives, and of the fruits of your labour and sometimes your dear children will die; then give glad tidings to the steadfast, who, when a misfortune overtakes them, do not lose heart, but affirm: We belong to God and are His servants and to Him shall we return. It is these on whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is these who are rightly guided.

This moral quality is called steadfastness or reconciliation to the Divine will. From one aspect it might be called equity or justice. Throughout a person's

106. And We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives, and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient, Who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say, 'Surely, to Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return.' It is these on whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is these who are rightly guided. (The Holy Quran, al-Baqarah 2:156-158)

life, God Almighty manifests thousands of matters in accord with the wishes of a person and bestows numberless bounties upon him, so that it would be inequitable on his part that on such occasions when God calls upon him to submit to His will, he should turn away, not pleased with the will of God, and should be critical, or lose faith or go astray.

Sympathy for Mankind

Of the natural qualities of man is his sympathy for his fellow beings. The followers of every religion have natural sympathy for their own people and many of them, under the urge of such sympathy, act wrongfully towards other people, as if they do not regard them as human beings. This state cannot be described as a moral quality. It is a natural urge which is manifested even by birds. For instance, when one crow dies hundreds of crows flock together. This quality would be accounted a high moral quality when it is exercised on its proper occasion justly and equitably. It would be a great moral quality which is designated sympathy both in Arabic and Persian. This is referred to by Allah, the Exalted in the Holy Quran. God Almighty has directed in the Holy Quran:

تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ¹⁰⁷
 وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ¹⁰⁸
 وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِبِينَ حَصِيمًا¹⁰⁹
 وَلَا تَجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
 حَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا¹¹⁰

That is, one should show sympathy to, and help, one's people only in good deeds and at no cost one should assist them in sin and transgression.

Slacken not in serving your fellow beings.
 Contend not on behalf of the treacherous. Plead not
 on behalf of those who persist in being unfaithful.
 Allah loves not those who are perfidious.¹¹¹

107. Help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression. (The Holy Quran, al-Mā'idah 5:3)

108. And slacken not in seeking these people. (The Holy Quran, an-Nisā' 4:105)

109. And be not you a disputer for the faithless; (The Holy Quran, an-Nisā' 4:106)

110. And plead not on behalf of those who are dishonest to themselves. Surely, Allāh loves not one who is perfidious *and* a great sinner. (The Holy Quran, an-Nisā' 4:108)

111. Here Ḥuḍūr mentions two categories of verses. In the first category are those verses which deal with compassion for God's creation and with the idea of collaboration in the doing of good deeds. In the second category, the subject of discussion is the punishment of the wrongdoer when the situation so demands. The message being conveyed is that sympathy for humankind does not mean that the culprit merely be punished for his wrongdoings thus securing the rest of society from his transgressions. In fact punishing him is an aspect of sympathy for humankind. The Publishers

Search for an Exalted Being

Of the natural conditions of man is his search after an Exalted Being towards Whom he has an inherent attraction. This is manifested by an infant from the moment of its birth. As soon as it is born, it displays a spiritual characteristic that it inclines towards its mother and is inspired by love of her. As its faculties are developed and its nature begins to display itself openly, this inherent quality is displayed more and more strongly. It finds no comfort anywhere except in the lap of its mother. If it is separated from her and finds itself at a distance from her, its life becomes bitter. Heaps of bounties fail to beguile it away from its mother in whom all its joy is concentrated. It feels no joy apart from her. What, then, is the nature of the attraction which an infant feels so strongly towards its mother?

