Diyanet Journal

ISSUE 12 | OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

| The Breach of the Constitution of Medina | Al-Khaliq | Islam in Indonesia | Piri Reis | Al-Khalil Mosque |

Islamic Carpet

Carpet weaving stands as one of the most iconic artistic traditions to emerge from Islamic societies. Between 1500 and 1800, Islamic carpets became ubiquitous—not only throughout the Islamic world but also across early modern Europe. Produced in vast quantities and in an impressive range of designs, materials, and weaving techniques, these textiles originated in workshops across the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. Yet their life extended far beyond their points of origin.

Islamic carpets circulated widely, crossing linguistic, cultural, and geographic boundaries; they became what we may call transcultural objects. They embody the interweaving of concepts, motifs, and techniques shaped by multiple cultural influences. At the same time, they were adopted, displayed, and interpreted in remarkably varied ways by the different cultures that acquired them. In this sense, Islamic carpets are transcultural not only in their modes of production but also in their diverse histories of use and meaning.

Editorial

Human beings, created in the most perfect form (ahsan al-taqwim), hold a unique value in the realm of existence. Their true worth lies in living in alignment with the purpose of their creation, thereby attaining happiness both in this world and the Hereafter. The path to this achievement lies in embodying Islamic values in every aspect of life. The most perfect example of a meaningful life in this world is the Prophet Muhammad (saw). It is stated in the Noble Qur'an: "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example..." (Ahzab, 33:21)

The Noble Messenger, whom we are always proud to follow as members of his ummah, first called us to have faith, then to fulfill the requirements of that faith, to live with steadfastness upon this path, and to preserve that steadfastness until our final breath. Through this call, Muslims come to understand the purpose of their existence in this world and strive to live in accordance with that purpose. The Prophet brought us the Holy Qur'an, whose guidance will remain valid until the Day of Judgment. He reminded us of our covenant with our Lord and taught us our responsibilities toward both humanity and nature. The example of the Prophet was not limited to personal morality and acts of worship. He guided people in every aspect of life, from the establishment of justice and the spread of mercy to the cultivation of humility and patience and the building of social harmony. The principles of the Prophet that shaped human relations continue to serve as a guide throughout the ages: "Make things easy; do not make them difficult; give glad tidings; do not drive people away." (Bukhari, 'Ilm, 11) Likewise, his reminder regarding unity and solidarity among the believers remains a guiding light today: "The believers, in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion, are like a single body." (Bukhari, Adab, 27)

In this issue of Diyanet Journal, we present the theme "The Most Beautiful Example Prophet Muhammad (saw)". Prof. Dr. Yuksel Salman contributes to our main theme with his article titled "An All-Encompassing Mercy: The Prophet Muhammad (saw)". For the Muslims of the World section, Abdulhamid Esmeli writes on "Islam in Indonesia". Our featured interview is with Prof. Dr. Safi Arpagus, the President of Religious Affairs.

We hope this special issue serves as a means to gain a deeper understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's example, which is filled with mercy and wisdom, to fully comprehend his message, and to open a spiritual horizon for our readers.

Dr. Lamia LEVENT ABUL

Owner on behalf of the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Editor-in-Chief
Hamza BAYRAM

Managing Editor
Dr. Lamia LEVENT ABUL

Editorial Board
Hamza BAYRAM
Ensari YENTURK
Dr. Lamia LEVENT ABUL
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sevde DUZGUNER

Publishing Coordinator
Zeynep Feyza TAYFUR

Digital Media
Meryem KILIC

Redaction
Ege OZAKCE
Merve Nur BILGIC

Proofreading
Amjad Mahmud HUSSAIN

Archieve
Ali Duran DEMIRCIOGLU

Graphic-Design
Arketip Agency | Emrah ANDIS
arketipajans.com | 05423181938

Social Media
Facebook/diyanetjournall
Twitter/diyanetjournal
Instagram/diyanetjournal

Contact
Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye Presidency of Religious
Üniversiteler Mahallesi
Dumlupınar Bulvarı No: 147/A
06800 Çankaya/ANKARA
Tel: +90(312) 295 70 00

thediyanetjournal@diyanet.gov.tr

Type of Publication
Quarterly, Common, Periodical, English

Date of Issue: 04.12.2025

Printed in
TDV Yayın Matbacılık Ve Ticaret İşletmesi
Ostim OSB Mah. 1256. Cad.
No: 11 06370
Yenimahalle/ ANKARA
Tel: 0312 354 91 31
Faks: 0312 354 91 32
e-posta: bilgi@tdv.com.tr

Corrections and deletions can be made in the articles to be published. The scientific responsibility of the articles belongs to the authors. Diyanet Journal is the publication of the Presidency of Religious Affairs. All rights of the articles, subjects, photographs, and other images published in the journal are reserved. It can not be quoted in any medium without permission and reference.

CONTENTS

06. AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING MERCY: THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)
| Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yuksel SALMAN

12. ORPHANS: A FRAGILE TRUST FOR THE SOCIETY

16. RISING THROUGH FAITH
| Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bayram KOSEOGLU

18. THE MOST VIRTUOUS OF DEEDS LOVING FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH
| Dr. Ahmet OGUZ

26. DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROMISE AN EARTHLY PARADISE?
| Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammet KIZILGECIT

34. DANIELA URUENA GARCIA: "I BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING SUPERIOR."
| Zeynep Feyza TAYFUR

38. WHAT DO HUMANS GAIN BY THE CURIOSITY TO SEE?
| Prof. Dr. Cagfer KARADAS

40. THE ONE WHO CREATES BY MEASURING AND DETERMINING: AL-KHALIQ
| Fatma BAYRAM

20.

PROF. DR. SAFI ARPAGUS:
"THE TRUTHS BROUGHT BY THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD HAVE ILLUMINATED THE PATH AND HORIZON OF ALL HUMANITY."
| Cemalettin GEZGIC - Abdurrahman AKBAS

30. THE BREACH OF THE CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA
| Prof. Dr. Eyup BAS

42. ISLAM IN INDONESIA
| Abdulhamid ESMELI

46. PIRI REIS AND HIS MAGNIFICENT MAP
| Koray SERBETCI

50.

SANCTUARY OF IBRAHIM: AL-KHALIL MOSQUE
| Sumeyra CELIK

54. FAQS

56. FAITH IN ANGELS IN ISLAM
| Meryem KILIC

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

Prof. Dr. Safi ARPAGUS
The President
Presidency of Religious Affairs

Islam is a comprehensive way of life that encompasses universal principles and standards designed to ensure that all of humanity may live in peace and security. The theoretical framework of this divine order, which offers guidance to human beings in their search for meaning, in their lives, and in their future, has been established through revelation. As a manifestation of His mercy, Allah the Almighty has sent prophets since the time of the first human being, and He has revealed to them the standards of life that would illuminate the path and vision of humanity. To the prophets whom He entrusted with the duties of conveying and clarifying revelation, He also assigned the mission of guidance and exemplary conduct. Indeed, from the Prophet Adam onward, all prophets, under the guidance of revelation, have brought people together with knowledge, wisdom, and goodness; they have personally demonstrated the ways of a virtuous, moral, and dignified life. In this way, the lives of the prophets have ultimately formed the living practice of the monotheistic religion grounded in revelation.

The institution of prophethood is a great blessing and gift for humankind, who, by their very nature, are inclined to learn through observation and imitation. The verse, “Indeed, Allah has done the believers a (great) favor by raising a messenger from among them—reciting to them His revelations, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. For indeed they had previously been clearly astray.” (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:164) — draws attention to the profound

meaning that revelation and prophethood hold for humanity. The final representative of this blessed chain, which has illuminated the earth like a radiant lamp since the time of the Prophet Adam, is the Prophet Muhammad (saw), the embodiment of justice, mercy, and noble character. He is the universal manifestation of that divine favor and gift. While previous prophets were sent to specific peoples at particular times, our Prophet, the Prophet Muhammad (saw), was sent to all of humanity as both a warner and a bearer of glad tidings, as well as a universal guide and the most beautiful example.

The coming of the Prophet (saw) was a great mercy for humanity. He transformed the principles and values of our sublime religion, Islam, into a lived reality and provided guidance and a model for all aspects of life. Through his own life, he taught humanity the true meaning of justice, mercy, law, morality, goodness, beauty, and courtesy. In an age when humanity had lost its way in the dark corridors of ignorance, it was through his guidance that people rediscovered the right path. Souls that had become barren under the scorching flames of oppression, hatred, and violence came to comprehend once again the purpose and wisdom of existence through his example.

When we look at the distinguished life of our beloved Prophet (saw), we witness the Qur'an embodied in lived form. Regardless of one's status or position, profession or responsibility, we find countless beautiful examples in his life that can illuminate every person's path and bring peace to those who embrace them. For he is, through his words, conduct, and bearing, a noble model to be emulated and, through a life shaped by revelation, an unwavering compass for salvation. From worship to education, economics to politics, family life to governance, and interpersonal relations to environmental ethics—in every aspect of life, he stands as a magnificent embodiment of moral excellence worthy of emulation. Indeed, Allah the Almighty praised the character of the Prophet (saw) with the divine declaration: "(O Muhammad,) And you are truly 'a man' of outstanding character." (Qalam, 68:4) And He informed us that "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often." (Ahzab, 33:21) Muslims who have lived in accordance with the guidance and example of the Prophet (saw) have established their relationship, both with Allah the Almighty and with all of creation, upon a foundation of righteousness. They have founded states and civilizations that shaped the course of history, and for centuries, they served as guarantors of goodness, justice, mercy, tranquility, and peace on earth. However, in times when the message brought by the Prophet of Mercy and his exemplary conduct were neglected, they fell into injustice, cruelty, human tragedies, and spiritual crises.

Today, the entire world, particularly the Islamic world, is witnessing some of the gravest tragedies resulting from a detachment from the guidance of revelation and the example of the Prophet (saw). Humanity is experiencing deep crises centered on meaning and purpose. In an age when truth, wisdom, and noble character are on the verge of being lost, and where, as a consequence of increasing worldliness, problems such as selfishness, loneliness, and despair have come to envelop life from all sides, mankind is in greater need than ever of the life principles brought and exemplified by the Prophet (saw). As human and moral values are being severely eroded, both within individuals and in collective memory, and as life is increasingly being driven toward a modern form of Jahiliyyah, the only path to safely emerge from this chaos is to firmly hold on to the blessed legacy and noble sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (saw). It is to embrace and embody his universal teachings that establish balance between matter and spirit, mind and heart, this world and the hereafter. It is to revive, through his example, the values that give meaning to life and elevate human character.

In this context, Muslims must make the words, actions, and conduct of the Prophet (saw) the focal point of life in every sphere—from family life to kinship ties, from social relations to the rights of neighbors, and from the workplace to their relationship with the environment. They must adopt as indispensable his character, shaped by the Qur'an; his justice, manifested through mercy; his understanding of governance, grounded in merit; and his approach that honors creation for the sake of the Creator. Muslims are obligated not only to cultivate individual morality, but also to build social conscience and uphold justice by following the example of the Messenger of Allah (saw). The grim fate of a world caught in the spiral of oppression, violence, and brutality, witnessing one of the most distressing periods in history, can only be changed when this prophetic model is fully embraced and practiced.

Marbling Art: Hikmet Barutcugil

AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING MERCY: THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yuksel SALMAN
Member of the High Board of Religious Affairs

Throughout history, many prominent figures have guided humanity, leaving their mark through their ideas and way of life. However, none has had as profound and lasting an impact on all of humanity—transcending the boundaries of time and space—as the Messenger of Mercy, the Prophet Muhammad (saw). As expressed in the Qur'an, the Prophet is "a caller to (the Way of) Allah by His command, and a beacon of light," (Ahzab, 33/46) and "an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often." (Ahzab, 33:21)

Due to his exemplary role in understanding the Qur'an and living according to Islam, the companions, who witnessed the process of revelation and knew him closely, followed the life of the Prophet with great attention. They adopted his principles as a model for themselves and transmitted his life and teachings to subsequent generations with immense dedication and precision.

His exemplary character and the trust He inspired

Being trustworthy is among the defining characteristics of all prophets. Even before receiving the duty of prophethood, the Prophet was known within his community as "al-Amin," meaning "the Trustworthy One". So much so that even those who did not believe in him would entrust him with their valuable possessions and never doubt his reliability. His words and actions were in complete harmony; he inspired trust when he spoke, fulfilled every promise he made, and remained committed to every agreement he entered into.

> "THE PROPHET'S INNER BEING AND OUTWARD ACTIONS, HIS ESSENCE AND HIS WORDS, WERE IN COMPLETE HARMONY. HE NOT ONLY ADVISED TRUTHFULNESS BUT ALSO FULLY EMBODIED WHAT HE PREACHED.

The Prophet, emphasizing the strong connection between faith and trustworthiness, stated: "Faith and disbelief cannot coexist in a person's heart. Truthfulness and falsehood cannot exist together. Trustworthiness and betrayal cannot be found together either." (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, II, 349) In highlighting the importance of trust in a Muslim's life, the Prophet also said: "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe. By Allah, in Whose Hand is my soul, a person whose neighbor is not safe from his harm will not enter Paradise." (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, III, 54)

When the Prophet migrated to Madinah, Abd Allah ibn Salam, one of the Jewish scholars, came to see him out of curiosity. Upon seeing the Prophet, he remarked, "This face is not the face of a liar!" Recognizing the trust and integrity reflected in his appearance, he embraced Islam (Tirmidhi, "Qiyamah", 42).

In our time, an age in which trust has become a widespread issue on both individual and societal levels, we can clearly see how universal and vital a virtue the Prophet's title of "al-Amin" (the Trustworthy One) truly is. It would not be an exaggeration to say that today, the most fundamental quality expected from a leader, a business partner, a neighbor, or even those closest to us is "trustworthiness".

His noble character

Noble character is the cornerstone of healthy relationships and peace in both individual and societal life. The life of the Prophet is a concrete embodiment of the unity of word and deed, loyalty to commitments, and honesty. His character was an all-encompassing model of virtue, embracing qualities such as justice, patience, humility, generosity, kindness, and forgiveness.

Emphasizing that human relationships should be grounded in noble character and mutual respect, and drawing attention to the connection between his mission and moral excellence, the Prophet said, "I was sent to perfect noble character." (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, II, 381; Muwatta, "Husn al-Khuluq", 8).

"NOBLE CHARACTER IS THE CORNERSTONE OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND PEACE IN BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETAL LIFE. THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET IS A CONCRETE EMBODIMENT OF THE UNITY OF WORD AND DEED, LOYALTY TO COMMITMENTS, AND HONESTY.

Not only during his life after receiving prophethood, but also in his earlier years and in his interactions with others, there was never any negative behavior or blameworthy moral flaw found in him. On the contrary, everyone, whether they believed in him or not, acknowledged the beauty of his character. Indeed, in terms of morality, the Prophet was the best among people (Bukhari, "Adab", 112; Muslim, "Adab", 30; Abu Dawud, "Adab", 61; Tirmidhi, "Birr", 69). Not only did he possess noble character himself, but he also consistently reminded his ummah of the importance of good character. He said, "The most perfect of the believers in faith are those who are best in character." (Bukhari, "Adab", 38; Abu Dawud, " Sunnah", 14; Tirmidhi, "Rada", 11; Ibn Majah, "Zuhd", 31; Darimi, "Riqaq", 74; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, II, 250) Once again, highlighting the central place of noble character in a believer's life and its strong connection to faith, he said, "Nothing will be heavier on the scale of a believing servant on the Day of Judgment than good character. Allah despises the one who engages in indecent behavior and foul speech." (Tirmidhi, "Birr", 62)

The generation of companions raised by the Prophet over the course of twenty-three years, and the transformation of a society steeped in ignorance into an age of bliss, was not only due to the greatness of the message he brought, but also closely tied to the way he lived that message as the finest example and to the strength of his character.

