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Part 1: Allah

Lesson 1: Seeking God

*Why do we think about God and study ways of knowing the Creator of the universe?

1. Love of awareness and becoming familiar with our world is within all of us.

We all want to know, in truth: Did this elevated heaven, with its beautiful stars, this extensive earth, with its heart-rendering views; these various creatures; beautiful birds; various kinds of fish, the seas and flowers ; the blossoms, plants, abundant trees, whose tops reach towards the heavens; did all of these things come into being of their own free will or were all of these wonderful forms painted by an expert, a powerful painter?

Beyond all of this, the first question which comes to mind for all of us is: Where did we come from? Where are we? Where are we going? If we know the answers to these three questions, how happy will we be! That is, if we know where our life began and where it will finally end and what duties we have now, our searching spirit tells us: you must not sit quietly until the answers come.

It often happens that in an automobile accident, a person is injured and becomes unconscious and for his treatment, they take him to a hospital. When his condition has improved a bit, and when he awakens, the first thing which he asks of those around him is, "Where am I? Why did you bring me here? When can I leave here?" All of these questions show that a person cannot remain indifferent and not ask these questions.

Thus, the first thing which sends us looking for God and understanding of the creation of the world of existence is our very thirsty spirit of search.

2. **A sense of thankfulness**: Pretend that you have been invited to a very important affair and all means

of convenience have been provided for you but, because you have been invited through your brother, you do not know the host well. The first thing you will want to do when you enter the gathering is to find the host to thank him.

When we look at this wide-spread created world and the multiple blessings which have been provided for us: eyes which see, ears which hear, -sufficient intelligence, various physical and psychological abilities, various means for living and for earning our livelihood, we automatically begin to think about trying to know He Who has given us all of these blessings and even though He does not need our thanks, we still thank. Him and, until we do this, we are unhappy with ourselves and feel we have not done a duty. This is another reason why we begin to search to come to know God.

3. The bond between things to our benefit and things to our harm with this example: Pretend that we are going on a journey and we reach a cross-road in which there is a great deal of commotion. Everyone warns us not to stop at this cross-road because there is great danger there. Each group invites us to go its way. One group says, "The best way is to go East." Another says, "Go West. It is the best road." The third group invites us to a road or a way which is between the other two, saying, "This is the only way of saving yourself from danger and reaching your home safely.

This is the way that will give you happiness and security and be a place of refuge for you."
Would we allow ourselves to choose a way without study? Will our mind allow us to stop there and not choose any way? Clearly not.

Rather, our mind and our wisdom tells US to begin immediately to study and research, to listen to the words of each group carefully and accept whichever way has the most correct signs, speaks the truth and has convincing reasons for taking that way. Having assured ourselves of the right way, we take it and move forward.

In life in this world, also, we have such a condition.
Different religions and schools of thought invite us to take their way, but as our fate, our fortune and misfortune, our progress and backwardness depends upon our study and making the best choice, we are obliged to think about this and prevent ourselves from falling into misfortune, corruption and difficulties.

This is yet another reason which invites us to search for the Creator of the world. The Holy Quran says,

فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ

"So give good tidings to my servants, those who listen to the sayings and follow the best of it ... " (***39: 17-18***)

Think and Answer

1. Other than what your mother and father have told you about God, have you seriously thought about Him?

2. Can you say what the difference is between 'searching for God' and 'knowing God'?

3. Have you ever felt a deep sense of spiritual love for God when you have whispered your prayers to Him?

Lesson 2: The Signs of God in Our Daily Life

1. Knowing God and the Progress of Science

Pretend that a friend has come from a trip and has brought a book as a present for you. He says that it is an excellent book, because the author of this book is full of information by a very great scholar, who is accurate, an expert and a genius in his own field.

You will most certainly not study this book carelessly. Rather you will concentrate on every sentence and even the choice of words made and if there be a sentence there that you not understand, perhaps you will spend hours and even days, whenever you can, studying it until the meaning of it becomes clear to you. Why? Because the 'author of this book is not J. normal average person but rather a great scholar who considers every word he uses carefully.

But if the opposite were true and they had said to you, "This book may appear to be beautiful and pleasing on the outside, but the author is not very literate and he has no base in science and has not taken any care," it is clear that you will only quickly glance at the book and wherever you found something unclear in it, you would say, "This is because the author was uninformed and it is a waste of time for a person to study this." The world of creation is like a great book in which every creature forms a word or sentence in that.

From the point of view of a person who worships God, every atom of this universe is worthy of study. A person who has faith in the ray of the light of worshipping God, will make use of a special sense of curiosity in studying the secrets of creation and it is this very fact which helps science and human knowledge to progress – because he knows that the Creator of this universe has endless knowledge and power an everything He does is based on a wisdom and a philosophy.

Thus, he studies with greater care, more profoundly in order to be able to understand the secrets better.

But a materialist has no reason to discover the secret of creation for he believes that nature is senseless. If we look at the work of a materialist scholar, it is in the same rank because he accepts God but calls him 'nature'. Why? Because he accepts an order and a program in Nature.

