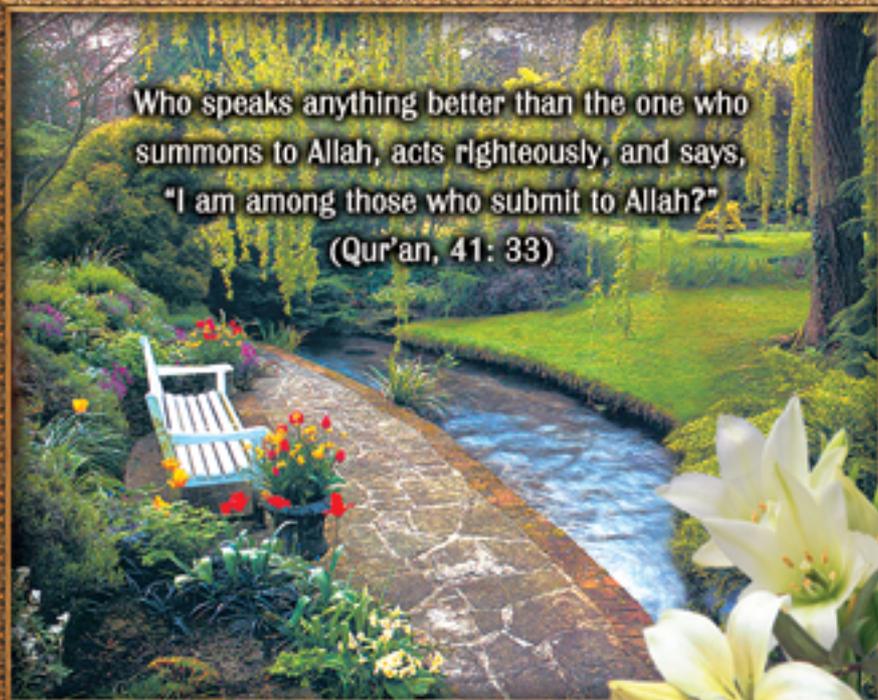




THE MUSLIM WAY OF SPEAKING

Who speaks anything better than the one who
summons to Allah, acts righteously, and says,
"I am among those who submit to Allah?"
(Qur'an, 41: 33)



HARUN YAHYA

Just as all are responsible for that which they choose to believe, and for every act they do, so, too, will they be held responsible for every word they speak, and receive their due recompense on the Day of Judgment.

Surely, it is those who arrive at a full understanding of the importance of these matters, also living by it, who are true believers. That is because believers are those who, being always mindful of Allah, live as Muslims in this world, and therefore, also speak as Muslims.

In this book, we will seek to encourage all to use the power of their speech in such a way as to be pleasing to Allah, by exploring the importance of Muslim way of speaking as outlined in the Qur'an. By establishing the ideal of a Muslim's manner of speaking, as well as the apparent differences between it and that used by those who live according to a type of spirituality distant from Allah's true religion, we call upon all people to speak in a manner that is in compliance with the morality taught in the Qur'an.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



The author, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in helping many to return their faith in Allah, and, in many others, to gain a deeper insight into their faith. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, regardless of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the reader's perspective by encouraging him or her to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of Allah and His unity, and to live by the values He prescribed for them.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



First published in Turkish in March 2003

Global Publishing, January 2004

Translated by Keith Dearn

Edited by David Livingstone

Distributed by

Global Publishing

Gursel Mah. Darulaceze Caddesi No: 9

Funya Sk. Eksioglu Is Merkezi B Blok D. 5

Okmeydani-Istanbul / Turkey

Tel: +90 212 320 8600

All translations from the Qur'an are from

The Noble Qur'an: a New Rendering of its Meaning in English

by Hajj Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley, published by Bookwork, Norwich,

UK. 1420 CE/1999 AH.

Printed by San Ofset

Cendere Yolu No: 23 Ayazaga-Istanbul/Turkey

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THE
MUSLIM WAY
OF SPEAKING

HARUN YAHYA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, he was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism.

His penname is a composite of the names *Harun* (Aaron) and *Yahya* (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their people's lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of godless ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word.

All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur' an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as Allah's Existence and Unity and the Hereafter; and to expose godless systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies.

Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian.

Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in Allah and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya.

This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for Allah's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works.

Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of Allah, render an invaluable service.

Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological chaos, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised to emphasize the

author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction.

One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late.

In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of Allah, these books will be a means through which people in the twentyfirst century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

The works of the author include *The New Masonic Order, Judaism and Freemasonry, Global Freemasonry, The Kabbala and Freemasonry, The Knight Templars, Templars and Freemasonry, Israel's Policy of World Domination, Islam Denounces Terrorism, The Black Clan, Terrorism: The Ritual of the Devil, The Disasters Darwinism Brought to Humanity, Communism in Ambush, Fascism: The Bloody Ideology of Darwinism, The 'Secret Hand' in Bosnia, Holocaust Violence, Behind the Scenes of Terrorism, Israel's Kurdish Card, Communist China's Policy of Oppression in East Turkestan, Palestine, Solution: The Values of the Qur'an, The Winter of Islam and The Spring to Come, Islam and Buddhism, The Philosophy of Zionism, Articles 1-2-3, Romanticism: A Weapon of Satan, The Light of the Qur'an Has Destroyed Satanism, Signs From the Chapter of the Cave in the Qur'an to the Last Times, The End Times and the Mahdi, Signs From the Qur'an, Signs of the Last Day, The Last Times and The Beast of the Earth, Truths 1-2, Idealism The Philosophy of Matrix and the True Nature of Matter, The Western World Turns to God, The Evolution Deceit, The Perfect Design in the Universe Is Not by Chance, Why Darwinism Is Incompatable with the Qur'an, Darwinism Refuted, New Research Demolishes Evolution, A Definitive Reply to Evolutionist Propaganda, The Quandary of Evolution I-II (Encyclopedic), The Error of the Evolution of Species, The Blunders of Evolutionists, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 50 Steps, The Errors of The NAS: A Reply to the National Academy of Sciences Booklet Science and Creationism, Confessions of Evolutionists, Perished Nations, For Men of Understanding, Love of Allah, Allah's Art of Affection, The Glad Tidings of the Messiah, The Prophet Musa (as), The Prophet Yusuf (as), The Prophet Muhammad (saas), The Prophet Sulayman (as), The Prophet Ibrahim (as) and the Prophet Lut (as), Maryam (as) The Exemplary Muslim Woman, The Golden Age, Allah Exists, Allah's Artistry in Colour, Magnificence Everywhere, The Importance of the Evidences of Creation, The Truth of the Life of This World, The Nightmare of Disbelief, Knowing the Truth, Eternity Has Already Begun, Timelessness and the Reality of Fate, Matter: Another Name for Illusion, The Little Man in the Tower, Islam and Karma, The Dark Magic of Darwinism, The Religion of Darwinism, The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution in 20 Questions, Allah is Known Through Reason, The Qur'an Leads the*

Way to Science, Consciousness in the Cell, Biomimetics Technology Imitates Nature, The Engineering in Nature, A String of Miracles, The Creation of the Universe, Miracles of the Qur'an, The Design in Nature, Self-Sacrifice and Intelligent Behaviour Models in Animals, Deep Thinking, Never Plead Ignorance, The Green Miracle: Photosynthesis, The Miracle in the Cell, The Miracle in the Eye, The Miracle in the Spider, The Miracle in the Mosquito, The Miracle in the Ant, The Miracle of the Immune System, The Miracle of Creation in Plants, The Miracle in the Atom, The Miracle in the Honeybee, The Miracle of Seed, The Miracle of Hormones, The Miracle of the Termite, The Miracle of the Human Body, The Miracle of Human Creation, The Miracle of Protein, The Miracle of Smell and Taste, The Miracle of the Microworld, The Secrets of DNA, The Miracle in the Molecule, The Miracle of Creation in DNA, The Miracle of Talking Birds.

The author's childrens books are: *Wonders of Allah's Creation, The World of Animals, The Glory in the Heavens, Wonderful Creatures, Let's Learn Our Islam, The World of Our Little Friends: The Ants, Honeybees That Build Perfect Combs, Skillful Dam Constructors: Beavers, Tell Me About Creation, The Miracle in Our Body, A Day in the Life of a Muslim, Children This is for You I-II*

The author's other works on Quranic topics include: *The Basic Concepts in the Qur'an, The Moral Values of the Qur'an, Quick Grasp of Faith 1-2-3, Ever Thought About the Truth?, Crude Understanding of Disbelief, Devoted to Allah, Abandoning the Society of Ignorance, Paradise: The Believers' Real Home, Learning from the Qur'an, An Index to the Qur'an, Emigrating for the Cause of Allah, The Character of the Hypocrite in the Qur'an, The Secrets of the Hypocrite, Names of Allah, Communicating the Message and Disputing in the Qur'an, Answers from the Qur'an, Death Resurrection Hell, The Struggle of the Messengers, The Avowed Enemy of Man: Satan, The Greatest Slander: Idolatry, The Religion of the Ignorant, The Arrogance of Satan, Prayer in the Qur'an, The Theory of Evolution, The Importance of Conscience in the Qur'an, The Day of Resurrection, Never Forget, Commonly Disregarded Qur'anic Rulings, Human Characters in the Society of Ignorance, The Importance of Patience in the Qur'an, Perfected Faith, Before You Regret, Our Messengers Say, The Mercy of Believers, The Fear of Allah, Jesus Will Return, Beauties for Life in the Qur'an, A Bouquet of the Beauties of Allah 1-2-3-4, The Iniquity Called "Mockery," The Mystery of the Test, Real Wisdom Described in the Qur'an, The Struggle Against the Religion of Irreligion, The School of Yusuf, The Alliance of the Good, Slanders Spread Against Muslims Throughout History, The Importance of Following the Good Word, Why Do You Deceive Yourself?, Islam: The Religion of Ease, Zeal and Enthusiasm Described in the Qur'an, Seeing Good in All, How do the Unwise Interpret the Qur'an?, Some Secrets of the Qur'an, The Courage of Believers, Hopefulness in the Qur'an, Justice and Tolerance in the Qur'an, Basic Tenets of Islam, Those Who do not Heed the Qur'an, Taking the Qur'an as a Guide, A Lurking Threat: Heedlessness, Sincerity Described in the Qur'an, The Happiness of Believers, Those Who Exhaust Their Pleasures During Their Wordly Lives, A Sly Game of Satan, Passivism in Religion, The Religion of Worshipping People, Agonies of a Fake World, How a Muslim Speaks, The Silent Language of Evil, The Ruses of the Liar in the Qur'an, Loyalty in the Qur'an, The Solution to Secret Torments.*

THE MUSLIM WAY OF SPEAKING

*Who speaks anything better than the
one who summons to Allah, acts right-
eously, and says, "I am among those
who submit to Allah"?
(Surah Fussilat: 33)*

HARUN YAHYA

January 2004

TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation—and therefore, Allah's Existence—over the last 140 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the chance to read only one of our book, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject.

All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn Allah's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning Allah's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensure that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at a one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents.

This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another.

In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of Allah. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books.

We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read.

In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

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INTRODUCTION

Just think how many years have we possessed a faculty as important as speech. How many years have you been able easily to say a word without effort, or to form any sentence you wanted to? Without a doubt, you will answer, "It has been many years." However, it probably will not have occurred to most people to ask themselves such a question, because speech is a faculty most of us are born with, and therefore, often merely taken for granted.

Most are able to speak as much or as little as they want, thanks to this God-given ability, and, it would seem, in general, people have become so accustomed to it that they fail to take into account the importance of speech.

Rather, it is of an importance that everyone should recognize; that is, that being able to speak is a blessing, and that Allah granted such an ability for a specific purpose. On the Day of Judgment everyone will be held responsible for every word they have uttered.

Allah created humanity to serve Him. He gifted human beings with intelligence in order that they might grasp and believe in His greatness; as also eyes for them to see and appreciate the sublimity of that which He created; ears that they would listen to His verses being recited, and tongues for them to exalt His glory and communicate His message. As stated in the following verse of the Qur'an, **"No indeed! We will write down what he says and prolong the punishment for him. We will inherit from him the things he is talking about and he will come to Us all alone,"** (Surah Maryam: 79-80) every word a person utters is kept in a record in Allah's sight. Therefore, just as all are responsible for that

which they choose to believe, and for every act they do, so, too, will they be held responsible for every word they speak, and receive their due recompense on the Day of Judgment.

However, most never venture to consider that they will be called to account for everything they have done on the Day of Judgment: for every word, and every phrase they uttered. As a result, they are careless in their speech, speaking without thinking and without recognizing the responsibility under which they have been placed. Nevertheless, Allah's promise, as He has related in the Qur'an, will definitely be kept; and, while people may indeed have forgotten much of what they once said, their words will be brought before them on the Day of Judgment. With this verse of the Qur'an: **"Standing over you are guardians, noble, recording, who know what you do,"** (Surat al-Infitar: 10-12) Allah points out that the angel scribes write every word that spills from a person's mouth. In another verse, Allah advises us that, just as He has given everything the ability to speak for itself, on the Day of Judgment, He will give people's skins the ability to speak and permit them to bear witness to what they had done:

They will ask their skins, "Why did you testify against us?" and they will reply, "Allah gave us speech as He has given speech to everything. He created you in the first place and you will be returned to Him." (Surah Fussilat: 21)

Thus, no matter the extent to which some people would want to conceal what they were responsible for saying, or how much they hope to avoid confessing to them, their ploy will not be of any use. Though they do not want to give account of what they had done, their skin will, on their behalf, confess to each of their deeds, one by one. Therefore, in the life of this world, our goal should be to not utter even a single word that we will regret in the presence of Allah, or pronounce a single phrase which we will be unable to account for, and only fill us with remorse.

Surely, it is those who arrive at a full understanding of the impor-

tance of these matters, also living by it, who are true believers. Because their belief is sincere, the faithful speak in all instances, and at all times, while being conscious of Allah. In consequence, they will be able to say, as is stated in the Qur'an **"come and read my book,"** as one **"who is given his Book in his right hand"** with a clear conscience (Surat al-Haqqa: 19). That is because believers are those who, being always mindful of Allah, live as Muslims in this world, and therefore, also speak as Muslims.

"The Muslim way of speaking" is speaking in all instances with the use of one's conscience, in the knowledge that Allah is present, that His knowledge is all-encompassing, and that, on the Day of Judgment, all will be called to account in His presence.

The Muslim way of speaking is possible only by submitting oneself to Allah and the message of the Qur'an. After fully experiencing faith in one's heart, as well as sincerity and a sense of submission, one will come to recognize that it is Allah Who grants speech. Allah will inspire a person to speak in the way of the Muslims, and lead him or her to speak in the sincerest, most wise, effective and appropriate manner. As long as people are not sincere in faith in their hearts, they will not be able to achieve sincerity in their speech through superficial means, such as by simply paying attention to their words. To be able to speak in the way of the Muslims, it is necessary to live at all times with a faith and consciousness of Allah in one's heart.

In this book, we will seek to encourage all to use the power of their speech in such a way as to be pleasing to Allah, by exploring the importance of Muslim way of speaking as outlined in the Qur'an. By establishing the ideal of a Muslim's manner of speaking, as well as the apparent differences between it and that used by those who live according to a type of spirituality distant from Allah's true religion, we call upon all people to speak in a manner that is in compliance with the morality taught in the Qur'an.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MUSLIM WAY OF SPEAKING

With regard to people in general, one of the most important issues in life is speech. Through it they express their views, their beliefs, their ideas and thoughts. Ultimately, much of that which they feel in their hearts, the thoughts they aim to hide, their desires, their ideals or fears, are also reflected in their speech. Therefore, whether or not someone's spiritual state is sound, or whatever level of intelligence or conscientiousness they possess, it will make itself evident through the words they use. From their language may be understood whether they are honest, sincere, and trustworthy, or dishonest, ill-willed and potentially a liar.

It is a well-recognized truth that one of the defining characteristics of a person is his or her way of speaking. When someone is being judged, for whatever matter, generally, it is what they say which is most often taken into account to determine their level of innocence or culpability. The job interview is a good example of this. Because employers often do not find the written material provided by the applicant sufficient, they opt to talk to them people face to face, to obtain information on them about various subjects in person. Such discussions help the employer form a better impression of the applicants' true character and personality.

The Qur'an, the Book that provides us with the most apt information on all matters, informs us that speech is one of the most important characteristics to bring to light a person's character. In a verse, Allah informs us that one's manner of speaking is an important factor in dis-

cerning those who are insincere: **"If We wished, We would show them to you and you would know them by their mark and know them by their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions."** (Surah Muhammad: 30)

Just as the manner of their speech reveals mean-spirited, ill-intentioned or hypocritical people for who they are, so, too, does the rule apply in reverse for people of faith, morality and who are good at heart. Consequently, a person who has sincere faith in his heart speaks in a way that is particular to the faithful, that is, in the way of the Muslims. The Muslim way of speaking is one of the most telling attributes of believers that evinces their love of Allah, their attachment to Him, and their respect and awareness of Him. Because of this difference, manner of speech is one of the primary characteristics that demark the faithful from unbelievers.

As recompense for their sincere belief, Allah assists believers to speak in the noblest, most appropriate and sensible manner. A believer, through knowledge of this truth, is more easily submissive to and trusting of Allah. People who do not live fully by faith are more concerned of the evil they hide in their hearts being revealed through their speech. But, no matter what care they take, they cannot prevent their speech from exposing them for who they really are. The Muslim way of speaking is a trait acquired not from a technical study of language or of especial attention to one's word use, but from sincere faith. This is a law of Allah, and an ability granted by Him to believers.

Another important aspect of the Muslim way of speaking is the following; Allah has imposed on believers the duty of communicating to others His religion and the moral values which it prescribes. When believers, who live by the values of religion, and who are cognizant of Allah's greatness, sincerely relate their feelings and thoughts to those who are ignorant of religion, and who lead a life far removed from it, this may help many to turn to Islam and their hearts to be filled with

awareness of Allah. It is also an important act of worship for believers. Because of this, true believers always ask of Allah the ability to speak intelligently, wisely and appropriately. When they talk with others, they make reference to Allah through the best of words, and tell them about the morality expounded in Islam, enjoining what is the right and forbidding what is wrong. Hence, for believers, speech becomes a form of worship, which can earn them reward throughout their lives.

As we are told by the following verse, "**Who speaks anything better than the one who summons to Allah, acts righteously, and says, 'I am among those who submit to Allah?'**" (Surah Fussilat: 33), those who speak most nobly are those who call on others to obey the morality prescribed in the Qur'an, in other words, those who speak in the way of the Muslims. By employing this manner of speaking, believers hope to earn the pleasure of Allah, His mercy and Paradise. For this reason, all believers whose sincerely turn to our Lord must fulfill all that is required in speaking in the way of the Muslims, and show determination in that endeavor until the end of their days.

THE ASPECTS OF THE MUSLIM WAY OF SPEAKING

For someone to be able to speak in the way of the Muslims, it is enough for them to submit themselves sincerely to Allah and adhere to the Qur'an, the Book that distinguishes right from wrong. If they fulfill such conditions, their conscience will show them the true path and enable them to employ their speech in the best possible way.

In the Qur'an, Allah offers various examples of what the Muslim way of speaking means, as well as those manners of speech to be avoided by believers. Also, the Qur'an provides examples of different types of situations one may face in the life of this world, and describes the reactions and comments made by people with different sorts of characters when faced with such circumstances. Thus, through adherence to the Qur'an, believers can see which responses constitute the manner of speaking expected of a Muslim and which are beyond the requirements outlined in the Qur'an. They can acquire information to help them avoid types of speech which Allah disapproves of, as well as learn how to employ that manner of speech which will please Him most.

In the following pages, all the aspects of the Muslim way of speaking, of which Allah has notified us in the verses of the Qur'an, will be examined, and examples will be given from the Qur'an, and from everyday life in order that the subject may be fully understood and, ultimately, put into practice.

Praising the Might of Allah

In everything sincere believers experience in life, they are witness to

the wisdom, knowledge, and might of Allah, and bow their heads to Him in reverence. This sincere love, respect and submission is then reflected in believers' language, as it is in the whole of their lives. Believers are aware at all times that Allah is rich beyond need of anything, but that all living creatures are in need of Him. Since they have understood the might and greatness of Allah, they are also aware of their own weakness. They know that they can do nothing on their own unless Allah wills it. Essentially, no matter how virtuous they may be, they do not give way to feelings of conceit and superiority. They are continually mindful of their own limited abilities and dependence on Allah; when referring to any success they may have achieved, they do so in the knowledge that it has resulted through those talents imparted to them by Allah. Similarly, when they receive praise, they remain humble, being aware that such praise is ultimately to be attributed to Allah's supreme wisdom.

