

## What are Islaam and Muslims all about?

By Dr Abu Osama

### Introduction

Barely a day goes by without hearing the words 'Muslim', 'Islaam' or 'Jihaad' from the media. In fact one would guess that the vast majority of people have heard such terms from the media or from friends or family. However, have you ever asked yourself what these terms really mean? Have you gone out and spent some time to research about these Muslims and what they believe in?

Perhaps you may think that these people are all foreigners and therefore have no bearing on your life. Well, you may be surprised then if I were to tell you that there are up to 3 million Muslims living on your doorstep in the United Kingdom; from the furthest south of Lands End to remote areas in northern Scotland. You may not feel this a strong enough reason to go out and read about Islaam; however, do you not feel at least a little ignorant when you hear it mentioned on the television or on the radio?

It is for this purpose that we have provided you with this short pamphlet about Islaam, Muslims and all that you may wish to know about them. We hope that you find the information beneficial and useful and encourage you to make contact with the authors if you wish to further your understanding of Islaam or correct any misconceptions you may have about it.

### Islaam

Islaam is the world's fastest growing divine way of life with around 1.3 billion adherents worldwide. From countries ranging far a field as America to Zimbabwe, Muslims can be found on all continents of the globe. A Muslim is someone who believes in and adheres to a way of life known as Islaam.

Islaam is an Arabic word which literally means 'submission'. The Islamic faith was revealed to the last and final Messenger Muhammad (saw) from Allaah (lit. God) in the deserts of Arabia some 1400 years ago; and was a continuation of the Judaeo-Christian religions that preceded it. In fact Islaam came as a rectification for both the Jewish and Christians scriptures since over time they had undergone numerous changes and additions from their original revealed form. The editors of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible 1971 comment in their introduction to the RSV Bible,

*"The King James Version has with good reason been termed, 'the noblest monument of English prose'. Its revisers in 1881 expressed admiration for its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression.' It entered, as no other book has, into the making of the personal character and the public institutions of the English-speaking peoples. We owe to it an incalculable debt. Yet the King James Version has grave defects. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the development of Biblical studies and the discovery of many manuscripts more ancient than those upon which the King James Version was based, made it manifest that these defects are so many and so serious as to call for revision of the English translation."*

The Islamic way of life is centred around the belief in a single Creator known as Allaah; this is often translated as God in English. Some may think that in this day and age of science, technology and development, it is old-fashioned to believe in a God or a Creator. Others seem to think that the theory of evolution and genetic engineering have made the need for God redundant. In fact the evidence of a Creator is all around us and we need only take one look at ourselves to come to this conclusion.

### The Myth of 'Science Has Answers to All Things'

It seems that if one speaks about God or a Creator in today's society, one would get strange looks from friends of work colleagues or would be accused of becoming 'brainwashed.' In fact the majority of people in British society are atheist (i.e. do not believe in any God or Creator); most of whom would claim that the theories that science have forwarded have refuted such an historical concept.

Before we explore whether there exists a creator or not, one must first mention that science is merely a tool by which one looks upon reality. Those great oft-repeated laws such as Newton's three laws of motion, or the law of gravity etc. were merely observations and documentations of certain laws that existed before, during and after such scientists. Is it not true that gravity existed before Newton noticed it? Or the laws of motion were allowing things to move and for friction to work before those scientists decided to compile works about them?

So the first point regarding science is that it is simply a comment by certain scientists upon a reality they envisage. Now the way they envisage the reality, and the tools they use allow them to understand more about what is going on around them. When one looks back to the comments of scientists living in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, without microscopes, without their telescopes, they believed that the earth was flat, motionless and the centre of the universe.

Now if you were alive during that time, would you too say that the world was flat and the centre of universe? Let us say that you did and that you backed your claim by saying, 'because the great scientists say so.' Well, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century you would be considered backward and ignorant since those such observations have been nullified as we have more advanced tools proving otherwise. So by following the scientists in the 12<sup>th</sup> century you would have arrived at a completely incorrect understanding about the world.

Who is to say that following the comments and statements of the scientists of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century so too would not be proved wrong at a later date? Who then would be held to account for believing in such misconceptions - obviously one can only blame yourself if you did not truly go out to seek the truth. There are manifest examples of such contradictions in more recent times as well, topics ranging from whether the universe is expanding, or whether the cause of asthma is as a result of pollution or not. In fact such contradictions will remain and continue so long as technology develops. However, development does not necessarily mean one will arrive at the correct answer as we have explained.

### Mankind's Greatest Question

Despite the great advancement in technology in recent times, there still remain fundamental questions which science has been unable to answer. Where did I come from, where am I going? What is the relationship between man, life and the universe? What is the link between life and what was before life, and what is after life? Such questions have been asked of oneself by each and every human being at some stage of their life.

Without having any answer to such questions we are simply continuing in a life which has no meaning and no purpose. And as a result it is no wonder why suicide rates and the prevalence of self-harm are rocketing.

If you were to be drugged unconscious, transported to an unknown location and then left to find yourself awake in a darkened room, you will naturally ask; *Who put me here? Why am I here? And what will happen next?* These questions would be foremost in your mind such that you probably would not be able

to do anything without answering these questions first. Are you and I not in exactly the same situation upon this earth? Who put us here? Why did they put us here? What will happen once we die?

Questions of what happens after death evoke in many an uneasy feeling, a feeling that many shy away from if they do not have a convincing answer. The truth of the matter is that the only certainty in this life is that we are all going to die. We all know people who were once alive and have since died. Where have they gone? What will happen to them? These are all questions that have passed through our minds but are we really content with the excuses and answers we have provided ourselves with?

