

# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living



Belief in God adds immeasurable hope to our struggle.

# ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

*Spirit of Islam* is a monthly magazine which is now in its Eighth year of publication. The aim of this journal is to present Islam in the contemporary idiom, while at the same time the contents are of universal appeal and of interest to a wider circle of spiritual seekers. It is our desire to help Muslims rediscover Islam, focusing on its message of peace and spirituality as derived from the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet, and in general we strive towards religious understanding for bringing about greater harmony.

Another purpose of this magazine is to assist its readers to deal with life's challenges, deriving positivity even from negative occurrences, gaining in spirituality and developing themselves intellectually so that they may contribute constructively to society.

The magazine's regular readers will appreciate that the entire thrust of its articles is directed to the individual—a collection of intellectually prepared individuals being the sole foundation on which a peaceful and harmonious society can be built.

As the subtitle indicates, *Spirit of Islam* is working towards enlightening people on the subject of global peace and regularly addresses relevant contemporary issues. The articles on peace based on the teachings of the Prophet of Islam offer us an ideology of peace—principles which lay down how peace may be established between conflicting groups, controversies resolved and conflicts defused. We believe that violence begins in the mind and so an effective ideology of peace needs to be presented to counter its influence.

We hope and pray that God helps us in this noble endeavour and grants us His special blessings!



# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

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Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

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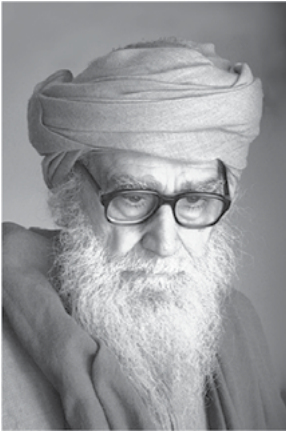
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## FROM MAULANA'S DESK



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## MARVELS OF MAN

**A**S I STOOD in front of India Gate in New Delhi, I thought what a beautiful specimen of architecture and sculpture it was. It is a structure which bears witness to man's unique creative faculties. For man to conceive of a thing like 'India Gate', he must think creatively before it can come into existence. He must make plans and then give them a concrete shape.

On observing this, the thought came to my mind that even if all the stars, planets, trees and animals were told to build an India Gate, they would fail to do so, even if all of them put their heads together.

This is the case with all other human matters too. All of man's extraordinary and exemplary feats are unique, and are his exclusive prerogative. No other being in the known universe is able to do the things which man is capable of doing by exercising his physical and mental faculties, be it the construction of India Gate or the operating of a complex industrial machine.

God desires that man should realize Him on the level of consciousness, that he should recognize Him through his intellect. That is why God

1. The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims 2020, Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordan.

created man with such distinctive faculties. Just as man is superior to all the creation of the universe, so is God a superior being as compared to man.

If man were to reflect on the difference between him and the rest of the universe, he would be able to comprehend the difference between God and himself. God is the ultimate form of this superiority which man experiences over the rest of the universe. To understand God is as simple a matter as understanding oneself.

The truth is that to believe in God is to believe in something in which we already believe. To see God is to see something which is already there for us to see. An intensification of what man is experiencing every moment is belief in God. The human being is not the 'full-stop' in this universe. When a higher state of existence is present in the form of man, then why should the existence of another higher state in the form of God not be a possibility? □

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# FROM THE EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

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## IN SEARCH OF MEANING

**T**HE AUSTRIAN neurologist and psychiatrist Viktor Emil Frankl (1905–1997) authored a book in 1946, called *Man's Search for Meaning*. Many authors over the years have written books with similar titles. During more than three hundred years of the printing press, millions of books have been published in different languages. If a common title were to be suggested for these books, it would, without doubt, be: *In Search of Meaning*.

A human being, by nature, is a seeker of meaning. Everyone is born with an enquiring mind. Everyone tries to find the answer to the quest of finding the truth and meaning behind their existence. And, it is this quest which has resulted in the writing of so many books, both fiction and non-fiction. All are directly or indirectly related to the subject of the quest for truth.

When a person reaches the age of maturity, his first concern is earning his livelihood. He opts for various kinds of jobs or engages in different types of economic activity. When he becomes engaged in some work, he goes through a period of satisfaction. Then, gradually, a time comes when he realizes that his job is not giving him what he had been in search of. Certainly, he gets his "bread", but as Jesus Christ rightly said: "Man does not live by bread alone." (Matthew 4: 4) To earn one's "bread" is everyone's first need. But bread can satisfy only one's physical requirements; it fails to give any intellectual satisfaction, or add meaning to one's life. This is the main cause of frustration and despair experienced by almost everyone today.

Every person, consciously or unconsciously, yearns to know how he came into existence. Everyone tries to understand the meaning of his existence in this world. There are few who have not frequently reflected on existence. When a person is born, he immediately finds himself in a world with a life-support system which he did not bring into existence. He then thinks that nature potentially had an entire technology hidden in it. Man later discovered and developed this technology to create the civilization we see around us.

***Man's search for meaning and truth, questions about death and beyond can find fulfilment under a single phenomenon that in religious terms may be called "God".***

Thus, man questions himself: Who is behind this living drama? What is the relationship between me and that super-artist? Then, there is the question of death, the most enigmatic question of all: Why does man die and what lies beyond?

Man's search for meaning and truth, questions about death and beyond can find fulfilment under a single phenomenon that in religious terms may be called "God". If we accept this term, we can say that, in fact, everyone is in search of God. It is God who gives meaning to all phenomena, because, after finding God, everything falls into place.

Everyone, knowingly or unknowingly, is in search of God. During this search he runs towards various things, but when they come within his reach, he very soon realizes that he has not found the answer to his search.

'God' is not something which one finds from external sources. It is a matter of self-discovery. God can only be discovered by an individual himself. It is only the self-discovered God that can give you conviction. If you want to make your life meaningful, you have to take up this question on a priority basis. It is your own study and contemplation through which you can discover God. The sign of truly discovering God is that when you find Him, you will feel at peace with yourself and with the universe, like a little boy in the arms of his mother.

The process of search has only one condition to it, and that is, sincerity. Jesus Christ has said: "The one who seeks finds." (Matthew 7: 8) This is not a religious saying; rather it describes a law of nature. One who is truly sincere in his search will certainly reach his goal. □

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# LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

## *Realizing a Limitless God*

**S**INCE the past five hundred years, the scientific study of the universe has been underway. Numerous great minds have been involved in research and findings related to the universe. The final outcome of these studies has revealed that the cosmos is so vast and expansive that it is well-nigh impossible for the human mind to fully encompass it. A recent study estimates that human knowledge has been able to fathom only 4 percent of the universe. All the stars, planets and galaxies that can be seen today make up just 4 percent of the universe. The other 96 percent is made of stuff that cannot be seen, detected or understood.

With respect to this 4 percent, a scientist has acknowledged that the more we discover, the more we come to understand that even those phenomena we have discovered are yet fully undiscovered. In other words, it is said that we know more and more about less and less.

Knowledge of God is equivalent to knowledge of the Creator. However, experience shows that humans have been able to discern only a meagre 4 percent of the creation of this Creator. In this scenario, for a person to demand that he be provided absolute knowledge of the Creator is undoubtedly unscientific. If humans have not been able to acquire thorough knowledge of the creation, how can they have conclusive knowledge about the Creator?

Creation lies within space and time, while the Creator exists beyond space and time. If the mind is so confined as to be unable to encompass that which lies within space and time, how can it comprehend that which lies beyond the realm of space and time?

The truth is that in this world a person can discover God only at the level of his helplessness and not at the level of absolute knowledge. □

*If the mind is so confined as to be unable to encompass that which lies within space and time, how can it comprehend that which lies beyond the realm of space and time?*



# A MOST EVIDENT MYSTERY

## *Existence Explained*

**I**T IS STRANGE to believe that there is a God, but not to believe in God is even stranger. Therefore, it is better to prefer the less strange to the more strange.

What everyone is most convinced of, is their own existence. Despite this, in purely scientific terms everyone is a mystery. For man is not what he physically appears to be, but consists of what he calls "I", and the "I" is not observable.

Philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650), to give proof of his own existence did not say: "I consist of a body that is observable, therefore I exist." Instead he said: "I think, therefore I am." By applying the same logic, one can say, 'I am, therefore, God is.' That is, one can say that when a creature exists, the application of simple logic is enough for one to believe that there is a Creator.

***The truth is that  
God's being  
comprehensible is an  
undeniable proof of  
His existence. If we  
deny God, we shall  
have to deny our own  
selves.***

Man undoubtedly has an observable existence. We all know that man exists. But, in fact, this existence is at the level of "I", and the cognizance of "I" is at the level of perception or comprehension, and not at the level of observation.

Exactly the same is true of God. It is as if God is a greater "I". God at the level of His creation is directly observable. But God at the level of His Being is not directly observable by man.

We shall have to believe in God on the basis of the same logical principle which Descartes employed to know himself, and on the basis of which all of us believe in our own existence.

*I can comprehend God; therefore God exists.*

The truth is that God's being comprehensible is an undeniable proof of His existence. If we deny God, we shall have to deny our own selves. Since we cannot countenance our own denial, we cannot countenance God's denial either. Everyone who believes in his own existence is logically compelled to say, "*I exist; therefore, God exists.*" □



# WHO CREATED GOD?

## *Reasons to Believe*

**A** COMMON argument from sceptics and atheists is that if all things need a cause, then God must also need a cause. They question, “Who made God? Something does not come from nothing, so if God is a “something”, then He must have a cause?”