2. Knowing God, Endeavoring and Hope

Whenever a difficult and complicated event takes place in the life of a human being, whenever all doors are somehow closed, one senses weakness, hopelessness and loneliness, when confronted by these difficulties, a person with faith in God then seeks His help, which He gives.

A person who has faith in God does not see himself or herself as being alone or powerless. He or she does not despair. He or she does not sense' weakness or inability, because God is above all difficulties and everything is easy for him.

With hope in His kindness, support and help, he or she will struggle against the difficulty and will use all of his or her energies. With love and hope, one will continue his or her endeavors and efforts and will overcome the difficulty.

Yea. Faith in God is a great place of refuge for a human being. Faith in God is the substance of perseverance and steadfastness. Faith in God always keeps hope in hearts alive. Because of this, individuals with faith never attempt to commit suicide because attempts at suicide comes from despair, a complete lack of hope and a feeling of having failed but individuals with faith neither lose hope nor do they sense failure.

3. Knowing God and the Sense of Responsibility

We know a doctor who, when poor people visit him, not only does he not get money from them for the visit, but he gives them money and drugs and if he senses a danger for that person, he will stay all night in his home. These are people who worship God and have faith.

But we also know a doctor who, until the money of the visit is not paid, he will not take the first step for the sick person because he does not have a strong faith.

A person who has faith, no matter what his or her profession is, senses responsibility, knows his or her duties, does good, readily forgives and constantly sees a spiritual policeman within his or her soul who watches over one's deeds.

But people who lack faith are selfish and dangerous people who have no sense of responsibility. Oppression, suppression and aggression against the rights of others 15 easy for them and they are less prepared to do good.

4. Knowing God and Peacefulness

Psychologists say that mental and psychological diseases are greater in our time than in any other. They say that one of the factors IS anxiety over future events, anxiety over death, anxiety over war and anxiety of fear and failure. They add, "Among the things which can take anxiety away from a person's spirit is faith in God because whenever an anxiety wants to penetrate one's spirit, faith in God pushes it away.

A God Who is kind, a God Who helps one meet one's needs, a God Who is aware of His servants condition and if they turn towards Him, He helps them and frees them from anxiety.

Because of this, a real believer always has a sense of peacefulness and no anxiety exists within his or her spirit. Whatever such a person does, is for God. Even if one suffers a loss, one seeks its replacement from Him. Such a person even enters the war front with a smile.

The Holy Quran says,

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ

"It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with oppression - that are (truly) in peacefulness, for they are on (right) guidance;" (6:82)

Think and Answer

1. Do you recall the fate of the people in the past which the Quranic verse refers to?

2. Do you know why some individuals, who pretend to have faith in God, are morally corrupt and none of the four effects mentioned above can be found in them?

Lesson 3: Two Clear Ways of Knowing God

From the earliest of times until today, books have been, written about coming to know God and a great deal has been said by scholars and non-scholars.

Each one chooses a way in order to come to understand this issue but from among all of the ways, there are two ways which can help us to grow near to this great Creator of the universe:

First, an inward way (the closest way) Second, an outward way (the clearest way)

With the first way, we get in touch with our deep, inner self and we hear the cry of monotheism from within the depths of ourselves.

With the second way, we explore the expansive created world, and we see the signs of the Creator in all creatures and in the heart of every atom. Each one of these two ways requires a great deal of explanation, but what we will try –to do is to briefly study each one of these two ways.

The Inward Way

Let us think about the following:

1. Scholars say that every human being who thinks, from whatever class or race one be, if left alone, receives no special training, not even hears the, words of people who worship God nor the words of materialists , that person will naturally become aware of a force or power which is above nature and which rules all of the world.

In the corners of one's heart and spirit, one will sense a very subtle sound, which is full of kindness and, at the same time, clear and firm, which calls one towards the great Source of the universe and the power that we call God. This is that very pure, divinely–created human nature of people.

2. It is possible that one becomes occupied with the commotion in the material world and one's daily life and the lights and attractions of life and one may temporarily neglect to hear this sound, but when one finds oneself facing problems and difficulties, whenever a natural catastrophe like a flood or an earthquake of a hurricane comes, yea, at this time, when one is curtailed from all means of material life, and when one finds no place of refuge, this inner sound gains strength. One senses that within one's self, a power is calling one, a power which is superior to all forces, a secret force and all difficulties and problems seem simple before it.

It is rare to find a person who in such difficulties does not automatically turn to God. It is this issue which shows how close we are to Him and how close He is to us. He is in our spirit and our very soul. Of course, the cry of instinct (nature) is always within a person but at times like this, it finds greater force.

3. Our history shows that even the powerful rulers who, at the time of peace and calm, refuse to even mention the Name of God, when the bases of their power begin to shake an d they see that they are about to lose all of their power, they turn to God and they hear the voice of their Divinely created nature.

History tells us that when Pharaoh saw that he was drowning in the waves of the sea, he said, "I confess that there is no god but the great God of Moses." This cry came from his soul. Not only Pharaoh, but all people who are in a state or condition like he was, cry out the same thing he did.

