





**The Dialectic of Eternity, Creation and Panentheism  
in the Qur'anic Context**

Towards an Ontological Reading of the Unity of Existence

Without Immanentism or Reductionism

Contemplations

on Philosophy, Science and the Quran

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# **DEDICATION**

**With Thanks and Gratitude To  
Dr. Medhat Jada'an and Fadia Khalifeh**

**To  
Sarah, Arwad and Nour Khalifeh  
Luna Currie and Ashton Currie**



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

There is nothing like Him.  
So do not set up equals to God  
And He is severe in punishment  
Do you know of any equal to Him  
And there is none comparable to Him

And there is none comparable to Him. (Al-Ikhlās 112:4)

The Originator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you from yourselves mates and from your offspring mates. He creates livestock in pairs, multiplying you thereby. There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. (Ash-Shūrā: 11)

He is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, so worship Him and be patient in His worship. Do you know of any equal to Him? (Maryam: 65)

And the thunder glorifies Him with praise, and so do the angels, out of awe of Him. He sends thunderbolts and strikes with them whom He wills while they dispute. (In God, and He is severe in punishment.) [Ar-Ra'd: 13]

(So do not set up equals to God. Indeed, God knows, and you do not know.) [An-Nahl: 74]

(Is He who creates like one who does not create? Then will you not remember?) [An-Nahl: 17]



## **A Preliminary Note to the Reader**

This book, in its aims and conclusions, does not seek to deny divine monotheism, nor to cast doubt on the doctrines of resurrection, judgment, and the afterlife, nor to negate God's mandate for humanity and its moral responsibility to do good and avoid evil. Rather, it begins with the acknowledgment of these principles as the doctrinal framework upon which the Qur'anic discourse is founded, and within which the inquiry takes place, not outside of it.

The approach adopted in this book is an ontological and contemplative one, striving to understand the nature of existence, creation, consciousness, and time in light of the Qur'anic text, while critically drawing upon classical and modern philosophy and contemporary consciousness sciences, without transforming these fields into alternative or competing references to revelation. Science here is read as a path of description, while the Qur'an is read as a path of meaning and guidance.

When this book discusses concepts such as the universality of consciousness, the relationship between God and the universe, or the presence of meaning in existence, it does not advocate for incarnation or the dissolution of the Creator into the created, nor does it reduce the divine to the natural. Rather, it proposes a synthetic framework akin to what is philosophically known as Panentheism: that the universe exists in God and is existentially connected to Him, without God being the universe, and without the Creator losing His absolute distinction from the created.

Similarly, this work does not treat time as an absolute, independent reality, but as a cognitive framework for organizing change within the finite universe. It does not view creation as a discontinuous event in the past, but as a continuous, renewed act in the present. From this perspective, the verses about creation are read not as mere rhetorical figures of speech, nor as technical scientific reports, but as indications of a cosmic structure imbued with meaning.

This book does not seek to establish a new theological doctrine, nor to refute theological or Sufi traditions, but rather to open a new avenue of dialogue between the Qur'anic text, philosophical reason, and contemporary science, concerning questions of existence, consciousness, freedom, and meaning. It does not offer definitive answers but proposes a way of thinking that views humanity as a moral witness within a universe charged with meaning, and as being addressed by responsibility, not merely as a biological being in a silent world.

Therefore, what may appear to some readers as a departure from conventional interpretation is not intended to contradict doctrine, but rather an attempt at a deeper reading of the cosmic and existential verses in the Holy Qur'an, while remaining faithful to the centrality of monotheism, the transcendence of the Creator, and the preservation of the meaning of divine responsibility and the Hereafter.

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Contemplations on Science, Philosophy and the Quran



## Introduction

Since the dawn of human thought, the questions of God, existence, time, and consciousness have remained among the most complex, unsettling, and astonishing. Does the universe have an absolute beginning? Is creation a transition from nothingness to existence, or a transformation from one state to another? Is consciousness a characteristic exclusive to humankind, or does all of existence possess some degree of perception and meaning? And how does divine discourse—the Qur’an—manifest itself within this vast horizon that encompasses the eternal and the temporal, the absolute and the relative, the unseen and the seen?

This book is an attempt to reflect on these questions from within the Qur’anic context, not as a closed theological text, nor merely a book of ethics and rhetoric, but as an ontological text open to questions of existence, reason, and consciousness. The Qur’an does not exclusively provide moral and legal guidance to humanity; it paints a comprehensive cosmic picture: heavens and earth, sun and moon, mountains and trees, animals and humankind—all sharing a pattern of presence before God and a cognitive and existential relationship with Him, expressed in verses of glorification, prostration, obedience, speech, and reverence.

This work explores simple yet profoundly significant hypotheses concerning the concepts of the Creator, time, existence, and consciousness in the Holy Quran, comparing them to prominent scientific and philosophical theories on these concepts, about which there is no consensus within any of these branches of knowledge regarding the truth of any of them. In the Holy Quran, there are clear

propositions regarding these concepts: the transcendence of the Creator from creation, the relativity of time, the continuous dynamism of creation, the relationship between the Creator and existence, and the universality of consciousness as not exclusive to humankind but rather an existential characteristic of varying degrees, encompassing all of existence at different levels of perception, response, and meaning. This hypothesis does not imply that nature is God, nor that beings possess human intellect, but rather that existence is not inanimate matter, and that the relationship between the Creator and creation is not a cold, mechanical one, but rather a relationship of presence, encompassing, and all-encompassing.

We can say that the some of the “Beautiful Names of God” refer to the concepts related to the thesis of this book.

This highlights the fundamental difference between the concept of Pantheism (monism), where everything is God, and Panentheism, where everything exists within God without being God itself. This book does not advocate immanentism or union, nor does it equate the Creator with the created. Rather, it seeks to understand the meaning of God encompassing all things, of existence being encompassed by His knowledge, word, and will without being dissolved by Him, and that existence derives consciousness from the source, which is God.

