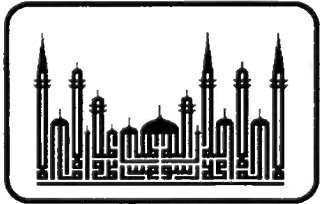


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

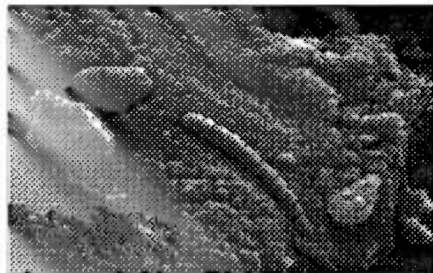
Perspectives



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Editorial

Last August, a research team of scientists from NASA and Stanford University announced that they have evidence which strongly suggests primitive life may have existed on Mars more than 3.6 billion years ago. This was based on finding complex molecules-crystals that look like those produced by bacteria here on earth, and tiny tubes that look like terrestrial fossil bacteria, in a 4.3 pound meteorite from the planet Mars (see figure below).



The meteorite's journey began four billion years earlier, when it was part of the crust of Mars. It landed in Antarctica about 13,000 years ago and was found by a recovery team in 1984.

The Mars find excited religious thinkers and sparked new debates about the reach of sacred laws. The search for answer to whether there is life in outer space, and in what form, continues. As Muslims, we can find some answers in the Qur'an.

Life is not confined to humans, animals and plants on Earth. Other forms of life do exist in the vast and spacious universe. Reference to living creatures scattered throughout the universe is given in the Qur'an.

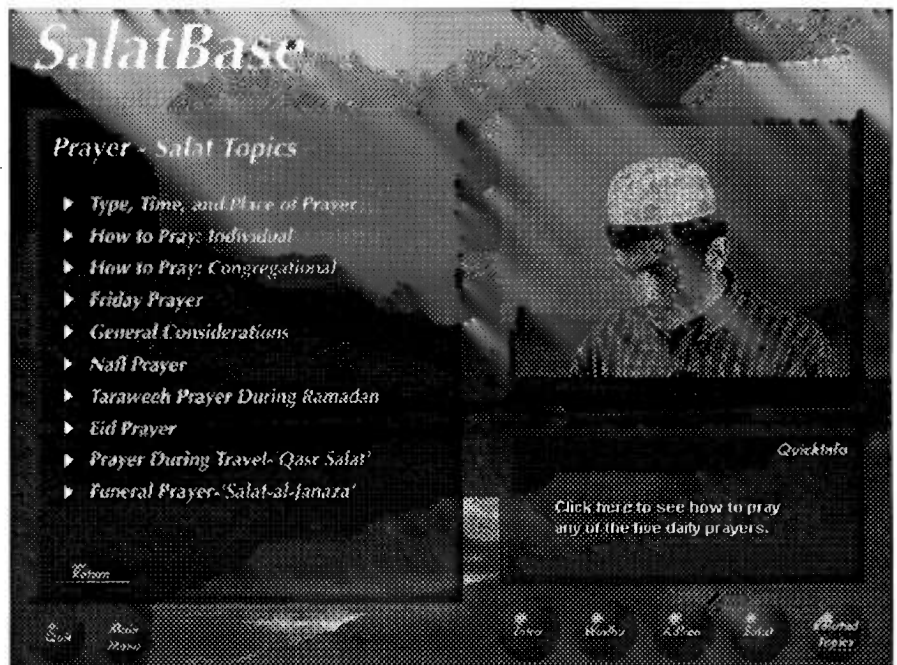
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Multimedia Program for Teaching Salah

A multimedia program providing detailed information on *salah* has been released. The program is entitled "*SalatBase on CD-ROM*" and works on both the PC and the MAC. The program combines text, graphics, audio and video. It provides detailed information on *Wudu* (Ablution), *Adhan* (call for prayers), the five daily prayers, *Janazah* (funeral) prayer, *Qasr* (shortened) and *Eid* prayers. It teaches the do's and don'ts of the prayers and has a complete glossary of terms. The program is available from Sound Vision, 843 W. Van Buren , Suite 411, Chicago, IL 60607, Tel 1-800-432-4262, Fax (312) 226-7537.