4. If you study the real reasons for this, you will agree that a light shines from there which calls you to God. Perhaps there have been times when you have met with difficulties and problems and all of the

usual ways of solving problems do not work. At that moment, most certainly, you have seen that there is a force in the world which can easily solve it.

At this moment, a hope mixed with love fills your spirit and soul and it removes the clouds of darkness from our soul. Yeah. This is the closest way which a person can take to God.

Only one Question

We know that this question may arise for some of you. Does this possibility not exist that based upon what we have been taught by our environment, our father and mother, at sensitive moments, we begin to think that we should not ask God for help?

We know you are right and correct in asking this question, but we have a very interesting answer which we give in the next lesson. The Holy Quran says,

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

"Now, if they embark on a boat. they call on God, making their devotion sincerely (and exclusively) to Him; but when He has delivered them safely to (dry) land. behold, they give a share (of their worship to others)!" (29:65)

Think and Answer

1. Try to memorize the surah number, verse number and meaning of word to word translation and gradually become familiar with the language of the Holy Quran.

2. Has a complicated problem ever arisen for you for which no solution seemed available to you except the kindness of God, the Almighty? (Write or tell about it briefly).

3. Why is this way called the closest way?

Lesson 4: An Answer to an Important Question

Question: In the previous lesson, we realized or recognized that we always hear the voice of monotheism (tawhid) and worship of God from within our souls and especially at times of difficulty, this voice becomes stronger and clearer and we naturally begin to think about God arid we seek His help and kindness.

Here it is possible that this question arise that this inner voice which we call the voice of Our 'God-given nature' (fitrat) is the result of things which we have heard from our environment and our mother and father have told us or from school and it has become very normal and common for us.

Answer: The answer to this requires a brief introduction. Customs change. We cannot find a custom which has not changed throughout history among all nations. Thus, when we see that this is something which exists among all nations, has existed at all times and during all ages, without exception, we should realize that its roots are in fitrat and the it is woven into the spirit and soul of human beings.

For instance, the love of a mother for her child. This can in no way be said to come from propaganda or ha bit or custom because in no tri be or nation, or a t any time or age, can you see that a mother does not love her child.

Of course, it is possible that a mother, because of a mental disturbance, do away with herself or a father during the Age of Ignorance in Arabia (the time before the appearance of Islam) buried his girl children alive became his thoughts were wrong and based on superstitions but these are very rare cases.

Looking at this introduction, recalling how people in the past and in the present worship God, we see (as this lesson is a little bit more difficult, please pay careful attention).

As stated by sociologists and historians, there has been no time in history when belief in God and faith did not exist among people. Rather, in every age and time and at all moments of this world, some form of belief existed and this, itself, is clear reason why the worship of God is from the depths of the spirit and its' source is fitrat of human beings, not that it is a result of customs we have accepted because if it were the consequences of habit and custom, it would not be so extensive and eternal.

We even have rules which show that tribes who lived before written history began, had some kind of a belief system. Of course, there is no doubt that at times, when people had forgotten God as the Being Who is above nature, they searched for Him and looked for Him among creatures in nature and they made idols for themselves of things in nature. But with the, development of thought, human beings gradually were able to see the truth, stop worshipping idols which were material creatures and become familiar with the One God.

Some of the well-known psychologists clearly and directly say that the human spirit or soul has four senses:

First, the sense of knowledge which sends a person after science and knowledge and makes one's spirit thirsty for knowledge, whether or not this has any material benefit.

Second, the sense of goodness which is the source for moral and human issues in the world of humanity.

Third, the sense of beauty which is the source of poetry and literature and art in their real sense.

Fourth, the sense of belief which invites the human being to come to know God and to implement His Commands. In this way, we see that the sense of worship is one of the senses with the deepest roots of the spirit. That is they are never separate from each other.

In our future lessons we will see how most materialists even admit to the existence of God, even though they do not mention His Name and instead refer to nature or give Him other names but Qualities are given to nature which are, in fact, qualities of God.

For instance, they say, if nature has given two kidneys to human beings, it was because it knew that if one of these failed, the other would continue life, etc.

Does this explanation hold for a nature which lacks awareness and consciousness? Or is this not a reference to the All-knowing and Infinite God but calling Him, nature?

We can conclude from what has been said that:

* A love for God has always existed in us and will always continue.

* Faith in God is an eternal flame which warms our heart and spirit.

*In order to come to know God, we are not obliged to take a long and complicated way. We quickly turn inward and see we have faith in Him. The Holy Quran says,

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

"We are closer to the human being than his Jugular vein. " (***50: 16***)

Think and Answer

1. Write several examples of customs and several examples of things which are part of our God-given nature (fitrat).

2. Why do ignorant people turn to idol worship?

3. Why do materialists refer to God as Nature?

Lesson 5: A True Story

We have said that in the depths of the spirit of those who deny God with their tongue, a faith in God

exists.