**The Proof of the Existence of a Creator**

If we were to ask Joe public how we came about on this earth, you would probably hear a plethora of different answers from Evolution, Big-Bang to a Supreme Creator. However, as intelligent individuals, you and I do not go on or believe what other people simply say, rather we want to be convinced by the greatest faculty we have been blessed with, the faculty of thinking and intellect. As a human being, we have been given the gift of thought and of comprehension such that one is able to judge and weigh up different arguments according to one's level of understanding. It is an insult for anyone to forego this faculty and to follow any concept, whether that may be the theory of evolution, the existence of a God, the Big-Bang theory blindly without asking for any evidence. To do so, renders one on a level lower than a farm animal and affords the chance to be exploited by others.

Returning to the issue as to whether there exists a Creator or not, to answer such questions we firstly need to draw upon the understanding we have about ourselves and all those things that surround us. Looking to oneself as a human what do we notice? We find that we are all born i.e. we have a starting point and that we grow to a certain height, achieve a maximal weight, and expire once we attain a certain age - some more prematurely than others. Hence we are limited. We have a limited lifespan, limited dimensions, and limited intelligence. Therefore from observing oneself, we can make a blanket statement about human beings in general, all humans are limited. What we mean by this statement is that we are not unlimited or infinite i.e. we don't live for ever or continue to grow without end.

The second concept we can notice is that human beings are dependent and needy i.e. they require nutrition to live and grow, oxygen to breathe and dwellings for protection from the environment. Humans are not self-subsistent and consequently without food, water, warmth and oxygen they would not be able survive. Therefore human beings are limited, needy and dependent. If one were to gather 100 persons in a single hall they still would have the same attributes of being needy, limited and dependent. This is because the totality of limited beings is limited. If one were to gather 1,000, 1 million nay even 1 billion people into a single space, they all still would have the attribute of being weak, limited and needy, since they still require food, shelter, and will each live for a fixed period of time.

Now if we turn our attention to other things around us such as animals and plants, we observe exactly the same findings. Animals and plants are dependent upon water, oxygen and carbon dioxide, warmth and sun light; without such things they will wither away and die. Animals and plants are also limited in that they grow only so tall and live so long.

Similarly if we look to the stars and the planets, even though they seem so huge and great, they are still limited in size and are dependent on many factors including gravitational pulls, energy etc. to maintain their course and existence. If we total the existence of all these things, the stars, planets, people and things, we find that they too are limited, needy and dependent on other things; since they are

dependent on other factors to bring them into being, to maintain their complex interactions and to sustain their existence.

Now we turn to the following possibilities, **i)** either all these limited objects brought themselves into being and consequently maintain themselves and are self subsistent or **ii)** these limited things are dependent upon other limited things for their existence which are in turn dependent upon other limited things which are in turn dependent ad infinitum or lastly; **iii)** all these things are dependent upon a being that is independent, eternal, unlimited and not needy.

If we take the first possibility (which is what the scientists would like you believe) that things came about on their own existence and are self maintaining. We ask you to simply look around you and bring a single example of a thing that is unlimited, self sustaining and not dependent on other things or factors. The fact of the matter is that there is not a single thing that one can perceive that fits into this and consequently such a claim is rejected as being false and misleading.

If we take the second possibility that all the things you see around you are dependent upon other dependent things for their existence; we ask the following tongue twister; what are these other dependent things dependent on themselves? If they are dependent upon other things which they themselves are dependent, then those others things consequently must be dependent upon other dependent things which they themselves are dependent upon until eternity. Since all these things are dependent, which one was first? Naturally, there cannot be a first dependent thing without an initiator as that is the nature of being limited and dependent. So again, this argument is totally baseless and flawed and is to be rejected by any sane person.

The last possibility is the only explanation that makes any sense. All dependent things have complex interactions and relationships with other dependent objects, however each of these dependent objects, irrespective of how numerous they are, are still dependent and hence require a being that has the attributes of being independent, unlimited and eternal to bring them into creation. And that being which brought them into being is known by some as God, and by the Muslims as Allaah (swt).

**What about the Big Bang?**

The Big Bang is a much quoted scientific theory that is mentioned by scientist which is meant to give a rational reason for the creation or beginning of the universe. Many people believe that such a theory disproves the third possibility as mentioned above i.e. the concept of a creator. However, if we analyse the big bang theory we see that it simply states that the universe and all that is around us had a beginning from the mixing of a cocktail of gases and chemicals. After numerous interactions and reactions, it is alleged that simple proteins were constructed that began as the building blocks of the universe.

Although we will not explore this theory in much further detail, it is important to ask from where did these alleged chemicals and gases come from? Who put them there? It is like saying that the sponge cake was made by a mixture of water, flour, eggs, cream, jam, baking powder in a heated environment. But you and I know that if a person did not get the initial ingredients from the shop, opened them, mixed them into a batter and then physically placed them in an oven, the cake would not be made. Similarly for the Big Bang theory, where did the ingredients of the universe originate from? Who put them together? The Big Bang theory does not provide a satisfactory answer to how you or I were created. And our simple lines of questioning provide further proof that much of what we hear from scientists shouldn't be taken for granted.

**What about Evolution?**

The theory of evolution was a notion championed by Charles Darwin as an explanation for the varieties of species that exist on the earth. However, over 100 years since the theory was propositioned, it still remains a theory in that the concept has not yet been proven to be fact. Despite evolution being taught in schools and colleges up and down the country, one is not taught the complete lack of scientific evidence or fossils which show the missing-link between a single specie evolving into another.

The concept of evolution states that the different species are in a continual state of strife and only the fittest is able to survive. Genes by their nature mutate and change, consequently, in the brutal nature of the environment only the fittest would therefore stay alive. Any genetic mutation that enable a specie to become fitter, surviving longer and procreate can pass on their genes for generations. Subsequently, that specie will have a better chance of survival. By this notion they explain that the amphibious being, fishes and their likes, grew wings and evolved into birds, others grew legs and walked out of their swamps and evolved into dogs, cats, humans, monkeys, elephants and their likes.