His truthfulness

The Prophet's inner being and outward actions, his essence and his words, were in complete harmony. He not only advised truthfulness but also fully embodied what he preached. To a man who asked him for counsel, he said: "Say: 'I believe in Allah,' and then remain steadfast." (Muslim, "Iman", 62; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, III, 413, IV, 385.) When he was told, "O Messenger of Allah, you have grown old," he replied, "Surah Hud and Surah al-Waqi'ah have made me old," because he had been commanded therein to remain steadfast and upright. (Tirmidhi, "Tafsir", 56)

His forgiveness

One of the closest individuals to the Prophet, 'A'ishah (ra), highlighted two key qualities of the beloved Prophet: "Whenever the Messenger of Allah had to choose between two matters, he would always choose the easier of the two—so long as it was not sinful. In addition, the Messenger

of Allah never sought revenge for personal grievances. However, when one of Allah's commands was violated, he would certainly carry out what was required in response." (Bukhari, "Adab", 80)

The Prophet forgave Wahshi, who had martyred his uncle, Hamza, at the Battle of Uhud. He also pardoned Habbar ibn al-Aswad, who had caused his daughter Zaynab to be injured and miscarry. When Ikrimah, the son of Abu Jahl, who had been a fierce enemy of Islam, came to him as a Muslim, the Prophet welcomed him without reproach, saying with kindness, "O migrant rider! Welcome." Even when he was subjected to harsh treatment in Ta'if while calling its people to Islam, he did not curse them but instead forgave them.

His supplication, "O Allah, forgive my ummah, for they do not know!" (Ibn Majah, "Manasik", 56) made on behalf of the community of believers who had embraced faith in him, also serves as a prayer and plea for forgiveness for the entire Muslim ummah. His plea for forgiveness and his compassion were not limited to Muslims alone. When he conquered Mecca and stood before those who had wronged him for years, those who had forced him out of his beloved homeland, he asked them a question that would be recorded in history: "What do you think I will do to you?" When they replied, "You are a noble brother, the son of a noble brother," he responded by referring to the story of the Prophet Yusuf (as): "There is no blame upon you today. May Allah forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of the merciful." With these words, he declared a general amnesty. This historic act of pardon was a strategic step taken by a victorious commander and head of state, one who chose peace, wisdom, and compassion over revenge and harshness. It served as a powerful means to foster social reconciliation and unity.

Tazhib: Sibel Ak

His encouraging and facilitating approach

Human nature leans toward ease. At times, a burdensome demand can lead a person to reject an issue altogether. For this reason, the Qur'an emphasizes ease in many of its verses (Baqarah, 2:185,186; Nisa, 4:28; Hajj, 22:78). In fact, the Qur'an, not being revealed all at once but rather gradually over a span of twenty-three years, often in direct connection with and in response to social realities, is one of the clearest examples of ease and facilitation in its approach.

The Prophet's principle, "Make things easy; do not make them difficult; give glad tidings; do not drive people away," (Bukhari, "Ilm", 11 "Jihad", 164; Muslim, "Jihad", 5; Abu Dawud, "Adab", 17; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, I, 239, 283, 365, IV, 399, 416, 417) reflects an approach that does not overlook human nature and takes into account both the physical and emotional constitution of the individual in interpersonal relations. His choosing the easier of two options when given a choice, so long as it involved no sin (Bukhari, "Manaqib", 23; Muslim, "Fada'il", 77), is also a reflection of this approach, rooted in mercy and consideration for ease. The Prophet advised his ummah to engage in deeds to the extent of their ability, except in matters where the rulings of the religion are clear and binding (Muslim, "Siyam", 177).

His gentleness and mercy

Throughout his life, the Prophet preferred gentleness, compassion, and mercy to resentment, anger, and harshness. The Qur'an states that it was by divine mercy that he dealt gently with people; had he been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have turned away from him (Al-i 'Imran, 3/159). The Prophet's mercy extended not only to Muslims and humanity but also to all of creation.

> IN THE FACE OF MODERN SOCIETY'S CHALLENGES, SUCH AS POVERTY, DISCRIMINATION, AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE, THE TEACHINGS BROUGHT BY THE PROPHET OFFER A MEANINGFUL PATH FORWARD.

His understanding of social justice and communal balance

In the face of modern society's challenges, such as poverty, discrimination, and social injustice, the teachings brought by the Prophet offer a meaningful path forward. By stating, "He is not one of us who sleeps while his neighbor is hungry," (Hakim, Mustadrak, 4/183.) he laid the foundation

for social responsibility. Through institutions such as zakat, fitrah, and sadaqah, he promoted a culture of social solidarity and mutual aid. In his Farewell Khutbah, the Prophet firmly rejected false notions of superiority based on race, color, language, or ethnic origin by declaring, "All of you are children of Adam, and Adam was created from dust. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have superiority over an Arab; a white person is not superior to a Black, nor is a Black superior to a White, except in piety and good deeds." With these words, he reminded people of the Qur'anic principle of taqwa as the true measure of merit and emphasized the shared human origin from the Prophet Adam to highlight the common ground of all humanity.

The Prophet of Mercy

When describing the Prophet, the Qur'an states, "We have sent you (O Prophet) only as a mercy for the whole world." (Anbiya, 21:107) Mercy is not limited to compassion alone. It is a comprehensive concept that includes kindness, forgiveness, benevolence, peace, goodness, and all forms of blessings. The Prophet being a mercy means that the message he brought and the rulings it contains offer peace, happiness, harmony, and security for the entire human family. For this reason, he is indeed an all-encompassing mercy.

In a society of ignorance where the pursuit of power and pride was dominant, and where the weak, the helpless, and the marginalized were oppressed and disregarded, the justice, fairness, mercy, and human values brought by the Prophet were a clear manifestation of his being a mercy. Orphans, children, the ill, the elderly, the lonely, the environment, animals, plants, and, in short, all of creation shared in his mercy. In our present time, the tears we witness, the violations of human rights, wars, and massacres that amount to genocide represent some of our greatest sorrows. The Prophet emphasized that even war has its own code of law and ethics.

In conclusion, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was a distinguished figure whose words and actions contain exemplary models for every aspect of life. He is a guiding personality through whom people can adorn their lives with love, peace, and goodness (Afzalur Rahman, Sîret Ansiklopedisi, İstanbul 1990, III, 198,199). From the past to the present, those who have shown hostility toward the Messenger of Allah have tried to discredit him with baseless claims and slander. Yet, they have never been able to find any flaw in his character or any moral weakness in his personality. Such individuals have only resorted to defamation, smear campaigns, and false accusations—the typical tactics of those who reject the truth in every era. However, these efforts have proven futile in the face of the Prophet, whose dignity is grounded in the divine principles he conveyed, the truths he upheld, and the virtues he embodied.

> "NOT ONLY DID HE POSSESS NOBLE CHARACTER HIMSELF, BUT HE ALSO CONSISTENTLY REMINDED HIS UMMAH OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CHARACTER.

In the face of rights violations, environmental disasters, moral decay, social injustice, poverty, and loneliness, the teachings of the Prophet remain a lasting solution even today. His being "a mercy to the worlds" is not confined to the era in which he lived but extends to all future generations, lands, and all living beings until the Day of Judgment. He is a matchless guide, a source of inner peace and social harmony, and for humanity, "a beacon of light." In building a more prosperous world, the messages brought by the Prophet and his exemplary character offer humanity unparalleled guidance and unwavering principles. Today, more than ever, humanity is in dire need of his all-encompassing mercy and the universal, mercy-laden message he conveyed.

ORPHANS: A FRAGILE TRUST FOR THE SOCIETY

The word “yatim” (orphan) in Arabic means “being alone and lonely”. It also means “the one who walks slowly and lags behind”. An orphan is a child who has lost his or her father and grows up sometimes with the support of the mother and relatives, and at other times with the support of the state. The orphans are entrusted to society. This trust is so delicate and weighty that the verses revealed during the early years of Islam reminds believers about the rights of orphans: “Absolutely not! In fact, you are not (even) gracious to the orphan.” (Fajr, 89:17) “So do not oppress the orphan.” (Duha, 93:9) “Have you seen the one who denies the ‘final’ Judgment? That is the one who repulses the orphan, and does not encourage the feeding of the poor. ” (Ma’un, 107:1-3)

> “IF PEOPLE REALIZE THAT REAL HAPPINESS IS NOT CONTAINED IN DECEPTIVE THINGS, SUCH AS WEALTH, STATUS AND POWER, THEY WOULD APPRECIATE THE LIGHT IN A CHILD’S EYE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

The Holy Qur’an reminds our beloved Prophet, who lost his father before he was born, of the mercy of Allah (swt): “Did He not find you as an orphan then sheltered you?” (Duha, 93:6) This sensitivity about orphans finds its place in the expressions of the Messenger of Allah (saw) as well. The Messenger of Allah’s invitation to his Companions (ra), by showing them his middle and index fingers and the distance between them, is still in front of our eyes: “I and the one who looks after an orphan will be (together) like this in Paradise.” (B5304, Bukhari, Talaq, 25) Our Prophet is telling us that those who take care of an orphan and share their food with them in this world will be with him (saw) in Paradise. A prophet, who was an orphan himself, would instinctively think and care for other orphans.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) did not forget about the mothers who, against all odds, took good care of their fatherless children, and sacrificed a lot for them: "I and a woman whose cheeks have become black (due to hardships) shall on the Day of Resurrection be (together) like these two (pointing to the middle and forefinger). She, who is a woman of rank and beauty who has been bereft of her husband, devotes herself (without getting married) to her fatherless children until they go their separate ways or die." (D5149, Abu Dawud, Adab, 120, 121) Indeed, who would understand the needs of orphans better than the Messenger of Allah (saw), who himself was an orphan?

To a man who was complaining about his tough and grumpy personality, our Prophet (saw) said, "Pat the heads of the orphans and feed the poor" (HM9006, Ibn Hanbal, II, 387). Patting the head of an orphan means not only to show love and compassion to them, but also to help them to survive in this difficult world. In this regard, the Prophet (saw) gave the good news to those who took care of orphans that they would go to the paradise: "Whoever takes in an orphan among the Muslims to raise, to feed and to give him drink, Allah, without a doubt, admits him into Paradise, unless he has done a sin for which he is not forgiven." (T1917, Tirmidhi, Birr, 14) The Holy Qur'an also refers to those who share their belongings with orphans as virtuous people (Baqarah, 2:177). 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar (ra) never had a meal without having an orphan at his table (EM136, Bukhari, Adab al-Mufrad, 60). This is because he was educated by the Prophet (saw) himself, and his behavior serves as a model for us.

> BEING A GUARANTOR IS A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY. IN THIS REGARD, ONE NEEDS TO PROTECT THE PROPERTY OF THE ORPHAN AND MAKE SURE NOT TO HARM IT.

By saying, "The best house among the Muslims is a house in which there is an orphan who is treated well and the worst house among the Muslims is a house in which there is an orphan who is treated badly," (M3679, Ibn Majah, Adab, 6) the Messenger of Allah (saw) demonstrated to us that the treatment of orphans is one of the main and important criteria for a household to be labeled a good or bad home.

It is clear from the sources above that orphans have priority in the Islamic tradition. These orphans may be the children of martyrs, others may have lost their parents to illnesses or accidents, and some may have lost their parents to devastating wars, which destroy our material and spiritual worlds. The main point is that they are no longer with their parents. They need special care, more than anyone else. They all wish to be like Anas (ra), who was taken care of by the Prophet (saw). They, like the orphans next to Umm al-Darda' ra, expect to hear glad tidings from the Messenger of Allah (saw), and receive attention and compassion from Muslims.

Taking care of orphans is not only a matter of generosity but also a matter of responsibility for wealthy and able people. The Prophet (saw) explained this responsibility by reciting the following verse: "Righteousness is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west. 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) travellers, 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)

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "O Allah, bear witness that I have issued a warning concerning (failure to fulfill) the rights of the two weak ones: orphans and women." (IM3678, Ibn Majah, Adab, 6; HM9664, Ibn Hanbal, II, 440) It is important to be the father or mother to an orphan in every sense. Being a guarantor is a multi-dimensional responsibility. In this regard, one needs to

protect the property of the orphan and make sure not to harm it. One also needs to be vigilant against all kinds of things that may harm the property. For example, it is reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) warned Abu Dharr (ra) not to take responsibility for orphans' property, because he was not competent in financial matters (M4720, Muslim, Imara, 17; D2868, Abu Dawud, Wasaya, 4).

To secure the future of an orphan, the Messenger of Allah (saw) asked the custodian of the orphan's property to do business with the property so that it would increase in value, rather than lose value. Our Prophet said, "As for one who is the guardian of an orphan who has wealth, then let him do business with it and not leave it until it becomes consumed by charity" (T641, Tirmidhi, Zakat, 15). The Companions took this advice very seriously and followed it as a principle in life. For example, the Caliph 'Umar (ra) constantly emphasized doing business with the property of orphans (MU592, Muwatta', Zakat, 6). It is also known that 'Aisha (ra) used to do business with the property of the orphans under her care (MU594, Muwatta', Zakat, 6).

> "TAKING CARE OF ORPHANS IS NOT ONLY A MATTER OF GENEROSITY BUT ALSO A MATTER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR WEALTHY AND ABLE PEOPLE.

An orphan is Allah's trust to us. He needs to be protected emotionally, mentally, and physically. Because of this trust, Allah (swt) and His Messenger asked us to be very careful and sensitive towards women, and orphans, who were among the most fragile segments of society. If people realize that real happiness is not contained in deceptive things, such as wealth, status and power, they would appreciate the light in a child's eye more than anything else. Only at that moment, the meaning of the verse "And if you partner with them, they are bonded with you (in faith) " (Baqarah, 2:220) would find its real place in our life.

RISING THROUGH FAITH

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bayram KOSEOGLU
Expert of the High Board of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَاَنْتُمُ الْاَعْلَوْنَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِيْنَ

"Do not falter or grieve, for you will have the upper hand, if you are (true) believers."

(Al-i 'Imran, 3:139.)

The Battle of Uhud, which took place in the history of Islam, served as a source of many lessons for the Muslims. In contrast to the victory gained at the Battle of Badr, the difficulties encountered during the Battle of Uhud conveyed numerous messages to the believers. As Allah the Almighty states, "We alternate these days (of victory and defeat) among people so that Allah may reveal the (true) believers..." (Al-i 'Imran, 3:140), life—with its ups and downs, its pain and joy, and its positive and negative aspects—is, at every moment, a means of trial.

In the context of the Battle of Uhud, the above-mentioned verse consoles the Muslims by advising them not to grieve over what befell them and not to fall into despair. It also gives glad tidings that, through the determination and steadfastness granted by strong faith, it is indeed possible to attain many victories. At the same time, it reminds them that they must not abandon their responsibilities in the face of adversity (Nasafi, Madarik al-Tanzil, 1/295; Kur'an Yolu Turkish Translation and Tafsir, vol. 1, p. 678.). Indeed, the word iman, derived from the root "amn", which conveys meanings such as "safety, not fearing, and being secure" (Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-'Arab, "amn" art.), signifies not only belief in Allah but also placing one's trust in Him and finding security through faith.

The verses revealed in the context of this experience in Islamic history undoubtedly contain important messages for us as well. Conscious believers who view every moment of life as a test will not boast about what they possess, will not become arrogant, and will not claim, "I achieved this myself." Just as they will show patience in the face of loss, they will neither complain nor rebel. Indeed, those who strive, make efforts, and take the necessary precautions will attain success. As for those who do not strive and fail to fulfill their responsibilities, failure will be inevitable.

