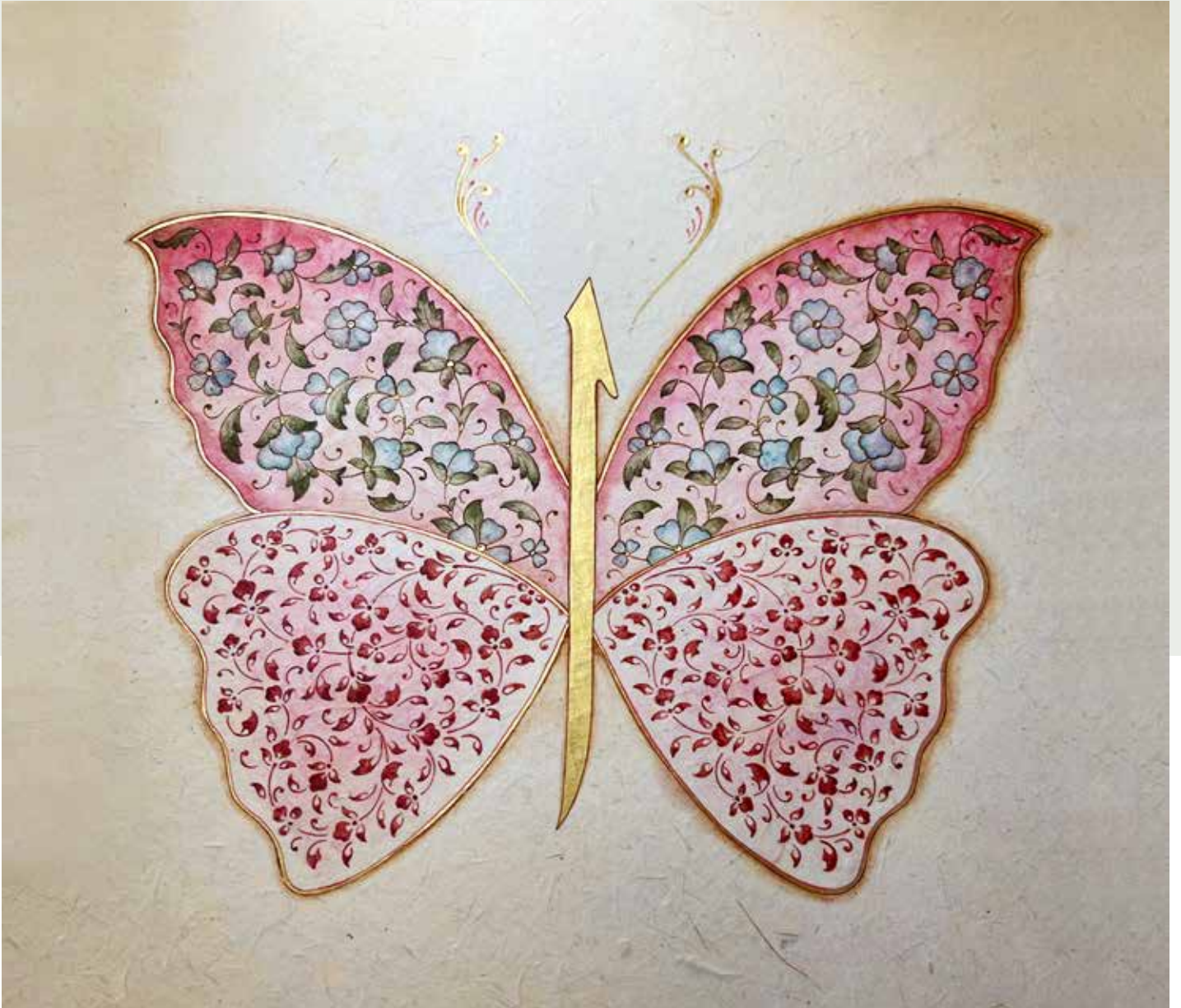


Diyanet Journal

ISSUE 3 | JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

THE RIGHT TO LIFE

| Islam in France | A Life Dedicated to Islamic Civilization: Fuat Sezgin | Masjid Al-Aqsa |



Marbling Art

Marbling is a water-based surface design technique that can create patterns resembling smooth marble or other types of stone. The intricate patterns are formed by floating colors on either plain water or a viscous solution and then delicately transferring them onto an absorbent surface, such as paper or fabric. Throughout the centuries, people have utilized marbled materials to adorn a variety of surfaces. Marbling art is frequently employed in the creation of book covers and endpapers, lending a distinctive and visually captivating quality to each individual piece. Thus, the fact that each print is a unique monotype is part of its great appeal.



Marbling Art: Fatma TASCILANKAY

Editorial

Allah the Almighty has elevated human beings, whom He has created as the most honorable of creatures, above all other beings, and appointed the human being as the caliph on earth. The fact that humans are superior beings is due to the qualities and blessings Allah the Almighty has bestowed upon them. In the Holy Qur'an, it is explicitly stated that human beings have been exalted above other beings and equipped with the means to lead an honorable life (Isra, 17:70). Human beings, with their superior material and spiritual qualities in their creation, have attained the status of being the caliphs of Allah the Almighty, on earth and the bearers of His trust.

Due to the exceptional value that Allah the Almighty places on human beings, He has deemed their faith, lives, property, offspring, honor, and dignity inviolable. He (swt) considers the unlawful taking of one human life as tantamount to the extermination of all humanity, and conversely, saving one human life as meritorious as saving the lives of all human beings (Ma'idah, 5:32). Human beings, who are the most cherished beings in the universe, are obliged to safeguard their lives, as emphasized in the Quranic verse, "Do not take a human life—made sacred by Allah" (Isra, 17:33). In Islam, life is considered the greatest blessing and trust given by Allah. For this reason, murder and suicide, which are considered as failing to protect Allah's trust, are forbidden.

Human beings, who have always been required to coexist with each other throughout human history, currently face violations of the right to life in many regions of the world. In these circumstances, it is incumbent upon human beings to comprehend and apply the principles of Islam concerning the right to life and to honor the sacred trust of life that Allah has conferred upon them.

We are pleased to present this issue of Diyanet Journal to our readers on the topic of "The Right to Life". Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Halil Karşlı, who emphasizes the inherent value of all human beings regardless of race, language, color, gender, or age, contributes to our agenda column with his article titled "The Right to Life". Furthermore, Julien Drolon, widely recognized for being the voice of many reverts from various countries and cultures through his documentary "Freedom", shares his journey of embracing Islam in our "Revert Stories" column. Finally, in the "Let's Talk" column, we conduct an interview with Prof. Dr. Nevzat Tarhan, exploring the contemporary understanding of the right to life and the considerations needed to respect the right to life of others in our society.

As Diyanet Journal, we wholeheartedly present this new issue to our esteemed readers, aspiring to a world characterized by peace, tranquility, and tolerance.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

THE RIGHT TO LIFE IS SACRED AND INVIOLEABLE

Human beings hold a unique and elevated position among all creatures due to being recipients of Allah's grace. Both the abilities that they possess as a result of their creation and the blessings bestowed upon them by Allah, give them immense honor and value in the hierarchy of created beings. Indeed, human beings have acquired the capability to exercise control over their surroundings through their innate faculties, such as reason, willpower, intelligence, contemplation, judgment, accountability, the capacity to appeal, comprehension, and communication. These abilities enable them to establish dominance and superiority over all other beings.

Islam, which places human beings as the most esteemed of all creatures, regards the safeguarding of human life as one of the primary objectives of the religion and deems the right to life as sacred and inviolable. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah the Almighty proclaims: "Whoever takes a life, it will be as if they killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if they saved all of humanity" (Ma'idah, 5:32). This verse underscores the sanctity and inviolability of the right to life. Furthermore, Allah declares that anyone who unjustly and intentionally takes the life of an innocent person will incur His wrath and curse, along with worldly punishment, and will face the torment of Hell in the Hereafter (Nisa, 4:93).



Prof. Dr. Ali ERBAS

The President
Presidency of Religious Affairs

Just as it is forbidden to take an innocent life without a just and legitimate reason, it is also a great sin for human beings to attempt to take their own lives or to wish to give up their right to life for any reason. So, individuals who are on the brink of death due to hunger and thirst are permitted to consume prohibited and forbidden sustenance. Muslims whose hearts are steadfast in faith but are compelled to choose between life and renouncing their faith may even utter disbelief in order to preserve their lives. Neglecting and violating the right to life are deemed major sins (An'am, 6:151). This is because life, a divine gift from Allah the Almighty, is, in fact, a trust, and safeguarding this trust is an essential component of servitude to Allah.

The sanctity of the right to life is not exclusive to human beings but is a fundamental principle to be upheld for all living creatures. For this reason, Islam calls for particular sensitivity towards the right to life of animals and prohibits the killing of animals for the sake of entertainment, leisure activities, or sports. Allah's declaration that He annihilated the people of Thamud for transgressing the right of a camel to drink water, and our beloved Prophet's

statement that a woman who gave water to a thirsty dog committed a meritorious act deserving of mercy, exemplify the importance that Islam places on the right to life of animals.

Indeed, the value that Islam places on the right to life and the principles it establishes for safeguarding life are a compelling testament to its status as a mercy to all of creation. In this context, the paramount duty of human beings is to uphold the sanctity of the right to life for all living beings, particularly their



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own lives. Fulfilling this responsibility is imperative for the peace and future of humanity, as well as for the order and perpetuity of the universe. Acting with this consciousness unquestionably serves one's own best interests, as the chaos and adverse consequences resulting from any violation of the right to life will ultimately impact human beings most profoundly.

Today, the lives of all living beings on earth, especially human beings, are facing a great threat and danger due to what human beings have done through their own hands. Regrettably, humanity has not been able to show the progress it has made in the last two centuries in the fields of science and technology in protecting and glorifying human life and dignity. The right to life has been devalued today, perhaps more than ever before. In our age, almost half of humanity does not feel secure about their lives and their future. While one part of the world enjoys a prosperous life, the other part of the world does not even have access to the most basic necessities to sustain its existence. In one part of the world, pleasure, joy, and entertainment reign, while in the other part of the world, people are dying due to war, chaos, terrorism, and starvation. However, a free, dignified,

and secure life is the most fundamental right of all human beings, regardless of their religion, language, race, color, and geography. In this regard, what is expected of human beings, who, by virtue of their intellect, will, and ability to reason, occupy a prominent position in the world of existence, is to maintain their relationship with the beings entrusted to their command on the axis of consciousness of trust. Only in this way will it be possible for both human beings and other living beings to continue their existence in peace and security and to look to the future with hope.

At this juncture, it is the responsibility of Muslims to embody the compassionate messages of Islam, which acknowledge fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly the sanctity of the right to life, as sacrosanct. Islam advises the most virtuous way of coexistence, life, and environmental stewardship, guided by a sense of trust. It is incumbent upon Muslims to breathe life into these principles and share them with humanity. Their duty is to strive for the establishment of a dignified, honorable, and virtuous life by positioning goodness, justice, mercy, compassion, and exemplary morals at the core of human existence.

THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Hilmi KARSLI

Vice President of Religious Affairs

“The Prophet of Mercy (saw) was engaged in a conversation with his Companions. He recounted an incident that transpired ages ago. The subject matter revolved around the importance of respecting the right to life, showing mercy, and upholding justice...

In ancient times, a prophet embarked on a journey with his people. Wearied by the travel he found respite beneath a tree. Seated on the ground, he rested in the near vicinity of numerous tiny creatures that inhabit the earth. After all, being so close to the earth means being close to the habitants

of the earth as well. It did not take long before an ant noticed him and bit him.

The prophet became angered by the pain he felt. As anger emerges, rationality departs the mind. Those who act in anger often face detriment. And so it was. He overlooked the fact that this minuscule creature possessed a life akin to ours, and furthermore, it had a family. Of course, he was well aware that all creatures on Earth were entrusted to us by Allah (swt). Yet, being human, he momentarily forgot this truth. In his ire, he took a decision in anger

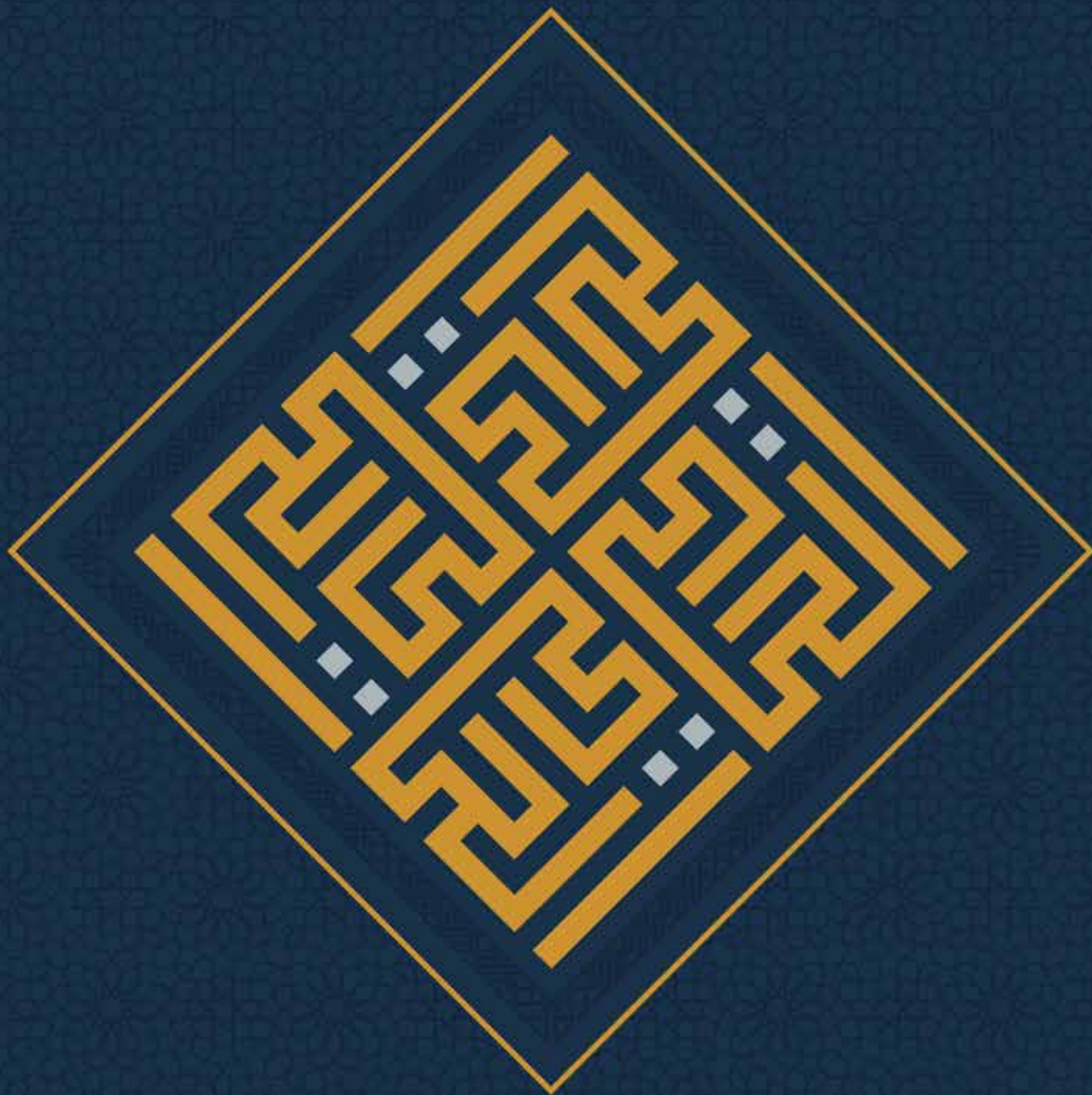
and commanded the destruction of the ant's nest.

The people around him carried out his command and set the nest on fire. Countless ants, whose small lives go unnoticed by us dwelling within narrow tunnels beneath the earth, perished in seconds.

As per the account relayed by the Prophet (saw) to his Companions, Allah expressed displeasure with this occurrence. Our Lord (swt), who fashioned all within the Earth and the heavens and bestowed upon them the entitlement to existence, did not

approve of this cruelty. A revelation descended upon the prophet responsible for igniting the nest. The Almighty Allah admonished him gravely, saying, “Is it because of one ant's bite that you incinerated a community among those communities that glorify Allah?” (Bukhari, Jihad, 153)

Taking the life of an innocent individual is forbidden (haram) in Islam. Deliberately causing the death of a person constitutes an act of murder that is considered an offense against all of humanity. Hence, murder is recognized as a grave sin in Islam.



The human being is the apple of the universe's eye. Endowed with the weighty duty of serving Allah (swt), they bear an entrusted responsibility known as "amanah" as described in the Qur'an (Alhazab, 33:72). While perfection in this task may not always be achieved, the elevated nature of their responsibility places them in a significant position. In a way, human beings serve as a link between the material and spiritual realms, embodying the divine will on earth. Unlike other creatures, they alone bear this profound responsibility.

It is indeed a privilege and a source of great honor that Allah the Almighty has bestowed this responsibility upon humanity. For the entrusting of this role is not a random act. This indicates the trust and closeness between the Exalted Creator and human beings. In a sense, humans have ascended to the position of being at the level of "trustee" of Allah the Almighty.

The value of both the heavens and the earth has been elevated due to the presence of humanity. All that is splendid, useful, productive, and fortunate has been placed at their disposal. Humans hold a distinct and elevated status compared to angels, jinns, and animals. They are set apart by their intellect, volition, capability, free will, and ethical capacity in ways that distinguish

them from other creatures. Indeed, a verse attests, "Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam" (Isra, 17:70).

Indeed, the verses of the Qur'an contain profoundly unique expressions regarding the creation of humankind. These expressions point out the value and dignity of the human being. For example, the following verses are remarkable: "I have breathed into him of My soul" (Hijr, 15:29), and "What I created with My Own Hands?" (Sad, 38:75). These statements indicate the importance and the care attached to an act related to human beings and are not used for any other creatures in the Qur'an. Correspondingly, another verse asserts, "Indeed,



BELIEF IN THE EXISTENCE AND ONENESS OF ALLAH ENCOMPASSES SHOWING RESPECT TOWARD HIS CREATIONS.

