

Discourse Twelve: Muhammad (S) in the Mirror of Islam

The heavenly character of the venerated Prophet Muhammad, who was appointed fourteen hundred lunar years ago by God, the Almighty, as messenger, leader and guide of the world, and the divine Qur'an, which is a compendium of God's words containing theoretical and practical generalities and is the Prophet's lasting miracle, have defined the lifestyle of hundreds of millions of followers and have claimed the attention of all humanity.

This must be considered one of the most important factors in the refinement and evolution of humanity. In fact, it is the most important factor and has had great effect upon the human society due to the influence it has had on the beliefs and acts of untold millions.

Islam and other religions

It is true that Islam is younger than Brahmanism with a history of approximately thirty centuries, Buddhism with a past of around twenty-five centuries, and Christianity that has lived in the human society for close to twenty centuries.

It is true that followers of this religion are more numerous than those of Islam; however, by referring to the Brahmin Vedas and their other religious texts it is clear that all or most of their religious decrees are negative and are only used by a small number of the religion's followers. Most believers neither benefit from the religion's spirituality nor their holy book. In truth, as regards action and reaction beyond its domain, the Brahmin society is futile.

In negative commandments, Buddhism is similar to Brahmanism. Also, as is plain to see from the four Gospels and other major texts, Christianity is almost completely devoid of applied edicts and social laws and is unreservedly skeptical of philosophy and reason.

Fundamentally, the story of Jesus Christ's sacrifices and the forgiveness of all of humanity's sins or

those of the Christian persuasion are in no way compatible with positive religious laws. Other religions such as Sabianism and Manichaeism, have either utterly lost their good image or accommodate a specific people and are thus bereft of an increase in followers.

Indeed, only Islam has become accepted and honored by countless millions by virtue of its logical beliefs and its positive individual and social laws. It continually has millions of adherents who put into practice its positive laws throughout their lives. It goes without saying that the positive and systematic lifestyle of one individual can directly and indirectly influence thousands of people or even a large society.

As a result, others are never idle in enacting policies against this pure religion—by their own acknowledgement—and continually attempt to extinguish its light. [1](#)

﴿يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

“They desire to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths; however, Allah will complete His light though unbelievers be loath.” [2](#)

Of course, understanding a heavenly character requires a heavenly intellect and describing it, a heavenly tongue. Even so, the extent that this pure personage and his attributes may be studied and debated goes beyond the bounds of a single article.

This discussion addresses the virtuous personality of the Prophet (S) through a general analysis of the method in which he imparted his pure teachings upon the human society because following these teachings is a necessity for the true happiness of humanity.

[Authenticity of the individual \[isḥat-e fard\] and worldview](#)

In order to completely understand these discussions, I must say in introduction that the human nature has no higher purpose than to carry on its existence as much as possible and attain its instinctive needs.

As such, the first step humans take is to get together and form a community and submit to laws in order to safeguard the society whereby depriving themselves of a proportionate degree of individual freedom. This is all because, by depriving themselves of some elements of their freedom, they intend to realize other components of freedom and in this way better secure their survival and inherent desires.

The cardinal issue in human happiness, as per creation, is individual bliss. The prosperity of the society is subordinate, not vice versa. In other words, the purpose of creation is the human nature, which is in fact individual existence, not the social aspect of individuals.

As necessitated by this elemental aim—i.e. happiness and success in life—we must choose a methodical style of life, which would inevitably be social; to drink, eat, dress, rest, marry, procreate,

endeavor to fulfill needs, and level the path of survival using the intellect.

The features of this method and the configuration of this systemic process depends on a person's notion of the truth of the world of existence and one's own self, which is an inseparable element of the universe. Thus, we see that some humans do not ratify a Creator for the world.

They consider the world's origination to be accidental and consider humans to be no more than their material body—whose existence is limited to the time between their birth and death. They order their styles and rules of life such that they only resolve the ephemeral material needs of mundane life and follow the way toward limited worldly success. It is also obvious that those who consider matter and material life to be that which is valid and genuine follow this same method.

Those who believe in a world creator and consider existence and everything in it to be managed by gods do not regard humanity's being to be confined to the physical universe. They arrange their lives to continually satisfy the gods and to keep from incurring their wrath so they may be successful and safe from unpleasant incidents, which are born of the fury of the gods.

Those who believe in monotheism, consider the world to have One Wise and Powerful God, and support the existence of an eternal human life that does not end with death and an ideology that orders their lifestyle so as to guaranty their happiness and prosperity in both worlds—before and after death—attaining everlasting prosperity and bliss.

Thus, it becomes clear that religion is lifestyle and there can be no differentiation between the two. Those who consider lifestyle genuine and religion and its laws formalities are committing a serious error.

According to this principle, Islam regards lifestyle as religion and identifies the divine course before humans as the straight path. The right method of living is the straight path and the wrong lifestyle is the deviate way. Thus, God states in the Qur'an:

﴿ أَنْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ * الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ ... ﴾

“Allah's damnation is upon the evildoers; who debar people from the path of Allah and seek to deviate it, and they disbelieve the Hereafter.”³

The worldview of Islam

The concept that the Noble Prophet (S) bases his religion upon is that the entirety of existence is the creation of a single God, who directs each component of the world to its specific perfection.

Accordingly, He guides humans, who have eternal life, towards their particular prosperity and perfection by asking them to follow the path that He shows them. In order to justify his mission, the Noble Prophet

(S) portrayed the natural human—i.e. a person possessing pure human nature, equipped with God-given intellect and will, and unadulterated with imitative and superstitious beliefs—as requisite of his religious invitation.

This is because such a person, through their God-given nature, has the competence to understand the concept mentioned above.