It is the attraction which the True Creator has implanted in the nature of man. The same attraction comes into play whenever a person feels love for another. It is a reflection of the attraction that is inherent in man's nature towards God, as if he is in search of something that he misses, the name of which he has forgotten and which he seeks to find in one thing or another which he takes up from time to time. A person's love of wealth or offspring or wife or his soul being attracted towards a musical voice are all indications of his search for the True Beloved. As man

cannot behold with his physical eyes the Imperceptible Being, Who is latent like the quality of fire in everyone, but is hidden, nor can he discover Him through the mere exercise of imperfect reason, he has been misled grievously in his search and has mistakenly assigned His position to others. The Holy Quran has, in this context, set forth an excellent illustration, to the effect that the world is like a palace, the floor of which is paved with smooth slabs of glass, under which flows a rapid current of water. Every eye that beholds this floor mistakenly imagines it to be running water. A person fears to tread upon the floor as he would be afraid of treading upon running water, though in reality the floor is only paved with smooth transparent slabs of glass. Thus these heavenly bodies like the sun and the moon etc. are the smooth and transparent slabs of glass under which a great power is in operation like a fast flowing current of water. It is a great mistake on the part of those who worship these heavenly bodies that they attribute to them that which is manifested by the power that operates behind them. This is the interpretation of the verse of the Holy Quran:

إِنَّهُ صَرَحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّنْ قَوَارِيرَ ۗ¹¹²

In short, as the Being of God Almighty, despite its brilliance, is utterly hidden, this physical system that is

112. It is a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass. (The Holy Quran, an-Naml 27:45)

spread out before our eyes is not alone sufficient for its recognition. That is why those who have depended upon this system and have observed carefully its perfect and complete orderliness together with all the wonders comprehended in it, and have thoroughly studied astronomy, physics, and philosophy, and have, as it were, penetrated into the heavens and the earth, have yet not been delivered from the darkness of doubts and suspicions. Many of them become involved in grave errors and wander far away in pursuit of their stupid fancies. Their utmost conjecture is that this grand system which displays great wisdom must have a Maker, but this conjecture is incomplete and this insight is defective. The affirmation that this system must have a creator does not amount to a positive affirmation that He does in truth exist. Such a conjecture cannot bestow satisfaction upon the heart, nor remove all doubt from it. Nor is it a draught which can quench the thirst for complete understanding which man's nature demands. Indeed, this defective understanding is most dangerous, for despite all its noise it amounts to nothing.

In short, unless God Almighty affirms His existence through His Word, as He has manifested it through His work, the observation of the work alone does not afford complete satisfaction¹¹³. For instance, if we are

113. This means that without the Word of God, contemplation of and foresight into the laws of nature cannot be sufficient. The Publishers

confronted by a room the door of which is bolted from inside, our immediate reaction would be that there is someone inside the room who has bolted the door from inside, inasmuch as it is apparently impossible to bolt a door from inside by some device employed for the purpose from the outside. But if, despite persistent calls from the outside over a period of years, no response becomes audible from inside, our supposition that there must be someone inside would have to be abandoned and we would be compelled to conclude that the door has been bolted from inside through some clever device. This is the situation in which those philosophers have placed themselves whose understanding is limited solely to the observation of the work of God. It is a great mistake to imagine that God is like a corpse interred in the earth whose recovery is the business of man. If God has only been discovered through human effort, it is vain to expect anything from Him. Indeed, God has, through eternity, called mankind to Himself by affirming: *I am present*. It would be a great impertinence to imagine that man has laid God under an obligation by discovering Him through his own effort, and that if there had been no philosophers He would have continued unknown.

It is equally stupid to enquire how can God speak unless He has a tongue to speak with? The answer is: Has He not created the earth and the heavenly bodies without physical hands? Does He not view the universe

without eyes? Does He not hear our supplications without physical ears?

Then is it not necessary that He should also speak to us? Nor is it correct to say that God spoke in the past but does not speak now. We cannot limit His Word or His discourse to any particular time. He is as ready today to enrich His seekers from the fountain of revelation as He was at any time, and the gates of His grace are as wide open today as they were at any time. It is true, however, that as the need for a perfect law has been fulfilled all law and limitations have been completed. Also all prophethoods, having arrived at their climax in the person of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, have been fulfilled.