We created humans in the best form" (Tin, 95:4). Each individual possesses distinct traits, making them a manifestation of Allah's signs. This signifies His immense power, limitless knowledge, and unparalleled creative might. In this manner, one can confidently declare, "Nothing can be more perfect!" Every limb operates in harmonious unity within its rightful place. With his biological and psychological existence, humans stand as precious and unparalleled creations (Infitar, 82:6-8).

Indeed, belief in the existence and oneness of Allah encompasses showing respect toward His creations. Respecting the human being is possible only by observing their rights. In Islam, human rights have been determined with religious orders and prohibitions like the rights of Allah. In essence, "religion" can be succinctly defined as "showing respect to Allah and glorifying Him and mercy to His servants."

All people regardless of their differing religions, share the fundamental essence of "being human beings" and precious. Ali (ra) encapsulated this sentiment aptly, "Human beings are either your counterparts in creation or brothers in religion." The following poignant incident underscores this principle: As a funeral procession passed by the Prophet

(saw), he rose to his feet. When he was told that it was the funeral of a Jew, he asked: "Is he, not a human being?" (Bukhari, Jana'iz, 49)

A Muslim shares the same ground of being human with all people even though s/he does not share the same values with them. In this sense, all people are precious and have the right to be respected regardless of their race, language, color, gender, or age. Showing respect to human beings continues not only during their lifetime but also after their death. Thus, mistreating a deceased body is regarded as a sin, similar to disrespecting him or her when s/he was alive (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 82).

Killing a person means killing humanity

Allah the Almighty has unequivocally prohibited (haram) murder for humanity. All religions, legal and moral systems have a consensus on the opinion that killing a human unjustly is both a major crime before the law and a major sin in the presence of Allah. This sentiment is vividly conveyed in the revelations bestowed upon the children of Israel, evident in the list of prohibitions known as "the Ten Commandments". Even though the Torah has undergone many changes, the explicit injunction "You shall not murder!" delineated in the Book of Exodus still remains (The Bible, Exodus, 20:13-17).

The prohibition against taking human life is also distinctly articulated in the Gospel. An illustrative passage can be found in the Book of Matthew, where it is stated, “You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment” (The Bible, Matthew, 5:21).

The importance of safeguarding human life and the wrongfulness of unjustly taking a human’s life have been explicitly conveyed to all of humanity in the Qur’an. These principles are articulated in the Noble Qur’an, the final divine scripture that holds validity until the Day of Judgment, “That is why We ordained for the Children of Israel that whoever takes a life unless as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land, it will be as if they killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if they saved all of humanity” (Ma’idah, 5:32).

An aspect of note in this verse is the inclusive use of the term “human/mankind” in a universal context. The verse does not specify a particular religion, sect, or race. Consequently, the prohibition against taking the life of an innocent individual is haram, irrespective of their identity. This is because human beings hold intrinsic worth and dignity, and their right to life is unequivocally safeguarded.

Taking the life of a human being, regardless of their affiliation, is a sin of the



ALL PEOPLE ARE PRECIOUS AND HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED REGARDLESS OF THEIR RACE, LANGUAGE, COLOR, GENDER, OR AGE.

gravest magnitude, akin to murdering all of humanity. Conversely, preserving someone’s life, irrespective of their beliefs, family, or nationality, is an act of virtue akin to safeguarding the entire human race. The safeguarding of life stands as a fundamental human right, benefiting all individuals universally.

The safeguarding of human life in Islam commences even before birth, during the time when s/he is in the mother’s womb. Our scholars have a consensus that a fetus cannot be a subject of medical intervention as long as s/he does not cause any danger to the mother’s life. That is to say, a fetus in a mother’s womb has the right of inviolability like all other living human beings. Consequently, terminating the life of the fetus through abortion or similar means is not permitted by religion.



The prohibition against taking a human life is reiterated multiple times in the Noble Qur’an. For instance, it is unequivocally stated: “Do not take a human life made sacred by Allah except with legal right” (Isra, 17:33). The punishment for intentional murder is detailed in the 93rd verse of Surah al-Nisa. Those who commit such an act will face Allah’s wrath and condemnation, will be excluded from His mercy, and shall undergo severe punishment. Thus, a grievous fate awaits those who incur Allah’s (swt) wrath and are deprived of His mercy.

Conclusion

Allah the Almighty has exalted and dignified humanity above all other creatures. One of the paramount objectives of the divine religions He has sent is the safeguarding of the inviolability of human life. Therefore, the human being cannot intend to kill himself or any other person under any circumstances. Neither suicide nor euthanasia can be justified by asserting, “This is my life, I have the freedom to choose.” Let alone suicide, a believer is prohibited even to desire death. This is because Allah is the sole possessor of all lives. He, who has brought all beings into existence, sustains their lives, and ultimately determines their fate, is Allah the Almighty. The human being, at this point, is only in the position of a trustee.

MOTHER-FATHER-CHILD: SHARING ONE HOME

Diyaret Journal

10

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Anas b. Malik (ra), who was raised at the home of the Prophet (saw), tells us that three Companions (ra), who were very diligent in performing prayers, came to the house of the Prophet (saw) in order to learn the supererogatory prayers that he performed day and night. It is apparent that they were curious as to how our Prophet showed his servitude to Allah while at home in addition to the obligatory prayers that he performed together with other Muslims. When they learned about the life of prayer of our Prophet from his wives, who did not hide their family lives because they wanted to provide good examples for believers, they thought that what they did was insufficient. So they said to themselves, “Look at us, and look at the Prophet! Doubtless, Allah forgave his past and future sins entirely.” They thought they needed to do much more worship than a person who was already a prophet.

Because of this, one of them said, “From now on, I will pray all night long.” Another said, “I will fast all the time, without skipping a day.” and the third one said, “I will live apart from women. I will not marry.” While they are talking, the Messenger of Allah (saw) appeared and said, “Are you the same



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THE SAME
FEELINGS,
THOUGHTS,
AND IDEALS.**

people who said such-and-such? By Allah, I am more fearful of Allah and more careful of Him than you; yet sometimes I fast, and sometimes I break my fast. I do supererogatory prayers (during part of the night) and I sleep (part of the night). I also marry women. So he who does not follow my sunnah is not from me.” (Bukhari, Nikah, 1)

The Prophet (saw) stated that establishing a family by getting married is a sunnah of his, i.e. his lifestyle, and invited the ummah to get married and to appreciate the value of the family. Our Lord, who created every living thing on earth, plants, and animals, in two forms, male and female (Ya-Sin, 36:36; Shura, 42:11; Dhariyat, 51:49; Naba', 78:8), also created the most precious creature, the human being, as male and female (A'raf, 7:189). The following verse explains it as follows: “And Allah has made for you spouses of your own kind, and given you through your spouses children and grandchildren. And He has granted you good, lawful provisions. Are they then faithful to falsehood and ungrateful for Allah’s favours?” (Nahl, 16:72)

Allah the Exalted, with the verse, “And one of His signs is that He created for

you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find comfort in them. And He has placed between you compassion and mercy. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect.” (Rum, 30:21) states that having a spouse is a natural need, and a marriage that satisfies this need legitimately should be built upon love and compassion.

In the Noble Qur’an, Allah the Exalted advises people how to keep pace with the flow of life after establishing the family unit. He shows people why having a family is a cause for having confidence in life and shaping the future. Above all, He wants people to understand what it means to be a family. Being a family does not only mean living under the same roof and sharing the same dining table, it also means sharing the same feelings, thoughts, and ideals. It means to be travelers on the same path and live a life to gain the pleasure of Allah by joining hands.

Family is one of the most precious blessings bestowed upon human beings. It is invaluable to share joy and sorrow and strive for a peaceful and useful life together. But the efforts should focus on what is good and beautiful, leaving all kinds of evil and repulsiveness



FAMILY IS ONE OF THE MOST PRECIOUS BLESSINGS BESTOWED UPON HUMAN BEINGS.

outside the door. He gives both positive and negative examples of several families in the Holy Qur’an. While reminding those who are like each other and work together in performing bad deeds, and who are oblivious of Allah (of the punishment to be expected in the next life) (Tawbah, 9:67-68), He mentions with praise and joy men and women who become friends and help each other in performing good deeds (Tawbah, 9:71-72).

After uniting with one’s spouse, a natural aspiration arises to

perpetuate their lineage and raise children for the future. Allah (swt) bestows upon the family the responsibility of ensuring the continuity of humanity into the future, much like how He designates the earth for nurturing life. Within the family, He entrusts a seed from which the potential of the universe’s future is concealed: the child.

This seed takes its place among the worldly blessings with all its beauty and earns the love and devotion of the people. Now, the first knot made



by tying two souls together is strengthened with a third. The child gives a new direction to the course of affairs while deepening the feeling of being a family.

A child is a precious trust in his parents' hands. Although s/he seems to belong to the present, s/he is in fact a trust which must be prepared for the future... S/he is a precious soul who is sensitive, fragile, and in endless need of attention and love... As it can be understood from the following verse, a child is a test: "And know that your wealth and your children are only a test and that with Allah is a great reward." (Anfal, 8:28) It is a test that demands considerable effort from those aspiring to attain the ultimate reward in the end.

The statement of our Prophet (saw), "Everyone is born in a natural state of being. Then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian or a fire worshipper (Zoroastrian)" (Bukhari, Tafsir 2; Muslim, Qadar, 22) clearly sums up the lasting impression parents have on their children. A baby, a gem ready to be polished, has a natural disposition to accept the good and adopt the beautiful from birth. The formation of a virtuous personality who could develop healthy relations with the new world to

which s/he has opened his/her eyes will take place in his/her parents' embrace. At the same time, the basis of his/her religious preference, which will lead him/her to the right way and the straight path, will be formed at the family home.

In the following hadith, the Messenger of Allah (saw) defined the family as a way of "testing": "Family, wealth, ego, and neighbors are tests for the human being. Fasting, praying, charity, and enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil expiate sins emerging from those tests." (Muslim, Fitān, 26; Bukhari, Mawaqit al-Salat, 4) Moreover, it is a network, a delicate balance founded on the triangle of mother, father, and child. Sharing the same house increases responsibilities as well as rights and, as the family members get closer to each other, the great care needed to keep tranquility at home is doubled. On this point therefore, while putting the relations between spouses in order, our Prophet avoided insisting that one party be burdened with responsibilities or have unlimited freedom: "Be mindful! Just as you have rights over women (wives), they also have rights over you." (Tirmidhi, Tafsir al-Qur'an, 9; Ibn Majah, Nikah, 3)



THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PROPHET (SAW), WHO LAUGHED AND PLAYED WITH HIS GRANDCHILDREN, GAVE THEM A HUG AND KISS, PERFORMED A SERMON WHILE THEY WERE IN HIS ARMS, AND PRAYED WHILE THEY WERE ON HIS BACK, SHOULD BE AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL PEOPLE.

Our Prophet, by saying, "The most benevolent among you is the one who is benevolent to his family. I am the most benevolent to my family among you," (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 63) calls upon believing people to treat their families benevolently. The behavior of the Prophet (saw), who laughed and played with his grandchildren (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 30; Ibn Majah, Sunnah, 11), gave them a hug and kiss (Bukhari, Buyu', 49), performed a sermon while they were in his arms (Abu Dawud, Salat, 225, 227), and prayed while they were on his back (Nasa'i, Masajid, 19), should be an example for all people.

Believing mothers and fathers tremble inside when they read the verse, "The true losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on Judgment Day." (Zumar, 39:15) They work hand in hand to establish a spiritual climate at home and to attain Allah's approval. They entreat Allah (swt) to forgive their families and grant them health and place them among those who are sincerely bound to Him in this world and the Hereafter (Abu Dawud, Witr, 25). They always have the following prayer on their tongue: "Our Lord! Bless us with pious spouses and offspring who will be the joy of our hearts, and make us models for the righteous." (Furqan, 25:74)

ISLAM: THE KEY TO SALVATION

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bayram KOSEOGLU

Expert of the High Board of Religious
Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

“Whoever seeks a way other than Islam, it
will never be accepted from them, and in the
Hereafter they will be among the losers.”

(Al-i ‘Imran, 3:85)

From the time of the first human being, Prophet Adam (as), Allah the Almighty (swt) has been sending prophets and books to guide humanity. The foundation of all divine religions is the belief in “tawhid,” which can be described as the exclusive worship of Allah (swt). In this context, Islam represents the overarching divine faith based on tawhid, signifying the act of surrender to Allah. Additionally, Islam is the specific name of the final religion conveyed through the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

The divine truths sent throughout human history have gradually been forgotten or altered as time passed. Yet, Allah the Almighty has consistently reminded us of these forgotten or distorted truths through the prophets and books He has sent. “Islam, which is the last link in the tradition of revelation that began with the Prophet Adam, is the name of the restatement of the divine message that was conveyed by the prophets but was forgotten in time or was subjected to some distortions by human beings, to be permanent until the Day of Judgment.” (Omer Faruk Harman, Encyclopedia of Islam, art. Islam)

The divine proclamation in the Qur’an, the final divine scripture, “Today I have

perfected your faith for you, completed My favor upon you, and chosen Islam as your way.” (Ma‘idah, 5:3), is an expression of the fact that Islam is not only the last religion but also complete and perfect. Thus, by revealing the Holy Qur’an, which contains the most perfect form of the principles of faith and practice that humanity needs, Allah the Almighty (swt) has perfected the religion called Islam. This faith has been transmitted since the time of the first prophet, Adam (as), to fulfill the requirements of diverse societies inhabiting different corners of the world in realms of intellect, existence, and civilization, persisting until the Day of Judgment. As such, Muslims possess fundamental principles that empower them to address novel challenges they encounter, employing jurisprudence rooted in the light of the Qur’an and the sunnah (Kur’an Yolu, vol. 2, p. 216).

The mention of Islam as the chosen religion in the verse serves as a declaration that only Islam is the religion acceptable before Allah (Nasafi, Madarik al-Tanzil, 1:427). Furthermore, the verse, “Certainly, Allah’s only Way is Islam” (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:19) presents another articulation of this truth. It is an affirmation that obedience and devotion are exclusively owed to Allah the Almighty,

entailing adherence to His decrees and prohibitions.

Similarly, the verse, “Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian; he submitted in all uprightness and was not a polytheist.” (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:67) is another proof of the necessity of the belief in tawhid, which involves acknowledging solely Allah as the true deity and yielding in submission to Him, refraining from associating partners with Allah or embracing corrupted religions (Maturidi, Ta’wilat Ahl al-Sunnah, 2/331–332). The verse proclaiming that those who seek a religion other than Islam will not be accepted and will be losers in the Hereafter (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:85) is a divine declaration of the fact that Islam, the final and perfect religion, is the only religion that will lead to salvation in this world and the Hereafter. In fact, as elucidated through the parables in the Qur’an, the injustice, oppression, and immoral lifestyles prevalent in contemporary times, as well as in past civilizations that met ruin, serve as concrete illustrations of the consequences that arise when one departs from Islam, which embodies complete submission to Allah.

There is a strong correspondence between the lexical meaning of the word Islam “to be bound,

to obey, to surrender, to be in peace and prosperity” and its terminological meaning “to embrace with one’s whole being all that the Prophet Muhammad revealed in the name of religion and to be in a submission that demonstrates this fact” (Kur’an Yolu, vol. 1, pp. 522–525). In this sense, Islam is not only accepting



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the existence and unity of Allah in the heart but also submitting to His commandments and prohibitions and demonstrating this in practice (Raghib, al-Mufradat, art. slm). Islam, which means submission to Allah, comprises a holistic entity encompassing its bedrock principles of faith and devotion, the stipulations of halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden), in addition to righteous deeds and good morals. Faith and Islam are the sum total of all these.

In addition to these truths, the contentions that faith alone suffices, that divine revelation and a prophet are unnecessary, or that the prophet merely acts as a messenger thereby negating the need for the sunnah, will carry no weight within the Muslim perspective. This is because Muslims are fully aware that a perception of religion that excludes the Qur’an and the sunnah from daily life strays significantly from Islam as defined by these primary sources. These truths also confer a crucial responsibility upon all Muslims—an obligation to exemplify Islam. Every member of the Islamic community is duty-bound to live Islam authentically, setting a model not only for their Muslim brothers and sisters, particularly within their families and immediate circles

but ultimately for all of humanity. It remains undeniable that both in the present and in history, some individuals aim to attribute certain flaws and shortcomings observed within Muslim societies to the Islamic faith. No conscientious Muslim can lead a life that inadvertently allows Islam to be criticized due to their own mistakes. On the contrary, they should endeavor to be devout believers whose lives radiate the virtues of Islam across all domains, spanning from acts of worship to family life, and extending from social interactions to business endeavors.

As the Prophet (saw) said, a Muslim is the one from whom other Muslims are safe (Muslim, Iman, 65). The best of Muslims are those who, when they are seen, Allah the Almighty, are remembered (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 4). In addition, the worship, commandments, and prohibitions in the Qur’an, the righteous deeds, and other moral beauties mentioned together with faith emphasize the importance of being in compliance with Islam and living as a Muslim. All these are not only indicators of humanity’s need for the life-giving principles of Islam but also expressions of the responsibility of Muslims to represent Islam.

PROPHETIC COUNSEL THAT TURNS MISTAKES INTO TRAITS

Halil KILIC

Expert of the High Board of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

Abu Mahdhura, one of the mu'adhdhins of the Prophet (saw), recounts how he acquired the title of "the mu'adhdhin of the Prophet": "I went out with a group of people, and we were somewhere on the road to Hunayn when the Messenger of Allah (saw) was returning from Hunayn. We encountered the Messenger of Allah somewhere on the road. One of the Companions called the adhan for prayer in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (saw). We heard the voice of the mu'adhdhin and we were heedless about it (the adhan), so we started shouting, imitating, and mocking it. The Messenger of Allah (saw) heard us, so he sent some people to call us to his presence. He said, 'Who is the one whose voice I heard so loudly?' The people all pointed to me, and they were telling the truth. He dismissed the others but kept me there with him. Then he (saw)

said, 'Stand up and recite the adhan.' I stood up, and up until that point, there was nothing more aversive to me than the Prophet's command and what he was asking of me. I stood up, and the Messenger of Allah (saw) himself taught me the adhan. Once I completed reciting the adhan, he beckoned me and handed me a small pouch containing some silver coins. Next, he placed his hand on my forehead, moving it over my face, then across my chest and heart, until his hand reached my navel. Following this, he prayed for me, saying, 'May Allah bless you and shower His blessings upon you.' and he commanded me to recite the adhan in Mecca. Consequently, all the hatred I had felt towards the Messenger of Allah disappeared, and was replaced with love for the Messenger of Allah." (Nasafi, Adhan, 5-6; Ibn Majah, Adhan, 2)

The Prophet Muhammad's attitude towards Abu Mahdhura, who mocked the adhan, is a living example of how Muslims, who are obliged to follow his way (Sunnah), should behave in the face of wrong attitudes. It was this exemplary behavior of the Messenger of Allah that illuminated the darkness of jahiliyyah with the light of Islam and made the period he lived in the "Asr al-Sa'adah".