The language of those who are able to appreciate Allah's glory, with true appreciation, is distinguished by a manner of speaking in which they praise and exalt His intelligence, knowledge, might and greatness. Their hearts are devoted to Allah every moment of their lives; no matter where they go, or what they see or hear, they recognize examples of Allah's artistry in everything, and sincerely express the awe they feel. As such, the Qur'an states that believers' hearts are with Allah at all times, whether standing, sitting, or lying down, and that they ponder upon Allah's might and praise it:

Those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth [saying]: "Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire." (Surah Al 'Imran: 191)

Muslims are aware of this truth at every moment of their lives, and in everything they set out to do. They know that it is Allah Who allows

for the food they eat to be cultivated from the dry earth and laid forth before them of the best and most delectable sort, and Who has granted them the opportunity to enjoy it. As a consequence, though they thank the cook, they are aware that their ultimate gratitude is to Allah. When they listen to music which is pleasing to them, they are impressed not by the musicians, but with Allah Who bestowed upon them this talent and in themselves the disposition to take pleasure in such music.

They are also aware that when something they had wished for comes about unexpectedly, it is not an accident, and give thanks to Allah. If they were to admire a beautiful work of architecture, they would be appreciating the architect, never forgetting that the real author of such beautiful works is Allah, and thereby exalt His glory. They do not become consumed with pride over their own talents; they are aware that they are a meek servant of Allah, and direct all praise to our Lord. In the Qur'an, we are told that He Who is truly worthy of praise is Allah, and, therefore, that we should praise and exalt Him:

And say: "Praise be to Allah Who has had no son and Who has no partner in His Kingdom and Who needs no one to protect Him from weakness." And proclaim His Greatness repeatedly! (Surat al-Isra': 111)

Remembering Allah frequently

In this verse of the Qur'an, **"Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and perform prayer. Prayer precludes indecency and wrongdoing. And remembrance of Allah is greater still. Allah knows what you do."** (Surat al-'Ankabut: 45), we are told that remembrance of Allah is the most important form of worship. Believers must fulfill this act of worship with utmost sincerity. Naturally, the deep love for Allah they have in their hearts is also reflected in their speech. They know that every blessing they enjoy comes from Allah, and, whenever they see something which they find beautiful they think of Allah and are

grateful to Him. With the knowledge that all that happens takes place for a divinely ordained purpose, they remember Allah and put their trust in Him, whatever the difficulty. Consequently, throughout their lives, and in everything they experience, they consider Allah and remember His name.

The devotion of Muslims to Allah is so that, no matter what they might be in the midst of doing, it does not distract them from remembering His name. The constancy of the faithful in remembering Allah is referred to in the following verse of the Qur'an:

[Believers are] not distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of prayer and the giving of alms; fearing a day when all hearts and eyes will be in turmoil. (Surat an-Nur: 37)

This steadfastness on the part of believers arises from their understanding of the truth revealed by the following verse:

Those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 28)

In the life of the world, there are many blessings from which people may take pleasure; but none gives them the true peace and fulfillment that comes from remembering Allah. Each of these blessings merely gain value and meaning when they are accompanied with the remembrance of Allah, because people can only attain the morality that permits the pleasure to be enjoyed from all such blessings in submission to Allah, and in the awareness that it is He Who created them all and that they are all under His control.

In addition, the Qur'an points out that remembering Allah often is one of those secrets of the faith which provides believers with certain successes and degrees of superiority:

You who have believe! When you encounter a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm and remember Allah repeatedly

so that hopefully you will be successful. (Surat al-Anfal: 45)

Believers who are aware of this remember Allah and exalt His glory, in their hearts, or with their tongues, every hour of every day, under any condition and in all situations.

Calling on Allah through His Beautiful Names

With the following verse of the Qur'an, "**Say: 'Call on Allah or call on the All-Merciful, whichever you call upon, the Most Beautiful Names are His.'**" (Surat al-Isra': 110), Allah reminds us that He possesses the most beautiful of names, and advises believers to call upon Him by them.

Throughout that with which they are faced in their lives, believers recognize the manifestation of the superior wisdom of our Lord. For example, they know that our Lord is the commander of infinite justice, and, during that which they experience, they remember Allah by such a title. Even under the most dire of circumstances, their recognition of Allah's perfect justice is reflected in their speech. Though they may suffer material loss, fall seriously ill, or suffer a grave injustice by the hand of another, they do not forget that all such occurrences have been created only to test them. No matter how outwardly different the events may seem, they never forget that Allah possesses infinite justice, and that on the Day of Judgment all will receive their due reward for the good or evil they had done. As is pointed out by Allah in the verse, "**They will not be wronged by so much as the smallest speck.**" (Surat an-Nisa': 49), they speak with knowledge that humans will not be made to suffer the slightest injustice. They conscientiously avoid uttering any word which will not be approved by Allah. Also, they speak in such a manner as to remind those around them of this same truth, that they may save them from heedlessness or error. In addition to "the Just," another of the beautiful names of our Lord which believers are familiar with that He is "the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful," "All-Thankful,

the All-Knowing," "the One Who answers sincere prayers in the best way" and "He Who protects and takes care of the righteous." They know, too, that only Allah is "the Provider of sustenance," "the Granter of joy and peace" and "He Who causes laughter or tears" and the knowledge of these attributes is reflected in their language. It can be discerned from their speech that in everything they experience they are aware of Allah's absolute control, His superior wisdom, His infinite justice and His unrivalled artistry.

In each of the statements of the Prophets, all shining examples for which the faithful to follow, we can discern the way in which they tended to refer to and exalt our Lord with the most beautiful of names. In the Qur'an, we are told that 'Isa (as), upon receiving a revelation from Allah, said:

And when Allah says, "Isa son of Maryam! Did you say to people, "Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah?"" he will say, "Glory be to You! It is not for me to say what I have no right to say! If I had said it, then You would have known it. You know what is in my self but I do not know what is in Your Self. You are the Knower of all unseen things." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 116)

Speaking in the knowledge that Allah is with you at every moment

Some do not consider that Allah Who created them, provides their sustenance, grants the blessings they enjoy, watches over them and encompasses them at all times. They are unaware that, in the event of their death, they will be brought back to our Lord, and called to account for every act they had committed, and every word they had spoken in this world. They believe themselves to be creatures independent of Allah. When they speak, they fail to recognize that it was Allah Who granted them that power. In fact, Allah is the sole ruler and is aware of everything that they do; not a single leaf can fall from a tree without His

knowledge. Allah is witness of everything, all the time. The Qur'an explains this truth:

You do not engage in any matter or recite any of the Qur'an or do any action without Our witnessing you while you are occupied with it. Not even the smallest speck eludes your Lord, either on earth or in heaven. Nor is there anything smaller than that, or larger, which is not in a Clear Book. (Surah Yunus: 61)

Everything in the universe, down to the tiniest dust particle, is under Allah's control. Yet, some people live their lives in ignorance of this very truth. It does not occur to them that, if their power of speech were to be taken from them, not a single syllable would form from their mouths so long as Allah willed it. The truth is this: People exist because of Allah's will; just as every action and every word comes about only with Allah's permission and His power. Throughout the time when they are speaking, these people need to be aware that, as in every moment of their lives, they are in the presence of Allah Who created them.

One of the primary characteristics in distinguishing the style of speech that is unique to believers is that they speak in the knowledge that they are with Allah at all times. This is cognizance of Allah's existence, might and grandeur, felt deep in one's heart; It is speaking without forgetting that He encompasses everything and everyone, is at our side at all times, hears and knows everything that we say, for which we will all be called to account. Those who are aware of these truths speak sincere and honestly. The fear of Allah which they have in their hearts prevents them from uttering a word of which Allah would not approve.

The fact that one lives at every moment according to the values of the Qur'an is one of the foremost indicators that that a person is aware of Allah's might and greatness, and that Allah can see and hear him, as all people, all the time. For example, though such people may be speaking on the subject of politics or economics, or conducting a mathematical calculation which occupies their mind completely, the fear of Allah

in their heart ensures that, so long as they are speaking, they do not deviate from Allah's commands, but proceed from a feeling of deep respect, fear and love of Him. Such conscientiousness ensures that no word falls from their mouths which might be contrary to the morality prescribed in the Qur'an. Indeed, what is important is that, throughout the time they are speaking, that they have this sincere belief and the fear of Allah deep in their hearts. When he refers to such a political or economic topic, he is yet mindful of these facts which constitute the basis of his faith. He knows that there is no power other than Allah, that Allah sees and hears everything, and that nothing can be kept hidden from Him. This ensures that he speaks every word in a manner appropriate to a Muslim who takes refuge in Allah.

Speaking so as not to associate others with Allah

In this verse of the Qur'an, "**Your Allah is One Allah. There is no god but Him, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful**" (Surat al-Baqara: 163), Allah informs us that there is no Creator other than Him and no other power to intervene for good or ill. Allah is the One, and there is no power other than Him Who can guide human beings to the truth, protect them and give them peace and blessings.

However, a segment of humanity is unaware of this truth. Some, when asked, say that there is no god but Allah, and that they believe He is omnipotent, but, because in their hearts they do not believe it to the full, hope for aid instead from other people, or from a change in circumstances, or even such mythical powers as luck or chance. However, neither human nor any other creation exercises any such power. As we are told in the Qur'an,

... All might belongs to Allah... (Surah Yunus: 65)

Believers, on the other hand, are cognizant that there is no god but Allah, that all glory and power are His, a truth which they sense devoutly and at every moment of their lives. They hope for help from

none other than Allah, not from any other person or event. They trust Allah and rely on Him solely. They fear only Allah, and expect help only from Him, because no person or living creature can possess the attributes of Allah; they are all creatures in need of Him, who have no power to ensure any good for themselves or to protect themselves from evil. The Qur'an explains the matter with the following example:

The call of truth is made to Him alone. Those they call upon apart from Him do not respond to them at all. It is like someone stretching out his cupped hands towards water to convey it to his mouth: it will never get there. The call of the unbelievers only goes astray. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 14)

The language of the faithful who are aware of this truth reflects this sincere faith and fear of Allah in their hearts. Whatever the subject, it can immediately be recognized from such people's way of speaking that they trust in and rely on Allah alone. Those who have understood that there is no god but Allah know that everything is under Allah's control, no matter what they may encounter. Such developments may affect their entire life, or their future, their safety, their property or their health; it may appear outwardly that all these are dependent upon the decisions of a few, or the result of some error committed by them, or on some success which they might have achieved. However, those of pure faith know that all are under Allah's control, and they thus behave accordingly. With regards to this matter we may offer the following example:

A businessman who has invested all his money in a new venture enters into various advertising and promotional campaigns to secure a good market share for his products. In order to compete with other firms in the same sector, he needs to produce better quality products. In addition, he expects good performances from all those who work for the company, from the advertising executive to the marketing or sales personnel. He gives these employees the necessary instructions. He

makes speeches to encourage them or to inspire them because it is clearly necessary for him to stay ahead of other companies and to achieve greater success than they have.

Now let us consider the difference between this person and someone else, in a similar situation, but who knows there is no god but Allah. That person follows all the appropriate practical steps. However, he is aware that the authority to make him rich lies not with the advertising, promotion or marketing campaigns, nor in expert personnel. On the contrary, he knows that they are human beings, who can only make decisions through the will of Allah, and achieve success only with Allah's permission. He knows that if he were to regard any of these as possessing a power independent of Allah, that would be to deify others besides Allah. For this reason, when communicating his demands, managing his employees, and monitoring all operations, he speaks with the knowledge that all such factors are at Allah's disposition. When something occurs which appears to him to be a setback, at no time does he plunge into depression, nor does he lash out angrily. No matter who was responsible for the problem, or for what reason, he takes the wisest decisions and adopts the most appropriate measures. However, at no time does he employ a manner of speaking that reflects the deification of others beside Allah, by regarding the person who caused the error as an independent power, or believing that events transpired by and of themselves. That is because, he knows that, if a mistake was made, it was made because it was in that person's fate and that Allah had willed it. The whole scenario is a part of his trial in the life of the world; of whether he will fall into the error of believing that events arise out of the disposition of others, or that he will act in the knowledge that there is no god but Allah. In this situation which we have described, one who is of committed faith knows that everything is part of the destiny decreed by Allah, according to His divine wisdom. For this reason, when a person comes up against an unexpected out-

come, they remain calm, and speak in a way that is grateful to Allah, thus exemplifying humility towards Him and submission to Him.

Such knowledge, when reflected in speech, is an important manifestation of faith. One who knows that there is no god but Allah, and in whom that knowledge is reflected in his speech, habitually brings attention to Allah's greatness and glory to those around him, or, otherwise, brings these things to their attention.

Speaking so as to praise and exalt Allah

In the verse, **"If you ask them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth and made the sun and moon subservient?' they will say, 'Allah.' So how have they been perverted?"** (Surat al-Anqabut: 61), Allah points here to that type of people who are far removed from the truth, despite their being aware that it is Allah Who created them, and that it is only He Who can provide for them. One of the foremost traits of believers, who are blessed with true faith, is that they demonstrate their sincere faith in Allah and their devotion to Him in every aspect of their lives, at all times and instances, and in every word and deed. They love Allah far more than anyone or any other thing in this world. They are in awe of Allah's power, knowledge, artistry and wisdom. They want to be His friend, while they are in this world, and earn His approval. They try to attain the greatest nearness to Allah, and become the best loved of His servants beyond any others in history.

Such deep love is reflected in their speech. They employ every word for the purpose of remembering and exalting Allah, and towards earning His approval. The love they feel for Allah is far greater than their love of people, and it is easily discernable from their speech that when they love others it is merely for the sake of Allah. They know that it is Allah Who created all mankind, and that it is He Who proffers them all blessings of this world. Therefore, every thing of beauty which they see, every favor done for them, and every experience of affection towards

them is a blessing which comes from Allah. All are manifestations of Allah's love, mercy and compassion for His servants. As such, we ought to be thankful only to Allah and show all gratitude to Him. Recognizing this truth, believers speak in such a way as to make evident their knowledge that Allah is exalted far above everything and everyone. In the Qur'an, the believers' love of Allah and their devotion to Him are expressed in the following manner:

Some people set up equals to Allah, loving them as they should love Allah. But those who have faith have greater love for Allah. (Surat al-Baqara: 165)

As is pointed out in this verse, those who fail to understand this truth love creatures they idolize beside Allah as they ought to love Allah Himself. In the speech of these people, will often be found a use of words that reveals their failure to appreciate Allah with the appreciation due Him, as well as their false esteem for other beings. Some speak of money, property, reputation or of people they admire in a way which presents them as equal to Allah. Some say that they believe in Allah, but employ language which instead shows they place their friends above Allah. When they meet a person who speaks inappropriately about Allah, it does not bother them, nor do they warn the one guilty. Though, when a single word is spoken against those they love, they oppose it immediately. They will not allow a word to be said against their loved-ones or any injustice to be done to them.

All such incorrect behavior exposes the insincerity of those who claim faith in Allah, but who do not have such faith fixed in their hearts. True believers love Allah more than anything else, exalt Him with words and hold Him high above everything. They never participate in the banter of those who speak in opposition to Allah or to His religion. If they have an opportunity to explain the truth to these people, they do so, but if the others are determined not to heed their warnings, then, in that case, they absolve themselves of their hostile and blasphemous language.

Such believers will not even allow themselves to watch a film or listen to a song whose content is in open opposition to Allah's judgments. No matter what the situation, they do not permit a word to be spoken which will not be approved by Allah. They do not take part in any such discussions because in the Qur'an Allah gives the following warning:

It has been sent down to you in the Book that when you hear Allah's Signs being rejected and mocked at by people, you must not sit with them till they start talking of other things. If you do you are just the same as them. Allah will gather all the hypocrites and the unbelievers into Hell. (Surat an-Nisa': 140)

Muslims acting with this knowledge in mind adopt, defend and support the morality of Islam in all instances and times, and through to the end of their lives. They show forth their faith in Allah, and their regard for Him, above all else, in their every word and deed.

Speaking in the knowledge of one's helplessness in the face of Allah

With the following words from the Qur'an, "**Recite: In the Name of your Lord Who created, created man from clots of blood. Recite: And your Lord is the Most Generous, He Who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know. No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient. Truly it is to your Lord that you will return.**" (Surat al-'Alaq: 1-8)

Allah points out that, in spite of their impotence, this some people may forget and become overly concerned with themselves. In truth, there are some who may behave with ingratitude towards Allah without having considered how it is He Who created them or how it is He Who gave them those attributes which they are so proud of.

In fact, without exception, in all instances, every human being is dependent upon Allah's protection and mercy. In addition to abilities, such as sight, hearing, speech, walking and moving, at every moment a

plethora of internal systems are working in the body, without a person's realizing it, but without which he would not otherwise be able to live. We need only reflect on these matters little to realize how impotent we are in the sight of Allah.

Despite these truths, some remember Allah only when they are faced with a problem or a difficulty. For example, a person sitting in a boat, which he had been certain would return to the shore, is immediately plunged into panic when a violent wind assails his boat as it begins to rock back and forth. Similarly, turbulence felt on a plane or the slightest technical malfunction may cause a person to feel great fear. In situations such as these, when they realize their impotence in the sight of Allah, and that only Allah can rescue them from the difficulty, these people turn to Allah and begin to pray. Even one who, merely a short time ago, walked arrogantly by other passengers at the airport, realizes right away how impotent she is in the face of such a danger, and that through the will of Allah she can lose everything she possesses in an instant.

The Qur'an tells us how people turn to Allah in total subservience in times of difficulty, but when the trouble is averted, return ungraciously to their former self-aggrandizing:

When harm occurs to you at sea, those you call on vanish—except for Him alone! But when He delivers you to dry land, you turn away. Man truly is ungrateful. Do you feel secure against Him causing the shore to swallow you up or sending against you a sudden squall of stones? Then you will find no one to be your guardian. Or do you feel secure against Him taking you back into it another time and sending a violent storm against you and drowning you for your ingratitude? Then you will find no one to defend you against Us. (Surat al-Isra': 67-69)

As we are told in these verses revealed by Allah, a person alone has no power of any kind. Allah reminds us of this truth in another verse:

Do not strut arrogantly about the earth. You will certainly never split the earth apart nor will you ever rival the mountains in height. All of that is evil action and hateful in the sight of your Lord. (Surat al-Isra': 37-38)

Muslims are those who are aware of this impotence at all times and in all places. The words they use reflect their complete faith in this truth. Even if someone were the best looking person in the world, a person who understands the greatness of Allah never thinks that his looks are something of his own making. He speaks in the knowledge that his appearance is a result of Allah's artistry, and that it can be taken from him at any moment, if Allah were to will it so. He would never dare say, "This beauty is a part of me and so long as I look after myself, nothing can happen to me," thus avowing that he cannot claim this blessing for his own power.

He knows that a single virus or microbe invisible to the eye, or a minor accident, can destroy this beauty, and that these things are under Allah's control. For this reason, he employs a manner of speech which consistently shows his gratitude to Allah, and which exalts Him. If someone else were to praise his knowledge or his beauty, he would respond by reminding him of Allah's supreme beauty, infinite power, intelligence and magnificence. Insisting that he is good-looking merely because Allah has willed it so, and that he is but a small reflection of Allah's boundless beauty or intelligence, he exalts Allah.

Believers' awareness of their weaknesses in the sight of Allah manifests itself in all aspects of their behavior. A devout believer never speaks in a way which humiliates a person she regards as having fewer means than herself. Nor, on the basis of her own good looks, does she speak slightly or hurtfully to someone who is less good looking. In the same way, she does not adopt the manner of speaking of those who despise the poor because they themselves are rich, those who discriminate against people in a class beneath their own because they hold

power, or those who belittle slow-witted people because they are intelligent. She acts in the knowledge that in the trial set for her in the life of the world, Allah has determined a different fate for every person, and that in Allah's sight true superiority is measured in terms of faith and piety. For this reason, and in accordance with the morality expounded in the Qur'an, she adopts the most respectful manner of speaking to all those who are around her, whether rich or poor, powerful or weak. Realizing that any behavior contrary to this would imply that she is setting herself up as superior, not to people, but to Allah, she fears Him and takes refuge in Him. This characteristic of the faithful is referred to in the Qur'an as such:

... Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbors who are related to you and neighbors who are not related to you, and to companions and travelers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful. (Surat an-Nisa': 36)

Speaking in the knowledge that tasks are performed through Allah's will

Another characteristic of the manner of speaking employed by the faithful is that, when speaking of something they are to do, they say, "**insha'Allah**," that is, "**If Allah wills**." When they take the decision to perform a particular task, they adopt all measures which are necessary. But, they do not forget that it can only be accomplished through Allah's will. No matter how much we want to accomplish something, or to what extent we have done everything necessary, it will not be accomplished if Allah does not will it. Allah reminds the faithful of this matter in the Qur'an:

Never say about anything, "I am doing that tomorrow, without adding 'If Allah wills'." Remember your Lord when you forget, and say, "Hopefully my Lord will guide me to something closer

to right guidance than this." (Surat al-Kahf: 23-24)

In order that the importance of this reminder be grasped, Allah prepares a large number of examples in a person's in daily life. For example, one might regard it as a sure thing that a holiday, which had been planned in advance, and for which reservations and payments have been made, will take place. It would appear as if there could be no reason whatsoever for the holiday to be cancelled. The family, in plans for a holiday, could go to bed early the night before a flight early the next morning, leave home taking traffic conditions into account, and check over and over if they have their tickets with them, but they will not make the flight if Allah has not willed it. The fulfillment of the plan may be prevented by a sudden illness, a traffic accident, a flight delay for whatever reason, or the emergence of some duty which would take priority over the holiday.