This person automatically understands with the least advisement that this world, with all its greatness and expansiveness and its sound system, is the creation of a pure Creator who is the source of all perfection and beauty by virtue of His infinite existence and is free of all evil and ugliness; that the creation of the world and everything in it is not in vain; that there is an afterlife; and that there will be an accounting for the good and bad deeds of humans.

Therefore, a specific style of human life must exist that can ensure this conception.

Selection of the natural human for education and edification has the following Islamic results:

1. The principle of equality

This method will be inclusive of all individuals. There will be no difference between black and white, woman and man, noble and commoner, wealthy and poor, king and beggar, powerful and weak, Eastern and Western, those living in the polar or equatorial regions, wise and ignorant, young and old, and also between the present and future generations.

This is because we are all partners in human nature and we enjoy all its trappings. This equality is specific to the pure method of Islam. Other methods all have some extent of bias. For instance, a general difference is marked in the method of “wathaniyyat” between ecclesiastics and lay people, and between men and women; in “Judaism” between the children of Israel and others; in “Christianity” between women and men; and in social methods between citizens and non-citizens.

Only Islam considers the human world to be a balanced unit and has extirpated bias and division at its roots. The Qur’an states:

﴿... يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

“O people! Surely, I have created you as males and females and divided you into groups great and small that you may know one another (and form societies). Verily, the most noble among you before Allah is the most pious of you...”⁴

﴿... أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ ... ﴾

“I shall not leave unrewarded the work of any agent among you, whether man or woman; you are all members of the same race...”⁵

2. The principle of realism

In view of the fact that humans possess the instinct of realism, the laws and decrees formulated in Islam are based upon realism.

In explanation, in the process of their natural lives, while humans are drawn towards their life aims with the help of their feelings and emotions, they naturally embark upon real aims not imaginative ones. An infant that touches its mother’s breast craving milk or cries of hunger wants that which is really milk not its image; it cries due to hunger not imagination or fantasy.

Persons that endeavor to attain benefits really want things that benefit them not the conceptual image of those benefits. Also, when feelings and emotions reveal needs to us and draw us toward desires without heeding their real goodness or evil, our faculty of discernment—i.e. intellect—harnesses our feelings and emotions, mitigating their longings and showing us the real good and bad in them.

Even though a sick person may desire to eat something harmful, it is the intellect that prevents him from doing so. The intellect stops us from doing dangerous things. Ultimately, it takes from us a large portion of our freedom. Intellect is the only advantage we have over other animals and it is our best tool for realism.

The rules and regulations that the Prophet brought the people are based upon realism, not desires and fancy. This means that humans must do that which is in their real interests even though they may not want to—rather than doing what they desire—and even though it may not be to their presumed advantage. The nation must do that which is truly beneficial and conforms to prosperity in life even if it is against individual desires rather than doing what the majority wishes regardless of its expedience.

In the Holy Qur’an’s parlance, that which conforms to reality or real interests is called haqq (truth). It is the only aim towards which humans must strive in their belief and practice.

﴿...فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ...﴾

“So what is there after Truth [haqq] save error?”⁶

﴿...وَلَوْ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ﴾

“And if Truth [haqq] had followed their caprices, the heavens and the earth and all in them would surely have been thrown into confusion and corruption...”⁷

After a few days, the skin of an almond that is put into the earth under special conditions cracks and a green sprout emerges from its kernel. It grows roots and continually gathers nutrition from the soil, growing until it becomes a prolific almond tree with a trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms, and fruit.

The embryo that is introduced into a mother's womb, under the influence of special factors, acquires specific form, limbs, and organs, and through its typical processes it grows larger and more complete everyday until it attains perfection. In the same manner, if we succinctly examine each and every type of creation in the world, it would be evident that every creation in existence evolves on a specified path until it gains perfection.

From the advent of existence they are directed toward their ultimate destination and never deviate from their course. By way of illustration, an almond sapling will not transform into a horse in the course of its evolution and a horse will not sleep at night and wake up in the morning as an almond tree. Rather, every one of these creations is drawn toward its final destination on a trajectory that is commensurate with the faculties and mechanisms with which they were created.

They gain advantages and ward off harms that threaten their existence in the way their means allow. Chickens eat grain, cows and sheep chew grass and wolves, tigers, and falcons hunt for meat because each of them are naturally equipped with a special feeding system that is only suitable for the food they eat.

In order to defend themselves, chickens use their beaks, cows and sheep use their horns, snakes bite, scorpions and bees sting, lions and tigers use their teeth and claws, and deer run away since those are the inherent defense mechanisms of each.

In short, in life each of these creations embarks on a destination and does what its existential resources compel them to do and determine for them. This determination and guidance is the same as fate [taqdir] and universal guidance indicated in the Holy Qur'an which is attributed to the Creator God:

﴿ قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى ﴾

“He said: Our Lord is He who gave to each thing its specific creation and then guided it.”⁸

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى * وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى ﴾

“The Lord who has created (components) then gave them order. And who has given quantity then guided accordingly.”⁹

Of course human beings, who are also a type of creation, are not an exception to the rule. Our specific creation—or make-up—shows us the method we must adopt in our lives and specifies the duties and

laws we must observe. The Qur'an proclaims:

﴿ مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ * مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ * ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ ﴾

“From what did He create humankind? He created it from a zygote then He gave it a measure. Then He eased the way (of happiness and prosperity).”¹⁰

By contemplating this matter and the previous discussion, it is clear that the results of both are the same. To state it more clearly, the true [haqq] acts that humans must choose using their realist instinct are the same acts towards which the human make-up guides with its special faculties. This is the religion of truth and haqq; it is also called the fitrā (i.e. innate or natural) religion because of its relation to creation and the inherent human make-up.