Believers, just as they must never despair of the mercy of Allah (Zumar, 39:53), must also not fall into laziness or avoid responsibility under the pretense of relying solely on that mercy (Fatir, 35:5). As in every aspect of life, balance must be observed in this matter as well. Believers who know and understand that Allah loves and is with the believers, the pious, the righteous, the patient, the grateful, and the sincere will, above all, strive to attain these qualities. Thereafter,

with the conviction that Allah the Almighty will surely reward His believing servants who possess these qualities, the believers will act with a sense of responsibility. For sound faith requires a strong heart and trust in Allah and in His promise to the believers (Baydawi, Anwar al-Tanzil, 2/39; Nasafi, Madarik al-Tanzil, 1/295.). It is also worth remembering that the Qur'an's declaration that a person will receive the outcome of their efforts (Najm, 53:39) is among the verses that point clearly to human responsibility.

As stated in the Noble Qur'an, "O believers! If you stand up for Allah, He will help you and make your steps firm." (Muhammad, 47:7), those who truly believe in Allah, who are conscious of Him, and who support His religion and His Prophet will not be left without divine aid. This verse also points to a divine law. In the life of this world, created as a place of trial, Allah's support is linked to the servants' fulfillment of their duties. In addition to verbal supplication, the servants must also offer their supplication through action and effort. If the servants fulfill their responsibilities, Allah (swt) will not leave that effort unrewarded (Kur'an Yolu Turkish Translation and Tafsir, vol. 5, p. 49.). Indeed, when we look at the stories of the prophets as told in the Qur'an, we see that while Allah the Almighty punished the disbelieving communities, He did not abandon those who believed in Him and His messengers; rather, He rescued them from among the disbelievers. In contrast, the end of the disbelievers was destruction, and all their deeds were rendered void (Muhammad, 47:8).

Strong faith, firm submission, and true reliance upon Allah are, in fact, foundational values that shape our perspective on life and determine how we make sense of it. Believers who believe in and trust Allah, submit to His divine laws, and direct their lives accordingly will come to understand that both gains and losses occur within the bounds of faith, submission, and reliance. If they attain the result they hoped for, they will give thanks—and this gratitude will further strengthen their faith. If they experience failure, they will take lessons from it, address their shortcomings, and approach the matter again with even greater effort. They will not give up or collapse; rather, they will manage to remain steadfast under all circumstances. As the Prophet (saw) stated, believers are like fresh saplings; the wind blows from all directions and bends them, yet they do not break—they rise again and stand tall (Bukhari, Tawhid, 31).

Believers who truly believe in Allah must know that faith will elevate them and that through their faith, they will attain a position of honor. Indeed, believers who have genuine faith in Allah will, by means of their righteous deeds and noble character, attain a respected standing among people. As for the superiority of the believers over the disbelievers in the Hereafter, this is a truth that the Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes and illustrates with striking examples at every opportunity.

In light of the unfavorable conditions that Muslims face today, it is a fact that the deficiencies in our practice of faith and Islam have a share in the doubts we now encounter regarding our sacred values, such as faith and Islam. A faith that is genuine rather than superficial, and a form of Islam that manifests not only on the tongue but also in daily life, will be the very faith that strengthens us. Above all, our belief and trust in our Lord and in ourselves will enable us to endure life's hardships with greater resilience. Faith adorned with worship, righteous deeds, and noble character will protect and empower its bearer in both this world and the Hereafter, ultimately leading to salvation. As our Lord has commanded, there should be no place for despair, weakness, or discouragement. For we possess the powerful weapon of belief in Allah. What is essential is that we remain conscious of this and live accordingly. Then, both success and failure will find their true meaning in our lives. A Muslim will remain strong and steadfast through their faith in Allah. As long as a sound belief in Allah, the source of happiness in this world and salvation in the Hereafter, remains at the center of our lives, the help of Allah will continue to be with us.

> "THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED DURING THE BATTLE OF UHUD CONVEYED NUMEROUS MESSAGES TO THE BELIEVERS.

THE MOST VIRTUOUS OF DEEDS LOVING FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

Dr. Ahmet OGUZ
Religious Affairs Attaché of Jeddah

Love is a feeling that penetrates the depths of the human soul and originates from creation itself, and it is a concept with various manifestations. In the Qur'an and hadith, it is generally expressed with the words "hubb" and "muhabbah/mahabbah", and at times with "wudd", "mawaddah", and their derivatives (Suleyman Uludag, "Muhabbet," DIA, 30/384.).

In order for a person to maintain a healthy life, they require not only material needs such as food and drink but also spiritual needs such as faith, worship, and supplication. Therefore, for a person to attain true happiness, these needs must be met in a balanced manner. Undoubtedly, one of our spiritual needs is to love and to be loved. Love is a significant emotion that originates from creation itself. As the Prophet (saw) stated: "The believer is one who loves and is loved. There is no good in a person who neither loves nor is loved." (Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, 6/58 (5787)) However, love reaches its peak through faith and the righteous deeds that nourish it. Indeed, Allah the Almighty states: "As for those who believe and do good, the Most Compassionate will (certainly) bless them with (genuine) love." (Maryam, 19:96). The concept of love (mahabbah) is attributed both to Allah and to human beings. Although there are various definitions of love, their common point is this: either the one who loves is Allah and the one who is loved is the servant, or the one who loves is the servant and the one who is loved is Allah (Rasit Kucuk, Sevgi Medeniyeti, p. 25.). Indeed, one of the names of Allah is al-Wadud (Hud, 11:90; Buruj, 85:14), which signifies that He loves His believing servants who act in accordance with His pleasure, and that He is loved by His creation (Bekir Topaloglu, "Vedud," DIA, 42/598–599). The Prophet Muhammad (saw) is a perfect human being who loved both the Creator and His creation, as he was a means for people to know and love Allah (Al-i 'Imran, 3:31). He referred to himself as Habibullah (the beloved of Allah), yet he stated that this was not a cause for pride (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 3 (3616)). The title Habibullah became one of the most frequently mentioned attributes by Muslims after the phrase Rasulullah (Topaloglu, "Muhammad," DIA, 30/438).

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) draws attention to the connection between love and faith as follows: "You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not truly believe until you love one another..." (Muslim, Iman, 93 (54)) That those who believe in Allah and perform righteous deeds will attain the love of Allah is expressed in a verse as follows: "...And do good, for Allah certainly loves the good-doers." (Baqarah, 2:195)

Undoubtedly, the ones most deserving of love are Allah and His Messenger. Indeed, in the hadiths it is stated that Allah and His Messenger must be loved more than anyone else (Bukhari, Iman, 8 (15); Muslim, Iman, 69–70 (44)), and that such love is a sign of perfect faith whose sweetness is deeply felt within the soul (Bukhari, Iman, 9 (16); Muslim, Iman, 67 (43)). It has also been promised that those who love one another for the sake of Allah, who meet and part with this love, will be among the seven fortunate groups honored under the shade of the Throne on the Day of Resurrection, as Allah's special guests (Bukhari, Zakat, 16 (1423); Muslim, Zakat, 91 (1031)). However, loving Allah and His Messenger is not a mere claim; it necessitates living in accordance with their

"أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ الْحُبُّ فِي اللَّهِ وَالْبُغْضُ فِي اللَّهِ"

"The best of the actions is to love for the sake of Allah and to hate for the sake of Allah."

(Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 2 (4599))

pleasure. For the one who loves is the one who obeys the beloved. As expressed in a poem attributed to Imam al-Shafi'i: "You claim to love Allah, yet you do not refrain from disobeying Him. Such love is false, and its reality is impossible. If your love were true, you would surely obey Him. For the lover is obedient to the one he loves." (Diwan al-Imam al-Shafi'i, p. 96) The noble companions also loved the Prophet Muhammad (saw) more than their own lives and expressed this love by saying, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah!" (Bayhaqi, Shu'ab al-Iman, 13/27 (9903)).

After Allah and His Messenger, those most deserving of love are, first and foremost, our parents, through whom we came into this world, followed by our siblings, who are part of them; our spouses, with whom we share the joys and trials of life; and our children, who carry the potential to keep our record of deeds open. Therefore, we should love them and express our love for them. For just as loving someone is important, making that love felt is equally so. The Beloved of all lovers, the Prophet Muhammad (saw), serves as an example for us in the matter of love, just as he does in all other areas. In one hadith, he expressed his love for his grandson, Hasan, saying, "O Allah! I love him, so love him as well, and love those who love him" (Bukhari, Libas, 60 (5884); Muslim, Fadha'il al-Sahabah, 56–57 (2421)). When his beloved daughter Fatimah came to him, he would stand up, take her by the hand, kiss her, and seat her in his own place. Fatimah (ra), in turn, adopted this noble character and treated her father the same way (Abu Dawud, Adab, 143–144 (5217)).

It is narrated that while a man was sitting in the presence of the Prophet (saw), another person passed by. The man said, "O Messenger of Allah, I truly love that man". The Prophet then asked him, "Did you tell him?" The man replied, "No". The Prophet said, "(Then go) and tell him". So the man went to him and said, "I love you for the sake of Allah". The other man replied, "May Allah, for Whose sake you love me, love you as well" (Abu Dawud, Adab, 112–113 (5125)).

One day, the Messenger of Allah (saw) took the hand of Mu'adh ibn Jabal and said to him, "O Mu'adh! By Allah, I love you" Mu'adh replied, "I love you too, O Messenger of Allah!" (Nasa'i, Sahw, 60 (1304)). Following this, the Prophet (saw) gave him the following advice: "O Mu'adh! I advise you not to neglect saying this supplication after every prayer: 'O Allah! Help me to remember You, to give thanks to You, and to worship You in the best manner.'" (Abu Dawud, Witr, 26 (1522))

Allah the Almighty states in a Hadith Qudsi: "Those who love one another solely for My sake, who gather for My sake, who visit one another for My sake, and who give in charity for My sake, deserve My love." (Muwatta', Sha'ar, 16); "For those who love one another for My sake, there will be pulpits/pavilions of light, which will be the envy of even the prophets and martyrs." (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 53 (T2390)) As understood from these hadiths, what makes love truly valuable is that it is purely for the sake of Allah, without any worldly expectation (Islam through Hadiths, 3/71–84) The noble companions also loved one another for the sake of Allah in pursuit of this glad tiding, and they demonstrated every form of selflessness and sacrifice in doing so (Hashr, 59:9).

Prof. Dr. Safi ARPAGUS:
“The truths brought by the Prophet Muhammad have illuminated the path and horizon of all humanity.”

Interview by:
Cemalettin GEZGIC
Abdurrahman AKBAS

He graduated from Marmara University, Faculty of Theology, in 1990. Arpagus began his academic career at the same faculty in 1992 as a research assistant. He completed his master’s degree in 1994 and his doctoral studies in 2001. He was awarded the title of associate professor in 2008 and became a full professor in 2014. Between 2011 and 2021, he served as the vice dean of the Faculty of Theology at Marmara University. He was later appointed as the Mufti of Istanbul and held this position from 2021 to 2025. On September 18, 2025, he was appointed President of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, becoming the 19th person to hold this office. His academic field of study is the history of Islamic Sufism, including Sufi concepts and institutions. Arpagus has especially focused on Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, the Mathnawi, and the Mawlawi Order and has published numerous books, articles, and translations on these subjects.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah the Almighty states, "We have sent you (O Prophet) only as a mercy for the whole world" (Anbiya, 21:107). From the perspective of this universal truth, how should the Prophet Muhammad's being a mercy to the worlds be contemplated and understood?

First of all, I would like to point out that the concept of mercy mentioned here refers to the mercy of our Exalted Lord toward all of creation. As you are well aware, the Noble Qur'an introduces our Lord to us with the names "ar-Rahman" and "ar-Rahim". Allah is ar-Rahman and ar-Rahim—the One Who shows mercy to all creatures and bestows countless blessings upon them. That is why we begin all our affairs by invoking these exalted names that express Allah's infinite mercy. We seek refuge in His boundless mercy and vast compassion. Indeed, Allah the Almighty emphasizes the limitless nature of His mercy with the verse: "But My mercy encompasses everything." (A'raf, 7:156)

There are, of course, countless manifestations of our Lord's mercy upon His servants. One of the clearest expressions of Allah's mercy toward humanity is His sending of revelation to convey the truth and appointing prophets to deliver the truths of that revelation to His servants. Indeed, for a person to comprehend the truth and to maintain sound and healthy relationships with their Lord, with themselves, and with their surroundings, it is only possible through the guidance of revelation and the prophets. In this context, the final prophet, Prophet Muhammad (saw), through the divine message he brought and the guidance he exemplified, reunited humanity—lost in the darkness of ignorance—with knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, leading them from darkness into light through the guidance of revelation. The truths brought by the Prophet Muhammad have illuminated the path and horizon of all humanity. His approach toward human beings, nature, and all living creatures has established a timeless example for all of humankind. Indeed, his coming has been a mercy to the entire realm of existence. Indeed, the verse you mentioned in your question, in which Allah the Almighty introduces the Prophet to us, expresses that the Prophet Muhammad was not sent as a mercy solely to those who directly received the revelation, but rather as a mercy to all of humanity, and even to the entire realm of existence. The Prophet Muhammad brought forth universal principles that show the paths to justice, mercy, trust, and a balanced life upon righteousness on earth. Realizing these principles will serve as a means of humanity's salvation. A consciousness built upon this foundation, along with a worldview shaped by these values, will also be a mercy to the entire realm of existence.

> WHEN JUSTICE CEASES TO BE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE IN RELATIONSHIPS AND HEARTS ARE DEPRIVED OF MERCY, WORDS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS BECOME DRIVEN BY ANGER, HATRED, AND UNCHECKED DESIRES.

When we look at the life of the Prophet Muhammad, it becomes clear that his mercy was not merely a felt emotion or an abstract virtue, but a concrete mode of conduct and a way of life. What fundamental moral messages does this noble stance and exalted character offer to human beings, who have been swept into a whirlpool of speed, comfort, and self-centeredness amid the chaos of the contemporary age?

Certainly, "mercy" is by no means merely an abstract virtue, a purely felt emotion in the heart, or a philosophical concept. Mercy, which is a reflection of Allah the Almighty's name "ar-Rahman", has not only an inner, spiritual dimension but also a practical, actionable aspect. Mercy revives, expands, and beautifies

the heart in which it takes root, transforming all of a person's words, attitudes, and behaviors into manifestations of divine mercy. In this regard, mercy is one of the most fundamental values that gives life to a person and imparts a humane, conscientious, and moral integrity to their life. As Mawlana said: "Mercy is a water of life within existence. Whoever lacks mercy is but a dead soul."

The most beautiful example for us in reflecting the feeling of mercy into life is our beloved Prophet. For all the truths, principles, and moral values of Islam were exemplified in the most perfect manner by the Prophet Muhammad, transforming them into a model way of life. He taught us every truth of the Qur'an by living it. For this reason, we regard every moment of the Prophet's life as a divine blessing granted to us by our Lord. We believe that the peace and salvation of all humanity lie in taking his life as an example. Mercy stood at the very center of his view of life. He linked being deserving of Allah's mercy to showing mercy toward creation. He said, "Allah shows mercy to those who are merciful; show mercy to those on the earth so that those in the heavens will show mercy to you." (Abu Dawud, Adab, 58).

> THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD BROUGHT FORTH UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES THAT SHOW THE PATHS TO JUSTICE, MERCY, TRUST, AND A BALANCED LIFE UPON RIGHTEOUSNESS ON EARTH.