Another form of the argument is: “If we believe that the universe was created by God—a Creator, then we must believe that God also has a Creator, and so on.... In this way there will be an endless series of Creators. Hence, isn’t it better to believe that this universe came about without a Creator?”

Such questions are inherently flawed because God, by definition, is not in the category of things that are created or caused. God is uncaused and uncreated—He simply exists.

How do we know this? We know that from nothing, nothing comes. So, if there was ever a time when there was absolutely nothing in existence, then nothing would have ever come into existence. But things do exist. Since there could never have been absolutely nothing, something had to have always been in existence. That ever-existing thing is what we call God. God is the uncaused Being that caused everything else to come into existence. God is the uncreated Creator who created the universe and everything in it. God is beyond space, time and the principle of causation.

*If we are ready  
to accept and  
acknowledge creation  
or the universe  
without a creator,  
then why can we not  
accept a God without  
a creator?*

People who reject God, however, continue to acknowledge and appreciate the universe we live in. If we are ready to accept and acknowledge creation or the universe without a creator, then why can we not accept a God without a creator?

Direct observational evidence for a Creator is impossible like for many other scientific facts. It is neither with those who believe in a God nor with those who deny God. However, indirect evidence of God is ubiquitous in nature and the universe is a valid reason and argument for belief in God. Some of those evidences are presented briefly here.

## Origin of Matter, Space and Time

It has been established that time and space had a coincident beginning. The universe was created from nothing through or after a 'Big Bang'. The discovery of the 'Big Bang' is proof that time, space and matter are temporal and not eternal. The universe appears to be an effect and, thus, is seemingly dependent upon something outside of and beyond itself (a transcendent causal agent). The universe therefore, implies the need for a Creator or Originator outside of space-time. The following is a very interesting paragraph from a lecture by Stephen Hawking:

***God is the uncaused Being that caused everything else to come into existence. God is the uncreated Creator who created the universe and everything in it.***

"Events before the Big Bang, are simply not defined, because there's no way one could measure what happened at them. This kind of beginning to the universe, and of time itself, is very different to the beginnings that had been considered earlier. These had to be imposed on the universe by some external agency. There is no dynamical reason why the motion of bodies in the solar system cannot be extrapolated back in time, far beyond four thousand and four BC, the date for the

creation of the universe, according to the book of Genesis. Thus, it would require the direct intervention of God, if the universe began at that date. By contrast, the Big Bang is a beginning that is required by the dynamical laws that govern the universe. It is therefore intrinsic to the universe, and is not imposed on it from outside." (*The Beginning of Time*)

Even if we refuse to accept a 'God', reason demands that we acknowledge a Prime Mover or a power that caused the universe to happen. How can we acknowledge the universe and fail to acknowledge the cause of the universe? Feigning ignorance like many people do is turning a 'blind eye' or 'looking the other way'.

## Order and Design in the Universe

After the Big Bang, the delicate balance of uniformity and irregularity in the inflationary expansion of the universe, the balance of matter, dark energy and dark matter that is responsible for keeping the universe stable as it expands, the perfectly tuned cosmological constant, hydrogen and carbon formation, the sun's luminosity, the forces and laws in nature, the value of the various constants that determine the nature of nature, and a million other features of the universe demonstrate order and intelligent design.

This in itself establishes direction and purpose in the formation of the universe and consequently these are evidences for a Designer, Director and Prime Mover.

Many physicists, cosmologists and scientists have acknowledged this fact. For instance, Paul Davies says, "I concede that the universe at least appears to be designed with a high level of ingenuity. I cannot accept these features as a package of marvels which just happen to be, which exist reasonlessly. It seems to me that there is a genuine scheme of things—the universe is 'about' something."

### **Fine-tuning for Life**

Our unique planet Earth has been fine-tuned and custom-designed for intelligent life—the Earth's atmosphere, the Earth's magnetosphere, Earth's geophysical history, water, vegetation, its position in the solar system, its galaxy, its orbit, rotational axis, its satellite and a million other features evidently prove this.

How can such a formidably complex system of the universe come about without a creative intelligence behind it? How can we refuse to believe in an Organizer of an organized universe? The most elegant, comprehensible and simple explanation for this reality is only possible by accepting an intelligent mind responsible for it. This intelligent mind designed a rational, ordered universe that produces intelligent beings capable of understanding that universe.

God especially designed and crafted, through miraculous means, planet Earth, so that it would support life and human beings. The Earth is a product of divine design.

Physicist Lawrence Krauss in his book, *A Universe from Nothing: Why There Is Something Rather Than Nothing*, treats the question of "First Cause" as a serious argument against God:

Ultimately, many thoughtful people are driven to the apparent need for First Cause, as Plato, Aquinas, or the modern Roman Catholic Church might put it, and thereby to suppose some divine being: a creator of all that there is, and all that there ever will be, someone or something eternal and everywhere.

***Many physicists, cosmologists and scientists have acknowledged that direction and purpose in the formation of the universe are evidences for a Designer, Director and Prime Mover.***

Nevertheless, the declaration of a First Cause still leaves open the question, “Who created the creator?” After all, what is the difference between arguing in favour of an eternally existing creator versus an eternally existing universe without one?

Krauss’s argument is not a very good objection because God, unlike the universe, is the sort of First Cause that accounts for His own existence. God is an infinite being, the Creator of time and space. It makes sense to say that He always existed, since He’s necessarily infinite. But the universe is not infinite, it is bound by time and space, and it had a beginning.

***God especially designed and crafted, through miraculous means, planet Earth, so that it would support life and human beings. The Earth is a product of divine design.***

Now, what if the questioner accepts that the universe had a beginning, but not that it needs a cause? Nevertheless, it is self-evident that things that begin have a cause—no one really denies it in his heart. All science and history would collapse if this law of cause and effect were denied. The universe cannot be self-caused. It did not become a reality all by itself. Nothing can create itself, because that would mean it existed before it came into existence, which is logically not possible.

As Aristotle cogently argued, there must be a reality that causes but is itself uncaused (or, a being that moves but is itself unmoved). Why? Because if there is an infinite regression of causes, then by definition the whole process could never begin. And nothing is explained.

In conclusion, the choice before us is not between ‘the universe with God’, and ‘the universe without God’. We must choose between ‘the universe with God’ and ‘no universe at all’. As we cannot opt for the proposition “no universe at all”, since the universe is too obvious a fact for us to deny its existence, therefore we have no option but to accept the proposition of “the universe with God.” □



# LIKENESS OF GOD

## *Towards Realization of God*

**A** LIKENESS of God is to be found in man, for is not the existence of man a proof of the existence of God? What is the nature of God? He is a living, self-sufficient Being, with a mind that is all-knowing, eyes that are all-seeing and ears that are all-hearing. His power is of such infinitude that it reaches every corner of the universe, and no object of His will is too great or too small to escape its force. And quite independent of all objects of creation, God has His ego.

Man may not, like God, be omniscient and omnipotent, but he certainly thinks, sees, hears, has a will, acts of his own volition and understands quite precisely what is meant by the 'ego'—the 'I'. To believe in God is to have faith in a higher form of the 'I'. Man's experience of himself, his attributes, his characteristics, make it possible for him to apprehend the eternal Being who possesses these very attributes and characteristics, but to a superlative degree. This is the Being whom we call God.

If one is sure of one's own existence, why should one not be sure of the existence of God? Here am 'I', sitting in one place, observing the universe. Why, then, should there not be a Being greater than I am, situated elsewhere in the universe, watching over it? We, ourselves direct the movements of machines in outer space by means of remote control, so why should we have any difficulty in accepting that there is a God who controls the universe by His own invisible system? Man metes out punishments and gives rewards according to his own concept of justice, so why should there not be an all-powerful God who administers reward and retribution according to his own, unique concept of justice? This is alluded to in both the Christian and Islamic traditions:

God created man in His own image. (*Genesis 1: 27*)

The Prophet of Islam said:

God created man in His Own image. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*)

Indeed, believing in God is no different from believing in one's own self. It is no more difficult for man to accept the existence of God than it is for him to accept his own existence. Belief in God is doubtless an extraordinary feat of the intelligence, but it is no more extraordinary than believing in man. Once one has accepted one such extraordinary phenomenon, what is there to prevent one from accepting another? □

# THE GLORIOUS GOD OF A GLORIOUS UNIVERSE

*Expression of God's Existence*

**S**TUDIES in astronomy show that the stars in the universe are more numerous than all of the sand grains on all the seashores of our planet. Many of the stars are vastly greater in size than our sun, some even being of such enormous girth that they could accommodate hundreds of thousands of suns inside them and still have room to spare. There are many other mysterious objects in the universe more massive than a million suns. The universe is not static, but is expanding at an incredible rate, every moment in all directions. Man has yet to comprehend the vastness of the universe.

*By nature, man  
desires an absolute  
and perfect God.*

Research has found that the laws of nature within our universe are perfectly 'fine-tuned' for life on Earth. The meaning and significance of the universe, the planning behind it and the incomparable design within it, all point towards the existence of a supremely intelligent God that created the universe and who controls, sustains and cherishes it.

Our universe does indeed declare the glory of God.

When we ponder upon the realities of our existence and the glorious universe around us, then two intense emotions develop within us:

- The emotion of gratitude and indebtedness
- Humility and the acknowledgement of our helplessness

By nature, man's condition demands that there must be a benefactor to him in this universe. If we were only to open our eyes and observe the incredibly vast universe around us, then we will find that we are an extremely insignificant and helpless creation within it.