﴿...فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ﴾

“So resolutely accept the religion of moderateness; do not turn aside from it because this religion is the special divine creation upon which Allah has created humankind. The creation of Allah is inalterable. This is the religion that can secure the will and prosperity of the human community...”¹¹

﴿ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا * فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا * قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا * وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴾

“By the soul and He who created it and gave it order; then inspired it with understanding of its wrong and its right. Truly saved are those who virtuously develop their souls. And surely despairing (of happiness and prosperity) are those who corrupt it.”¹²

From another perspective, since creation is the work of God and all beautiful phenomena that manifest in it are attributable to His Bounty, the requirements of the specific human genesis that bring about human actions are called God's will.

(Of course, I am talking about the mandate will [irādah tashrī‘īyah] of God which entails His guidance and human responsibility. This is different from His genetic will [irādah takwīnīyah] which is absolutely inviolable.) The duties and decree obtained in this way are considered the commands and injunctions of God:

﴿...وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ﴾

“And your Lord creates and chooses what He pleases; they have no will before the will of

Allah...”[13](#)

In light of the fact that this religion is a series of duties and instructions from God, the Creator, for those who follow its theoretical and practical precepts and submit to God, in Qur’anic parlance this religion is called Islam:

﴿...إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ﴾

“Indeed, Religion is surrender [Islam] to Allah...”[14](#)

﴿...وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ﴾

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam (surrender to Allah) it will not be accepted of him...”[15](#)

3. The principle of balance between matter [maddah] and spirit [ma'nah]

The third result Islam gained by extending its invitation toward the natural human is that in this manner it has selected a median method between materiality and spirituality.

This is one of the unique masterpieces of this divine religion as contrasted with what is understood from Judaism and the Torah, the Jewish Holy Book, which has no relation to human spirituality; Christianity which, according to a statement attributed to Jesus Christ, has nothing to do with the material life of this world;[16](#) and other religions such as Brahmanism, Buddhism, and even Magianism, Manichaeism, and Sabianism that deal with spirituality to some extent but separate the path of spirituality from material life, completely severing their relationship. Only Islam is a primordial religion [dīn-e hanafī], based upon the human fitrah.

By way of explanation, there are those who, by all accounts, form the majority of the world’s population and throughout their lives have no ideal but material advancement. Nothing occurs to them but the fancy of attaining high rank, great wealth, and material pleasures. They endeavor night and day to secure their livelihoods and pay not the least attention to anything beyond the framework of their evanescent lives and the passage of this mundane world.

Contrary to this group, there is a small minority who, through contemplation of the truth of this world and faithlessness of its life, understand that every pleasure is linked with a myriad of pains, every nectar a myriad of stings, every happiness a myriad of woes, every possession a myriad of cares and grief, every union by separation, health by illness, and life by death.

They comprehend that beyond the straits of this prison and this deceptive mirage lays an everlasting

world that is free of the hardship and suffering of this one and that its happiness and prosperity belong to the beneficent and enlightened.

As a result of this thought, they become reclusive and turn away from the vileness and beauty of the fleeting world where all sweet enjoyment one day turns into despair, resentment, and disappointment. Thus, they crawl into a quiet corner and occupy themselves with observation of the eternal world and the infinite beauty throughout the heavens.

These two groups exist in our age and historically, they have also continually existed in previous ages.

The persistence of these two groups among humans is the best testament to the fact that with their God-given nature, humans affirm the correctitude (or rather the necessity) of traversing both the material and spiritual paths of life since if humans completely abandon social life and cease their endeavors, they must immediately say farewell to life and pass away from material life and in this event spiritual life would be lost as well.

Conversely, if humans abandon spiritual life, they negate reason and intellect which is the only advantage humans have over other animals and, ignoring realism, enter the same rank as beasts!

Consequently, a fitrah human can never adopt a one-sided lifestyle and suffice with only matter or only spirit. This is because, on the one hand, it is not possible to live in the material world and be free of matter, and, on the other hand, the awareness and worship of God in the insight of the fitrah human is meaningless without spiritual life.

The truth regarding what was said before regarding the faiths of Judaism and Christianity is that each reinforced one aspect of life in accordance with the prevailing conditions at the time of their inception.

In the age of Moses (‘a), the Interlocutor with God [kalimullah], the Children of Israel who lived under the oppression and in servitude of Egypt’s Pharaoh were bereft of all human privileges and they were treated as animals. After saving them, Moses (‘a) spent the majority of his time in giving order to internal affairs, promoting social laws, building housing, and so on. He also taught spiritual life to a small extent.

Conversely, in the age of the Messiah’s appointment, though the Children of Israel were under the dominance of Rome, they possessed systematic institutions. However, their priests and influential personages had completely left aside the religion of the Torah and had turned spirituality into a tool for material gain and exploitation of the people. As a result, the Messiah was forced to put all his effort into spiritual life and allocate the greater part of his teaching to this aspect.

As indicated, in its teachings Islam has chosen a method that is the median between physical and spiritual life. In fact, it has reconciled between and amalgamated two methods of life that seem to be completely antithetical.

Furthermore, by rights there is no way for the evolution of humanity except this, because obviously all

types of creations attain their perfection—the purpose of their existence—through their fitrah activities and endeavors and the type of activity depends upon the capabilities and facilities inherent in their beings.

Humans, who are also one type of creation, are subject to this general axiom and law. Humans have a spirit or soul that has been created to live forever. It does not decay or become nonexistent. However, through virtuous endeavors and pursuits it can attain the *raison d'être* of perfection that is above and beyond any kind of prosperity, happiness, and success.

All the while, this heavenly soul is bound to an earthly body where lay its tools of trade, and the forces that work these tools are related in some manner to this body. In addition, the human make-up guides us towards society and civilization.

