

QURAN ON ATHEISM

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QURAN ON
Atheism

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P R O J E C T

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Quran on Atheism!

It is very interesting to note that when a person who denies the creator is asked, What do you believe?

The answer usually is something on the lines of “I do not believe in anything” or “I do not have to believe to be a good human” etc. however, when a person is uttering such sentences what he or she does not realise is that they believe just like a believer in the creator does- its just that their belief is different and in opposition to a believer in the creator- they believe that there is no creator, but believe they do!

Islam, on the other hand, teaches there is no body worthy of being served in the sense of following His guidance or worshipped except the one true creator of the universe!

Let us try and explore how the Quran approaches such thoughts and what message it gives out to a person lost in the quagmire of uncertainty and speculations in the name of science and knowledge.

So what does the Qur’an say about atheism? In Surah At-Tur, Chapter 52 Verse 35, the Qur’an asks the reader a set of rhetorical questions:

“Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]?”

And in the following verse 52:36 the Qur’an says:

“Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain.”

As you can see, the Qur’an uses arguments against atheism that are very straightforward and to the point, yet these few words are packed with deep meaning. Despite clear and concise reasoning, the Author of the Qur’an knows the reader may not be convinced by this alone. As such, the Qur’an doesn’t actually leave the topic. Instead, it employs a consistent strategy no other book has come to match in terms of approach. Take these verses for example:

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?” – 41:53

“And a sign for them is the dead earth. We have brought it to life and brought forth from it grain, and from it they eat. – 36:33

Some usual questions posed by an atheist

1. ***Why does God need us to worship him if he is in no need of anyone/anything?***

God is the Creator and the sustainer of all that exists- both within our realm of understanding and outside its grasp, and all of the creation is a testament for his existence. Though God does not need His creation in order to exist, the creation itself relies on God and His Magnificence to sustain and thrive.

God does not need worship or indeed anything from his creation. This is stated in the Qur'an:

[51:56] And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may serve Me (By fulfilling their purpose of creation).

[51:57] I desire no sustenance from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me.

[51:58] Surely, it is God Himself Who is the Great Sustainer, the Powerful, the Strong.

In Islam worship is not restricted to performing rituals. Worship ('Ibadah') extends to our whole way of life including ethics, behaviour and morality. God teaches that even a good word is an act of worship, as are service to society, acts of charity and the seeking of knowledge and higher education.

Thus, the worship of God is a way of life through which you constantly seek to improve yourself in all aspects of your life and give thanks to the Creator in different ways.

Smiling at strangers is an act of worship too! 😊

Thus the act of Ibadah or worship is in fact a need and requirement of humans in order to better themselves and be of value and help to the rest of the creation.

2. If God is self-sufficient, and does nothing in vain, why did he have to create us for fun or to amuse himself?

Is Creation an act of vanity? Does God watch the happenings on our planet like a game of gladiators or a sport?

This thought is just another speculation with no basis in knowledge and understanding. It only takes a cursory look around our own neighbourhood to see quite clearly that everything that we come across has a specific purpose and has a use. We are yet at the beginning of our journey of making ever new discoveries and of progressive learning and unlocking the secrets of the world around us.

The very fact of us humans having progressed and constantly improved living standards and build massive and glorious civilizations are testimony to the fact that nothing about creation is in vain. As the Qur'an states:

[44:38] And We created not the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in sport.

[44:39] We created them not but with the requirements of truth and justice, but most of them understand not.

[67:1] Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things; [67:2] Who has created death and life that He might try you — which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.

[67:3] Who has created seven heavens in harmony. No incongruity can you see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again: Do You see any flaw?

[67:4] Aye, look again, and yet again, your sight will *only* return back to you dazzled and fatigued.

3. If creation is for our benefit, then what is the benefit to those who will burn forever?

The Qur'an declares that God has given a choice to all mankind to either choose or refuse the natural way of life sent down for our guidance by the creator and as a result it declares that there are infinite rewards for the believers and for those who strove to do good deeds on Earth; who gave thanks to God Almighty and served his Creation. The absence of this struggle is the absence of this reward. Of course, this will seem harsh in comparison to what is offered to the believers.

And whoever desires the reward of this world - We will give him thereof; and whoever desires the reward of the

Hereafter - We will give him thereof. And we will reward the grateful. (3:145)

The life on this Earth is like a harvest, and you reap what you do or do not sow, if you do not commit yourself to struggling and making efforts for your afterlife you cannot claim to be the deserving ones for the reward and similarly if you opposed tooth and nail all your life the efforts the believers how can you claim immunity from punishment in the next life?