In such a universe, when man observes his own petty self, he feels totally helpless; more helpless than the ant that struggles to save itself when caught between ocean waves. Man, involuntarily desires that someone, who can be a benefactor to him in this vast universe. He seeks the refuge of a Being more powerful than the powers of the universe so that he could come under His protection and feel safe and secure.



In the present day, nationalism, political power, ethnicity and other such affiliations are nothing but different projections presented to satisfy this innate desire of Man. But this is just like presenting a statue to satisfy the desire of one who is seeking a life partner.

Man is in search of one such Being who has power and control over the entire universe. The answer to this desire cannot be found in any geographical location. To be the focus of his affections, man desires only such a Being who is the Creator of the heavens and the Earth. By nature, man desires an absolute and perfect God.

Although, God does not appear before us, His creation in the form of this glorious universe is spread all around us. We can see it; we can experience it. In such a case, man can only be satisfied with a God so exalted that this glorious universe testifies to His glory. A God who in reality is found to be the Creator and Lord of this glorious universe. A God any lower in stature than this can never appeal to the mind of man. Until man finds such a God, his search will continue. Any other object can never satisfy this desire.

***Man desires a God  
he can trust, who will  
grant him success  
after every disaster,  
who can remove all  
difficulties from his  
path.***

A sense of deprivation human beings feel in the midst of abundance is due to the fact that they have disconnected themselves from God. Man experiences a shortcoming in his quest for subsistence. Today, we fail to find true happiness on the face of man in spite of the accumulation of all his desires. Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) begins his book, *The Conquest of Happiness*, with the following lines:

Animals are happy so long as they have health and enough to eat. Human beings, one feels, ought to be, but in the modern world they are not, at least in a great majority of cases.

This is because modern civilization with its grand successes has only been able to garner a small portion of what man desires. It has accumulated the requirements of the 'body', but has failed in garnering anything for the 'soul'.

Man seeks meaningfulness, but modern civilization can only offer him material structures made of steel and stone. Man desires life, but modern civilization can only give him a lifeless statue in the mould of a man. Man desires satisfaction for his heart and mind, but modern civilization places him in a soulless, mechanical vehicle. Man desires to

meet the Creator of this universe so that he could prostrate before his Benefactor, but nowhere can he find this Benefactor in the world that modern science and technology has created. Unable to find his true God, he bows down before assumed, fabricated gods. But this is just like a mother, who unable to bear a child takes a plastic doll and holds it close to her bosom. In the words of the Quran:

All those you worship instead of Him are mere names you and your forefathers have invented, names for which God has sent down no authority: all power belongs to God alone, and He orders you to worship none but Him: this is the true faith, though most people do not realize it. (12: 40)

Man's need for a supreme God is so intense that it is acknowledged by even those intellectuals who in accordance to their tastes do not approve of the existence of God and religion. For example, Bertrand Russell writes:

If life is to be fully human, it must serve some end which seems in some sense outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind such as God or truth or beauty. (*Principles of Social Reconstruction*)

This is an acknowledgement of the innate urge for a God embedded in human nature. By denying the existence of God, modern man has forsaken his Creator. His salvation now lies only in once again finding God, his Creator. The concept of God is interwoven in man's nature.

The instinct of eating grass in a goat and of eating meat in a cat cannot be suppressed; in the same way, God cannot be detached from man's nature.

***By nature, man's condition demands that there must be a benefactor to him in this universe.***

Man's life has been fashioned in such a way that he continuously lives in a feeling of dependency. This feeling of helplessness is characteristic of every human being. It forces man to clutch onto a support that is more powerful than him; one that can deliver him

from his weakness. It is this feeling of helplessness that drives man in his search for God. Man needs such a God before whom he can pour out his feelings of gratitude; to whom he can entrust all his affairs; in whose faith he will find succour even at times when there is no one to help him. Man desires a God he can trust, who will grant him success after every disaster, who can remove all difficulties from his path. Man's

feeling of helplessness can never be overcome unless he discovers this God.

There are some religions that present many Gods; but this runs completely against the natural desire of man. This is because the desire for a God, is the desire for such a Being that can be made the focus of his affection, and the focus of his affection can only and always be one, not more than one. Some other religions present God in the form of a vague spirit; but man desires a God who can see; a God who can hear and one who answers.

Some religions present a man in the form of God; but the God that man desires, can only be that God, who is greater than his own kind. A God, who is just like man, cannot be a God worthy of worship. A God like this is very small in comparison to this glorious universe.

An American scientist and professor, Walter Oscar Lundberg, has presented an interesting example. In the book *'The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe'*, he writes, "The professional scientist has one special advantage over others, if he will but use it, in understanding the reality of God. The fundamental principles on which the methodology of his profession is based, are, in essence, an expression of God's existence."

In spite of this why do people with a scientific education deny God? According to the American professor, this is because of two reasons, the primary one being:

In organized Christianity, there is instilled deeply in young people a concept of God created in the image of man, rather than of man created in the image of God. When such minds are later trained in science, this reversed and limiting anthropomorphic concept gradually becomes more and more incompatible with the rational, inductive attitude of science. Ultimately, when all attempts at reconciliation fail, (...), the concept of God may be abandoned entirely. The accompanying disillusionment and other psychological consequences discourage any thought of embracing a new concept.

***Our universe does indeed declare the glory of God. Now it is for man to discover this glorious God.***

Islam is not a new religion. In reality and in their origins, Islam and all other religions were the same. However, due to changes over long periods of time, the original and true concept of God could not be

preserved in other religions. In contrast, the Quran is an authentic and preserved book. This is the very reason that it presents God in an authentic and true form. The God that the Quran introduces us to is the One God. He is the Lord of all forms of powers. He was always there and will always remain. He has no partners. He alone created the whole universe. He is the glory of this universe and He alone controls and supports the entire universe. He sees, hears and speaks. He is always ready and present to stand by anyone that calls Him; man can communicate with Him at all times and at all places. Everything is in His power and control; He is the succour for man in his life before death and also in man's life after death.

Our universe does indeed declare the glory of God. Now it is for man to discover this glorious God. □



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# GOD, THE GREATEST

## *Artistry and Precision in the Universe*

**T**HE DISTINGUISHED British-Lebanese mathematician, Sir Michael Francis Atiyah (d. 2019), said that God is a mathematician. Similarly, Nobel Prize winning physicist, Paul Dirac has said, 'God is a mathematician of a very high order.' This idea is not new. Over fifty years ago, English physicist and mathematician, Sir James Jeans suggested that the universe was handiwork of a mathematician. Centuries before him Pythagoras said that all things are numbers. To Picasso, God was an artist. 'God is really another artist,' he said. 'He invented the giraffe, the elephant and the cat.' Einstein once said that 'the Lord is subtle and – though not malicious – is very clever.'

One who observes the universe is confronted with the awesome feeling that there is a being greater than himself at work here. A mathematician comes across such complex mathematics as to make him aware of the triviality of his grasp of the subject. 'God is a great mathematician!' he exclaims. To an artist, the art displayed in the universe appears so sublime as to make his art seem worthless and he spontaneously cries out, 'God is the greatest artist!' The wisdom prevailing in the universe is such as to astonish a genius; he in turn discovers that there is a genius far greater than him at work.

***God's might is indeed manifest in a thousand ways, but it is only those who open their minds and hearts to Him who can be truly aware of His blessings***

The truth is that God is the greatest mathematician, the greatest artist and the greatest genius. When one observes the sublimity of the details in the grand design of the universe, they are wonder-struck. One, then, cannot fail to recognize God's wisdom, knowledge and infinite might. One who fails to find the manifestations of God in the universe is blind. One who does not believe in God after having seen Him is insensate.

God's might is indeed manifest in a thousand ways, but it is only those who open their minds and hearts to Him who can be truly aware of His blessings. □



# GOD: A SOURCE OF CONVICTION

## *Compensation for One's Weakness*

**T**HE MOVEMENT of the stars and planets in the endless space appears astonishingly strange to behold. An unbelievable number of vast balls of fire called stars are moving with great speed. Amidst these astral bodies, the Earth appears no more than a grain of sand.

It is an awesome experience to witness this constant motion of the stars and planets. One can also see unbelievably enormous masses of heavenly bodies countless in number, racing about amidst which the planet Earth appears like a little speck. All of this so astounds us that compared to this, our own existence appears to be totally insignificant.

This spectacle of the universe leads to the discovery of two important things. First, the existence of an All-Powerful God, who is its Creator as well as its Sustainer. If one can bring to mind this scene of the massive universe, one's heart will testify that the universe itself is a proof of its Creator. And, secondly, the utter helplessness of man. God is an indispensable need of man. Without God, man's very existence is impossible. When one discovers this reality, one would race towards God and call out wholeheartedly, "God! Please help me! Without You, nothing is possible for me."

*In this vast universe, it is God who is man's support. He alone can help us cross this river of life and lead us to the other shore safely.*

In this vast universe, it is God who is man's support. He alone can help us cross this river of life and lead us to the other shore safely. Belief in God is everything for man. Without this belief, man is nothing at all.

Each one of us, in our daily life, feels the same utter helplessness that we experience when we observe the vast universe. Each one of us repeatedly goes through experiences that lead us to realize our severe limitations.

Very often, we do not get what we want. Situations arise in our lives that compel us to feel completely helpless. In addition to this, fear of loss, sickness, accidents, old age and death tell us that we are utterly dependent on a force that is infinitely greater than us, and that without the help of this infinitely superior power, we simply cannot succeed. This realization is a psychological proof of God's existence. Every person necessarily encounters this psychological experience. Every person finds within, a firm proof of God's existence.