Doubtless, the purpose of such guidance is to deliver the recipient to its life aim and perfection. Moreover, the perfection and prosperity of every creation is certainly that which creation has determined for it, not that which imagination and superstitions decide.

The prosperity of a flower tree is in attaining its natural growth and producing that which its botanic nature impels—not being put in a golden flowerpot and set in a palace overlaid with gold.

Therefore, how can humans achieve their real perfection and beatitude and completely realize their true ideals without utilizing the physical means given to them by their genetic constitution and by living outside the environs of social life?

Islam has determined corporeal human life, which is social in the complete sense and uses all material means, as the backdrop for its education and edification. In line with the guidance of the human fitrah and specific creation, it has adopted extensive laws regarding the individual, social, general, and particular actions of humans which constitute the complete program for their education and perfection.

Some of these laws are responsibilities that humans have towards their God involving the expression of surrender and devotion before His Lordship, indigence and destitution before His Affluence and Needlessness, abjection before His Glory, ignobility before His Greatness and Divinity, ignorance before His Knowledge, impotence before His Power, and submission before His Will and Providence. It also involves the socialization of daily and festival prayers, the greater socialization of Friday Prayer, and the greatest socialization of all which is hajj.

Another part of these laws are the obligations people have regarding each other and in the context of society. Of course, in these commitments (i.e. Islamic laws) the sense of responsibility is solely pertinent to God in that one must only submit to His Governance—i.e. that which His creation necessitates.

This means that all acts must be performed in the radius of the three principles of *tawhīd* (monotheism), *nubuwwah* (Prophethood), and *ma'ād* (Resurrection). The Qur'an states:

﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

“O Prophet! Say to the People of the Book, ‘Come, let us unite in a common word: that we serve none save Allah and that we associate not aught with Him and that some of us take not others as lords (to whom the destinies of people are consigned and whose will are followed) besides God.’ If they do not accept this proposal, say, ‘Bear witness that surely we are those who surrender to God, worship none but Him, and adhere only to His Will (which is what is necessitated by fitrah and creation)’.”¹⁷

The foregoing discussion completely shows that the lifestyle in the holy religion of Islam is arranged in a way that the social and material life of humans is like a cradle in which spiritual life is fostered.

The spiritual effulgence of a Muslim who conforms to Islamic commandments is something that illuminates and purifies all individual and social acts. At the same time that such persons are among people, they are also in the presence of their Lord. When they are in a crowd, they are concurrently in mystical seclusion.

While their physical bodies are striving to realize their material aims, engaged in various sweet and bitter, agreeable and unpleasant, beautiful and repugnant eventualities, and bound by the events of this disruptive world, their hearts are free and they reside in a calm world. Every which way they turn, they see naught but the face of their God:

﴿...فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ... ﴾

“Whichever way you turn, you face Allah...”¹⁸

As we have made clear, devout Muslims extend their spiritual lives throughout their material ones. Wherever they are, everything they do is linked to their Lord. For such persons, all physical occupations are like a mirror that display God.

However, when other people think of spiritual life they see normal and fitrah life as a veil between themselves and the truth they seek. Therefore, they necessarily abandon their normal life and take an abnormal lifestyle upon themselves like Christian monks, Indian Brahmins, or ascetic Yogis. Regardless of the type, such paths are severe and perseverance in them requires steely determination.

On the other hand, a person who pursues spiritual life through regular social life in accordance with the Islamic method knows very well that the ascetic way is easier than the Islamic. In truth, by abandoning normal life, ascetics flee and absolve themselves of the hardship of constant vigilance and struggle.

In truth, they have precluded themselves from the path of perfection—laid out by their genetic make-up

in the form of innate abilities and faculties—and conceive of a different path. That being so, will they realize the purpose that creation has determined for them?

In addition, in view of the facts that the world and all that is in it are creations of God and every phenomenon with their myriad differences are signs of Truth and signs of God, and humans and their various fitrah properties are among these signs, we must be aware of and know God in the process of our spiritual lives and all these mirrors must be used to acquire complete knowledge of the beauty of Truth, else we will realize no benefit from our endeavors but deficient knowledge or complete ignorance.

4. Knowledge and awareness from the standpoint of Islam

A person who has read about the religions of the world will have no doubt that Islam’s honor and reverence regarding knowledge and understanding and its encouragement and eagerness regarding obtaining knowledge cannot be found in any religion whether divine or secular. The Holy Qur’an proclaims:

﴿...هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ...﴾

“Are those who know and those who do not know equal?”¹⁹

The Holy Qur’an has greatly and lucidly venerated the high status of knowledge. The Noble Prophet declares:

طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم. اطلبوا العلم من المهد إلى اللحد. اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين.

“Seeking knowledge is a religious duty of all Muslims.” “Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.” and “Seek knowledge even if it is in China (far away).”

The Holy Qur’an commands its adherents to never leave the path of knowledge and to refrain from following conjecture and accepting anything heard, seen, or conceived without contemplation because the ears, eyes, and minds are responsible:

﴿وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا﴾

“And adhere not to that which you have no knowledge because the ears, eyes, and hearts will be interrogated.”²⁰

Clearly, Islam encourages its followers to attain knowledge with full force. Among the types of knowledge, it deems learning the theoretical teachings and practical laws obligatory:

﴿...وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“All believers must not go out to jihād; rather, from each party a group must engage in learning religious knowledge and undertake religious promotion...”²¹

It is a reality that the ability of various individuals is different in regard to understanding knowledge and scientific truths. Some people do not have great talent for logical reasoning and exist in the workplace and the material level of life.

Others possess analytic thought and naturally enjoy understanding profound intellectual knowledge and scientific theories. Still others turn a blind eye to thought and action and spiritually forfeit the dismal world of matter and its beguiling beauties and ephemeral pleasures. They discover within themselves a special passion for the infinite and everlasting beauties of which the charms of this world are just a sample or a shadow.