Reflections

Dr. Ahmed K. Noor

Stories of the Qur'an

قصص القرآن



Allah (SWT) related to us a number of stories in the holy Qur'an. Some of the stories pertain to previous prophets and messengers, and what they had to go through. Other stories tell us about important incidents and experiences of people, as well as of other creations of Allah. An examination of the stories of the Qur'an reveals that they differ from those of history books in a number of ways. Specifically, the following major differences can be noted:

- The information presented in each story is coming from Allah, and therefore, has unquestionable authenticity.

تُنْحَنُ نَقْصُ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ
(سورة الكهف - من آية ١٣)

"We relate to you their story in truth."
(Qur'an 18:13)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ
(سورة آل عمران - من آية ٦٢)

"This is the true account."

(Qur'an 3:62)

- Each story has a wisdom and a reason (or reasons) behind relating it.
- Only enough details are given to satisfy the reason(s) behind relating it. Several details are left out. For example, the exact number of the companions of the cave, the name of the mysterious teacher of Prophet Moussa (PBUH), and the identity of Pharaoh and of Zul-Qarnain (the two-horned powerful ruler) are not given. These details are unimportant insofar as the reasons behind relating their stories.

In this article an attempt is made to examine four of the major reasons behind relating the stories of the Qur'an, namely (see the figure on page 3).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ . (سورة يوسف - آية ٣)

"We do relate to you the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to you this (portion of the) Qur'an : Before this you too were among those who know it not." (Qur'an 12:3)

- * Providing accurate information about previous events.
- * Strengthening the hearts of the Prophet (PBUH) and the believers.
- * Proving that the Prophet (PBUH) is continuing the same message of his predecessors.
- * Providing object lessons to the Ummah of the Prophet (PBUH).

Each of the four reasons are discussed subsequently.

Strengthening the Hearts of the Prophet and the Believers

The stories of the previous prophets and messengers in the Qur'an demonstrate the fact that, despite the difficulties and hardships that these prophets and messengers went through, at the end they were granted victory by Allah (SWT) over their opponents.

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ .
(سورة غافر - آية ٥١)

"We will, without doubt, grant victory to our messengers and those who believe, (both) in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses will stand forth."
(Qur'an 40:51)

By informing the Prophet (PBUH) about the strong opposition that his predecessors went through, he is comforted with the realization that his difficulties are not more than those of theirs, and his heart is strengthened with the belief that Allah (SWT) will support him as He supported his predecessors. The heart is the seat of faith, piety, knowledge, memory, reason, perception, understanding, and comprehension.

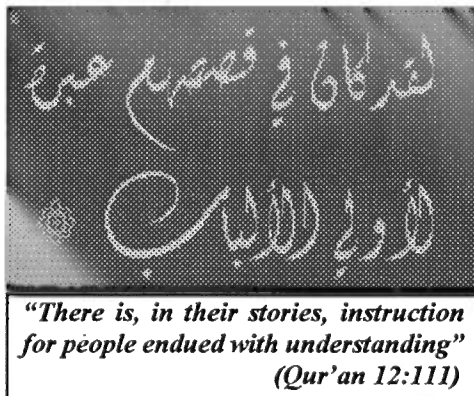
وَكَلَّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا
نَدَّبْتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ
(سورة هود - من آية ١٢٠)

"And that we relate to you of the stories of the messengers, - with it we make firm your heart."

(Qur'an 11:120)

Proving that the Prophet is Continuing the Same Message of His Predecessors

Allah's religion is the same in essence, whether given, for example to



"There is, in their stories, instruction for people endued with understanding"
(Qur'an 12:111)

Providing Accurate Information

Allah (SWT) informed us in Surat Al-Baqara (Qur'an 2) about the creation of the universe and the creation of Adam. In several verses, the Qur'an emphasizes the truthfulness and accuracy of the stories presented.

إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ يَقُصُّ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ
الْفَاصِلِينَ .
(سورة الأنعام - من آية ٥٧)

"The command rests with none but Allah : He declares the truth, and He is the best of judges." (Qur'an 6:57)

وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ
(سورة هود - من آية ١٢٠)

"There comes to you the truth."

(Qur'an 11:120)

Noah, Ibrahim, Moussa, Issa, or to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). The source of unity is the revelation from Allah.

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا
وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى

(سورة الشورى - من آية ١٣)

"The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined to Noah, the which We have sent by inspiration to you - And that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses and Jesus."

(Qur'an 42:13)

The Prophet (PBUH) was instructed to declare that he was not bringing a new fangled doctrine, but the eternal truths which have been known to good people through the ages.