In the above hadith, which gives very important messages about "doing what is befitting for oneself", the following advice is given to Muslims:

Visiting relatives

The observance of the kinship ties formed by blood or marriage and the visits of relatives to each other are characterized as silat al-rahim. If we look at the Qur'anic verses on this subject, we will see that it is mentioned together with the right of Allah (Nisa, 4:1);

it is described as a bond that Allah has ordered to be safeguarded (Ra'd, 13:25); those who have reason and faith observe this bond (Ra'd, 13:21); and those who are deprived of faith and divine guidance break this bond (Muhammad, 47:22).

Our Prophet (saw) also drew attention to the issue of silat al-rahim with recommendations such as "Allah will keep good relations with him who keeps good relations with kith and kin" (Bukhari, Adab, 13); "Whoever is pleased that he be granted more wealth and that his lease of life be prolonged, then he should keep good relations with his kith and kin." (Bukhari, Adab, 12), and the Prophet said that this is an action that will lead one to Paradise (Bukhari, Zakat, 1).

It is important not to abstain from such a righteous deed, which involves many virtues and heavy responsibilities, for any reason.

أَفْضَلُ الْفَضَائِلِ أَنْ تَصِلَ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ، وَتُعْطِيَ مَنْ مَنَعَكَ، وَتَصْفَحَ عَمَّنْ شَتَمَكَ.

“The highest of virtues is to maintain your relations with those who cut their ties with you, to give to those who do not give to you, and to forgive those who speak evil of you.”

(Ibn Hanbal, XXIV, 383)

Sharing what you have

One of the qualities praised in the Holy Qur'an is spending in the way of Allah, in other words, giving without expecting anything in return. It is stated that this is a characteristic of virtuous believers as follows: "... Rather, the righteous are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books, and the prophets; who give charity out of their cherished wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, needy travelers, beggars, and for freeing captives; who establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and keep the pledges they make; and who are patient in times of suffering, adversity, and in the heat of battle. It is they who are true in faith, and it is they who are mindful of Allah.”

(Baqarah, 2:177)

Although what is meant by “giving” in the hadith is giving from wealth, it would

not be wrong to consider many other types of deeds within this scope. As a matter of fact, some non-financial acts of kindness, such as showing a smiling face to a fellow believer, guiding someone who has lost his way, or removing things that cause harm to people from the road and putting them aside, were considered charity by our Prophet (saw). From this point of view, extending a helping hand to those who turn away from us in times of distress, greeting those who pass by without greeting us, and showing a smiling face to those who are sullen towards us, in short, responding with goodness even to those who do evil to us, are considered among the most virtuous deeds within the scope of the above hadith.

Forgiving the evil-doer

Forgiveness, which is one of the most sublime qualities that human

beings can possess, is not to see evil or mistakes as normal. Rather, it entails demonstrating a virtuous disposition by recognizing that all individuals are prone to making mistakes. Forgiveness doesn't promote wrongdoing; rather, it aims to create an atmosphere where individuals who have erred will refrain from repeating their misdeeds due to the discomfort they feel. To withhold forgiveness is to shackle the mind and heart with detrimental sentiments like anger, resentment, enmity, hatred, and stress, triggered by the mistakes of others. Conversely, forgiveness liberates one from all such negative emotions and thoughts, enabling them to soar freely, akin to birds. While refusing to forgive begets responding to wrongdoing with more of the same, forgiveness embodies an approach in harmony with the Quranic

directive, “Repel evil with what is better” (Fussilat, 41:34). This path involves striving to gain the favor of the Merciful Creator who esteems forgiveness and endeavors and those who remain steadfast as devoted servants.

Consequently, those believers who aspire to genuinely emulate the Prophet's (saw) example ought to internalize the attributes delineated in the preceding hadith. Moreover, they should consider the adage, “Responding with kindness to good conduct is within everyone's capacity, while responding with kindness to ill behavior is exclusive to the virtuous,” as a guiding principle. This maxim should inform their conduct in every circumstance, prompting them to exhibit an attitude that befits their character and values.

Prof. Dr. Nevzat TARHAN

“Wise people are those who can use the capital of life in the best way.”



Interview by:
Zeynep Feyza AKKAYA

Prof. Dr. Nevzat Tarhan was born in Merzifon in 1952 and graduated from Kuleli Military High School in 1969 and Istanbul University Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty in 1975. He became a psychiatrist at Gulhane Military Medical Academy (GATA) in 1982. He became an assistant professor in 1988 and associate professor in 1990 in GATA Haydarpasa. He became colonel in 1993 and professor in 1996. He founded the NPISTANBUL Hospital in 2006 and the Uskudar University in 2011 by donating all his assets. He is a scientist who has transferred the results to his personal and social life, where he has transferred his knowledge of psychiatric expertise, which he has pursued over the years with great effort and with more than 170 research articles, that have been published in national and international refereed journals 70 books, and book chapters. Currently; he is executing the Founding Presidency of Uskudar University and by being the President of the Supreme Council of Management he is leading the duties of Türkiye's first neuropsychiatry hospital NPISTANBUL Brain Hospital's Management Board Presidency.

The right to life, often regarded as the foremost among fundamental rights and freedoms, is considered sacred in many religions and cultures and is characterized as one of the most critical rights to safeguard. What does the right to life entail?

Unlike other living beings, humans are born with the unique capacity for abstract, conceptual, and symbolic thinking. This is why some philosophers, such as Hegel, assert that human beings are placed into this world, implying that humans are not a mere product of the world but rather arrived in it afterward. A human is a being that questions life meaning they are inherently inclined to question the nature of life. When we examine the historical, biological, and social development of the world, human beings ask questions such as: What is life? Why am I here? Where am I going? Where did I come from? Who am I? Where do I belong? Along with these questions, the most profound one that people contemplate revolves around the essence of life itself.

The basic human drive is the desire to live. Right now, this urge is essential for human beings to survive. Without

this innate drive to live, individuals would lack the motivation to persevere. All living beings possess an innate tendency to live. However, humans, uniquely, contemplate this instinct in abstract terms, and for that reason, they address the issue in terms of rights.

Human beings, by their nature, have the capacity to prioritize their own wants and needs over the right to life of others. It is due to this characteristic of human beings that laws, regulations, and principles regarding the right to life have been established, shaping societal norms and trends.

For the first time in history, humanity articulated the concept of the right to life in the 1950 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Today, alongside other rights like the right to travel and the right to a fair trial, the right to life is recognized and declared as a fundamental human right.

People cannot kill others nor can they kill themselves. Self-murder, i.e., suicide attempt, is also a violation of the right to life. The right to life has become a sacred right in this age. Therefore, when dealing with the right to life, it is necessary to know that there is a human-



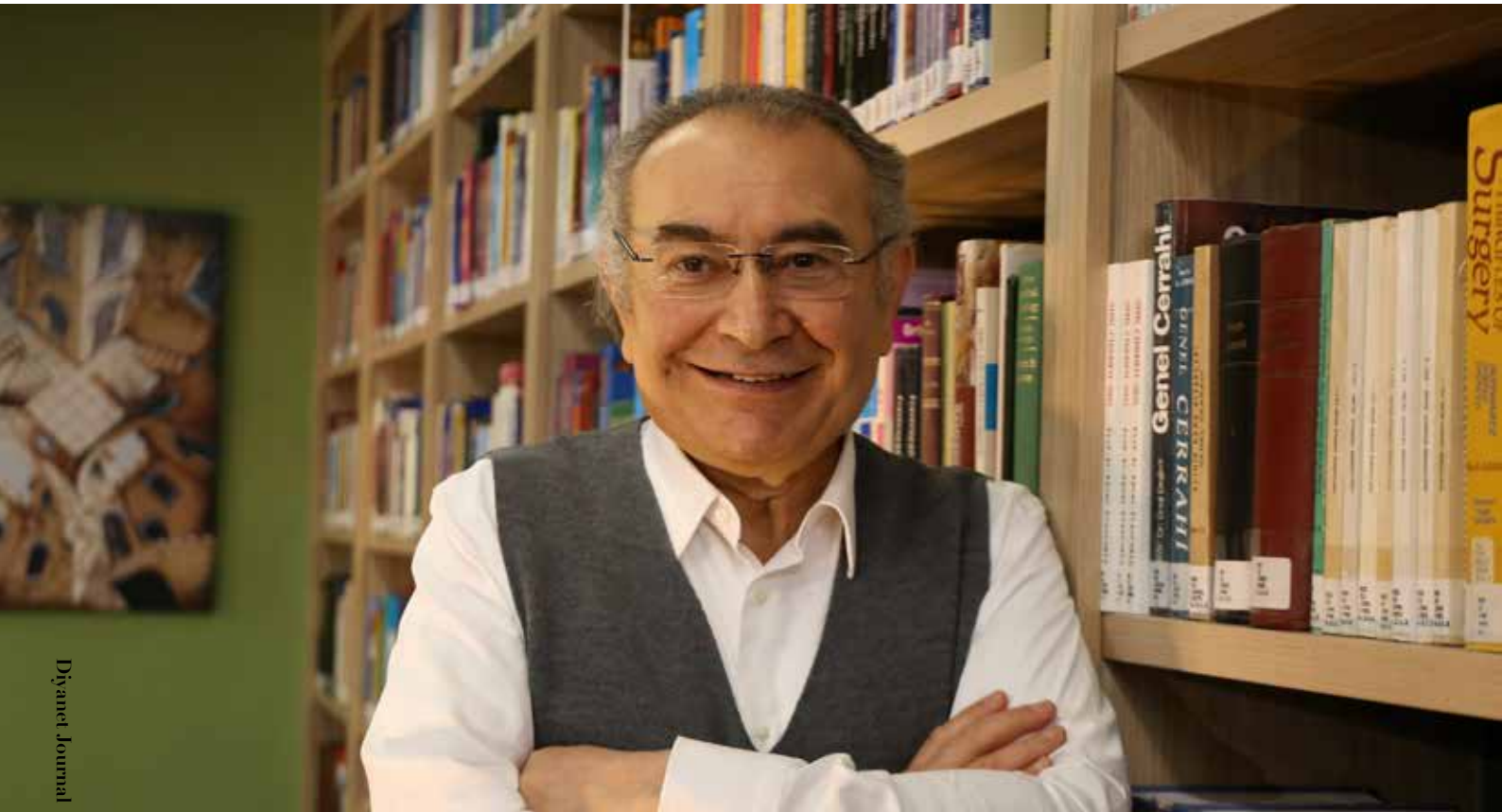
UNLIKE OTHER LIVING BEINGS, HUMANS ARE BORN WITH THE UNIQUE CAPACITY FOR ABSTRACT, CONCEPTUAL, AND SYMBOLIC THINKING.

specific right to life and that there are rules and limitations related to it.

Humans are social beings and need to live together. What should people pay attention to when respecting the right to life of other fellow individuals in our shared world?

There exists a hierarchy of human needs often depicted as a pyramid. At its foundation lie physiological necessities, encompassing essentials like eating, drinking, reproduction, and shelter. These are the basic physiological needs of human beings. If you deprive people of these essentials, you also deprive them of their right to life. In addition, apart from the need for shelter and such, there emerges the need for trust and reciprocity, the need for affection and companionship, and ultimately, the need to find purpose and meaning in one's life.

Following these, people's beliefs and values come into play. Beliefs and values shape the framework for the purpose of life. To establish equilibrium in society regarding the purpose of life, the rules need to be clear and well-defined. A compass is needed to determine these rights to life. That compass is beliefs and values.



At this point, there are three types of norms. First and foremost is legislation, which represents norms established by the law. Secondly, we have social norms, which encompass traditions and values that are shaped by society, often reflecting cultural standards. Finally, there is the individual's norms. These are the principles that reside within an individual's conscience. Examples include keeping one's promises, being honest, refraining from falsehoods, respecting the rights of others, and refraining from violating those rights. These norms found in one's conscience are defined as morality.



WE ARE FACING CLIMATE CHANGE AS A RESULT OF DENYING OTHER LIVING BEINGS THEIR RIGHT TO LIFE.

Morality ensures that people do not commit evil in secret. Social norms ensure that people do not do evil openly, and legal norms ensure that they do not commit crimes. In essence, a hierarchy exists to determine the standards by which we live our lives.

When we talk about the right to life, we are faced with a wide range of issues, including those that affect the living beings around us. However, presently, we are witnessing the deprivation of the right to life for numerous living beings worldwide. Actually, today other living beings appear to have the right to life at least as much as humans,

if not more. What do you think can be done to raise individual and social awareness on this issue?

Francis Bacon, one of the Enlightenment philosophers, viewed nature as a rival, contending that nature is a challenge to be overcome and that humans should aim to dominate it. According to his argument, we can destroy nature. This idea paved the way for industrialization. As a result, the idea that humans can destroy nature and that only humans have the right to life emerged.

We are facing climate change as a result of denying other living

beings their right to life. There are currently three threats facing humanity in the future. The first is economic inequality, the second is climate change, and the third is human isolation.

Climate change is related to a lack of respect for nature. Modernism is the driving force behind human destruction of nature and the perception of nature as a competitor and adversary. When nature is viewed as a rival, it becomes possible to exert control over it or even cause its destruction.

Power-oriented systems in the world pose the greatest threat to the right to life, while justice-oriented systems are its greatest ally. This is because only a system rooted in justice can establish and uphold norms, values, and beliefs. Consequently, ethical and cultural standards are imperative for the establishment and preservation of the right to life. The most important measure of these cultural standards is values. In other words, values are akin to traffic signs on the path of life. When the right values are in place, individuals are on the correct course, just as correct traffic signs lead the way. If the traffic signs are inaccurate, they can lead you astray and

make you go the wrong way. Traffic signs do not exist for their own sake. In the same way, values do not exist for their own sake either. Values have a purpose, which is to guide individuals toward what is good, right, and beautiful in life.

What would you like to say about the right to life in the digital world in the context of the values we have mentioned?

The world is going through a digital revolution. There is serious digitalization all over the world right now. This digitalization is the industrial revolution of our age. Yet, there is a purposeless digitalization in society. Only if we direct this digitalization towards a certain purpose, will it benefit human beings. Therefore, the direction in which we steer this digital transformation is crucial. It can either lead to global collapse or pave the way for substantial improvements in our society and the world at large.

The most damaging thing about digitalization is the spread of dishonesty and selfishness. However, it's worth noting that the internet can also serve as a feedback mechanism to counteract malicious behavior. Therefore, digitalization presents an aspect of threat and an

aspect of opportunity. The opportunity dimension of digitalization holds significant promise. If we use the Internet for good, righteous, and beautiful purposes, we have a chance to tell the whole world about the truths we possess. Digitalization is a great means of conveying the truth.



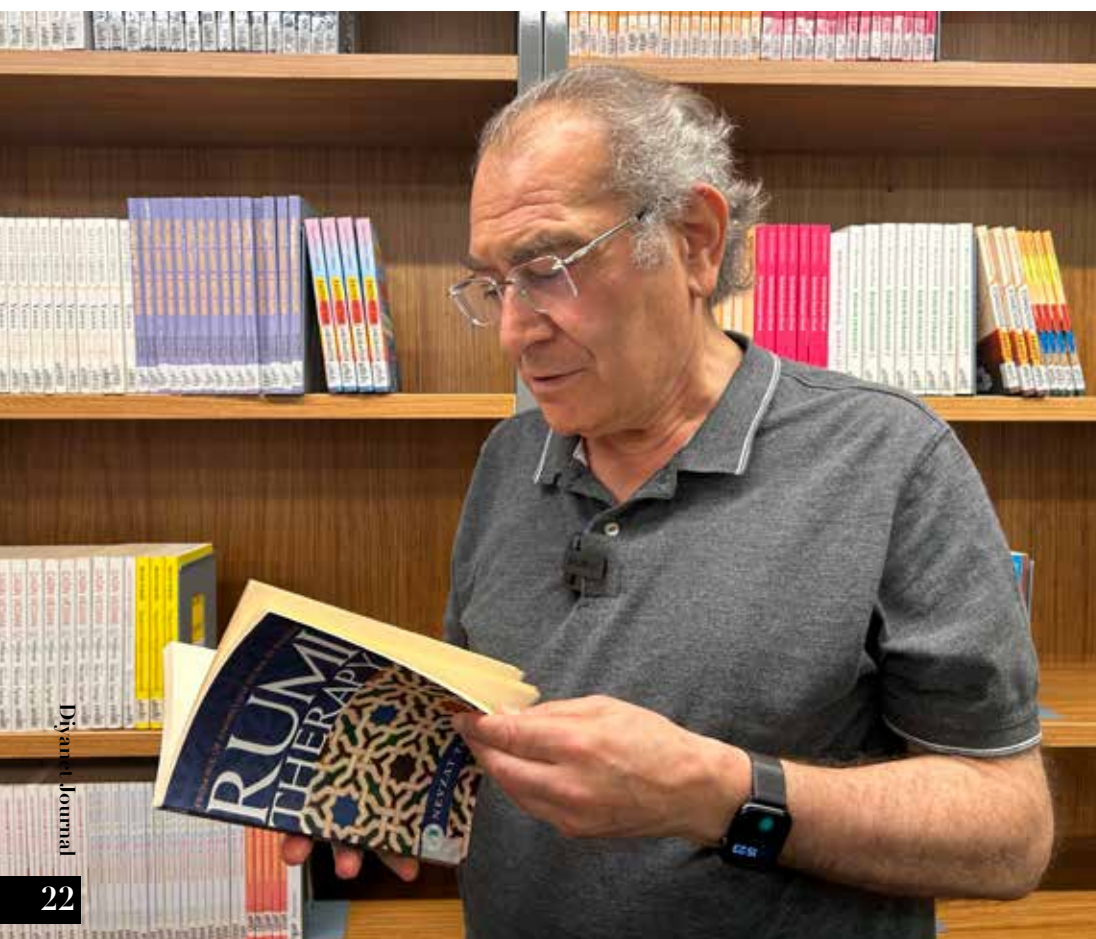
ALL LIVING BEINGS POSSESS AN INNATE TENDENCY TO LIVE. HOWEVER, HUMANS, UNIQUELY, CONTEMPLATE THIS INSTINCT IN ABSTRACT TERMS, AND FOR THAT REASON, THEY ADDRESS THE ISSUE IN TERMS OF RIGHTS.