If the family made plans without trusting in Allah, and saying, "**We will do this if Allah wills,**" they will be sorely disappointed if they are confronted with some obstacle. Since they falsely believe that tasks can be carried out without Allah's consent, our holiday-planners will fret and grumble because they have not gone on holiday as expected. They do not take into account, however, that if they had, they might have suffered an unexpected accident, or met with some other unforeseen mishap, and that, on the contrary, the failure to proceed as they had planned may have actually been a blessing in many ways. To hold on to such error can only cause anxiety, both in this world and in the afterlife.

Muslims know that Allah created everything for a certain purpose and good. Therefore, if the family in our example is among the faithful, and they instead proceeded on the assumption that they would go on holiday only if Allah willed it, they will not be in any way disappointed by its cancellation. They experience the peace of mind and comfort of knowing that what is best and most beneficial for them depends on the will of Allah.

Saying, "Who knows what benefit there is in it for me?," they attempt both to recognize that there must be some ultimate good, as well as exhibit to those around them how true believers ought to think and speak. Because they have surrendered themselves to Allah, and employed behavior that demonstrates their gratitude and submission to Allah, they enjoy the hope of reward in return for the morality they adopted, both in this world and on the Day of Judgment.

Employing the Qur'an as a guide in speech

In the following verse of the Qur'an, "... **This is a Book We have sent down to you so that you can bring mankind from the darkness to the light, by the permission of their Lord, to the Path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.**" (Surah Ibrahim: 1), Allah explains that one of the blessings conferred through the sending down of the Qur'an is that it **"brings people from the darkness to the light."**

The Qur'an has been under Allah's protection from the time it was first revealed to the present, and has undergone no corruption. It was sent down as an admonition and a warning to people; for the faithful, it is the source of healing, guidance and a mercy. Its words are the most noble, they distinguish right from wrong, and guide those who follow it to the true path.

Those who understand the divine wisdom of the Qur'an take it as their guide. Since they have accepted the verses of the Qur'an with their entire hearts, the morality expounded in it is always reflected in their speech. At every stage of their lives, whether formulating a decision, or speaking, or while offering an interpretation of something, they consistently use the Qur'an as their guide. Therefore, their every word, every decision, and every form of advice they are prepared to offer is in agreement with the Qur'an. Those who speak by using the Qur'an as their guide invariably participate in any conversation in the best way, because the verses of the Qur'an deconstruct and eradicate all errant forms

of logic, bringing the truth to the light. Allah explains this with the following verse: "**Rather We hurl the truth against falsehood and it cuts right through it and it vanishes clean away!...**" (Surat al-Anbiya': 18)

Words spoken in accordance with the morality explained in the Qur'an are a healing and a mercy for the sincere. Those who listen to them, with the intention of profiting from its advice, or to derive its benefits or to discern its wisdom, find the truth, by way of these conversations—if Allah wills.

In addition, the speech of those who speak in conformity with the guidance of the Qur'an has achieved wisdom. Every example they employ, every point to which they draw attention, and every detail they stress, is effective and thought-provoking. They encourage the people they address to think honestly and sincerely, and to exercise their conscience. Since their speech is sincere, issuing from their hearts, and is in defense of the right, its power to influence is strong. Those who are able to evaluate what they hear according to their conscience can verify the truth of their statements with certainty.

Those who listen, but who are insincere, and do so with prejudice, do not wish to see the wisdom and truth of the words of the faithful, but try instead to distort them through calumny. Unable to grasp that it is the wisdom of verses of the Qur'an that has reinforced the believers' speech, they attempt to explain it away through ridiculous assumptions. The fact is, however, these effects are faith-induced, and easily accessible to all who conform to the Qur'an and accept it as his guide. However, this the unbelievers fail to understand.

A number of examples of what we are discussing have been provided in the Qur'an. For example, when confronted with the frankness and wisdom direct of the Prophet Muhammad (saas), the disbelievers and pagans were plunged into dismay. Within only a short time, large numbers were moved by the message of our Prophet (saas), and their obedience to him caused great consternation among the disbelievers.

Because they could not understand the verses of the Qur'an, which imbued the statements of our Prophet (saas) with their wisdom and effectiveness, or rather, that they refused to accept it, they sought to foment false accusations against him, such as that he was a magician or merely a poet. In fact, as is the case with all human beings, it is Allah Who instilled in the Prophets the power of their speech. In the verses of the Qur'an Allah declared:

Your companion is not misguided or misled; nor does he speak from whim. It is nothing but Revelation revealed. (Surat an-Najm: 2-4)

As we can see in these verses, the words of our Prophet (saas) were not only extremely effective but imbued with wisdom, because he recited from the Qur'an, a book which is the word of Allah. The One Who imparted the faith and influence to the hearts of those who listened to his words and believe, was Allah. Those who fail to appreciate the greatness of Allah fall into a grave error, by vainly seeking to gain influence and wisdom by other means.

Speaking in the knowledge of the certainty of fate and of the truth that there is good in all things

Allah has determined a specific destiny for every living thing. Everything people experience during their lives, or every task they undertake, or every word they utter, was predetermined by Allah before they were even born. Moreover, because Allah transcends time, the life of all things is lived out and concluded in His sight. However, a person who is bound by time can only experience life within it (in the order of a calendar). Just as one who is 40 today has lived 40 years—assuming the human lifespan is 80 years—his remaining 40 years have been encompassed in the sight of Allah. However, a human can only witness and experience these developments through time, or within the 40-year period ahead of him.

In short, what we describe as the future, or the sequence of events which are yet to happen, has already begun and ended within Allah's eternal knowledge. All that has already happened in Allah's sight constitutes a person's destiny. Everyone is accorded a fate from which they will not be able to escape. Just as one cannot change one's past, neither can one change one's future, because both have already been experienced, seen and perceived in the sight of Allah. However, some, because they do not have any such foreknowledge, believe their futures are in their own hands. Therefore, not believing in destiny they fall into the error of presuming that they can shape it. However, a person's whole life is like a film which has already been shot. As if being made to see what happens when watching the film, a person is in no position to change the film's script or intervene; so, in a similar way, is it impossible for that person to interfere in the events that play out according to his destiny.

In the Qur'an, we are told that Allah has pre-ordained a specific destiny for each and every individual, and that all will never experience that which has not already been prescribed:

Indeed, all things We created with predestination. (Surat al-Qamar: 49)

Nothing occurs, either in the earth or in yourselves, without its being in a Book before We make it happen. That is something easy for Allah. That is so that you will not be grieved about the things that pass you by or exult about the things that come to you. Allah does not love any vain or boastful man. (Surat al-Hadid: 22-23)

As these verses explain, a specific destiny has been created, not only for each human being, but for all inanimate and living things, that is, all things. From the wooden table in your house to the shoes on your feet; from the rose seedling in your garden to the clothes in your wardrobe; from your friends to your cat, everything in existence is subject to a des-

tiny determined by Allah. It is already foreordained what phases yourself and the things that belong to you, such as the table, the rose seedling, and your friends, will experience in the future. For example, it had already been known, far into eternity in Allah's sight, who would plant the seed of the tree from which the table was made, for how long and under what conditions the tree would grow, when, how and by whom it would be cut down, to which sawmill it would be taken, in what dimensions it would be cut, what quality and shape of table would be made of it, how you would decide to buy the table, where you would find it, when you will put it in your house, in which part of your house you would put it, and what meals you will eat, who you would talk to and what letters you would write at it, because Allah determined all such things before you were born, and knew, as in a single transcendent moment, how to bring them about. To you, however, you would learn of them only as they occurred, in sequence through time.

If a person is not informed of the reality of destiny, or has not fully understood its reality, he may act without considering that he is fulfilling the destiny prescribed for him, and be led astray by the sequence of events he experiences. For example, when he goes out to buy a dining table for his house, he looks through dozens of shops, changes his mind time after time in each case, thinks carefully, exchanges ideas and discusses his options with those with him. In the end, he believes he has taken a decision of his own deliberation. In fact, however, before he had set out to buy the table, the one he was ultimately to choose was already written in his destiny; therefore, he merely searched for, found and purchased that table which was already prescribed for him according to his destiny. The exchange of ideas, the discussions and his difficulty in reaching a decision, were all likewise determined according to a destiny prescribed by Allah.

Hence, for a person to feel pain, regret, sorrow or fear in response to a particular event, and to waste words such as "If only I had done such

and such," or "If only I hadn't gone here or there," or to worry about the future is pointless in the extreme, because the person is fulfilling a life which has already begun and ended, and the events over which she feels regret or sorrow are part of that destiny. For example, when a person carries too many plates in her hands and drops and smashes them, she may feel regret, saying, "If only I hadn't tried to carry so many, then it wouldn't have happened." But the truth which she does not know, or has forgotten, is that it was determined, for that very moment, where and how every one of those plates would be broken. Indeed, it was fated who would break them, even before they were manufactured or before the person who would break those plates was born. A person should simply try to consider all the events which take place and take a lesson, that she may understand the wisdom behind them. However, feeling sorrowful over such things is futile, because she has no power to prevent what happens to her. We are told that such a person is powerless to prevent what Allah wills in the following verse:

If Allah afflicts you with harm, no one can remove it except Him. If He desires good for you, no one can avert His favor. He bestows it on whichever of His servants He wills. He is Ever-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surah Yunus: 107)

Those who surrender to their destiny know that there is an ultimate good in everything Allah brings about, even though it might appear adverse. They recognize the blessings and the wisdom in these events Allah has brought about and is grateful. If they cannot at first understand them, they put their faith in Allah and pray for Allah to reveal their purposes and their wisdom. If still they cannot recognize them, those who know that they will be brought forth on the Day of Judgment live in the tranquility and comfort of believing with certainty that Allah is the lord of eternal justice, and is compassionate and merciful.

Such people's submission and devotion can be clearly discerned in their speech. In no instance do they use words such as, "Why did that

happen?" with reference to events. They speak in the knowledge that Allah has created everything in the best form, and that some happening which might at first appear negative will in the end bring some blessing.

In the Qur'an, Allah reminds us of this truth with the following verse: **"It may be that you hate something when it is good for you and it may be that you love something when it is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know."** (Surat al-Baqara: 216) Therefore, when confronted by an experience which appears as a setback, sincere Muslims' words ought to be, "My Lord brings about everything for a purpose, there must certainly be a good in this too," or "Allah ordained this to happen for our benefit." They never complain, as would the ignorant, such as, "Oh dear, what a pity, how could I do such a thing?" grumbling in a way which suggests a lack of submission and hope in Allah.

This manner of speaking, in the knowledge that everything and everyone was created for a specific good, is important for Muslims throughout their lives. They exclude nothing, no-one and no event from this understanding. They know that, when they face a setback, it is a reflection of ignorance to speak in a manner in opposition to their fate, and instead consider that occurrence to be a positive aspect of his fate. No matter whether they, or some else, committed a mistake, they would not say such things as "why did you do it," "this wouldn't have happened if you hadn't gone there." Rather, they speak as people who have grasped the truth in the verse: **"... What assailed you on the day the two armies met was by Allah's permission..."** (Surah Al 'Imran: 166) They also know that unwanted outcomes through the lack of proper advance precaution is also part of their fate. Like someone watching a film many times over, seeing the same thing scene after scene. For that reason, immersing oneself in sorrow or regret, and forming illogical excuses, such as, "if this had happened, such else would have happened" is pointless. Whatever happened was for the best. Thus, in the Muslim way of speech, never is there any anger, rage, ten-

sion, complaint, disappointment, panic, fear or worry.

Even through events that are the most difficult and troublesome, believers try to discover their hidden good as well as the possible outcomes that would provide blessings, and speaks of these with sincerity. Those who behave as Muslims help to dispel panic and worry by influencing positively those around them.

In the Qur'an, Allah indicates to the faithful the manner of speaking which is required in times of difficulty, in this verse : **"Say: 'Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is Our Master. It is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.'**" (Surat at-Tawba: 51)

In another verse, our attention is drawn to the humble speech of the faithful, that is, those who know that fate or everything that occurs has been ordained ultimately for their benefit: **"Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, 'We belong to Allah and to Him we will return' "** (Surat al-Baqara: 156). The reward which Allah will give to those who understand this truth is described in this verse: **"Those are the people who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord; they are the ones who are guided."** (Surat al-Baqara: 157)

The manner of speaking of a believer, when saying, with reference to fate, that there is good in everything is very different from the "consoling," "calming" or "parroted" speech of one who is far from the morality expounded in the Qur'an. When confronted with similar events, some of those who have not adopted the morality set forth in the Qur'an may also use expressions as "every cloud has a silver lining." However, there is a certain difference in the way they employ it. Muslims say this from the heart, sincerely, from deep in their soul and with definitiveness. No matter how many times those with a corrupt morality may pass this phrase to their lips, the fact that they cannot express it as a heartfelt belief is revealed by the lack of trust in Allah reflected in their behavior.

Speaking through trust in Allah

When they are in trouble and need help, or want to obtain something for themselves, the ignorant seek a solution in what they consider to be the power sources of this world. Some hope for help from influential friends, some from people with wealth, reputes or authority. They forget that all these people are impotent creatures acting under Allah's control. And therefore, because this they forget, they try to ingratiate themselves to them.

In fact, there is only one power that can bring about good or ill for a person, and that is Allah. Muslims know this truth. For this reason, at all times they speak with the expectance of help and support from Allah, and aiming to earn only His approval. Even though they may be in need, or in trouble or difficulty, they know that only Allah can alleviate such circumstances and that He is the only One Who can aid them. Therefore, believers encourage one another to turn to Allah and put their trust in Him when faced with difficulty. For the Qur'an says:

If Allah helps you, no one can vanquish you. If He forsakes you, who can help you after that? So the believers should put their trust in Allah. (Surah Al 'Imran: 160)

In addition, the faithful speak in the knowledge that Allah is always at their side, and that without Allah's permission no one and nothing can do them harm, in accordance with that which was stipulated of the following: "... **Allah will certainly help those who help Him**" (Surat al-Hajj: 40) Even at the worst, and most critical or most life-threatening moments, they believe there are blessings in what they are experiencing, and make light of this truth to others around them, as the Prophet Yaqub (as) said, according to this verse of the Qur'an: "... **In Him I put my trust, and let all those who put their trust, put it in Him alone.**" (Surah Yusuf: 67)

At no time do they use the manner of speech of one gripped irrationally by fear, panic and hopelessness; they speak in a calm and meas-

ured way. They know that losing hope in Allah is a characteristic of those unable to understand the subtleties of faith. Because they are aware that everything occurs through Allah's will, and in accordance with Allah's wisdom, they do not give way to false concern in time of difficulties. They speak in the knowledge that Allah will do what is best for them.

We are told in the following verse of the Qur'an that Allah certainly helps those who help Him: **"You who believe! Remember Allah's blessing to you when certain people were on the verge of raising their hands against you and He held their hands back from you. Heed Allah. The believers should put their trust in Allah."** (Surat al-Ma'ida: 11)

A number of examples are given in the Qur'an of the faithful speech of the believers. For example, when the children of Israel were trapped between the sea and the Pharaoh's army, while others who fell into disbelief and were plunged in despair and fear, were saying, **"We are doomed,"** the words of the Prophet Musa (as) were to this effect, **"Never. Our Allah is with us."** We are informed in the Qur'an of the way the Prophet Musa' (as) speech reflected his trust in Allah:

So they [Pharaoh and his army] pursued them towards the east. And when the two hosts came into sight of one another Musa's companions said, "We will surely be overtaken!" He said, "Never! My Lord is with me and He will guide me." (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 60-62)

Confronted with this dilemma, the Prophet Musa (as) relied and depended solely upon Allah, inviting those around him to do the same. Allah told the Prophet Musa (as) to strike the sea with his staff, and when he did so, it parted in two, providing safe passage for the children of Israel. As for the Pharaoh and his army, they were all drowned. This episode is an example of the assistance given by our Lord to those who take Him as their guardian and rely solely on Him.

As is the case with the story of the Prophet Musa (as), from every

word of the faithful, it can be recognized that they fear nothing and no one but Allah, trusting only in Him. In a verse of the Qur'an, we are informed that the faithful, when threatened with the statement, "**The people have gathered against you, so fear them,**" expressed their trust in Allah by saying, "**Allah is enough for us and the Best of Guardians**":

"Those to whom people said, 'The people have gathered against you, so fear them.' But that merely increased their faith and they said, 'Allah is enough for us and [He is] the Best of Guardians.'"
(Surah Al 'Imran: 173)

Speaking with awareness that the life of the world is transitory

Those who deify worldly things employ a way of speaking peculiar to themselves. It can be clearly discerned from their speech that they have made the life of this world the major object of their longing. Some speak with envy, some with covetousness of the fine things they see in the possession of others. These desires hidden in their hearts arise out of ignorance of the truth of this worldly life as well of the afterlife, while, in the Qur'an Allah tells us that the blessings of this world are to test people:

Know that your wealth and children are a trial and that there is an immense reward with Allah. (Surat al-Anfal: 28)

Because they are unaware of this, those who have no faith are partial to others who possess more in this world than they do, and adopt a fawning manner of speaking towards them. For example, when speaking of the car and the clothes of a person who is rich and famous, their profound jealousy, compounded by feelings of inferiority, captivates them. They exhibit this longing through such statements as "If only I were as rich as he," "If only I were in his place right now," and "What a fine car he has; if only it were mine." In fact, those they look upon with

envy are all—as they themselves are—weak and needy in the sight of Allah. Everything that people possess belongs ultimately to Allah. Everybody, for the whole period of his or her life, is being tested with the blessings which Allah proffers.

Because they know that the true and lasting life is the one in the Hereafter, the faithful strive throughout their worldly lives to attain the abode of Paradise. They desire worldly blessings, like wealth and property, only to use them in a way that is pleasing to Allah, to show their gratitude to Him, and to exalt Him. Because of this moral excellence, even if they lose one such worldly blessing, or even all their possessions, they do not give way to sorrow or despair. They consider it to be predestined by Allah, and they want Allah to give them the real blessings and finer things of the Hereafter. In addition, it can be understood from all that they say that they know that Allah provides sustenance and other worldly blessings through His mercy and wisdom. In a verse of the Qur'an, Allah tells us the following:

Allah expands provision to anyone He wills and restricts it. They rejoice in the life of this world. Yet the life of this world, compared to the Hereafter, is only fleeting enjoyment. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 26)

Failing to grasp that specific purposes have been preordained by Allah, those who are passionately devoted to their wealth and property, render interpretations of events that are worldly-oriented. For example, a person, whose wealth and fame they covet, may, at bottom, be one of low morality. Nevertheless, those who lack understanding will not consider him to be of base morality at all, nor will they think about that which he will encounter on the Day of Judgment, and possibly see no fault in longing for that person's wealth or repute. Muslims, however, see the truth of this worldly life, and try to earn Allah's approval to attain the afterlife. For this reason, their manner of speech consistently reflects their knowledge of this reality. As an example, the Qur'an cites the instance of certain

people envious of the wealth of a rich man named Qarun:

Qarun was one of the people of Musa but he lorded it over them. We gave him treasures, the keys alone to which were a heavy weight for a party of strong men. (Surat al-Qasas: 76)

Addicted to the life of the world, and, for this reason, unable to evaluate accurately what a malefactor was Qarun, these people said the following when they saw his wealth:

He went out among his people in his finery. Those who desired the life of this world said, "Oh! If only we had the same as Qarun has been given! What immense good fortune he possesses." (Surat al-Qasas: 79)

While Muslims had reminded them that He Who had provided Qarun his possessions was our Lord, and that his real destination was the afterlife, those who failed to speak with a morality particular to a Muslim were affected by Qarun's wealth and behaved ignorantly. The Qur'an tells of the warning given to these people by Muslims like this:

But those who had been given knowledge said, "Woe to you! Allah's reward is better for those who believe and act rightly. But only the steadfast will obtain it." (Surat al-Qasas: 80)

In the Qur'an we are told that, because of his immorality, Qarun and his house were brought down. After this, those who had formerly envied Qarun saw that he was powerless in the front of Allah and, realizing their error, this time responded by speaking as Muslims:

We caused the earth to swallow up both him and his house. There was no group to come to his aid, besides Allah, and he was not someone who is helped. Those who had longed to take his place the day before woke up saying, "Allah expands the provision of any of His servants He wills or restricts it. If Allah had not shown great kindness to us, we would have been swallowed up as well. Ah! Truly the unbelievers are not successful." (Surat al-Qasas: 81-82)

As we are told in the verse, **"Do not let their wealth and children impress you. Allah merely wants to punish them by them during their life in this world and for them to expire while they are unbelievers."** (Surat at-Tawba: 55), Muslims show that they do not covet worldly wealth, and that they are people who think always of Allah and their final home in the afterlife, reflected in all their actions and their speech. This firm morality of Muslims receives its reward, by the grace of Allah, in this world, as in the afterlife. Allah tells us that He will grant blessings and the best rewards, both in this world and the afterlife, to those who purify themselves of worldly ambition and aim to earn His approval:

Anyone who acts rightly, male or female, being a believer, We will give them a good life and We will recompense them according to the best of what they did. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

Showing concern in speech for the lawful and the unlawful

One of the most definite aspects of the Muslim way of speaking is the scrupulous observance of the boundaries between the lawful and the unlawful as prescribed in the Qur'an. With the verse, **"Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who fast, those who bow, those who prostrate, those who command the right, those who forbid the wrong, those who preserve the limits of Allah: give good news to the believers."** (Surat at-Tawba: 112), Allah commands adherence to these limits.