He himself treated every creature with the utmost compassion and mercy. His mercy, especially toward the believers, was evident in every moment of his life. Even in times when he did not have enough means at home for himself and his family, he still helped those in need and extended a hand to the poor, no matter the cost. With Allah's mercy, he treated all people with kindness and was never harsh, severe, or hurtful toward anyone. He bore no feelings of revenge against anyone, remained patient in the face of people's rudeness and mistakes, and chose the path of forgiveness and tolerance. He showed mercy even to his enemies; even when they launched the harshest attacks against him, he never cursed them; instead, he prayed for their forgiveness. Therefore, in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, mercy goes beyond being merely a feeling; it represents sacrificial action and embodies attitudes and behaviors demonstrated for the well-being of all living beings.

Today, modern human beings, caught in a whirlpool of pleasure, speed, and self-centeredness, have drifted away from mercy and, as a result, have become distant from empathizing with others and sharing in their pain. The ability to remain indifferent while people nearby suffer from hunger, deprivation, and poverty is one of the clearest signs of this. Likewise, the fact that one can watch the unjust killing of thousands of people in live broadcasts and continue with life as if nothing has happened, without even feeling a trace of sorrow in the heart, is a reflection of this absence of mercy.

The attitude of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) in his family life, rooted in love, respect, justice, and mercy, presented the finest examples of human relationships. This prophetic approach, especially notable for its ethics of family communication, offers what spiritual remedies for today's rapidly deteriorating and fragmented family structure?

Values such as love, respect, justice, fairness, and mercy form the very soul of human relationships. However, in the modern age, pragmatic approaches, almost enslaving the individual, have led to relationships often unfolding devoid of these essential values. Human interactions today are conducted in an environment dominated

by individualism and selfishness, where mutual consideration is lacking, the ethics of living together are neglected, spiritual values are pushed aside, and selflessness is seen as meaningless. When justice ceases to be the guiding principle in relationships and hearts are deprived of mercy, words, attitudes, and behaviors become driven by anger, hatred, and unchecked desires. The family is the institution that suffers the most from this decline. As a result, in the modern age, the family institution is increasingly damaged and worn down with each passing day, gradually losing its quality as a haven of peace and security.

The cure for this ailment, which wounds the institution of the family and threatens social harmony, undoubtedly lies within the family life of the Prophet of Mercy. Today, both building a strong family structure and restoring the family unit worn down by the turmoil of modern life can only be achieved by following the example of the Prophet Muhammad. In this regard, we know that love, respect, and mercy always held a central place in his family life. The Messenger of Allah always valued his family members, especially his wives, paid utmost attention to their rights, consulted with them, and never withheld his support in managing their affairs. At times, he would even joke with them, race with them, and spend pleasant, joyful moments together. He showed love and compassion, especially toward children; he kissed his grandchildren, embraced them, and played with them. Even during acts of worship, he made an effort to keep their hearts content. The hadith that expresses all of this, "The best of you is the one who is best to his family, and I am the best among you to my

> "THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE FOR US IN REFLECTING THE FEELING OF MERCY INTO LIFE IS OUR BELOVED PROPHET.

family" (Ibn Majah, Nikah, 56), is undoubtedly the most beautiful prescription for family life.

What spiritual values and principles should we prioritize today in order to rebuild our workplaces, homes, and schools—in short, our entire society—upon the climate of mercy and the foundations of love and justice, as taught by the Prophet Muhammad?

In fact, the subjects we have been discussing from the beginning, centered on love, respect, justice, and mercy, constitute the essential steps for establishing a society grounded in these values. The Prophet Muhammad taught us the practical implementation of such a society step by step through his own life and built a civilization of mercy that serves as an example for all of humanity. Of course, being the ummah of the Prophet of Mercy also brings with it a great responsibility. In order to establish a society of mercy as the Prophet Muhammad once did, we must bring his example into our lives in all its dimensions. In this context, it is essential to raise individuals with love, compassion, and mercy, first and foremost by loving all of creation for the sake of the Creator, and to weave a Muslim identity, thread by thread, with these values. As you know, love, compassion, and mercy possess a healing power for both individuals and society. Moreover, without a doubt, the most suitable and primary environment for sowing and nurturing the seeds of love, compassion, and mercy in hearts is the family home. It is essential to build the family, which is a place of education, upon these foundations, to shape the character of those raised within it according to the noble moral principles of Islam, and to imbue their souls with these universal values. In this regard, great responsibilities also fall upon our educational institutions and educators. All of Islam's life-giving values and principles

must be instilled in the minds and hearts of future generations with the precision of a jeweler. Individuals who are raised, both within the family environment and in schools, by experiencing goodness, love, respect, and the feeling of mercy will naturally adopt these traits as a way of life. While this is the most fundamental responsibility for every Muslim, it is also a vital and effective method for transforming mercy into lived practice. Indeed, the first generation that was raised under the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad through such practices formed the very essence and foundation of the civilization of mercy. Outstanding examples, such as those who would leave food on mountaintops during harsh winter seasons so that wild animals could survive, emerged from this very spirit of mercy.

In the face of today's global challenges, where should a believer who wishes to reflect the character and example of the Prophet Muhammad begin, and which fundamental principles should they adopt as their compass?

Let me emphasize that in the face of today's global challenges, which undermine, disregard, and dismantle established values, what truly matters is not merely speaking about the Prophet Muhammad, but reflecting the principles he established and the exemplary character he embodied in our own lives. It is to adopt a stance befitting a believer. In fact, the entire world is in need of such a stance. In today's world, where the vast majority of humanity is experiencing extremely difficult times due to the insatiable greed, avarice, and selfishness of those who have forgotten justice and mercy, humanity is in dire need of such a stance. The need for Islam's vision of life, its understanding of justice, and its moral principles, embodied in the example of the Prophet Muhammad, who was sent as a mercy to the worlds, is being felt more and more with each passing day.

Today, humanity seems to have, regrettably, forgotten mercy and justice. As it grows distant from mercy, it becomes trapped in a dark and barren climate. Because these principles have been abandoned—especially by Muslim societies, but also by humanity as a whole—people are now suffering from injustice, unrest, and spiritual crises. As a result, episodes of violence, anger, hatred, and unchecked desire have descended upon the modern world like a nightmare. The earth has become a place increasingly overtaken by injustice, inequality, hunger, and poverty. In such a context, it is of great importance that the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad be properly understood and that the values he brought be represented in the most beautiful manner and conveyed to humanity. This suffocating darkness that weighs upon the soul can only be dispelled by making the message of mercy brought by our exalted religion, Islam, prevail in our lives, through the example of the Prophet Muhammad. In this regard, the first step is to strengthen the feeling of mercy within our hearts and place it at the very center of our lives. We must reflect the example of the Prophet of Mercy—rooted in knowledge, wisdom, justice, and compassion—in our words, attitudes, and actions; to live it fully and strive to keep it alive. By doing so, despite the self-interest-driven global challenges of the modern age, goodness and mercy will prevail, and the climate of peace will replace the cycles of violence and whirlpools of hatred that have long afflicted humanity.

> ALL OF ISLAM'S LIFE-GIVING VALUES AND PRINCIPLES MUST BE INSTILLED IN THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS WITH THE PRECISION OF A JEWELER.

DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROMISE AN EARTHLY PARADISE?

Prof. Dr. Muhammed KIZILGECIT

One of the world-renowned technology companies recently used the slogan "We, Robot" during a launch event where it introduced its upcoming products to the market. The company appeared to be referencing Isaac Asimov's I, Robot with this slogan. So, who was Isaac Asimov, and what was he conveying with his famous book?

Born in 1920 in a town near Smolensk, Russia, to a Jewish family, Asimov emigrated to the United States with his family at the age of three. He grew up in New York. Before the age of twenty, he began writing science fiction stories. Starting his writing career with science fiction, Asimov also published popular science books and poetry collections. His short science fiction story Nightfall, published in 1941, became one of the most famous science fiction stories. This story was selected in 1968 by the organization called the Science Fiction Writers of America as the best short science fiction story written up to that time. Asimov also gained great fame with his Foundation and Robot book series. The Foundation series tells the story of an organization established to prevent the collapse of a galactic empire and the ensuing chaos. In this series, Asimov brings together various disciplines such as theology, anthropology, history, mathematics, and sociology to create a complex and profound universe (Timucin, Bugra Edman, Selcuk University Faculty of Letters Journal, 2017, Issue 37, 2017, pp. 377–386.).

The fictional universe/text initiated by Asimov, with the support of other writers and the film industry, is positioned as one of the foundational texts of the postmodern era. The possibility of preventing or delaying galactic chaos is pursued through robots based on artificial intelligence. In this narrative, both sacred texts and symbols, as well as anthropological elements, are employed to the fullest extent in a postmodern style. Transitions between times and personalities, the battle between good and evil, and most importantly, preparation for a posthuman future...

AI

The Western human's inclination toward possession, which began with the geographical discoveries... The colonial order brought about by this inclination and the world wars waged to sustain that order... Then, the positioning of humanity by the owners of major corporations as modern slaves... All of this aimed at a conformist lifestyle and the desire to experience eternity here on earth... Employing robots to bring paradise down to earth and instrumentalizing artificial intelligence for this narrative... The idea of controlling objects or people is not new. There is a "will to power" within the human being, and when we look at our world, this desire appears insatiable. By nature, the human being desires not only immortality but also infinite power. Possessing power and using it over weaker individuals is one of the oldest behavioral patterns in human history. At the point we have reached, using robots to attain power is the posthuman era's manifestation of this very tendency. So, in this narrative presented to humanity, and accompanied by science, what awaits us?

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to develop, it raises profound questions about the future of humanity and its place in the world. Although still a largely unexplored field, the themes outlined in sacred texts point to an intersection between AI and the eschatology of divine religions. Considering its potential risks as a new kind of "monster" that could lead humanity astray, it is necessary to reflect on the potential role of AI within an eschatological framework. Furthermore, examining the effects of AI's development in a post-human world is essential in order to establish new perspectives on how AI might take shape and to offer a vision for future generations (Sancili, F. (2023), "Islam Kulturunde Kiyamet Mitolojisinin Temel Eskatolojik Mitleri," (The Fundamental Eschatological Myths of Apocalypse Mythology in Islamic Culture), Ardahan University Faculty of Humanities and Letters, Belgu Journal (Special Issue), pp. 113–12; Youvan, Douglas C., AI and the Apocalypse: Exploring the Role of Artificial Intelligence in the Eschatology of the Book of Revelation, October, 2024.).

> "INDIVIDUALS MUST LIVE WITH A SUSTAINED SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD HUMANITY, CREATION, AND THE SACRED THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES, AND MAINTAIN THIS COMMITMENT UNTIL LIFE'S END OR AT ITS FINAL STAGE.

In light of all these explanations, we once again ask the question posed in the title: Does artificial intelligence promise an earthly paradise? Or, as the world is clothed in the "new", what kind of world will it become? The word jannah (paradise) is derived from the root jann, meaning "to cover, to conceal," and refers to a "garden that covers the ground with its plants and trees". The reason why the eternal abode of bliss for the believers in the Hereafter is called by this name is explained either by its general resemblance to earthly gardens or by the idea that its unparalleled blessings are hidden from human comprehension. As in Judaism, Christianity also holds the belief that the "Eden" paradise existed at the beginning of creation (Sahin, M. Sureyya, TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, vol. 7, pp. 374–346.).

Paradise has been a realm long yearned for throughout human history. Based on the statements found in the Qur'an and authentic hadiths, the main characteristics of the blessings of Paradise can be identified as follows: 1. Everlasting life and comfort. 2. Constant peace and tranquility. 3. The inhabitants of Paradise possessing exceptional physical, spiritual strength, and abilities. 4. Spiritual fulfillment (contentment). 5. Seeing Allah and speaking with Him. 6. All of these are encompassed by perpetuity. (Topaloglu, Bekir, TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi, vol. 7, pp. 376–386.)

Considering that in many verses Paradise promised to the righteous is mentioned in the plural

form, it is understood that there are multiple abodes and that a dwelling is prepared for each believer. Regarding the interpretation of the verses that describe Paradise as being as vast as the heavens and the earth (Al-i 'Imran, 3:133; al-Hadid, 57:21), the following differing views have been put forward: 1. It is a metaphor expressing that Paradise is unimaginably vast. According to this view, ardh (earth) refers to "width". Since the narrow side of an area is usually its width, within the framework of this comparison, the length of Paradise would be far greater. 2. Paradise is as valuable as the universe comprehensible to humankind in worldly life. 3. Just as the material world has been presented to human perception, so too has Paradise been presented to human knowledge and understanding (Topaloglu, Bekir, vol. 7, pp. 376–386.). In Islam, a believer who wishes to attain Paradise must do the following:

1. Individuals must live with a sustained sense of responsibility toward humanity, creation, and the sacred throughout their lives, and maintain this commitment until life's end or at its final stage.

2. They must strive to live and help others live with this awareness.

3. They must be just and compassionate.

4. Rather than attempting to realize a sense of perpetuity within the inherent transience of this world, individuals should endeavor to attain timelessness through their worldly acts, entrusting everlasting existence to the Hereafter.

5. While exploring the universe and reaching for the stars, they must live with tawhid and endeavor to establish tawhid throughout the cosmos.

> "CONSIDERING ITS POTENTIAL RISKS AS A NEW KIND OF "MONSTER" THAT COULD LEAD HUMANITY ASTRAY, IT IS NECESSARY TO REFLECT ON THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF AI WITHIN AN ESCHATOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.

In contrast, in the postmodern era, the humanoid (human-like being), envisioned as part of a posthuman future paradise, aims to continue the colonial attitude of the West with the following characteristics:

1. It should position knowledge as mere data, distant from wisdom.

2. It should procure raw materials through an inclination to possess.

3. It should, if necessary, kill those who obstruct this.

4. Within the limited plane of existence, it should construct eternity on earth so as to leave no place for the unseen.

5. In smart cities, people, regarded as organisms with serial numbers, should be kept under control.

6. If Earth is insufficient for absolute fulfillment, it should turn to other galaxies.

7. Through interstellar voyages, it should, by its own hand, subjugate existence to the form it has idealized.

Seeking Paradise in this world brings with it the fallacy of reducing Paradise to the worldly realm. Stripping the everlasting (Paradise) of its true nature is the greatest harm that can be done to what is everlasting. On the other hand, to eliminate the possibility of perpetuity for the limited being (the human) is to render human into nonexistence. Positioning artificial intelligence technology for individual and social well-being is, of course, a condition desired by all. Moreover, for every Muslim to be the designer and producer of these technologies and to offer a vision to all humanity on a global scale is a necessity for all hearts that believe in truth and in al-Haqq—especially in this period when war crimes are being committed, when Muslim blood is being mercilessly shed in many parts of the world, and when the genocide in Gaza is taking place. However, the future or the world envisioned from Asimov's time to the present must not be based on pagan myths, anthropomorphic Greek mythology, or the eschatology of the Holy Book; rather, it must be in accordance with tawhid, the Qur'an, prophethood, justice, and mercy.

THE BREACH OF THE CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA

Prof. Dr. Eyup BAS
Religious Services Counselor in Copenhagen

After the Prophet (saw), for a period, neutralized the principal external threat posed by the Qurayshi polytheists—most notably through the victory at Badr—and had established a stable social order in Medina favorable to the Muslims, he was subsequently confronted with a series of provocations from the Jewish tribes. Initially, however, the Prophet's (saw) approach toward the Jews of Medina had yielded some positive results; among the notable scholars of Banu Qaynuqa, Abd Allah ibn Salam had embraced Islam along with his family. Nevertheless, although the Jews had previously claimed that they would follow the soon-to-arrive prophet and thereby gain superiority over their enemies, using such assertions to threaten the members of the Aws and Khazraj tribes, they ultimately rejected the Prophet Muhammad (saw) as the Messenger of Allah because he had not emerged from among the Jews. Furthermore, they undertook various efforts to turn Muslims away from their religion and at times mocked the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (saw). They also sought to stir up discord by reminding the Aws and Khazraj tribes of their former, thereby emboldening the hypocrites.