However on the everlasting nature of hell fire God is merciful and does not do injustice for an atoms weight to any of his creation:

Indeed, Allah does not do injustice, [even] as much as an atom's weight; while if there is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward. (4:40)

Thus Allah says,

[11:106] As for those who will prove unfortunate, they shall be in the Fire, wherein there shall be for them sighing and sobbing,

[11:107] Abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, excepting what your Lord may will. Surely, your Lord does bring about what He pleases.

[11:108] But as for those who will prove fortunate, they shall be in Heaven; abiding therein so long as the

heavens and the earth endure, excepting what your Lord may will — a gift that shall not be cut off.

It is made clear from these verses that the phase of Fire will depend on the decision of our Creator and we know He does not do an atom's weight of injustice. And even this period is described as one of giving and taking and breathing, while the fortunes of heaven are never ending and never taken away.

4. ***What's the point of God's test when He knows the outcome? How can He punish us for what He destined?***

Understanding the purpose of our creation as described above is very important to keep in mind to get an answer to this question. All of us know that we are free to choose what we want to do in our life. There is absolutely no one that forces us to make choices in life. By making our choices it is us who decide what path we choose without any compulsion from our creator.

However, our creator by his unlimited knowledge knows what we will choose and what choices we will make, this is what makes him the ultimate controller of his creation and the whole operating system in the universe. Can you imagine if God did not know what was going to happen in his kingdom in the next day or even the next moment?

He would cease to be the king and the master of the worlds. It is his omnipotent quality that allows him to know everything including the outcomes of our

decisions and hence he has sent his guidance for us to seek the right path and be among the ones who are successful. It is clear from this life that there are a range of different people; including people who are believers, and people who are non-believers, people who are doing good, and people who are evil, and all others who are in between. We are all given a chance in this life to discover our ways, seek self-betterment and find the purpose of creation.

You can easily say “I love God and His Creation,” but in this life God is giving you a chance to apply this sentiment and to keep trying to do it better. You have a lifetime to discover what you have and to achieve what your goal in life is. You do not have an excuse not to do it. So don’t waste your life complaining that there’s a “fiery” Hell. Instead, seek heaven.

[4:40] Surely, Allah wrongs not any one even by the weight of an atom. And if there be a good deed, He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward.

[99:7] Then whoso does an atom’s weight of good will see it,

[99:8] And whoso does an atom’s weight of evil will also see it.

5. ***Can a being who creates humans that he knows will fail his test and will be tortured without end, be called The Most Merciful?***

Once again keep the above answers in mind to seek a truthful answer to this query.

God has given all mankind equal opportunity to accept or reject the message that he has sent through his messengers, throughout human history. Can a human being, with equal chances to all others, complain of being stuck in hell after having wasted all those chances and opposed the efforts of the believers in his worldly life and having rejected the multiple chances to seek the path of God complain about his fate?

God says that Heaven and Hell are a natural corollary of people's actions in this life and just as the believers had to struggle and suffer for upholding the message of their creator in this world the disbelievers will be punished for rejecting and opposing the truth, in the hereafter. This is very fair and clear The Quran says:

“Is he then who is a believer like him who is a transgressor? They are not equal.” (32:18)

“So taste (the recompense) because you neglected the meeting of this day of yours; verily We, too, forsake you; and taste the abiding chastisement for what you were doing.” (32:14)

[19:72] Then We shall save the righteous and We shall leave the wrongdoers therein, on their knees.

As mentioned, the afterlife is the harvest of what you have done in this lifetime. The extent to which you clean your senses will determine whether you are enjoying the pleasure or suffering in the afterlife.

- 6. Why does God cause so much suffering to humans? Is it part of God's test to prompt them to turn to Him in obedience and worship? Isn't that like a con-man who causes a problem then offers to fix it for you?***

God is not the cause of human suffering, it is like attributing your failure to something that gave you the choice to either work hard and attain success or be lazy and suffer the consequences! Islam does not burden any human being with what he or she cannot handle. It is the actions of humans that cause suffering for their fellow humans and not God.