I do not view digitalization as a threat. It is a significant opportunity for individuals with a purpose in this era, but it can also be a substantial threat to those who prioritize their own interests.

It is a well-known fact that the steps leading to suicide are based on social and cultural reasons and that the psychological state is highly influential. Why do people give up their right to life?

When we compare human behavior with that of other living things, there are four





The fourth distinctive trait relates to the contemplation of death. Unlike any other living beings, humans possess the knowledge of their own mortality. Some philosophers who grapple with the concept of death have even taken extreme actions like suicide, arguing that the pursuit of meaning is ultimately futile. This awareness of death sets human beings apart, yet they also harbor a desire for eternity. People who have a meaningful explanation for death can find happiness in it. For why should people who worship Allah as if He sees them every moment be afraid of death? These people have a deep sense of accountability after death beyond this life. What do wise people do? They invest in the hereafter recognizing that life is both a capital and a divine gift bestowed upon us. If we use our life well and increase this capital, when we come to the end of this life, we will enter the second life with great wealth. Thus, wise people are those who can use the capital of life in the best way. They are the people who can make their decisions in this life accordingly. Therefore, when we talk about life, we should not only think about this worldly life.

concepts that only humans have that other living things do not. For example, only humans have the gene for seeking novelty. This is because human beings possess a sense of curiosity and wonder, which drives them to constantly seek out new experiences and challenges.

Another distinctive characteristic of humans is their relentless search for meaning. Unlike other creatures, human beings ponder questions like “What is the meaning of life? What is my purpose in life?” While other species primarily focus on basic



POWER-ORIENTED SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD POSE THE GREATEST THREAT TO THE RIGHT TO LIFE, WHILE JUSTICE-ORIENTED SYSTEMS ARE ITS GREATEST ALLY.

survival needs like eating, drinking, reproducing, and eventually passing away, humans exhibit a unique drive. Although they grow older they aspire to live longer. They seek immortality. The third is the perception of time. No living being except humans perceives the past and the future. Although they live in the present, and in the moment, human beings have regrets about the past and questions about the future. This characteristic causes depression in humans. In fact, one of the biggest causes of depression is related to death.

IUMS delegation is in Türkiye

A delegation from the International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS) was received by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Presidential Complex. The meeting was attended by the Secretary-General of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, Ali Mohiuddin Al Qaradaghi, and his delegation, along with President of Religious Affairs Ali Erbas.



“Islam is a religion of compassion, mercy, justice, and tolerance”



President of Religious Affairs Erbas attended the “Communication and Integration” conference organized by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance in Saudi Arabia.

Pointing out that Islam is a religion of trust and peace, President Erbas emphasized that guidance and tranquility can be possible by holding tightly to the Holy Qur’an and the sunnah.

He ended with the following statement and supplication, “Indeed, the Messenger of Allah declared, “I have bequeathed to you two

things that will ensure you remain on the right path: the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet.” Islam inherently embodies compassion, mercy, justice, and tolerance. Regrettably, we witness instances of sorrow and conflict within certain segments of the Muslim community. It’s crucial to recognize that this distressing state is not rooted in genuine Islamic teachings but rather arises from misinterpretation or misrepresentation. We beseech Allah for guidance, triumph, accurate comprehension, and unwavering commitment to the righteous path.”

“Read to Understand It” campaign against the burning of the Holy Qur’an

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) has launched an initiative titled “Read to Understand It” in response to the recurring incidents of the Holy Qur’an being burned in European countries.

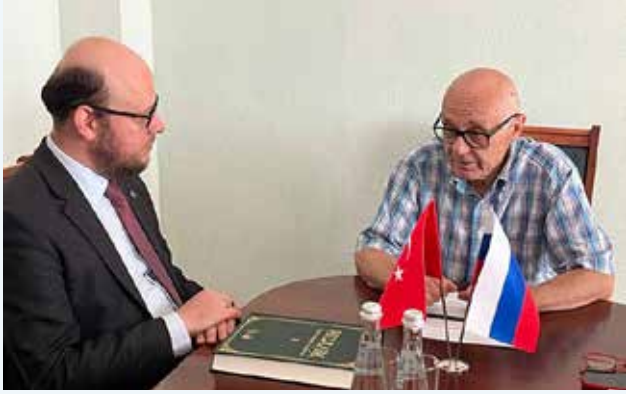
As per an official statement from ISESCO, an international conference took place in Rabat, Morocco’s capital, featuring the participation of numerous scholars and leaders from Islamic universities. During the

conference’s opening address, ISESCO’s Director General, Salim bin Mohammed al-Malik, unveiled the “Read to Understand It” initiative as a proactive measure against the desecration of the Holy Qur’an.

Highlighting that the initiative was launched as a constructive reaction to counteract Qur’an burnings, Malik underscored the necessity for collaborative endeavours to accurately explain Islam.



“Islam through Hadiths” in the Russian State Library



The Russian translation of the book “Islam through Hadiths,” published by the Presidency of Religious Affairs, has been added to the Russian State Library, which is among the world’s largest libraries. The event took place during a program commemorating the presentation of the book to the “Lenin Library” in Moscow, the capital of Russia.

The program was attended by Omer Faruk Savuran, Counsellor for Religious Services at the Embassy of Türkiye in Moscow, Viktor Fedorov, Director of the Russian State Library, and other officials of the library.

During his address, Savuran highlighted the library’s historical significance, noting its service during the Tsarist era, the Soviet

Union period, and in contemporary Russia.

Observing that the work was meticulously prepared by the experts in the field of theology in a way that can be understood by everyone, Savuran remarked, “The Hadith and the sunnah are among the basic sources of Muslims because they are the exposition of the Holy Qur’an. I believe that this publication will be very beneficial to everyone in the library, including those who do academic studies in the field of theology in Russia.”

Fedorov, acknowledging Russia’s multicultural composition, expressed his optimism that the book “Islam through Hadiths” will captivate the library’s visitors, particularly the younger generation.



The documentary of TDV Encyclopedia of Islam met its first audience in Sarajevo

The TRT co-production documentary “Forever Thirty-Three”, which tells the story of the Turkish Diyanet Foundation (TDV) Encyclopedia of Islam, had its world premiere at the 29th Sarajevo Film Festival (SFF).

The documentary spotlights the TDV Encyclopedia of Islam, the first original encyclopedia written and completed within the Islamic world chronicling the 15-century odyssey of Islamic culture and civilization. This documentary received its inaugural showcase to cinema enthusiasts at the Sarajevo Film Festival in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

“The Encyclopedia serves as a gateway to accurate information within the Islamic world”, stated Prof. Dr. Murteza Bedir, the Head of the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation Centre for Islamic Studies (ISAM). He highlighted that the TDV Encyclopedia of Islam,

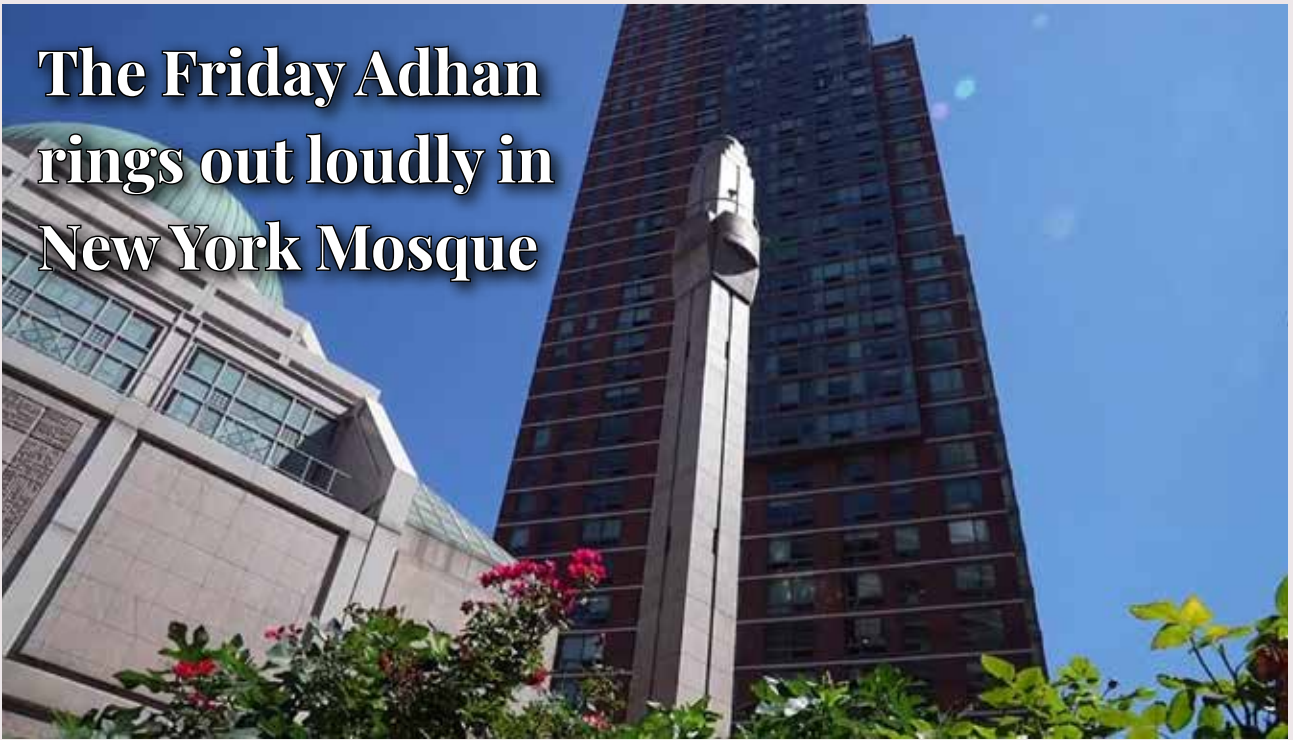
composed over 33 years spanning 44 volumes, carries significant value. Bedir emphasized, “It’s immensely gratifying to possess a resource that provides precise insights into Islam, both within the Islamic world and in Türkiye. The fact that Türkiye achieved this accomplishment is especially meaningful.”

The TDV Encyclopedia of Islam

As relayed by ISAM, the TDV Encyclopedia of Islam stands as the pioneering encyclopedia globally, produced and completed by Muslims. This unique work bears originality and holds the copyright for its article listings, content, and stylistic approach. Created through a 33-year endeavor spanning 1983 to 2016, this monumental 44-volume encyclopedia earned recognition from the Presidency in 2014 and the Turkish Academy of Sciences in 2019.



The Friday Adhan rings out loudly in New York Mosque



The call to prayer, known as the adhan, resonated through the loudspeakers for Friday prayers in New York City, USA.

At the Islamic Cultural Centre of New York (ICCNY), one of the largest mosques in the Manhattan area, the call to prayer was recited aloud for the first time, while some of the Muslims attending Friday prayers recorded the moment on their mobile phones.

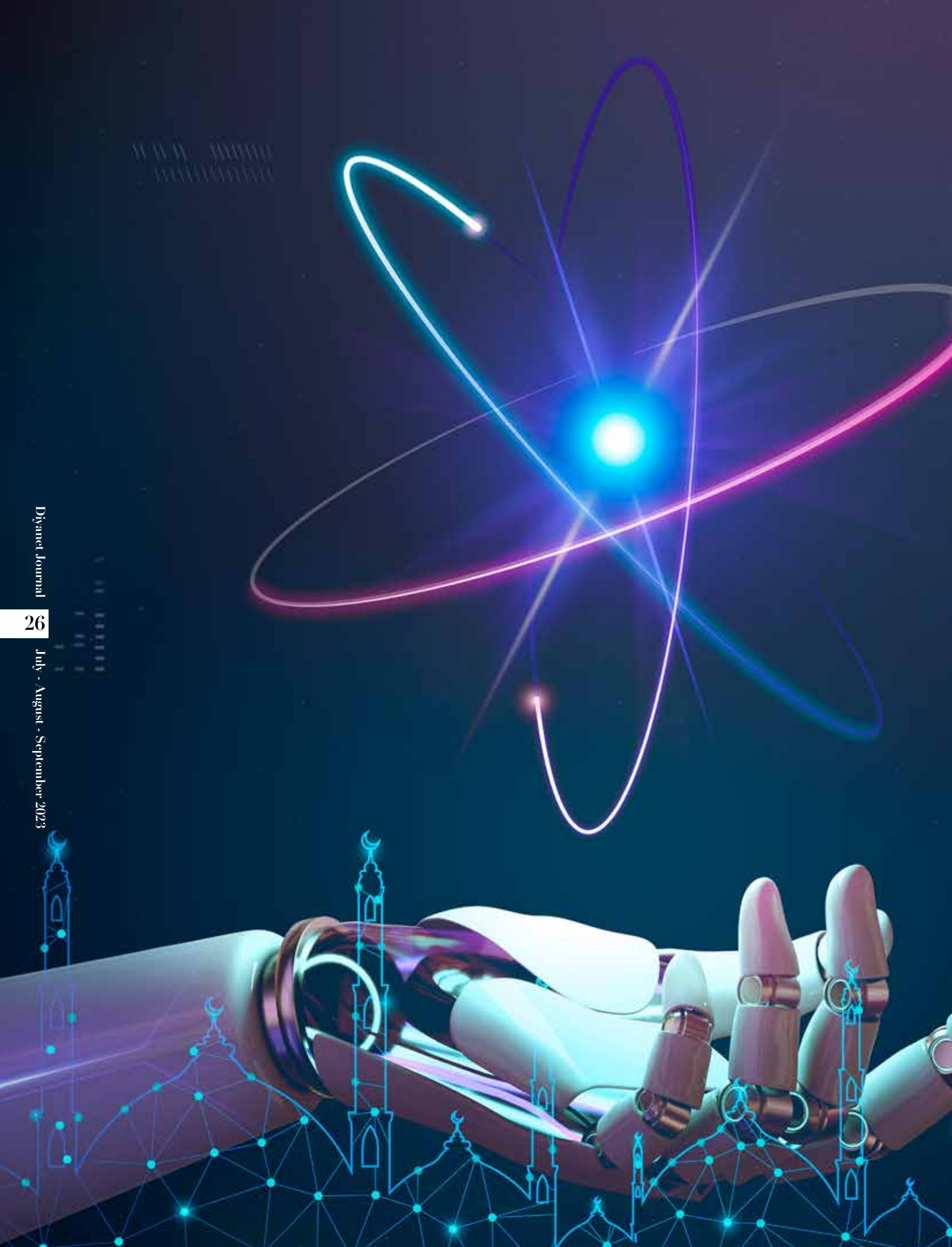
New York Mayor Eric Adams announced at a press conference on August 29th that the call to prayer could be

heard outside during Friday prayers in the city's mosques and at iftar during Ramadan. Speaking at the meeting, which was attended by representatives of various mosque associations and Muslim foundations, Adams said: "You're free to worship as you wish in New York. I am proud that we are finally achieving that today." Noting that Islam, like Christianity, Judaism, and other faiths, is an important part of New York's culture and that mosques help fight crime and illegal immigration, Adams told Muslim leaders, "We are determined to give you the recognition you deserve."

The National Museum of the Holy Qur'an in Iran displays Qur'anic manuscripts



The National Museum of the Holy Qur'an in Tehran, the capital of Iran, specializes in exhibiting Qur'anic manuscripts and artworks. Its collection comprises 650 artifacts, with the majority being manuscripts of the Qur'an. Among these are Qur'ans dating from around the 4th century of the Hijri Shamsi calendar to the end of the Qajar period, along with a diverse array of coins, plates, boxes, penholders, vases, and other valuable objects. Established in 2005, the museum houses a significant number of historical artifacts from the history of Islam, including manuscripts of the Holy Qur'an.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammed KIZILGECIT

Ataturk University Faculty of Theology

Artificial intelligence is often likened in significance to historical breakthroughs like the invention of writing or electricity. The rapid and vital pace of progress in artificial intelligence (AI), tough and challenging to keep up with, necessitates a comprehensive understanding. Although it is not yet clear how to calculate its impact on society and individuals as well as its future status, it is of great importance for the future of society and individuals to clarify the nature of the impact of AI. Although AI studies

continue to increase rapidly in many fields such as engineering, medicine, health, defense, and science, studies on artificial intelligence in the social sciences, particularly in religious studies, remain limited. Thus, addressing the matter within the context of the artificial intelligence-religion relationship and artificial intelligence-religious studies is appropriate.

To some, artificial intelligence signifies the capacity of computers to think. To others, it is a

field of research striving to imbue computers with human-like behavior superior to current human abilities and capabilities. In more general terms, it would not be inaccurate to say that artificial intelligence is a branch of science that develops algorithms enabling computers to emulate the characteristics of human intelligence. This branch of science aims to develop systems that can interpret events, make daily decisions, and produce solutions to problems by exhibiting intelligent behaviors like humans.

The ability to understand information, create cause-and-effect relationships, derive information from information, and process information indicate the system's level of intelligence. With this level of intelligence, the computer can exhibit behaviors such as problem-solving, decision-making, reasoning, planning, learning, controlling, monitoring, and diagnosing. Artificial intelligence's scope extends beyond computer science to encompass mathematics, psychology, sociology, biology, and philosophy.