A group of Jews, unwilling to accept the outcome of the Battle of Badr and fearing that the Muslims' successes would undermine their own authority, grew even more envious after this victory. They attributed the Muslims' triumph to the Quraysh's lack of knowledge in the art of warfare. While this tension continued, an incident that took place in the marketplace of the Banu Qaynuqa, who were renowned among the Jewish tribes of Medina for their bravery and combativeness, became the final straw that broke the camel's back. A Muslim woman from the Ansar went to the marketplace of Banu Qaynuqa to make a purchase and was subjected to harassment by the Jews present at a jeweler's shop.

> AFTER THE EXPULSION OF THE BANU QAYNUQA FROM THE CITY, LIFE IN MEDINA GRADUALLY BEGAN TO RETURN TO NORMAL.

When she cried out for help, a Muslim man rushed to her aid. Unable to contain his anger, he killed the Jewish jeweler from Banu Qaynuqa. In turn, he was killed by the Jews present at the scene. This incident, which clearly demonstrated that the previously established agreement had been violated and was no longer of any significance, deeply grieved the Prophet (saw) and the Muslims. The Prophet (saw) began to fear that Banu Qaynuqa, as the first among the Jewish tribes to breach the pact, might at any moment engage in further acts of treachery. It was at this point that a revelation was sent down, stating that if the Prophet (saw) feared betrayal from any group with whom a treaty had been made, he was permitted to respond in kind by annulling the agreement: "And if you (O Prophet) see signs of betrayal by a people, respond by openly terminating your treaty with them. Surely Allah does not like those who betray." (Anfal, 8:58)

In the middle of the month of Shawwal, the Prophet (saw) appointed Abu Lubaba ibn Abd al-Mundhir al-Ansari as his deputy in Medina and laid siege to the neighborhood of Banu Qaynuqa. In front of Bayt al-Midras, the building used by this Jewish tribe both as a school and a court, the Prophet (saw) issued them a final invitation to Islam. However, the Banu Qaynuqa responded negatively, stating that they had already been warned by the Prophet Muhammad (saw) on this matter. The tribe possessed two fortresses, which were characteristic of Medina's architecture. They withdrew into these strongholds. The Muslims besieged Banu Qaynuqa for fifteen days. Despite having around seven hundred warriors, the Jews of Banu Qaynuqa were overcome with fear. They agreed to surrender and leave Medina, abandoning all their possessions and homes, on the condition that their lives be spared. Abd Allah ibn Ubayy, the leader of the Khazraj tribe, who did not want to lose his allies with such military strength, persistently pleaded with the Prophet (saw) to pardon them and allow them to remain. However, his efforts were unsuccessful.

> "THE PROPHET (SAW) REMAINED DEVOTED TO EDUCATING THE MUSLIMS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES AND NURTURING THEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WILL OF ALLAH THE ALMIGHTY.

The Prophet (saw), granting the Banu Qaynuqa—who were the first group to violate the citizenship agreement—a period of three days to leave Medina, appointed Muhammad ibn Maslamah to take custody of their belongings. He also tasked Ubadah ibn al-Samit with overseeing the situation and maintaining order until they departed from the city. During this time, at the request of Banu Qaynuqa, they were permitted to collect their outstanding debts. The Prophet (saw) also informed them that they would be allowed to return to Medina for a period of up to three days at a time, should they need to take care of various matters. The Jews of Banu Qaynuqa left Medina under the supervision of Ubadah ibn al-Samit, abandoning a significant quantity of weapons and materials used in arms manufacturing and jewelry-making (Shawwal, 2 AH / April 624 CE).

After taking one-fifth (khums) of the spoils seized from Banu Qaynuqa, the Prophet (saw) distributed the remaining four-fifths among the Muslims. Thus, for the first time, he implemented the directive revealed in Surah al-Anfal, verse 41, regarding the division of spoils of war, following the Battle of Badr.

After the expulsion of the Banu Qaynuqa from the city, life in Medina gradually began to return to normal. Shortly thereafter, the Prophet (saw) wished to marry his cousin Ali to his daughter Fatimah. Ali had proposed to Fatimah before the Battle of Badr, but at that time, he lacked the means to offer a proper mahr (bridal gift). Following the battle, he sold a piece of armor he had received as part of his share of the spoils. According to some reports, he sold his camel and some belongings instead and gave a mahr of approximately 450 silver dirhams. Fatimah's dowry consisted of a velvet cover, a leather pillow filled with palm fibers, two hand-operated grinding stones, and two water containers made of leather. The Prophet (saw) solemnized the marriage of Fatimah and Ali in the month of Dhu al-Qa'dah (May 624 CE).

When the month of Dhu al-Hijjah, regarded by the Arabs as the month of Hajj, arrived, the Prophet (saw) led the 'Eid al-Adha prayer on the tenth day of the month and had sacrificial animals slaughtered. As he had done on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, the Prophet (saw) encouraged the Muslims to visit one another and offer congratulations on 10 Dhu al-Hijjah 2 AH (3 June 624 CE). He implemented this practice in accordance with the Qur'anic verses revealed during his time in Mecca, which prohibited the consumption of meat from animals slaughtered in the name of beings other than Allah—a practice that had become part of a pilgrimage ritual corrupted by elements of shirk. These prohibitions are found in the following verses: Baqarah (2:173), Ma'idah (5:3), An'am (6:145), and Nahl (16:115). He also abolished the polytheistic custom of smearing the blood of sacrificial animals on the walls of the Ka'bah as an act of seeking blessing, implementing the following verse as a guiding principle: "Neither their meat nor blood reaches Allah. Rather, it is your piety that reaches Him. This is how He has subjected them to you so that you may proclaim the greatness of Allah for what He has guided you to, and give good news to the good-doers." (Hajj, 22:37)

Sometime later, another matter that served to further define the Islamic identity was addressed through the revelation of a verse declaring the obligation of zakat—a prescribed portion taken from the wealth of affluent Muslims.

"Alms-tax is only for the poor and the needy, for those employed to administer it, for those whose hearts are attracted (to the faith), for (freeing) slaves, for those in debt, for Allah's cause, and for 'needy' travellers. 'This is' an obligation from Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." (Tawbah, 9:60)

During the Medina period, the revelations sent to the Prophet (saw) prominently emphasized the strong connection between faith, worship, morality, and socio-economic life. With the revelation of this particular verse, zakat came to occupy a central place within socio-economic relations. Explaining the verse to the Muslims, the Prophet (saw) stated that zakat was to be collected from the wealth of affluent Muslims. He counted zakat among the pillars of Islam, highlighting that it is not only a financial obligation but also an act of worship. In response to questions posed to him, the Prophet (saw) provided detailed explanations regarding the types of wealth subject to zakat, as well as their nisab (minimum threshold) and the applicable rates. He advised his companions to begin their charitable giving with their own family members before extending assistance to others.

"DURING THE MEDINA PERIOD, THE REVELATIONS SENT TO THE PROPHET (SAW) PROMINENTLY EMPHASIZED THE STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN FAITH, WORSHIP, MORALITY, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE.

While our beloved Prophet (saw) was engaged in explaining the revelations and nurturing the Muslim community, he did not neglect his own family life. A month or two after the recent developments, he married off his other daughter, Umm Kulthum, to Uthman ibn Affan.

During the same period, the Prophet (saw) was faced with an external threat. He learned that the tribes of Sulaym and Ghatafan were planning to attack Medina. In response, he advanced with a force of two hundred men to a place called Qarqarat al-Kudr. However, the polytheists fled before risking any confrontation. The Muslims returned to Medina safely, without falling into any ambush. Soon after, the Prophet (saw) marched with four hundred companions against Banu Muharib and Banu Sa'labah, who intended to raid Medina. Upon hearing of the Prophet's (saw) approach, the polytheists were overcome with fear and fled (3 AH / 624 CE).

Aside from such occasional threats and tensions that arose from time to time, the Prophet (saw) remained devoted to educating the Muslims in their daily lives and nurturing them in accordance with the will of Allah the Almighty.

DANIELA URUENA GARCIA:
“I BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING SUPERIOR.”

Interview by: Zeynep Feyza TAYFUR

Can you introduce yourself? Who is Daniela?

I'm from Colombia. I've been Muslim for 14 years now. I live in Türkiye. I studied psychology, and I also studied industrial design in Colombia. When I came to Türkiye, I did a master's in counselling psychology, alhamdulillah, and I am the only child. As well, I'm the only Muslim in my family. My parents are in Colombia. I'm working in the Presidency of Religious Affairs as a translator. I translate Islamic books from English and Turkish to Spanish, alhamdulillah.

Can you describe your life before Islam, regarding faith?

In Colombia, most of the people are Catholic Christians. In my whole life, I studied in a Catholic school. My parents are Catholic, so I always believed in God, for sure. I believe then that this was something superior, and we prayed to the angels and to Jesus. So I did have a belief.

I became Muslim when I was 22 years old. After Islam, everything changed alhamdulillah. I think somehow belief starts to grow in your heart. Islam gives you hope. If you are a believer, the most important thing as a Muslim is to have hope. Never lose hope, that is what Islam teaches me.

Did you remember the first time you heard about Islam?

I was traveling to graduate from the university, so for that reason, I had to go to America to get my English certificate. I was in the States for three months. I liked the English course, and it was the first time that I met Muslims. In fact, it was the first time that I saw a Muslim. I don't remember that I learned anything about Islam specifically, but I remember I saw a girl, my classmate, and she was wearing a beautiful headscarf. It was summer, it was really hot, but she was still wearing a headscarf, and I got curious about it. It was the first time that I crossed paths with Islam, as I had never heard anything about it in my life.

What can you say about this first experience with Muslims?

The first question I asked her was, "Why are you wearing this?" Since she was married, I thought her husband probably made her wear it. She was 24 years old. However, she told me, "No, my husband doesn't force me to do anything; it is my choice. It's just because it helps me that people will identify me as a Muslim, you know. In the Qur'an, Allah says that women should cover themselves for protection and to self-value. She said: "Our beauty is not for everybody. In that way, people will value you, but it is not for your beauty. It is for your personality and for who you are. So we have to protect that beauty, and we have to share it with the right people. So to say, I share with my family, with my husband, with my sons, but not with everybody. I'm special. Allah says that women are special and we have to protect them."

> "AFTER I CAME BACK FROM THE STATES, I STARTED TO READ ABOUT ISLAM IN MY OWN LANGUAGE. I DIDN'T FIND MUCH.

When I was learning English, she was learning English. Sometimes she used to talk in Arabic. I used to speak in English. She used to say inshallah and alhamdulillah. For example, I was sneezing and she said alhamdulillah. When she was starting something, she says bismillah. When I said something, she said mashallah, inshallah. I said, "What is Allah?" She said: "Allah is God, and it's the same, but in Arabic, Allah is used only for Him. This word is just for Him because Allah is not a woman, nor a man. We do everything for Allah, and we praise Him all the time. We give up things for Him, we ask for His forgiveness all the time, for Allah is present."

At the same time, I thought to myself that she was really happy. She was studying, then she would go back to Saudi Arabia. She will work, and she is free. However, we have the opposite thinking that a Muslim woman doesn't have advantages, but that she is disadvantaged. The thought is that she is controlled by her husband, she will have to stay at home, and she will not be able to do anything at all. But this is culture, not Islam. At the same time, they believe that Allah is with them all the time. Even during a bad situation, they would say alhamdulillah. For example, sometimes they didn't have money or other things, but they didn't complain. I was very pleased with that response.

In this process, how did you decide to be a Muslim?

I have never said, "I want to be Muslim". But now that I think about it, I feel Allah was showing me the way. He takes you from here to there, and Allah is the best planner.

After I came back from the States, I started to read about Islam in my own language. I didn't find much. I used to search on the internet, but there wasn't much information in Spanish. Everything was in English, and my English wasn't that good. But I found out that it was really logical. I understood and believed that Allah is One. I believed that Jesus is a prophet, and that Allah sent him to guide us. I didn't have any issue with the belief. I said, "Okay, I accept the angels, the divine books, destiny..." The beliefs were not much different from Catholicism and Christianity. The problem was society, how I was going to behave in my society. I come from a social environment where everything is mixed, and the morals are not well-balanced. So I thought, "I have to wear hijab... How is that going to work? Who will I marry?" I was thinking about these kinds of things. But I kept reading. One day during Easter, my parents went on a trip. I didn't go; I stayed home, and I said to myself, "Okay, I'll go to a masjid". But this is Colombia. I live in the capital, Bogotá. I looked on the internet and found that there was a mosque close to my house, somehow. I went there. Since it was a holiday, the streets were empty. No one was outside. I followed the address and went to the neighbourhood. I was walking, expecting a big mosque with everything. But I didn't find anything like that. I said to myself, "Okay, I'll go back home." But something inside me said, "Don't go. Go back again. Just try once more." So I went around again. I was in the area near the Palestinian Embassy. There are old houses, I said, "Okay, let me try here, behind the embassy." I rang the bell. A brother opened the door. I said, "I'm looking for the masjid." They were repainting and repairing the mosque, so they had taken down the sign — the name wasn't there. He said, "Yes, this is the mosque. Let me call a sister." He called a sister, who was Colombian, also a convert. We spoke in our own language. She gave me some brochures. I told her I had already accepted the beliefs, but I didn't know how to behave now. I didn't know how my family would accept it, how my friends would react, or how I would grow into it. She said, "Come tomorrow, it's Friday, so there will be Jumah prayer. You'll see many sisters. We also share food. Come tomorrow, read books, and it's okay."

The next day, I went to the Jumah prayer. The prayer was in Arabic and Spanish. After prayer, it was lunchtime, so they shared food. I talked to the sisters, most of whom were Colombians, and they were really nice. We had coffee, snacks, and I felt comfortable. Then I went to talk to the imam of the mosque. I asked him the same questions. He said, "You are ready." I said, "Ready for what?" He said, "Do you believe in God? Do you believe in the Prophets? In the angels? In the Books? In destiny?" I said, "Yes. Catholics believe the same. There's no difference". He said, "Then you are ready." I said, "I'm not ready." He said, "What if you go outside today and — may Allah protect you — you have an accident and you die? Where do you want to go? To Paradise? Or to Hell?" Then he wrote something on a piece of paper and said, "Let's go to the women's area."

We went to the women's section. There were a few sisters. We sat in a circle. I was in the middle, and he was in front of me. He gave a speech and then said: "Now you're going to repeat after me." I said, "Okay." So I said the Shahadah. Then everyone said: "Allahu Akbar!" I wasn't really conscious of what it meant. I didn't go there to say, "I want to be Muslim" or "I want to make Shahadah". He made me do it. I didn't think about what would happen the next day. I just said it. Alhamdulillah.

> "IT WAS SUMMER, IT WAS REALLY HOT, BUT SHE WAS STILL WEARING A HEADSCARF, AND I GOT CURIOUS ABOUT IT. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT I CROSSED PATHS WITH ISLAM.

He gave me a book and told me the prayer times, how to do ghusl when I get home, and that I'm welcome every Friday. He said: "Don't worry. Allah is with you." I went out. The street was empty. I looked to the right, then to the left, but no one. I thought: "Nobody knows. Let me try. If I like it, I'll continue. If not, I'll drop it. It doesn't matter." I took a taxi and went back home. I messaged my Muslim friends and told them, "I think I'm Muslim." They said, "What do you mean, you think?" I explained everything. One of them said, "My sister, you are Muslim". She said to me: "Just take it easy. If you need anything, I'm here. You can text me whenever. You're a Muslim. We are sisters in Islam. Don't worry, Allah will guide you." I said, "Okay, nice. I won't worry." That made me feel better. After that, every Friday I used to go to the Masjid because it was on the way to my university. I would stop by, spend time with the sisters, and learn more.