The Reason for the Appearance of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in Arabia

That the last Divine guidance should shine forth from Arabia was determined by Divine wisdom. The Arabs are descended from Ishmael who was cut asunder from Israel and had, under Divine wisdom, been cast into the wilderness of Paran (*Fārān*), which means two fugitives. The descendants of Ishmael had been cut asunder from Banī Isrāʾīl by Prophet Abraham himself and they had no part in the law of the Torah, as was

written that they would not inherit from Isaac.

Thus they were abandoned by those to whom they belonged and had no relationship with anyone else. In all other countries there were some traces of worship and commandments which indicated that they had at one time received instruction from prophets. Arabia alone was a country that was utterly unacquainted with such teachings and was the most backward of all. Its turn came last of all and it received the benefit of a universal prophethood, so that all countries might share again in the blessings of prophethood, and the errors that had become current in the meantime among them might be weeded out. The Holy Quran is the Perfect Book which undertook the entire project of human reform and is not addressed only to one people. It seeks the reform of all and has set forth all grades of human development. It teaches savages the manners and ways of humanity and thereafter instructs them in high moral qualities. Thus there is no need of any other book beside the Holy Quran.

What the World Owes to the Holy Quran

It is a bounty of the Holy Quran upon mankind that it has set forth the distinction between man's natural state and moral qualities and that it does not stop merely at leading man from his natural conditions to the

elevated palace of high moral qualities, but also opens the doors of the holy understanding that leads man to the spiritual heights. In this way it sets forth in an excellent manner the three types of teaching that we have already mentioned. As it comprehends all the teachings which are necessary for religious training, it claims it has discharged this function to perfection. It says:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ
لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا¹¹⁴

That is, this day have I perfected your religion for your benefit, and have completed My favour unto you and have been pleased to appoint Islam as your religion. This means the climax of religion has been reached in Islam, which is that a person should be committed wholly to God and should seek his salvation through the sacrifice of his self in the cause of God, and not through any other means, and should demonstrate this motive and determination in his conduct. This is the stage at which all excellences arrive at their perfection. Thus, the Holy Quran has presented the God Who was not identified by the philosophers. The Quran has adopted two methods for the understanding of God:

114. This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islām as religion. (The Holy Quran, al-Mā'idah 5:4)

First, the method whereby human reason is strengthened and illumined for the purpose of setting forth reasons in support of the existence of God, and thus saves a person from falling into error; second, the spiritual method, which we shall, God willing, set forth in answer to the third question.

Proof of the Existence of God

We now proceed to draw attention to the excellent and matchless proofs of the existence of God that the Holy Quran has set forth. At one place it has said:

115 رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى

That is, our Lord is He Who has bestowed upon everything its appropriate faculties, and has then guided it to the achievement of its appropriate purposes. If we keep in mind the purport of this verse and then reflect upon the shape and form of man and all the animals on land and in the sea, and the birds, we are impressed with the power of God Who has bestowed its appropriate form on everything. This is a vast subject and we would urge our readers to reflect deeply upon it.

115. Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its *proper* form and then guided it to its *proper function*. (The Holy Quran, Ṭā Hā 20:51)

The second proof of the existence of God that the Holy Quran has set forth is that God is the ultimate cause of all causes, as it is said:

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُتَتَّهِىٰ 116

That is, if we observe carefully we find that the entire universe is bound together in a system of cause and effect. This system is at the root of all knowledge. No part of creation is outside this system. Some things are the roots of others and some are branches. A cause may be primary or may be the effect of another cause, and that in its turn may be the effect of still another cause, and so on. Now, it is not possible that in this finite world this pattern of cause and effect should have no limit and should be infinite. We are compelled to acknowledge that it must terminate with some ultimate cause. The ultimate cause is God. Open your eyes and see that the verse

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُتَتَّهِىٰ 117

sets forth this argument very concisely and affirms that the system of cause and effect terminates in God.