As proof for their theory, they tell you that the similarities between the chimpanzee DNA and the human DNA is around 97% and therefore humans have evolved from the chimp. Although it is postulated that perhaps Darwin kept pictures of monkeys in his family album! However, what the same evolution proponents fail to mention is that using the same DNA analysis techniques, human DNA is 50% similar to banana DNA and 75% similar to the DNA of mice! Could it ever be postulated that half the humans evolved from bananas? And the other three-quarters evolved from mice?

The reality is that the whole living world is derived from a series of 4 building blocks (amino acids) known as A, T, C and G. Depending on the length and composition of these chain of DNAs, different beings exist. Similarity between the chains is not an indication of common ancestry but points to a common designer. Think about a Porsche and a BMW car. They both have air-cooled, flat, horizontally-opposed, 4-cylinder engines, independent suspension, two doors, a boot, and many other similarities. Why do these two very different cars have so many similarities? Can one deduce that the BMW evolved from the Porsche? Of course not! So why then is such an idea entertained for the more complex environment around us?

**What about the Survival of the Fittest?**

What about the idea that existence is governed according to the theory of survival of the fittest? If one were to apply this theory to humans, it would make little sense for a mother to spend thousands of pounds trying to cure her sick child; and it would make perfect sense that we dispose of sick parents when they become too burdensome for us. Doing so would help our species become even more fit. Yet instead of sounding logical this behaviour only sounds revolting. Why? Look to your own self. Humans have morals, a sense of guilt. How did this became installed in us? We feel a need to seek justice when we've been wronged, and to seek forgiveness when we've wronged others. All humans are conscious of good and evil to some degree. Why is it that the humans have courts and systems of law for when one person kills another, but in the animal kingdom random killings (for whatever reason) within the same species or between different species are never brought to trial?!

**There is this Creator -What's that got to do with me?**

We have seen how using our minds and rational faculties there is no choice but to believe in the existence of an originator of man, life and the universe. The various scientific theories, and postulations do not provide satisfactory answers to why we are here and how we came about; rather, they have

many holes and faults in their reasoning and line of argumentation that a sane human being will never accept them as providing any solution to the fundamental questions.

If one looks around at the environment, one notices that there is a myriad of different organisms, beings, persons, animals, plants all interacting and functioning in a particular manner. If one looks at a higher level at the stars and planets, similar one finds such interactions and a sense of organisation. If the sun were 1cm closer to the earth the temperature difference resulted would be so great that no living being could survive upon it! If the earth were even a few millimetres from its normal orbit, the gravitational changes between the different planets would result in the earth being flung out of the solar system! There is evidently a delicate organisational structure running throughout the whole universe, obeying a particular law and set of rules; whereby any deviation from these will result in inevitable complete chaos.

If one were to purchase a new television, a state of the art plasma screen or LCD device, the first thing you or I do when we take it out of the box is read the manual to help us use the machine to the best of its purpose. This is because the person or company who made that television screen, or that games console knows better than you or I how to use it, its limitations and its functionality. If we were to play around with the television without reading the manual, we may learn a lot about it, perhaps even enough to use it. However, if we were to break it having not read the manual, then this would surely void the guarantee as it can be argued that one was not being prudent with the product.

If we use this line of thinking, then what about our own lives, what law do we live by? If there is this creator it is unfathomable to think that they have not given us any information or a manual on how we should live our lives and solutions for the day to day problems that we may face. Everything around us that we can see and perceive has a role to play, a function and a purpose. The sun provides nutrition, warmth and light. Water provides life and purification. Air carries us the oxygen we need to breath as well as removing the carbon dioxide which in excess could kill us.

If all these things around us has purposes, what is the purpose of us beings then? Is it for you and I to decide or is it for the creator? We can see how perfectly the system of the creator works in all levels of life. And we can also see how flawed the human based systems that exist all around us are, from capitalism, tribalism, communism, to democracy; injustice, unfairness, cold blooded killings, rapes and murders are all too common for the eye to see.

The annals of history are full of man's oppression of man. Greed, selfishness, killing, monopoly, and vice are manifestations of man fulfilling their survival instincts. If man is prepared to go as far as killing others in satisfaction of his needs, then surely man is in need of control over his actions. Without a criterion for action the striving for satisfaction of mans' needs will lead him to constant conflict with others. One man's freedom is another's slavery. The Creator has not left man to his own devices, man has never been free to undertake his life in whichever way he feels best. It is wholly consistent with our perception of man as being limited, dependant and imperfect that for man to bring his own way, his own system, would be false, due to man's limited understanding of life. Man is always subject to bias, disparity, differences, contradictions and the influence of his current environment, hardly a basis for complete impartiality and absolute truth. Any man made system will suffer from these same bias, disparity, differences, contradictions and influence.

### The Need for Messengers and a Message

It is not possible for a limited being to comprehend an unlimited being, therefore the Creator has given mankind communication through a channel that is clear for him. God has sent Prophets and Messengers (Prophets with the divine law) to mankind to give guidance in all of our affairs. Each of whom were each given miracles which proved to mankind the authenticity of their prophethood.

So we see that Musa (Moses) was given the power of magic, when his staff was thrown down and turned to a snake devouring the staffs of the magicians. Or similarly Isa (Jesus) was given the ability to cure the sick. The miracle given to Muhammad (saw) was the Qur'an, the word of God. As only the Messengers of God are given the Divine Law of God then Muhammad must definitely be the Prophet and Messenger of God. To prove this point comprehensively we must examine critically the Qur'an.

Indeed, messengers have been sent to mankind since the beginning of human history, carrying this guidance and imploring people to recognise the nature of their existence and to understand the reality and purpose of their lives.

The last of these Messengers was the Messenger Muhammad (saw) and with his guidance, came the clarification of not only the truth of God's existence, but also the code of conduct for humanity to achieve justice and prosperity in both this life and the next.