One day, I was walking my dog around the neighborhood, and I saw a woman in a hijab and a little boy in a jubba. I asked them, "What is this place?" She told me it was an Islamic center called Al-Kurtubi. They offered classes on the weekends for Muslims and non-Muslims about Islam, Arabic, and related topics. I started going every weekend. There were also Colombian Muslims there, and I started learning Arabic. I learned how to pray on time, how to wear hijab, what halal food is — and it was just 10 minutes from my house. It was really nice. When I was there, I felt like I was in another world. I was sharing time with my Muslim friends. Many of my best friends, who are also in Türkiye, I met there. I was happy, but when I went back home, I felt a heavy energy. Nobody understood me there. I felt like an alien, but every weekend I felt happy. Before this event, I had dropped out of university in my last semester, and my father thought I had gone mad. But after I became Muslim, I returned to finish my degree. Allah opened the doors for me and wrote my thesis. Over time, I began to feel better.

> "I THINK SOMEHOW BELIEF STARTS TO GROW IN YOUR HEART. NEVER LOSE HOPE, THAT IS WHAT ISLAM TEACHES ME.

Then Ramadan came. I knew I had to fast, and my parents would definitely notice. I was really scared. I went to the same imam who helped me take my Shahadah, and I asked, "How do I tell my parents? I'm really scared. How will they react?" He said, "Just say Bismillah." I said, "How?" and he said again, "Just say Bismillah and say it." So I said okay.

One weekend, I approached my father. He was sitting in the living room reading the newspaper, very relaxed. I felt like a little girl, nervous. I said, "Dad... you know I've been going to this place on weekends, and there are really nice people. I've been learning Arabic, and they teach about a religion called Islam. I really liked it, and I became Muslim. Now there's a month where we fast, it's called Ramadan, so I'll be fasting." He didn't really react. He said, "Are you happy with that?" I said, "I'm really happy." He said, "Okay." That was it. He didn't say anything else.

Then I told my mom. It was the same. I said, "I've been going to this place, I like it, I became Muslim, and I'm happy with it." She didn't say anything. Maybe they didn't realize it was a big deal. I hadn't changed much. I didn't wear a hijab. My behavior was the same. My friends were the same. I hadn't started praying openly either; I used to pray all my prayers at Isha time, "aerobics style," all at once. They didn't see any change. Also, I had kept in touch with my Muslim friends and introduced them to my mom, so she probably thought it was just a phase. Like, "Oh, Daniela is just trying something new, she'll drop it." But after 14 years, I haven't dropped it.

Daniela Uruena Garcia is from Colombia and has been Muslim for 14 years. She studied psychology, and also studied industrial design in Colombia, and received a master's in counselling psychology in Türkiye, where she has lived for five years. She translates books from English and Turkish to Spanish.

QUESTIONS ON MY MIND

WHAT DO HUMANS GAIN BY THE CURIOSITY TO SEE?

Prof. Dr. Cagfer KARADAS

People want to see everything, taste everything, and hear everything. However, what bothers me is that when these desires come true, they act as if they never had such a desire. Suddenly, they turn around and walk away from what they wanted to see, hear, or taste. What does it mean?

Human beings have been following their curiosities and driven by them all along. People are mostly curious about seeing things. This is exactly where they are deceived, and they deceive others. This is still going on. The senses of taste, touch, and smell are no less than this. Did Allah the Almighty tell us about the first humans, Prophet Adam and Eve, in vain? Didn't Satan deceive them with the curiosities by these very senses? He pointed to the forbidden tree and whispered to them. "Your Lord has forbidden this tree to you only to prevent you from becoming angels or immortals." (A'raf, 7:20) With this tempting delusion, a curiosity took the Prophet Adam and Eve. Their curiosity turned into a passion for seeing and tasting. What happened then? They saw it, tasted it, and lost... Only then did they realize that they were wrong and deceived, but the damage had already been done. They were driven by the desire to see what Satan was showing, that is what Allah called "Satan is your sworn enemy" (A'raf, 7:22). These show that

the temporality of the pleasures obtained with the senses is the most striking indicator that tells us the temporality of the world. When we look around, we observe how frequently individuals who pursue their desires with great passion either lose interest once those desires are fulfilled or find themselves deeply disappointed. So, no need to look further to see that the world is a temporary place. It is enough to look at ourselves.

What happened to Prophet Adam and Eve then?

Allah the Almighty is merciful. As He taught them all the names, He also showed them how to get out of the state of being deceived. They did not insist on rebellion as Satan did. They held onto the rope of salvation from Allah and were saved. Those who know themselves know their Lord and reach salvation. They also knew themselves, turned to their Lord and begged with sincere feelings: "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will certainly be losers" (A'raf, 7:23) Allah (swt) accepted their apologies and forgave them immediately. For Allah's mercy is abundant and His forgiveness is swift. Satan, who did not repent, lost, while the Prophet Adam and Eve, who understood and corrected their mistakes, succeeded. For, as the Messenger of Mercy said, "He who knows his mistake and sincerely apologizes to Allah will be forgiven immediately and will be purified as if he had never sinned" (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 30). The reason Satan lost was that he looked at fire and earth, which are the materials of creation, instead of thinking about Allah's command, and made an irrelevant comparison. You see, his superficial and individualistic outlook deceived him. If he combined what he saw with what he heard and weighed it on the scales of his mind, he would see the truth. Such is the fate of one who embarks from a single datum of sense experience and ultimately succumbs to the selfishness of individualism.

Therefore, we have a lot to learn from the stories in the Qur'an. What do we see, what can we not see, or what should we see and how?

As you say, there is a way, method, and manner of seeing. Those who do not know their way will be confused, those who do not use the method will stray away from the target, and those who ignore decency will hit the wall of morality... Allah has given humans five senses and assigned a separate task to each of them. Therefore, each sense has its scope and limits that can be used. Going beyond the limits and not seeing the boundaries leads one astray. What can be understood with the sense of taste cannot be understood with the eyes. If it has been conveyed that Allah the Almighty will not be seen in this world, then aspiring to behold Him here is nothing more than the pursuit of an empty illusion. Pharaoh told his vizier Haman, "O chiefs! I know of no other god for you but myself. So bake bricks out of clay for me, O Hamân, and build a high tower so I may look at the God of Moses " (Qasas, 28:38). The misguided Pharaoh believed that Allah resided in the sky. However, Prophet Moses did not present him with any information suggesting that God could be seen. He could not recognize the truth in the miracles Moses brought because he did not look attentively, nor did he employ his reasoning. The proof of Allah's existence came to him, but he tried to look for it in the skies... He left the truth and followed the dream. Amidst the waters of the sea, he realized the truth, yet his recognition came too late.

But the Prophet Moses also wanted to see Allah.

Right. He asked, and Allah the Almighty showed him that it would not happen. It is actually a great lesson for us, but the Jews did not learn from this lesson. They kept saying, "O Moses! We will never believe you until we see Allah with our own eyes" (Baqarah, 2:55) They thought they could put Prophet Moses in a difficult position. So what happened? A big disappointment. Sentenced to wander in the desert for forty years. Is it because of such behavior that the strictest atheists emerge from them? The atheist, who says, "I don't believe in what I don't see," is like a leaf that is caught in the lightness of the devil's superficial gaze and that is blown away in front of every wind. Most of our knowledge comes from hearing, not seeing. It is the information we receive with our ears that guides and facilitates life. Consider this: if people begin with zero knowledge and seek to acquire understanding solely from what they observe, regardless of the time invested, how much can they truly learn in a single lifetime? Therefore, it is necessary to make use of every sense as required. We need to take our decisions without reducing them to a single sense and without ignoring the mind... So many blessings given by Allah are enough if we can make use of them. Indeed, it is more than enough...

THE ONE WHO CREATES BY MEASURING AND DETERMINING:

AL-KHALIQ

Fatma BAYRAM

The One Who creates everything in due measure and with precise determination... The One Who establishes a matchless order without allowing anything to transgress its bounds or infringe upon another... The One Who, when the time comes, manifests Himself through His Divine Names to the beings that await their turn in draft form in His presence—giving them life with His command "kun" and bringing them forth from nonexistence, the greatest affliction, into existence, the foremost of blessings...

Since al-Khaliq refers to the One Who determines and defines the existence of all things, along with the states they will experience throughout their existence, it is thus a name that encompasses both determination (taqdir) and bringing into being (ijad). Accordingly, al-Khaliq is "the One Who creates in a deliberate, conscious, and harmonious manner, according to a purpose and plan". In this sense, this name serves, on one hand, to protect a person from associating divinity with other beings who have no power to create anything—namely, from shirk; and on the other hand, it facilitates contentment with everything that exists by the decree of Allah the Almighty. Knowing that the existence of anything depends solely on His act of creation makes it easier to be content with what is brought into being contrary to our desires when the things we strive for do not come into existence. It encourages us to perceive the order and purposeful design in creation. By informing us that every act of Allah is according to a precise measure and calculation, it warns against opposing that divine order—lest one fall into the danger of wasting one's existence.

In the Qur'an, Allah the Almighty's attribute of being "al-Khaliq" is presented as one of the most significant pieces of evidence of His Lordship (Rububiyyah) (Zumar, 39:62; Ghafir, 40:62; Fatir, 35:3). As a consequence of His having created all things, servitude should be directed to Him alone (An'am, 6:102); yet it is questioned with astonishment why worship is offered to those who have no power whatsoever to create anything (Ra'd, 13:16). According to the Qur'an as well, the act of creation is not something that has been completed once and for all. Rather, He continuously creates at every moment (Rahman, 55:29; Nahl, 16:8, etc.). There are other Divine Names that emphasize various aspects of our Lord's creative power, such as al-Bari', al-Musawwir, al-Muhyi, al-Mubdi', and al-Badi'. In Surah al-Hashr, where seventeen Divine Names are mentioned consecutively, the Names al-Khaliq, al-Bari', and al-Musawwir are mentioned in succession, pointing to the three successive stages of creation.

The name al-Hallaq, which appears in verse 86 of Surah al-Hijr and verse 81 of Surah Ya-Sin, also expresses that our Lord is the One Who creates continuously and perfectly. Realizing Allah the Almighty's unique creative power, and that He does not cease after creating once but continually brings His creation into renewed existence, places a person in a constant state of gratitude. Indeed, even setting aside the ongoing act of creation in the cosmos, merely imagining what would happen if our bodies, minds, or consciousness were to fall outside the flow of uninterrupted creation for even a moment is enough to make one a grateful servant.

Unlike bringing something into existence from nonexistence, creation sometimes takes place from an existing primary substance. For example, the creation of the Prophet Adam from clay and the creation of human progeny from a drop of fluid (nutfah) are of this kind. In this sense, creative power is also mentioned in the Qur'an in reference to the miracle of the Prophet Isa, who formed a bird from clay. This event is described in Al-i 'Imran (3:49) and Ma'idah (5:110), where the term "khalq" (creation) is utilized. In this context, it has been understood to mean shaping an existing substance into a new form. In fact, the act of creation (khalq) attributed to the Prophet Isa is consistently qualified in the verses by

the phrase "by Allah's will," thereby setting clear limits on its scope. The phrase "ahsan al-khaliqin" ("the best of creators"), which appears in two verses of the Qur'an, also indicates that the ability to create from existing materials is a capacity granted by Allah to His servants. Based on these two Qur'anic examples, al-Ghazali states that creation may be attributed to human beings in a metaphorical sense. This is because Allah has endowed them with the foundational faculties of creation: knowledge and power. In today's world, where the value of creative abilities in human beings is gaining increasing importance across all areas of life, one of our most vital social responsibilities in the education of young minds is to help them fully develop this Divine gift bestowed upon us by our Lord, by seeking refuge in Him, and to free them from the influence of narrow-minded attitudes that view creative intelligence as a threat. According to Ibn Arabi, just as a person requires the manifestation of this Divine Name in order to make sound decisions, they must also possess the attribute of creativity in order to maintain balance in their life of servitude and to persevere in their struggle against the nafs, Satan, and society. The invention and manifestation of beings that have originated in Allah's knowledge in the most perfect manner, in the most beautiful form, and in a unique position, by human hands, also occur through the manifestation of this Divine Name. We perceive this form of creativity in the products of various branches of art and science. Regardless of how extraordinary the resulting work may be, if one becomes neglectful of the fact that both the materials employed and the intellect and capacities that transform them are endowments from the True Creator, the conditions for shirk begin to manifest.

Those who truly understand this Divine Name are always productive. They seek paths from what has been given toward what has not yet been given, and by combining their share of knowledge, power, and wisdom with their creative abilities, they produce countless works. In doing so, they do not act randomly or haphazardly. Every word they speak and every action they take is thoughtful, measured, carefully considered, and placed exactly where it belongs. Just as khilqat (creation) emphasizes the measure and harmony in our creation, akhlaq (morality), derived from the same root, expresses the balance and proportion within human character. In this sense, "to be moral" is to consciously reflect, through our actions, the harmony and beauty that our Lord has placed within our creation.

Islam in INDONESIA

Abdulhamid ESMELI
Religious Services Counselor in Indonesia

Indonesia... Though far from Türkiye in distance, it is an Asia-Pacific country whose heart feels very close. With its natural beauty and its abundance of colorful, diverse fruits, it is like a tropical corner of paradise. It is a place where the serenity of Islam can be clearly felt. Those who have performed Hajj or umrah know that when Indonesia is mentioned, what comes to mind are always orderly, educated, courteous, and calm people. It is the homeland of our fellow believers who entered Islam willingly and were honored with Islam through the efforts of trustworthy Muslim merchants and devoted Sufi scholars.

The people are devout, and the Indonesian identity and Islam are the two foundational elements of the society. In Indonesia, Islam is lived vibrantly; it is the central element of life. The people are content and patient. They are affectionate and courteous. Gratitude for goodness and a smile on their faces can always be observed. In the country, trade is largely dominated

by non-Muslims. Although Indonesia is rich in natural resources and possesses strong economic potential, not all segments of society are able to benefit equally from its wealth and prosperity. A significant portion of the population lives under economically unfavorable conditions.

Indonesia ranks first in the world in terms of Muslim population. Of its approximately 286 million people, 87.18% are Muslim, 9.87% are Christian, 1.69% are Hindu, and 0.72% are Buddhist. It is the world's largest archipelagic country, consisting of 17,509 islands, both large and small, around 6,000 of which are inhabited. The main islands are: Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Bali, Lombok, Timor, and Sulawesi. After remaining under Dutch rule for 350 years, it was occupied by Japan for three and a half years during the Second World War, and subsequently declared its independence on August 17, 1945. Its land area is 1,919,443 square kilometers. Prior to the arrival of Islam, it is known that the indigenous peoples living in the Indonesian archipelago had embraced various religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. According to the Indonesian scholar Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah, it is accepted that Islam reached Indonesia from Mecca in the first Hijri century, corresponding to the seventh century CE. Although it is stated that they were honored with Islam as early as the era of the companions, the widespread acceptance of Islam in Indonesia occurred from the 13th century onward through intertwined phases involving Sufism, trade, marriage, and the influence of local kingdoms.

> "ALONGSIDE THE RISE OF ISLAMIC KINGDOMS IN INDONESIA, MOSQUE CENTERS WERE CONSTRUCTED TO SYMBOLIZE THE RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRATION OF SOCIETY. THESE STRUCTURES SERVED NOT ONLY AS PLACES OF WORSHIP BUT ALSO FUNCTIONED AS CENTERS FOR EDUCATION, GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL INTERACTION.