To further clarify and avoid confusion between the numerous and overlapping definitions and interpretations of the concept of the unity of existence and its specific terminology, we must first explain a selection of these definitions. Among the most important definitions in this context is one that highlights the fundamental difference between the concept of the unity of existence in its Spinozan sense (Monism/Pantheism) (everything is God) and the non-immanent unity of existence (all in God) (Panentheism), meaning that everything exists within God without being God itself. The book does not call for

solutions or union, nor does it equate the Creator with the created. Rather, it tries to think about the meaning of God being all-encompassing and “closer to us than our jugular vein,” and of existence being encompassed by His knowledge, word, and will without dissolving into it, and of existence deriving its cohesion from transience and deriving degrees of consciousness from the origin, which is God.”

This work also stops at the concept of creation itself, which has always been understood as coming out of nothingness into existence, while some saw matter as eternal, uncreated and always changing. It sheds light on contemporary scientific theories related to the origin and nature of the universe and the extent to which science meets the relevant Qur’anic text, and reflects on the Qur’anic verses that narrate the story of the beginnings of creation and reveal that the word “nothingness” is almost absent, and that creation is presented as a continuous act: “Every day He is engaged in some affair,” “Be, and it is,” “He created the heavens and the earth in truth,” “And the heaven We constructed with might, and indeed, We are expanding it,” and “Do you not see that God created the heavens and the earth in truth? If He wills, He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.”

This opens a different horizon for understanding the relationship between eternity and time, between perpetuity and history, and between God’s eternal knowledge and the manifestations of this knowledge in successive historical events.

In this context arises the question of the Qur’an itself: Is it eternal or created? Is the word of God bound by time or transcendent to it? This question has transformed in Islamic history into a doctrinal and political conflict known as the “Inquisition of the Creation of the Qur’an”, (Mihnat Khalq al-Qur’an – “Ordeal/Inquisition of the

Createdness of the Qur'an"). However, this book does not treat this ordeal as merely a sectarian dispute, but rather as an expression of a profound philosophical tension between the eternal and the temporal, between essence and manifestation, between the absolute and the relative. It proposes a synthetic reading that sees the Qur'an as eternal in that it exists in God's knowledge, and temporal in that it was revealed and manifested in history, without this implying any contradiction or duality in reality.

This book pays particular attention to the problem of "metaphor" in interpreting verses that attribute perception, glorification, and speech to the heavens, the earth, and inanimate objects. Many commentaries have reduced these verses to rhetorical figures of speech, arguing that consciousness is exclusive to humans. However, this work attempts to question this very assumption: Is metaphor a textual necessity, or a pre-existing philosophical assumption imposed upon the text? Is it permissible to reduce an entire system of verses to a single rhetorical function, given that the Qur'an presents these meanings in a recurring and consistent declarative form? And why shouldn't we reduce the language of the Qur'an to metaphor?

It is important to note that this book does not begin with a denial of metaphor in the language of the Qur'an, nor with a rejection of rhetoric as a tool of expression. Rather, it begins with a critique of transforming metaphor into a comprehensive interpretation that negates the ontological dimension of the text. The Qur'an does not use language for mere embellishment, but to construct a conception of existence and the relationship between the Creator and the world. When verses about creation, glorification, obedience, speech, and testimony are reduced to mere didactic metaphors, we are not interpreting the text so much as imposing upon it a preconceived philosophical notion that

views the universe as inert matter and consciousness as the exclusive domain of humankind.

The fundamental principle of language is literal meaning, and metaphor is only resorted to when a rational or linguistic impediment prevents a literal interpretation. There is nothing in these verses that precludes understanding them as allusions to a mode of perception and response appropriate to the nature of existence. Acknowledging a gradual consciousness within the universe does not imply God's indwelling in things, nor does it equate inanimate objects with humans. Rather, it is an acknowledgment that existence itself is in relation to the divine command, and that meaning is not extraneous to the world but is rooted in its very structure.

Therefore, this reading does not aim to disable rhetoric, but rather to liberate it from reductionism and reconnect the language of the Qur'an with the question of existence, as a discourse that reveals a living world of relationship and meaning, not merely a symbolic text reduced to metaphor.

The book does not confine itself to Islamic heritage alone, but rather engages with modern philosophical and scientific debates about consciousness and the universe: from the idea of panpsychism, to theories of social consciousness (Marx and Mannheim), to the unconscious (Freud), to questions of modern cosmology concerning the beginning of the universe, its expansion and contraction, and the fine design of its physical and biological laws. The question is posed not as a conflict between science and faith, but as a shared search for the meaning of existence and the source of order and meaning within it.

The aim of this book is to open a new contemplative horizon that connects God, the universe, and consciousness; eternity and creation; science and revelation; reason and experience; and humanity and the cosmos.

It is worth noting that this book is closer to contemplation and reflection on existence and philosophy than to academic philosophical inquiry. It is an attempt at intellectual humility before the vastness of existence, the depth of the Quranic text, and the limitations of human intellect. It is an invitation to see the universe as an open book, the Quran as a mirror reflecting this book, and consciousness as a bridge between humanity, the world, and the Creator.

# Terms



## Terms

Definitions of a set of concepts and standardization of their terminology used in the material of this book.

**Monotheism:** Belief in one God, omnipotent, active, just, self-subsistent, necessary in existence, transcendent of nature, history, and humanity, distinct from His creation, and different from events; He is the center of the universe, separate from it, who gives it cohesion and grants humanity independence from all other beings, the capacity for choice, and the ability to transcend the material world and its physical, natural self.

**Idolatry:** Absolute attachment to limited material things, such as power, pleasure, material possessions, and ideologies, instead of absolute truth or God, thus turning the relationship between Creator and creation upside down. Idolatry is considered a fundamental deviation from human desires, where a part of reality is treated as the whole. Key philosophical perspectives on idolatry include:

**The Monotheistic View (Abrahamic Religions):** Idolatry is considered the worship of false gods or an excessive attachment to worldly things and is often seen as the root of sin. It represents a misguided approach to God.

**Symbolism and Representation:** Idolatry is an attempt to represent the intangible (God) with a limited, physical object.

**Socio-Ethical Perspective:** Modern interpretations often view idolatry as the veneration of ideas, nationalism, or identity, where groups are prioritized over individuals.