There is no doubt that victories and successes – especially for individuals with few possibilities – develops pride and this very pride becomes the source for forgetfulness, to the point where often a person even forgets his or her own opinions. But the moment that a storm of difficulties throws their life into chaos and the strong wind of difficulties attacks that person from all sides, the curtains of pride and selfishness moves away from their eyes and divinely-created nature (fitrat) and monotheism (the belief that God is One) appears.

History gives many examples of individuals who were like this, whose lives were full of deceit:

There was a minister who was very strong and powerful in his age. He had taken control of most of the power and no one opposed him. One day he entered a meeting in which a group of religious scholars were present. He turned to them and said, "For how long will you continue to say that God exists? I have many reasons to prove other- wise."

He said this with special pride. As the scholars who were present knew that he was not a reasonable or logical person and that power and strength had made him so proud that no words of truth would affect him, they ignored him and remained silent, a meaningful and humble silence.

This event passed. After a time, the minister insulted someone. The ruler of the time had him arrested and thrown in to jail.

One of the scholars who was present at the gathering thought to himself that the time to awaken him had come. Now that he has gotten off the horse of pride and the curtain of self-interest has moved away from his eyes, and the sense of accepting the truth was awakened in him, if he contacts him and gives rum words of advice, it may produce good results. He received permission to visit him and he went to the prison. As he neared rum, he saw that he was in a room all alone, walking back and forth and thinking and he was recalling a poem which said, "We are all like drawings or paintings of a lion which are painted or drawn on a flag. When the wind blows, it moves and perhaps even attacks, but in reality it has nothing from itself. Its strength is the wind which gives it power. We, also, as we gain more power, have nothing from ourselves. It is God who has given this strength to us and whenever He wills, He can take it from us."

The above-mentioned scholar saw that under these conditions, not only does he not deny the existence of God, but he has become ardently aware of God. After greeting him he said, "Do you recall how you said you have many reasons for the non-existence of God. I have come to answer those many reasons with just one response, "God is He Who, with such ease, took your power away from you." He hung his head in shame and did not answer because he knew that he had been wrong and he saw the light of God within himself. The Holy Quran says,

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدْوًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنَتْ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

"We took the Israeli tribes across the sea, Pharaoh and his has is followed them in pride and insolence. At length, when overwhelmed with the flood. he said. 'I believe that there is no god except Him whom the Israeli tribes believe in. I am of those who submit (muslimin).' "(10:90)

Think and Answer

1. Describe the consequences of the true story in several lines.

2. Why are the Israeli tribe called "Israeli tribe"?

3. Who was Pharaoh? Where did he live? What claims did he make?

Lesson 6: The Second Way of Coming to Know God

The Outer Way

With a quick glance at the world that we live in, we realize that the world is not in chaos and disorder. Rather, all phenomena are in motion moving towards a clear and determined direction. The facilities of the world are like a great army which has been divided into well–organized units which move in a determined direction.

The following points will clarify any ambiguities:

1. In order to come into being and to remain, every living creature must be a part of a series of laws and special conditions. For instance, for a tree to be, water and suitable earth and a specific temperature are necessary for us to plant seeds and nourish them and each seed to become green and grow.

2. If these conditions do not exist, there is no possibility for growth and the choosing of these conditions and proving the necessary preliminaries requires an intellect and knowledge.

Every creature has a special effect which is exclusive to it. Water and fire each have their own particularities which do not separate from them and they constantly follow permanent laws.

3. All of the members (organs) of living creatures work and are coordinated with each other. As an example, this very human body, which is itself a world, all works together consciously and unconsciously in a special coordination. For instance, if a danger arises, all are mobilized for defense. This relationship and co-operation is another sign of the order in the universe.

4. One look at the world scene makes it clear that not only are all organs of one body of one living creature in co-ordination with each other, but all the various creatures of the world are also in special co-ordination with each other. For instance, for the nourishment of living creatures, the sun shines, clouds bring rain and the earth and resources of the earth also help. This all shows the existence of one clear system in the universe.

The Relationship of Order and Intellect

This truth is clear for everyone's conscience that whenever order exists in a facility, this shows intellect, thought, a plan and a goal.

Because whenever a human being sees order, permanent laws and a reckoning of things, he or she knows that beside that source, knowledge and power must also be sought and in understanding this, in one's conscience, he or she does not see need for reasoning.

He or she knows that a blind person or an illiterate person can never type a good essay or write a social or critical article, that a child of two years old can never paint a beautiful and valuable painting by the drawing of lines on a piece of paper. Ratner , if we see a good essay or read a good article, we know that a person who is literate or if we have seen very beautiful paintings, we will have no doubt that an expert painted them even if we have never met or seen that painter.

Thus, wherever there is a sense of order, besides that, there has been an intellect and however much larger that system be, it is more accurate and more interesting, the knowledge which brings that into being in the same proportion is greater.

Sometimes, in order to prove this issue that every system needs a source of knowledge, the law of probabilities, which has been achieved in high mathematics, is used to prove that, for instance, if an illiterate individual wants to type an article or an essay or a poem by accidently pressuring on the keys of the machine, according to the law of probabilities, this will take millions of years to attain for which one lifetime is not sufficient.