Just as believers seek to avoid that which Allah has prohibited, and carry out that which He has commanded, they must also observe the same bounds in their speech throughout their lives. They must not defend in word or support any behavior which Allah has commanded them to renounce. They should also speak in praise of behavior which Allah approves of. For example, believers know that Allah disapproves

of and has forbidden depriving others of their rights, making an unfair profit by the fraudulent weighing of goods, lying and bearing false witness, and for that reason do not tolerate such things. They cannot offer tacit support by remaining silent when confronted with one who defends sinful behavior.

They do not hold back from saying what is true and right; on the contrary, they take great pleasure in explaining the morality related in the Qur'an to others. He never gives way to such thoughts as "If I oppose their ideas, will they take action against me?" or "I wonder what they think of me?," thus remaining silent, because, as we are informed in the verse, **"It is a Book sent down to you—so let there be no constriction in your breast because of it—so that you can give warning by it and as a reminder to the believers."** (Surat al-A'raf: 2) it is incumbent upon believers to admonish others based on the Qur'an. For this reason, they explain to others their errant thinking and expound to them instead what is correct, using evidence from the Qur'an. By explaining that certain behavior is disliked and prohibited by Allah, they invite others to observe the limits set by Him. On realizing that those with whom they are talking will not heed the advice, realizing instead that they are blaspheming the Qur'an, they obey Allah's commands by abandoning such people. Allah relates in the Qur'an as such:

When you see people engrossed in mockery of Our Signs, turn from them until they start to talk of other things. And if Satan should ever cause you to forget, once you remember, do not stay sitting with the wrongdoers. (Surat al-An'am: 68)

In another verse, we are told that when the faithful come face to face with people speaking ignorantly, they are honorable and respectful, and pass on saying *salaam* (peace):

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk lightly on the earth and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, "Peace." (Surat al-Furqan: 63)

Avoiding the style of speech influenced by Satan and taking refuge from Satan in Allah

In the Qur'an, we are told that Satan swore an oath to deceive people from the way of Allah. Because Satan rebelled against Him, Allah expelled him out of Paradise and cursed him. Satan's aim is to incite humans to rebel, as he himself has. Allah allowed Satan until the end of time to pursue his aim, but advised him that he would be unable to influence the true believers.

To divert people from the true path, Satan tries various wiles and blandishments, but, as we are told in the verse, "**As for those who guard against evil, when they are bothered by visitors from Satan, they remember and immediately see clearly.**" (Surat al-A'raf: 201), Satan cannot influence those who hold Allah dear in their hearts. When they sense a provocation directed towards them by Satan, believers take refuge in Allah, and recognize that it is nothing other than a ploy of Satan's.

Those who are weak of faith are easily deceived by Satan's ruses. Though, in the verse we are told, "**... Satan's scheming is always feeble.**" (Surat an-Nisa': 76), those who fail to believe as they should think that Satan's deceptions are true.

People who are entirely heedless of the existence of Allah, and of the morality set forth in the Qur'an, act in their lives instead under the guidance of Satan. They think, behave and speak the way Satan desires them to. Satan's crooked logic rules every decision they take and every word they utter. Satan's purpose is, by exploiting those who follow him, to drive others into general moral degradation, and set his own perverse morality in their hearts. By making use of their mouths as if they were his own, he aims to have his inspiration reach other people.

The speech of those who are heedless of Allah possesses a particular Satanic aspect. As if they were Satan's spokespersons, some people employ a manner of speaking that is deceptive, leading others astray from

Allah and the morality of the Qur'an, and instead living according to the morality that destines one for Hell. While this manner may be deceptively attractive at times, its aim is to present something satanic and evil as reasonable and logical. In such cases, these people invariably rely on words founded on errant logic. Through their words they aim to make those around them forget the truth of fate, the afterlife, the Day of Judgment and Allah's promised punishment. They use a furtive manner of speaking to deceive others about the life of the world. They advance false and deceptive claims to dull the listener's conscience into submission. In the matter of faith in Allah, and living according to the morality spelled out in the Qur'an, they secretly endeavor to stealthily induce doubt and misgivings in people's hearts. The methods they use are often very cunning; most often, they try to implant thoughts of wrongdoing into people's subconsciouses, and influence them to the point that they become habituated to such ideas. For this reason, those who act as Satan's spokespersons, or those speaking under his influence, do not usually defend Satanic behavior openly. Instead, they try to deceive others without them recognizing it. They approach indirectly through devious approaches; by the most secretive means, they try to plant doubt in the other. The Qur'an tells us of these various methods and tactics used by Satan:

He [Satan] said, "By Your misguidance of me, I will lie in ambush for them on your straight path. Then I will come at them, from in front of them and behind them, from their right and from their left. You will not find most of them thankful." (Surat al- A'raf: 16-17)

"I will lead them astray and fill them with false hopes. I will command them and they will cut off cattle's ears. I will command them and they will change Allah's creation." Anyone who takes Satan as his protector in place of Allah has clearly lost everything. He makes promises to them and fills them with

false hopes. But what Satan promises them is nothing but delusion. (Surat an-Nisa': 119-120)

As is stated in these verses, Satan's basic aim is to divert people from the way of Allah. Those who adhere to Satan, and act on his behalf, employ the same tactics as he. They aim to prevent others from interpreting the events according to the guidance of the Qur'an. By emphasizing the negative instead of the positive, they try to make people forget to see that there is good in that which is fated, as in all things. They strive to provoke people into pessimism, hopelessness and dismay. For instance, when news arrives of a sudden accident or death, they will immediately try to impart in the other person a manner of speech which is an affront to our Lord.

When faced with such news, those who know that both life and death are subject to Allah speak in a manner that shows submission, and a heartfelt devotion to Allah; they say, "Allah's decision is always for the best."

Similarly, once those who are distant from faith learn that they have been seized by a deadly illness, they may, under Satan's influence, refer to their hopelessness and discontent. By manipulating those under his influence, Satan aims stealthily to plant in people's minds the idea that sorrow and a lack of trust in Allah are reasonable, while those who speak in a Muslim way are ever optimistic and respectful of Allah, even at the most trying times. No matter how serious the disease they may have contracted, they speak with the trust and submission brought about by the knowledge that Allah's might is without bounds. The faithfuls' speaking with such hopefulness invites those around them to behave with similar trust in Allah, as well as to speak with the same hopefulness.

Those who have faith in Allah recognize when a statement is made under Satan's influence, and, whatever the situation, they point to it without fear of reprisal, never consenting to it. They know that the pun-

ishment in the afterlife for those who act as Satan's spokespersons will be similar to that slated for Satan himself. Because of this, they do not fall into Satan's trap; they immediately take refuge in Allah, and by speaking in conformity with the Qur'an, they ultimately render Satan's efforts ineffective.

Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong

With their speech, believers try both to live according to the morality expounded in the Qur'an, as best as they can, as well as encourage others to live a moral life. That is because, in the Qur'an, they are advised that they are responsible for calling others to behave well, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who have success. (Surah Al 'Imran: 104)

As this verse commands, Muslims must try to direct both one another and other people towards the morality which Allah approves. In the Qur'an, the faithful are instructed to speak "**the finest of words.**" Because of this, the faithful speak using their intelligence and their conscience in the best possible way, and try to find the words which will be most useful for the people they are talking to. Knowing that others' lack of knowledge or ignorance comes from their distance from the Qur'an, they approach them by a way of speaking filled with compassion and mercy. They do not forget that, before they themselves learned the morality of the Qur'an, they were prone to incorrect behavior or that they had been able to arrive at moral perfection only because of Allah's compassion.

In addition, while explaining the religion, they never speak in a way that is forceful. As is outlined in this verse of the Qur'an, "**So remind them! You are only a reminder. You are not in control of them.**" (Surat al-Ghashiyya: 21-22), the responsibility of the Muslims is only to give

advice with the most beautiful language and speak in the knowledge that the only One Who ultimately offers guidance is Allah. They attempt to speak in "the kindest way," as they are told to do in another verse of the Qur'an: **"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way."** (Surat an-Nahl: 125)

As they are told in another verse "... **warn them and speak to them with words that take effect.**" (Surat an-Nisa': 63), Muslims call on the consciences of those who have fallen into error, but do so in a straightforward manner, using unambiguous and effective words. They never speak out of conceit or feelings of superiority. They use a manner of speaking which is measured, always respectful, and approach those they advise with points that are both positive and constructive. They hold conversations which will attract these people to their intelligence and sincerity. By warning others to abandon the state of error in which they find themselves and telling them about the afterlife, the Day of Judgment and Allah's hearing every word spoken and seeing every act in order to direct them towards a better way of behaving, they invite them to heed Allah.

As well, though the faithful may be truly sincere in their efforts, the opposite party may not be able to understand what has been explained, or may simply not wish to accept it. Nevertheless, the faithful never fall into hopelessness or despair. Their duty is to carry out the task of communicating Allah's message, described by Allah as a form of worship, in the best way possible; the responsibility for following or not following the advice given is solely upon those spoken to. The believers never forget that guidance is from Allah, as we are told in the following verse of the Qur'an: **"You cannot guide those you would like to but Allah guides those He wills. He has best knowledge of the guided."** (Surat al-Qasas: 56)

Speaking with wisdom

Speaking with wisdom represents the ability to speak in the most appropriate, the most beneficial and most effective manner possible. But speaking with wisdom is not bound by any specific rules. It depends on the time, place, the person addressed, and the circumstances. Moreover, the ability to speak with wisdom has no relation whatsoever with people's degree of intelligence, or how cultured they may be, their level of education or technical expertise. Some, who fail to apprehend this truth, then take part in courses or training with the aim of attaining wisdom and public speaking skills. Some believe this trait can be obtained merely by employing certain techniques; for this reason, they expend much effort to comply, as best as possible, to the various advice found in books about the rules of rhetoric or the art of diction.

They believe that if their speaking is extended or excessively elaborate, or that they use fashionable or foreign turns of phrase, which they believe carry intellectual appeal, their speech will be more attractive and effective. However, these characteristics do not endow anyone with the ability to speak with wisdom, because wisdom is a faculty which can only be acquired through faith, the sincerity which results from awareness of Allah and wholehearted submission to Allah.

As Allah says of the angels, in the Qur'an, "**They said, 'Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise'.**" (Surat al-Baqara: 32), Allah has boundless wisdom, and He grants ability to whomever He wills. A person has no knowledge except what is taught by Allah.

When speaking with someone, those endowed with wisdom do not seek to endear the other to themselves. Knowing that it is Allah Who grants the power of speech, they take refuge in Him, and employ their speech in order only to gain His approval. At all times, they are aware that, while they are speaking, they are in the presence, not only of other people, but of Allah, and that their words will be effective only by His

will. To this purpose, that their language take effect and be supported with wisdom, they pray to Allah. As a consequence of their sincerity, their conscience assists them to choose those words which are best and the most appropriate. As such, all who listen to their consciences may easily discern that which needs emphasis, what needs to be indicated, or what must be said.

In contrast to verbose or elaborate speeches, as with those among whom the morality of the Qur'an is not adhered to, they who speak with wisdom have an effect on the heart of their listeners. At no time does one who is sincere speak with the purpose of earning praise. However, because the real aim of those who are far removed from the morality set forth in the Qur'an is to make others be like them, they utterly lack in sincerity. Without this sincerity, of course, nor either can there be wisdom in their speech. In it we would only be able to refer to its technical aspects.

Merely to make a show of their profound knowledge of a subject, some speakers at times make unnecessary pronouncements which are of no use whatsoever to their listeners. They belabor their audiences with two or three hour-long speeches on highly mundane subjects, which could have otherwise been explained in a few sentences. By contrast, people of faith explain in the most clear, comprehensible, concise and effective manner so as to be of benefit to the listener.

Their purpose is neither to make themselves lauded nor to assume superiority over others. Their intention is solely to be of use to the listener, so as to earn the approval of Allah. Because their intention is pure, their efforts, Allah willing, will be ultimately successful.

The Qur'an draws our attention to the importance of wisdom, and to the fact that it is a great blessing: "**He gives wisdom to whoever He wills and he who has been given wisdom has been given great good...**" (Surat al-Baqara: 269) Indeed, those endowed with wisdom may, with Allah's permission, live according to the religion in the best way and, by explaining to others the morality found in the Qur'an in the manner which is the

most comprehensible and effective, bring upon them a number of benefits. Those addressed by such wise people may, through their wise words, be able to see the truth behind the events they observe, and may be encouraged to reform their behavior, matters which until then they had not been able to properly understand. Realizing how great a blessing wisdom is, the faithful, in their prayers, ask Allah to grant them "wisdom and discernment in speech." The Qur'an gives the example of the Prophet Ibrahim's (as) prayer:

My Lord, give me right judgment and unite me with the righteous; and make me highly esteemed among the later peoples. (Surat ash-Shu'ara': 83-84)

These verses call attention to the fact that Allah grants wisdom to whomever He wills, and that wisdom is a characteristic trait of Allah's messengers. For instance, from the verse, "[We] ... **gave him wisdom and decisive speech.**" (Surah Sad, 20), we understand that Allah granted specific wisdom and influential speech to the Prophet Dawud (as). The following verse informs us that wisdom was imparted to the Prophet Ibrahim (as):

Or do they in fact envy other people for the bounty Allah has granted them? We gave the family of Ibrahim the Book and wisdom, and We gave them an immense kingdom. (Surat an-Nisa': 54)

As well, there is no relation between the ability to speak wisely and a person's age. Allah will endow those with wisdom in proportion to their sincerity and faith, at whatever age He wills. The best examples of this, as stated in the Qur'an, are those of the Prophets Yahya (as) and Musa (as).

In the verse, "**Yahya, take hold of the Book with vigor! We gave him judgment while still a child,**" (Surah Maryam: 12), we are told that the Prophet Yahya (as) was given wisdom in childhood. On the other hand, the verse, "**And when he reached his full strength and maturity, We gave him judgment and knowledge. That is how We rec-**

ompense good-doers." (Surat al-Qasas: 14) tells us that the Prophet Musa (as) received such blessing in his later years.

Several examples are provided in the Qur'an of the wise manner of speech of the Prophets. One such example is that of a man who believed himself to be great, merely due to wealth and property, and initiated an argument about Allah. Faced with the wisdom of the answer of the Prophet Ibrahim (as), he then recognized his own insincerity:

What about the one who argued with Ibrahim about his Lord, on the basis that Allah had given him sovereignty? Ibrahim said, "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes to die." He said, "I too give life and cause to die." Ibrahim said, "Allah makes the sun come from the East. Make it come from the West." And the one who was an unbeliever was dumbfounded. Allah does not guide wrongdoing people. (Surat al-Baqara: 258)

Speaking in a sincere manner

One of the manners of speech which is the most effective is that which is sincere, because, as with words that are wise, sincere speech attains the heart and conscience of the listener directly. It is in a human beings' nature to be prone to the effects of sincerity. Sincere speech aids people to see the truth of an idea which they had till then not believed in, which they would not have tolerated, and which, therefore, they would have opposed and refused to evaluate objectively. It encourages the listener to also think sincerely, as well as to judge and speak sincerely. Compared to one who speaks sincerely, the insincerity of one who makes flowery speeches with much affectation is immediately recognizable. Indeed, often, people see that speaking insincerely only works against the person.

One of the more important characteristics of those who speak sincerely is that they take refuge in Allah, with no attempt to elaborate their speech in some peculiar way. Sincere speech reflects the honest

feelings of a person. If there is a defect or some corruption in that person, then admitting to it honestly is also a sign of sincere speech. Those who speak sincerely present themselves as they are; they do not attempt to present themselves as good if they are bad, or if they are good to conceal the fact, or to give a different impression of what they are to those around them.

Even if they have not been introduced to those they speak to, their sincere manner of speaking makes the introduction on their behalf. Their tone of voice, their emphases, the words they select, the structure of their logic, their honest and objective approach to events, their natural manner of speaking purified from artificiality, their avoidance of seeking to please people, and their determined refusal to avoid telling the truth provide proof of their sincerity to their audience.

Speaking sincerely is a great comfort, both to the speakers, and to the listeners; the speakers experience the peace of saying what comes from their heart, without worry, because they are devoted to Allah, while the listeners experience the confidence of trusting sincere, well-intentioned and honest people, and acting upon their truthfulness. Whatever happens, they know these people are concealing no ill-will, and are certain of the honesty of their advice or criticism.

Speaking the truth

Another characteristic prevalent in the speech of the faithful is their telling the truth no matter what the circumstances. We are told in the Qur'an that avoiding speaking the truth, simply from fear of others, is not acceptable. For this reason, while speaking, the faithful listen to the voice of their conscience. They always speak with the best and most effective words, but, at the same time, do not neglect speaking the truth for fear of disappointing or angering someone, or to win him or her over. They do not fail to speak the truth from concern that the response will have negative repercussions for themselves or their friends.

Neither do they tell lies to gain advantage for themselves or their friends and relatives, because Allah instructs all to tell the truth in this verse of the Qur'an: **"You who believe! Heed Allah and speak words which hit the mark"** (Surat al-Ahzab: 70) and **"... avoid false words."** (Surat al-Hajj: 30)

Lying is frequent where the morality of the Qur'an is not followed. Some believe that lying is not harmful. Some say that, while certain lies are wrong, others are permissible. They consider that small lies, in order to avoid suffering some greater loss, whether in the moral or material sense, are a necessity of life. They try to ease their consciences by putting forward suggestions such as, "I tell lies but I do nobody any harm," or "By lying I'm actually doing good." By reason of these excuses, they tell dozens of lies throughout the day, though they claim that they are not lies. For example, they may tell someone who calls them on the phone, "I'm very busy. I can't talk to you at the moment," while, in fact, at the time they weren't busy doing anything at all. Or, they lose a file at the office but, when asked, say they know nothing about it, or try to put the blame on someone else. When they meet their bosses, though they think exactly the opposite, they say things like, "You think very correctly," or "You conducted business very well," being truly two-faced. They tell a friend who asks for a loan, "I'm in trouble at the moment, I have no money myself," when in truth they have quite enough. When one of their relatives asks for help, they find an excuse saying, "I'm very ill, I can't come at the moment," when in actuality they are not ill at all. It is possible to offer a great number of such examples, because people who have descended into this sort of morality have practically made lying a way of life.