**Functional/Psychological Perspective:** Idolatry is seen as a psychological tendency to project inner needs for security and meaning onto external objects.

**An Alternative Perspective:** Some, as in certain Eastern traditions, view physical objects not as idols in their essence, but as manifestations of God, which can be instruments of worship rather than false gods. Philosophically, idolatry is often analysed as a deficiency in perspective, where the symbol becomes more important than the reality it is supposed to represent.

Idolatry, as understood in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is the worship of something or someone other than the one God; it can be literal.

**Monolatry:** The recognition of multiple gods, but the worship of only one God.

**Partial monotheism:** The worship of one God without denying the existence of other gods.

**Deism:** Belief in a creator God who does not intervene in the universe.

**Panentheism:** The unity of God (“All in God”) and (the universality of consciousness without immanence) is a philosophical and theological position that sees God as permeating and encompassing the entire universe, while simultaneously transcending it. Unlike Pantheism (God is the world), Panentheism asserts that God is greater

than the universe, while maintaining the ontological distinction between Creator and creation. Basic principles and concepts:

**"All in God" versus "God in all":** The universe exists in God, and God is present in every part of the universe.

**Transcendence and Incarnation:** God is not only in the world (incarnation), but also outside of it (transcendence).

**Dynamic Relationship:** Unlike classical monotheism, which sees God as completely separate and independent from the world, fixed and distinct, Pantheism posits a reciprocal, if not equal, relationship. The world influences God, making God a dynamic, changing being who experiences the universe.

Pantheism is highly influential in contemporary theology, environmental ethics, and debates surrounding the intersection of science and religion, as it acknowledges a divine presence in natural and evolutionary processes.

Origin: The German philosopher Karl Kraus coined this term in 1828 to distinguish his view of pantheism. The concept is rooted in various traditions, including Hinduism, Kabbalistic Judaism, and Christian theology.

**Anthropomorphism:** A philosophical and epistemological tendency to attribute human qualities, feelings, intentions, or characteristics to non-human things, such as gods, animals, nature, or inanimate objects. It is used as a cognitive mechanism to understand the world through the projection of human experience and appears in religions, myths, and art. It can be considered a logical fallacy in the interpretation of natural phenomena.

**Examples:** Scripture often refers to "the eyes of God" (to signify omniscience/vigilance), "the hand of God" (to signify power/action), or "the arm of God" (to signify salvation).

**Origin and Definition:** Derived from the Greek words "anthropos" (human) and "morphe" (form), it means representing beings or phenomena with human characteristics.

**Philosophical and Religious Context:** Historically, it has been used to personify deities (such as the Greek gods) and to interpret nature with human emotions (such as the "angry sea").

**Cognitive Function:** Some philosophers and psychologists suggest it is a "safe" and familiar way for humans to understand their environment, where "faces in the clouds" serve as a form of psychological protection. **Logical fallacy:** Also known in philosophy as the "passionate fallacy," this refers to the exaggeration of human emotions in relation to nature. **The concept in anthropology:** This differs from "philosophical anthropology," which studies human nature and behaviour, while anthropomorphism studies the projection of human nature onto others.

**Immanentism:** A philosophical and mystical (and sometimes religious) doctrine based on the idea that the Creator (God) dwells within His creation or merges with the universe, becoming one essence or one being. There is no separation between Creator and creation; God and nature are one reality, and the sum of material manifestations proclaims God's existence. **Key aspects of immanentism: Unity of existence:** Immanentism holds that divinity exists and is eternal in every part of nature, and the duality between Creator and creation vanishes. **Union:** Some extreme Sufi groups (immanentists) believe that God unites with some of His creation, such as prophets or

righteous individuals. It makes them the very essence of God's existence.

**The Islamic Jurisprudential Perspective:** Scholars and jurists consider the doctrine of incarnation or union to be pure disbelief and misguidance, because it entails anthropomorphizing the Creator and placing Him in locations unbecoming of His essence.

**In Jewish Thought:** Studies (such as the analyses of Abdel Wahab El-Messiri) indicate that the Zionist/Jewish vision is characterized by incarnation, where the "chosen people" or "the land" are seen as incarnations of God, thus sanctifying their actions.

**The Difference Between Incarnation and Union:** Incarnation implies the existence of two beings (God incarnating in a creature), while union implies the existence of one being (the Creator and the creature being one essence).

**Pantheism/Unity of Being:** A philosophical doctrine that holds that true existence is one, namely God, and that the universe and its manifestations are merely manifestations, extensions, characteristics, or images of this true existence, and do not possess independent existence. It is associated with Neoplatonism, Spinoza, and its most prominent Sufi theorist was Ibn Arabi.

### **Key Points of Pantheism:**

**The Reality of Existence:** Existence in His true nature is God, infinite in attributes and qualities. Nature is a limited part of God, and creation has no essence distinct from God.

**Divine Manifestations:** The universe is an image of God. Everything you see in the universe is God, and nothing else exists.

**The difference between Immanentism and Pantheism:** Pantheism means that existence is God Himself, while Immanentism means that God dwells within the parts of the universe.

**Unity of Being in Sufi Thought:** Adherents of this school of thought consider the multiplicity people perceive in the universe to be manifestations or expressions of the one divine essence. Some distinguish between "Unity of Being" (that there is no existence but God) and "Unity of Witnessing" (that I see nothing in the universe but God).

**Criticisms:** It contradicts the fundamental doctrine of monotheism, which distinguishes between God (the Creator) and all else (the created). It negates obligation and worship because it equates the worshipper and the worshipped with one and the same.

**Immanence:** God is immanent in the universe, meaning that all existence is contained within God, and God contained within existence. This implies that God and the universe are one entity (essence); that the laws of the universe are inherent within it, and that the universe can only be understood through studying these inherent laws, which it cannot transcend. The principle of immanence is the assertion that "the whole is within the whole," and that the elements of existence contain one another and constitute only one reality. This is the opposite of transcendence and independence. Hence, the principle of immanence is a premise or consequence of the doctrine of Pantheism, where the essence of God is immanent/internal within the world; that is, He and the world are one. Spinoza, in his definition of "God" (*deus est omnium* in Latin), stated that God is the inherent

cause of all things, not the external cause that influences them. The association of Spinoza's name with this term is significant; he was the one who proclaimed the equality and synonymy of God and nature, that is, God's immanence within nature, meaning that they, and all things, are one essence.