The Holy Qur'an says:

[20:2] We have not sent down the Qur'an to you that you should be distressed

Allah wills for you ease, and He does not will difficulty for you (2:185)

"Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear" (2:286)

"So keep your duty to God as best as you can, and listen, and obey, and spend; that is better for your souls. And

whoso is saved from his own greed, such are the successful” (64:16)

Islam does not permit any act of self-torture, and does not allow self-harm or damage to others, except in last-resort, inescapable cases of self-defence, or for the defence of the helpless and the innocent.

It's the human greed that causes people to suffer the tyranny of those who oppress others for their material benefits.

Why would God give humans the ability to reason – then punish them for rejecting beliefs their reason cannot reconcile?

Islam commands believers to constantly seek knowledge and education. Also, Islam asks its followers to constantly reflect and ponder upon the deeper meanings of its verses, the heavenly signs, and the world around them. Islam forbids you to blindly follow and imitate your fathers and forefathers, and encourages each person to seek the truth

"And when it is said to them: "Come to what has been revealed by God and to the Messenger": They say: "Sufficient for us are the ways we found our fathers following." What! even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance?" (5:104)

And if you obey most of those in the earth, they will mislead you from the way of God. They follow but

assumption / conjecture (Arabic: Zana) and they only guess / lie (Arabic: Yakhrasun)" (6:116)

"Say [O Muhammad]: 'This is my way; I invite to God with insight, I and those who follow me. And exalted is God; and I am not of those who associate others with him.'" [Quran: 12:108]

And Allah will not punish any person for that which he cannot understand, or which is beyond his reasoning or ability to comprehend.

[2:286] Allah burdens not any soul beyond its capacity. It shall have the reward it earns, and it shall get the punishment it incurs.

8 Should God not be responsible for all evil as he is the one who created evil?

Evil is the absence of good, just as darkness is the absence of light. Essentially, you are the creator of your own evil actions, as mentioned in the Qur'an:

[17:13] And every man's works have We fastened to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open.

[17:14] 'Read your book. Sufficient is your own soul this day as reckoner against yourself.'

[17:15] He who follows the right way follows it only for the good of his own soul: and he who goes astray, goes

astray only to his own loss. And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another. We never punish until We have sent a Messenger.

7. *How can being good because you fear God, be really being good?*

Yes, it is. And to constantly seek to be a better version of yourself for the love of God, is the best strategy for continued human progress.

The correct application of the teachings of Islam will definitely make any bad person a good person, and a good person a better person.

But the correct application of atheism will not make any person any different from what they already are.

This is what makes a person who is always thinking about the judgement day an improved version of himself or herself, as the thought of punishment will be a great motivating force for him as is the amazing and everlasting reward for him. Humans work with a reward and punishment structure when it comes to efficiency and motivation so this is in perfect harmony with the human nature.

[41:33] And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with that which is best. And lo, he between whom and yourself was enmity will become as though he were a warm friend.

10 Why did God only protect the Qur'an from corruption? Couldn't he have protected the Bible and prevented billions claiming he has a son?

You can read the Bible front to back and you will not find Jesus claiming himself as a Divine form of God. But he does claim to be a servant of God. The term “Son of God,” and the reference to God as “father” were and still are, ways that true servants of God refer to Him in Judaism. These ways of referring to God were used by Prophets like David in the Hebrew Bible, so unsurprisingly, Jesus also refers to God using this terminology in the New Testament. However there is no source of the “divinity” of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

[Genesis 6:2] That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3: And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4: There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

5: And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6: And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

[Exodus 4:22] Then say to Pharaoh, ‘This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son,

When reading the New Testament, the only story discovered is that of a true worshipper of God spending his night praying to the Creator to help him and to remove this “cup” to save him from a sentenced punishment. If Jesus himself was the Divine, then who was he praying to? And why, then would the will of Jesus be different from the will of God?

[Luke 22:42] Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.

It wasn’t until the councils of Nicea and Laodicea, where men gathered and voted for the idea of a “divine” Jesus that Christians in general began to think this way. But it was something the early Christians rejected.

It’s also important to add that the continuation of religion is not a result of former corruption, but rather a fulfilment of prophecies made by previous prophets.

[Matthew 21:43] Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

We Muslims believe God has revealed teachings in stages that are suitable for the guidance of a people at a particular time, while also considering the different tribal and social needs of each geographical location. In this way, we see the ‘Shariah’ of Adam (a.s.) as basic and portraying the needs of basic people, while the ‘Shariah’ of Noah is a somewhat more advanced teaching, which the people of Adam would have considered as a burden.