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ
(سورة الاحقاف - من آية ٩)

"Say: I am not an innovation among the messengers."

(Qur'an 46:9)

Providing Object Lessons to the Ummah of the Prophet (PBUH)

The stories of the Qur'an provide valuable lessons to guide our conduct (Qur'an 12:111)

Each of the stories of the Qur'an has one or more implications. For example, the story of Prophet Moussa (PBUH) has important political implications

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ
الْوَارِثِينَ. وَنُمْكِّنْ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي
فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا
كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ .

(سورة القصص - آيات ٥ ، ٦)

"And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders and make them heirs. To establish a firm place for them in the land, and to show Pharaoh, Haman and their hosts, what they were dreading from them."

(Qur'an 28:5,6)

Allah has established for the Israelites, who were enslaved by Pharaoh, a firm place in the land. He changed their condition from that of being depressed in the land to that of leadership.

The story of Prophet Yussuf (PBUH) has economic implications. With the help of Allah (SWT), he was able to make a full fifteen year economic plan which was successful.

قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَنَئِىَ سِنِينَ دَأْبًا فَمَا

حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّمَّا
تَأْكُلُونَ . ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ سَنَئِىَ
شَدَآءٍ يَأْكُلْنَ مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّمَّا تُحْصِنُونَ . ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
عَامٌ فِيهِ يَغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يُغْصِرُونَ
(سورة يوسف - آيات ٤٧، ٤٨، ٤٩)

(Yussuf) said: "For seven years shall you diligently sow as your wont : and the harvests that you reap, you shall leave them in the ear, except a little, of which you shall eat. Then will come after that (period) seven dreadful (years) which will devour what you shall have laid by in advance for them - (All) except a little which you shall have (especially) guarded. Then will come after that (period) a year in which the people have abundant water, and in which they will press (wine and oil)."

(Qur'an 12:47,48,49)

The story of the companions of the cave (Qur'an 18:9-22,25) has important spiritual implications. It shows the effect of having the spiritual light from Allah on the attitude and behavior of the individual.

إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى
(سورة الكهف - من آية ١٣)

Reasons for the Stories of the Qur'an

قصص القرآن - لماذا؟

①

Provide accurate information to the Prophet about previous events.

إعلان وإخبار الرسول عن النبأ الحق

②

Strengthen the hearts of the Prophet and the believers.

تسرية و تثبيت لقلوب الرسول والمؤمنون

③

Proof that the Prophet is continuing the same message of his predecessors

دليل على أن الرسول جاء متمم لما بدأه الرسل السابقون

④

Provide object lessons to the Ummah of the Prophet

عبرة وعظة لأمة الرسول

"They were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance." (Qur'an 18:13)

وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَّدْعُوهُ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا سُطِّطْنَا (سورة الكهف - آية ١٤)

We gave strength to their hearts; Behold, they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and of the earth: never shall we call upon any god other than Him: if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity!". (Qur'an 18:14)

Two of the stories which show, in a very graphical way, the effect of ingratitude to Allah (SWT), are those of Qarun and the People of the Garden. The story of Qarun is given in Qur'an 28:76-82. Allah (SWT) granted Qarun abundant wealth. The very keys of his hundreds of treasure chests would have been a burden to a body of young men!

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولَى الْقُوَّةِ (سورة القصص - من آية ٧٦)

"Such were the treasures We had bestowed on him, that their very keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men." (Qur'an 28:76)

Qarun was arrogant. Instead of showing his gratitude to Allah (SWT), by spending this wealth in ways that please Allah (SWT), he nullified the power of Allah. He claimed that he has been given this wealth because of a certain knowledge which he possessed.

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي (سورة القصص - من آية ٧٨)

"He said; This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge which I have." (Qur'an 28:78)

Allah (SWT) taught him, and all people like him, a lesson. Allah caused the earth to swallow up Qarun and his house.

فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَصِرِينَ.

(سورة القصص - آية ٨١)

"Then We caused the earth to swallow up him and his house; and he had not (the least little) party to help him against Allah, nor could he defend himself." (Qur'an 28:81)

The lesson of Qarun is a very important one for all of us today. Many of us forget the fact that Allah who created us, is the one that created the bounties and favors we are enjoying.



"And you have no good thing but is from Allah" (Qur'an 16:53)

Moreover, it is Allah who gives us the power and knowledge to enjoy these bounties and favors.