This complete immanence, in this sense, is the total denial of all dualities, of the human realm, and of any existence of a transcendent whole.

**Immanent Pantheism/Monism:** This is a philosophical/doctrinal view that posits the unity of existence, where the world (humanity and nature) is considered a single, coherent essence, within which an immanent divine or material principle resides, thus eliminating the distinction between Creator and creation. It traces all phenomena back to a single source and divides them into two types: **spiritual** (monism) and **material** (immanence/death of God).

**The most prominent features of immanent pantheism:** Unity of existence: God does not transcend the world (is separate) but rather resides within it (is immanent) and becomes part of it, which means the dissolution of dualities.

**The latent principle:** The world and nature are considered "sacred," and nothing exists outside of them. The governing principle becomes the "laws of matter" or the "law of motion."

**Jewish Pantheism:** The thinker Abdel Wahab El-Messiri points out that some Jewish perspectives (such as Hasidism and Sabbathism) adopted this conception, where God dwells within the Jewish people, bestowing "sanctity" upon their actions and history, thus paving the way for comprehensive secularism.

**Materialist pantheism:** In an advanced stage, the spiritual concept of God disappears and is replaced by pure matter, leading to the "death of God" or a materialistic view of life.

**Monistic latent Pantheism:** Monistic latent pantheism is a philosophical doctrine (the unity of existence) that integrates God into the world. Nature and humanity are viewed as a single latent essence, and the duality between Creator and creation disappears. This makes God present in everything and synonymous with existence, thus transcending the concept of a transcendent God outside the universe. Kabbalah (especially Lurianic) is fundamental to the shift of Jewish thought toward this paradigm.

### **Key characteristics and concepts of latent pantheism:**

**Spiritual pantheism:** This posits the existence of a divine essence immanent in all matter, representing the source of movement and existence, with the entire universe becoming a manifestation of this essence.

**Material Pantheism (death of God):** This develops from spiritual Pantheism, where the divine principle is replaced by terms such as "laws of nature" or "law of motion," resulting in a completely materialistic monism and the disappearance of any duality (God/universe).

**Abolition of transcendence:** There is no creator outside the universe; rather, the creator is immanent within it, and the boundaries between the sacred and the profane dissolve.

**Liquid monism:** This refers to the postmodern era where rigid dualities (good/evil, humanity/nature) fade away.

**Connection with Kabbalah:** Kabbalah played a role in the transition from traditional monotheism to pantheism, particularly in the symbolic and oral interpretations of texts. This doctrine views history and nature as a continuous process of divine intervention and is considered fundamental to some Jewish and Zionist interpretations of history as "sacred history" through the uniqueness of the Jewish people, who represent divine intervention.

**Esotericism:** The term esotericism refers to a variety of Western and Eastern spiritual traditions that focus on esoteric, hidden knowledge (involving "secret" or "hidden" knowledge) reserved for a select group, rather than the exoteric (public) teachings of mainstream religions.

In the East, esotericism emerged with Islamic sects (such as the Ismailis and Qarmatians) that believed religious texts had an exoteric and an esoteric meaning, and that the esoteric, "hidden" meanings were only understood by the "infallible Imam" or the elite and differed from the exoteric meaning understood by the general public. It was founded by Maimonides and emerged as a secret hermeneutical movement aimed at controlling minds.

In the West, esotericism emerged as a distinct category in the 19th century, encompassing, among other things, hermeneutics, Kabbalah, alchemy, astrology, and more recent movements such as Theosophy, Spiritualism, and the New Age movement.

**Historical Context:** This term encompasses traditions of "rejected knowledge" that, at various points in history, were deemed unacceptable by mainstream science or religious authorities. **Key Characteristics:** Esotericism is often defined by its emphasis on direct mystical experience, a "mystical" worldview (as opposed to rational,

non-mystical views), and a belief in the interconnectedness of different levels of reality.

**Examples:** Common traditions and practices categorized under this label include Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Rosary, ritual magic, alchemy, and esoteric interpretations of religious texts.

**Academic Study and Contemporary Perception:** Although often overlooked, Western esotericism has recently become a recognized field of academic research, focusing on the historical and cultural role of these traditions. Institutions such as the University of Amsterdam are leading this field. **Contemporary Expressions:** In contemporary culture, esotericism manifests itself in the New Age movement, occult practices, and various forms of alternative spirituality.

**Imminence:** A philosophical and critical concept referring to the study of a thing in itself and through its internal laws, without attributing it to external factors; that is, its "latency" or "incarnation" within the thing itself. It is a central structural principle in literary criticism for isolating the text from its contexts and is considered the antithesis of paradox or transcendence.

The following is a detailed explanation of aspects of immanence:

**In Structural Criticism:** Immanent analysis focuses on the literary text as a closed structure, completely independent of its historical or social context or the author's own self.

**In Philosophy:** Kant referred to it as the presence of the thing in itself (latency) as opposed to paradox, which refers to the existence of the thing outside of or transcendent to it.

**Internal Element:** Immanence holds that the meanings and laws of a text originate from within it, interpreting things as they truly are. In Deleuze's philosophy: Gilles Deleuze introduces the concept of the "flat of immanence" as a field of life that does not refer to a separate subject or object but rather is a state of immediate existence.

Imminence has become a fundamental tool in textual studies for separating literature from its surroundings and focusing on its internal structure.

**Annihilation:** The philosophy of annihilation primarily refers to the theological doctrine of annihilation, which holds that the wicked are completely annihilated—that is, their existence ceases—after Judgment Day, rather than suffering eternal torment in Hell. It is rooted in conditionalism, where immortality is considered a gift, not an inherent quality of the soul. Generally, this philosophy addresses questions concerning the inevitability of death, the nature of personal annihilation, and whether nothingness is something to fear, often contrasting with beliefs in an afterlife or eternal punishment.

**The main aspects of annihilation philosophy include:**

**Theological annihilation:** A perspective within Christianity that suggests God condemns those beyond redemption, viewing eternal damnation as incompatible with divine love. This view is commonly held by Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses.