For each one of us, our nature is continuously calling out to us, telling us that we need God, that without God, our life cannot be complete, and that without God's help, we can never be truly successful. Man's position is further illustrated by the following example.

A hundred years ago, a ship sailed from the coast of America towards Africa. When the ship was far out in the open sea, a severe storm broke out, making it heave and shudder. The passengers were all shaken and in a state of great fear and anxiety. At this time of crisis, one of the passengers noticed a little girl in a corner on the deck playing with her dolls, quite undisturbed by the storm. Seeing her, he got curious and asked, "Do you know what is happening to our ship?"

The girl asked, "What is the matter?"

The passenger told her that the ship was caught in a dangerous storm.

The girl calmly replied: "You know, my father is the captain of this ship. He is not going to let it sink."

The girl's faith in her father saved her from being a victim of fear at this crucial moment. The same is true of a person of faith. He has the same childlike faith in his Creator, God Almighty. But this is a faith of far greater intensity. When catastrophe threatens, he can say with much stronger conviction that God Almighty is the captain of the ship of his life. He will never let it sink under any circumstance. □

*Our nature is continuously calling out to us, telling us that we need God, that without God, our life cannot be complete, and that without God's help, we can never be truly successful.*



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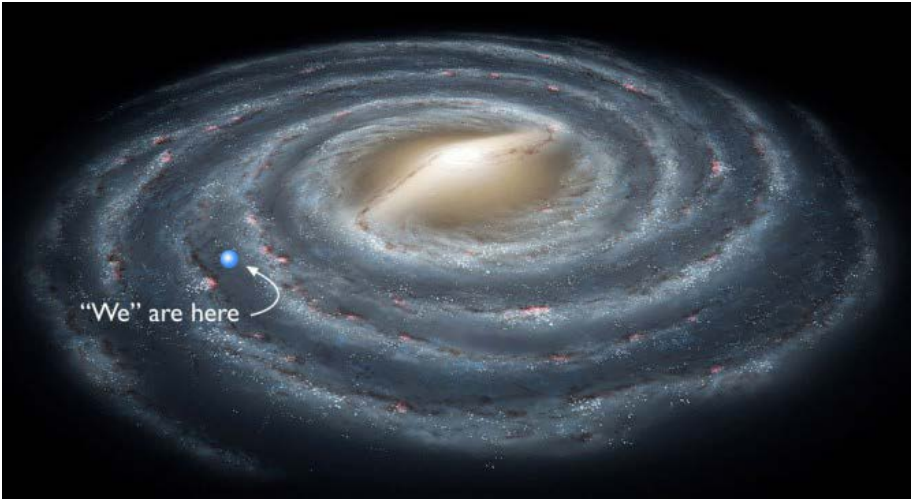


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# THE GALAXY SPEAKS ABOUT ITS CREATOR

*How Great Thou Art!*

**A**CCORDING to a recent study, the Milky Way is at least 50% bigger than previously estimated. Research conducted by an international team at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the US has established the presence of a bulging ring of stars beyond the known plane of the Milky Way. Their findings show that the features previously identified as rings are actually part of the galactic disk, extending across the known width of the Milky Way from 100,000 light years<sup>1</sup> to 150,000 light years.



Our galaxy, the Milky Way, is a unique astronomical phenomenon of which our Solar System is only a tiny part. Until the early 1920s, most astronomers thought that the Milky Way contained all the stars in the universe. Edwin Hubble in the early 1920s with his new telescope was able to produce astronomical photographs that resolved the outer parts of some spiral nebulae as collections of individual stars. A nebula is a giant cloud of dust and gas in space. He was also able to conclusively estimate the distance to the nebulae and found that they were far too distant to be part of the Milky Way.

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<sup>1</sup> Light year = distance that light can travel in one year = 9,500,000,000,000 kilometres.



The Milky Way, a disc-shaped barred spiral galaxy, is estimated to contain 100–400 billion stars. The Solar System is located within the disk, about 27,000 light-years from the Galactic Centre, on the inner edge of one of the spiral-shaped concentrations of gas and dust called the Orion Arm. The Sun is 25,000–28,000 light-years from the Galactic Centre. The Galactic Centre is marked by a concentration of mass best explained as a supermassive black hole with an estimated mass of 4.1–4.5 million times the mass of the Sun.

There are billions of other galaxies in the universe. The Milky Way has several satellite galaxies and together with the neighbouring Andromeda galaxy, it is part of the Local Group of galaxies, which is a component of the Virgo Supercluster, which is itself a component of the Laniakea Supercluster of galaxies.

*The Creator is truly great! He made such a vast universe, of which our galaxy is only a tiny part!*

If a person could be far away in space and have a telescope with which he could view the entire Milky Way, he would be able to see a mind-boggling spectacle. He would see that, in the vastness of space, there is a magnificent starry galaxy. It would take more than 3000 years to count the stars in the Milky Way at a rate of one star per second. On one spiral arm of this galaxy, our Solar System is situated. The planet Earth is part of this Solar System which, along with other planets, is continually revolving around the Sun. The Quran says: "God's throne extends over the heavens and the earth; and their upholding does not weary Him." (2: 255)

Such a spectacle of stunning proportions will compel the gazer to exclaim in wonderment: The Creator is truly great! He made such a vast universe, of which our galaxy is only a tiny part! □



# FROM THE SPIRITUAL TREE

*There is a tree beside my house. I call it the 'Spiritual Tree'. I derive spiritual inspiration from it. A tree is an ever-growing being that was initially a seed possessing the potential of becoming a full-grown tree. A seed takes food from the universe around it and then grows into a tree. The same is true with spirituality, the desire for which is intrinsic to, and an integral part of, the very nature of every human being. To realize this spirituality, man must derive spiritual food from the universe around him. A tree converts carbon-dioxide into oxygen; a spiritual person is one who can take positive lessons from negative situations. From this perspective, a tree is an embodiment of a spiritual personality. —Maulana Wahiduddin Khan*



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## LOVE OF GOD

**L**OVE of God is not simply a philosophical issue; it is rooted in the very nature of human beings. Love means a strong feeling of deep affection for somebody or something. Love is a natural phenomenon, an elevated kind of positive response towards someone. Love cannot be created in a vacuum, it requires a strong base of affection.

Love of God is this same kind of strong affection. The basis of this love is quite natural when one discovers that one was created by God and that it was God who has given humankind all such bounties as the planet Earth, the life-support system, oxygen, water and food. All these things were not created by man. They are precious gifts bestowed by someone else. When one discovers this fact, one naturally feels a profound love for God. Thus, love of God is the outcome of one's discovery of God's munificence.

Every sincere person reaches a stage in life when he faces some basic questions such as, how did I come into existence? How is it that I find myself in a world that is extremely favourable to me? One realizes that this compatibility between man and the rest of the universe is so

unique that science has observed that the universe has been custom-made for man. Love is in fact an acknowledgement of this fact. When we endeavour to acknowledge our super-benefactor, we call it love of God.

Although love is an inner feeling, it comes naturally to human beings to give it an external expression. It is said that man is a social animal, so it is but natural that one's inner love should also find some expression in terms of social relationships. It is this social expression of one's inner feeling that is called peace. In terms of God, love is a psychological acknowledgement of the Creator, and in terms of society, love is manifested in peaceful living among other members of society.

***When a person has love in his heart for his Creator, at the same time he cannot resist showing his love to his neighbours.***

It is not relevant to ask, if we cannot see God, how can we express our love towards Him? This contention may have been valid in the era before nuclear science, but after the emergence of nuclear science it is totally invalid. Nuclear science has successfully established that the physical world, in its last analysis, consists of unobservable subatomic particles. For example, everyone loves his mother, but in terms of modern science, no one is able to see his mother. One's mother, as well as other things, are nothing but a combination of numerous unobservable subatomic particles. In fact, 'mother' is an unobservable inner being whom we see with reference to her external body. Similarly, God is an unobservable being whom we see through His creation. In such a world, it is irrational to say that one cannot love God because one cannot observe Him. The fact is that if you receive some good things from anyone, you cannot do other than acknowledge his generosity. In this sense, love of God is a natural phenomenon.

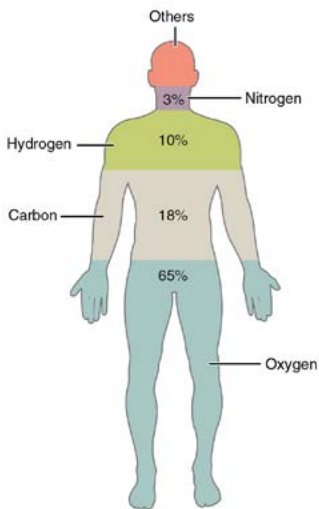
It is also a law of nature that if you add a pinch of dye to a glass of water, the dye pervades all of the water. This principle is also applicable in the case of love. When a person has love in his heart for his Creator, he cannot resist showing his love to his neighbours. And in this electronic age, the whole world is one's neighbour.

One can say that love has two dimensions: theoretical and practical. In terms of the theoretical dimension, love means deep affection for and gratitude to God and in terms of the practical or social dimension, love means feelings of fraternity and peace for all human beings. □

# WONDER OF WONDERS

## *Non-replicable Masterpiece*

**L**OOKING at the human body from a purely physical point of view, one finds that it is just made up of water, carbon, oxygen and some other chemical elements. 99% of the mass of the human body is made up of six elements: Oxygen, Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Calcium and Phosphorus. One can even work out the price of material constituents of the human body. According to calculations performed by *DataGenetics*, the market value of all the elements of a human body is about \$160.00, about ₹12,000 today.