The story of the people of the Garden is given in Qur'an 68:17-33. Allah (SWT) has given a pious man a beautiful garden with lots of fruits. At the time of collecting the fruits, the poor and the needy showed up, and the pious man gave them their share. The pious man died, and his sons inherited the garden. They did not like the idea of sharing the fruits with the poor and the needy. So, they made their plan: they will go very early in the morning to the garden and collect all the fruits before the poor and the needy show up. They thought that with this plan everything was under their control, and they slept. Allah (SWT) had his plan! While they were asleep, Allah sent a very strong wind that destroyed all the fruits and the trees of the garden. The whole place was changed out of recognition! The new owners of the garden got up early in the morning, as planned, and went to the garden. At first they thought that they have lost their way.

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا لَضَالُّونَ . (سورة القلم - آية ٢٦)

"But when they saw (the garden), they said: we have surely lost our way." (Qur'an 68:26)

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَوْمُونَ . (سورة القلم - آية ٣٠)

"Then, they realized what happened, and turned one against the other in reproach." (Qur'an 68:30)

At last, they realized the result of their greed, selfishness, and heedlessness.

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا طَاغِينَ . عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَا أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ لَنَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَاغِبُونَ

(سورة القلم - آيات ٣١ ، ٣٢)

"They said: Alas for us! we have indeed transgressed. It may be that our Lord will give us in exchange a better (garden) than this: for we do turn to Him (in repentance)." (Qur'an 68:31,32)

The stories of Qarun and the people of the garden teach us the results of forgetting the fact that whatever good thing we have is coming from Allah (SWT).

If we show our gratitude to Allah (SWT), He increases and blesses the bounties He has given us. On the other hand, if we are ungrateful, Allah (SWT) is able to take back the bounties. His punishment is severe.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ . (سورة إبراهيم - آية ٧)

"And remember! your Lord caused it to be declared: If you are grateful, I will add more (favors) unto you. But if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed."

(Qur'an 14:7)

I pray to Almighty Allah to give us the guidance and the strength to learn the lessons given to us in the stories of the Qur'an, and to show our gratitude to Him for the countless bounties which we are enjoying as Muslims. Ameen.



Guidance to the Straight Path

الهداية إلى الصراط

المستقيم

Allah (SWT) has showered us with His bounties and His favors, both on an individual level, and on a community level. If we were to count all the favors that we have received from Allah, we will never be able to number them.

وَأَنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

(سورة إبراهيم - من آية ٣٤)

“But if you count the favors of Allah, never will you be able to number them.”

(Qur'an 14:34)

But, of all the favors of Allah (SWT), guidance to the straight path stands out as the most significant blessing that we have received. It gives meaning to our life, a direction to our work and activities. The straight path referred to in Qur'an 6:161 is the path of Allah. It is the path which leads us to what is right in every aspect of life, keeps us absolutely free from errors and evil consequences, and brings us success in the end.

The focus of this article is *hidaya* or *huda*, which means guidance to the path

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ . (سورة الأنعام - آية ١٦١)

Say : “Verily, my Lord Has guided me to a way that is straight, - A religion of right,- The path (trod) by Abraham the true in faith, and he (certainly) joined not gods with Allah.”

(Qur'an 6:161)

of Allah. The word *huda* and its derivatives have been repeated in the Qur'an 308 times. They are referred to in multitudes of sayings of the Prophet (PBUH).

Two Kinds of Guidance

A careful examination of the Qur'anic usage of the word *hidaya* reveals two different kinds of guidance, namely, directional guidance

هداية الدلالة أو الإرشاد , i.e. to point out

the way, and supporting guidance

هداية المعونة أو التوفيق , i.e. to give the

necessary assistance to reach and to remain on that way (see the figure at the bottom of this page).

The directional guidance has been given by Allah (SWT) to all human beings through:

- Divine revelations, which direct them to the straight path, to worshipping Allah and obeying His commands, and help them in discerning the right from the

wrong. The Qur'an is the final and complete book of these revelations.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ
(سورة الإسراء - من آية ٩)

“Verily this Qur'an does guide to that which is most right (or stable).”

(Qur'an 17:9)

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
وَهَدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةً

(سورة النحل - من آية ٨٩)

“We have sent down to you the book explaining all things, a guide, a mercy.”