The utilization of scientific tools to fathom and interpret religious life and spiritual encounters invokes reflections on the historic tension between religion and science, predominantly rooted in the Western experience. Nonetheless, the fact that Islamic civilization has experienced this negativity to a minimal extent compared to the West, coupled with the ontic (existential) intellectual value that Islam attributes to knowledge and scholars, establishes a fertile ground for constructing a forward-looking narrative centered around science. At this juncture, the intersection of artificial intelligence and religion underscores the functional role of

artificial intelligence. In other words, the issue is to what extent technology and digitalization will be beneficial for human beings, the most honorable of beings. The yardstick here is Islam's conception of the human being. The preference of Muslim individuals to use the digital technologies offered by AI for spiritual and physical development



THE RAPID AND VITAL PACE OF PROGRESS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), TOUGH AND CHALLENGING TO KEEP UP WITH, NECESSITATES A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING.

may even be a religious obligation in certain instances.

The interaction between artificial intelligence and religious sciences can be explored within two frameworks. The first approach is to address the nature of AI through the lenses of Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and ethics. Organizations working in the fields of Islamic jurisprudence and ethics should proactively evaluate the use of artificial intelligence both at the technological level as a tool and in the digital world itself. The issue should be evaluated on the basis of Islamic values, taking into account all beings, and the framework for an appropriate future should be drawn. A partial realization of this concept is evident in the actions of the European Commission, which, in April 2018, issued its initial strategy paper on AI to identify potential risks and ethical aspects associated with AI technology. Following this work, the European AI Alliance was established. The European AI Alliance is a forum that brings together different stakeholders, such as companies, consumer organizations, and industry representatives, to discuss AI strategies and evaluate recommendations for the future. In April 2019, Ethics Guidelines

for Trustworthy AI were published, outlining seven key principles that AI systems should comply with and these basic principles are as follows: the human factor and supervision, technical robustness and safety, privacy and data protection, transparency, diversity, non-discrimination, and justice, social and environmental benefits, accountability.

Humanity is witnessing poignant instances that highlight to which degree the fundamental principles articulated by the European Commission can apply to both the Western world and other civilizations. Stressing the importance of approaching this matter within the framework of Islamic law and ethics serves to underscore that the endeavors of the mentioned Commission should be undertaken by our corresponding authorities in a more all-encompassing and thorough manner, expeditiously.

The European Commission also published a report on the safety and liability implications of AI in February 2020 (Report on the Safety and Liability Implications of Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, and Robotics). The report demonstrated the need for a foreseeable

framework regulation addressing the potential safety issues and liability principles of AI in the European Union. Finally, the Commission published the Commission White Paper on Artificial Intelligence – a European Approach to Excellence and Trust, which provides detailed guidance on how to address the ethical issues identified. The report was submitted for public opinion in February 2020, and the Artificial Intelligence Regulation was published in April 2021, which is the first legal regulation on AI.

The second stage of the interaction between artificial intelligence and religious studies



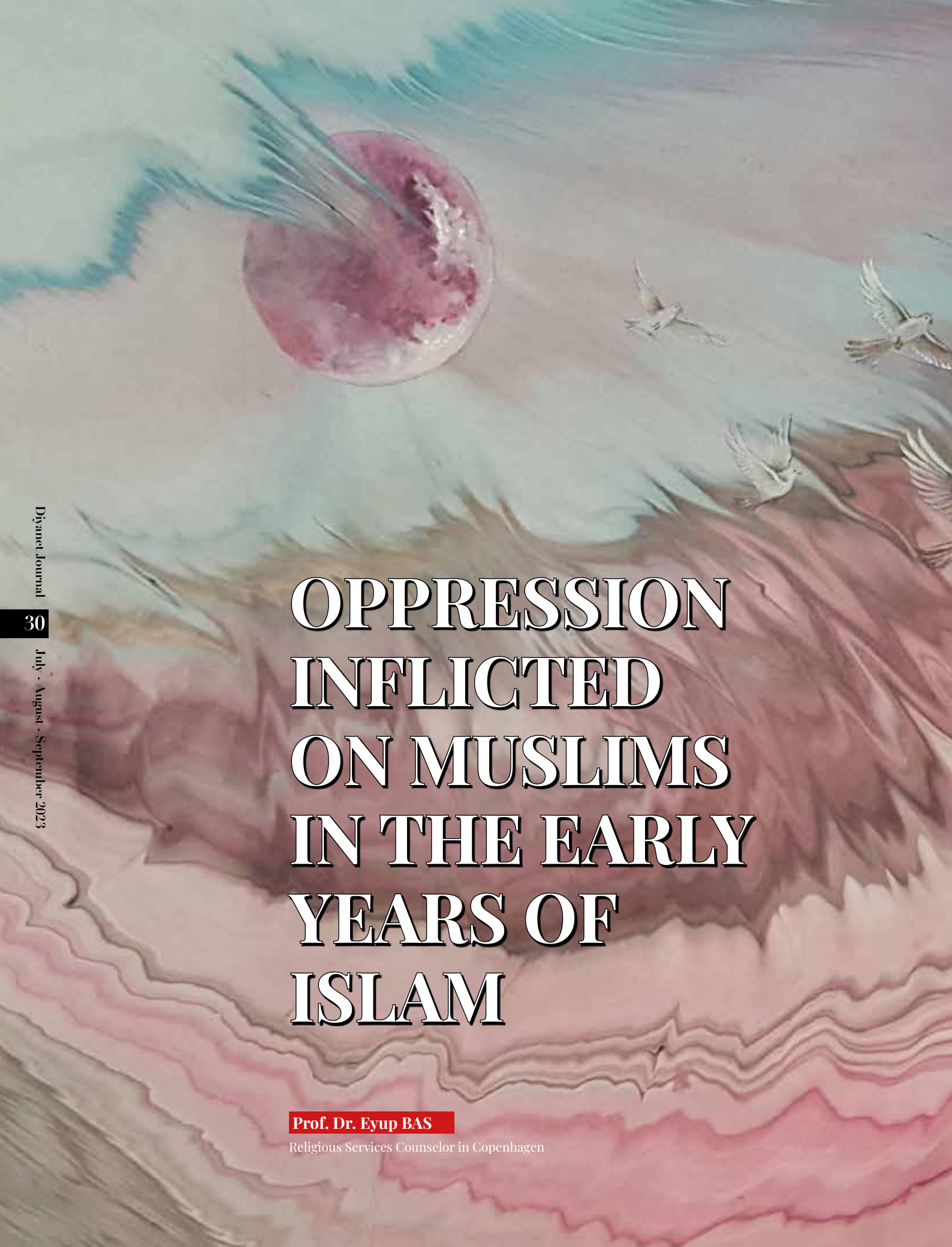
THE ISSUE IS TO WHAT EXTENT TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITALIZATION WILL BE BENEFICIAL FOR HUMAN BEINGS.

involves the use of AI as a method in the field of religious studies. This entails positioning AI as an instrumental tool to enhance understanding of religion. It involves introducing AI into new realms and dimensions, fostering an environment of creativity and foresight for the future. This involves the construction of a narrative and framework for the future. This phase encompasses the production of software, hardware, algorithms, and applications in accordance with tawhid in all areas for the construction and maintenance of religious life. It is to develop strategies by making prospective predictions

about the future of religions with machine learning and artificial intelligence network approaches. This is because the structure or approach that creates the algorithm will claim that it is itself the truth and will construct the understanding of religion of future generations with the religious vision created with these algorithms.

In this critical juncture of witnessing history and standing on the threshold of a new era, we must act swiftly to build realms in accordance with tawhid, maintain a religious perception in accordance with prophethood, and actualize a religious life in accordance with mercy, justice, and wisdom.





OPPRESSION INFLECTED ON MUSLIMS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF ISLAM

Prof. Dr. Eyup BAS

Religious Services Counselor in Copenhagen



THROUGH THE
STRATEGIC
ACTIONS
OF THE
MESSENGER
OF ALLAH,
A NUMBER
OF MUSLIMS
WERE ABLE
TO PRACTICE
THEIR FAITH
WITHOUT
HINDRANCE.

The swift reception of our beloved Prophet's efforts to spread the message of Islam in society greatly unsettled the polytheist Quraysh tribe, who held dominant power in Mecca. Yet, the derision and ridicule aimed at his character, along with their attempts to coax him into abandoning his righteous cause through various agreements, proved futile. Their animosity continued to intensify since they believed that if polytheism were abolished, their superiority in the eyes of the Arab tribes and their commercial opportunities and interests would be lost. Consequently, they employed all available means to obstruct the Prophet's mission and scorned Muslims collectively through his persona. Whenever he passed by a group of people, they would gesture to each other and utter, "Behold, here comes the son of the descendants of Abd al-Muttalib, who is spoken to from the heavens." Allah was undoubtedly supporting all the believers with His revelation, "We certainly know that your heart is truly distressed by what they say. So glorify the praises of your Lord and be one of those who always pray." (Hijr, 15:97-98)

The most oppressed were the ones who were slaves and Muslims, lacking



THE MIGRATION OF THIS FIRST GROUP TO ABYSSINIA WAS THE FIRST HIJRAH IN THE HISTORY OF ISLAM.

the persecution and torture the Muslims were being subjected to, yet rendered powerless to halt it, counseled them to seek refuge in Abyssinia (contemporary Ethiopia) on the Red Sea coast. This region was governed by a just ruler belonging to the Ahl al-Kitab, and there

guardians to shield them. Given the Meccan's inability to trouble the free and esteemed Muslims significantly, they channeled their rage toward the vulnerable.

The Prophet (saw) himself was subjected to insults and violence. His uncle Abu Lahab, to whom he gave his two daughters in marriage, and his wife Umm Jamil, the sister of Abu Sufyan, were his fiercest opponents. Since their house was near the Prophet's residence, they used to throw dirt in front of his door and would often pelt his house with stones or incite others to do so. Umm Jamil, in particular, took pleasure in selecting large thorny plants and hurling them onto the path that he frequently used to reach his house. In response to the wicked deeds of this cruel couple, Allah said to our beloved Prophet: "May the hands of Abu Lahab perish, and he 'himself' perish! Neither his wealth nor 'worldly' gains will benefit him. He will burn in a flaming Fire, and 'so will' his wife, the carrier of 'thorny' kindling, around her neck will be a rope of palm-fibre." (Masad, 111:1-5)

The first hijrah : the prophet's guidance to the muslims to immigrate to Abyssinia

The Messenger of Mercy, profoundly grieved by

they could freely practice their faith and enjoy safety. His decision was shaped by the unfavorable socio-cultural conditions prevailing in the Arabian Peninsula. The Arabian Peninsula was largely under the influence of the Quraysh and they held significant sway over this region. The Quraysh maintained favorable ties with other polytheist tribes, preventing any Arab tribe from daring to challenge them on behalf of the Muslims due to their intertwined commercial and religious relations. Moreover, the Yemeni region could not tolerate a divine religion because it was Zoroastrian. The movement towards Iraq and Damascus was also impossible due to the rigorous rule of the Sasanian and Byzantine in those regions.

Acting upon the counsel of the Prophet (saw), a cohort of Muslims clans secretly departed from Mecca in 615 to migrate to Abyssinia. This group consisted of eleven men and four women including 'Uthman ibn Affan and his wife Ruqayya, Abu Hudhayfa ibn Utba and his wife Sahla bint Suhail, Abu Salama and his wife Umm Salama, Amir bin Rabi'ah and his wife Layla bint Abi Hasma, Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam, Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf,

'Uthman ibn Maz'un, Abu Sabra, Hatib ibn 'Amr, and Suhayl ibn Bayda'. They traveled to Shu'ayba, situated approximately 80 kilometers from Mecca, and from there they reached Abyssinia by sea.

Upon their arrival, the emigrants' foremost action was to approach Ashamah, the Najashi of Abyssinia, and hold a meeting with him. During this meeting, they told him about the Prophet Muhammad and his teachings of Islam, the nascent faith he had begun to convey in Mecca. They recounted the persecution and oppression they had faced after adopting this religion. Finally, they informed him that the Prophet Muhammad wanted to entrust them, and later other Muslims if he agreed, to his righteous rule. Thus, the Muslims presented their request for asylum to Ashamah, the Najashi of Abyssinia, and received the positive response they expected. They continued to live under his protection without facing any discrimination or oppression because of their religious preferences. The migration of this first group to Abyssinia was the first hijrah in the history of Islam.

Second hijrah to Abyssinia

Abyssinia's strategic location along the

maritime trade route, connected to various port cities on the Red Sea coast, facilitated its access to a wealth of accumulated information and news. Due to this location, the emigrants there received the false news that the Meccans had eventually embraced Islam. Naturally, this news in the minds of some of the emigrants ignited the belief that the unfavorable conditions had come to an end. Consequently, a portion of them returned to Mecca. As these returning emigrants drew near Mecca, they discovered the falsehood of the news. However, it was too late. Since it was too difficult to return to Abyssinia, some of them had to enter Mecca secretly and others under protection. The polytheist of Quraysh maintained their silence, probably assuming that the returning emigrants were coming back remorseful. Yet, this event enabled the Muslims to get first-hand information about the conducive environment in Abyssinia from the emigrants who had returned from there. After careful assessment, the Messenger of Allah (saw), directed another group of Muslims to Abyssinia, who were no longer able to endure the material and spiritual pressures, to migrate to Abyssinia.

One year after the first hijrah, a second group of eighty-two men and eighteen women migrated to Abyssinia in the year 616. These Muslims, who reached Abyssinia under the leadership of Ja'far,



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the son of the Prophet's uncle Abu Talib and the brother of 'Ali, were welcomed there with equitable treatment and benevolence similar to the first emigrants.

The ramifications of the second hijrah had much greater implications in Mecca. For, according to the polytheists, the number of Muslims who migrated was much higher than before. The Meccan polytheists feared that Islam would proliferate in Abyssinia, potentially posing a threat to their authority. Moreover, given their significant trade relations with Abyssinia, they considered the presence of Muslim refugees there as hazardous to their economic interests. Therefore, in response, they immediately dispatched 'Amr ibn al-'As and 'Abd Allah ibn Rabi'ah to Najashi Ashamah, laden with substantial gifts. Their mission was to persuade Najashi to repatriate the Muslims who had sought refuge under his protection. Once in the court of Najashi, they maligned the Prophet Muhammad and those who believed in him to Najashi.

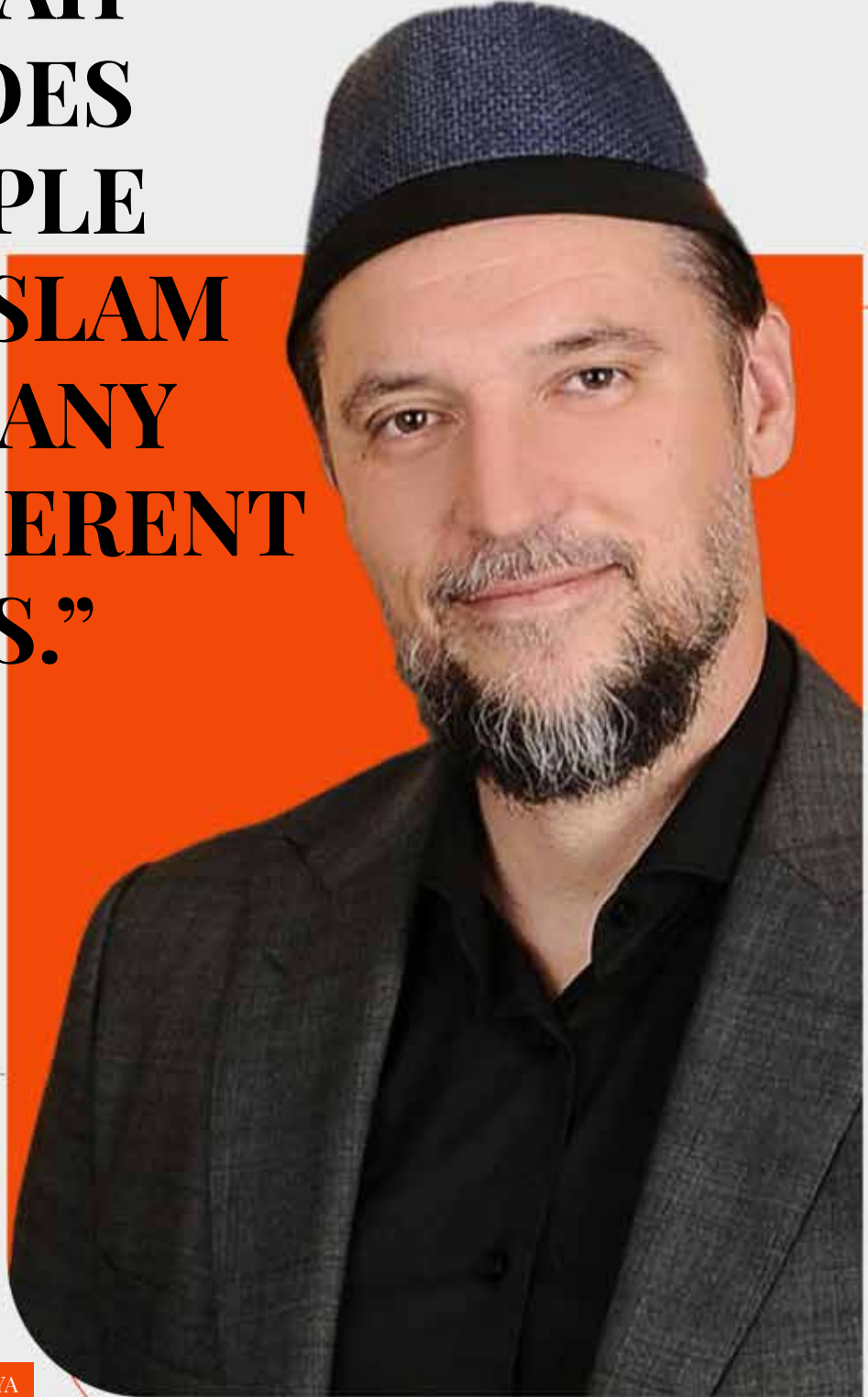
As a result, Najashi Ashamah summoned the Muslims to his presence and faced them with the representatives of the

Quraysh. In the presence of the great bishops and priests, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib spoke on behalf of the Muslims and explained the situation of the Muslims. At the end of his speech, Ja'far recited the verses mentioning Prophet 'Isa and his mother Maryam. Then Najashi said, "By Allah, Isa bin Maryam is not different from what you say. What you say comes from the same source as what came to Isa." and refused to hand over the Muslims to the Meccans. The gifts Amr and Abdullah brought were returned to them, and they returned to Mecca empty-handed.