Islamic Kingdoms in Indonesia

With the spread of Islam across the Indonesian archipelago during the Middle Ages, the country experienced significant political and social transformations. Through marriages within royal families, young individuals who embraced Islam began to assume influential roles in governance. During this process, Islamic law and moral values were gradually integrated into the state structure.

Eventually, numerous Islamic kingdoms emerged across various regions of the country. The Samudera Pasai Kingdom, established during the reign of Sultan Malikussaleh between the years 1267 and 1297 in the Sumatra region, is considered the first known Islamic state in the Indonesian archipelago. In the 15th century and beyond, several Islamic kingdoms were established across different regions of Indonesia. In the Sumatra region, the Indragiri Sultanate, the Jambi Kingdom, and the Aceh Darussalam Sultanate were founded. In the Java region, the Sultanates of Cirebon, the Demak Sultanate, the Banten Sultanate, Kingdom of Pajang, and the Mataram Sultanate came to power. In the Nusa Tenggara region, the Sumbawa Sultanate and the Bima Sultanate emerged; in the Maluku region, the Ternate and Tidore Sultanates; in the Sulawesi region, the Bone and Wajo Kingdoms, along with the Gowa–Tallo Kingdom; and in the Kalimantan region, the Banjar and Kutai Kingdoms were among the earliest Islamic kingdoms of Indonesia.

Mosques in Indonesia

Alongside the rise of Islamic kingdoms in Indonesia, mosque centers were constructed to symbolize the religious, cultural, and architectural integration of society. These structures served not only as places of worship but also functioned as centers for education, governance, and social interaction. The Menara Kudus Mosque, built in 956 AH / 1549 CE and reflecting a synthesis of Hindu–Javanese and Islamic elements; the Great Mosque of Banten, constructed in 1566 CE; the Demak Great Mosque, built in the late 15th century; the Katangka Mosque, built between 1603 and 1607; the Sultan Suriansyah Mosque located in the city of Martapura in the South Kalimantan region; and the Aceh Baiturrahman Grand Mosque, commissioned during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda in 1612 CE—are all examples of early Islamic architecture in Indonesia.

> “IN THE 15TH CENTURY AND BEYOND, SEVERAL ISLAMIC KINGDOMS WERE ESTABLISHED ACROSS DIFFERENT REGIONS OF INDONESIA.

The Istiqlal Mosque, constructed after Indonesia’s independence, is the largest in the country. It is located in the heart of Jakarta, directly across from the Cathedral. It stands as a national expression of gratitude for the country’s freedom. The foundation of the mosque was laid on August 24, 1961, and its official opening took place on February 22, 1978. As the only official state mosque, the Istiqlal Mosque is administered directly by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. Covering an area of approximately 95,000 square meters, it can accommodate more than 200,000 worshippers at the same time. The mosque has seven main entrance gates. It features a single minaret standing at 96.66 meters in height and a main dome with a diameter of 45 meters. These dimensions symbolize Indonesia’s date of independence in 1945. The mosque’s five levels represent the five pillars of Islam.

With approximately 800,000 mosques, Indonesia is the country with the highest number of mosques in the world. Just as there are many mosques, there are also many congregants. Prayers are performed in congregation. Religious days and nights are celebrated with great enthusiasm. Everyone possesses basic religious knowledge and is capable of leading prayer as an imam. There is no direct state administration over the mosques. The expenses related to the upkeep and sustainability of places of worship are met through donations given by the congregation. In addition to the adhans being heard five times a day, Qur’an recitations, sermons, and educational activities

conducted inside the mosques are broadcast outside through the mosque's sound system.

Islamic education in Indonesia is shaped primarily through two main institutions: mosques and madrasahs/pesantrens (boarding religious schools). The education conducted in mosques is directed toward both children and adults. While mosques serve as the primary venue for Islamic education, such religious education is also carried out in open areas, homes, police stations, military units, government offices, and at times even within the presidential palace. In addition to mosques, Islamic education in Indonesia has been institutionalized through madrasahs. These institutions form the foundation of the country's religious education. Many madrasahs also offer boarding facilities. They are officially recognized by the Indonesian government, and their graduates are eligible to continue to higher levels of education within the national education system.

Major Islamic Institutions in Indonesia

Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia:

Indonesia is a unitary state governed by a presidential system. Executive power is exercised by the president and vice president, who are elected for a five-year term. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia) was established on January 3, 1946. In its early years, the Ministry dealt exclusively with matters related to Islam. However, over time, its responsibilities expanded to include the administration of all six officially recognized religions in Indonesia: Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU):

Meaning "Revival of the Scholars," Nahdlatul Ulama was founded on January 31, 1926. It is stated to adhere to the path of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. In the field of jurisprudence, it recognizes the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools of law; however, in practice, the Shafi'i school is predominantly followed. Nahdlatul Ulama oversees educational activities through approximately 3,000 primary schools, 26,000 madrasahs and pesantrens (boarding schools), and 274 universities. It is the most influential Islamic organization in both Indonesian society and government, with the largest number of adherents. It is claimed to have around 40 million followers, though some assert the number is even higher.

Muhammadiyah:

Muhammadiyah was founded on November 18, 1912. It is noted to have been established with the aim of purifying Islamic belief from superstitious elements. Muhammadiyah carries out its activities through the Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid (Council for Scholarly Interpretation and Renewal), which conducts religious evaluations in accordance with the changing conditions of the times. Muhammadiyah operates 2,453 primary schools, 1,599 middle schools, 1,294 high schools, 172 universities, and 123 hospitals. It is claimed to have reached around 30 million followers, though some assert that the actual number is even higher. In addition to its educational institutions and hospitals, Muhammadiyah also maintains orphanages and commercial enterprises.

Indonesian Ulema Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia – MUI):

The Indonesian Ulema Council was established on July 26, 1975, as an independent Islamic authority. It provides religious guidance, advice, and consultation to both the government and the public. MUI issues fatwas on matters of faith, worship, and social issues in accordance with Islamic law. It serves as a bridge between the ulema and the state, and also acts as a link between scholars and the general public.

PIRI REIS
AND HIS MAGNIFICENT MAP

Koray SERBETCI

The 16th century was a time when powerful seafarers and colonial powers began to appear on the horizon of the world. The Portuguese, in particular, dreamed of establishing a vast global colonial empire. Gradually, they began settling along the coasts of Arabia, India, and Malaya. For the Muslims of the region, who were subjected to colonial assaults, there was only one place to turn to and seek help: The Ottoman Empire and its mighty sultan, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent!

The Ottoman Empire heeded the call of the distant Muslims and promptly established a new military unit: The Indian Ocean Command. In 1547, an admiral named Piri Reis was appointed as the head of this new unit. He would go on to become one of the most distinguished figures in Islamic history.

An elegant man

Piri Reis was originally Turkish from Karaman. He was born between 1465 and 1470 in Gallipoli, a small coastal town known at the time as a Turkish naval base. His father was Haji Mehmed.

The renowned Turkish historian of the period, Ibn Kemal, described the children born in Gallipoli at that time with the following words: "Children born in Gallipoli grow up in the water like crocodiles. Their cradles are vessels of death. They fall asleep to the lullaby of ships' sounds, morning and evening." Muhiddin Piri, the future great seafarer who grew up under this metaphor, lived in the charming coastal town of Gallipoli until the age of eleven. He was raised under the guidance of his uncle, Kemal Reis, one of the most prominent Turkish captains of the era. There was not a single coast, port, or island in the Mediterranean that he had not visited. As a result of these expeditions, he earned the title of captain by the age of twenty-five. He was also honored with the duty of delivering the news of the conquest of Navarino from the Venetians to Istanbul.

> "PIRI REIS, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FIGURES OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF SULTAN SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, WAS A SCHOLAR OF GEOGRAPHY AND CARTOGRAPHY.

Map of the Anatolian Coast around the Bay of Izmir

The figures from whom Piri Reis learned seamanship were among the most renowned sailors of the 16th century. After the death of his uncle, Kemal Reis, who drowned when his ship sank off the coast of Gallipoli, he served under Aruj Barbarossa (Oruc Reis) and later under Hayreddin Barbarossa (Hizir Reis). He also took part in the conquest of Egypt.

When Makbul (Pargali) Ibrahim Pasha, the most powerful statesman of the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, set out to inspect Egypt, the captain of the ship he boarded was Piri Reis. During this journey, the Pasha was deeply impressed by Piri Reis's knowledge and intellect, and subsequently appointed him as an advisor. Upon returning, he spoke highly of him to Sultan Suleiman and offered considerable praise. As Piri Reis's brilliance in his field was quickly recognized, he was appointed as the Indian Ocean Commander in 1547.

Indeed, the most powerful Turkish admiral of the era, Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, described Piri Reis in his book Gazavat-ı Hayreddin Pasha, a kind of memoir dictated to Muradi, as "a man of great understanding, refined manners, and well-versed in the customs and protocols of the courts of high officials."

The most accurate map

Piri Reis, one of the most important figures of the golden age of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, was a scholar of geography and cartography. He is best known for his geographical work Kitab-ı Bahriye (The Book of the Sea) and his two world maps dated 1513 and 1528, which left all who saw them in awe. Completed in 1521, Kitab-ı Bahriye is a book composed of hundreds of maps detailing the Mediterranean and its islands with remarkable precision. The introduction section was written in poetic form by Muradi, based on the words of Piri Reis himself.

Piri Reis also drew a map of the Atlantic Ocean, which was unfamiliar territory for the people of his time. By charting the coasts from Greenland to Florida, he included references to the newly discovered American

Map of the Caspian Sea

> PIRI REIS ALSO DREW A MAP OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, WHICH WAS UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY FOR THE PEOPLE OF HIS TIME.

continent and confirmed that the Earth is round. Experts in the field have remarked that the map of Europe he produced was even more accurate than the one drawn by Europeans in 1528.

The first world map of Piri Reis

The works that made Piri Reis's name known to nearly everyone are the two world maps he drew. The first of these was created in 1513 and presented to Sultan Selim I in Egypt in 1517. Of course, Piri Reis's map was not the first world map in history. Before him, many cartographers had produced maps based on the known regions of the world at the time. According to the most plausible interpretation, Piri Reis had seen Columbus's map and, by consulting other maps as well, produced his own.

This map, colored using nine different pigments, was drawn on leather and measures 86 cm in height, with a width of 61 cm at the top and 41 cm at the bottom. It represents a portion of a complete world map. The map features wind roses and various directional lines. The names of the locations marked on the map are accompanied by descriptions of their characteristics and notes on who discovered them.

The second world map of Piri Reis

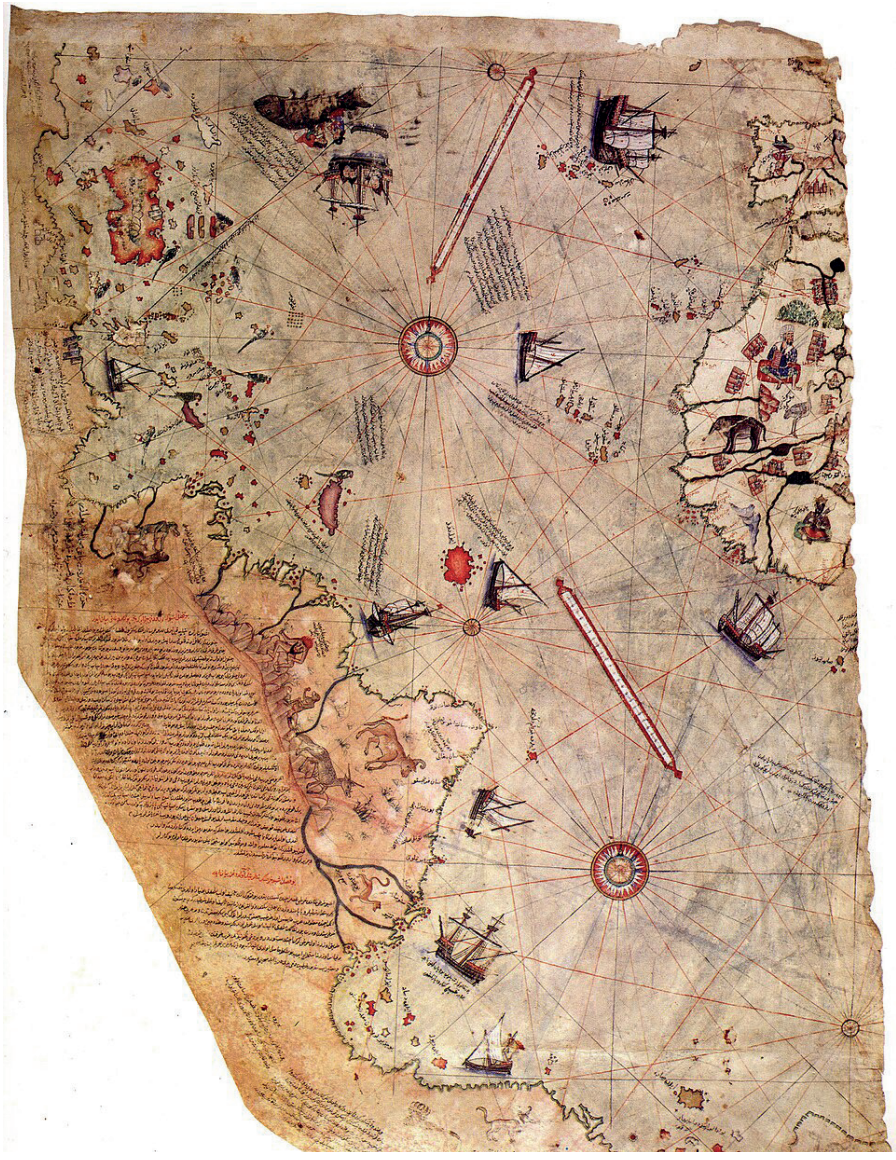
The second map that Piri Reis presented to Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1528 was drawn on gazelle skin and colored using eight pigments. It represents only the northwestern corner of a larger world map. This section includes the northern Atlantic Ocean, the newly discovered coasts of North and Central America, and the shoreline stretching from

Greenland to Florida. The fact that Piri Reis corrected the inaccuracies from his first map, caused by incomplete information, demonstrates his rigorous scientific approach and attentiveness to ongoing developments. This second map, produced on a larger scale and with greater precision than the first, stands as one of the most advanced cartographic works of its time.

Piri Reis' description of the American continent

Piri Reis described both the discovery of America and its native inhabitants as follows:

"My late uncle Gazi Kemal had a Spanish servant. This slave claimed, 'I traveled to those lands three times with Columbus,' and recounted the events as follows: The island's people came and showered them with arrows. Both men and women fired arrows—they were all naked. When the crew could not land, they moved their ships to the other side of the island and anchored there. The islanders, realizing that no harm was coming from these ships, approached them and began bringing fish in their small boats. The crew welcomed them kindly and gave them glass beads in return. It turns out Columbus had read in a book that glass beads



were considered valuable in that region. When the natives saw the beads, they brought more fish. The crew continued to give them glass beads in exchange. One day, they saw a woman wearing gold on her arm. They took the gold and gave her beads. Then Columbus's men said, 'Bring more gold, and we will give you more beads.' The islanders returned with even more gold. From these islands, they also took a large quantity of red dye wood and brought back two of the islanders to present to the king of Spain that same year. Now, those lands have been completely opened and have become widely known."

Demise of Piri Reis

The second Egyptian expedition in 1552 marked a tragic turning point for both Piri Reis and Turkish history. When Piri Reis left the fleet in Basra, intending to allow the ships to undergo maintenance and the soldiers to rest, while he sailed to Egypt with ships laden with spoils, political rivalry came into play. Due to the actions of his rivals among the state officials, he was reported to the Sultan for this decision. Found at fault, he was executed in 1554 at a time when he was over 80 years old.