The Holy Quran says,

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

"Soon will We show them Our Signs upon the horizons and in their own souls, until it becomes

manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that Thy Nourisher is aware of all things." (***41:53***)

Think and Answer

1. Give a few examples (other than those presented in the story) about industrial units, the observation of which shows the existence of a Creator of the world Who is Aware.

2. What is the difference between 'horizons' and 'souls'? Give examples of God in the 'horizons' and within one's own 'soul' .

Lesson 7: Examples From Creation

Throughout the world, 'order', 'goal' and 'design' are apparent. Now pay attention as we study some examples of this. We will present some large and some small examples for you.

Fortunately, today, with the progress made in natural sciences, the discovery of the secrets and wonders of the world of nature, and the subtleties in the existence of human beings, animals and plants, the wondrous structure of a cell or an atom and the wondrous system of the stars, the doors of knowing God have been opened to us in such a way that one can clearly say that all books of natural science are books about the oneness and unity of God which teach us great lessons about the great Creator because these books remove the veils or curtains which cover the interesting order of the creatures of this world and show how important the Creator of this world is.

The center of administration of the country of your body

Our skull has been filled with grey matter called the brain. This brain forms the most accurate and exact system of our body because it commands all of the powers of our body and it manages all of the organs of our system.

In order to understand the importance of this great center, it would be a good idea for us to explain the following for you.

The newspapers had printed that a Shiraz University student in Khuzestan was in an automobile accident and his brain was damaged but it seemed that nothing at all had happened to him. All of his organs were healthy but strangely enough, he had forgotten all of his past life. His mind worked well. He could study but if he saw his mother and father, he did not recognize them. When they said to him that this was his mother, he was surprised. They took him to his home in Shiraz. They showed him the

handicraft work he had done and then hung on the walls of his room. But he looked at it all in amazement and said that he was seeing these things for the first time.

It became clear that in the brain damage he suffered, cells which were, in reality, transitions between thought and his memory were no longer working and like a blown out fuse which cuts off the electricity and brings darkness, his memory of the past had been disconnected.

Perhaps the point which no longer works is no bigger than the size of the top of a pin but what an effect it has had upon his life and from this it becomes clear how complicated and how important our brain is.

Our brain consists of two separate parts: first, the part which is controlled by our voluntary will which controls all of our voluntary motions like walking, looking, speaking. Second, the involuntary part which controls the movement of our heart, stomach, etc. and if one part of this part of the brain does not function, the heart or another organ will no 1 anger function.

One of the Most Wondrous Parts of the Brain

The cerebrum is the center of will power, consciousness and memory. In other words, it is one of the most sensitive areas of the brain and many of the reactions of the inner senses like anger, fear, etc. relate to it.

If we take out the cerebrum in an animal but we leave the other organs as they are, it will remain alive but its understanding and consciousness will be totally eliminated. They have removed the brain of a pigeon. It remained alive for a while but it could not eat seeds that were placed in front of it. Even though it was hungry, it would not eat. If it was allowed to fly, it flew until it hit a barrier and fell down.

Another Wondrous Part of the Brain is the Sense of Memory

Have you ever thought how wondrous our sense of memory is? If our sense of memory is taken from us for even one hour, what a difficult situation we will be placed in.

The center of memory which forms a small part of our brain is where all of our memories of our lifetime are stored. Whoever is related to us, the particularities of that person as to size, form, color, clothes and spirit, are kept in storage in their own area and a special file is formed for each one. Thus the moment we confront that person, our mind removes him from the file and immediately, completely reviews what we know about him and then it commands us as to what reaction we should have.

If it is a friend, respect and it is an enemy, the showing of hatred but all 'of this is done so quickly that there is more or less no lapse of time.

The wonder of this becomes more apparent when we try to recall what is stored and draw it or write it down or record it in a tape recorder without any doubt, it will require a great deal of paper or a great

number of tapes which can fill a large storage room. Even more wondrous than this is when we want to find one drawing or one tape among them, a file clerk will be necessary but our sense of memory does all of this work very simply, easily and quickly.

How can an unconscious nature create a conscious one?

Many books have been written about the wonders of the human brain. Can you believe that such an extraordinary system which is so subtle, accurate, complicated and mysterious be made from an unconscious nature? More wondrous than this is to believe that an unintelligent nature could create intelligence.

The Holy Quran says,

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِلْمُوقِنِينَ وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

"On the earth are signs for those of assured faith as also in your own selves: will you not then see?" (***51: 20-21***)

Think and Answer

1. Do you have any other information about the wonders of the human brain?

2. What has God created in order to protect the human brain against accident?

Lesson 8: A World of Wonder in a Small Bird

In this lesson, we want to leave aside the large country of our body, which we have only very briefly touched upon, and turn to a look at the wonderful order of other creatures.