Thus, it is with the Shariah of Moses and of people from different geographical locations. As God says in the Qur’an that for every nation a prophet was sent. But we see Islam as the last universal religion, one that is suitable for all mankind in any present or future time and place, and this gradual revelation of religion as a necessity for the condition of every age. And people without a developed system of currency and commerce per se, wouldn’t have had the benefit and responsibility of taking out a percentage of their wealth as ‘Zakat.’

[4:45] There are some among the Jews who pervert words from their proper places. And they say, ‘We hear and we disobey,’ and ‘hear you without being heard,.... But Allah has cursed them for their disbelief; so they believe but little.

11 Why do so many characteristics of Allah like anger and vengeance seem like human ones?

“Anger” is not a proper translation of the word “Ghazab” used in the Quran for God however, the closest to proper English equivalent would be “wrath”. God’s wrath is one of His characteristics. It, however, is not the characteristic passed onto human beings as such—but a much milder version of it “anger”. Logically and rationally human beings are incapable of handling the intensity and wholesomeness of any of His Characteristics. Justice is also one of His characteristics and passed onto human beings in the similar fashion. “Unjustness” or “In-justice” however, is not one of His characteristics but human beings practice it due to their innate unsavoury impulses. When human beings; despite His countless blessings; transgress; doing an injustice to His right(s); it results in His “wrath”, which is quite logical and rational consequence.

God speaks to us in terms we can understand, implying anger or satisfaction, to pinpoint the direction to where the deed is taking the person, he is not angry in the human sense, but more like for us (to know) the consequence of our actions.

For us humans, God is the Guide and the Judge. Apart from the physical laws, for us there are the laws of cause & effect because we have been given free will. The manner in which we use the free will has an impact on the world around us in either a good or bad way. In the first chapter of Quran we seek guidance from God to be on the straight path and be among those who are blessed and not be among those who earned His wrath.

You earn blessings or wrath depending on how you act. Your actions define the results and nothing else. Reward or punishment is the outcome of the law of cause & effect. God is not emotional. Emotion is His creation. He is unlike His creation. So when you look at implied meanings of wrath and anger, it is not emotion at work, it is the law at work.

12 *The Qur'an criticizes idolaters for following the religion of their parents. Are you any different?*

The blind following of religion as a cultural habit is frowned upon in Islam. Even if a person is born into a Muslim family, he must discover Islam for himself. For if a Muslim's parents were following cultural habits that contradict the Quran. The child is responsible to not duplicate his parents' mistakes, and to seek his own ways that comply with the words of God. The Qur'an states:

[5:104] And when it is said to them, 'Come to what Allah has revealed, and to the Messenger,' they say, 'Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers.' What! Even though their fathers had no knowledge and no guidance?

13 *Is everyone that passed before us destined for Hell?*

The answer to this question is that the decision of judging people belongs wholly and solely to our creator. No one can guarantee the salvation or punishment of

anyone else. This question was posed by the pharaoh to Prophet Moses and here is his dialogue and answer to it:

Dialogue on what about previous generations!

(20:49) Pharaoh said: " Moses! Who is the Lord of the two (Moses and Aaron) of you?"

(20:50) He said: "Our Lord is He Who gave everything its form and then guided it."

(20:51) Pharaoh asked: "Then, what is the state of the former generations?"

(20:52) Moses said: "Its knowledge is with my Lord, recorded in the Book. My Lord does not err, nor does He forget."

Our creator is the final authority and power and we are all in need of guidance and help. We can on our own reflect and ponder and if we are truthful in our observations we will come to one and the only truthful conclusion ----

There truly are signs in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternation of the night and day, for those with understanding, who remember God standing, sitting, and lying down, who reflect on the creation of the heavens and earth: 'Our Lord! You have not created all

this without purpose—you are far above that!—so protect us from the torment of the Fire.’ (3:190-91)

In the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water which God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds. (2:164)

(2:256) There is no compulsion in religion.²⁸⁵ The Right Way stands clearly distinguished from the wrong. Hence he who rejects the evil ones and believes in God has indeed taken hold of the firm, unbreakable handle. And God (Whom he has held for support) is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