These individuals can easily apprehend the truths and secrets of the other world using their inner intuition.

Bearing in mind this obvious variance among people, Islam instructs in three different manners and speaks with each of these groups in their own language.

It educates and edifies some using religious forms, others using free reasoning, and the rest by way of jihād of the soul and inner purification. God, the Almighty, gives an exemplum regarding His teachings:

﴿...أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا﴾

“He sent down water from the sky that flowed in every channel to the extent of its capacity...”²²

Also, the Holy Prophet stated:

«نحن معاشر الأنبياء، أمرنا أن نكلم الناس على قدر عقولهم»

“We, the group of prophets, are charged to speak with the people on a level they can understand.”²³

A. The method of instruction

Among its adherents, Islam has not given those with little talent for reasoning who are faced with error and deviation in this path, a greater burden than they can bear. It teaches them the threefold principle of religion, i.e. tawhīd, nubuwah, and ma‘ād, using simple instructive statements—pure commands and injunctions. Such statements are prolific in Qur’anic verses and narrations from the venerable Prophet

(S) and the custodians of the religion.

Of course, this threefold principle, which humans can easily reason out with their fitrah, may be only accepted as a result of sure knowledge. In truth, this policy makes rationalistic the other teachings this group has accepted without reasoning, since the rightfulness of prophethood makes all the statements of the Prophet valid and conclusive.

B. The method of reason

Islam trains people who have healthy minds and the talent for understanding scientific theories and logical reasoning by free argumentation. This means that it guides them toward what their realistic, unaffected fitrah understands, as opposed to first imposing and inculcating its ideas and then bringing ostensible reasons to support them.

The Book and Tradition—i.e. Qur’anic verses and the sayings of the esteemed Prophet (S) and the guiding Imāms (‘a), which clarify the aims of the Qur’an—are profuse with logical reasoning. In them, Islamic beliefs are explained in detail with the clearest and most decisive of reasons. They also speak of the general interests of Islamic laws and decrees.

Of course, one must not disregard the fact that discussion of the expedience of laws does not signify that a Muslim or the Islamic society should not accept a decree until they understand its benefits. As I previously pointed out, all these precepts have been received from the Prophet and substantiation of prophethood is a compact proof of the validity of these precepts, even though their detailed rationalization may not be available.

Fundamentally, execution of laws that are in circulation in advanced or primitive human societies cannot depend on the theoretical acceptance of the individual. Individuals cannot be considered free in accepting or rejecting rules and regulations whether or not the law itself approves of intellectual criticism. Otherwise, dissolution of the society would be imminent. Indeed, people are free to give their opinions on these matters but they cannot disobey standing regulations unless the legislative authority declares the annulment of a particular law.

Moreover, following a religious leader [taqlīd]²⁴ cannot be considered inconsistent with the general mandate that an action must only be performed in knowledge and a breach of the aforementioned verse:

﴿...وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ﴾

“And adhere not to that which you have no knowledge...” ²⁵

This is because the reality of the aforesaid taqlīd is that uninformed persons who cannot determine their duty should follow an erudite that can. Referral to an expert when a person lacks discernment is an

incontestable intellectual principle.

It differs from censurable imitation whereby people unquestionably devote themselves to a person whose scientific competence has not been acknowledged. As per the instinct of realism, humans do not depart upon a path that they do not know and if they are forced to traverse it, they ask a person who knows it and they utilize that person's knowledge as if it were their own. If a sick person is not a doctor, they consult one.

Whenever a person is in need, they take a person as their guide that is an authority in resolving that particular need. No person can be found in the world that is an expert in all things.

C. The method of edification and purification

Those who possess genuine talent in rending their hearts away from material attachment and turning their backs upon the delusory adornments and phantasmal desires of this fleeting world—those who have come to draw a debunking line through everything besides God [m^ع saw^ع All^عh] and turn a blind eye upon all the beauty and ugliness, the sweet and bitter, and the ups and downs of this impermanent existence—have opened their inner eyes towards the everlasting world to perceive the grandeur of the Truth without the veil of matter.

They want to traverse the stages of perfection prior to taking their leave of this transient world, gaining proximity to God. Islam reveals mystic secrets to these individuals in the veiled and esoteric fashion they are familiar with and understand and guides them from the nadir of ignorance to the zenith of knowledge.

Is Islamic mysticism derived from its Hindu counterpart?

Some foreign scholars have made statements such as, “Islamic mysticism has originated from Hindu mysticism and the Islamic tradition is nothing but a series of rigid simple beliefs and dry devotions.”

In order to answer these claimants, the following hemistich must be cited:

سخن شناس نه اي دلبرا، خطا اينجاست

You are not a knower of words, O dearest, your error is this.

Of course, I do not intend to defend Islamic mysticism and vindicate its various methods of mystical experience or distinguish their methods from that of the Hindu, just as I did not intend, in the discussion regarding the method of reason, to endorse overall everything written by Islamic philosophers or in the discussion regarding the method of religious forms to vindicate all practices of the Islamic masses.

Rather, my aim in this article is only to concisely review the main documents of Islam, which are the Book and Tradition, without refuting or ratifying the words or behavior of each of the aforementioned groups.

The claim by these scholars is founded upon the principle of evolution, upon which they establish their scientific thoughts and by which they account for the transformation and development of natural phenomena. They have generalized this principle to encompass all events even customs and traditions, and instinctual, *fitrā*, and spiritual manifestations. They seek the source of every event in previous ones.

This approach is the basis they use when they say that Islamic laws have been derived from Roman law or that Islamic beliefs have been adapted from the thoughts of Greek philosophers. They have even gone so far as to claim that religious beliefs are the evolved form of views from the Age of Myths.