Element	Symbol	Percentage in Body
Oxygen	O	65.0
Carbon	C	18.5
Hydrogen	H	9.5
Nitrogen	N	3.2
Calcium	Ca	1.5
Phosphorus	P	1.0
Potassium	K	0.4
Sulfur	S	0.3
Sodium	Na	0.2
Chlorine	Cl	0.2
Magnesium	Mg	0.1
Trace elements include boron (B), chromium (Cr), cobalt (Co), copper (Cu), fluorine (F), iodine (I), iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), molybdenum (Mo), selenium (Se), silicon (Si), tin (Sn), vanadium (V), and zinc (Zn).		less than 1.0

Yet out of 12,000 rupees worth of matter, God has created a human being so wonderful that no price can be set upon him. No amount of money can buy the priceless masterpiece that God has fashioned within the human frame.

One can appreciate the pricelessness of the human body when some part of it is lost. If one loses a hand, for instance, millions of dollars will not buy a new one like it. If one loses one's sight, all the wealth in the world will not win it back. If one's power of speech fails, there will be no tongue in the shops of the world which will put one's thoughts into words.

How incredible it is that God should fashion something so wonderful out of things of least monetary value. It is only God who can bring the dead to life; only He who has the power to convert insensate matter into conscious life, to make something out of nothing.

If a magician were to cast a spell on a stone, making it break into speech, everyone would be spellbound at this extraordinary feat. The feat which God has performed is one of much greater complexity. He has made the inanimate matter that constitutes man's body into a moving, talking, thinking human being. Yet God's feat does not cause people to wonder. How blind are those who can see the skill of a conjurer's magical feats, but not the infinitely greater feats of God. How ignorant are those who rush to become devoted disciples of anyone who performs tricks, without feeling any adoration for or attachment to the One who performs truly wondrous acts of creation.

*If only man were to truly discover God, he would become totally absorbed in the Lord's wondrous feats of creation.*

If only man were to truly discover God, he would become totally absorbed in the Lord's wondrous feats of creation. Everything in the world would appear to him as a remarkable sign of God's power and perfection. While dwelling in an earthly abode, he would see and feel nothing but the Lord on high. □



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# GOD: A RESPLENDENT BEING

*Source of Beauty and Goodness*

**G**OD is the source of all goodness. He can be seen everywhere. His existence is manifested in His creation throughout the universe. His power is evident in the form of light and heat. He converts matter into greenery and flowing water. His glory is made manifest in colour, taste and fragrance. Motion and magnetism are evidence of His strength.

Belief in a God of such perfection is more than just a dogma. It illuminates man's soul and enraptures his heart. If one relishes a delicious fruit, and goes into ecstasy on hearing a melodic tune, how then can one fail to be moved by the discovery of God, who is the fountainhead of all goodness.

***God is the source of all goodness. He can be seen everywhere. His existence is manifested in His creation throughout the universe.***

When one truly discovers God, He becomes like a fragrance which one savours, a delicious taste which one relishes, a spectacle which captivates one's vision, a melody which never ceases to thrill. God has created all these exquisite delights. His being is their treasure-house. Drawing close to God is like entering Paradise. It is like dwelling in a garden of exquisite beauty and fragrance, like being in the neighbourhood of the source of all light. The Quran says:

God is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light may be compared to a niche containing a lamp, the lamp inside a crystal of star-like brilliance lit from a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west. The [luminous] oil is as if ready to burn without even the fire touching it. Light upon light; God guides to His light whom He will. God draws such comparisons for humankind; God has full knowledge of everything. (24: 35) □



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# EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*From Creation to Creator*

ONE of the three astronauts who travelled in the Apollo 15 American spacecraft was Colonel James Irwin. In August 1972, he described the magic of that moment, when he set foot on the moon. It was an ecstatic experience, he said, to feel oneself in God's presence, to feel so close to Him that His greatness appeared before one's eyes.

Colonel Irwin did not look on his voyage to the moon as a voyage of mere scientific discovery; it had given him new spiritual life as well. He left NASA in 1972 to start the High Flight Foundation, a Colorado Springs based religious organization.

The moon was a new sight for Colonel Irwin. That is why, struck by its magnificence, he was able to experience there the presence of God. When he saw Earth from space he expressed his feelings saying, "Seeing this has to change a man; has to make a man appreciate the creation of God and the love of God."

Colonel Irwin's experience was not a unique one, for in truth all that God has created is so wonderful that one has only to gaze upon it to become lost in the wonders of what He has fashioned. The face of the Creator shines continually in the perfection of His creation.

***There is no greater discovery than the discovery of God, no greater realization than to feel Him everywhere. When this realization is awakened, everything becomes a reflection of His glory.***

In order to see God in His creation, we too have to look at everything—not as old and familiar—but as something new and exciting. We have to look at things as if we are seeing them for the first time.

There is no greater discovery than the discovery of God, no greater realization than to feel Him everywhere. When this realization is awakened, everything becomes a reflection of His glory. The sunshine will portray His light, the trees His beauty. One will feel His gentle touch in the winds as they caress one's body. As one prostrates oneself before Him, it will be as though one has cast oneself at His feet.

God is, indeed, everywhere, but only those who are blessed with vision can behold Him. □

# THE UNIVERSE DECLARES

## *Arguments for the Existence of God*

**T**HE CHRISTIAN Mission of Kerala published a booklet titled *Nature and Science Speak about God*. In this 28-page newspaper-sized book, scientific discoveries about the universe are mentioned to bring home the point that the existence of God is a fact that cannot be denied in any way.

The greatest evidence of God before us is His creation. Nature itself and our study of nature, both proclaim that there is one God who, in the infinity of His wisdom, has created and continues to sustain the universe.

Scorpions, fleas, and many other similar creatures of land and water combat and control their enemies by making use of their stings. At

***Whatever object you see in nature manifests intelligent design. The universe is not a random pile of garbage, but rather it exhibits tremendous purpose and discipline. Could this happen without a conscious plan?***

the tip of their sting is a very small aperture through which they inject a type of poison into their enemy's body. If this aperture was at the very end of the sting, it would be closed when the sting was inserted into the body. Moreover, the sting would not efficiently pierce the skin of the target. That is the reason the aperture is always a bit slanted like the hole in the doctor's syringe. This is to cite just one example of intelligent design. Whatever object you see in nature manifests such design. The universe is not a random pile of garbage, but rather it exhibits tremendous purpose and discipline. Could this come about without a conscious plan?

Termites build for themselves houses that are thousand times bigger than their size. If we try to build our homes in the same proportions, we will need to erect a mile-high wall. Termites can live in the wood and carve their homes inside. Studying their lives reveals many wonderful occurrences. To take just one example: Termites eat wood. After stone, wood is the most indigestible of all known materials, but it does not pose a problem for termites. They have specific jaws for the purpose, which not only serve as a saw and but also function as grinder. However, no matter how much the wood is ground, it will still remain wood, and will only induce indigestion rather than satisfy the need for food in the stomach. What is it, then, that helps termites? There



are many microorganisms in the intestines of the termite to facilitate this function. These microorganisms make certain alterations to the swallowed wood so that they can be digested and provide nourishment to the body. Who brings about this amazing arrangement?

Consider the structure of eggs. Each egg has seven different characteristics, all of which are so important that even if one of them is missing, the egg would not survive as an egg. The outer-shell made of limestone, the pores inside the shell that provide passage to the air, the thin membrane that surrounds the insides of the egg, the yolk and egg white forming the food of the hatching chicks inside the shell, the germ of the baby, the ligament that keeps the germ fixed in the right direction. Remove any one of these, and the egg will never become a nourishing place for the chicks. Is this aggregation of seven different things simply a coincidence?

“Coincidence” cannot explain the presence of these seven different things, which are found to be in precise and perfect condition. What is even more baffling is why are only these things accumulated in the egg by “coincidence”. Why not a leaf of a plant, some form of wood, a piece of stone, and thousands of such things that could have been contained inside, enter the shell? If any of such things were inside the shell, they would have destroyed the egg. The most perplexing thing is that when the chick is ready to get out of the egg, a small hard horn appears on its beak with which this ‘lump of flesh’ is able to break through the walls of its shell. After fulfilling its purpose, the horn falls off automatically a few days after the chick is born. How did such precision come about in the egg?

Ponder upon your own existence. How wonderful the human body is! Look at the brain. A telephone exchange that connects all the men, women and children of the planet at every moment; that continuously exchanges messages with them. If you can conjure up such a telephone exchange, you have only estimated a tiny bit of the incredibly complex system of the brain.

There are about a hundred billion nerve cells inside your brain. There are very fine wires coming out of each nerve cell and they are spread

***There are numerous things in the universe that would require an entire library just to name them, whereas in proportion, current human knowledge of the cosmos is minimal compared to the vastness of the universe. What we have yet to see, is much more than what we have seen.***

all over the body. They are called nerve fibres and function to conduct information in the form of electrical impulses to other cells, muscles and glands in the body. A system of information transmission on these thin fibres runs at a speed of about hundred kilometres per hour.

Look at the heart, a small organ about the size of the fist. It weighs no more than 200 grams, but this little pump of the human body runs continuously day and night. It pumps 100,000 times a day and sends about six litres of blood to the entire body every minute. The heart has been endowed with extraordinary capability for achieving this amazing performance.