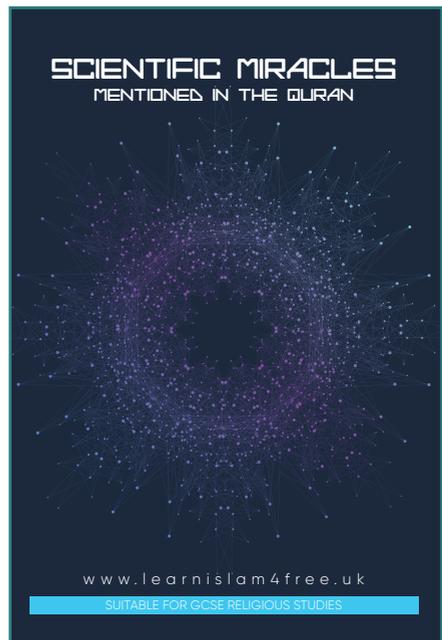
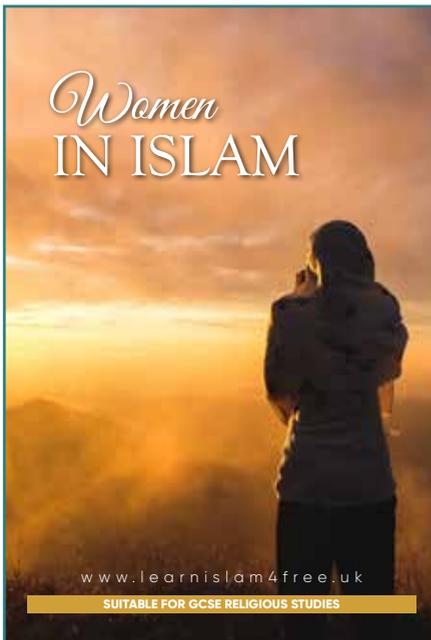
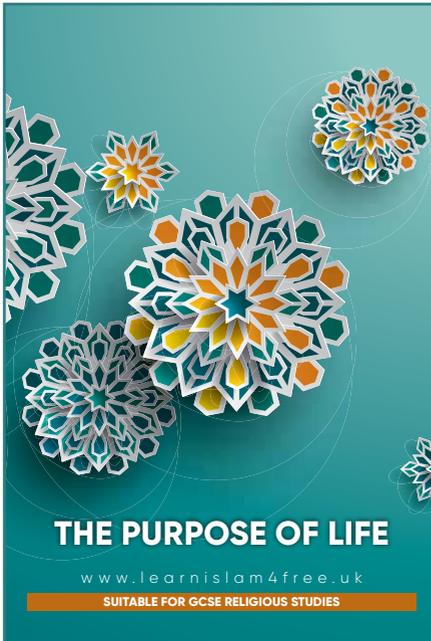
(2:257) God is the Guardian of those who believe, He brings them out of every darkness into light. And those who disbelieve, their guardians are the evil ones; they bring them out of light into all kinds of darkness. These are destined for the Fire, and there shall they abide.

May we all have the courage to seek the following prayer of Prophet Muhammed pbuh:

“My Lord show me the true nature of things as they really are (Not as I want to see them)”

Aameen

OTHER ESSENTIAL READINGS



Booklets

1. The Quran
2. The Book That Shook The World
3. World's First Written Constitution
4. The Sharia Law
5. The Purpose Of Life
6. The People Of The Book
7. What Is Islam?
8. The Concept Of God In Islam
9. Jesus In Quran
10. Did Jesus Predict Coming Of Muhammad?
11. Common Misconceptions About Islam
12. Is There A Creator?
13. Women In Islam
14. The Hijab
15. Scientific Miracles Mentioned In The Quran
16. Message To Mankind
17. Islam's Solution To Terrorism
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24. Salah-Islamic Prayer
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26. Hajj-The Islamic Pilgrimage
27. Islam Has No Clergy
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29. Concept Of Halal & Haram In Islam
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32. What Is Zakah?
33. Role Of Masjid And Imam
34. What Is Shahdah?
35. The Wakeup Call
36. Islam Against Racism
37. Remembrance Of God
38. The Book Of Prayers
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40. The Rights Of Parents And Children
41. Beautiful Stories Of Prophet Muhammed pbuh For Children - Book 1
42. Moral Stories For Children - Book 2
43. The Book Of Manners For Children - Book 3
44. Islam For Children
45. The New Muslim Book
46. Insaan (Human) described in the Quran
47. Islaam Against Racism
48. Quran on Atheism
49. Quranic Description of the Satan