These scholars have made two errors:

First, they have taken it for granted that what we call mystical perception is a form of intellectual understanding. As a result, they consider the knowledge gained by mystics through inner purification to be a series of poetic ideas such that a talented poet with a sweet-sounding tongue can spin these thoughts better than a divine sage.

They have made a similar mistake in regard to revelation—which is the heavenly apprehension of prophets and the instrument by which divine knowledge and laws are imparted. This is why they have introduced the Greek thoughts and Roman laws as the root of Islamic beliefs and commandments. This is totally clear from their discussions regarding prophethood and the prophets' way of thinking.

The statements available from the prophets—whether or not they are righteous in their claims—patently impugn and refute this theory.

Second, even if we consider the principle of evolution as definite and valid, we should not relate it to the principle of typical instinct. In the absence of external impediments, the instinct that creation has made dormant in a type or species will manifest in an individual of that species, whether or not the species has any antecedents.

For instance, we could say that Arabs learned variety in foods and the making of diverse meals from non-Arabs; or that democracy and its administrative institutions were transmitted to the East from the West. However, this cannot be said of the principle of society and government.

It was made clear in previous discussions that self-edification and self-purification—spiritual life and mystical intuition [*dhawq*]²—is a natural human instinct.

With the existence of talent and dissipation of obstructions, this instinct awakens and the person sets out upon this path.

With the advent of religions that more or less involve the eternal and supernatural world, the innate ability of some followers will awaken and rend their hearts away from the attachments of this fleeting, calamitous, woeful world and turn to the world of eternity for the sake of absolute tranquility. In practice, in every religion that contains the name of God we see a group devoted to spiritual life and the path of mysticism.

By comparing the spirituality of the available main texts of various religions, we clearly see that major Islamic texts describe eternal human prosperity and the everlasting world more than any other religion. Therefore, emergence of the method of purification in Islam is natural, without its origination having anything to do with India or any other place.

Besides, history shows that some of the disciples of Amr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ('a), such as Salmān, Kumayl, Rashīd, Maytham, and Uways, had spiritual lives under his instruction before Muslims had even set foot in India or had any dealings with Indians. That the various types of Islamic Sufism claim linkage—both rightly and falsely—to Imām 'Alī ('a), makes the foregoing matter certain.

The difference between Islamic mysticism and other varieties

Indeed, when the elegant statements of Islam are compared with the assertions of others, especially Hindu mysticism, we see that Islam has the distinction that its mystical truths are hidden within general statements that other groups can benefit from to the extent of their understanding and it refrains from divulging secrets whereas other creeds do not possess this distinction. As a result, Islam has remained safe from the detrimental effects caused by the unveiled teachings of others.

For example, if we refer to Hindu mysticism to review the Vedic Upanishads—the sections devoted to divine teachings—and interpret the texts as a consolidated whole and ponder upon every statement, we will see that it has no purpose but a detailed and profound monotheism.

However, it states its valid arguments in such an unveiled manner that any referrer that does not have complete mystic knowledge will see its elegant and valid words as no more than a series of superstitious beliefs. In the least, from statements that describe monotheism in the utmost detail, they will realize nothing but incarnation [hulūq], union [ittihād], and idolatrous beliefs.

This is substantiated by the theories of Sanskritist orientalists regarding Hindu mysticism. After all their inquisitiveness regarding the major Brahman and Buddhist texts, they now declare Hindu mysticism to be a series of superstitions that are the intellectual products of Indians bereft of life privileges. The main reason for these reactions is that the wordings of these texts are intrepidly conspicuous and objectionable.[26](#)

[The corrupt results of Hindu mysticism](#)

The disagreeable method adopted by Hindu mysticism has produced three harmful results:

1. When the mysticism that solely aims at undiluted monism of the pure God enters the awareness of the unenlightened masses, it becomes the opposite of what it was intended and turns into idolatry. Instead of one God, a number of gods equal to the desires of people are worshiped: angels, fairies, and human saints.

The texts of the Magians show that their mysticism was afflicted with this same doom. Even though making idols was not common among adherents of this religion, they follow the same method as Hindu idolatry in venerating angels, human saints, and the elements—especially fire.

In practice, Christian mysticism, an example of which exists at the beginning of the Gospel of John, is similar to Hindu mysticism. The trinity [tathl[th] in this religion is the same trinity of Wathaniyyah—a type of idolatry.²⁷

2. The edicts this mysticism gives to its followers are negative. Therefore, all the positive acts that divine creation has set in the human world, each as a sign of the Creator and each a mirror of His pure attributes, are completely discarded from spiritual life. This is a great deficiency that has befallen this mysticism. Furthermore, the mysticisms of the Magians and Christians have also been afflicted with this flaw. Only Islam has expanded its spiritual life to the human world and all its positive and negative phenomena.

3. Hindu mysticism deprives some strata of people from spiritual life, such as women and some men. Also, in Christianity, women are afforded limited spiritual growth. Only Islam does not deprive anyone and instructs each person commensurate with his or her own individual disposition.

[Back to the Islamic method](#)

The creation of God has put a particular material life within the reach of humans, has equipped everyone with similar mechanisms, and does not discriminate between humans.

It has also made spiritual life, which is beyond the veil of material life, available to all. Just as it has set the perfection of physical human life in the manifestation of our actions and positive and negative works, accomplished by the body, it has likewise extended the perfection of spiritual life to all our actions and positive and negative works.

In line with creation, Islam considers spiritual life as everyone's right and does not discriminate against any group. It also extends spiritual life to all positive and negative aspects of human life, and invites humans to follow a specific transcendent path within the constraints of social life and positive conduct.

While teaching this method, it hints at allusions in its normal and general statements. This is because our literal assertions are born of public opinion, and we use them in the process of our material and social lives for mutual understanding and conveying our ideas and intellectual concepts to each other.