***The term 'law of nature' simply expresses that things always come into existence under a certain principle and will always come into being in the same way. This does not indicate why something is happening?***

There are numerous things in the universe that would require an entire library just to list them. On the other hand, current human knowledge of the cosmos is miniscule compared to the vastness of the universe. What we have yet to see, is much more than what we have seen.

Did this brilliant workmanship, this complete planning, and this perfect intelligence happen by chance? Of course, sometimes an incident does happen by chance. For example, a gust of wind sometimes blows up a pollen of a red rose and puts it on a white rose, resulting in a yellow flower. But this kind of coincidence

can produce only partial and subtle changes. It can only account for this particular colour of the rose, not for the entire existence of the rose. Coincidence does not always explain why a particular type of system continues to be consistent. It does not explain why there is regularity and organization in our world. The process of "coincidence" will not keep repeating itself. It is not possible for coincidence to bring into existence today what transpired yesterday. Then why do all things always appear in the same form with total uniformity? Why are natural systems and laws so methodical, mathematical and regulated?

If some pieces of metal are tossed into the air, what are the probabilities that they would fall to the ground in the form of moulded typeface letter and upon falling, form some meaningful text on a page? If this cannot happen simply by chance, then why is it assumed that such a large world with such amazing features has come into being by chance? What academic argument could be put forth to prove a theory that could not be proven in a laboratory?

Another justification that materialist thinkers rely on is the term 'the law of nature'. "Why do chicks come out of the hen's egg in 21 days, whereas from the egg of the ostrich, the babies take 45 days to hatch?" There are a number of questions of this nature which are answered by the materialist simply as: "It is a law of nature." This does appear to be a justification, but in fact this answer only describes one incident. By using the words 'law of nature', we only acknowledge the order and function of the universe. These words do not explain why this discipline and performance is established in the first place. The term 'law of nature' simply expresses that things always come into existence under a certain principle and will always come into being in the same way. This does not indicate why something is happening? It does not state the cause of the incident, but only presents the picture of the event.

***Science has furnished us with many new insights. But whatever it offers is only a detail of a few events. Science has no answer for why they are happening.***

If you ask a doctor why the blood is red, he will reply that the blood contains minute red particles called red blood cells.

"True, but why are these particles red?"

"These particles contain a special substance called haemoglobin, which turns red when it absorbs oxygen in the lungs."

"Okay, but where do the red blood cells carrying haemoglobin come from?"

"They are prepared in your spleen."

"That's wonderful, doctor, but tell me how is it that blood, red blood cells, spleen and thousands of other things are organized in such a coherent way and act so unitedly that I can breathe, run, speak, and live."

"Ah! That is the law of nature."

"What is it that you call law of nature?"

"When I say 'nature', I mean the interplay of blind physical and chemical forces."

"But doctor, what causes these blind forces in nature to always act in a direction that leads them to a definite end? How do they organize their activities in such a way that a bird can fly, a fish can swim and a human being comes into existence with his unique abilities?"

“Don’t ask me, my friend. A doctor can only tell what is happening. He does not have the answer for the question: Why something is happening?”

This conversation aptly illustrates the reality of science. Indeed, science has furnished us with many new insights. But whatever it offers is only a detail of a few events. Science has no answer for why they are happening. How do the delicate organs of a fly work? Of course, science has told us a lot in this regard, but who is the one who thought that bees needed these delicate organs, and provided them with such fine skilfulness? To explain the order of the universe and its appropriateness, and to show why various kinds of blind forces act towards a particular end—what we need is something other than the presence of these powers. The description of a bed is not enough if we just throw a few words such as mattress, pillows and bedstead. A castle is the name given to a structure of millions of bricks and other things installed in their proper and ordered place. For any small organ of the human body

***The law of nature is a phenomenon of the universe. It is not a justification of the universe. It seeks justification for its own existence.***

to come into being, it is necessary that millions of atoms come together in a unique and special setting. Blind forces cannot always express this kind of purpose, they cannot create meaning and harmony within events.

Science does not tell us how or why the laws of nature came into being, how or why they continue to exist or why they cause the Earth and the heavens to function with such unflinching precision that, simply by observing them, it was possible to establish immutable scientific laws. The fact is that the law of nature is a phenomenon of the universe. It is not a justification of the universe. It seeks justification for its own existence. As Cecil Boyce Hamann says, ‘Nature does not explain, she is herself in need of an explanation.’

What this means is the existence of meaningfulness in something is clear evidence that there is a mind behind it. The germ of life (sperm cells) that is nourished in a male’s body is very similar to the other cells in the body, but it has a unique and remarkable feature very different from other cells. By attaching itself with a special egg cell of a female, it has the ability to bring into existence a completely new human being. How is it possible that two cells, each of which are raised in two completely different bodies, are capable of acting so amazingly

together? Can this event be explained without acknowledging the involvement of a creative mind?

Acknowledging the existence of a creative mind in the universe is not like accepting a baseless tradition. In fact, many of the inevitable conclusions from the discoveries of science lead us to this belief. Numerous scientific facts compel us to accept the existence of a driving force behind the universe. Just like the sound from the radio compels us to recognize the presence of radio waves, even though we do not see them. When sugar is added to the glass of water, it will dissolve in such a way that it will not be visible to the eyes. But by tasting it with your tongue, you can detect the presence of sugar in water. Similarly, God is not visible to the eyes, but when we study the world of our surroundings, our instinct and intuition cry out that there is God here, without whom the universe could not exist.

*The greatest evidence of God before us is His creation. Nature itself and our study of nature, both proclaim that there is one God who, in the infinity of His wisdom, has created and continues to sustain the universe.*

The fact is that the stupendous increase of human knowledge has not distanced man from God, but has brought man closer to Him. To doubt God's existence is merely to declare our ignorance. How definitive then are Pasteur's words:

A smattering of science turns people away from God.  
Much of it brings them back to Him. □



# BELIEF IN GOD

## *Form Vs Spirit*

**O**NE manner of seeing a tiger is in the museum as a dead, stuffed tiger. The other tiger is the one that you see in the jungle. The tiger in the museum is only the skin of a dead tiger that has been prepared, stuffed with cotton and mounted for display. It only appears to be a tiger, but is not the real animal. People only see this museum tiger for entertainment or for study. Nobody would feel the need to fear or run from such a tiger.

But the tiger in the jungle is a live tiger. It is a symbol of boundless power and majesty. When the tiger walks in the jungle, all other creatures stand in awe. When the tiger roars, the animals fall down in terror. Anyone who sees a live tiger in the jungle would tremble from head to toe losing all sense of awareness except fear. Such a person would not be anything like he was before seeing the tiger.

***A conscious belief in God arises from discovering God in all His powers. One who discovers God in such a manner cannot remain like he was before finding God.***

This example can be used to understand the matter of belief in God. Belief in God also can be of two types. One is a traditional belief in God. The other is a conscious, living belief in God.

A traditional belief in God is a lifeless belief. Such a belief does not move the soul of man. It does not cause any tremor in the personality. It does not create any palpitation in the heart. In a traditional belief in God, there is an admission of God, but there is no fear of God.

On the other hand, a conscious belief in God is a completely different matter. A conscious belief in God arises from discovering God in all His powers. One who discovers God in such a manner cannot remain like he was before finding God. After discovering God, his whole personality is shaken. His very soul is stirred with the intensity of fear. All other matters vanish from his mind leaving him concerned with only the issue of God.

A conscious belief in God and the fear of God are two integral concepts. You cannot separate the fear of God from a conscious belief in God. Where these two have been disconnected, then know that it is not a conscious belief in God but only a traditional belief, and a traditional belief in God is of no value. □

# QUEST FOR LIFE IN SPACE

## *A Misplaced Quest*

**F**OR SEVERAL decades now, scientists have been carrying out an extraordinary kind of research—listening for life in space. SETI or The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence is a collective term for scientific searches for intelligent extraterrestrial life, for example, monitoring electromagnetic radiation for signs of transmissions from civilizations on other planets. In 2015, the noted theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking announced a 100 million dollar hunt for alien life that would comprise of a 10-year international search effort for intelligent civilizations beyond our solar system.

Mr. Hawking said at the same conference, “We believe that life arose spontaneously on Earth, so in an infinite universe there must be other occurrences of life.” Space flights, therefore, also aim, among other things, at contacting those forms of life. Such an assumption has led to the conviction that an extraterrestrial civilization exists. In addition to space flights, huge antennas have been set up in the USA and other developed countries. These antennae are called radio ears. They serve to send and receive signals from outer space. Extremely sensitive instruments have also been installed with an aim to receive the expected signals.

It appears that the modern theory of evolution has given rise to this quest. The explanations furnished to prove the evolutionary concept of life presuppose the existence of life forms in some parts of outer space resembling the life forms on Earth.

***The truth of the matter is that the existence of a living man is evidence of living God.***

The cell is the fundamental unit of life, and the DNA of a single-celled animal contains enough information to fill a volume of an encyclopedia while the information in the RNA and the rest of the cell can fill an entire library. All that information has to be in the right order for the cell to function. Carl Sagan, one of the founders of SETI said that “A single message from outer space would prove there was intelligent life on other planets,” but how is it that an entire library of information inside the most simple cell doesn’t prove that intelligence put it there?

The existence of life and consciousness is a unique and exceptional phenomenon in the whole universe. Since this consciousness could

***How is it that an entire library of information inside the most simple cell doesn't prove that intelligence put it there?***

never have come into being by itself, it necessarily involves, therefore, the existence in space of life and consciousness on a greater plane—the source of life on Earth. In this way, modern science clearly indicates the possibility of a Creator.