**Existential annihilation/self-annihilation:** The concept of relinquishing the ego or self-constructions to allow for transformation or a more authentic existence. This concept is sometimes explored in postmodern literature.

**Distinction from nihilism:** While related to the idea that life is temporary, it differs from existential nihilism, which denies all meaning to life.

This concept is frequently discussed in the contexts of eschatology (end-times theology), ethics (euthanasia, suicide), and the humanistic view of death as a final and absolute cessation. **Death and Nothingness:** Philosophers like Christopher Belshaw explore whether death truly is the end of existence, and whether this "annihilation" makes death a bad thing for the individual, sometimes drawing on Epicurus's view that the fear of nothingness is irrational.

Philosophically, annihilation is a profound concept that transcends biological death. In Sufism, it represents the erosion of negative attributes and the absence of self-awareness due to absorption in the Truth. It is viewed as a spiritual state of "death before death," signifying the annihilation of the ego and union with the Absolute. In an existential context, it represents the acceptance of the self's liberation from the resistance of the inevitability of annihilation. **Sufi Annihilation (Islamic Mysticism):** Annihilation and subsistence represent the highest stations of Sufism, where the seeker is annihilated from their will and self-existence to live in God (subsistence). It is also defined as the annihilation of mortal human attributes and the subsistence of eternal divine attributes.

**Philosophical and Comparative Foundations:** The Sufi doctrine of annihilation (*fana'*) is rooted in influences from Greek (Neo-Plotinian) and Buddhist philosophies, particularly the concept of "Nirvana."

**Emanationism:** Emanationism is a philosophical/modern theory that explains the emanation of existence and beings from the "One" (God) in a necessary and gradual manner, similar to the emanation of light

from the sun, rather than creation from nothingness. It was founded by Plotinus and adopted by Muslim philosophers such as Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina to explain the relationship between the Creator and the material universe through a series of intellects and celestial spheres. However, it was criticized by theologians such as Al-Ghazali.

### **Key Ideas of the Emanation Theory:**

**Necessary Emanation:** Existence emanates from the "First" (God) by necessity of bestowal, not by willful action; only one can emanate from the One.

**Levels of Existence:** Existence flows in descending degrees from perfection to imperfection: the One -> the First Intellect -> the Celestial Intellects -> the Universal Soul -> the Material World. **The Problem of the One and the Many:** This theory aims to explain how multiplicity (creatures) emanated from the Absolute One, where the First Intellect emanates from God, and from this Intellect, subsequent intellects emanate.

**Influence and Intermediary:** Emanation is an organizational process in which creation occurs through intermediaries (intellects) whose degrees are ordered, while true influence and creation belong to the Necessary Being (God).

Emanationism is linked to the idea of "the unity of existence" and the dialectical view that distinguishes between the transcendent and the perceptible material world.

**Incarnation:** Philosophically, incarnation is an ontological concept referring to the taking on a tangible, material form (body) of an idea, spirit, or immaterial divine being. This conception embodies the

realization of the idea in earthly reality, whether it be the incarnation of a deity in human/animal form or a material transformation of energy. It differs from reincarnation, which means the transmigration of the soul into another body (**reincarnation of souls**).

### **Philosophical Aspects of Incarnation:**

**Material Incarnation:** This refers to making something material, tangible, and visible.

**Religious Philosophy:** In Christianity, the Incarnation represents the union of divinity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, a cornerstone of theological redemption.

**The Incarnation of Ideas:** This describes how abstract principles (such as freedom, wisdom, or art) are transformed into tangible, material reality.

**Vitalism/Animism:** An ancient philosophical and scientific doctrine that distinguishes living beings from inanimate objects by the presence of a non-material "life force" or psyche that governs bodily functions and vital processes. This doctrine rejects the complete explanation of life in terms of physics and chemistry, postulating the existence of an inner force that guides growth and development.

### **Key Details of Animism:**

**Historical Roots:** Its roots extend to Greek philosophy (Aristotle), who considered the soul to be a spiritual force that governs living beings.

**Life Force:** Believed to be a non-material force, it is referred to by various names such as "vital impulse," "intelligentia," or "psychic essence." **Self-Generation:** This doctrine posits that living organisms cannot arise from inanimate matter without the intervention of a powerful force.

**Decline of the Doctrine:** The theory was scientifically refuted in the 19th century (1828) when Frederick Waller succeeded in synthesizing urea (an organic substance) from inorganic materials, thus proving that biological reactions are governed by chemical laws.

Although considered a "pseudo-scientific" concept today, the vitalist principle formed the basis for understanding life for a long time, focusing on the distinctive characteristics of the organism as a whole, not just its components.

### **The Macrocosm (Greater Universe) and the Microcosm (Smaller Universe/Humanity)**

These are two ancient philosophical concepts that refer to the analogy between the universe as a whole (the totality) and humanity (the part), where humanity is considered a microcosm or reflection of the cosmic structure, and both are subject to the same structural and spiritual laws. This similarity means that studying and understanding one contributes to understanding the other.

**The macrocosm – the larger universe:** refers to the universe as a whole, including cosmic space, galaxies, and stars. In ancient philosophies (such as Greek and Stoic), it was considered a living entity with a soul and mind ("world soul"). It is the all-encompassing system that includes everything in existence.

**The microcosm – the smaller universe:** refers to the human being as a microcosm representing the larger universe. This idea is based on the notion that the functions of human organs correspond to the functions of celestial bodies (e.g., liver, heart, stomach). It is viewed as a microcosm containing the same elements and structures as the macrocosm.

### **Key Philosophical Principles:**

**Symmetry and Similarity:** Ancient civilizations (Mesopotamia, Iran, China, and Greece) believed in a close correspondence between the universe (the larger) and the human body/soul (the smaller).

**Divine Nature:** Plato and the Stoics suggested that the human soul possessed a divine nature similar to the cosmic soul.

**Spinoza's Philosophy:** This philosophy proposed the equivalence of the Creator, Nature, and Humanity, where humans are considered part of the whole and subject to its laws.