Mystical experience which is rarer than elixir and has never become common throughout the history of humanity is completely apart from this method. A person who wants to express mystical insight using another method—i.e. thought—is like a person who wants to describe various colors to a congenitally blind person using words—i.e. the sense of hearing. A person who puts mystic experience into words is just like a person who carries water with a sieve.

[An outline of the spiritual journey](#)

One may think that our claim that Islam expresses the spiritual path using hints and allusions is baseless and just a shot in the dark.

However, adequate contemplation of Islamic teachings and their examination through the passionate and ecstatic state of this group has proven the contrary. In a vague and general manner, it reveals the stages of perfection that the wayfarers of this path traverse. Even so, in order to truly and elaborately understand these stages, there is no way but mystical intuition [dhawq].

This group, who are besotted with the infinite beauty and perfection of the Truth, worship God because of their love and affection, not due to desire of rewards or fear of punishment. Worship of God for attaining paradise or avoiding hell is in truth worship of rewards or punishment, not worship of God. As a result of the love and devotion pervading their hearts, especially after hearing that God, the Exalted, states:

﴿...فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ﴾

“Remember Me that I remember you...”[28](#)

and discovering hundreds of other verses that speak of the remembrance of God, such as:

﴿...الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ﴾

“They remember Allah standing, sitting, and laying on their sides (whichever way they face and in whatever state they are)...”[29](#)

and when they hear the message of their Beloved that:

﴿إِنَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“Surely in the heavens and earth there are (many) signs for the believers.” [30](#)

﴿...وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ...﴾

“And there is not a thing but celebrates His praise...” [31](#)

﴿...فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ...﴾

“Whichever way you turn, you face Allah...” [32](#)

and find out that all beings are mirrors each of which display the unparalleled beauty of the Truth and that, besides being mirrors, they possess no independent existence of their own; thus, they observe all things with loving eyes and probing hearts and have no intention but to behold the beauty of the true Beloved.

And when they hear God’s message that:

﴿...يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ﴾

“O you who believe! Be mindful of your selves (souls): a person who is gone astray cannot harm you if you are rightly guided...” [33](#)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَاقِيهِ﴾

“O human! Verily you are striving towards your Lord and you shall encounter Him.” [34](#)

they understand that creation has confined them to the enclosure of their selves and that they have no way towards God save the way of their selves. Everything that they see or discover from this wide world, they also see and discover through their selves.

In this stage, one finds that they are detached from everywhere and everything; that there is no one but themselves and their God. Such persons are alone even if they are among thousands and even though others may see them among a crowd, they perceive themselves in utter seclusion unattainable by any save God.

At this moment, they look at themselves and everything within themselves, seeing nothing but a mirror in which the matchless beauty of the Truth is manifest. There remains nothing save God.

When they remember God in this manner and stabilize remembrance of God in their hearts, free of

vanity, through various devotions, they shall enter the first rank of the people of certitude [yaqīn]. Thus, the following divine covenant will be realized for them.

﴿ وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴾

“And worship your Lord until you attain certainty.”³⁵

At this moment, the doors to the kingdom of the heavens and the earth will open to them and they will perceive everything as being from Him. Regarding Abraham, the Qur’an states:

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِيْ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ مَلَكُوْتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَلِيَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُؤَقِنِيْنَ ﴾

“Thus, We show Abraham the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth that he becomes one of those having certitude.”³⁶

First, the unity of divine acts [tawhīd-i af‘āl] will be revealed unto them and they will directly perceive that it is God that directs the world and everything in it; that the innumerable causes and factors in the world of creation that are engaged in various tasks acting in accordance to their attribute—voluntary acts with the attribute of volition and compulsory movements true to compulsion—are painted with His (figuratively) capable hands.

Whether it is a cause, an effect, or the relationship between them, all are created and formed by Him:

﴿ ...وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ﴾

“And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth...”³⁷

Then they will start discovering the unity of divine names and attributes [tawhīd-i asmā’ wa sifāt] and openly discern that every attribute of perfection that manifests in this vast world and every beauty and grandeur that is seen, including life, knowledge, power, glory, and splendor, are all rays from the never-ending light source of Truth that radiate from the existential windows of the diverse objects in the world:

﴿ ...وَلِلّٰهِ الْاَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنٰى ﴾

“And to God belong names (even) more beautiful...”³⁸

Then in the third stage, they perceive that all these various attributes are manifestations of an infinite Essence and are in truth all exactly the same and identical to the Essence:

﴿ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ... ﴾

“Say: Allah is the Creator of all things and He is the One and the Predominant (over all things).”³⁹

Superiority of the tawhīd of Islam

These were the threefold stages of tawhīd (monotheism) that are allotted to the travelers of the path of Truth. When followers of various Godly religions who love truth journey upon this path, they assign it as their supreme aim. However, in order to instruct its wayfarers, Islam has discovered an apex higher than that found by others, determining it as their ultimate destination.

That which is understood from Brahman, Buddhist, Sabian, Christian, and other texts is merely that they have negated the quality of limitation from the Truth, identifying Him as an infinite truth beyond all status. However, Islam has even negated infinitude—because it is an attribute and all attributes limit their subjects—as a quality of God. It considers the Holy Essence to be above all status and even beyond this description. This stage of tawhīd cannot be found in any place but the holy creed of Islam.

According to a narration cited in the book “Al-Kifāy” from the sixth Imām (‘a), he interprets this stage from the following holy verse. In view of the fact that this discussion is beyond the level I have pursued in this article up until now, I will forbear from further explication.