We look at the sky in the darkness of night. We see an exceptional bird which is searching for food with all of its energy. This bird is a bat. There are many wondrous things but flying at night is among the most wondrous.

The swift flight of bats in the darkness of the night without hitting anything is so wondrous that no matter how often one studies this, new mysteries of this are revealed. This bird flies with the same speed and accuracy as a pigeon does in the day time.

If it flies into a dark and narrow tunnel which is full of smoke and twists and turns, it will fly through all of

the twists and turns without hitting any of the walls and not the smallest amount of smoke will be found on its wings.

This strange ability, of the bat is proof of an effect within it which is similar to radar. We now need to know what radar is in order to be able to see it in a small bat.

In physics, in the discussion on forms, waves are discussed which are beyond sound waves. These waves are those same waves whose length and frequency are so great that the human ear cannot hear them. This is why they are called meta-sound waves.

When these waves are set off by means of a very strong transmitter, these waves move forward but whenever they meet up with any kind of a barrier in a paint of space (like the aircraft of the enemy, etc), just like a ball when it hits a wall and bounces back, like our voice before a mountain or a high wall and based on an accurate record of how long it takes for the sound to return to us, we can measure the exact distance to the object.

Many aircraft and ships are guided by means of radar and it takes them to whatever direction they want. It is also used to find out the location of enemy ships and aircraft.

Scholars say that within this small creature, there is something similar to radar so that if the bat flies in a room which at that same moment a microphone is put to use to transform meta-sound waves into sound waves which can be heard, in each second (30 to 60 times) the meta-sound waves will be heard by the bat.

Scholars in answer to this say, "These waves leave the larynx through the nose of the bat by means of strong organs and its ears, which are the receivers, receive these.

Thus, this bat, in its night travels, is obligated to its ears. A scholar, through experiment, has proven that if you remove the ears of a bat, it cannot fly avoiding things whereas if you completely remove its eyes, it will very expertly still be able to fly . That is, a bat sees with its ears! Not its eyes. And this is most strange.

Now think who created these two wondrous organs in this small creature and how was it taught how to use them? And how can it avoid the dangers which exist during its night flying? Who?

Is it possible that nature have the intelligence and consciousness to do this? and place these organs which scientists copy, at great expense, in its body?

Hadrat 'Ali, peace be upon him, in the Nahj al-Balaghah, in a very long sermon about creation, mentions the bat, saying, "It is never prevented from the way because of the darkness of the night. Great and glorious is God Who, without a previous model, brought everything into being.

Think and Answer

1. What other interesting information do you have about the bat?

2. Did you know that the bat's wings and how it bears children and that even its method of sleeping differs from other animals and that it is most exceptional?

Lesson 9: Love for Insects and Flowers

One spring day when the weather is, little by little, growing warmer, make a visit to a park or a farm. You will meet up with all sorts of small insects, honey bees, flies, butterflies and mosquitos, who, without making a sound, fly from one flower to the next and from this branch to that branch of the trees.

They are so busy with their work that one could imagine an employer is overlooking their progress and continuously telling them what to do. Their wings and feet are colored yellow by the pollen of the flowers, giving them the look of workers who have put on their work clothes and with love and seriousness, they continue their work.

In truth, they have a very important assignment which is so great that Professor Leon Briton says, "Few people realize that without the work of insects, our fruit baskets would be empty."

And we add this sentence, "The next year, our green gardens and pastures would be completely lost." Thus, insects are, in reality, the real nourishers of fruit and providers of flower seeds.

You most probably ask why. Because the most sensitive act in the life of flowers is performed with their help. You have probably heard that flowers, like many animals, have two parts, masculine and feminine, and that reproduction takes place through their union, giving us seeds and fruit.

But have you ever thought how the two parts of flowers, which do not move, are attracted to each other? And how the male spermatozoa mix with the female ovary and provide the beginning of a marriage between the two?

This work is most often the work of insects and, in some cases, it is the work of the wind. But this is not as simple as we think it is. This fruitful marriage in which in sects act as the intermediators , has a history, formality and long adventure, only a small part of which we mention here with a short story.

Two old and close friends: Natural scientists, after study, have concluded that flowers and plants appeared in the second geological age and strangely enough, insects appeared at the same time. These two, throughout the eventful history of creation, were like two old and close friends who have remained

loyal to each other and have been complements to one another.

Flowers have always stored sweet nectar within themselves in order to further attract and sweeten the relationship. At the time when insects enter the flower in order to transfer the masculine group, provide the preliminaries for the marriage and pregnancy, the flower freely gives of its sweetness to them. This sweet and valuable sugar is so good tasting to the insect that they are naturally pulled towards it.

Some botanists believe that the beautiful colors and good smelling perfume of flowers also play an important role in attracting the insects to them. Various experiments with honey bees have shown that they distinguish colors and the aroma of flowers.

In reality, it is these flowers which grow for insects and have a good-smelling aroma in such a way that a butterfly and honey bees are attracted to them. They accept the invitation with all of their being and quickly begin the preliminaries and eat of their sweetness.