### Who Was the Messenger Muhammad (saw)

Muhammad (saw) was born into a noble tribe in Makkah now in modern day Saudi Arabia, in the year 570CE. An orphan at birth, he was cared for first by his grandfather and later by his uncle. He started life as a shepherd, then became a trader and finally a prosperous merchant. At the age of forty, disillusioned by the materialistic lifestyle and ignorant practices of the Pagan Arabs, Muhammad (saw) began to spend long times in contemplation and meditation. It was during these periods that he (saw) would receive revelation from God at the hands of the angel Jibrael (Gabriel) until his death some 23 years later. The revelation that was received would deal with subjects as far reaching as politics, spirituality, afterlife, economics, inheritance, women's rights, warfare, prayer etc. and would be immediately recorded, memorised such that it could not undergo any distortion. Such revelation is what we have today known as the Qur'an, or final testament from God and is what the Muslims profess to follow and believe in.

### The Miracles of the Qur'an

If a person came into your room, or said on the television *'I am a prophet of God'* it is more than likely that you would shut your ears and claim him to be mad or schizo and one would hope such people would be placed under the care of the local mental unit. However, if such a person claimed to be a prophet and then in front of your eyes began performing tasks which you know was beyond the capacity of a normal human being, you would think twice before calling the psychiatrist. Rather you yourself would want to know what this person is really about before making any rash decisions. Perhaps his feats of walking on water, bringing the dead back to life or healing the leper may convince you about his call.

However, if a person told you that they saw a person perform these extraordinary feats, you would be less likely to believe them or take them for granted; even if such a person was your close friend or family member. This is because such feats need one to actually visualise and experience them to truly believe in their occurrence. Therefore, all the claims made that previous prophets and messengers performed such fantastic feats and miracles may well be true but bear no direct relevance to us as we

were unable to experience such. No matter how many people speak about them or how many times they are repeated, this reality is not changed. Such miraculous feats are only suitable as proof for the time and the people they were performed to. It is reported that the prophet Muhammad (saw) performed many such miracles to his people. However, we did not witness such events and consequently these are not proof of prophethood for you or I in this day and age. Rather what is alleged by us Muslims is that the Qur'an is the only living miracle of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw) and is the final revelation from the Creator to mankind.

### The Qur'an and Science

The Qur'an is the last revelation, and a proof not only to the pagan Arabs one thousand four hundred years ago, but also to the scientists of today. Perhaps one of the most remarkable qualities of the Qur'an for those living in the twenty first century, is the complete consistency between the Qur'an and most of the discoveries of modern science, in some cases even pre-empting facts discovered within the last twenty years.

One of the first Western scientists to make a serious study of this subject was Dr Maurice Bucaille, who wrote a book called, "The Bible, the Qur'an and Science". In this book, he compared the statements concerning natural and scientific data in the Bible and the Qur'an concluding,

*"The Qur'an follows on from the two Revelations that preceded it and is not only free from contradictions in its narrations, the sign of the various human manipulations to be found in the gospels, but provides a quality all of its own for those who examine it objectively and in the light of science, i.e. its complete agreement with modern scientific data. What is more, statements are to be found in it (as has been shown) that are connected with science: and yet it is unthinkable that a man of Muhammad's time could have been the author of them. Modern scientific knowledge therefore allows us to understand certain verses of the Qur'an which, until now, it has been impossible to interpret. The comparison of several Biblical and Qur'anic narrations of the same subject shows the existence of fundamental differences between the statements in the former, which are scientifically unacceptable, and declarations in the latter which are in perfect agreement with modern data: this was the case of the Creation and the Flood. Besides, there are major differences between the Qur'an and the Bible on the other subjects: they serve to disprove all that has been maintained-without a scrap of evidence-concerning the allegation that Muhammad is supposed to have copied the Bible to produce the text of the Qur'an. In view of the level of knowledge in Muhammad's day, it is inconceivable that many of the statements in the Qur'an which are connected with science could have been the work of a man. It is, moreover, perfectly legitimate, not only to regard the Qur'an as the expression of a Revelation, but also to award it a very special place, on the account of the guarantee of authenticity it provides and the presence in it of scientific statements which, when studied today, appears as a challenge to explanation in human terms."*

Some of the statements found in the Qur'an that match with recent scientific discoveries are as follows,

### 1. *The Accurate Description of Embryonic and Fetal Development*

At the time of Prophet Muhammad ideas surrounding the development of the foetus in the womb were similar to those of Aristotle who thought that a child was formed by the menstrual blood clotting by touching male blood. Even until the Eighteenth Century, foetal development was completely misunderstood as Hartsoeker claimed to have seen a pre-formed human being within a sperm. Amazingly, the Qur'an reflected none of these theories as would be expected if it was written by man, rather the Qur'an describes the development of the embryonic human with an exceptional precision that has only been possible in the past thirty years. Allaah (swt) says,

*“We created man from a quintessence of clay, We then placed him as a drop (Nutfa) in a place of rest firmly fixed, Then we made the drop into an Alaqah (leech-like) and then we changed the leech-like structure into a Mudghah (chewed-like) and then We made out of that chewed-like substance bones then We clothed the bones with flesh then We caused him to grow and come into being and attain the definitive form. Blessed be Allah the Perfect creator. After that, at length you will die. Again, on the Day of Judgment, you will be raised up.” (23:12-16)*

Professor Keith Moore, Chairman of the Department of Anatomy in the University of Toronto, Canada, and author of *The Developing Human*, said concerning these statements in the Qur'an:

*“Until the 19th Century, nothing was known about classifying the stages of human development. A system of staging human embryos was developed around the end of the 19th Century based on alphabetical symbols. During the 20th century, numerals were used to describe 23 stages of embryonic development. This system of numbering the stages is not easy to follow and a better system would be based on the morphological changes. In recent years, the study of the Qur'an has revealed another basis for the classification of the stages of the developing embryo which is based on easily understood actions and changes in shape. It utilizes terms which were sent from God to Muhammed the Prophet by the Angel Gabriel and recorded on the Qur'an. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammed must have been a Messenger of God.”*