**In contemporary thought,** the terms are used to refer to any small system (atomic and subatomic particles and the quantum physical laws that govern them) that represents a larger system (all that we see and perceive with our senses, represented by various mathematical equations and laws).

**Logos:** The Logos is an ancient Greek philosophical concept meaning "word," "mind," "reason," or "cosmic order." It refers to the rational principle underlying the organization and harmony of the universe, rather than myths (mythos). It evolved from being a natural law in Heraclitus to "universal reason" in the Stoics, and then "the divine word" in religious philosophy.

**Pancosmism:** A philosophical doctrine that views the physical and temporal universe (the cosmos) as all that exists. Emerging in the 19th century, it presents a materialistic worldview that centres on the universe as the complete and self-contained reality. It is often associated with the belief that nothing exists outside the visible physical universe, similar to materialism or naturalism.

**Panpsychism:** Also known as panspiritualism, is a philosophical view that sees mind or consciousness as a fundamental and universal feature of reality, present in some form even in elementary particles like electrons. This suggests that complex consciousness (such as human consciousness) arises from the combination of these simpler, fundamental mental properties, rather than emerging from entirely unconscious matter. This theory offers a way to address the "complexity of consciousness" by proposing that experience is not something new that suddenly appears, but rather an ongoing aspect of the universe that varies in complexity. Key ideas include the idea that particles possess fundamental empirical properties that combine to form higher-level consciousness. This theory has gained renewed interest in the philosophy of mind and science for its ability to reconcile materialism and experience.

### **Key Concepts:**

Fundamental and Universal: Consciousness is not a property arising from complex brains, but rather a fundamental building block of everything.

**The Complex Consciousness Problem (Hard Problem):** This problem aims to resolve how subjective experience arises from physical matter by positing that matter already possesses some mind-like

properties. "All things," from electrons and atoms to plants, animals, and the universe itself, are encompassed by (cosmic consciousness).

**Gradual Consciousness:** Consciousness exists in varying degrees; simple entities have minimal experience, while complex systems (like the brain) possess rich and complete consciousness.

**Key Thinkers and History:** This concept originated in ancient Greek philosophy (Thales, Plato) and Eastern traditions. Philosophers such as Galen Strawson and Philip Goff revived it in contemporary philosophy. It is also associated with Spinoza, Leibniz (Monads), Schopenhauer, and William James.

**How It Works (Proposed Mechanism):** Elementary particles possess intrinsic, non-material, empirical properties alongside their physical properties (mass, charge). These simple experiences combine, or integrate, to form the complex consciousness we know.

**The Problem of Composition:** How do countless microscopic consciousnesses combine to form a unified and complex consciousness (like human consciousness)?

**Unity of Consciousness vs. Other Views:** Pantheism says that everything is God; while monism says that everything has a mind.

**Not Dualistic:** It avoids the divide between mind and matter by making them two sides of the same fundamental truth.

**Not Idealistic:** It doesn't claim that consciousness is the only reality, but rather an essential part of it.

**Comprehensive Awareness:** Comprehensive awareness is the philosophical view that mind or consciousness is a fundamental and universal feature of reality, present in everything, from elementary particles to complex organisms, and not something that only vaguely appears in advanced minds. This suggests that everything has some form of subjective experience, where simpler forms in basic matter combine to form the richer consciousness we experience, offering a possible solution to the "hard problem" of consciousness by avoiding the idea that inert matter creates experience out of nothing.

In philosophy, holistic consciousness is an existential and reflective awareness that transcends direct self-knowledge to encompass a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the self, others, and the world. It is a state of heightened awareness that allows individuals to perceive their actions, feelings, and social context. Philosophers connect self-awareness with the formation of collective consciousness through existential experience.

### **Key Dimensions of the Comprehensive Philosophy of Consciousness:**

**Consciousness as Substance and Matter:** The philosopher Descartes considered consciousness to be the "thinking substance" that distinguishes humankind, a direct knowledge of the self by itself.

**Social Existence Determines Consciousness:** Marx argued that consciousness arises from relations of production; social existence shapes people's consciousness, not the other way around.

**Consciousness and the Other (Existentialism):** Sartre linked consciousness to the other, asserting that the other's gaze upon us is what makes us conscious of ourselves as an object.

**The Relationship Between the Self and the World:** Merleau-Ponty explained that consciousness gives the world its meaning, and that there is a dialectical relationship where the self cannot represent itself without projecting itself onto the world.

**Self-Consciousness and Reflective Consciousness:** This is divided into spontaneous (daily, automatic) consciousness and reflective consciousness (deep thinking).

**Consciousness as a Moral Phenomenon:** It is viewed as the capacity to interact with values, perceive beauty, morality, and the meaning of things.

Historically, consciousness as a philosophical subject has evolved from ancient Eastern thought through Greece to the modern and contemporary era, where it has come to be viewed as an enigma.

### **Monotheism and Immanentist Pantheism:**

We observe a fundamental contrast between the concepts of monotheism and immanentist pantheism. Monotheism is based on the belief in one God, omnipotent and just, independent of nature, history, and humanity, and distinct from creation and events. He is the center of the universe, giving it coherence and granting humanity the capacity for choice and transcendence over materialism. Immanentist pantheism, on the other hand, is a conception that sees God as immanent within nature, humanity, and history, such that the center of the universe becomes latent within Him. Thus, monotheism is the antithesis of immanentist pantheism.

Immanentist pantheism is closely linked to comprehensive secularism, representing a monistic, materialistic worldview that explains the

universe through its inherent laws, disregarding any transcendent laws. The rise of immanentist pantheism leads to the dominance of materialistic interpretations and increased secularization and rationalization.

The history of Western philosophy can be read as a struggle between a theistic worldview that believes in the transcendence of God and humanity over nature, and an immanentist, materialistic worldview that sees God as inherent in nature and humanity as a part of it, incapable of transcending it. Within immanentist pantheism itself, a conflict arises between egocentrism (the deification of humanity) and object-centeredness (the deification of the universe).

As for the difference between immanence, union, and pantheism, immanence and union presuppose a divine existence that inhabits or unites with creation, while pantheism negates the distinction between creator and creation, considering God to be creation and creation to be God.