As for Muslims, they speak in the knowledge that Allah sees them, in all instances and all times, and hears every word they say, and that they will be called upon to account for themselves on the Day of Judgment. Because they fear Allah, they avoid telling lies, or using even

the slightest evasion, as well as concealing information, and slander, gossip and bad language of all types. They take refuge in Allah from saying a word they think He will not approve of, and speak with honesty at all times. They are aware that lies and slander cause a person to suffer loss in the afterlife, as we are told in the verse, **"Who could do greater wrong than someone who invents lies against Allah or denies His Signs? The wrongdoers are certainly not successful."** (Surat al-An'am: 21)

In those communities in which they carried out their missions, the Prophets were known for their true word, as can be understood from the ways in which they were addressed by the people around them. The Qur'an tells us of one who had been unjustly thrown into prison, because of a false accusation, and who had come to the Prophet Yusuf (as) saying: **"O truthful Yusuf ..."** (Surah Yusuf: 46)

The true words of Muslims are noticeable in a number of ways; they never perjure themselves. Allah warns believers to avoid such transgressions in the following verse of the Qur'an: **"They have made their oaths into a cloak and barred the Way of Allah. What they have done is truly evil."** (Surat al-Munafiqun: 2) In fact, false oaths are one of the most frequently used methods to deceive one another by those who are removed from the morality expounded in the Qur'an. Even when they clearly know that each other has no fear of Allah, and that their oaths are used as a means of deception, they still believe each other's words. This behavior, however, is strongly condemned by our Prophet (saas), who said, *"Those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's Covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter."* (Bukhari and Muslim)

In other verses, also pertaining to speaking the truth, Allah points out that making a promise one cannot keep is unacceptable; **"You who believe! Why do you say what you do not do? It is deeply abhorrent to Allah that you should say what you do not do."** (Surat as-Saff: 2-3)

For that reason, the faithful do not make promises they cannot keep. They know these may burden them with great responsibility in the presence of Allah. Among those distant from the morality of the Qur'an, however, these acts are quite common. This sort of people may resort to such ploys to gain an unfair advantage, to lead those around them in the direction they wish, or to cover up their own shortcomings. As for the faithful, when they give their word they do not break it. They know that if they do not keep their word they will have committed an error, not only against others, but against Allah. Because they fear Allah, they try to remain true to their word, no matter how difficult it may be to do so. Our attention is drawn to this feature of believers in the Qur'an:

Those who fulfill Allah's contract and do not break their agreement. (Surat ar-Ra'd: 20)

Another characteristic exemplifying the true words of the faithful is their truthfulness in bearing witness. The Qur'an refers to this trait of the faithful like this:

Those who do not bear false witness ... (Surat al-Furqan: 72)

Those who stand by their testimony. (Surat al-Ma'arij: 33)

Although its consequences may result in harm, both to themselves and those around them, believers bear witness to what they hear or see without hesitation. That is because they know that Allah commands them to uphold justice as true witnesses. One pertinent verse reads:

You who believe! Be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do. (Surat an-Nisa': 135)

Knowing that our Prophet (saas) admonished the faithful on this matter the following way: "*I warn you against making a false statement and giving a false testimony.*" (Bukhari and Muslim), they never protect one

who is guilty and always adhere to what truth requires. They tell the truth with impartiality, even in the case of those whom they do not approve of, bearing witness against them in the fairest manner. As we are told in the verse, **"You who believe! Show integrity for the sake of Allah, bearing witness with justice. Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to heedfulness. Heed Allah. Allah is aware of what you do,"** (Surat al- Ma'ida: 8) they fear Allah and take refuge in Him.

These true words of the faithful are evident also in their summoning others to the truth. On the other hand, those who have not adopted the morality of the Qur'an seek to cast doubt on the existence of Allah and the afterlife through statements made without any evidence whatsoever. The Qur'an draws our attention to the invalidity of their statements as such:

Among people there is one who argues about Allah without knowledge, and follows every rebellious Satan. (Surat al-Hajj: 3)

These people encourage one another to become excessively fond the life of this world, to not heed Allah, and to live instead according to a corrupt morality and be neglectful of the afterlife. One of the most frequently encountered examples of this case is their offering the suggestion, "I will bear the burden of your sin" when encouraging one another to behave in ways they know to be wrong. Allah, however, explains in this verse, **"No burden-bearer can bear another's burden. Then you will return to your Lord and He will inform you of what you did. He knows what the heart contains,"** (Surat az-Zumar: 7) that such a thing is not possible in His sight. Therefore, those who come to others with such a suggestion are lying.

Believers, however, always summon those around them to the truth and to what is right. They exalt the glory of Allah, remind others that the afterlife is a sure reality, that the Day of Judgment is close at hand, and call on them to heed Allah's laws. In the Qur'an, we are told that

Allah's messengers were known, among the communities to which they were sent, for always telling the truth and for speaking in an honest and truthful fashion. As for those who, despite their honesty and truthfulness, still did not believe that which the Prophets had set forth, but instead set themselves against them, when they find themselves face to face with the truth in the after life, will confess to this reality, saying, **"The Messengers were telling the truth."**

The Trumpet will be blown and at once they will be sliding from their graves towards their Lord. They will say, "Alas for us! Who has raised us from our resting-place? This is what the All-Merciful promised us. The Messengers were telling the truth." (Surah Ya Sin: 51-52)

Speaking sensibly and logically

Another characteristic common to the speech of the faithful is that it is found to be a way of speaking which reflects true wisdom. Contrary to popular belief, not all who are thought wise are actually wise. Allah grants this blessing to those who believe in Him. What people often confuse with wisdom is intelligence, a talent which is never to be compared with the superiority of true wisdom.

Some, though they are far from the morality of the Qur'an, may be very clever; having a talent for thinking quickly, a powerful memory or a keen ability to provide ready answers. However, in their speech we would not encounter the use of words that would reflect real wisdom. The Qur'an tells us that real wisdom, which enables one to distinguish right from wrong, only comes through fear of Allah and faith in Him:

You who believe! If you fear Allah, He will give you a criterion [by which to judge between truth and falsehood] and erase your bad actions from you and forgive you. Allah's favor is indeed immense. (Surat al-Anfal: 29)

This wisdom, which is gained by faith and the fear of Allah, is re-

flected in all that the faithful say; in their speech, when they make a decision, when they determine a deficiency or a need, when they analyze people's characters, faults or good points, their wisdom is noticeable and recognized by others. Such wise speech is very direct though equally plain and simple; it is unambiguous and comprehensible, that it can be easily understood by anyone, from a young child, or an uncultured person to one with a high intellectual capacity.

Thanks to this wisdom, the faithful can determine truths and important points about a subject which others, with far more knowledge and experience than they possess, fail to recognize. They are able to provide definite answers to a great many problems, for which no solution had been found, even though every method had been employed. They are able to point out a person's errors in the most accurate, the most convincing, and the simplest language possible. They avoid unfounded comments; taking into account the history and circumstances of an event, they assess its possible ramifications. Where views had come to be taken for granted, they offer new and innovative ideas, exhibiting their wisdom. When they do so they impress others upon which they have a genuine effect.

Their speech is not of an ordinary or common variety. Their chain of logic, the evidence they put forward, and the examples they give, are so accurate that the listeners find themselves unable to reject them. They can avoid becoming monotonous by talking about the same subject but varying their speech, by using different sentence structures, different words and offering different comparisons each time. They defy the familiarity of a listener with a subject by using different approaches on every occasion. In addition, they are able to describe something beautiful in the most striking and effective language. They can also express their love or respect for a person in the most beautiful way. In order to do so, they do not need to cast themselves in some special light, or any such effort; in return for their sincere submission to Him, Allah, Who

inspired wisdom in these believers, shows them the most correct path and enables them to speak with wisdom.

Giving good tidings

Allah has bought from the believers their selves and their wealth in return for Paradise. ... [W]ho is truer to his contract than Allah? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the great victory. (Surat at-Tawba: 111)

In the verse quoted above, Allah reminds the faithful to share good tidings with one another. The faithful's source of joy and good humor is that Allah has set them on the true path which will lead to "the great victory." The faithful are those whose selves and wealth are at the disposal of Allah, and who vow to behave virtuously that they may reach Paradise. This is the smartest bargain one can make in the life of this world, and the one with the best reward.

The believers experience this joy that arises from their faith at every stage and every moment of their lives, because Allah is the friend of the faithful, and He has given them the good news that He will always come to their aid, see all their affairs to a favorable conclusion, and shower blessings upon them, and He has promised them Paradise in the afterlife. The faithful, who know that Allah never breaks His covenant, interpret all that they experience in the life of this world according to this knowledge. For this reason, they are certain that everything which they experience is for their benefit. They can see blessings and the positive aspects of difficulties which they face, and in when speaking of these developments they always do so in a way which is optimistic and encouraging. Within themselves they have the peace and security of their reliance on Allah, as well as their trust in Him. They receive their reward for their extraordinary patience through

these difficulties and problems. Thinking of their noble reward in Heaven, as recompense for this patience, they are heartened with the good news. Consequently, whatever happens is good news for the faithful, because everything that takes place is brought about by Allah, and He is the friend and guardian of the faithful. Whatever comes from Allah is both beautiful and blessed. Indeed, it is impressive that the faithful can speak of "excellence" even when faced with an event such as a death:

Say: "Do you await for us but one of two most excellent things [i.e., martyrdom or victory]? ..." (Surat at-Tawba: 52)

The faithful greet death as something good because, for those who have lived their lives sincerely, pledging themselves wholeheartedly to Allah, it is not an end but a new beginning. In the afterlife, Allah will recreate believers in the most beautiful form, and give them blessings of a wonder and variety not to be compared with those of the life of this world. As a result of their living their lives in the type of submission of which Allah approves, He has promised His servants the greatest and most wonderful blessings. For that reason, the joy and contentment of the faithful is unconditional. No matter what difficulties they encounter, their manner of speaking is always such to reflect their gratitude to Allah.

However, it is necessary to add that the ability of the faithful to see the good and positive side of things is not a cop-out. They exercise their wisdom to the best of their ability, in order to be able to see the good in everything they experience, as well as to be able to overcome the difficulties which they encounter.

Where the morality expounded in the Qur'an is not adhered to, it is difficult to encounter a pleasant manner of speaking, even in the best of times. For whatever reasons, some people make a habit of finding the negative in everything and speaking pessimistically. They do not know how to be happy about anything, and try to find things to grumble,

complain and moan about. They make a habit of being bearers of bad news and prodding others into discontent. Their spiritual state is somber and they provoke one another into thinking negatively about everything, and lead each other into despair.

Not speaking joyfully is one of the most important characteristics in determining those who are of a hypocritical nature who try to find a place for themselves amongst the faithful. Hypocrites carefully avoid giving good news which will bring joy to the faithful, or speaking of events in a positive and cheerful way. They do not want to even listen to good news in the believers' favor. When such news is given them, either they do not respond to it, or they try to dampen the joy of the faithful and take away their pleasure by finding in it something negative. But, they are never successful through such efforts. On the contrary, the ability to avoid these hypocrites, by seeing them for who they are, is a mercy and another yet more good news for the faithful.

Giving good and happy news, and interpreting every event positively despite the pessimistic provocations of the soul, or of Satan, keeps the faithful enthusiastic and cheerful. Their speaking in this way angers the hypocrites and unbelievers, because it renders void their attempts to harm the faithful. While they themselves sink into despair and hopelessness for the minutest reason, they observe with envy the faithful who are not in the least affected by the turn of events which to them are seen as negative. Because they do not understand that the source of the believers' disposition is faith, they do not discern the source of their strength.

Talk imbued with good news and positivity may enable those whose faith is weak, and who easily fall into despair, to find strength, to see the truth and to fortify their faith. The faithful, who manifest their contentment with Allah and their submission to Him with their cheerful and joyful way of speaking, hope, through this manner of devotion, to earn Allah's contentment and approval. This reward as Allah prom-

ises to the believers is described in the Qur'an as follows:

The forerunners—the first of the Muhajirun [i.e., migrants] and the Ansar [i.e., supporters]—and those who have followed them in doing good: Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared Gardens for them with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever and ever. That is the great victory. (Surat at-Tawba: 100)

Speaking so as to arouse joy and enthusiasm

One of the responsibilities of the faithful is that they always maintain high level of joy, contentment and enthusiasm among the believers through their words. Sincere believers experience this pleasure and joy deep within themselves at all times, but they also know that Satan tries to urge the faithful into a state of despair and destroy their will and enthusiasm. Therefore, the faithful support one another against Satan's schemes and, by encouraging one another, render Satan's wiles ineffective.

In addition, even if there were no temptations at all from Satan, Muslims never regard the joy and enthusiasm they feel as adequate; they strive to strengthen both themselves and one another, by continually enhancing these positive sentiments. As is pointed out in the words of the Qur'an, "**spur on the believers,**" (Surat an-Nisa': 84), in order to receive the great rewards in the afterlife, they exert the maximum effort in encouraging one another to pious behavior, in order to earn the approval of Allah. In another verse, "**... so race each other to the good.**" (Surat al-Baqara: 148) Allah announces to the faithful that they have entered a competition in good.

In the life of this world, the lifespan allotted by Allah to humankind is quite short. Furthermore, no-one can know on what day and at what time they will meet their death. For this reason, proceeding slowly or procrastinating in one's efforts to earn Allah's approval, maintaining

the excuse that, "Anyway, I have long years ahead of me," is clearly very wrong. On the contrary, we should behave enthusiastically all the time, be ardent and eager, saying, "I may meet my death at any moment." With that regard, the support the faithful render unto one another is very important. By reason of the news given in the Qur'an, they remind one another of the proximity of death, the afterlife and the Day of Judgment and that those who are the most acceptable to Allah are **"the forerunners in doing good deeds"** (Surat al-Waqi'a: 10). Another verse says:

Race each other to forgiveness from your Lord and to a Garden, whose breadth is like that of heaven and earth combined, made ready for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is Allah's favor which He gives to those He wills. Allah's favor is indeed immense.(Surat al-Hadid: 21)

As we are told in the following verse of the Qur'an, **"So when you have finished, work on"** (Surat al-Inshirah: 7), they encourage one another to engage in good works which will earn the approval of Allah, and when they have no task at hand, to seek to find one. No matter what difficulties or troubles they may encounter, they remind one another that Allah is always at their side and will help them without a doubt. Even under the most trying conditions, they note that they need to keep their hope alive, that they must be patient with a firm resolve, and that there will be a greater reward in the afterlife for living according to the morality spelled out in the Qur'an with zeal and determination.

In awareness the verse of the Qur'an, **"Do not give up and do not be downhearted. You shall be uppermost if you are believers,"** (Surah Al 'Imran: 139) the faithful maintain that their faith will always guide them to the straight path, and, ultimately, to success. They encourage one another to greater enthusiasm with reminders of what Allah has promised in the afterlife.

Saying what is best

Say to My servants that they should only say the best. Satan wants to stir up trouble between them. Satan is an outright enemy to man. (Surat al-Isra': 53)

In the Qur'an, Allah commands people to say what is best to one another. People can banter without thinking, or they can make the effort to speak in the finest way. Of the two approaches, the one which would be expected to be acceptable in Allah's sight, and which will earn the approval of Allah, is the second; that is, to do one's utmost and speak in the most conscientious manner.

We can explain this with an example. One may turn a blind eye to the superior behavior of another, and not mention it, or he may admit that it was indeed excellent behavior, but reluctantly and half-heartedly. Or, he may do exactly the opposite and tell the person just how superior was his morality and how exemplary was his behavior, sincerely and from the heart. At first glance, the difference between these two manners may not mean much. However, upon closer inspection, with the regards to the rewards they garner in Allah's sight, there is a great difference. Therefore, in order to speak in the way of the Muslims, Muslims should highlight the good qualities of the other, without in any way giving in to their pride and allowing themselves to be taken over by envy. Trying to ignore the matter, even in part, and growing arrogant, is behavior which reflects the type morality of those who are far removed from the lessons of the Qur'an. The faithful are those who notice such deviance, likely to be whispered from their lower selves, and speak in the best manner they think will be approved by Allah.

Before uttering a word, Muslims consult their conscience and try to say only what is best. They take care not to say a single word which will discomfort the other person, or cause doubt or concern in their heart. On the contrary, they will try to speak in such a way as to put their heart at ease, to console, and thus entuse them. They speak for the

purpose of encouraging others, and ensuring that they are strengthened in faith by bringing them closer to Allah.

Not speaking from the lower-self and from personal desires

Another superior moral characteristic reflected in the speech of the faithful is that they avoid speaking on behalf of their selves and their desires. Believers know that the lower self continually seeks to incite them to behavior of which Allah will not approve. For this reason, they speak not in the way their lower-selves suggest, but in the way inspired by their consciences. In the Qur'an, the behavior of the Prophet Yusuf (as) is offered as an example of this aspect of the morality of the faithful. When he was falsely accused, and as a result imprisoned for years in a dark dungeon, the Prophet Yusuf (as) refrained from defending himself, but admitted that the lower-self would always lead people into evil:

I do not say my self was free from blame. The [lower] self indeed commands to evil acts—except for those my Lord has mercy on. My Lord, He is Forgiving, Merciful. (Surah Yusuf: 53)

Speaking from one's desires is that which is done without taking into consideration the approval of Allah, and instead thinking selfishly only of one's own wishes. In communities which do not live by the values of the Qur'an, people speak without thinking at all; they act on the spur of the moment and out of the feelings that arise from within them. For example, when a person makes a mistake, another may succumb quickly to rage, and speaking out of this rage, uses a course, critical and inconsiderate language, whereas one who hopes for the approval of Allah ought to use a way of speaking which deals with the mistake with forgiveness, which explains the mistake to the other person, and shows the way to correct it. In that case, the faithful straight away employ their consciences and say only whatever is most appropriate in accordance with the morality explained in the Qur'an.

Speaking in a measured, courteous and respectful manner

Another example of the fine morality of the faithful is that they speak in a way that is both measured and respectful. This way of speaking is not dependent on the age, knowledge, intelligence or wealth of the person they are addressing, because they live according to the morality of the Qur'an in order that they may gain the approval of Allah. They are aware that if they were to consider everyone they speak with as individuals having an independent power of their own or superior in some way, and approached everyone differently, they would not be fulfilling the requirements of the morality of the Qur'an. They know that they will be questioned as to each person they encountered, as part of the test which Allah has created for them in the life of this world, and they act in the knowledge that they are representatives of Islamic morality. They try to respond to everyone with the most respectful and the kindest words; they approach a vendor they meet in the street, an apprentice working at a grocer, co-workers at their place of work, and their spouses and children, all with exactly the same respect. In the Qur'an, this approach practiced by the faithful is emphasized in the following verse:

When you are greeted with a greeting, return the greeting or improve on it. Allah takes account of everything. (Surat an-Nisa': 86)

In addition, they respond to in the same measured way to those who are angry or disrespectful towards them. They speak in the knowledge that remaining firm in their morals in such instances is the type of behavior which will earn them a superior place in Allah's sight. In a verse of the Qur'an, Allah explains the superiority of this behavior with these words:

Wealth and sons are the embellishment of the life of the world. But, in your Lord's sight, right actions which are lasting bring a better reward and are a better basis for hope. (Surat al-Kahf: 46)

Speaking in a humble manner

Humility is another important factor in the speech of the faithful. Attention to this matter is drawn to this aspect of their morality in the Qur'an in this verse: **"The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk modestly on the earth and, who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, 'Peace'."** (Surat al-Furqan: 63) The faithful are humble through their knowledge that no matter what qualities they may possess, all are favors from Allah and that He can take them back whenever He wishes.

Allah notifies the faithful of this with the words of the following verse, **"Do not strut arrogantly about the earth. You will certainly never split the earth apart nor will you ever rival the mountains in height. (Surat al-Isra': 37)**

Human beings are truly powerless in the light of the boundless might of Allah. Allah's knowledge encompasses everything; He is the Creator and the Possessor of every thing. For this reason, the believers act with cognizance of the degradation they will suffer when confronted by Allah on the Day of Judgment, if they become proud of something that does not truly belong to them. Even in that in which they are outstanding, they humble themselves, acknowledge their deficiencies and speak in recognition of their powerlessness.

Even if those they talk to are lacking in the same own qualities, Muslims never become arrogant and boastful, because, in the following verse, Allah has informed them that He does not love vain people,

Do not avert your face from people out of haughtiness and do not strut about arrogantly on the earth. Allah does not love anyone who is vain or boastful. (Surah Luqman: 18)

When speaking on a subject, Muslims do not talk in a condescending manner; that is, they talk with an awareness that the matter in question also applies to themselves. As is pointed out in the verse, **"No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient"**

(Surat al-'Alaq: 6-7) believers act in the knowledge that, if they admire themselves vainly, their better qualities may be in detriment and they may fall into great error. When speaking on a subject they know well, they do not become conceited and try to bring attention to themselves. On the contrary, they adopt a manner of speaking that reflects a recognition that it is only Allah Who grants the power of speech, and it is only Allah Who possesses the knowledge of all things.

In the verse **"Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him. Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbors who are related to you and neighbors who are not related to you, and to companions and travelers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful."** (Surat an-Nisa': 36), Allah reminds people to behave well and not to be boastful towards those they speak to. Allah has instructed us to show humility to our parents, our close friends and casual acquaintances, orphans and the needy. Behaving humbly towards those one regards well but arrogantly towards those one looks down upon, is not in accordance with the morality of the Qur'an. People are responsible for adhering to this in all instances. Muslims also know that speaking boastfully when faced with an egotistical person, offering the excuse, "Never mind, he's arrogant as well," is not correct either. The Muslim way of speaking requires speaking in the knowledge that everywhere and at all times Allah is witness to every word, and this sense of moral obligation can only be developed by following the teachings of the Qur'an.

Speaking with tolerance and forgiveness

In a verse of the Qur'an, Allah tells us that a well-spoken, tolerant and forgiving manner of speech is expected of the faithful: **"Correct and courteous words accompanied by forgiveness are better than giving charity followed by insulting words. Allah is Rich Beyond Need, All-Forbearing."** (Surat al-Baqara: 263)

To live according to this moral code, as defined in the Qur'an, requires a sincere faith and fear of Allah, because, to demonstrate a superior morality, one of the most difficult responsibilities is in forgiving somebody against whom one has a valid complaint.