Consequently, through the strategic actions of the Messenger of Allah, a number of Muslims, particularly those vulnerable to potential harm, were able to practice their faith without hindrance. Those who remained in Mecca fostered unity amongst themselves, following the Prophet's distinct measures and interventions. This endeavor was far from simple, given the Quraysh's heightened control over the routes encircling Mecca, a measure aimed at obstructing Muslim migrations to various locations, particularly Abyssinia.

JULIEN DROLON:

**“ALLAH
GUIDES
PEOPLE
TO ISLAM
IN MANY
DIFFERENT
WAYS.”**



Interview by: Zeynep Feyza AKKAYA

Could you please tell us about yourself? Who is Julien Drolon?

I am the CEO of Halis Media, a French Malaysian media/event company specializing in producing exceptional world-class media content and conferences with a special emphasis on narratives of convert. I am of French origin and embraced Islam in 2012 while in the Philippines.

How was your life concerning faith before you embraced Islam?

I have a strong Christian background. I got baptized when I was 2 years old. At 8 years old I received my first communion and subsequently ventured into Buddhism during my college years. I tried many types of spiritual practices and even walked 1000 kilometers in 30 days on a famous Christian Pilgrimage route “The Way of James” in Spain but I used to believe that God was too big for one religion which is a New Age concept.

When was the first time you encountered Islam?

I would say it was when a taxi driver in Abu Dhabi invited me to Islam after realizing that I was touched by listening to the Qur’an on the radio.

What did you feel when you heard the Qur’an?

I felt it was speaking to my heart. It was in a taxi in Abu Dhabi on the radio. It talks to your soul, you can’t deny it. As newborn babies recognize the voices of their mothers, human can recognize the sound and message of their creator.

How did you decide to be a Muslim?

I took my Shahada right after listening to an American convert talking about the difference between the Bible and the Qur’an. After he explained very well the differences, he proved that the Qur’an could only come from God and has not been changed by men which is not the case with the Bible of course.

How did your family and friends react to your conversion to Islam?

At first not so well but then after a while they started to understand and accepted my decision. As for my friends, I lost many of them of course but gained many more within the community of Muslims.

You became the voice of people who embraced Islam from different countries like Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India, China, Japan, Kenya, England, France, Germany, Poland, Peru, Mexico, Australia, and many more cultures with your documentary called “Freedom”. How



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did you decide to produce a feature film of 90 minutes?

I got tired of the anti-Muslim propaganda and the lies that the Western media spread about Islam. Back then I used to be in charge of a program to support new Muslims after their conversion. The idea emerged while talking with my wife Zara Shafie. We both came up with the idea to interview all the converts we knew in Malaysia. We interview 50 converts from 25 countries. It took us 2 years. We then did a world screening tour in 10 countries, which was a big success. Our next objective is to do a



Turkish Tour in at least 10 major cities in Türkiye. I hope this interview will help us find a partner to screen our documentary: FREEDOM. It has already been translated into Turkish and it will be very good for the young Turkish people to watch it especially. It is now available in English, French, Spanish, and Turkish at <https://www.thefreedomfilm.org/view>.

What caught your interest the most while interviewing these people?

Allah guides people to Islam in many different ways. But they all had something in common: they were searching for the truth, they were not satisfied with their lives and their belief systems. They knew something was missing on their spiritual path and they realized that it was Islam.

You are currently in the preparation of a new project called “The Last Hope”. What would you like to say about it?

“The Last Hope” is our new documentary film featuring converts from around the world sharing about the impact that the Prophet Muhammad, may peace be upon Him, had on their lives after and in some cases before their acceptance of Islam. We are currently raising funds

to get the necessary budget to finish the documentary. People can already watch the teaser and trailer of the documentary on our YouTube Channel @halismedia. The documentary is very important to counter the insults about the Prophet Muhammad, may peace upon Him. I think the Ummah is not making enough efforts to tell the world about the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and that is why we are also facing more Islamophobia. We hope that we can find some serious sponsors to help us make a big impact with this new documentary. Hopefully, this interview will help the right people to help us in our mission to make sure everyone on earth will know the truth about Prophet Muhammad, the greatest man that came on the surface of the earth and the Last Prophet of mankind.



I LOST MANY OF MY FRIENDS BUT GAINED MANY MORE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF MUSLIMS.

Julien Drolon is a French convert, former international reporter, and singer-songwriter. After conducting extensive research on religion for many years, he embraced Islam in the Philippines in 2012. Since then, he has been involved in many projects including New Muslim Care, which focuses on the people who have embraced Islam. Through a documentary project titled “Freedom” carried out by Julien Drolon and his beloved wife Zara Shafie, they wanted to give a voice to a community of Muslims during a crucial period when better comprehension of Islam is imperative. Presently, their efforts encompass diverse projects with the aim of reaching out to people and explaining the religion of Islam in the right way.

WHO HAS ESTABLISHED THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE AND WHO MANAGES IT?

QUESTIONS ON MY MIND

Prof. Dr. Cagfer KARADAS

The order and operation of the universe are occupying my thoughts. How does the universe operate? What kind of order does it possess? Who established this order, and who is responsible for its management?

To start with, let's address this inquiry based on the guidance from the Qur'an, sent by the Creator: "Have We not smoothed out the earth like a bed, and made the mountains as its pegs, and created you in pairs, and made your sleep for rest, and made the night as a cover, and made the day for livelihood, and built above you seven mighty heavens, and placed in them a shining lamp, and sent down from the rainclouds pouring water, producing by it grain and various plants, and dense orchards?" (Naba, 78:6-16)

If we can elaborate on this a little, what do these verses mean?

The order of the universe and the functioning of this order are explained in these verses. They illustrate the expanse of the earth likened to a resting surface, while mountains are depicted as stabilizing pegs. The diversity of humanity's colors, races, and tribes, along with the alternation of night and day, wherein night serves as reprieve

and day as a means of sustenance, are also expounded. Furthermore, the process of rain and the resultant abundance of grains, foliage, and fruits, which cater to the nourishment of living beings, are meticulously described. The Almighty Allah states that He has prepared all these opportunities for the human being whom He addresses as “you”.

What is the connection between these events?

Every phenomenon and occurrence within the universe intricately intertwines. The above verses emphasize this reality, shedding light on the interconnectedness of the heavens, earth, and the entities existing between them. The verses underscore the necessity of these elements and emphasize the inseparability of one from the other. The order and interdependence within the universe are intricately woven, where each facet cannot exist in isolation from the rest. To make these truths more relatable to human understanding, the metaphor of a “tent (i.e. stake)” is chosen.

How so?

The analogy is drawn wherein the sky resembles a tent, the earth is akin to

a mattress laid within the tent, and the sun is akin to a lamp suspended at the tent’s apex. Furthermore, the verses emphasize the critical significance of rain for sustenance, the deliberate arrangement of night for rest, and daylight for livelihood. The fact that the earth cannot function without the sky, the sun, and rain is a source of connection between the sky and the earth, and that in the absence of one of these elements, the others cannot fulfill their essential functions is also highlighted.

Why would not one exist without the other?

Experience confirms this observation. Planets lacking an atmosphere and water, despite having sunlight, are devoid of life. Life cannot exist where the sun is absent. Indeed, the removal of any of these elements from the established framework would disrupt the harmony within the universe.

So what is the source of this order and mechanism?

This harmony and connection arise either from the preferences and potentials of the elements listed here or from an external will and authority. However, the elements we discussed lack such



ALLAH HAS CREATED EVERYTHING IN THE UNIVERSE IN AN INTERRELATED AND INTERCONNECTED WAY. JUST AS THE SKY IS DEPENDENT ON THE EARTH AND THE EARTH IS DEPENDENT ON THE SKY, HUMANS ARE ALSO DEPENDENT ON OTHER BEINGS.

potential, as evidenced by our accumulated experiences. The most intelligent and experienced beings in the universe are human beings, and they obviously do not have the potential to create and manage such a structure. It is impossible for people to ensure the continuity of the elements existing in the universe with human intervention, and it is clear that they cause a deterioration of the connection and harmony established between the elements. Most of the recent environmental disasters are the result of thoughtless and outrageous human intervention in nature. International agreements and conventions made for this aim so far are unable to prevent this destruction. So, people appear as destructive and disruptive actors rather than being constructive factors in the universe. This is because the universe and its functioning are beyond the mental and biological power of people. The fact that some of the steps people took thinking that it would be for their own benefit led to the environmental disasters mentioned above, and this is the picture of people’s inability to fully comprehend the universe and their weakness in the face of this great structure.

What is the human being's position in the universe?

When we think about this, we come face to face with the passive reality of human beings, who seem to be effective actors with their minds and wills in the universe, caught in the flow of the corridor of time and space. It is even possible to say that the human being is a prisoner who appears to be dominating. That is why some thinkers have claimed that the human being is a passive being dragged under the orders of some laws imposed from outside. However, it is undeniable that people are active and effective beings to a certain extent in the universe, with the mind and willpower given to them, as pointed out above. If we try to look at the issue objectively, that is, if both the order of the universe and the role of humans in this order are well observed and calculated, we can clearly observe that both God and humans affect human voluntary actions. In addition to all these, we cannot ignore the fact that the environment has an impact on human actions because Allah has created everything in the universe in an interrelated and interconnected way. Just as the sky is dependent on the earth and the earth is dependent on the sky, humans



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are also dependent on other beings. However, the universe, with its enormous structure, is beyond human knowledge and experience. Under these circumstances, it seems difficult for humans to play the sole regulatory and developer role in the universe and to assume such a responsibility.

So, what is the conclusion?

At this point, this complex and yet so harmonious structure points to an external entity with the power and will, and it draws the attention of people, who are intelligent and strong-willed beings, to this aspect. This being, possessing power and will, is beyond the whole of this structure. He is divine, unique, and independent of all conditions and prerequisites, especially in time and space, and beyond any limits and limitations. At the same time, He possesses the qualities of knowledge, power, and will, and does whatever He wants. So, only a being with these qualities can establish, maintain and run the universe. When we consider all these features, our attention is turned to Allah, who is the focal point of divine religions. Almighty Allah often states in the Qur'an that He is the owner and creator of the earth, the sky and all

that is in it, and, warns, "And do not be inclined to the wrongdoers or you will be touched by the Fire. For then you would have no protectors other than Allah, nor would you be helped." (Hud, 11:113) The term "wrongdoers" referred to in the verse pertains to individuals and jinn who fail to acknowledge Allah and the order He has established. Consequently, they engage in actions that disturb or seek to disturb the established order and harmony within the universe. Yet, these same beings, who are granted the capacity for intelligence and will as an essential aspect of the divine test, are placed within the constraints of the earth and heavens. As indicated in the verse, "I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me." (Dhariyat, 51:56), their primary purpose is to acknowledge Allah and abide by the order He established. However, despite this purpose, differences persist among them, as mentioned in the following verse, "And We relate to you (O Prophet) the stories of the messengers to reassure your heart. And there has come to you in this surah the truth, a warning to the disbelievers, and a reminder to the believers." (Hud, 11:119)

SPECIAL MANIFESTATION OF MERCY: AR-RAHIM

Fatma BAYRAM

Since the name “ar-Rahim” shares the same root as “ar-Rahman”, it becomes essential to elucidate their meanings through comparison. “Ar-Rahman” signifies the One Who extends His mercy to upon all created beings impartially. This mercy is bestowed irrespective of any conditions, circumstances, or on the will of the servant. It suffices that we are created in order to be the recipients of the manifestations of “ar-Rahman”. However, if Allah’s mercy were solely characterized by Him being ar-Rahman, there would be no differentiation between the good and the bad, the righteous and the unrighteous. The fact that human beings were given a will would be of no value, the human capacity for choice would be inconsequential, the pursuit of goodness would be meaningless, and moral advancement would remain unattainable.

We know that the names of our Lord are not independent of each other and each of them forms a perfect whole in

relation to the others. As a result of the relationship between mercy and justice, the name “ar-Rahim” expresses a second mercy that the servants will attain as a reward for using their wills in the path of goodness. It shows that in His sight, the one who strives and the one who does not strive will not be treated equally (Baqarah, 2:218; Al-i ‘Imran, 3:132; Nisa, 4:175; Tawbah, 9:20–21; Naml, 27:46; Nur, 24:56; Ahzab, 33:43; Jathiyah, 45:30; Hujurat, 49:10; Hadid, 57:28). Indeed, in the Qur’an, after declaring that His mercy encompasses all creation, Allah states that those who believe in the Last Prophet and possess certain qualities will also receive divine mercy in the future (A’raf 7:156–157). For this reason, it is widely accepted that “ar-Rahman” refers to the divine mercy that includes everyone in this world, and “ar-Rahim” refers to the divine mercy that includes only the believers in the Hereafter.

Thus, our Lord, Who surrounds our beginning and our end with this two-way manifestation of His mercy, grants absolute hope to all humanity with

His name “ar-Rahman” and encourages people who fulfill their responsibilities, are diligent and benevolent to continue their good deeds without despairing of the result with His name “ar-Rahim” (Yunus, 10:26–27).

The name “ar-Rahim”, which is mentioned 154 times in the Qur’an to describe Allah and is used by itself in only 3 verses



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(Nisa, 4:29; Isra, 17:66; Ahzab, 33:43), is usually used in conjunction with one of the other names of our Lord, such as ar-Ra’uf, al-Ghafur, and al-Tawwab, and is always used in a way that contains glad tidings. The fact that the verses on repentance end with this name in 38 places in the Qur’an reveals the connection between the acceptance of repentance and Allah’s name, ar-Rahim. In verse 167 of Surah al-A’raf, while describing the horror of the Day of Judgment, Allah’s attributes of Sari’ al-‘Iqab and Ghafur ar-Rahim are mentioned together, and we (thankfully) see that the power to punish is balanced by the attribute of forgiveness. In verse 42 of Surah al-Dukhan, the name ar-Rahim is mentioned again, emphasizing that salvation on the Day of Judgment will be achieved only through Allah’s mercy. In verse 7 of Surah al-Mumtahanah, it is heralded that enmity between people can be transformed into love because Allah is al-Qadir, al-Ghafur, and



ar-Rahim. In verse 14 of Surah al-Taghabun, it is recommended that hostile behaviors within the family should be treated with forgiveness, while the names of Allah, al-Ghafur, and ar-Rahim are mentioned again, reminding us that we too need Allah's forgiveness and mercy and that to deserve it, we must first treat His servants in the same way.

The servants who have been imbued with this name are those who are merciful to those whom Allah commands to be

merciful but who are able to maintain a delicate equilibrium between mercy and justice. Even in the face of challenges encountered while aiding others, they endure these difficulties solely for the sake of Allah's satisfaction. Rather than lamenting their circumstances, they consistently express gratitude to Allah for deeming them worthy of possessing this virtue. They remain humble, recognizing that they are merely conduits for goodness, never succumbing to arrogance as chosen instruments of

their Lord for righteous deeds. They remain humble, recognizing that they are merely conduits for goodness, and they never succumb to arrogance, knowing that they are only a means to deliver good.

Psychology tells us that compassion, kindness, and emotional empathy have significant benefits for both mental and physical health. These emotions have a calming effect and reduce anxiety.

The debate on how to reconcile the infinite mercy attributed to Allah

by His names, ar-Rahman and ar-Rahim, with the evil seen in nature has always been a problem that challenges people in terms of faith. Al-Ghazali explains this issue by stating that there is no such thing as pure evil in the universe and that there is a good hidden in what is considered evil for human beings that we cannot perceive at the beginning. He emphasizes that there should be no doubt that Allah is *Arhamar Rahimin*, but that it is not possible to be fully acquainted with all the secrets of divine providence.

ISLAM IN FRANCE

Dr. Bayram DEMİRTAS

Religious Services Counselor in Paris

Roubaix Eyüp Sultan Mosque



France's initial interaction with Muslims occurred during the Umayyad conquest campaigns in North Africa. Settlements in the present-day southwestern Toulouse region of France, which commenced in 720, proved to be impermanent, and the Muslim influence in southern France concluded by 975.

In fact, France's commercial and political relations with the Islamic world came only to the fore through the collaboration established between Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and King Francis I. Due to the treaty granted in 1536, French merchants, missionaries, and diplomats were accorded religious, commercial, and legal privileges within the Ottoman borders. This accord allowed them to reside in significant imperial centers and engage with Muslims. It was only with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 that France's policy of gaining control over Muslim nations was initiated. France's pursuit of influence over the Muslim countries continued through the conquest of Algeria in 1830 and extended to other Maghreb countries. Yet, this also led to the formation of Muslim communities within



FRANCE'S INITIAL INTERACTION WITH MUSLIMS OCCURRED DURING THE Umayyad CONQUEST CAMPAIGNS IN NORTH AFRICA.

France. Simultaneously, the post-World War II industrial boom enticed millions of Muslims to select France as their primary labor destination and eventually the country where they settled.

In present-day France, which boasts the largest Muslim population in Europe, accounting for potentially 10% of its 70 million inhabitants, the topics of "religion," particularly "Islam," frequently emerge as subjects of discussion. These debates are often intertwined with notions like freedom, security, cohesion, modernity, public space, and local identity. Regrettably, these discussions can sometimes foster misunderstandings about Islam, a faith rooted in concepts of peace and trust. Regarding their origin, the majority of Muslims in France hail from North Africa, with 43.2% originating from Algeria, 27.5% from Morocco, and 11.4% from Tunisia. Additional groups of Muslim people in contemporary France hail from sub-Saharan Africa (9.3%) and Türkiye (8.6%).