**Monism:** derived from the Greek word *monos* (singular/unique), is the philosophical view that all reality consists of a single, unified essence, principle, or substance, reducing complex phenomena to a single fundamental entity. It contrasts with dualism (two essences) and pluralism (multiple), aiming to explain the unity underlying existence. Its most prominent forms are materialist monism (everything is material) and idealist monism (everything is mental).

Materialist/physical monism holds that matter is the only thing that exists, and that the mind is merely a product of the brain's physical activity. Monism does not present a mind-body problem; it sees mind and body not as separate entities, but as two sides of the same coin, a single essence.

Idealist monism, on the other hand, views reality as essentially mental, and the material world as merely a projection of consciousness.

Neutral monism, however, is the view that the fundamental essence is neither mental nor material in its essence, but rather a third, neutral essence.

## **Philosophy of Space and Time**

The philosophy of space and time explores the fundamental nature, existence, and structure of these dimensions, questioning whether they are absolute containers, relational concepts, or mental frameworks. Key debates include: eternity versus presentism (only the present is real), the question of past/future reality, essentialism versus relationality (the independent existence of time), and the impact of relativity on their integration into a dynamic four-dimensional space-time (spacetime).

### **Key Aspects of the Philosophy of Space and Time:**

**The Nature of Time (Presentism versus Eternity):** Presentism holds that only the present is real, while eternity (or a "static universe") suggests that all points in time (past, present, and future) are equally real, similar to positions in space.

**Space: Absolute versus Relational:** Newton championed absolute space (a container independent of objects), while Leibniz proposed a relational view, where space is simply a spatial relationship between objects.

**Spacetime and Relativity:** Einstein's theory of relativity unified three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time into four-

dimensional spacetime, a unified fabric that curves under the influence of gravity. This means that time is not universal; it can travel at different speeds depending on speed and gravity.

**Structure:** A fundamental question is whether space and time are continuous (infinitely divisible) or discrete (composed of small parts).

**The Flow of Time:** Philosophy explores why we perceive time as moving forward, a concept sometimes considered a subjective experience rather than an objective physical property.

**The Blank Slate:** The idea that humans are born without innate mental content, innate knowledge, or predetermined traits, and that their personality and intelligence are entirely shaped by experience, environment, and education. This perspective, popularized by the philosopher John Locke, places greater emphasis on "education" than on "nature." Although Aristotle mentioned it, it was the 17th-century philosopher John Locke who solidified it. The mind at birth is a "blank slate" or white page. The basic principle: all knowledge is acquired through perception and sensory experience.

Modern criticism of this theory: Despite its influence in psychology and philosophy, modern science indicates that the mind is not born completely blank, as heredity and biology significantly influence human behavior and development. The blank slate theory is often compared to the idea of predetermined, innate characteristics.



# **Chapter One**

**Between Eternity (Sarmad), Perpetuality (Azal), and Time  
(zaman)**



## Chapter One

### **Between Eternity (Sarmad), Perpetuality (Azal), and Time (zaman)**

Distinguishing between eternity, beginningless, and time is a pivotal issue in understanding the relationship between God and existence. Many theological and philosophical problems have arisen from confusing these concepts, or from projecting concepts of time onto that which transcends it, or from attempting to conceive of the eternity using the limited tools of temporal reason.

I will not define time as something that passes, but rather as a method of ordering change. I will not treat science as an adversary to revelation, but rather as a descriptive path, which is countered by a path of meaning. I will not reduce the text to metaphor, nor impose a preconceived philosophy upon it.

#### **1. Eternity, Perpetuity, and Beginningless**

Three seemingly similar but semantically distinct terms are used in Islamic tradition:

**Beginningless:** the negation of a beginning, that is, that which cannot be conceived as having a beginning.

Perpetuity: the negation of an end, that is, that which cannot be conceived as having an end.

Eternity: existence that is not subject to time at all; it has neither beginning nor end, and neither before nor after applies to it.

Eternity is not a length of time, but rather a transcendence of time itself. If time is a series of successive moments, then eternity is a complete, indivisible, and ungradual presence. Hence, describing God as the Ever-Living (Al-Hay), the Self-Subsisting (Al Qayyoom), the First (A Awal), and the Last (Al Akher) is not a temporal description, but rather a description of an existence not governed by the concepts of succession and change:

“He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden.” (Al-Hadid 57:3) This verse does not place God within the timeline, but rather elevates Him above it, encompassing it from all sides.

## **2. Time as a characteristic of existence, not a framework for God.**

Views on time vary. In the Qur’anic perspective, time is not an independent substance, but rather a characteristic of the created world. Night and day, succession, and change are all signs of existence, not attributes of the Divine Essence. ﴿ He created the heavens and the earth in truth. He wraps the night around the day and wraps the day around the night, and He has subjected the sun and the moon, each running [its course] for a specified term. Unquestionably, He is the Exalted in Might, the Perpetual Forgiver﴾. (Az-Zumar 39:5)

﴿ Every day He is engaged in some affair﴾ (Ar-Rahman 55:29)

﴿ Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, is able to create the like of them? And He appointed for them a term about which there is no doubt, but the wrongdoers refused except disbelief﴾. (Al-Isra: 99)

﴿ The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a Day the measure of which is fifty thousand years﴾. (Al-Ma'arij: 4)

﴿ And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in truth. And the Day He says, "Be," and it is. His word is the truth. And His is the dominion on the Day the Trumpet is blown. [He is] the Knower of the unseen. And the testimony. And He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware﴾. (Al-An'am 6:73)

﴿ Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself upon the Throne. He covers the night with the day, [the night] pursuing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds﴾. (Al-A'raf 7:54)

These verses do not describe a change in the essence of Allah, but rather describe Divine action is renewed in existence. Change is a reality in the world, not in the absolute. Thus, time is not a vessel prior to creation, but rather a consequence of creation itself. Creation does not occur within a pre-existing timeframe; rather, time is born with creation as a pattern of existence.