To forgive someone who has committed an injustice against us, and to, though we may be in the right, adopt a gentle manner of speaking, is only possible through the reformation of the soul and conscience gained by the fear of Allah. In areas of the world where the morality of the Qur'an is not observed, people are only tolerant towards others when they expect a benefit in return; only for such a reason would they forgive others with calm, measured and tolerant speech. However, this is only on the surface—on the inside, instead of tolerance, they harbor hatred and anger. When they have obtained the benefit they had been hoping for, and there is a conflict of interest, or when they reach the limits of their patience, then they let out that hatred and anger.

In some cases, after resorting to a malevolent, intolerant and aggressive way of speaking, people say they have forgiven the other party using words like, "Let me be big hearted." However, first giving way to the provocations of the lower self, then expressing anger, and only afterwards forgiving the other person, so as to place him under a debt of gratitude, is not genuine tolerance. What is important is to be able to adopt this superior morality. Our Prophet (saas) pointed out the importance of this to the faithful with these words: *"The strong man is not the good wrestler; the strong man is only he who controls himself when he is angry."* (Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim)

For this reason, the faithful, even in circumstances where they are most in the right, remain modest, tolerant and forgiving, in accordance with the morality of the Qur'an, because they know that what is most acceptable is that they show firm patience when they find themselves in conflict with their own lower-selves. They know that to gain Allah's approval they need to maintain good morals, not from time to time, but in

all times, without interruption, and through to the end of their lives. In addition, just as they appear gentle, principled and compassionate on the outside, so, too, do the faithful have the same compassion within themselves. If they adopt a forgiving manner of speech, it is because the forgiveness is genuine. There is nothing in their hearts of hatred or anger. When they are in a situation of conflict with their own selves, they know that it is their responsibility to Allah not to deviate from the morality of the Qur'an by resorting to a belligerent manner of speech. For this reason, they remain firm in their morality with those they meet and speak in a tolerant, compassionate and forgiving way, in order to gain the approval of Allah. In this verse, Allah advises the faithful:

Practise forgiveness, command what is right, and turn away from the ignorant. (Surat al-A'raf: 199)

Consulting

Another characteristic of the speech of those distant from the Qur'an is that they always seek the last word and to come out right in the end. Rather than understanding and benefiting from what the other has to say, they look to express their own ideas and force them to be accepted. In fact, no matter what one's level of knowledge, there may be things to be learned from the other. Even if the other is less knowledgeable, it is always possible for him or her to offer a different perspective on a subject, evaluate it more objectively and come up with helpful insights.

Those who know that everyone they listen to was created by Allah, consider that there may be some hidden good in the other party's speech from which they can derive benefit and seek to uncover it. Even with regard to a subject they know very well, they are aware that it is still possible that they might have formed an idea inadequately or incorrectly. Abiding by the following verse of the Qur'an, "**Over everyone with knowledge is one [more] knowing**" (Surah Yusuf: 76), they recog-

nize that no matter how well informed they may be about that subject, someone else may be even better informed and able to form more accurate conclusions, and thus keep themselves open to the other's comments and advice. Moreover, in such instances, even before anyone else were to say anything, they consult on the matter with those whose intelligence, conscience and sincerity they trust; in other words, they exchange ideas with others. Carrying out affairs through consultation is one of the important characteristics of the faithful. A verse of the Qur'an offers the following:

Those who respond to their Lord and establish prayer, and manage their affairs by mutual consultation and give of what We have provided for them. (Surat ash-Shura: 38)

In addition, there is no place for dogmatism in the speech of the faithful. What is important is not to convince the other party of the rightness of their own ideas, but to be able to discover what is most correct. In this matter their common reference is the Qur'an. That is because, when speaking they take the Qur'an as their guide and are dependent on it for every decision. In a verse of the Qur'an, our attention is drawn to this characteristic of the faithful:

Those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, do not turn their backs, deaf and blind to them. (Surat al-Furqan: 73)

Saying "It is as Allah wills, there is no strength but in Allah"

The true possessor of all the blessings which a person witnesses in the life of this world is Allah. However, there are some who may fall into error by believing that they are the real owners of the blessings which Allah has granted them. With these blessings in their possession, they may forget their powerlessness in the sight of our Lord, and become arrogant though Allah has the power to take back everything He has given them whenever He wills. Because of this, it is necessary for all

to recognize that every blessing is the gift of Allah, and to thank our Lord for our enjoyment of them. In order for people to understand this matter, Allah gives the following example in the Qur'an:

Make an example for them of two men. To one of them We gave two gardens of grape-vines and surrounded them with date-palms, putting between them some cultivated land. Both gardens yielded their crops and did not suffer any loss, and We made a river flow right through the middle of them. He was a man of wealth and property and he said to his companion, debating with him, "I have more wealth than you and more people under me." He entered his garden and wronged himself by saying, "I do not think that this will ever end. I do not think the Hour will ever come. But if I should be sent back to my Lord, I will definitely get something better in return." (Surat al-Kahf: 32-36)

Of the two people referred to here in the Qur'an, the one who was more powerful in terms of wealth forgot that it was Allah Who gave him his property and riches, falsely believing that they were his own and becoming boastful. He believed that the gardens, which yielded their crops because Allah made them fertile, would never be destroyed or suffer any damage at all. In one way, it could be thought that his well protected orchard, through which a river passed and which had every promise of fertility, was of a beauty and magnificence which could never be harmed. But, it must be remembered that all things are subservient to Allah. Like everything in the universe, this garden was under Allah's control; every seed would grow only with Allah's permission, every branch sprouted because Allah ordered it. The river watered the roots of the date palms because Allah willed it. The garden remained thriving and fruitful on Allah's instruction; all could be destroyed just by Allah pronouncing "Be."

In the Qur'an we are told that the man, who had forgotten that the

provider of the blessings he possessed was Allah, was reminded that he should praise and exalt Allah's power and glory, on entering his orchard, and say, **"It is as Allah wills [masha'llah], there is no strength but in Allah":**

His companion, with whom he was debating, said to him, "Do you then disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, and then formed you as a man? He is, however, Allah, my Lord, and I will not associate anyone with my Lord. Why, when you entered your garden, did you not say, 'It is as Allah wills, there is no strength but in Allah?' Though you see me with less wealth and children than you possess, it may well be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden and send down on it a fireball from the sky so that morning finds it a shifting heap of dust, or morning finds its water drained into the earth so that you cannot get at it." The fruits of his labor were completely destroyed and he woke up wringing his hands in grief, rueing everything that he had spent on it. It was a ruin with all its trellises fallen in. He said, "Oh, if only I had not associated anyone with my Lord!" There was no group to come to his aid, besides Allah, and he was not given any help. In that situation the only protection is from Allah, the Real. He gives the best reward and the best outcome. (Surat al-Kahf: 37-44)

As can be understood from these verses, by bringing about a natural disaster, Allah destroyed both the garden and the crops of this man, who was so proud of what was in his possession, to remind him that there is no other power than His. The owner of the garden, who had had everything he possessed destroyed, finally understood that he had no friend or helper other than Allah, and took refuge in Allah saying, **"if only I had not associated anyone with my Lord!"**

One of the lessons which needs to be drawn from this story provided in the Qur'an is that people should never at any time believe that

their possessions are their own, and that they should speak in such a way as to exalt the glory of Allah, as saying, **"It is as Allah wills, there is no strength but in Allah."**

Speaking well with one's parents

Another matter to which attention is directed in the Qur'an concerns the manner in which one's father and mother must be addressed. In the following verse of the Qur'an, Allah instructs people to behave well towards their parents: **"We have instructed man concerning his parents. Bearing him caused his mother great debility and the period of his weaning was two years: 'Give thanks to Me and to your parents. I am your final destination.'" (Surah Luqman: 14)** Our Prophet (saas) also pointed out the importance of this subject to the faithful with these words, *"Accord your parents benevolent treatment."* (Muslim)

Truly, a parent's influence on a child is very profound. The mother must endure much hardship carrying the child for nine months in her stomach, and then afterwards, must make many personal sacrifices to ensure it is raised correctly. The father must expend great effort to enable it to reach adulthood. For one to ignore these sacrifices and efforts, made on his or her behalf, is ingratitude and contrary to the morality expected of a believer. Allah calls upon the believers to behave properly towards their parents, and to avoid arrogance behavior towards them: **"... Be good to your parents and relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to neighbors who are related to you and neighbors who are not related to you, and to companions and travelers and your slaves. Allah does not love anyone vain or boastful."** (Surat an-Nisa': 36)

With regards to this matter, Allah also explains how dutifully a person should behave as follows:

Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him, and that you should show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say "Ugh!" to

them out of irritation and do not be harsh with them but speak to them with gentleness and generosity. Take them under your wing, out of mercy, with due humility and say: "Lord, show mercy to them as they did in looking after me when I was small." (Surat al-Isra': 23-24)

Muslims should adopt a well-mannered and respectful way of speaking towards their parents, even to the extent of not resorting to rude grunts like "Ugh!" as an answer. They should be humble and empathetic towards them, and should always use the best language towards them. They labored to raise them and bring them up, and they should show them the same patience and compassion when they reach their old age. They should also be forgiving of their parents' faults and approach their needs with kindness. No matter the situation, they should never behave angrily or impatiently towards them.

Even if one's parents rebel against Allah, as according to the Qur'an, though Muslims should not obey them in matters of religion, they should nevertheless do their best to get along well with them. The Qur'an explains the sort of behavior the faithful are required to undertake as follows:

But if they try to make you associate something with Me about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. Keep company with them correctly and courteously in this world but follow the Way of him who turns to Me. Then you will return to Me and I will inform you about the things you did. (Surah Luqman: 15)

We have instructed man to honor his parents, but if they endeavor to make you associate with Me something about which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. It is to Me you will return and I will inform you about the things you did. (Surat al-'Ankabut: 8)

In the Qur'an, attention is also directed to the superiority of this behavior, by giving the example of the Prophet Yusuf's (as) well-man-

nered and respectful comportment towards his parents. When the Prophet Yusuf (as) became the ruler of Egypt, he continued to behave modestly towards his parents:

Then when they entered into Yusuf's presence, he drew his parents close to him and said, "Enter Egypt safe and sound, if Allah wills." He raised his parents up onto the throne... (Surah Yusuf: 99-100)

The Prophet Ibrahim's (as) way of speaking to his father, though he had wanted him to worship idols, is another excellent example for believers. Despite his father's belligerence, the Prophet Ibrahim (as) maintained superior morality:

Mention Ibrahim in the Book. He was a true man and a Prophet. Remember when he said to his father, "Father, why do you worship what can neither hear nor see and is not of any use to you at all? Father, knowledge which never reached you has come to me, so follow me and I will guide you to the right path. Father, do not worship Satan. Satan was disobedient to the All-Merciful. Father, I am afraid that a punishment from the All-Merciful will afflict you, and turn you into a comrade of Satan." He said, "Do you forsake my gods, Ibrahim? If you do not stop, I will stone you. Keep away from me for a good long time." He said, "Peace be upon you. I will ask my Lord to forgive you. He has always honored me. I will separate myself from you and all you call upon besides Allah and I will call upon my Lord. It may well be that, in calling on my Lord, I will not be disappointed." (Surah Maryam: 41-48)

Not talking behind others' backs or gossiping

Instead of telling others about their faults and defects to their faces, people of low morality talk instead behind their backs. These people have no desire of leading others in a better way, or of helping them to

correct their ways. They plunge into gossip for mundane purposes, such as to pass the time, to degrade the reputation of those they dislike, to belittle and mock them, or to glorify themselves at the expense of others. This vile behavior is so widespread amongst certain groups of people that they have made gossip a form of entertainment, or even a normal way of life by which they are even found to earn a living.

In our time, and in several countries around the world, a great number of newspapers and magazines are published, and television shows produced for the sole purpose of spreading gossip. Publications and broadcasts of this type aim to justify this form of deviance, otherwise known as gossip, and present it as socially acceptable.

In fact, these people are contradicting themselves, because, though they enjoy gossiping about others, when they find themselves in the same situation, they then realize how despicable this behavior is. But, in spite of this, they do not stop gossiping, so long as they themselves are not exposed. When they meet one whom they had been criticizing just a few minutes earlier, as if nothing had happened, they continue their phony friendship, speaking with them insincerely. Moreover, this behavior contributes to a vicious circle; two people get together and gossip about a third, then one of these people gossips with the third person about the other, and later the other two people come together and gossip about the absentee. Nobody points out to anyone else that gossip is wrong, on the contrary, they maintain that it is harmless, that it adds color to life and provides entertainment to themselves.

Allah notifies people through the Qur'an of the incorrectness of this behavior; in a verse of the Qur'an, Allah tells us that the gossip of people behind one another's backs is just as repugnant as "a person eating his brother's dead flesh":

You who believe! Avoid most suspicion. Indeed some suspicion is a crime. And do not spy and do not backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat his brother's dead flesh? No, you

would hate it. And heed Allah. Allah is Ever-Returning, Most Merciful. (Surat al-Hujurat: 12)

In another verse, Allah explains in following manner the recompense received in the afterlife by those claiming that gossip is entertaining and try to excuse it as acceptable:

Woe to every faultfinding backbiter. (Surat al-Humaza: 1)

No indeed! He will be flung into the Shatterer. And what will convey to you what the Shatterer is? The kindled Fire of Allah reaching right into the heart. It is sealed in above them in towering columns. (Surat al-Humaza: 4-9)

This way of speaking by those who are far from the morality of the Qur'an is not to be found amongst the faithful. The faithful, knowing that Allah listens in on every conversation everywhere, studiously refrain from uttering a word which they know He will find spiteful, because a word uttered in another's absence is of no use either to that person or to the one who speaks it. Though in this manner other persons' defects may be analyzed or revealed, because they do not know about it, it is impossible for them to make any alteration in their behavior. So long as these defects are not explained to the related persons, and they do not recognize them for themselves, there is no possibility of them correcting them. Because of this, the faithful pass on to each other all their opinions, positive or negative, about one another, without reluctance. They know that true friendship and sincerity are dependent upon it, and that explaining faults to a person they like is not doing him or her harm but good. Their aim is to lead one another to a better, finer and purer morality.

This is a requirement of Allah as set out in the Qur'an: of "enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong."

Avoiding suspicion and slander

Another important matter which Muslims take care to avoid is

making statements on subjects about which they are not informed and based merely on conjecture. In the verse of the Qur'an, "**Do not pursue what you have no knowledge of. Hearing, sight and hearts will all be questioned.**" (Surat al-Isra': 36), Allah points out that this will become a heavy burden in His presence. In another verse, Allah says that the vast majority of people on earth "follow nothing but conjecture" and warns the faithful as follows:

If you obeyed most of those on earth, they would misguide you from Allah's Way. They follow nothing but conjecture. They are only guessing. (Surat al-An'am: 116)

Many have made speaking founded on conjecture and guesswork a common habit. It has become so acceptable that, sometimes, people accept mere theories as fact and conform their lives accordingly. For example, they may have surmised something negatively about a person who had become rich in a short time and formed a poor opinion of him, saying "Who knows by what method he acquired this money?" and "It's obvious he couldn't have acquired this wealth merely on his salary." It may be, however, that the situation is very different from what they were led to believe. The person may have become wealthy through an inheritance or some business transaction. When confronted with a situation that awakens one's curiosity, and which one cannot understand or which confuses him, one should never make guesses without information or evidence, because such unsupported speculations are of no use in determining the truth. In this verse of the Qur'an, "**Conjecture is of no avail whatever against the truth.**" (Surat an-Najm: 29) Allah points out that people will not gain further access to the truth by conjecture and guesswork.

The faithful speak in the knowledge of this fact because it is pointed out in the Qur'an. When they are confronted with a puzzling situation, they do not form any opinions not based on knowledge or documentation. They either ask the person concerned, or obtain verifiable infor-

mation about the subject through proper investigation, and draw conclusions on the basis of the information they have obtained.

One of the examples given on this matter in the Qur'an concerns people who speculated about the conduct of the wife of our Prophet (saas) without any information. By saying that, when they hear any conjecture about a believer, the faithful should say, "**This is obviously a lie,**" or "**We have no business speaking about this. Glory be to You! This is a terrible slander,**" Allah announces the need to warn one another against conjecture:

There is a group of you who propagated the lie. Do not suppose it to be bad for you; rather it is good for you. Every one of them will incur the evil he has earned and the one who took it on himself to amplify it will receive a terrible punishment. Why, when you heard it, did you not, as men and women of the believers, instinctively think good thoughts and say, "This is obviously a lie?" Why did they not produce four witnesses to it? Since they did not bring four witnesses, in Allah's sight, they are liars. Were it not for Allah's favor to you and His mercy, both in this world and the Hereafter, a terrible punishment would have afflicted you for your plunging headlong into it. You were bandying it about on your tongues, your mouths uttering something about which you had no knowledge. You considered it to be a trivial matter, but, in Allah's sight, it is immense. Why, when you heard it, did you not say, "We have no business speaking about this. Glory be to You! This is a terrible slander!?" Allah warns you never to repeat the like of it again if you are believers. Allah makes the Signs clear to you and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Surat an-Nur: 11-18)

Some people may regard speaking on the basis of conjecture as trivial and harmless, but, in these verses, Allah points out that in His sight, it is an "immense" crime.

On this subject, another example given in the Qur'an concerns the account of Maryam (as). According to what we are told in the Qur'an, Maryam (as) was wrongly accused because she had become pregnant with 'Isa (as) without having been touched by a man, but rather because Allah said, "Be" and it was.

She brought him to her people, carrying him. They said, "Maryam! You have done an unthinkable thing! Sister of Harun, your father was not an evil man nor was your mother an unchaste woman!" (Surah Maryam: 27-28)

And on account of their disbelief, and their utterance of a monstrous slander against Maryam. (Surat an-Nisa': 156)

In fact, as we are told in the Qur'an in the verse, "**Maryam, Allah has chosen you and purified you. He has chosen you over all other women.**" (Surah Al 'Imran: 42) Allah had chosen her over many others and she was known to be a person devoted to Allah.

Allah explains the baselessness of the slander of the people in the verse, "**And Maryam, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity—We breathed Our Spirit into her and she confirmed the Words of her Lord and His Book and was one of the obedient.**" (Surat at-Tahrim: 12) and made Maryam (as), with her chastity, an example to the faithful.

Not speaking in a mocking manner

No matter where you go in the world, or who you talk to, if you ask, "Do you want to be mocked?" it is very probable that the answer you would receive from everybody, would be "Certainly not." Nevertheless, these people who do not at all enjoy being mocked, regard mockery as a source of great entertainment, but when the brunt is born by somebody else. Wide acceptance of this manner of speaking amongst people deceives them and makes them regard mockery as acceptable. They claim that such behavior has no ill intent, and is even enjoyed by the person

mocked. When the same thing happens to them though they do not think the same. When a person mocks them they feel anger, answering that he or she is trying deliberately to make them angry and to belittle them. But, because it is often employed as a way of assuming superiority over others, they do not hesitate to treat others in this humiliating way whenever they find the chance. When they mock a person's defects and weaknesses, they enjoy presuming their own superiority.

Because they have suppressed the voice of their consciences, over time, these people become increasingly cruel and abusive. In addition to adopting a snobby attitude, speech and lifestyle, they take pleasure in making fun of physical birth defects or human frailties in general. The small size of a person's nose, his lack of hair, his accent, his poor eyesight, his weight, his intellectual level, another's style of dress, her occupation, her workplace, the district she lives in, her home furnishings and her car, can all become the object of this derision. They even mock people who sneeze, stutter, get something stuck in their throats or stumble and fall. People with a derisive character think that, by exposing these faults they are belittling others, and thus affirming their own qualities. And, they emphasize their mockery by repeating them for days, months or even years.

On the other hand, the mistake of some people who are the subject of mockery is to reply with similar derisiveness. In ignorant societies derision becomes so widespread that it can be likened to a civil war of egos, while in truth it is a form of behavior which Allah has warned people to avoid:

You who believe! People should not ridicule others who may be better than themselves; nor should any women ridicule other women who may be better than themselves. And do not find fault with one another or insult each other with derogatory nicknames. How evil it is to have a name for evil conduct after coming to faith! Those people who do not turn from it are

wrongdoers. (Surat al-Hujurat: 11)

Being aware of this instruction from Allah, the faithful are never mocking in their speech with one another; to those who do so towards them they nevertheless behave modestly and answer according to the morality of the Qur'an, because they know that one can only attain true superiority by living according to the morality of the Qur'an. Answering those who heed the negative prodding of their lower selves, and act ignorantly with a similar low level of behavior is the easy option. However, what is more correct is to ignore the incitements of the lower-self and listen rather to the voice of one's conscience. Muslims are those who speak with the guidance of their consciences.