This very sweetness is a special kind of sugar which is considered to be the best food for insects. When it is stored in one place, it makes honey because insects are attracted to flowers. It eats some of this sweetness and takes most of it with them to their honeycomb to store. This is a contract of friendship and love which is based on mutual interest, always existed and will continue to exist between flowers and insects.

A lesson about monotheism: when a human being studies these wondrous points in the lives of insects and flowers, he or she automatically asks, "Who established this pact of love and friendship between insects and flowers?"

Who gave this special sweetness and good tasting nectar to flowers? Who granted flowers these attractive colors, beauty and this sweet-smelling perfume? Who invited insects towards it? What were the fat and tiny bodies of insects, butterflies, honey bees and golden bees given to make them prepared to connect the pollen of flowers?

Why do bees, for a certain period of time, move towards one kind of flower? Why did the life of flowers and insects begin a t one time in the created world?

Can anyone - no matter how stubborn - accept the fact that all of these events were without any plan or pre design? And the unconscious laws of nature automatically brought such wondrous scenes into being? Never.

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ثُمَّ كُلِي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا

"And the Nourisher taught the bee to build its cells in hills, on trees and in habitations then to cat

of all tile produce (***of the earth***) ***and find with skill the spacious paths of its Nourisher ….***
(***16:68-69***)

Think and Answer

1. What use do the sweetness, color and perfume of flowers have?

2. What do you know about the amazing life of honey bees?

Lesson 10: In the World of Infinitely Small Things

Because we are nurtured in the wondrous world of creation and we are familiar with it, we may be unaware of the importance of many of its wonders such as:

1. Insects and very tiny animals live around us, which if measured, would not even be two millimeters but just like large animals, they have hands, feet, eyes, ears, even brains, awareness, a certain series of nerves and digestive facilities.

If we put the brain of an ant under a microscope and if we study its amazing structure with care, we would see what a strange and interesting body it has. The various parts are placed next to each other, each gives a command to a certain part of the tiny ant's body and the slightest change in any of these areas would paralyze a part of its body.

The strange part is that in this small brain, which is much smaller than the head of a pin, lies a world of awareness, wisdom, civilization, taste and art. It is such that a group of scholars spend many long years of their lives, studying these animals. They include the interesting points in the books that they write for us.

Can the person who created all of this awareness, wisdom, taste in such a small animal be a nature that does not itself have even a pin-head's amount of awareness and wisdom?

2. 1n the mysterious world, we know that the smallest creature recognized to date is the 'atom'. The 'atom' is so small that even the strongest microscope, one which shows a piece of straw like a mountain, is not strong enough to see one.

If you want to know how small an atom is, know that one drop of water has more atoms than the number of people upon the earth and if we want to count the protons in one centimeter of a thin wire and we get

1000 people to help us and if in each second, we separate out one of them, it will take 30 to 300 years, depending on the number of atoms) of working day and night to count all of them.

Now that you have understood that one centimeter of a thin wire contains this many atoms, "just think about how many atoms are in the heavens and on the earth; in water and the air and the stars and planets and the galaxy!! Does one's mind not tire just thinking about it? No one other than their Creator is worthy to count them.

Atoms Give us a Lesson in Monotheism

Learning about atoms, which are among the most important scientific discussions today, this tiny thing gives us a glad and happy lesson in monotheism because the world of atoms call our attention 'to them in four areas.

1. The extraordinary sense of order. To date, more than 100 elements have been discovered beginning gradually with one electron and accepting up to over 100; this amazing order could never be born from an unaware or unintelligent factor.

2. Strong sense of balance. We know that two different electricities attract each other. Thus electrons which are negative and a nucleus which is positive should attract each other.

In addition, we also know that the encirclement of electrons around a nucleus brings a repulsive force into being (flight from the center). Thus the pull of this force draws electrons away from the atomic environment. The atom is separated and its attractive forces want to attract the electrons and des troy the atom.

It is here that one must see how accurately the force of 'attraction' and 'repulsion' have been systematically arranged in atoms so that neither do the electrons flee nor are they attracted, but are always in a state of balance, continuing their movement. It is possible that a blind and deaf nature bring this balance in to being?

3. Each upon its own way: We have said that some atoms have a multiple number of electrons but not that all of the electrons move in one circuit, but rather, in multiple circuits and each electron in a determined distance, each within its own area, with great speed move like this for millions of years, without any contradictions arising between them. It is a simple issue to place all of these in a fixed circuit and movement with an unbelievable system of order?

4. The great energy of the atom: In order to understand the great strength of the atom, just consider that in 1945, an experimental atom bomb was set off in the wilderness. A very small atomic bomb was placed upon a metal stand. After the explosion, the metal melted and then set off steam and electricity and a frightful sound was heard. When scientists went to look for it, there was no sign of it.

In this same year, two small bombs like these were inhumanely exploded over Japan by the USA, one in the city of Nagasaki and the other in the city of Hiroshima. In the first city, 70,000 people were killed instantly and the same number were injured and in the second city, 30 to 40, 000 people were killed instantly and the same number were injured, making Japan unconditionally surrender in the war with America.