(Qur'an 16:89)

- Messengers and Prophets whom

Allah (SWT) sent to teach people His divine revelations. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was told in the Qur'an that he provides directional guidance to the path of Allah.



Two Kinds of Guidance

نوعين من الهداية

Directional Guidance

هداية الدلالة
أو الإرشاد

Provided to all human beings through:

- Divine revelations, including the Qur'an.
- Messengers of Allah including Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).
- Pious people and preachers.

Supporting Guidance

هداية المعونة
أو التوفيق

Totally from Allah
(through opening one's heart to receive the truth)

(سورة محمد - من آية ١٧)

"But those who receive guidance, He increases their guidance."

(Qur'an 47:17)

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى

(سورة مريم - من آية ٧٦)

"And Allah does increase in guidance those who seek guidance."

(Qur'an 19:76)

يقول الله تعالى:

أنا عند ظن عبدي لي وأنا معه إذا
ذكرني فإن ذكرني في نفسه ذكرته في
نفسى وإن ذكرني في ملأ ذكرته في ملأ
خير منهم وإن تقرب إلى بشر تقربت
إليه ذراعاً وإن تقرب إلى ذراعاً
تقربت إليه باعاً وإن أتاني يمشى
أتيته هرولة .
(حديث قدسى)

In a *hadith Qudsi* Allah (SWT) says:
"I am as my servant thinks of Me, and I
am with him/her when he/she
remembers Me. If he/she remembers Me
in privacy, I remember him/her in a
better group. If he/she draws near Me a
hand span, I draw near him/her an arm
span. If he/she draws near Me an arm
span, I draw near him/her more than
that. If he/she walks towards Me, I rush
toward him/her."

The ones who are deprived of the
supporting guidance of Allah are the
unbelievers, the unjust, the rebellious
against Allah and His Commands, the
false and ungrateful, the liar and
transgressor.

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

(سورة البقرة - من آية ٢٦٤)

"And Allah Guides not those who
reject faith."

(Qur'an 2:264)

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

(سورة التوبة - من آية ١٩)

"And Allah Guides not those who are
unjust."

(Qur'an 9:19)

وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

(سورة التوبة - من آية ٢٤)

"And Allah Guides not the rebellious."

(Qur'an 9:24)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ

(سورة الزمر - من آية ٣)

"And Allah Guides not such are false
and ungrateful."

(Qur'an 39:3)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُشْرِفٌ

كذَّابٌ (سورة غافر - من آية ٢٨)

"Truly Allah Guides not one who
transgresses and lies."

(Qur'an 40:28)

It is important to note that those who
do not receive the supporting guidance
of Allah do receive the directional
guidance. They are told what to fear and
avoid.

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ

هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّى يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَا يَتَّقُونَ

(سورة التوبة - من آية ١١٥)

"And Allah will not mislead a people
after He has guided them, in order that
He make clear to them what to fear
(and avoid)."

(Qur'an 9:115)

Some people prefer blindness over
guidance, as in the case of *Thamud*.

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَى

عَلَى الْهَدَى

(سورة فصلت - من آية ١٧)

"As to *Thamud* We gave them
guidance, but they preferred blindness
to Guidance."

(Qur'an 41:17)

If one does not believe in Allah, or
neglects the remembrance of Allah,
Satan and his associates become his /her
companions.

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا

يُؤْمِنُونَ

(سورة الأعراف - من آية ٢٧)

"We made the Satans friend (only)
those without faith."

(Qur'an 7:27)

وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَانِ نُقِضْ

لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ .

(سورة الزخرف - آية ٣٦)

"If anyone withdraws himself/herself

وَأَنَّكَ لَتَهْدَى إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ
(سورة الشورى - من آية ٥٢)

"And verily you do guide (people) to
the straight path."

(Qur'an 42:52)

• Pious people and preachers who
invite to the way of Allah.

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةً يَهْتَدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا

(سورة السجدة - من آية ٢٤)

"And We appointed, from among
them leaders, giving guidance under
our command."

(Qur'an 32:24)

The supporting guidance is a
special blessing from Allah (SWT). Not
even the Prophet (PBUH) had the power
to give this kind of guidance.

إِنَّكَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

(سورة القصص - من آية ٥٦)

"It is true you will not be able to guide
every one whom you like, but Allah
Guides those whom He will."

(Qur'an 28:56)

This fact is very important for us to
know and appreciate.