Yet, man's existence is being sought to be explained away in terms simply of there being some life forms in space—forms resembling ours but not necessarily superior, just another form of civilization, and not a Lord or Creator. Whereas the truth of the matter is that the existence of living man is evidence of living God. □



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# TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE

*We often talk of peace in the context of war. But this is a very narrow and restricted notion of peace. Peace is deeply linked with the entirety of human life. Peace is a complete ideology in itself. Peace is the only religion for both—man and the universe. It is the master-key that opens the doors to every success. Peace creates a favourable atmosphere for success in every endeavour. Without peace, no positive action—small or big—is possible.*



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## SPEAKING OF GOD TODAY

**N**ATURE is a creation of God, and as such is a divine mirror. It serves as a reflection of divine attributes. In ancient times, man's knowledge of nature was very limited. It was, therefore, not possible for man to have a profound understanding of God. In modern times, the position is quite different. The known facts about natural phenomena have increased exponentially, and with the spread of education man has far greater access to information than was ever hitherto possible. That is why today the possibility of the intellectual realization of God has increased manifold. A philosopher once aptly summed up this changed state of affairs with the observation, "A smattering of knowledge turns people away from God. Much of it brings them back to Him."

*Nature is a creation of God, and as such is a divine mirror. It serves, therefore, as a reflection of divine attributes.*

It is the same point which was expressed 1400 years ago in the form of a prophecy in the Quran:

"We shall show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the Truth."

(41: 53)

This prediction has been entirely fulfilled in modern times. It has been demonstrated by the scientific revolution of the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries. The discovery of facts today by scientific research is akin to removing the veil of ignorance which prevented humankind from seeing the face of God. This has been expressed by a scientist in these words:

“Nature and science speak about God.”

The world discovered by science is so unique that it cannot be explained without accepting the existence of God. In former times, people used to ask, “If God created the universe, who created God?” Questions such as these have now become meaningless, because they are irrelevant. In view of the new scientific findings it has become possible for us to assert that, in this world, the option is not between the universe with God and the universe without God. The real option is between the universe with God, and no universe at all.

***The world discovered by science is so unique that it cannot be explained without the acceptance of God.***

We cannot refute the existence of the universe; therefore, we cannot refute the existence of God as well. It has to be conceded that the concept of God is linked with the universe exactly as the concept of an engineer is linked with the concept of a great machine. If we believe in the existence of the machine, we shall inevitably have to believe in the engineer who created it.

God is a reality, albeit invisible. He does not come under our direct observation and experience. Hence His existence can be proved only by inferential or indirect argument, for direct argument in this case is not possible.

It was previously held that the subject of God was a matter of dogma, pertaining only to accepted creeds. Therefore, it was a topic neither for academic debate nor for logical, scientific analysis. Now, however, the situation has totally changed. Scientific discoveries have shown that the atom is not a material entity at all, but waves of electrons, waves which are invisible. We cannot observe the electrons themselves, but only their indirect effects.

Advances in human knowledge of the material world brought about a number of changes, one of these being a revision of the principles of the science of logic. In the age of Newton, only direct argument was held to be valid in logic. But in the new age ushered in by Einstein, it came to be established that indirect argument or inferential argument was logically as acceptable as direct argument.

The objections raised by atheists to the holding of religious beliefs seemed to carry any weight only so long as human knowledge was confined to the level of the macroworld. But when human knowledge, making a great leap forward, made its entry into the microworld, atheistic suppositions were totally demolished. It was because, unlike the macroworld, the microworld was unobservable. Now a whole range of realities had come within the scope of man's knowledge which are neither observable nor measurable. Therefore, the only kind of argument which was applicable to them was the indirect argument.

This academic revolution brought about a paradigm shift in the science of logic. By admitting that indirect or inferential argument was logically as valid as direct argument, it became possible for the concept of God to be proved by exactly the same kind of reasoning as is applied in the various branches of science.

One of the ineluctable features of this world is its uncertainty. That is why every individual, young or old, rich or poor, finds oneself helpless at one time or another in the face of the circumstantial and environmental factors which are pitted against him. This uncertainty has not decreased, but has rather increased in the wake of modern revolutions. That is why the unrest found in the peoples of ancient times is greatly on the rise today. It is significant too that, as compared with the past, the number of suicides is greatly on the increase.

***The real option is between the universe with God, and no universe at all. As we cannot refute the existence of the universe, we cannot refute the existence of God as well.***

To be able to stand fast in this world, every person requires a concept which, at all times and in all places, will be an unending source of hope and confidence to him. Such an eternal concept cannot be other than that of God. Indeed, since ancient time, the only solution for man has been to have faith in an all-powerful Supreme Being. Throughout the ages this has served as a fountainhead of courage and strength for human beings, and will remain so forever.

The greatest and most basic social requirement of humankind is peace. This is vital for any kind of human progress, for without peace viable social structures cannot be erected. So far as human beings are concerned, they all appear to be equal. And it is a fact that peace is most difficult to establish among equals. For the establishment of peace in society, therefore, an Agent is required who has a status immeasurably superior to that of human beings—in effect, a Supreme Being.

***The only factor that can be effective in ensuring peace between human beings is the universal acknowledgement of the concept of a superior God—a God who is held to be great by all and to whom all surrender in equal measure.***

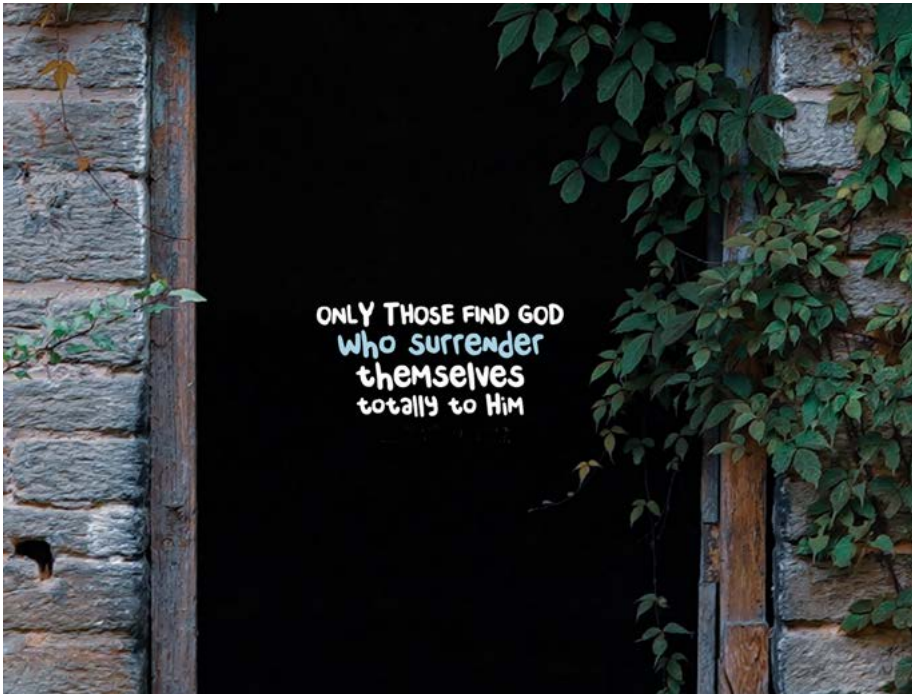
A Being of this kind—a grand regulator of human affairs—can only be God. The only factor, indeed, that can be effective in ensuring peace between human beings is the universal acknowledgement of the concept of a superior God—a God who is held to be great by all and to whom all surrender in equal measure. As the old adage has it.

“Peace, thy name is God.”

According to a *Hadith*:

O God, You are Peace, peace comes from You, Blessed and most High are You, O Possessor of glory and honour. (*Ibn Majah*)

The importance of God is as great for the individual as it is for society. No part of our individual or social life is complete without God. Undoubtedly the concept of God is as relevant today as it was in ancient time, for God is man’s greatest asset. □



# THE WONDERS OF CREATION

*Look through the Eyes of a Child*

**I**N order to enjoy God's creation to the full, man must shed his indifference. He must look at the sunrise with the eyes of the very young, and listen to the glad outpourings of the birds as if they sang for the first time.

"When opened it was like a small tent, and when shut, it was all curiously jointed and would fold up to the length of a man's hand." Nowadays we would have some difficulty in recognizing the ubiquitous umbrella from this description, but that is how it appeared to an early observer when it first appeared in London in 1749. When a hand pump was first installed in an Indian village at the beginning of the century, it was an object of great astonishment and curiosity. One old woman, on seeing it, exclaimed: "Only death has defeated man!"