There is nothing entertaining about mocking common human frailties like sneezing, coughing or falling, or talking about physical birth defects, or referring to people by unflattering nicknames. Proceeding from this standpoint, the faithful take no pleasure in any hurtful, belittling words or other derisive forms of humor. Just as they do not themselves descend to this kind of baseness, they do not permit anyone else to be mocked when they are present. They act in the knowledge that it was Allah Who allotted frailties, and that He has the power to inflict the same frailties on those guilty of the mockery. Allah announces this truth in this verse:

Messengers before you were also mocked, but those who jeered were engulfed by what they mocked. (Surat al-An'am: 10)

Avoiding speaking out of covetousness and envy

In the verse, "... people are prone to selfish greed. If you do good and guard against evil, Allah is aware of what you do." (Surat an-Nisa': 128), Allah points out that selfish greed and jealousy is to be found in the soul of everyone, but that it is a tendency which must be avoided. In another verse, Allah explains what it is a person who feels jealousy needs to do to avoid wrongdoing and the types of wickedness

which ensue from jealousy:

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of Daybreak, from the evil of what He has created and from the evil of the darkness when it gathers and from the evil of women who blow on knots and from the evil of an envier when he envies." (Surat al-Falaq: 1-5)

That Allah warns people against the evil of those who are inclined to this misguided sentiment is important in understanding the kind of base morality into which envy can lead people. Problems caused through envy are frequently encountered in society; the source of arguments and conflicts which lead to serious injuries and even murder is often found to be jealousy.

Muslims know that envy is a feeling which Allah disapproves of, and for this reason they try to cleanse their selves of this vice. The faithful are aware that Allah is the bestower of all blessings and all beautiful things. They therefore know that coveting such blessings or things of beauty given by Allah is tantamount to disapproving of Allah's decision, because, according to His own wisdom, Allah saw good to grant these things to a particular person. Moreover, all of such things are part of the test which that person undergoes in the life of this world; they also comprise part of the test of other people who cherish these things. Either a person will lapse into jealousy because of these blessings or, by suppressing this tendency, arrive at the morality by which he or she will be pleased that others possess such blessings. In fact, the Qur'an announces that this very state of affairs has been especially created to test people, in the following verse: **"In this way We try some of them by means of others so that they say, 'Are these the people among us to whom Allah has shown His favor?' Does not Allah know best those who are thankful?"** (Surat al-An'am, 53) In addition it should not be forgotten that all the blessings for which some have become jealous in the life of this world will no longer be attainable beyond their death. To covet something which will eventually vanish, thereby engaging in be-

havior of which Allah will not approve, is a grave error. Acting in this knowledge, the faithful take refuge in Allah from jealousy when they see something particularly beautiful belonging to others around them. As they carefully guard themselves from jealousy, so too do they also avoid arousing doubt and anxiety in others. They appreciate the good qualities of those they talk to, and employ a style of speech imbued with praise and expressions of admiration. As for those who, in such circumstances, are overtaken with envy, rather than speaking in a way to show their appreciation of the other person, they overlook their good qualities and try to emphasize instead the flaws and deficiencies of the person.

Muslims are people who can control the desires and passions of the lower-self as described in the verse of the Qur'an. As with other forms of deviation, they respond to the envy within themselves as stipulated in the verses of the Qur'an. In the eyes of Allah, determining the foremost among the faithful is not established on criteria like beauty, wealth, education or culture. The most pious is he or she who is the most respected and the best loved amongst the faithful and in the sight of Allah. Believers' knowledge that which ought truly be coveted is piety (that is, consciousness of Allah) prevents them from feeling envy of any thing of this world.

Not making empty and trivial statements

Because those who do not believe in Allah think their lives are limited to the life of the world, they feel no need to make preparations for the everlasting existence they will lead in the next world. They do not reflect upon the way they behave, what good they do during their lifetimes, or what end they are approaching. In fact, every act, every word and every thought is recorded, and with these each will be reminded on the Day of Judgment. Every good and wise word uttered will be to a person's benefit in the afterlife, helping that person to gain Allah's ap-

proval, His mercy and His Paradise.

While those who do not ponder about the afterlife waste their time by faltering into empty words and embroidering them into conversations which are of no use to themselves or anyone else, the faithful pass every moment of their time in beneficial and wise conversation.

In the Qur'an, we are told about those who forget about the afterlife by wasting their words the following manner: "... **Then leave them in their empty discourse, amusing themselves.**" (Surat al-An'am: 91)

The Muslims' careful avoidance of empty and useless words is expressed in another verse:

"When they hear worthless talk they turn away from it and say, 'We have our actions and you have your actions. Peace be upon you. We do not desire the company of the ignorant.'" (Surat al-Qasas: 55)

As to what words are empty and vain, Muslims use the Qur'an as their measure. Because they know that every moment they spend in the life of this world is dear, with regards to determining their lot in the afterlife, they take great care in order to avoid empty words by always first referring to their conscience. In a verse of the Qur'an, we are told that when they hear empty words they pass by honorably: **"Those who do not bear false witness and who, when they pass by worthless talk, pass by with dignity"** (Surat al-Furqan: 72)

Not interrupting and speaking calmly

Muslims approach each experience throughout the day with the question, "How should I behave to earn the approval of Allah?" One way of behaving in a way, which is hoped will earn Allah's approval, is listening politely to a person without interrupting. This shows respect for the speaker and what he or she is saying.

In contrast, in places where the morality of the Qur'an is not adhered to, turning a deaf ear to the speaker, not properly listening to one

another, arguing simultaneously and speaking louder than the opponent are commonplace. In particular, on television talk-shows, such examples are quite frequent. Even those who are experts in their own specific fields may at times show forth behavior which is fundamentally impolite and disrespectful. Instead of benefiting from what others have to say, these people try arrogantly to make their own words heard and accepted.

As for Muslims, they are not swayed by aims of the lower-self such as to bring attention to themselves, to be in the limelight or have the last word. Because of this, their way of speaking is measured and calm. By reason of the courtesy which arises from the morality of the Qur'an, they always acknowledge one another, try to benefit as far as possible from what others are saying, and avoid behaving ignorantly.

Another defining characteristic of those who are far from the morality of the Qur'an is the tone of their voice. To feign that they are in right, to intimidate the other person, or win the argument by forcing the other to surrender, they speak very loudly. Allah advises Muslims of this matter in the Qur'an, by relating the advice given by the Prophet Luqman (as) to his son:

Be moderate in your tread and lower your voice. The most hateful of voices is the donkey's bray. (Surah Luqman: 19)

Employing a style of speech appropriate to the level of knowledge of the person addressed

One of the appealing features of the speech of Muslims is that they use the way of speaking that is the most appropriate, most considerate comprehensible. It is the intelligence that results from faith which endows them with this ability to address people of all ages and circumstances. The manner used to address a person with an open mind and broad level of knowledge is different from that used towards one who is not well cultured and with limited ability of comprehension. For ex-

ample, it is not correct to explain a subject pedantically to an intellectual with detailed knowledge of it. It is the basis of consideration and politeness to speak without forgetting that the other knows the subject far better and while appreciating his or her superior qualities.

In contrast, when speaking to a person who is less cultured and who has far less knowledge and experience, where care needs to be taken is in being comprehensible. Speaking to such a person in a manner he or she cannot understand or decipher, not being careful of the explanations he may need, and speaking in a way that is ambiguous and confusing way, is wrong. For example, using sophisticated language with an uneducated person is pointless. Those who try to make a show of themselves in the eyes of others on a subject about which they are not informed only actually make them look small. As a requirement from the intelligence they have gained by following the Qur'an, the faithful always use the way of speaking that is most appropriate, taking into account the needs, knowledge and cultural level of the person they are addressing.

Avoiding speaking hypocritically

In the Qur'an, those who describe themselves as believers but who, in truth, do not believe, are referred to as "hypocrites." Although they are invited to belief, the fact that they remain bound to the life of this world, and have adopted a way of life contrary to the morality of the Qur'an leads these hypocrites to adopt an insincere way of speaking, because there is a profound difference between their true sentiments and the ones they try to show to the faithful.

Hypocrites interpret the Qur'an in a corrupt manner. This distorted logic is also reflected in their speech. They interpret the verses of the Qur'an according to their own desires and passions. However, such ways of speaking are a sign of their true selves. This situation, which is highlighted in this verse of the Qur'an, **"If We wished, We would show**

them to you and you would know them by their mark and know them by their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions." (Surah Muhammad: 30) is a help to believers from Allah. In this way, the faithful may recognize the insincere who are trying to infiltrate themselves amongst them.

Sometimes, hypocrites try to make their insincere speech seem reasonable by ornamenting it. But when examined closely, it can be seen that this is a Satanic form of speech which only encourages further insincerity:

When you see them, their outward form appeals to you, and if they speak you listen to what they say. But they are like propped-up planks of wood. They imagine every cry to be against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. Allah fight them! How they are perverted! (Surat al-Munafiqun: 4)

Muslims immediately detect the way of speaking of insincere people and carefully avoid speaking in a similar way.

However, if some of the faithful behave like hypocrites, this does not definitely establish that they are hypocrites. Believers are progressively educated throughout their lives. During that time, they may make many mistakes or behave wrongly, and of these mistakes may be some similar to those of hypocrites. However, what is important is for those believers to be able to see their mistakes, and correct them and to achieve a level of morality by which they will not repeat the same errors. That one feels a sincere regret and changes one's behavior, in keeping with the Qur'an, shows that he or she has purified himself and sought to act sincerely. If hypocrisy in speech is stubbornly adhered to, however, that is a very different matter.

Avoiding a way of speech which gives rise to doubts

Another way of speaking which Muslims must avoid is that peculiar to hypocrites, which is full of doubt and causes doubt. Because hyp-

ocrites are in serious doubt about the existence of Allah, about the afterlife and about Allah's promises, their speech reflects these doubts and insecurities. They are never able to explain the morality of the Qur'an as openly, clearly and definitely as the faithful can. This deep-seated doubt, which reflects itself in their speech, aims also to cast doubt in the hearts of those who listen to them. However, the faithful, who believe sincerely and with certainty, are not affected by their speech, because they are convinced that the Word of Allah is true. If there is one who speaks in a way to reflect these doubts, they know it is the result of the person's insincerity and corrupted way of thinking.

Such errors are never found in the speech of Muslims; because there is no doubt in their hearts, their words are definite and unambiguous. Nevertheless, they take care not to speak in a way such as to give rise to any misunderstandings among their listeners, because sometimes, even with the best of intentions, several sentences set together or two subjects mentioned successively may be open to different interpretations.

Even if it is not intended, speech may give rise to uncertainty amongst the listeners. Thus, the Muslim way of speaking requires using a manner of speech which will not give rise to confusion by taking into consideration of how each word, one by one, may be interpreted, what types of connotations may arise, and the context of the situation. A contrary approach would reflect a disposition peculiar to the "secretly doubting character" of hypocrites. For this reason, taking great care to not make speeches that are particular to hypocrites, even without intending to do so, is a requirement of faith.

In addition, using expressions like "If only that hadn't happened," "Damn, we lost," and "Oh, what a shame," which do not demonstrate acquiescence to Allah's will, reflects again another hypocritical way of speaking. We are told in the Qur'an that the hypocrites in the midst of the believers try to break their resolve by acting as bearers of bad news:

Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the insidious whisperer who whispers in people's breasts and comes from the jinn and from mankind." (Surat an-Nas: 1-6)

Allah warns against such vile morality, and advises the avoidance of *khannas*; that is, from being of those who "whisper evil into the breasts of mankind." Hypocrites are those who have assumed the role of the *khannas* to the faithful; through furtive, secretive and ill-intentioned methods, they act as Satan's spokesmen, and try to sow seeds of doubt in people's hearts. As for the faithful, they carefully avoid a way of speaking which may reflect such deviance and instead take refuge in Allah from speech which gives rise to doubts.

Avoiding a probing and prying speech

Another thing which Muslims ought to avoid is speaking in a prying and deceptive way. We have mentioned in previous sections that sincerity and honesty are amongst the finest characteristics of the Muslims, qualities which are also reflected in their speech. Saying what they want to say directly, without hiding behind false pretenses, is also a requirement of sincerity and honesty. The intention of Muslims can be easily discerned from their speech.

People who are far from the morality of the Qur'an generally do not say what they want to say directly. The reason for this is that they have formed a number of ill-intentioned pre-calculations. When they want to learn something, instead of asking openly, they prefer to go by devious routes. On a subject on which they want information, they try to lead the conversation towards it, and lead the other to talk about it by deceptive tactics. They also believe these ruses are not noticed by other people. However, such a cunning and deceptive way of speaking makes itself immediately apparent through its evident insincerity.

This is the behavior of those far from the Qur'an and of the hyp-

ocrites. Muslims, who see everything in the light of the Qur'an, immediately detect the Satanic motives in such ways of speaking, and are not deceived by them.

Avoiding statements that lead to evil

Muslims try to speak every word in a way which conforms to the instructions of the Qur'an, and which sides with Allah's religion. They try to bring up matters which will be useful to other believers, draw them closer to Allah, give them peace and contentment, encourage them and console them. They take care to avoid matters which will diminish their inner-peace, occupy their minds unnecessarily, or awaken doubt or anxiety in their hearts.

In the conversations of hypocrites, this way of speaking is often found. With their speech, they try to provoke one another into opposing Allah, to encourage sin, and through devious methods to make others excessively attached to this worldly life. They do not speak so as to encourage others to approach Allah, live a moral life, and better understand fate and the afterlife. On the contrary, they try to enter every deviant thought as the topic of every of conversation. These people can often be observed venturing carelessly into subjects completely incompatible with the morality pronounced in the Qur'an. They employ a way of speaking which seeks to spread among the faithful that type of behavior which Allah has forbidden.

On matters which Allah has commanded them clearly in the Qur'an, the faithful are not adversely tempted by the wiles of the hypocrites. They are continually vigilant of such tactics. The hypocrites persist in these efforts because they cannot understand how devoted the faithful are to Allah, and the sincere and honest way they live according to the morality of the Qur'an. The ideas they present to the faithful, and the false logic they employ, persistently contrary to the Qur'an, reflect the spiritual darkness of those who resist faith. The faith-

ful, who are aware of the fallacy of this manner of speech, listen cautiously when another begins speaking, recognizing that he or she may be promoting Satanic ideas, and summon people to adhere to the morality of the Qur'an.

Avoiding obfuscation

Another matter which the faithful carefully avoid is that described in the Qur'an as "**distorting the Book.**" Speaking with a twisted tongue is the attempt to bring different interpretations to verses of the Qur'an, though they are otherwise clear and unambiguous. In a verse of the Qur'an, Allah tells us that speaking in a manner to obfuscate is a characteristic of hypocrites and represents a deviation from faith:

It is He Who sent down the Book to you from Him: verses containing clear judgments—they are the core of the Book—and others which are open to interpretation. Those with deviation in their hearts follow what is open to interpretation in it, desiring conflict, seeking its inner meaning. No one knows its inner meaning but Allah. Those firmly rooted in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All of it is from our Lord." But only people of intelligence pay heed. (Surah Al 'Imran: 7)

Knowing Allah's verses well, but acting instead in accordance with the desires of their lower-selves, those with deviation in their hearts try to distort the meaning of the verses. In particular, in matters where it conflicts with their interests, instead of conforming to Allah's commands, they seek to adapt the religion to their desires. In a verse of the Qur'an, it is explained that, when speaking with twisted tongues, these people are in fact aware that they are lying:

Among them is a group who distort the Book with their tongues so that you think it is from the Book when it is not from the Book. They say, "It is from Allah," but it is not from Allah. They tell a lie against Allah and they know it. (Surah Al 'Imran: 78)

In employing this way of speaking, one of the greatest errors into which such people fall is their false belief that they will be able to win over the faithful through what they say. They believe they will be able to interpret the verses according to their corrupted logic and make the faithful accept their interpretations. Yet, the verses revealed by Allah are clear, and because of their faith the believers are able to understand their intended meaning. Though hypocritical people distort their words, believers immediately recognize their aims. In the end, all such people are able to accomplish through such ways of speaking is to expose their own insincerity.

In the Qur'an, there are many examples of the manner of speaking of hypocritical people. When the Prophet Muhammad (saas) called on the faithful to stand together, and oppose the attacks of those who resisted faith, those with a sickness in their hearts immediately set out to twist their tongues, putting forward hypocritical excuses such as **"our houses are exposed"** (Surat al-Ahzab: 13) and **"do not go out to fight in the heat"** (Surat at-Tawba: 81).

Unaware of their own impudence, they believed their excuses would be accepted. However, for devoted believers, neither heat nor the condition of their house is more important than the call of Allah's Messenger. Sincere believers never try to escape from a task of which Allah approves, or to twist their tongues to make insincere pronouncements. They know that this way of speaking is a trait known of the hypocrites. At all times, they speak in a way in keeping with the teachings of the Qur'an. Before saying a word on any subject, the faithful refer to their consciences, asking themselves questions such as, "Is there any insincerity in what I'm saying?," "Does it conform to the Muslim way of speaking defined in the Qur'an?" and "Is there something here inspired by my lower-self?" If they recognize even a single insincere word which their consciences are opposed to, they take refuge in Allah and speak in a way which conforms to the morality of the Qur'an.

Not holding secret meetings

In the Qur'an, Allah points out that most secret conversations are not intended for any good, with the followings verse: **"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin charity, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward."** (Surat an-Nisa': 114)

According to this verse, so long as they are not carried out for sincere purposes, such as leading people towards good, or establishing peace among them, secret meetings are of no benefit to anyone. Satan regards such situations as prime opportunities for deceiving people, whereby he tries to draw them into a way of speaking opposed to Allah. That that which is said at secret meetings is done so under the influence of Satan is pointed out in the following verse of the Qur'an: **"Conferring in secret is from Satan, to cause grief to those who believe; but it cannot harm them at all, unless by Allah's permission. So let the believers put their trust in Allah."** (Surat al-Mujadala: 10) Because of this, Allah warns people and advises them of what to avoid when they find themselves involved in secret meetings:

You who believe! When you confer together secretly, do not do so in wrongdoing and enmity and disobedience to the Messenger; rather confer together in goodness and through a sense of duty. Heed Allah—Him to Whom you will be gathered. (Surat al-Mujadala: 9)

The truth which all need to know is that, while talking in secret we are in the presence of Allah. Words believed to be secret are actually spoken in the presence of Allah. Though they think where were none by themselves privy to their conversation, we are informed that they were not alone:

Do you not see that Allah knows what is in the heavens and on the earth? Three men cannot confer together secretly without

Him being the fourth of them, or five without Him being the sixth of them, or fewer than that or more without Him being with them wherever they are. Then He will inform them on the Day of Rising of what they did. Allah has knowledge of all things. (Surat al-Mujadala: 7)

Allah hears all that is said in secret meetings. But, those who fail to take this into account inaccurately presume that it is sufficient to keep their conversations secret from other people.

Many examples are given in the Qur'an of those habitual to secret conversations. These examples all show us that, as we are told in the following verses, secret conversations are not for any good:

We know how they listen when they listen to you, and when they confer together secretly, and when the wrongdoers say, "You are only following a man who is bewitched." (Surat al-Isra': 47)

Their hearts are distracted. Those who do wrong confer together secretly, saying, "Is this man anything but a human being like yourselves? Do you succumb to magic with your eyes wide open?" Say: "My Lord knows what is said in heaven and earth. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing." (Surat al-Anbiya: 3-4)
Do you not see those who were forbidden to confer together secretly returning to the very thing they were forbidden to do, and conferring together secretly in wrongdoing and enmity and disobedience to the Messenger? And when they come to you they greet you with words Allah has never used in greeting you, and say to themselves "Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?" Hell will be enough for them! They will roast in it. What an evil destination. (Surat al-Mujadala: 8)

When they meet those who believe, they say, "We believe." But when they go apart with one another, they say, "Why do you speak to them about what Allah has disclosed to you, so they

can use it as an argument against you before your Lord? Will you not use your intellect?" Do they not know that Allah knows what they keep secret and what they make public? (Surat al-Baqara: 76-77)

Musa said to them, "Woe to you! Do not fabricate lies against Allah or He will annihilate you with His punishment. Fabricators of lies are bound to fail." They argued among themselves about the matter and had a secret conference. They said, "These two magicians desire by their magic to expel you from your land and abolish your most excellent way of life." (Surah Ta Ha: 61-63)

All these examples given in the Qur'an should show people that there is no good in secret meetings, and that they should avoid them. In these examples is also indicated how this way of speaking is insincere and contrary to the Qur'an. Thus, the faithful are those who heed these warnings and avoid secret conversations. Wherever they are or whoever they may be talking with, they speak in a way which conforms to the Qur'an, they follow the path of Allah and our Prophet (saas), and they summon others to the morality of the Qur'an. Because of this, they have no need of secret conversations.

In contrast to the faithful, insincere people feel a need to conceal their deviousness. Even if for some reason a believer finds himself in their company, for reasons beyond his control, he will certainly recognize the evils of their conversation, never going along with them, but rather trying to draw those around him into virtue.