Professor Marshall Jonson, Chairman of the Department of Anatomy and Director of the Daniel Baugh Institute, at the Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, U.S.A., said:

*“As a scientist I can only deal with things I can specifically see. I can understand embryology and developmental biology; I can understand the words that are translated to me from the Qur'an. If I were to transpose myself into that era, knowing what I do today and describing things, I could not describe the things that were described. I see no evidence to refute the concept that this individual Muhammed had to be developing this information from some place, so I see nothing in conflict with the concept that Divine Intervention was involved on what he was able to say.”*

### 2. *Cosmology*

There is much information in modern times regarding theories about the development of the universe and the creation of the worlds. This is what God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) through the Qur'an regarding it,

*“Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one united piece, then We parted them. And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe.” (21:30)*

This verse clearly mentions the common origin of the universe, a fact that was not discovered until forty years ago with the advent of nuclear physics. The separation seems to refer to what the scientists call the “Big Bang”. Also, the Qur'an mentions that all living things are composed largely of water, again a scientific fact only recently proven.

*“Then He rose over towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: ‘Come willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said: ‘We come willingly.’” (41:11)*

The word smoke describes accurately the primeval state of the universe, which was composed of a hot gaseous mass, with particles moving vigorously, just as in smoke. From this the stars, planets and the earth were formed.

*“The heaven, We have built it with power, verily We are expanding it.” (51:47)*

It is also an accepted fact that we are living in an expanding universe.

*“Allah is the one who created the night and day, the sun and moon. Each one is travelling in an orbit with its own motion.”*

The sun is actually in orbit, not around the earth but around the centre of the galaxy, so there is no contradiction, since the Qur'an does not specify the Sun's orbit.

*“It is He who made the Sun a shining thing and the moon as a light, and measured out their stages.” (10:5)*

The Qur'an describes the Sun as a “siraj” which means a torch, generating its own heat and light where as the Moon is described “an-nur” which is light originating from another source. Is it merely by chance that a Bedouin arab in the middle of the desert some 1400 years ago could make such bold assertions without the help of a telescope or any magnifying instrumentation?

### 3. *Geology*

*“Have We not made the earth an expanse; and the mountains stakes?” (78:6-7)*

*“And Allah has cast into the ground mountains standing firm so that it does not shake with you.” (31:10)*

It has recently been discovered that mountains have roots that go into the earth's crust which is composed of seven tectonic plates. Their movement is the cause of earthquakes. It is thought that the roots and weight of the mountains play a vital role in stabilizing the earth's crust.

### 4. *Animal and Plant life*

The sixteenth chapter of the Qur'an mentions the bee that leaves its home to gather as feminine, although it has generally been believed that the bees are soldiers and they answer to a King. The Qur'an

also mentions the sexes of plants and the winds as a means of their fertilization. All recently discovered matters.

#### 5. Atomism

The Greek philosopher Democritus (460-361 BC) advanced the theory that matter was composed of tiny, indivisible particles called Atoms. Modern science has discovered that there is the Atom, but that Atom is divisible and consists of smaller parts. The Qur'an states,

*“He is aware of an atom’s weight in the heavens and on the earth, and even anything smaller than that.” (34:3)*

#### 6. Dermatology

*“Those who reject Our signs We shall soon cast into the fire, As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for fresh skins so that they may truly taste the Penalty, For Allah is exalted in power, wise.” (4:56)*

The nerve ends that feel pain are found in the skin. When the skin is severely burnt the nerve ends are destroyed and pain is not felt. In Hell, Allah will recreate the skin so that its inhabitants may permanently feel intense pain. This is not common knowledge now, let alone in Muhammad’s time. The author of the Qur’an is, however, well acquainted with these facts!

#### 7. The Water Cycle

The Qur’an correctly describes the water cycle, and the origin of underground springs as being from rain water. Obvious you may think, but the Greek philosophers did not get it right, suggesting that underground springs were produced by sea spray collecting in caves which fed a great underground sea through the ‘abyss’! In fact the water cycle was not accurately propounded until the 18th century. The Qur’an, however, states:

*“Hast though not seen that Allah sent water down from the sky and led it through sources into the ground?” (39:21)*

For the sake of brevity, we have only mentioned a few of the statements and provided limited explanation of the statements contained in the Qur’an and traditions dealing with scientific subjects. Professor Persud, Chairman of the Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, at the University of Manitoba, in Canada commented:

*“Muhammed was a very ordinary man, he couldn’t read, didn’t know how to write, in fact he was illiterate; we’re talking about 1400 years ago you have some illiterate person making profound pronouncements and statements that are accurate of a scientific nature. I personally can’t see how this could be a mere chance, there are too many accuracies. I have no difficulty in my mind reconciling that this is a divine inspiration or a revelation which led him to these statements.”*

Let us not forget the words of Dr, Bucaille that these facts *“appear as a challenge to explanation in human terms.”* And Professor Persud’s statement that it cannot be coincidence, there are too many accuracies! The probability against Muhammad taking wild guesses and getting each fact right are indeed phenomenal! These scientists, renowned experts in their fields, like the Arabs who had mastered their language in the time of the Prophet, recognize the clear proof and miraculous nature of the Qur’an. Allaah (swt) says in the Qur’an,

*“We will show them our signs on the furthest horizons and within themselves until they know that this is the truth.”*

The Qur’an is consistent with external realities, and it is also consistent internally. It is the nature of the works of men, be they scientists, philosophers, sages or mystics to contain inconsistencies and contradictions. This cannot be so with the Divine Revelation as the Qur’an states:

*“Have they not carefully considered the Qur’an, had it been from other than Allah they would have found many discrepancies within.”*

In testimony to God’s conservation, the Qur’an is the only Scripture in human history that has been preserved in complete and original version without the slightest change in style or even punctuation’s. The history of recording the Qur’an, compiling its chapters and conserving its text is beyond any doubt not only in the minds of the Muslims but also in the minds of honest and serious scholars. This is a historical fact which no scholar from any faith who respects his knowledge and integrity has ever questioned. As a matter of fact, it is Muhammads’ standing miracle that if all mankind were to work together they could not produce the like of one Qur’anic chapter.