Thus, a long time ago, newly invented umbrella and the handpump appeared quite extraordinary. Nowadays, however, they have become so commonplace, that people do not even give them a second glance. Regrettably, our attitude to the objects of God's creation is very similar. They had lost their novelty for us even before the handpump and the umbrella had come on the scene. Yet, everything that exists in this world, be it the budding trees or the birds on the wing, is quite wonderful beyond words. Because man sees these lovely things every day, he ceases to have any regard for their beauty and he loses his sense of wonder at their very creation. But, were he to see them for the first time, like a blind man who has suddenly regained his sight, his amazement would be unbounded. He would marvel at every leaf and every petal, and at every little feather on the wings of the birds. □

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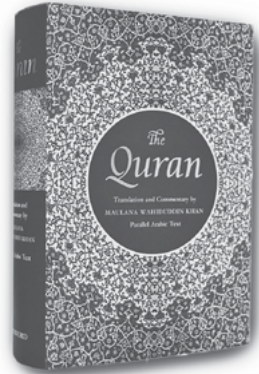


# THE WORD OF GOD

*From The Scriptures*

*The Quran is the book of God. It has been preserved in its entirety since its revelation to the Prophet of Islam between AD 610 and 632. It is a book that brings glad tidings to humankind, along with divine admonition, and stresses the importance of man's discovery of the Truth on a spiritual and intellectual level.*

Translated from Arabic and commentary by  
**Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**



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***In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful***

***Alif Lam Mim. This Book has beyond all doubt been revealed by the Lord of the universe. Do they say, 'He has invented it himself.'? No indeed! It is the truth from your Lord to warn a people to whom, before you, no warner came, so that hopefully they may be rightly guided. (32: 1-3)***

On the face of it, this is an ordinary statement consisting of just a few words. But this is a very serious and portentous claim, which in the entire history of religion, nobody has had the courage to profess, except those chosen few to whom the Book of God was in actuality revealed. Other than the appointed person, anyone who mustered the audacity to utter these words, was either a trifler or a madman.

The Quran is a proof in itself. Its miraculous style, its claims that have not been proved wrong even after centuries have elapsed,—all these and similar considerations prove that it is a book sent by God. And since it is a book of God, it is absolutely necessary that everybody should pay heed to its warnings and gives serious thought to them.

***It was God who created the heavens and the earth and whatsoever is in between in six Days, and then He established Himself on the throne. You have no patron nor any intercessor besides Him. So will you not pay heed? He directs all affairs from heaven to earth. Then all will again ascend to Him on a Day whose length is a thousand years by the way you measure. Such is the Knower of the unseen and the visible, the Powerful, the Merciful, who gave everything its perfect form. He originated the creation of man from clay, then He made his***

***progeny from an extract of a humble fluid. Then He moulded him; He breathed His Spirit into him; He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts. How seldom you are grateful!*** (32: 4-9)

The gradual creation of the universe, in six days meaning six stages, along with the system full of wisdom governing it, is indicative of the fact that the Creator has some special purpose behind this creation. Moreover, numerous processes are incessantly going on in the universe. This further proves that its Creator is running it in a well-planned manner. The human being is a wonderful living organism, but if his body is analyzed, it will be found that it is composed of earth elements. Then this creation does not end there, but continues eternally through the process of procreation and regeneration.

If the individual gives deep and serious consideration to these facts, his mind will be free of feelings of awe for anything except the Majesty of God. He will become a grateful subject of God. But there are very few who give deep consideration to anything. That is why there are very few people who offer praises to God and are grateful to Him.

***They say, 'When we are lost in the earth, how can we then be recreated?' Indeed, they deny they will ever meet their Lord. Say, 'The Angel of Death who has been given charge of you will gather in your souls. Then you will [all] be returned to your Lord.' If only you could see the evil-doers hanging their heads in shame before their Lord, 'Our Lord, we have seen and we have heard, so send us back again and we will act rightly. For we do indeed now believe.' Yet had We so willed, We could indeed have imposed Our guidance upon every human being: but My word shall come true: 'I will fill Hell with jinns and men all together.' We shall say to them, 'Taste this—for you forgot you would ever meet this Day. We too will forget you—taste the chastisement of Eternity for your [evil] deeds!'*** (32: 10-14)

Man's creation for the first time is enough to convince humankind of the possibility of creation for the second time. But when a man does not believe in his accountability before God, he ridicules the possibility of a second creation, and he talks flippantly of it.

But, this amounts to taking liberties throughout the period of freedom given for the purpose of putting man to test. And when this period expires and a man dies and is made to stand before Almighty God for the purpose of giving an account of himself, he will find himself speechless. At that time, the arrogant will say that they now accept the reality and will request that they be sent back into the world, so that they may perform righteous deeds. But this admission at that stage will

be useless. Had God desired that people should accept reality in this way, He could have compelled them to accept it in the present world itself.

Before God, that acceptance carries weight which is made without the reality being visible. Acceptance after seeing the reality has no value.

***The people who truly believe in Our messages are those who fall to the ground in prostration when they are reminded of them, and glorify their Lord with praise and are not arrogant. They forsake their beds, calling upon their Lord in fear and in hope, and spend out of what We have provided them with. No soul knows what joy is kept hidden in store for them as a reward for their labours.*** (32: 15-17)

For an individual to avail of guidance, his willingness to accept the Truth is the most important factor. Only those who, by temperament, are ready to accept the Truth whenever it presents itself before them—whether it be revealed through a person of lesser importance, whether such acceptance be a tacit admission of one’s own error, or whether such acceptance leads to upsetting the existing system of one’s life—are capable of availing of guidance. Only those who have such a capacity will find the Truth. Those who want to accept the Truth, but at the same time want their ‘greatness’ to remain intact, will never find it.

A man who sacrifices his greatness for the sake of Truth actually finds the greatest thing, namely, the greatness of God. God enters his life in such a way that he sleeps thinking about Him and wakes up with memories of God. His hopes and fears are all linked with God. He surrenders all his possessions to God to the point of not keeping back anything for himself. Such people will forever relish the bounties of the eternal Gardens of Paradise. □





# ASK MAULANA

*Your Questions Answered*

***The remedy for ignorance is asking questions. (Prophet Muhammad)***

***The spirit of enquiry is the hallmark of an open society and the above saying of the Prophet aptly illustrates this principle. A culture of curiosity and open-mindedness will foster development in any society by motivating its members to learn enthusiastically and enrich their knowledge. This is because awareness of one's ignorance is half of knowledge, as it becomes a stepping-stone to seeking and finding answers. A questioning mind is like a flowing river that is replenished with fresh thoughts and ideas and continues on its journey.***

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***Given the current state of the world, how could we see God as Most Kind and Most Merciful, Most Powerful and Most Loving?***

This is a very important question. I feel it is a very short-sighted approach to look at some events transpiring in the world and hastily formulate an opinion based on them. We should first develop an understanding of the creation plan of God and then evaluate events in the light of this plan.

History shows that difficulties and hardships have also played a vital role in the progress of many countries. Hardships and challenges have brought out the best from individuals and communities. The so-called adverse and negative events in the world have culminated in setting successful examples of re-planning. It has taught people the way forward after having incurred losses and defeat. Any disadvantageous situation creates a compulsion, which leads to new and positive developments. Arnold Toynbee, a noted historian, has termed this phenomenon as 'Challenge-Response Mechanism'. God creates compulsions to guide people in the right direction, for people to learn and take heed. Many communities have risen to great heights starting from utter distress. Thus, God's love, kindness and benevolence towards human beings can be found in the way that this catastrophe has awakened man to change his ways for better, before it is too late.

Take the present coronavirus pandemic. It is a situation which calls humankind to realize, repent and return to nature, to respect nature and to change its ways. Nature has been warning us in the form of pollution, depletion of ozone layer, increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, global warming, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, disease, etc., which should

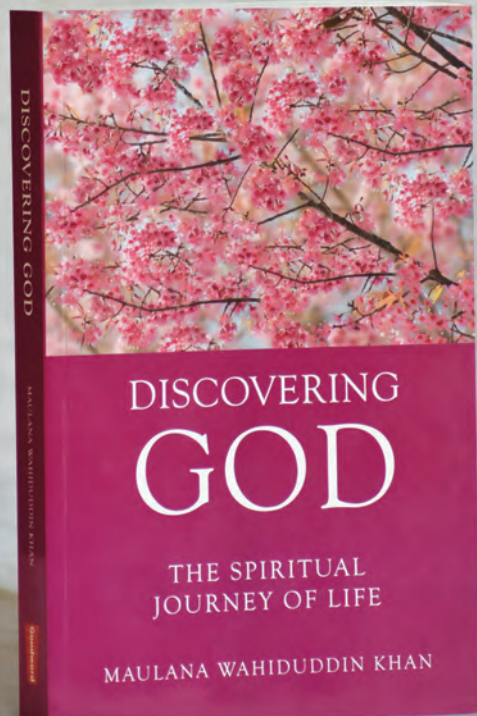
have been enough to make us realize our irresponsible use of the blessings of God. The warnings should have motivated us to change our attitude towards nature. We neglected these signs and continued heedlessly towards materialism and today we are facing a most difficult and unprecedented situation in human history.

Still there is hope for humankind, if all of us choose to bring about changes immediately and be steadfast irrespective of whether or not they are imposed on us by the authorities. In this struggle, individual responsibility is the only thing which can give the right results. As has been rightly said, the soul of all reformation is the reformation of the individual soul. □



# DISCOVERING GOD

The author, through his study of science, religion, psychology and the experiences of his own life, enlightens about the path to discovery of God through one's journey of life. A discovery of this kind involves pondering on the word of God, converting one's material experiences into spiritual insights, constant introspection, and contemplating on the numerous phenomena of the universe. This kind of spiritual and intellectual endeavor of remembering God and recognizing His majesty and glory in everything around provides nourishment to the soul. Such a person develops strong affection for His Creator, Sustainer and Benefactor, a feeling which reflects in his character and behaviour. Discovery of the noble and merciful God makes a person rise above negative thinking; his heart becomes free of hatred, anger, and vengefulness. He develops the ability to engage in positive thinking even in unpleasant situations. The personality that undergoes this spiritual process is deserving of being settled in Paradise in the Hereafter.



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