Is it not sufficient to simply study the small atom for the human being to come to know the greatness of the Creator of the universe? It can then be said that there are as many reasons for the existence of God as there are atoms in the universe.

وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَامٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ

"And if all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean (were ink), with seven oceans behind it, to add to its (supply), yet would not the Words- of God be exhausted ... "(31 :27)

Think and Answer

1. Do you know other things about the life of ants?

2. Can you draw the structure of an atom on the blackboard?

Appendix 1: How Splendid Are God's Qualities!

His Qualities

Know that to the same extent that realizing the existence of God through studying the secrets of the created world is easy, learning of His Qualities is difficult and requires a great deal of care and caution.

You probably wonder why. The reason for this is clear because God does not resemble anything we have ever seen or heard. Thus the first condition to recognize God's Qualities is to negate all of the qualities of creatures, that is, not comparing Him to any limited creature of the world of nature. It is here that our task becomes difficult because we have grown up in the heart of this nature. Our contact has been with nature. We have become familiar with it. Thus we are inclined to compare everything with it.

In other words, whatever we have seen has had a material form. Some of the creatures which have a determined time and place, have a special dimension and form. Because of this, conceiving of a God Who neither has eyes, nor time, nor place, but, at the same time, He overlooks all times and all places

and is unlimited from all points of view, is a difficult task. That is, it requires that steps be taken along this way with great care.

But it is necessary to remind ourselves here of this point that we can never come to know God's Essence and we should not expect that we could because such an expectation is like expecting to contain the endless seas in a glass or expect that a child, which is developing in its mother's womb, know about all of the world outside of the womb. Is this possible?

It is here that such a small blunder will cause a person to fall tens of kilometers from the main way of coming to know God and become waylaid in crags of idol worship and the worship of creatures. Note with care that, in summary, we must be conscious of never comparing God's Qualities with the qualities of creatures.

The Qualities of Majesty and Beauty

We most often divide God's Qualities into two groups: those Qualities which Goa has and those Qualities which God is free from. And now, this question arises as to how many Qualities God's Essence has.

The answer is: On the one hand, God's Qualities are endless and unlimited and, on the other hand, they can be summarized in one Quality because all of the Qualities of God can be summarized in the following:

The Essence of God is an essence which is infinite from all points of view and it contains all perfections.

From the point of view of Qualities which God does not contain, they can be summarized in the following sentence. The Essence of God is not imperfect from any point of view.

But from another angle, as perfections and imperfections have various levels, that is, we can conceive of endless perfections and endless imperfections, thus, it can be said that God is the infinite of demonstrated Qualities and infinite negation of Qualities because whatever perfection you can imagine, He has and whatever imperfection you can imagine, He is free of. Thus the demonstrated and negation of Qualities of God are unlimited.

The Most Well-Known Qualities of God

The most famous demonstrated Qualities of God can be summarized in the following:

1. God is the 'Knower' (Alim): He knows all things.

2. God is Powerful (Qadir): He has ability over all things.

3. God is the Living because something which is living has wisdom, power and because

4. God is Wise and Powerful, thus He is Living.

5. God is the Willer (Murˈid), that is, He has a Will power and He is not obliged in His work and whatever He does, has a goal and wisdom and even the smallest thing in the universe does not lack a philosophy and a goal.

6. God is Perceiving (Mudrek), that is, He understands and perceives all things. He sees everything; he hears all things and He is aware of all things.

7. God is Primordial and Eternal (Qadim and Azali), that is, He always was and His existence has no beginning because He always boils from His inner Essence and because of this, He is primordial and eternal because a person whose being is from he himself has no non-existence or annihilation.

8. God is the Speaker (Mutakalim), that is, he can create waves in the atmosphere and speak to His Prophet, not that God has a tongue or lips or a larynx.

9. God is Truthful (Sadiq), that is, whatever He says is the Truth and is equivalent to reality because lying comes from ignorance or from weakness and a lack of power and it is impossible for God Who is Knowing and Powerful, to lie.

And the most well-known negations of Qualities of God are:

1. He is not a composite. That is, He does not have mixed elements because in this case, He would be in need of other elements, whereas, He is in need of nothing.

2. God is not a body because everybody is limited, unstable and accepts annihilation.

3. God is not visible. That is, He cannot be seen because if He could be seen, He would be a body, limited and accepting annihilation.

4. God has no place because He is not a body to require a place.

5. God has no partner because if He had a partner, He would have to be a limited creature because is not possible to have two non-limited entities from every point of view, and in addition, the unity of law of this world shows His Oneness.

6. His Qualities are exactly like His Essence.

7. God is Needless and Self-sufficient. He is rich and containing everything because an endless being from the point of view of knowledge, power and all things has no deficiencies.

The Holy Quran says,

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

"There is nothing like unto Him" (***42:11***)

Think and Answer

1. Do you know another reason for the Oneness of God and His not having a partner?

2. Have you heard that some religions believe that God is three and some believe that He is two. Which religions are these?

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