The ones who receive, and the
ones deprived of, Allah's
Guidance

Allah (SWT) tells us in the Qur'an
the characteristics of those who qualify
for receiving His supporting guidance
and those who are deprived of it.

To receive the supporting guidance
of Allah, we have to have a sincere
belief in Allah, and take the first steps
to have guidance. Spiritual
advancement is progressive: each step
makes the next one easier and more
complete.

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِلَى

صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (سورة الحج - من آية ٥٤)

"For verily Allah is the Guide of those
who believe to the straight path."

(Qur'an 22:54)

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى

from remembrance of the Most Gracious, We appoint for him a satan, to be an intimate companion to him/her."

(Qur'an 43:36)

Such a person will be in total loss in the present world and the one to come.

وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا .

(سورة النساء - من آية ١١٩)

"Whoever, forsaking Allah, takes satan for a friend, has of a surely suffered a loss that is manifest."

(Qur'an 4:119)

Our success in the present world and the hereafter requires guidance to the straight path, as well as following that path and remaining on it. Small deviations from the straight path can lead to bigger and more serious deviations. This is why Allah, in His mercy, commanded us to recite the supplication "Guide us to the straight Path" إهدنا الصراط المستقيم at least seventeen times everyday in our prayers. Let us make this supplication from the bottom of our hearts and mean it!

Continued from page 1
Editorial

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَهُوَ عَلَى
جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ .

(سورة الشورى - آية ٢٩)

"And among His signs is the creation of heavens and the earth and the creatures that He has scattered through them (both): and He has power to gather them together when He wills."

(Qur'an 42:29)

Interpreters of this verse had construed that "through them both" referred to them as an integral entity, for they had no knowledge of living beings in any place besides our earth. They over looked the fact that there are six other earths, and on some of which there may be life and living creatures.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ
الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ

(سورة الطلاق - من آية ١٢)

"Allah is He who created seven firmaments and of the earth a similar number."

(Qur'an 65:12)

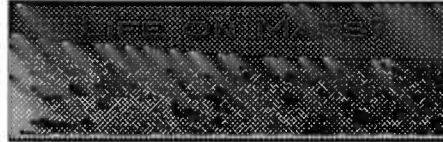
Note that Allah (SWT) has detailed in the following verse what was mentioned briefly in the Qur'an 42:29

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ .

(سورة النحل - آية ٤٩)

"And to Allah does prostrate all that is in the heavens and on earth, whether moving creatures or the angels: for non are arrogant (before their Lord)."

(Qur'an 16:49)



There are indications in the Qur'an that the Jannah (Garden) which Allah (SWT) sent Adam and his wife to, was neither a place on earth, nor was it the eternal Jannah of the hereafter. Rather, it was a place of trial for Adam and his wife before they were sent to the earth - the place where they were appointed as vicegerent (see Perspectives vol.2, No.3, page 2). Could that Jannah has been on Mars? Allah (SWT) knows.

Whatever science will disclose in future concerning life on other planets, will only be realizing a scientific miracle of the Qur'an, and a proof that it is coming from Allah (SWT).

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ
حَتَّىٰ يَتَّبِعِنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

(سورة فصلت - من آية ٥٣)

"Soon will We show them Our signs in the (furthest) regions, and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth."

(Qur'an 41:53)

I pray to Almighty Allah to make us benefit from His signs, and help us in performing *da'awa* to others.

Supplications while, and after, performing Ablution

أدعية الوضوء

أثناء الوضوء :

اللهم اغفر لي ذنبي ، ووسع لي في
داري ، وبارك لي في رزقي .

O Allah, forgive my sins, make my residence spacious for me, and bless me in my provisions.

بعد الوضوء :

من توضأ فقال بعد فراغه من
وضوئه : سبحانك اللهم وبمحمدك ،
أشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت ، أستغفرك
وأتوب إليك ، كتب في رق ثم جعل
في طابع ، فلم يكسر إلى يوم القيامة

Whoever makes ablution and says: "Glory be to You, O Allah, and the praise be to You. I bear witness that there is no god except You. I beg Your forgiveness and I repent to you," will have it written for him/her, and placed on a tablet which will not be broken until the day of resurrection.

Important Dates

Ramadan 1, 1417

January 10, 1997

Eid-ul-Fitr

February 9, 1997

Eid-ul Adha

April 18, 1997

Note: Please contact the National Organizations listed on the back page for confirmation about these dates