﴿... قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى ﴾

“Say: call upon Allah or call upon the Merciful [rahmān]. Whichsoever you call upon, He has names (even) more beautiful...”⁴⁰

Divine guidance

From the point they begin to the place where they achieve rest, wayfarers of the path to perfection have many mystic insights that are hidden from the eyes and hearts of the earthbound of the physical world. This topic is beyond the limits of this article. That which is now important is the issue of divine guidance.

When these wayfarers enter the stage of tawhīd and proximity to God, they lose straight away everything they had until then, everything they thought was theirs, and all independence they claimed to be their own.

Seeing all as belonging to the Truth, they forswear their false claims. This is when they realize the greatest tranquility and are freed of all suffering, fear, and sorrow since they do not own anything to be afraid of its possible harm or be sorrowful for harm realized.

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴾
﴿... نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ﴾

“Verily upon those who said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ then persevered, angels descend saying, ‘Fear not nor feel sorrow; receive joyous tidings of the Paradise you were promised. We are your guardians and guides in the world and in the Hereafter’...”[41](#)

﴿ أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴾

“Lo! Verily the friends of Allah feel no fear nor do they feel sorrow.”[42](#)

It is then that the bitter and sweet, the ugliness and beauty, and the ups and downs of the world will become one for them. They will attain a different existence, seeing the world and all that is in it in a new light:

﴿...أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ ﴾

“Is he who was dead and We brought to life and set for him a light with which he walks among people like his counterpart in darkness?”[43](#)

Ultimately, they and everything they had becomes of God and God becomes of them:

«من كان لله، كان الله له»

“Those who are for Allah, Allah is for them.”[44](#)

The foregoing discussions have made it apparent that the spiritual life in Islam is more extensive and profound than other religions. Because it encompasses all pauses and motions, positive and negative, performed by humans and its zenith rises above the aims of other creeds.[45](#)

[1.](#) Regarding the reasons for the advance of Islam and the triumph of Muslims over Christians in the Crusades and other battles, Hendrik Willem Van Loon states in “The Story of Mankind”:

“The Prophet promised that those who fell, facing the enemy, would go directly to Heaven. This made sudden death in the field preferable to a long but dreary existence upon this earth. It gave the Mohammedans an enormous advantage over the Crusaders who were in constant dread of a dark hereafter, and who stuck to the good things of this world as long as they possibly could. Incidentally, it explains why even today Muslim soldiers will charge into the fire of European machine guns quite indifferent to the fate that awaits them and why they are such dangerous and persistent enemies.”

[2.](#) Ṣurat al-Saff 61:8.

[3.](#) Ṣurat al-Aʿraf 7:44–45.

[4.](#) Ṣurat al-Hujurat 49: 13.

5. [Sūrat al-‘Imrān 3:195.](#)
6. [Sūrat Yūnus 10:32.](#)
7. [Sūrat al-Mu‘minīn 23:71.](#)
8. [Sūrat T̄ H̄ 20:50.](#)
9. [Sūrat al-A‘l̄ 87:2–3.](#)
10. [Sūrat ‘Abas 80:18–20.](#)
11. [Sūrat al-R̄m 30:30.](#)
12. [Sūrat al-Shams 91:7–10.](#)
13. [Sūrat al-Qisas 28:68.](#)
14. [Sūrat al-‘Imrān 3:19.](#)
15. [Sūrat al-‘Imrān 3:85.](#)
16. This point is understood from the questions and answers between Herod and Christ after his imprisonment and it has been noted in the Gospels. In “The Story of Mankind”, Hendrik Van Loon cites this from Christ in a historical letter reproduced in the story of Joshua of Nazareth.
17. [Sūrat al-‘Imrān 3:64.](#)
18. [Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:115.](#)
19. [Sūrat al-Zumar 39:9.](#)
20. [Sūrat al-Isr̄’ 17:36.](#)
21. [Sūrat al-Tawbah \(or Bar̄’ah\) 9:122.](#)
22. [Sūrat al-Ra’d 13:17.](#)
23. [Us̄l al-K̄f̄, vol. 1, p. 23.](#)
24. Those who cannot elicit the practical precepts and laws of Islam from their original documents must refer to the opinion of a mujtahid—i.e., a person who has the capability and mastery to deduce precepts—and act accordingly.
25. [Sūrat al-Isr̄’ 17:36.](#)
26. In a book he wrote describing the religion and asceticism of Buddha, an orientalist named Hermann Oldenberg, repeatedly elucidates that the mystic beliefs of Hindus are mingled with folly. He also states that Buddha considers the world to be independent of God.
27. For more information, refer to “Al-‘Aq̄id al-Wathaniyyah f̄ al-Millah al-Nasr̄niyyah” (Idolatrous Beliefs in the Christian Nation).
28. [Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:152.](#)
29. [Sūrat al-‘Imrān 3:191.](#)
30. [Sūrat al-J̄thiyah 45:3.](#)
31. [Sūrat al-Isr̄’ 17:44.](#)
32. [Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:115.](#)
33. [Sūrat al-M̄idah 5:105.](#)
34. [Sūrat al-Inshiq̄q 84:6.](#)
35. [Sūrat al-Hijr 15:99.](#)
36. [Sūrat al-An‘ām 6:75.](#)
37. [Sūrat al-J̄thiyah 45:27.](#)
38. [Sūrat al-A‘r̄f 7:180.](#)
39. [Sūrat al-Ra’d 13:16.](#)
40. [Sūrat al-Isr̄’ 17:110.](#)
41. [Sūrat Fussilat 41:30–31.](#)
42. [Sūrat Yūnus 10:62.](#)
43. [Sūrat al-An‘ām 6:122.](#)
44. [Bih̄r al-Anw̄r, vol. 82, p. 197; W̄f̄, vol. 8, p. 784.](#)
45. [Extracted from “Muhammad Kh̄tam-e Paȳambar̄n”.](#)

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