#### Muhammad (saw) and Prophecies

One of the gold standards a lot of people use to judge whether or not a person is capable of being an apostle of God is whether their prophecies turn out to be true or false. Of course, if one was receiving true revelation from the creator of the universe, then not a single prophecy should ever be incorrect. We will mention a few of the numerous prophecies made by the Prophet Muhammad (saw) 1400 years previous.

1. The Qur’an mentions, *“The Roman Empire has been defeated in a land close by; but they, even after this defeat, will gain victory in a few years. Allah’s is the command, in the past and in the future. On that day shall the believers rejoice, with the help of Allah, He helps whom He wills. And He is the mighty and the most Merciful. It is the promise of Allah. Allah never departs from His promise: but most men understand not. They crave for the outer things of life, but of the hereafter they are heedless.” (30:1-7)* The Eastern Roman (i.e. Byzantine) Empire suffered a massive defeat at the hands of the Persians who captured Jerusalem in 614, and after that Egypt and Syria fell, and Constantinople was laid siege to - (“a land close by”). The pagan Arabs delighted in this, as it seemed to signal to them the success of idolatry over the followers of revelation. When this verse was revealed it seemed impossible that Rome would recover. The word, translated “a few”, is bid’a, which actually means from three to nine years. By the year 623, Heraclius, the Byzantine Roman Emperor, took to the field and vanquished the Persians in a series of battles, culminating in the battle of Niveh in 627. At this same time the Muslims had been victorious over the pagan Quraish and were rejoicing, as the Qur’an foretold .

2. The Prophet (saw) also predicted the capture of Egypt, and told his companions to treat the people well, and that they would seize the treasures of the Persian Choseros (Emperor), who lives in the white palace, all of which they accomplished, and that Suraqa bin Malik (one of the companions) would have the bracelets of Caesar put on his hands. So it happened that some such bracelets fell into the possession of ‘Umar and he called Suraqa, and placed the bracelets on him, reminding him of the Prophet’s words .

3. The Prophet mentioned that the Muslims would conquer both Rome and Constantinople. He was asked which would fall first, and the Prophet said: *“The city of Heraclius”*, i.e. Constantinople. Constantinople was taken by the Muslims in the fifteenth century. Rome still remains to be conquered, as it will be. So the order is correct, and rest still to be fulfilled. What is noteworthy about these statements of the Prophet is that they were made at a time when no one could imagine that a small city state, permanently under siege by the pagan Arabs, would reach such heights of power and strength, and that these predictions are not couched in some vague terminology open to various interpretations, like the meanderings of Nostradamus. The language is clear, their assertions direct, and often with specific names and dates .

4. The Prophet mentioned that there would be signs forewarning the approach of the Final Day. Among those that have clearly come to pass are :

a. The barefooted bedouins competing in building tall buildings. Today we find in the Arabian Peninsula, the Arabs who used to be impoverished herders of camels and sheep, are competing in building the tallest tower blocks such as in Dubai or the UAE.

b. The Mosques would be like palaces. This is clearly the case, even though the Prophet ordered simplicity in the houses of Allah, the mosques have become more and more fantastic, with golden domes, marbled floors, lavish carpets and chandeliers.

c. Disappearance of trustworthiness, so much so that one would only be able to say: *“I know a trustworthy person in such-and-such town”*.

d. The increase in killing, so that the one who kills does not know why he killed, and the one killed does not know why he was killed. The massacre of civilians in the Vietnam War, the Afghanistan and Iraq wars by American troops who had little idea why they were there, and the increase of such conflicts, is further illustration of the fulfilment of this prophecy. As are the rise of insane mass murders, of children killing children, such as Jamie Bulger.

e. The increase of the use of riba (usury/interest) so that no one will be able to escape being tainted by it. This clearly the state of the world economy today with the rise of the usage of Credit Cards, Hire purchase agreements and bank mortgages.

f. The enemies of the Muslims dividing the Muslim’s wealth and lands between them, the Muslims abandoning jihad, and concerning themselves only with the worldly matters. We have already mentioned this.

g. The increase of literacy.

h. The increase of sexual promiscuity, and new diseases that people had not heard of before spreading amongst them as a consequence of that. This is clear, with the arrival of AIDS, and other previously unheard of viruses .

i. The drinking of wine and intoxicants becoming common and widespread.

j. The worst and most ignorant will become leaders and they will be oppressors, just look to George Bush and many of the leaders of the Middle East.

k. A man will obey his wife and disobey his mother, and treat his friends kindly and shun his father.

So these are just some of the numerous prophecies of Muhammad, that have clearly come true, and some have been fulfilled in this age in which we live, all adding weight to the evidence in favour of his claim.

### Basic Muslim Beliefs

We have mentioned some of the undisputable facts found within the Qur’an which confirm that the Book is one of the divine books revealed from the Creator of the universe to mankind. The Qur’an is the cornerstone of a Muslim believer’s faith and as such a Muslim cannot be a Muslim without believing in and following its commands. We will mention a few other matters that are considered by the Muslims principals that all Muslims believe in and are guided by. The true, faithful Muslim believes in the following,

#### Creator

He believes in One God, Supreme and Eternal, Infinite and Mighty, Merciful and Compassionate, Creator and Provider. This belief, in order to be effective, requires complete trust and hope in God, submission to His Will and reliance on His aid. It secures man’s dignity and saves him from fear and despair, from guilt and confusion. The reader is invited to see the meaning of Islam as explained above .