France, a secular state with a substantial and diverse Muslim population representing various ethnic origins, has undertaken a range of initiatives over the years

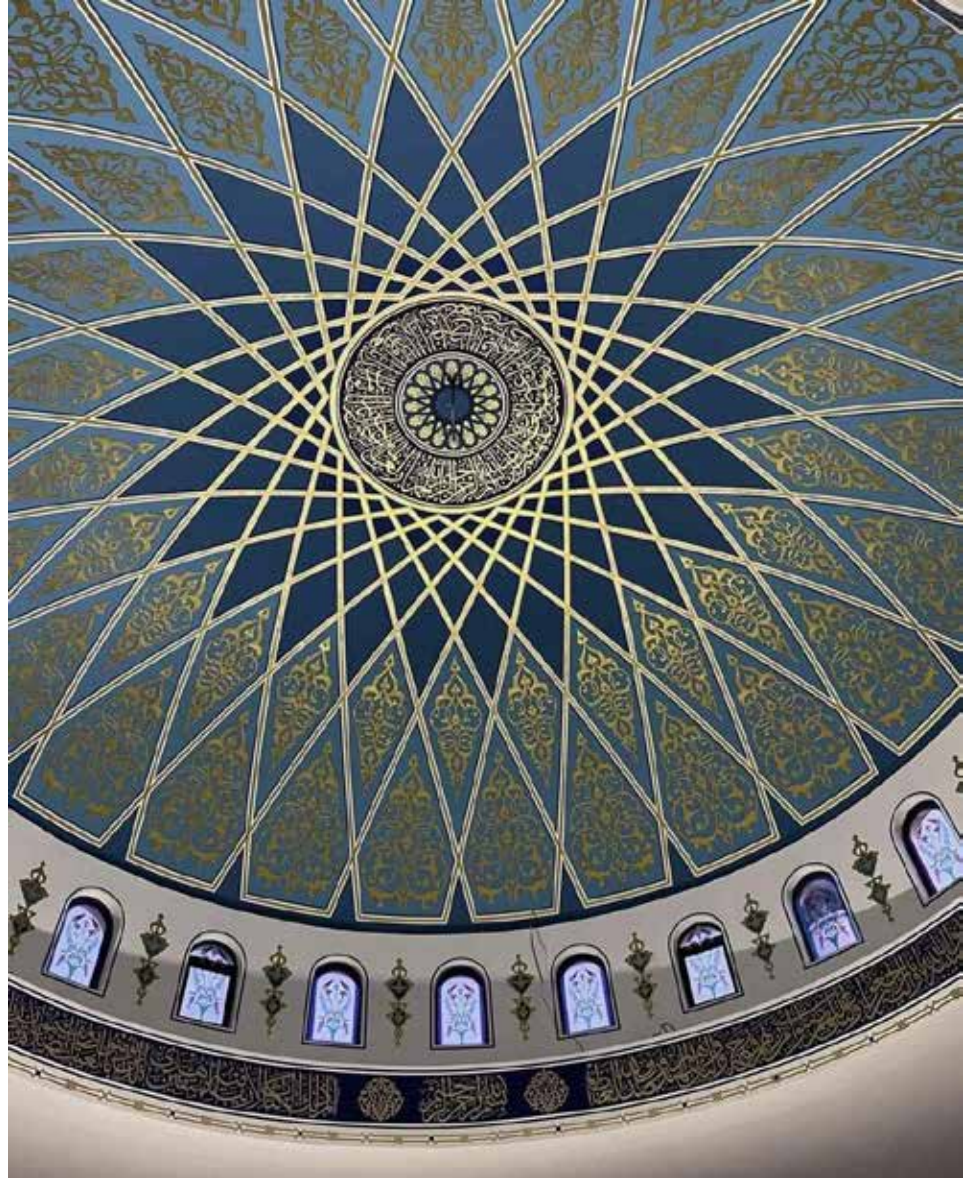
to address the issue of Muslim representation in public discourse. One notable initiative was the establishment of the Council of Islamic Thought in France ("Conseil de réflexion sur l'Islam en France") in 1990. This council aimed to bring together diverse Muslim groups and was formed with 15 representatives from various backgrounds, including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Senegal. The scope of CORIF's activities extended beyond religious worship, encompassing research on the relationship between Islam and society at large. It also involved meetings with representatives of different faiths to promote dialogue.

However, after a while, CORIF was eventually dissolved. In 2003, under the leadership of the then-Minister of the Interior Sarkozy, the French Council of the Muslim Faith ("Conseil Français du Culte Musulman" - CFCM) was established through a decision by the Ministry of the Interior. The primary objective was to create a democratically elected structure that would represent Muslims. The number of council members matched the count of the membership of the mosques, aiming for comprehensive inclusivity

within the Muslim community.

Yet, in 2022, it was announced by the state authorities that the CFCM would no longer be recognized, and the Forum of the Islam of France (FORIF) was created to replace it. The working groups established within FORIF included Muslims appointed by the Ministry of Interior, governors, religious officials, and representatives of some Muslim organizations. These distinct working groups have been formed to address various concerns. These include the training of imams and spiritual guides in settings like prisons, hospitals, and the military. They also focus on matters such as mosque security and the implementation of the “Law on Reinforcing the Respect of Republican Principles,” which took effect in August 2021. The efforts conducted under the framework of FORIF are made accessible to the public through guidebooks and informational resources.

The historical trajectory of the Muslim population in France bears similarities to that of other European nations. During the initial and subsequent waves of immigration, spanning the first and second generations, many were



“ FRANCE HAS UNDERTAKEN A RANGE OF INITIATIVES OVER THE YEARS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF MUSLIM REPRESENTATION IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE.

individuals with limited educational opportunities who settled in suburban areas and took up labor-intensive jobs. This pattern persisted until the late 1980s. Today the situation has changed and a well-educated third and fourth generation of immigrants born and raised in France has emerged. Although this group does not currently constitute the majority among Muslim immigrants, their voices, hold significant weight and have become much louder when it comes to

inequality in society and the state. Muslims are struggling much more vigorously for equal rights with other French citizens in the political and economic spheres.

However, the fact that Muslims have become more visible in public opinion has also increased anti-Islamic and racist attitudes in contemporary France. Especially during election periods, the propaganda and discourse of some parties seem to be based on anti-Islam and anti-

Muslim rhetoric. While the existing circumstances have reached unsettling levels for the Muslim community, it remains widely recognized that Muslims in the nation constitute indispensable and enduring components of France.

From the perspective of Turkish citizens, the history of migration to France is more recent than that of other immigrant groups. The first bilateral labor agreement between Türkiye and France was signed in 1965, but mass migration started in the early 1970s and continued until the 1980s. During the 1990 census, Turks became the fourth immigrant community in France, and, in the most recent official census, the Turkish population exhibited the most substantial surge among all immigrant groups.

In France, similar to other countries, the establishment of associations for Turkish citizens gained momentum in the 1980s with the primary goal of organizing Friday and Eid prayers. DITIB (Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs) was established under the guidance of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, unifying these associations under one umbrella. Presently, 265

“MUSLIMS IN THE NATION CONSTITUTE INDISPENSABLE AND ENDURING COMPONENTS OF FRANCE.”



out of the 2,500 mosques serving Muslims in France are affiliated with DITIB associations. Yet, these mosques and associations do not provide services limited to only prayer times. They offer a wide range of services, including year-round basic religious knowledge and Qur'an courses for children of different

ages, Turkish language classes, activities for youth and women, social, cultural, and sports events, humanitarian aid activities, halal food options, and modest markets with traditional flavors. Under the umbrella of DITIB, our religious officials, association administrations, honorary religious officials, women's branches, and youth branches provide services to all segments of society. These efforts aim to preserve both religious and national identities while providing an opportunity for a meaningful contribution to the broader society. Today, Turks residing in France approach the future with optimism as self-assured individuals and associations that continually improve in terms of quality and quantity. They are dedicated to their country, possess a strong understanding of France, and actively contribute to their broader community in various ways.



A LIFE DEDICATED TO ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION: FUAT SEZGIN

Nermin TAYLAN



Born on October 24, 1924, in Bitlis, Fuat Sezgin pursued his primary education in Dogubayazit. He continued his secondary and high school education in Erzurum. In 1942, he relocated to Istanbul to pursue his university education with the aspiration of becoming an engineer.

Shortly after arriving in Istanbul, Fuat Sezgin was introduced to a conference by a relative of his who was studying at Istanbul University's Faculty of Literature. This conference featured renowned German orientalist Hellmut Ritter, who was considered an authority in the field of "Islamic Sciences and Orientalism". He attended the lecture with a sense of awe and described himself as "mesmerized" by Ritter's discourse. During the lecture, Ritter spoke about esteemed Islamic scholars, extolling luminaries like al-Khwarizmi, Ibn al-Haytham, Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani, Ibn Yunus, al-Jazari, and al-Biruni, elucidating their profound contributions to global science.

Hearing these truths from a Western scientist profoundly affected Fuat Sezgin. Consequently, he pursued a different goal in Istanbul, a city he had originally come to

for studying engineering. Fueled by his great admiration for Hellmut Ritter and a newfound curiosity about his own civilization, he resolved to enroll in the Department of Arabic and Persian Philology at Istanbul University. He was now a student of Ritter, and he embraced his lessons with great passion. Following his teacher's counsel to learn a new language each year, he directed his efforts towards mastering Arabic and achieved fluency in due course. Over time, he managed to learn languages such as Latin, Persian, Hebrew, and Assyrian well enough to read them from their own sources.

He graduated from the university in 1947 with his graduation thesis titled "Evolution of Ilm al-Badi". Sezgin, who worked as a civil servant in various state institutions in Istanbul for two years, published his first Arabic translation work in 1948. In 1949, he began working at the Central Library of Istanbul University, where he completed his doctorate studies and received his Ph.D. in 1950.

The words he heard from his teacher, Hellmut Ritter, during his student years, "The main foundation of sciences is based on Islamic sciences", became



FINALLY, IN 1967, HE PUBLISHED THE FIRST VOLUME OF HIS "HISTORY OF SCIENCES", FOR WHICH HE HAD BEGUN COLLECTING MATERIALS IN THE 1950S, TRAVELED TO 50 COUNTRIES, VISITED HUNDREDS OF LIBRARIES, AND EXAMINED FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND WORKS.

a pivotal moment in his life. On the advice of his teacher, he decided to write his dissertation on al-Bukhari.

Consequently, he started to work on his dissertation titled "The Sources of al-Bukhari" within the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at Istanbul University. In this thesis, he posited that al-Bukhari, a significant figure in Islamic culture as a source of hadith, "relied on written sources" and not on oral sources, contrary to popular belief.

While he remained to prepare his dissertation, his mentor, Hellmut Ritter, returned to Germany. Subsequently, Sezgin enrolled at the Faculty of Theology in Ankara and continued his studies under the guidance of the esteemed hadith scholar Prof. Dr. Tayyip Okic. In 1951, he commenced his role as a tafsir assistant at the Faculty of Theology at Ankara University. In 1954, he successfully completed his dissertation thesis titled "Research on the Sources of al-Bukhari", yet he did not cease his studies. He traveled to Pakistan, Egypt, and Germany for the Congress of Orientalists, and meticulously examined the manuscripts located in libraries, one by one. A one-year scholarship

initially granted to him by a German foundation was extended due to the foundation's recognition of his dedication and diligence. His quest for knowledge led him to traverse cities and countries like Damascus, Cairo, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Iraq, Iran, Spain, and Italy. During these travels, he continued his studies in the libraries. However, in 1961, Sezgin was forced to leave the university along with some of his professors. Undeterred, he dedicated his days to the Suleymaniye Library maintaining an unyielding focus on his studies. Yet, after careful contemplation, he reached a decision to journey to Germany. On March 13, 1963, he left Istanbul, the city he loved so deeply.

As the years elapsed and he was asked about his departure, he recounted those times with the following sentences: "My love for my homeland was profound. I harbored a strong desire to contribute meaningfully. I had established an institute, and it was working like clockwork. I thought I had not yet finished collecting all the material for my book. I did not want to be away from Istanbul; I did not want to move away from the East, from Iran and Egypt. But I chose



Frankfurt because it was the only 'Institute for the History of Science' in the world. Its director, Willy Hartner, was a dear friend of mine and had previously served as the rector."

In Germany, he initially served as an assistant professor at the University of Frankfurt. However, his tenure there was terminated by the faculty. Even the professors admired his resilience in the face of adverse conditions and despondency. He displayed an unwavering determination in the face of potential unemployment, expressing a readiness to take up even manual labor as a construction worker if necessary to complete his thesis. However, he breathed a sigh of relief when he received an offer from the University



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of Marburg and started working there as a professor. Two years later, he returned to Frankfurt University, where he began a new associate professorship thesis on Jabir ibn Hayyan in the Department of Chemistry in the History of Science. By 1964, he had ascended to the rank of professor in the field of History of Sciences.

Finally, in 1967, he published the first volume of his "History of Sciences", for which he had begun collecting materials in the 1950s, traveled to 50 countries, visited hundreds of libraries, and examined four hundred thousand works. A greeting card from his mentor, Hellmut Ritter, conveyed his profound admiration: "No one has ever undertaken such a feat. No one will be able to follow in your footsteps. Congratulations." As it turned out, Ritter's assessment was entirely accurate. This work is unique in its field. This exceptional work, comprising the contributions of Muslim scholars and grounded in the most authoritative sources, stands as a paramount resource for those engaged in the study of this field.

In 1968, he received the award for "The Most



Excellent Work on Islamic Sciences". With the support he received from Arabia, he founded the "Institute for the History of the Arab Islamic Sciences" at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in 1982, which is considered an example in its field and introduced Muslim scholars to the entire world. Later, he founded the Museum of the History of Islamic Science and Technology. In this museum, eight hundred inventions made by Muslim scientists are replicated and exhibited. He also introduced the Islamic civilization with a five-volume work

containing the items exhibited in the museum.

Fuat Sezgin accepted the offer to establish a museum in Istanbul, leading to the inception of the Museum of the History of Islamic Science and Technology in Gulhane Park on May 24, 2004. Proficient in 27 languages, Fuat Sezgin devoted over six decades to researching the history of Islamic science and technology. His entire life was dedicated to promoting Islamic Civilization. His unrelenting commitment, considering work as a form of worship, served as an inspiration. He believed



**HE STARTED
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that progress hinged solely upon it. On June 30, 2018. He passed on at the age of 94. His legacy encompasses a multitude of awards, numerous titles, and dozens of works for humanity.

Fuat Sezgin's contributions to world science are countless. Words are not enough to describe his efforts. Perhaps we should try to understand such a scholar, instead of talking about him, who even in the last moments of his life said, "You are making me waste my time here; get me out of here; I need to study."

THE HOLY MASJID IN AL-QUDS: MASJID AL-AQSA

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sema CELEM

The construction of the walls surrounding al-Quds (Jerusalem) began during the time of the Prophet Sulayman and these walls and the city continued to develop as late as the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent. Surrounding the Old City, these walls embraced the whole city and remained strong and resilient despite facing

harsh winters and being subjected to wars.

Have you ever wondered how many cities in the world possess such an ancient history and an extraordinary destiny? Al-Quds, the holy city whose testimony holds great significance, is a place where everyone aspires to be in it, and it

is where everyone leaves their mark as they pass through it.

The original name of the city of al-Quds translates to “the land of peace” in every language. More than just a city, it is like a nurturing mother to those who truly see its soul. Although it had been ruled by civilizations such as

the Canaanites, Jebusites, Hurrians, and Persians for centuries, its true honor was given to it by the hand of Prophet Dawud. The Bayt, which crowns its sanctity, was built by the Prophet Sulayman. Allah, in His blessing of al-Quds with the Bayt al-Maqdis, sanctified it as a city of Islam. Those who attempted to establish



idolatrous societies briefly succeeded through oppression and tyranny, but al-Quds always reverted to its core essence with divine support.

Al-Quds is the capital of tawhid. The path of prophethood, which commenced with the Prophet Adam courses through this sacred city of al-Quds. The blessed city bears witness to the esteemed legacies of the blessed Prophets including Ibrahim, Lut, Isma'il, Ishaq, Isaac, Ya'qub, Yusuf, Dawud, Sulayman, Zakariya, Yahya, Isa, and the final Prophet Muhammad. Throughout al-Quds, one can find the remnants, monuments, resting places, effects, and reminiscences of the prophets. Even in modern times, those who

explore al-Quds within the embrace of its ancient stone walls unmistakably experience the profound sense that they are truly in the city of prophets at every turn.

For the inhabitants of al-Quds, Prophet Abraham is Khalilullah (Friend of Allah). Indeed, Ibrahim (as), the forefather of the prophets who passed through al-Quds and resided in al-Khalil, actually left a lasting legacy in al-Quds, carrying with it all the memories of his presence. It was in this city that his sons were born, with one of them settling in Mecca and the other in al-Khalil.