SANCTUARY OF IBRAHIM: AL-KHALIL MOSQUE

Sumeyra CELIK

Located in the West Bank, approximately thirty kilometers from al-Quds, al-Khalil is one of the significant cities of the Islamic world, known for its fertile and green landscape. Just as Mecca and Medina are referred to as the Haramayn, the same designation is also used for al-Quds and al-Khalil. The name of the city is derived from an allusion to the Prophet Ibrahim, who was honored with the title Khalil al-Rahman (the Friend of the Most Merciful). The Prophet Ibrahim, regarded as the patriarch by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is one of the ulu'l-'azm prophets most frequently mentioned in the Qur'an. In the city of al-Khalil, renowned for its vineyards in Palestine,

the mosque that houses the graves or shrines of prophets is known as the Ibrahim Mosque or al-Haram al-Ibrahimi. In Jewish tradition, it is known as the Cave of the Patriarchs (Ma'arat ha-Machpelah), while in Christian tradition, it is referred to as the Cave of Machpelah. The structure, whose foundations date back to the 1st century BCE during the reign of King Herod, has survived almost entirely intact to the present day as a monumental edifice. The foundation walls, constructed with massive stone blocks approximately 1.8 meters thick and reaching up to seven meters in length, give the structure a monumental appearance. During the Byzantine period, a roof was added, and with the addition of a basilica on the southeastern side, the building assumed the identity of a church. With the advent of Muslim rule in the 7th century, it assumed the identity of a mosque. During the Crusader occupation, the site was converted back into a church, but in 1188, it was restored as a mosque by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, who also added minarets. As with al-Masjid al-Aqsa, a minbar was also installed in al-Khalil Mosque. The Minbar of Salah al-Din has survived to the present day in its original form. During the Mamluk period, the prayer areas of the mosque were expanded, and new additions were made. In the Ottoman period (16th–20th centuries), the mosque was meticulously preserved, and the legacy of the prophets was carefully safeguarded. The Ottoman sultans diligently provided and regularly renewed silk and gold-embroidered coverings for the cenotaphs of the prophets and their spouses.

> THE CITY, ALSO KNOWN AS HARAM AL-IBRAHIM, IS RECOGNIZED AS THE PLACE WHERE THE PROPHET IBRAHIM SETTLED IN PALESTINE.

Al-Khalil Mosque contains one of the most revered areas, housing the tombs of several prophets. According to various narrations, the cenotaph of the Prophet Ibrahim is believed to mark his actual grave, while the cenotaphs of the other prophets are considered symbolic shrines. Within the mosque are the tombs of the Prophet Ibrahim and his wife Sarah, the Prophet Ishaq and his wife Rebekah, the Prophet Ya'qub and his wife Le'a, and the Prophet Yusuf. In the mosque, the majority of which has been converted into a synagogue, the entire site is opened to Muslim visitors only on a few days each year. On the Night of Mi'raj and during the 'Eid festivals, permission is granted to visit the tombs of the Prophet Ya'qub, his wife, and the Prophet Yusuf, which are located in the section of the mosque that has been turned into a synagogue.

In the main prayer hall of the mosque, the cenotaphs of the Prophet Ishaq and his wife Rabekah are housed in chamber-like enclosures with a square base and a triangular dome, situated in front of the mihrab and minbar. The exterior walls of these cenotaphs are adorned with stonework in alternating red and white horizontal stripes. The cenotaph of the Prophet Ibrahim, considered the central point of the mosque, is enclosed in a tomb-like room with a high ceiling, decorated with intricate hand-drawn ornamentation, and features two opposing windows. Calligraphic inscriptions of verses from the Qur'an are arranged in a circular pattern along the interior walls. The covering of the cenotaph, recently replaced, is green in color but differs significantly in design from the original covering used during the Ottoman period. Today, next to the cenotaph of the Prophet Ibrahim, visitors can see a red banner said to have been placed there since the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. The cenotaph of the Prophet Ibrahim's wife, Sarah, is located in the northwestern section of the mosque.

Al-Khalil Mosque, in addition to housing the grave of the Prophet Ibrahim, is also notable for its exceptional minbar. Installed in the mosque following its reconquest by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, the minbar has preserved its original form, composed of 12,000 intricately crafted pieces and adorned with kundekari-style mother-of-pearl inlay. This masterpiece, one of only three minbars of such distinction in the history of Islamic art, holds a unique place; the other two are located in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus and al-Masjid

al-Aqsa. According to the narrative, Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, while still a child, saw the minbar that had been crafted for al-Masjid al-Aqsa during the time it was under occupation. Forty years after its construction, he conquered al-Quds and installed the minbar in al-Masjid al-Aqsa. Later, a similar minbar was also commissioned for the al-Khalil Mosque. Although it is commonly known as the Minbar of Salah al-Din, the original minbar intended for al-Masjid al-Aqsa was actually commissioned by Nur al-Din Zangi, who had it crafted by artisans from Aleppo forty years before the conquest. That minbar remained in al-Masjid al-Aqsa for 762 years until it was rendered unusable due to an arson attack in 1969. The minbar in al-Khalil Mosque, however, has preserved its original form to this day.

> “IN THE OTTOMAN PERIOD, THE MOSQUE WAS METICULOUSLY PRESERVED, AND THE LEGACY OF THE PROPHETS WAS CAREFULLY SAFEGUARDED.

The city, also known as Haram al-Ibrahim, is recognized as the place where the Prophet Ibrahim settled in Palestine. Haram al-Ibrahim is regarded as the fourth holiest mosque in the Islamic world, following al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, al-Masjid al-Nabawi in Medina, and al-Masjid al-Aqsa.

Al-Khalil (Hebron) has been divided by the occupying forces into two sectors: H1 and H2. The H1 sector, which comprises approximately 80% of the city, is under Palestinian control, while the H2 sector, covering the remaining 20%, is under Israeli control. The Ibrahim Mosque is located within the H2 sector. Located in the occupied West Bank since 1967, the city of al-Khalil today endures a somber reality. On February 25, 1994, during the Fajr prayer, a fanatical Jewish settler carried out an armed attack inside the mosque, martyring 29 worshippers. Following this massacre, the mosque was closed by the occupying forces under the pretext of “security concerns.” After being shut for several months, it was reopened—but now divided by partitions. A significant portion of the sacred space had been converted into a synagogue. The mosque, with separate prayer areas and entrances for Muslims and Jews, has since been a site of ongoing tension. For most of the year, the adhan is prohibited. On Jewish holidays, the entire mosque is closed to Muslim worshippers.

May one establish a prayer by making intention for both qada and sunnah?

One prayer cannot be performed with the intention of both qada and sunnah. We should clearly specify the prayer for which the qada prayer will be established, and make our intention for it. If we make an intention for both qada and sunnah of that time's prayer, the prayer will be counted as a qada prayer. It will not substitute for both qada and sunnah of that time's prayer (al-Fatawa al-Hindiyyah, I, 73).

How do we make intention for qada prayers?

It is essential for a person performing a qada prayer to make a specific intention by identifying the prayer being offered. However, if one has numerous qada prayers to perform, they may make a general intention for previous prayers, such as: 'to perform the first Fajr/Dhuhr/'Asr/Maghrib/'Isha prayer that I missed' or 'to perform the last Fajr/Dhuhr/'Asr/Maghrib/'Isha prayer that I missed.'

Can we perform sunnah prayers when we have qada prayers to be performed?

In the Hanafi school, individuals who have missed prayers are expected to continue observing the rawatib (sunnah) prayers preceding and following the fardh prayers, while striving to compensate for their missed obligations at the earliest opportunity.. According to the Shafi'i school, those who have missed prayers cannot perform any nafl prayers, including rawatibs, Eid, and witr prayers, before performing the qada prayer for all the missed prayers. A person who has missed prayers needs to spend all his/her time to perform the qada prayer for them. Moreover, it is not permissible for such people to deal with nafl prayers as they need to establish qada prayers for the missed prayers in all their time remaining after doing important daily affairs such as sleeping and providing sustenance for their home (Dimyati, Hashiyatu i'anat al-talibin, I, 39-40).

Is it necessary to make up the missed sunnah prayers?

Qada prayers are established for fardhs of the missed daily prayers and the wajib witr prayer. There is no qada for the missed sunnah prayers after their time ends. However, qada prayer is established with its sunnah for the missed fajr prayer when it is established within the same day before dhuhr prayer time (Mawsili, al-Ikhtiyar, I, 223). This is because the Prophet Muhammad established qada prayer with its sunnah for a missed fajr prayer before dhuhr prayer time (Abu Dawud, Salat, 11). Moreover, a person who begins performing the fardh units of the dhuhr prayer in order to join the congregation should perform any missed first sunnah after completing the fardh. This missed sunnah may be performed either before or after the final sunnah.

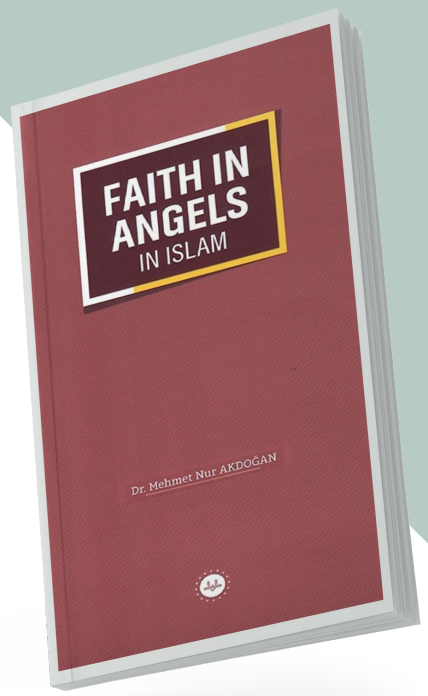
May other people perform the qada prayers for us?

For acts of worship that are performed solely with the body, it is not valid for one person to perform them on behalf of another (Ibn Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar, II, 535; Shayhizada, Majma' al-anhu, I, 455). This is because everyone will account for their own deeds (Isra, 17:13; Ya-Sin, 36:54; Tur, 52:16, 21; Muddaththir, 74:38). In this respect, a person cannot perform qada prayers on behalf of a deceased or living person. Therefore, everyone should pay attention to establishing their prayers while they are alive and healthy, and make efforts not to stand before Allah as a servant in debt.

Can we perform qada prayers in congregation?

Qada prayers may be performed within a congregation, provided that the person offering the prayer does so at the same time as the imam (Marghinani, al-Hidayah, I, 377; Harashi, Sharhu Mukhtasar, II, 39). This ruling is grounded in the instance when the Prophet Muhammad (saw), constrained by the harsh conditions of the Battle of the Trench and unable to perform the four daily prayers at their designated times, performed them in congregation when conditions allowed. The narrative of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud on this subject is as follows: "The idolaters kept Allah's Messenger distracted from four prayers on the Day of Al-Khandaq (the battle of the Trench) until as much as Allah willed of the night had passed. So he ordered Bilal to call the Adhan, then he called the Iqamah to zuhr, then he called the iqamah to pray asr, then he called the iqamah to pray maghrib, then he called the iqamah to pray isha." (Tirmidhi, Salat, 20; Nasa'i, Mawaqit, 55; Tecrid Tercemesi, II, 535)

FAITH IN ANGELS IN ISLAM

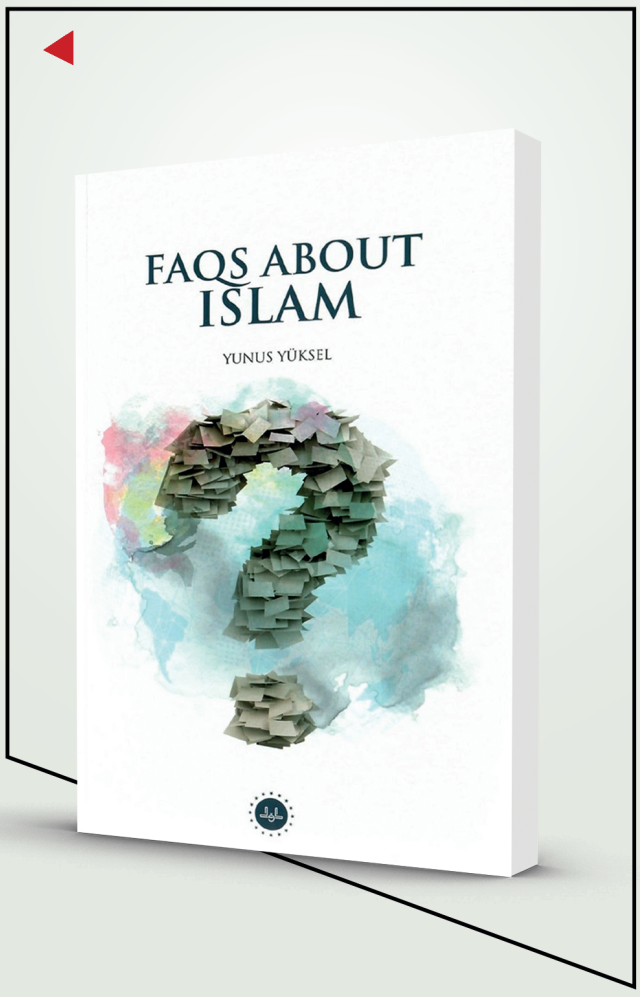


Meryem KILIC

Faith in angels is the common pillar and basis of faith in the divine religions, namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The fact that the faith in angels is the subject of faith in religions based on revelation is also important in terms of showing that they stem from the same source. On the other hand, faith in angels shows that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the Messenger of Allah (swt) and Islam is the last divine religion. This is because in all divine religions, it is emphasized that angels have various responsibilities. Angels are also in charge of the order that Allah (swt) has created in the universe, and they fulfill the task ordered to them in the order of the universe without interruption.

The Presidency of Religious Affairs published a work titled "Faith in Angels in Islam", which explains that faith in angels is one of the fundamental principles of Islam. This work, written by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Nur Akdogan presents information about angels based on religious sources. Islam aims to ensure the happiness of people both in this world and in the Hereafter. To achieve this, it clearly lays out the necessary guidelines to help them find the right path. In this context, one of the beliefs emphasized in the Qur'an is faith in angels. Indeed, a verse clearly highlights that belief in angels is one of the fundamental principles of faith: " The Messenger (firmly) believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers. They (all) believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers." (Baqarah, 2:285)

Faith in angels is also an indication of belief in the ghaib, which is one of the basic characteristics of believers who are faithfully attached to Allah (swt). In this context, the book "Faith in Angels in Islam" discusses topics such as what is an angel, the attributes of angels, certain angels and their duties, and the effects of faith in angels on our lives. Although it is a pillar of faith in itself, faith in angels has a very close connection with other pillars of faith. First of all, faith in angels brings with it faith in Allah (swt) and the order He has placed in the universe. This is because Allah the Almighty (swt) has hidden the perfect functioning of the world behind visible or invisible causes and beings. Thanks to faith in angels, people understand that they were not created to live on earth alone, and it strengthens their belief that angels appointed by Allah (swt) are present with them at all times and in all places. Therefore, we present this valuable work, which elucidates the significance of belief in angels in a clear and accessible manner, to you, our esteemed readers, with the hope that you will find it beneficial.



yayinsatis.diyanet.gov.tr

Diyanet publications are available from local bookshops as well as our attaché and consulting offices abroad.

“Indeed, Allah showers His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O believers! Invoke Allah’s blessings upon him, and salute him with worthy greetings of peace.”

(Ahzab, 33:56)

ISSN 2980-146X