#### Messengers

He believes in all the messengers of God without any discrimination among them. Every known nation had a warner or messenger from God. These messengers were great teachers of the good and true champions of the right. They were chosen by God to teach mankind and deliver His Divine message. They were sent at different times of history and every known nation had one messenger or more. During certain periods two or more messengers were sent by God at the same time to the same nation. The Holy Qur’an mentions the names of twenty-five of them, and the Muslim believes in them all and accepts them as authorized messengers of God. They were, with the exception of Muhammad, known as “national” or local messengers. But their message, their religion, was basically the same and was called ISLAM, because it came from One and the Same Source, namely, God, to serve one and the same purpose, and that is to guide humanity to the Straight Path of God. All the messengers with no exception whatsoever were mortals, human beings, endowed with Divine revelation, and appointed by God to perform certain tasks. Among them Muhammad stands as the Last Messenger and the crowning glory of the foundation of prophethood. This is not an arbitrary attitude, nor is it just a convenient belief. Like all the other Islamic beliefs, it is an authentic and logical truth. Also, it may be useful to mention here the names of some of the great messengers like Noah and Abraham, Ishmael and Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, may the peace and blessings of God be upon them all. The Qur’an commands the Muslims thus :

***“We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes; and that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and that which was given to all prophets from their Lord. We make no discrimination between one and another of them, and we bow to God.”***

#### Scriptures

The true Muslim believes, as a result of article two, in all the scriptures and revelations of God. They were the guiding light which the messengers received to show their respective peoples the Right Path of God. In the Qur’an a special reference is made to the books of Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus. But

long before the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammad some of those books and revelations had been lost or corrupted, others forgotten, neglected, or concealed. The only authentic and complete book of God in existence today is the Qur'an. In principle, the Muslim believes in the previous books and revelations. But where are their complete and original versions? They could be still at the bottom of the Dead Sea, and there may be more Scrolls to be discovered. Or perhaps more information about them will become available when the Christian and Jewish archaeologists reveal to the public the complete original findings of their continued excavations in the Holy Land. For the Muslim, there is no problem of that kind. The Qur'an is in his hand complete and authentic. Nothing of it is missing and no more of it is expected. Its authenticity is beyond doubt, and no serious scholar or thinker has ventured to question its genuineness. The Qur'an was made so by God Who revealed it and made it incumbent upon Himself to protect it against interpolation and corruption of all kinds. Thus it is given to the Muslims as the standard or criterion by which all the other books are judged. So whatever agrees with the Qur'an is accepted as Divine truth, and whatever differs from the Qur'an is either rejected or suspended. God says:

*'Verily We have, without doubt, sent down the Qur'an, and We will assuredly guard it'*

#### *Day of Reckoning*

The true Muslim believes in the Last Day of Judgement. This world will come to an end some day, and the dead will rise to stand for their final and fair trial. Everything we do in this world, every intention we have, every move we make, every thought we entertain, and every word we say, all are counted and kept in accurate records. On the Day of Judgement they will be brought up. People with good records will be generously rewarded and warmly welcomed to the Heaven of God, and those with bad records will be punished and cast into Hell. In Heaven, said Muhammad, there are things which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no mind has ever conceived. However, the Muslim believes that there definitely will be compensation and reward for the good deeds, and punishment for the evil ones. That is the Day of Justice and final settlement of all accounts.

Belief in the Day of Judgment is the final relieving answer to many complicated problems of our world. There are people who commit sins, neglect God and indulge in immoral activities, yet they seem to be "superficially" successful in business and prosperous in life. And there are virtuous and God-minded people, yet they seem to be getting less rewards for their sincere effort, and more suffering in the present world. This is puzzling and incompatible with the Justice of God. If the guilty people can escape the mundane law unharmed and, in addition, be more prosperous, what is, then, left for the virtuous people? What will promote the cause of morality and goodness? There must be some way to reward goodness and arrest evil. If this is not done here on this earth-and we know that it is not done regularly or immediately it has to be done some day, and that is the Day of Judgment. This is not to condone injustice or tolerate mischief in this world. It is not to sedate the deprived or comfort their exploiters; rather, it is to warn the deviants from the Right Path and remind them that the Justice of God shall run its full course sooner or later.

#### *Nature of the Creator*

The true Muslim believes in the timeless knowledge of God and in His power to plan and execute His plans. God is not indifferent to this world nor is He neutral to it. His knowledge and power are in action at all times to keep order in His vast domain and maintain full command over His creation. He is Wise and Loving, and whatever He does must have a good motive and meaningful purpose. If this is established in our minds, we should accept with good Faith all that He does, although we may fail to understand it fully, or even think it is bad. We should have strong Faith in Him and accept whatever He

does because our knowledge is limited and our thinking is based on individual or personal considerations, whereas His knowledge is limitless and He plans on a universal basis.

#### *Purpose of Creation*

The true Muslim believes that God's creation is meaningful and that life has a sublime purpose beyond the physical needs and material activities of man. The purpose of life is to worship God. This does not simply mean that we have to spend our entire lives in constant seclusion and absolute meditation. To worship God is to know Him; to love Him; to obey His commandments; to enforce His law in every aspect of life; to serve His cause by doing the right and shunning the evil; and to be just to Him, to ourselves, and to our fellow human being and To worship God is to "live" life not to run away from it.

In brief, to worship God is to instill ourselves with His Supreme Attributes. This is by no means a simple statement, nor is it an oversimplification of the matter. It is most comprehensive and conclusive. So if life has a purpose and if man is created to serve that purpose, then he cannot escape the responsibility. He cannot deny His existence or ignore the vital role he has to play. When God charges him with any responsibility, He provides him with all the required assistance. He endows him with intelligence and power to choose his course of conduct. Man, thus, is strongly commended by God to exert his utmost to fully serve the purpose of his existence. Should he fail to do that, or misuse his life or neglect his duties, he shall be responsible to God for his wrong deeds.

#### *Original Sin?*

The true Muslim believes that every person is born free from sin and all claims to inherited virtue. He is like a blank book. When the person reaches the age of maturity he becomes accountable for his deeds and intentions, if his development is normal and if he is sane. Man is not only free from sin until he commits sin, but he is also free to do things according to his plans on his own responsibility. This dual freedom: freedom from sin and freedom to do effective things, clears the Muslim's conscience from the heavy pressure of Inherited Sin. It relieves his soul and mind from the unnecessary strains of the Doctrine of Original Sin.