Another proof of Divine existence set forth in the

116. And that to your Lord do *all things* ultimately go; (The Holy Quran, an-Najm 53:43)

117. And that to your Lord do *all things* ultimately go; (The Holy Quran, an-Najm 53:43)

Quran is:

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ
الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلُ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ¹¹⁸

This means that the sun cannot catch up with the moon, and the night, which is a manifestation of the moon, cannot prevail over the day, which is a manifestation of the sun. Neither of them can move outside its orbit. Were there not a Regulator of the whole of this system behind the scenes, the system would fall into chaos. This proof is very striking in the estimation of astronomers. There are so many grand heavenly bodies that are gliding through space that the slightest disorder in their movements would bring about the ruin of the whole world. What a manifestation of Divine power is it that these bodies neither collide nor change their speed, nor alter their courses in the slightest degree, nor have they been worn out by their circulation during such a long period, nor has their machinery suffered any disorder. If they are not under the supervision of a Guardian, how is it that such a grand organisation continues to carry on through

118. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. All of them float in an orbit. (The Holy Quran, Yā Sīn 36:41)

numberless years entirely on its own? At another place in the Quran God Almighty draws attention to this in the words:

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ¹¹⁹

That is, can there be a doubt in the existence of God Who has originated the heavens and the earth?

He has set forth another proof of His existence in the words:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۝ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ۝¹²⁰

That is, all that is on the earth will perish and only the countenance of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour, will survive. If we assume that the earth might be reduced into particles and the heavenly bodies might be broken down and everything might be overtaken by a blast that would wipe out every sign of these bodies, yet reason acknowledges and right conscience deems it necessary that after all this destruction there should survive One, Who is not subject to destruction, and can undergo no change and Who should continue in His pristine state. That One is God, Who has created everything mortal and is Himself immune from

119. Are you in doubt concerning Allāh, Maker of the heavens and the earth? (The Holy Quran, Ibrāhīm 14:11)

120. All that is on it (earth) will pass away. And there will remain *only* the Person of your Lord, Master of Glory and Honour. (The Holy Quran, ar-Raḥmān 55:27-28)

mortality.

Another proof of His existence that God has set forth in the Holy Quran is:

اَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَانُوَابِلَىٰ¹²¹

That is, I asked the souls, am I not your Lord? They answered: Indeed. In this verse God Almighty sets forth, in the form of a story, the characteristic with which He has invested the souls, and that is that by its very nature no soul can deny the existence of God. Those who deny God do so because they can find no proof of His existence according to their own fancy. Yet they acknowledge that for everything that is created there must be a creator. There is no one in the world so stupid that if he falls ill he would insist that there is no cause for his illness. If the system of the universe had not been made up of cause and effect, it would not have been possible to predict the time of a tornado, or of the eclipse of the sun or the moon, or that a patient would die at a certain time, or that a disease would be reinforced by another disease at a certain stage. Thus, a research scholar who does not acknowledge the existence of God, in effect does so indirectly, for he too, like us, searches for the causes of effects. This is an acknowledgment of a sort, though it is not perfect. Besides, if, through some device, a person who denies

121. Am I not your Lord?' They say, 'Yea, (The Holy Quran, al-A'rāf 7:173)

the existence of God could be made unconscious in such manner that he should pass under the complete control of God, discarding all fancies, emotions, and impulses of his earthly life, he would, in such a state, acknowledge the existence of God and would not deny it. This is testified to by eminent experts. The verse that we have cited also indicates that a denial of the existence of God is only a manifestation of this earthly existence, for the true nature of man fully confesses His existence.

Attributes of God

We have set forth these few proofs of the existence of God by way of illustration. We now call attention to the attributes of God to Whom the Holy Quran calls us, which are as follows:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ

الرَّحِيمُ¹²²

مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ¹²³

الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ

الْمَتَكَبِّرُ¹²⁴

122. He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Gracious, the Merciful. (The Holy Quran, al-Hashr 59:23)

123. Master of the Day of Judgment. (The Holy Quran, al-Fātihah 1:4)