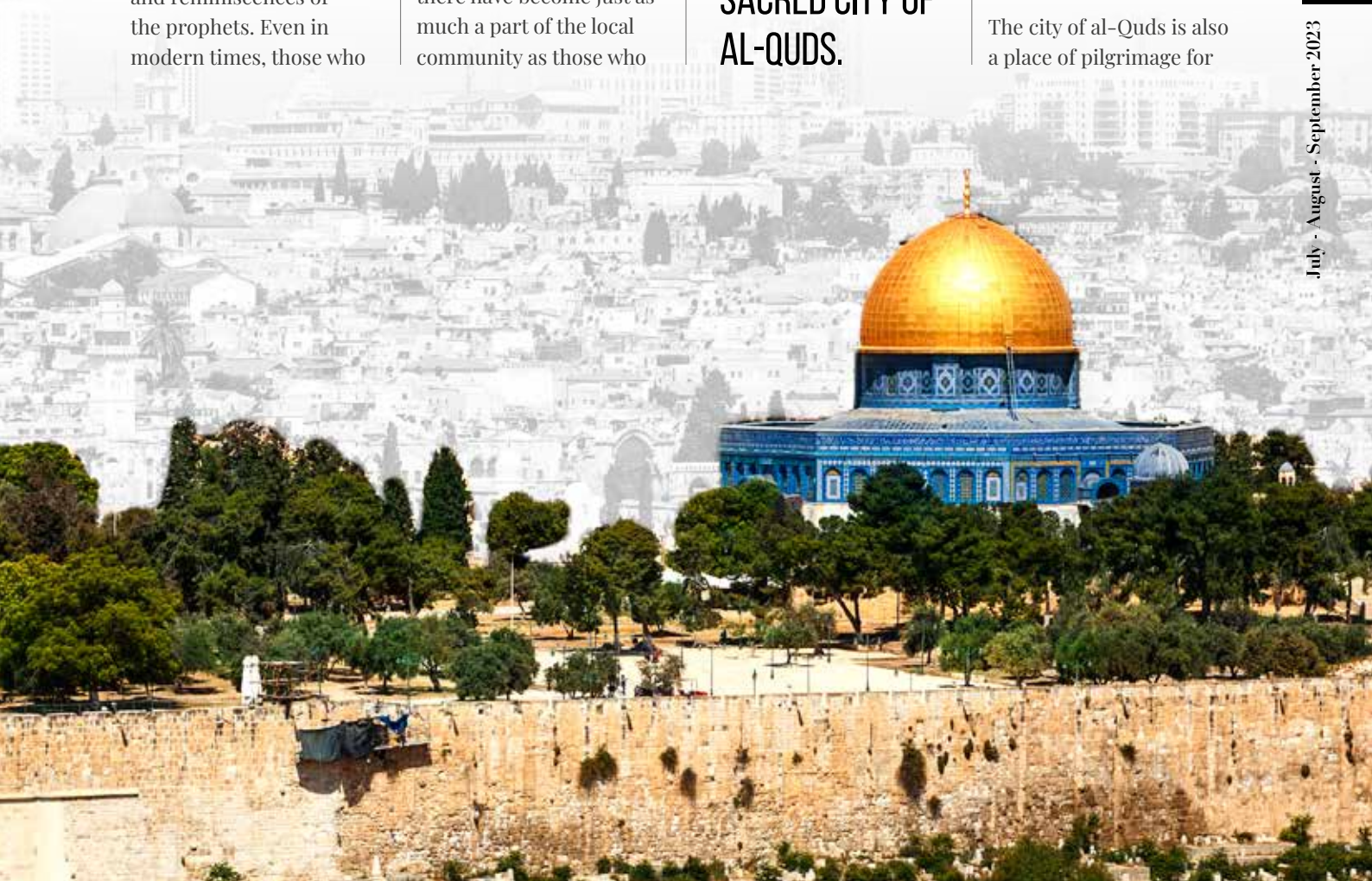
The people who settled there have become just as much a part of the local community as those who



THE PATH OF PROPHETHOOD, WHICH COMMENCED WITH THE PROPHET ADAM COURSES THROUGH THIS SACRED CITY OF AL-QUDS.

were born in the city. The city of Jerusalem (al-Quds) could have been the city where the Banu Israil could have lived in peace had they heeded the divine command delivered to them by Prophet Musa. However, they made life difficult for themselves through their own decision. Their fear prevented them from responding to the Prophet Musa's call to enter the holy land. He said to them, "O my people! Enter the Holy Land which Allah has destined for you to enter. And do not turn back or else you will become losers." (Ma'idah 5:21) Consequently, al-Quds became a test for them, leading to their forty-year wandering in the desert.

The city of al-Quds is also a place of pilgrimage for





A photograph taken from the north side of the Haram al-Sharif with the Qubbat al-Sakhra in the foreground and the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the background

the followers of Prophet Isa. This great prophet, who was saved from his persecutors with the help of Almighty Allah, has been commemorated with prayers for centuries in this land where he was born and raised.

For the believers, Mecca is the source of guidance, Medina is the source of mercy, and al-Quds is the source of abundance. The value of one does not overshadow the other; on the contrary, they complement each other. That is why our beloved Prophet (saw), the last link in the chain of prophets, ascended to the divine presence

not from Mecca but from al-Quds. With this night visit, he engraved Masjid al-Aqsa and al-Quds in the consciousness of his Ummah. Due to him, hearts are purified and minds are enlightened.

The city of al-Quds reached its golden age a few years after the passing of the Prophet (saw). The new inhabitants of the city that Prophet Dawud had saved from the oppressors and that Prophet Sulayman had built were the companions of the Messenger of Allah. Umar dictated a deed of trust to guarantee the freedom of all those who wanted to stay and



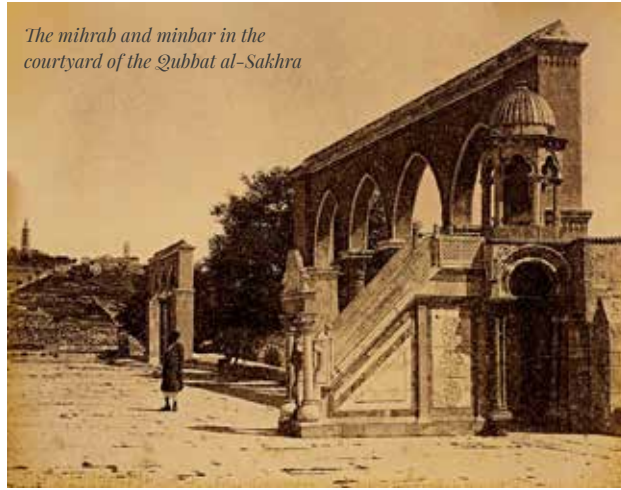
**THE ORIGINAL
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worship in al-Quds. Khalid bin Walid, Amr bin As, Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, and Muawiyah bin Abu Sufyan, the great commanders of the companions, became the honor of humanity by signing this document. With this act, they and their followers obeyed the Prophet’s command, “Go and establish prayer there,” and as long as they lived, they carried oil to the lamps of Masjid al-Aqsa, illuminating not only it but also the entire region.

The holy land that houses Masjid al-Aqsa is praised in the verses of the Qur’an, and the people of al-Quds are praised in the hadiths.

In addition to being a “safe haven” (Yunus 10:93), it is an honor for al-Quds to host worthy believers. The Prophet Muhammad, who said, “A group of people from my ummah will continue to fight in defense of truth and remain triumphant until the Day of Judgment” was asked, “Where is this group of people?” and he responded, “In and around Bayt al-Maqdis”.

The first qiblah, the second sanctuary, and the third masjid are all located in al-Quds. As reported in the Qur’an, the first masjid built by Allah’s command is “the one at Bakkah—a blessed sanctuary and a guide for all people.” (Al-i ‘Imran 3:96) Although the Bayt al-Maqdis, which is known to have been built for the first time by the Prophet Adam forty years after his creation, was destroyed due to various reasons such as wars and natural disasters over time, the hill, which includes the Qubbat al-Sakhra, has rarely remained without a sacred sanctuary. This sacred land was officially joined to the Islamic lands during the rule of Umar (ra), and it already had a mosque when the Muslim army entered the sacred city. Over time, the Haram al-Sharif, spanning one hundred and forty-four acres, has been adorned with various places of



The mihrab and minbar in the courtyard of the Qubbat al-Sakhra



A view from inside the Masjid al-Aqsa



worship, both above and below ground.

Al-Quds is akin to an open-air museum, and the presence of pre-Islamic elements in the city is most evident in its places of worship. Since it became an Islamic territory, successive dynasties such as the Umayyads, Abbasids, Ayyubids, Mamluks, and Ottomans have constructed everything that was needed, especially the essential infrastructure, in this holy city. Thanks to their efforts, there is scarcely anything in al-Quds that a visitor cannot find. Mosques, madrasahs, fountains, mihrabs (prayer niches), and minbars (pulpits) coexist with soup kitchens, libraries, inns, baths, and hospitals. All of these contribute to the rich heritage and cherished memories of the holy city.

The city of al-Quds never forgets those who kept it alive. It holds deep affection for historical figures like Saladin, Selim the Resolute, Suleiman the Magnificent, and Abdul Hamid II, just as it reveres Umar, preserving the monuments they left behind at great cost. This ancient city, one of the world’s oldest, is exceptional in its commitment to preserving its history. It has no other wish but for peace and tranquility to prevail.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ISLAM



Did ritual prayer (salah) exist before the Prophet Muhammad (saw)?

It is stated in the Qur'an that the prophets before the Prophet Muhammad (saw) were entrusted with the responsibility of performing ritual prayers as well. This is evident in verses such as Baqarah, 2:83; Yunus, 10:87; Hud, 11:87; Ibrahim, 14:37, 40; Maryam, 19:30-31, 54-55; Ta-Ha, 20:14; Anbiya, 21:72-73; and Luqman, 31:17. These verses indicate that ritual prayer was not exclusive to the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) but was practiced during the times of preceding communities as well. Likewise, although it is reported that there were basic pillars such as standing, bowing, and prostration in the ritual prayers of the previous ummahs, there are no comprehensive descriptions available about how they performed their ritual prayer.

Was a prophet sent to every community, and what is the number of prophets?

The Qur'an informs us that Allah sent prophets to every community and there were several prophets between the first Prophet Adam (as) and the last Prophet Muhammad (saw). It is stated in the 10th verse of Surah al-Hijr, "Indeed, We sent messengers before you (O Prophet) among the groups of early peoples" Similarly, the 36th verse of Surah al-Nahl declares, "We surely sent a messenger to every community, saying, "Worship Allah and shun false gods." But some of them were guided by Allah, while others were destined to stray. So travel throughout the land and see the fate of the deniers!"

These verses indicate that Allah the Almighty ensured that no community was without a prophet throughout history. The 78th verse of Surah al-Mu'min further asserts, "We already sent messengers before you. We have told you the stories of some of them, while others We have not."

Furthermore, the 15th verse of Surah al-Isra clarifies, "And We would never punish a people until We have sent a messenger to warn them." From this verse, it is evident that Allah dispatched prophets to all communities and nations. While the Qur'an mentions the names of only 25 of these prophets, it's worth noting that it's stated through hadiths that there were 124,000 prophets (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, V, 266). This means that Allah (swt) sent prophets to every region, yet not all their names are explicitly detailed in the Holy Qur'an, the Bible, or the Torah. This is because the Holy Qur'an explicitly asserts that there were no communities or ummahs to which a prophet was not sent (Fatir, 35:24; Nahl, 16:63; Yunus, 10:47).

Is euthanasia permissible?

According to Islam, taking one's own life is forbidden (haram). Euthanasia, which involves ending the life of a person who has no hope of recovery in medical terms or ending the life of a person who is experiencing severe pain with the assistance of another person, is considered suicide for the person making the request and murder for the person carrying it out. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an, "O believers! Do not devour one another's wealth illegally, but rather trade by mutual consent. And do not kill each other or yourselves. Surely Allah is ever Merciful to you. And whoever does this sinfully and unjustly, We will burn them in the Fire. That is easy for Allah" (Nisa, 4:29, 30), "...Do not take a human life-made sacred by Allah-except with legal right. This is what He has commanded you, so perhaps you will understand" (An'am, 6:151). The Prophet (saw) advised against desiring death due to suffering and distress (Bukhari, Marda, 19). Engaging in an activity, even desiring it when it is forbidden, is a grave offense. These teachings are evidence that shows that it is never permissible to end the life that Allah has entrusted without a valid ground. This is because it means breaking the limits set by Allah and rebelling against His will (Tahtawi, Hashiyah, 602). The sufferings and grievances faced by the believers are considered a form of atonement for their sins. Furthermore, in today's rapidly advancing field of medicine, there is a possibility of finding treatment options even for the most hopeless patients.

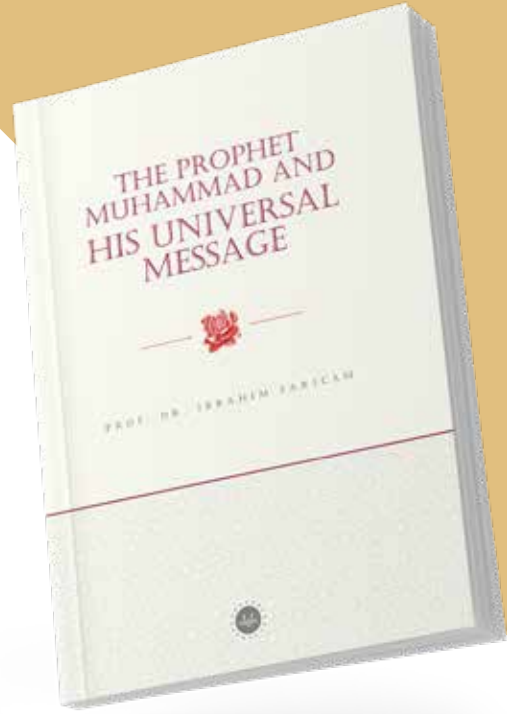
What does ibadah mean and how is it categorized?

The term "ibadah" encompasses meanings of "worship, obedience, submission, servitude, acting modestly, and acknowledging the as divine."

As a religious term, it signifies "the conscious obedience that expresses glorifying Allah and being close to Him (swt), and drawing closer to Him (swt), resulting in reward based on actions and intentions". Worshipping Allah stands as the pinnacle of obedience and reverence. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an that humankind was created to worship Allah (Dhariyat, 51:56), and all prophets invited people to worship Allah (Baqarah, 2:83).

The concept of worship, as portrayed in the Holy Qur'an, encompasses numerous meanings, including tawhid (Nisa, 4:36), obedience (Baqarah, 2:172), dua (invocation) (Mu'min, 40:60), submission (Fatiha, 1:5), faith and good deeds (Nisa, 4:172-173), tasbih (extolling) and prostration to Allah (A'raf, 7:206), and being aware of and knowing Allah (Dhariyat, 51:56). Correspondingly, it entails adhering to the commands and prohibitions of Islam while preserving the boundaries set by Allah in the most comprehensive sense. In order for a behavior to be considered an act of worship, one should have faith (iman), intention (niyyah), and sincerity (ikhlas). Worship should be performed with the consent of Allah and should comply with Islam. Acts of worship are generally examined under four categories in terms of practicing: a) Acts of worship performed by the heart such as with iman, sincerity, intention, contemplation, marifah, patience, and taqwa (piety). b) Acts of worship performed by the body such as salah (prayer), fasting, dua, and dhikr, in addition to being physically benevolent to parents, treating people well, and visiting relatives (silat al-rahim). c) Acts of worship performed with wealth and property such as zakat, sadaqah, helping the relatives and the poor, and infaq (spending for the sake of Allah). Finally, d) Acts of worship performed with both body and wealth such as hajj (pilgrimage).

THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND HIS UNIVERSAL MESSAGE



Meryem KILIÇ

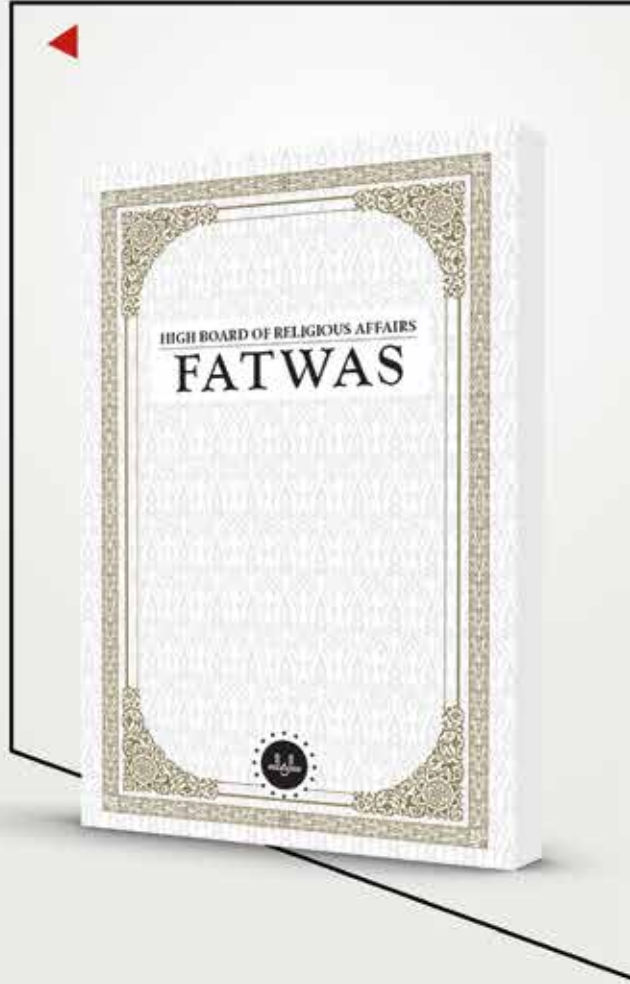
Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw), the final messenger sent to humanity by the Almighty Allah, served as the most exemplary model for all of humankind in terms of faith, worship, and morality throughout his 23-year prophetic life. By elucidating the principles and tenets of Islam, he eradicated idolatry and propagated the belief in unity (tawhid), thereby establishing a new society grounded in peace and tranquility as per the divine revelation. Those who heed the message of our Prophet (saw) will discover the finest exemplar for comprehending and embodying the teachings of the religion of Islam.

To be part of the ummah of the Last Prophet, to understand his view of life, and to build a life in accordance with the religion of Islam, it is imperative that we hold fast to his guidance. Delving into and exploring the Prophet's life is the sole means of comprehending the message he conveyed to all of humanity.

To disseminate the universal values conveyed by our Prophet (saw) and present them for the benefit of all humanity, Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Saricam has authored a work titled "The Prophet Muhammad and His Universal Message." This book endeavors to provide an accurate depiction

of our Prophet's life, drawing from authentic sources, and elucidates his universal message, which encompasses the salvation of all humanity. The book is organized into main headings that enumerate the topics it covers. While events leading up to the Hijrah are presented chronologically, subjects related to the Medina period are systematically arranged. Furthermore, the book is enriched with illustrations, maps, and diagrams, enhancing the reader's grasp of the context in which the Prophet resided. A very helpful list of maps, images, and additional resources can also be found by following the table of contents.

The esteemed publication titled "The Prophet Muhammad and His Universal Message" stands as one of the most distinguished works of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Türkiye. The purpose of this book is to offer in a clear and comprehensible language the account of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, with the aim of contributing to the accurate understanding of the Prophet Muhammad. The Presidency of Religious Affairs of Türkiye presents this book as an original contribution to our esteemed readers who have an interest in gaining insight into the life of Prophet Muhammad (saw).



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“Indeed, We created humans in the best form.”

(Tin, 95:4)

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