Speaking so as to defend and to support our Prophet (saas)

Allah sent His messengers to show humanity the true path, to warn them of His punishment, and to bring them the good news of the reward believers will enjoy in the afterlife. The messengers were men

whose lives exemplified true faith, inviting people to virtue and morality, and leading them to a degree of faith by which they were able to attain the greatest reward. In the Qur'an, we are told that Allah's messenger (saas) brought people from darkness to light, lifted and eased their burdens and led them to salvation:

Those who follow the Messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel, commanding them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong, making good things lawful for them and bad things forbidden for them, relieving them of their heavy loads and the chains which were around them. Those who believe in him and honor him and help him, and follow the Light that has been sent down with him, they are the ones who are successful. (Surat al-A'raf: 157)

As we are told in the words of another verse of the Qur'an, "A Messenger has come to you from among yourselves. Your suffering is distressing to him; he is deeply concerned for you; he is gentle and merciful to the believers." (Surat at-Tawba: 128) the our Prophet (saas) behaved humbly, compassionately and mercifully towards the faithful. Sincere believers, as described in the verse, "Allah showed great kindness to the believers when He sent a Messenger to them from among themselves to recite His Signs to them and purify them and teach them the Book and Wisdom, even though before that they were clearly misguided" (Surah Al 'Imran: 164), were aware of what a great favour and mercy it was for Allah to have sent a messenger to them. For this reason, all Muslims follow the way of our Prophet (saas), and defend and support him in all times and places. We are told of this behavior of their in the following verses,

We have sent you [O Muhammad] bearing witness, bringing good news and giving warning so that you might all believe in Allah and His Messenger and honor him and respect him [i.e.,

the Prophet] and glorify Him [i.e., Allah] in the morning and the evening. (Surat al-Fath: 8-9)

The manner of speech by which believers defend and support our Prophet (saas) is one of the foremost features of the morality of their speech. Allah explains that to pledge allegiance to the Prophet (saas) is to pledging allegiance to Him: **"Those who pledge you their allegiance pledge allegiance to Allah. Allah's hand is over their hands. He who breaks his pledge only breaks it against himself. But as for him who fulfils the contract he has made with Allah, We will pay him an immense reward."** (Surat al-Fath: 10)

Thus, believers' love, devotion and obedience to the Prophet (saas) arise from their faith in Allah. For this reason, at every opportunity, and through everything they do and say, the faithful express their devotion to the Prophet (saas), the wisdom of his advice and his superior moral qualities, and defend him in the best possible way.

THE EFFECTS OF THE MUSLIM WAY OF SPEAKING

The Muslim way of speaking is a significant characteristic of faith, and is the most influential way of speaking on the face of this earth. The power of its influence springs from the faith and sincerity of the believers. Muslims reflect to one another the way they live with their words; they reveal what they really believe and feel in their speech. Generally, those who speak in the way of the Muslims impress those they meet. Because, for much of their lives, they have been exposed only to conversations which do not reflect the morality of the Qur'an, the sincerity of Muslims offers a stark contrast and therefore profoundly affects them. Though some they had formerly met with and spoken to may have explained to them the need for moral perfection and sincere religious devotion, perhaps these people's failure to practice what they preached prevented what they said from having a sincere effect on the listener. Because these cases are so widespread, when meeting those who are sincere, that is, who practice what they preach, they listen to what they have to say—Allah willing—with great interest and sincerity, that which they had previously heard, but had often dismissed, and put what they hear into practice. This is one of the most important effects that the Muslim way of speaking can have; being able to reform the hearts of people, through Allah's will, and make them love the faith.

One who speaks in the way of the Muslims is able to explain the morality of the Qur'an to others in the best and most effective way. For example, when they are explaining the meaning of awareness of Allah, this awareness of Allah is also reflected in their speech, and with Allah's per-

mission, thus allows those they are speaking with to understand this subject more easily. If the speaker tries to explain the same subject without this awareness in his or her heart, repeating the same sentences, in the same way, with the same arguments, even if he were to do so over and over, because he was not able to convince them of his sincerity, the listeners will likely be unmoved by what they were told. However, one who speaks in the way of the Muslims will explain sincerity by being sincere, submission by feeling submission, optimism with optimism, and compassion with compassion, etc, Allah willing, will exercise an effect on the conscience of the listener.

Another important effect that the Muslim way of speaking has is that it puts people's hearts at peace, contentment and ease, because, as Allah tells us, "... **Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace**" (Surat ar-Ra'd: 28). Every word spoken mindful of Allah and in conformity with His will, brings peace and joy to people's hearts. Those who speak in this way may not directly refer to Allah by name, or be speaking on a religious subject, but just their manner of speech, which reflects their faith and the morality of the Qur'an, effectively reminds people of Allah. Muslims affect people around them; because of their way of speaking, others begin to think about the temporary nature of this worldly life, the nearness of death, the truth of the afterlife, and the importance of earning Allah's approval. Thus, one of the effects on those who benefit from witnessing the Muslim way of speaking is that it leads them towards examining their consciences and thinking sincerely.

Those around one who speak in the way of the Muslims may come to abandon their own errant ways of speaking, which had not been mindful of Allah, though these had become a habit and they seeing nothing dubious about them. The obvious contrast between the two styles of speaking makes them feel embarrassed of their errant manner and they thus abandon it. In fact, where speech which is not mindful of Allah predominates, these people do not see anything wrong about speaking in a base man-

ner which arises from their forgetting about death, the afterlife and their powerlessness before Allah. Nevertheless, when one speaks with them in the way of the Muslim they will often put an end to their old ways. The sincerity of the believer awakens their suppressed conscience, and, even if only for a short time, inspires them to think and act sincerely.

The Muslim way of speaking also allows the development of deep friendship and trust between people. Those who show their devotion to and love of Allah in their speech inspire affection and respect in those they talk with. This also fosters great cooperation amongst Muslims. In fact, Allah advises the Muslims in the following manner:

Your friend is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe: those who establish prayer and give alms, and bow. As for those who make Allah their friend, and His Messenger and those who believe: it is the party of Allah who are victorious! (Surat al-Ma'ida: 55-56)

As these verses explain, the faithful ought to make Allah, His Messenger, and those who believe, their friends. When they meet other believers, who speak in the way of the Muslims, their words being a reflection of their sincere faith, they develop trust and a deep bond among themselves. This is Allah forging their hearts into agreement. The foundations of this friendship are so sound that we are told in the Qur'an that this closeness cannot be acquired in any other way: **"And [He] unified their hearts. Even if you had spent everything on the earth, you could not have unified their hearts. But Allah has unified them. He is Almighty, All-Wise."** (Surat al-Anfal: 63)

Another effect caused by the Muslim way of speaking is an increase in hope and enthusiasm. Those who speak in accordance with the morality of the Qur'an, throughout their lives, consistently inspire others to what is good, and in conformity with the Qur'an. Because they remind one another that trust in Allah is a source of hope for the faithful, even in their most difficult moments, that fate unfolds in the best possible way,

and of other such matters, naturally, they strengthen one another's morales.

Moreover, the effect of this faith-boosting manner of speaking also takes place in hypocrites and unbelievers as much as on Muslims. The Muslim way of speaking, at all times and in all places, of those who are devoted to Allah with profound faith and sincerity, causes serious discomfort in hypocrites. Like idolaters and unbelievers, hypocrites feel ill at ease in the presence of those who speak in the way of the Muslims.

In the same way, Satan cannot be assuaged where people speak in the Muslim way, because, in such instances, hypocrites cannot foment their havoc and Satan cannot pursue his Satanic aims. Every word of the hypocrite, and every whisper of Satan, loses its effect through the Muslim way of speaking. For this reason, where people speak in the way of the Muslims, one with the character of a hypocrite either reforms his ways by deriving lessons from their speech, or reaches a point where he cannot stand it any longer, and removes himself from the presence of the faithful. In this way, the Muslims purge themselves of hypocrites who otherwise try to find a place amongst them by concealing their true faces.

In short, the Muslim way of speaking is a continual source of blessing and abundance for those around them; it is a form of worship which is, not only important from with regards to the afterlives of the faithful, but is at the same time directed towards everyone. As a matter of fact, in the Qur'an Allah explains that the best of words are a permanent source of blessing for people:

Do you do not see how Allah makes a metaphor of a good word: a good tree whose roots are firm and whose branches are in heaven? It bears fruit regularly by its Lord's permission. Allah makes metaphors for people so that hopefully they will pay heed. The metaphor of a corrupt word is that of a rotten tree, uprooted on the surface of the earth. It has no staying-power. (Surah Ibrahim: 24-26)

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this book is to define what the Muslim way of speaking means, and to point out that it is a way of speaking according to one's conscience, followed in every moment of a person's life. But, in addition to this, its basic aim is to warn people against a difficult day and to remind them that they should utter every word carefully, in consideration that they will recompensed in the afterlife for everything they had done and said. In the Qur'an, Allah calls on people to heed Him, so as to not become immersed in doubt about their meeting with Him, nor to forget that He encompasses and surrounds them wherever they are.

If a person abandons due care in accordance with the Qur'an, Satan tries to benefit from the situation and drive him into despair, by making him forget the remembrance of Allah. For this reason, Allah points out that a person must be clearly aware and must take care in light of Satan's attempts, in this verse of the Qur'an: **"Satan has gained mastery over them and made them forget the remembrance of Allah. Such people are the party of Satan. No indeed! It is the party of Satan who are the losers."** (Surat al-Mujadala: 19)

People may employ the power of speech, which Allah has given them, as they wish, with faithful care, or with Satanic-inspired carelessness. If they are of those who neglect to remember Allah, and falter into heedlessness, those words they had spoken, over a period of probably decades, will have no other effect than to result in punishment in the afterlife. Words they will not even remember when, where and to whom they spoke them to, are recorded in Allah's sight, and will be set before them, one by one:

The Book will be set in place and you will see the evildoers fearful of what is in it. They will say, "Alas for us! What is this Book which does not pass over any action, small or great, without recording it?" They will find there everything they did and your Lord will not wrong anyone at all. (Surat al-Kahf: 49)

If those who are doubtful about the afterlife try to reinterpret, conceal or change their words on the Day of Judgment, it will be of no use to them. At that time, Allah will order their skins and their senses of hearing and sight to confess every word they spoke in the life of the world:

They will ask their skins, "Why did you testify against us?" and they will reply, "Allah gave us speech as He has given speech to everything. He created you in the first place and you will be returned to Him. You did not think to shield yourselves from your hearing, sight and skin testifying against you and you thought that Allah would never know much of what you did." (Surah Fussilat: 21-22)

On the day when they see the terrible punishment, they will be able to speak but will be able to express anything but regret:

They will say, "If only we had really listened and used our intellect, we would not have been Companions of the Blaze." Then they will acknowledge their wrong actions... (Surat al-Mulk: 10-11)

If only you could see when they are standing before the Fire and saying, "Oh! If only we could be sent back again, we would not deny the Signs of our Lord and we would be among the believers." (Surat al-An'am: 27)

In the life of this world, these people were granted a unique opportunity to believe in Allah, and remember and exalt His Name, but they spoke only with obstinacy and rebellion. They were warned and called upon time after time to speak well but they turned away their faces. On that day, even if they wanted to return to it, they will no longer have this

opportunity. They will be brought to a state where they cannot say even a single word on the side of good to earn Allah's approval. On that day, Allah will no longer grant them the power of speech.

The Word will be carried out against them for the wrong they did and they will not speak. (Surat an-Naml: 85)

On that Day, woe to the deniers! This is the Day they will not say a single word, nor will they be allowed to offer any excuses. On that Day, woe to the deniers! (Surat al-Mursalat: 34-37)

While these people who follow Satan and forget the remembrance of Allah will meet with punishment as their reward, Muslims who aim with every act and every word to earn the approval of Allah will attain eternity and will be established in Paradise. Knowing that they will be called to give account on the Day of Judgment, they will have left only fine words for their records.

As we are told in the following verse of the Qur'an, "**Do you do not see how Allah makes a metaphor of a good word: a good tree whose roots are firm and whose branches are in heaven? It bears fruit regularly by its Lord's permission. Allah makes metaphors for people so that hopefully they will pay heed.**" (Surah Ibrahim: 24-25) fine speech is like a tree, which continually bears fruit and brings forth blessings. It will definitely meet with the finest rewards in Allah's sight.

There are great differences in terms of the rewards which those who speak in the way of the Muslims will receive in the afterlife, compared with those who speak carelessly. The aim of this book, from its beginning to now, has been to point out the extent to which speech will affect a person's afterlife, and to call upon people to take care in this matter.

Allah tells us in the Qur'an that the words of a Muslim's speech are the finest and most acceptable in the following manner:

Who speaks anything better than the one who summons to Allah, acts righteously, and says, "I am among those who submit to Allah"? (Surah Fussilat: 33)

THE DECEPTION OF EVOLUTION

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of clear "design" in the universe and in living things. In this way, science confirmed the fact that Allah created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science.

Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the concept of intelligent design to account for the origin of life. This "intelligent design" is a scientific expression of the fact that Allah created all living things.

We have examined the collapse of the theory of evolution and the proofs of creation in great scientific detail in many of our works, and are still continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

THE SCIENTIFIC COLLAPSE OF DARWINISM

Although this doctrine goes back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859. In this book, he denied that Allah created different living species on Earth separately, for he claimed that all living beings had a common ancestor and had diversified over time through small changes. Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory failed in the face of many critical questions.

Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics:

- 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth.
- 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all.
- 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests.

In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

THE FIRST INSURMOUNTABLE STEP: THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive Earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be ob-

served in the fossil record are some of the questions that the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, we need to ask: How did this "first cell" originate?

Since the theory of evolution denies creation and any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"LIFE COMES FROM LIFE"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, which asserts that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while.

Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye.

Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science.

However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will

the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."¹

For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

INCONCLUSIVE EFFORTS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses he advanced in the 1930s, he tried to prove that a living cell could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin had to make the following confession:

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.²

Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins.

Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.³

After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.⁴

All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to ex-

plain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth* magazine in 1998:

Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?⁵

THE COMPLEX STRUCTURE OF LIFE

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together.

The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10^{950} for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10^{50} is considered to be impossible in practical terms.

The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each.

A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated

by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine:

It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical means.⁶

No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

IMAGINARY MECHANISM OF EVOLUTION

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power.

Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection." The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection...*

Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses.

Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*:

Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.⁷

LAMARCK'S IMPACT

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation.

Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.⁸

However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

NEO-DARWINISM AND MUTATIONS

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory," or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930's. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings due to such external factors as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favorable variations" in addition to natural mutation.

Today, the model that stands for evolution in the world is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings formed as

a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms (e.g., ears, eyes, lungs, and wings) underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they are always harmful.

The reason for this is very simple: DNA has a very complex structure, and random effects can only harm it. The American geneticist B.G. Ranganathan explains this as follows:

First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.⁹

Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living things, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer.) Of course, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself," as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, no such any imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

THE FOSSIL RECORD: NO SIGN OF INTERMEDIATE FORMS

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record.

According to this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years.

Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period.

For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to have lived in the past, as "transitional forms."

If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained:

If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹⁰

DARWIN'S HOPES SHATTERED

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All of the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed.

One famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist:

The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail,

whether at the level of orders or of species, we find—over and over again—not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹¹

This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that all living things are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma:

Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.¹²

Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the Earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but creation.

THE TALE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

The subject most often brought up by advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that modern man evolved from ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, some "transitional forms" between modern man and his ancestors are supposed to have existed. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed:

1. *Australopithecus*
2. *Homo habilis*
3. *Homo erectus*

4. *Homo sapiens*

Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors *Australopithecus*, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various *Australopithecus* specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹³

Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the *Homo* series are more developed than *Australopithecus*. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of *Homo sapiens*, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."¹⁴

By outlining the link chain as *Australopithecus* > *Homo habilis* > *Homo erectus* > *Homo sapiens*, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that *Australopithecus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus* lived at different parts of the world at the same time.¹⁵

Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as *Homo erectus* have lived up until very modern times. *Homo sapiens neandarthalensis* and *Homo sapiens sapiens* (modern man) co-existed in the same region.¹⁶

This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution, although he is an evolutionist himself:

What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (*A. africanus*, the robust australopithecines, and *H. habilis*), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.¹⁷

Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is "upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific foundation.

Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years and studied *Australopithecus* fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man.

Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"—concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense—and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his reasoning:

We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible—and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.¹⁸

The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

DARWINIAN FORMULA!

Besides all the technical evidence we have dealt with so far, let us now for once, examine what kind of a superstition the evolutionists have with an example so simple as to be understood even by children:

The theory of evolution asserts that life is formed by chance. According to this claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us think about that. When we bring together the elements that are the building-blocks of life such as carbon, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium, only a heap is formed. No matter what treatments it undergoes, this atomic heap cannot form even a single living being. If you like, let us formulate an "experiment" on this subject and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without pronouncing loudly under the name "Darwinian formula":

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living things such as phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen, iron, and magnesium into big barrels. Moreover, let them add in these barrels any material that does not exist under normal conditions, but they think as necessary. Let them add in this mixture as many amino acids—which have no possibility of forming under natural conditions—and as many proteins—a single one of which has a formation probability of 10^{-950} —as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they like. Let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they like. Let them put the foremost scientists beside these barrels. Let these experts wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, and even trillions of years. Let them be free to use all kinds of conditions they believe to be necessary for a human's formation. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human, say a professor that examines his cell structure under the electron microscope. They cannot produce giraffes, lions, bees, canaries, horses, dolphins, roses, orchids, lilies, carnations, bananas, oranges, apples, dates, tomatoes, melons, watermelons,

figs, olives, grapes, peaches, peafowls, pheasants, multicoloured butterflies, or millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they could not obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

Briefly, unconscious atoms cannot form the cell by coming together. They cannot take a new decision and divide this cell into two, then take other decisions and create the professors who first invent the electron microscope and then examine their own cell structure under that microscope. Matter is an unconscious, lifeless heap, and it comes to life with Allah's superior creation.

The theory of evolution, which claims the opposite, is a total fallacy completely contrary to reason. Thinking even a little bit on the claims of tevolutionists discloses this reality, just as in the above example.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE EYE AND THE EAR

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear.

Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of how we see. Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the eye's retina. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision." These electric signals are perceived in this center as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking.

The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness.

The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding

it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth.

For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality.

Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all of its atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot?

If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the

sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing in the brain.

The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just as it is from light. It does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your completely silent brain, you listen to symphonies, and hear all of the noises in a crowded place. However, were the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there.

As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospheric sounds as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man.

So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

TO WHOM DOES THE CONSCIOUSNESS THAT SEES AND HEARS WITHIN THE BRAIN BELONG?

Who watches an alluring world in the brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose?

The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electro-chemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions.

For this consciousness is the spirit created by Allah, which needs neither the eye to watch the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think.

Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty Allah, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A MATERIALIST FAITH

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the required intermediate forms have never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered uni-

verse model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history.

However, the theory of evolution is kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against it as an "attack on science." Why?

The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature.

Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist":

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.¹⁹

These are explicit statements that Darwinism is a dogma kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter created life. It insists that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to defend it just so as "not to allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice will see this evident truth: All living beings are works of a

Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise, and All-Knowing. This Creator is Allah, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION IS THE MOST POTENT SPELL IN THE WORLD

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible.

As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of the Prophet Musa (pbuh) worshipping the Golden Calf.

In fact, Allah has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verse, He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows:

As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe.

Allah has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Surat al-Baqara: 6-7)

... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Surat al-A'raf: 179)

Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Surat al-Hijr: 14-15)

Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems.

In fact, the Qur'an relates the incident of Prophet Musa and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told Prophet Musa to meet with his own magicians. When Musa did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue:

He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Surat al-A'raf: 116)

As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Musa and those who believed in him. However, his ev-

idence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as the verse puts it.

We revealed to Musa, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Surat al-A'raf: 117-118)

As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, world-renowned British writer and philosopher Malcolm Muggeridge also stated this:

I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.²⁰

That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

NOTES

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4 Stanley Miller, *Molecular Evolution of Life: Current Status of the Prebiotic Synthesis of Small Molecules*, 1986, p. 7.

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11 Derek A. Ager, "The Nature of the Fossil Record", *Proceedings of the British Geological Association*, vol 87, 1976, p. 133.

12 Douglas J. Futuyma, *Science on Trial*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1983. p. 197.

13 Solly Zuckerman, *Beyond The Ivory Tower*, Toplinger Publications, New York, 1970, pp. 75-14; Charles E. Oxnard, "The Place of Australopithecines in Human Evolution: Grounds for Doubt", *Nature*, vol 258, p. 389.

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15 Alan Walker, *Science*, vol. 207, 7 March 1980, p. 1103; A. J. Kelso, *Physical Anthropology*, 1st ed., J. B. Lipincott Co., New York, 1970, p. 221; M. D. Leakey, *Olduvai Gorge*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971, p. 272.

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18 Solly Zuckerman, *Beyond The Ivory Tower*, p. 19.

19 Richard Lewontin, "The Demon-Haunted World," 71 Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, p. 43.

20 Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980, p. 43.

*They said, "Glory be to You! We have no
knowledge except what You have taught us.
You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."
(Qur'an, 2: 32)*