#### *Freedom*

This Islamic concept of freedom is based upon the principle of God's justice and the individual's direct responsibility to God. Each person must bear his own burden and be responsible for his own actions, because no one can expiate for another's sin. Thus, a Muslim believes that if Adam had committed the First Sin, it was his own responsibility to expiate for that sin. To assume that God was unable to forgive Adam and had to make somebody else expiate for his sin, or to assume that Adam did not pray for pardon or prayed for it but it was not granted, would be extremely unlikely and contrary to God's mercy and justice as well as to His attribute of forgiveness and power to forgive. To assume the said hypothesis, would be an audacious defiance of common sense and flagrant violation of the very concept of God.

On this rational basis as well as on the authority of the Qur'an, the Muslim believes that Adam realized what he had committed and prayed to God for pardon, as any other sensible sinner would. It is also on the same basis, the Muslim believes, that God, the Forgiving and Merciful, granted Adam pardon. Hence, the Muslim cannot possibly accept the doctrine that Adam with the whole human race had been condemned and unforgiven until Jesus came to expiate for their sins. Consequently, the Muslim cannot entertain the dramatic story of Jesus' death on the cross just to do away with all human sins once and for all.

### **Way for Salvation**

The true Muslim believes that man must work out his salvation through the guidance of God. This means that in order to attain salvation a person must combine Faith and action, belief and practice. Faith without action is as insufficient as action without Faith. In other words, no one can attain salvation until his Faith in God becomes dynamic in his life and his beliefs are translated into reality. This is in complete harmony with the other Islamic articles of Faith. It shows that God does not accept lip service, and that no true believer can be indifferent as far as the practical requirements of Faith are concerned. It also shows that no one can act on behalf of another or intercede between him and God.

### **Blind Faith**

The true Muslim believes that Faith is not complete when it is followed blindly or accepted unquestioningly unless the believer is reasonably satisfied. If Faith is to inspire action, and if Faith and action are to lead to salvation, then Faith must be founded on unshakable convictions without any deception or compulsion. In other words, the person who calls himself a Muslim because of his family traditions, or accepts Islam under coercion or blind imitation is not a complete Muslim in the sight of God. A Muslim must build his Faith on well-grounded convictions beyond any reasonable doubt and above uncertainty. If he is not certain about his Faith, he is invited by God to search in the open book of Nature, to use his reasoning powers, and to reflect on the teachings of the Qur'an. He must search for the indisputable truth until he finds it, and he will certainly find it, if he is capable and serious enough.

This is why Islam demands sound convictions and opposes blind imitation. Every person who is duly qualified as a genuine earnest thinker is enjoined by Islam to employ his faculties to the fullest extent. But if a person is unqualified or uncertain of himself, he should pursue his thinking only as far as limits can take him. It will be quite in order for such a person to rely only on the authentic sources of religion, which are sufficient in themselves, without applying to them any critical questioning of which he is incapable. The point is that no one call himself a true Muslim unless his Faith is based on strong convictions and his mind is clear from doubts. Because Islam is complete only when it is based on strong convictions and freedom of choice and cannot be forced upon anybody.

### **Islam and Women**

Even though many aspects of Islam are misunderstood by non-Muslims, the ignorance, misinformation and incorrect assumptions that are made in regards to Islam's treatment of women are probably the most severe. Numerous verses of the Qur'an make it clear that men and women are equal in the site of God. According to the teachings of Islam, the only thing that distinguishes people in the site of God is their level of God-consciousness. Due to this, many people are surprised to find out that Islamic Law guaranteed rights to women over 1400 years ago that women in the Europe and America only obtained recently.

For example, Islam clearly teaches that a woman is a full-person under the law, and is the spiritual equal of a male. Also, according to Islamic Law, women have the right to own property, operate a business and receive equal pay for equal work. Women are allowed total control of their wealth, they cannot be married against their will and they are allowed to keep their own name when married. Additionally, they have the right to inherit property and to have their marriage dissolved in the case of neglect or mistreatment. Also, Islam does not consider woman an "evil temptress", and thus does not blame woman for the "original sin". Women in Islam participate in all forms of worship that men participate in. Actually, the rights that Islam gave to women over 1400 years ago were almost unheard of in the West until the 1900s.

Less than fifty years ago in England and America, a woman could not buy a house or car without the co-signature of her father or husband! Additionally, Islam gives great respect to women and their role in society; it gives them the right to own property, marry who they want and many other rights. Also, it should be mentioned that the Prophet Muhammad's mission stopped many of the horrible practices in regards to women that were present in the society of his time. For example, the Qur'an put an end to the pagan Arab practice of killing their baby daughters when they were born. Additionally, Islam put restrictions on the unrestricted polygamy of the Arabs of the time, and put many laws in place to protect the well-being of women. Today, most of the so-called reforms in the status of women came about after the West abandoned religion for secularism. Even those in the West who claim to follow the so-called "Judeo-Christian tradition" really follow the values of Western liberalism; but just to a lesser degree than their more liberal countrymen.

If women in the Muslim World today don't have their rights, it is not because Islam did not give them to them. The problem is that in many places alien traditions have come to overshadow the teachings of Islam, either through ignorance or the impact of Colonialisation.

### **Summary and Call**

Having read this short work, we hope that your eyes have been opened to the Islamic way of life, and we have contributed at least a little to improving your understanding about the Muslim faith. However, knowledge is of little benefit if one does not act upon it; rather if one believes that some truths have been mentioned in this leaflet then one should strive hard to investigate them further and accept the call if it is the Truth.

We invite you to contact the authors of this short work via email or telephone or visit one of the plethora of Islamic websites on the Internet.

Compiled and edited by  
Dr Abu Osama  
mnpublic@yahoo.com