This view aligns with modern science. The beginning of time is linked to the emergence of space with the Big Bang approximately 13.8 billion years ago. It is not absolute, as Newton believed, but a fourth, relative dimension that merges with the three spatial dimensions to form

"spacetime." It is affected by speed and gravity. Einstein's theory of relativity demonstrated that time slows down as speed increases, making it a flexible fabric rather than a static flow. It is part of a mental and perceptual experience linked to movement and consciousness. Within the physics of fundamentals and cosmology, there are approaches that question time as a primary entity, treating it instead as a relationship between events/emerging quanta (quantum mechanics). Some physicists even question its fundamental nature, considering it merely a connection between events or a perceptual illusion.

Leibniz, however, spoke of time as a relation, not a substance (Relational Time). Time is not something existing in itself, but rather a measure of change and a consciousness of transition from one state to another. Things move, and the previous position that we remember is what we interpret as time. Without movement, change, and memory, there is no such thing as "before" and "after."

For Husserl and Bergson, time is a product of consciousness and memory (phenomenologically speaking), and time is an internal experience: where memory equals the past, attention equals the present, and expectation equals the future. Without consciousness, there is no "time" in the sense we know it but rather change without a narrative.

Albert Einstein likened time to a "stubborn illusion" in a condolence letter related to Michel Bessot, offering solace to the bereaved wife by suggesting that the distinction between past, present, and future is merely a persistent "stubborn illusion." It's as if he wanted to convey that Bessot might still be alive, albeit in a slightly different spacetime coordinate system. I don't know if this theoretical consolation resonated with the wife's heart and mind! This quote is important to

mention as a philosophical context within the framework of relativity, not as proof of the "non-existence of time."

Einstein is also credited with saying, "Nothing begins until something begins to move." However, this doesn't imply that time is unreal; rather, it removes the attribute of "absolute" from time and integrates it with spacetime into a fixed "cosmic block."

As for Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, he believed that time is created and limited, not eternal, as it is linked to the existence and movement of the world. For Al-Ghazali, time is a "new creation" in which the believer awakens to do good. He considers the present to be the only truly available time, thus necessitating its utilization and vigilance against neglecting its lessons.

Al-Ghazali's concept of time can be summarized in the following points:

-The creation of time and the denial of eternity: Al-Ghazali opposed the philosophers who asserted the eternity of the world and its time, emphasizing that time has a beginning (creation).

-Time is an event by the will of God: He believes that God created time along with the creation of the world, and that God's eternal will determines the time of occurrence. Therefore, the cotton not burning, for example, is not due to the absence of a natural cause, but rather because God is the Creator and Agent of the thing, not nature or inanimate objects.

-The present moment is reality: Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of "living within the limits of your day," considering each new day an

opportunity to be seized for obedience, while everything else is either past and gone or a future shrouded in the unseen.

-Time as a lesson: He sees time as a means of destroying civilizations and eroding humanity, and as an opportunity to seize life, while the heedless one lets time pass without benefit.

Al-Ghazali's vision is based on the Ash'ari theological perspective, which rejects necessary causality between things and makes every event directly linked to God's creation.

For Ibn Arabi, the concept of time is an integral part of his Sufi worldview. He sees it as something nonexistent or "illusory," lacking independent, objective existence. Rather, it is a "fluid space" resulting from the succession of movement and the renewal of archetypes in the Preserved Tablet (al-Lawh al-Mahfouz), and it is closely linked to the "unity of existence" and the manifestations of Truth.

One of the most important pillars of Ibn Arabi's concept of time is the inseparability of time and space: time is considered fluid space, and space is frozen time, both being manifestations of Truth. Time, as "renewing time," is the measure based on the rotation of celestial bodies (the heavens); it is not absolute but relative, and it disappears when movement ceases. Ibn Arabi believed that the universe is renewed every moment, and time is the narrative of this continuous renewal of existence within the "Universal Soul," which he termed "continuous creation." He distinguished between types of days, including original days (related to existential speed) and witnessed days, referring to "the Day of the Lord" and "the Day of the Ascending Pathways" (a thousand years/fifty thousand years). The concept of manifestation and time is expressed as the emergence of existence

through the continuous writing by the First Intellect on the Preserved Tablet, and this is time.

Ibn Sina defined time as "the measure of motion," inseparable from it, so time without motion is inconceivable. For him, time is a measure of the unstable state (motion), a means of measuring change in the universe, and a psychological and philosophical extension connected to the existence of the world. He linked motion, space, and time in his Peripatetic<sup>1</sup> natural philosophy.

Among Ibn Sina's most prominent concepts of time is the concept of the measure of change. He defines time as a measure of motion, specifically the number of movements in respect of "before" and "after", which is how change in things is perceived. Ibn Sina emphasizes the psychological aspect, linking the perception of time to the soul. He cites the story of the People of the Cave to illustrate that the perception of time depends on movement and sensory experiences, and how our psychological perception of time can contract or expand. For Ibn Sina, time is an integral part of the natural world and the understanding of existence, distinct from stillness, as there is no time in a static universe.

It is worth highlighting here the Peripatetic definition of time in general: time is the measure of motion in terms of what precedes and follows; it does not exist independently but is dependent on matter and its motion. Time is not a temporal creation but rather a "creator" that

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<sup>1</sup> The Peripatetic school was an ancient Greek philosophical school founded by Aristotle in Athens (335 BCE). It employed a rational, deductive method and was named after Aristotle's teaching style, as he circled the Lyceum, a covered portico. It focused on the natural sciences, logic, and metaphysics, and was later adopted and developed by Muslim scholars (Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Rushd), becoming a cornerstone of Islamic philosophy.

progresses by its "essence" (causality), not by duration. Time is considered a measure of change, and all movement in the universe is linked to a First Mover.

The following is a detailed explanation of the Peripatetic concept of time:

-Time and Motion: There is no time without motion; motion is what creates the awareness of time.

-The Relationship between "before" and "after": Time is the way we arrange events (past, present, future) based on the motion of objects.

-Time as "Now": The present or "now" is the only real, material point in time, while the past and future are mental concepts.

-The Beginningless Time: Ibn Sina believed that time has no beginning; otherwise, there would be a time prior to the beginning of time, which Peripatetic logic rejects, considering it an eternal creation.

-Time and Spirit: In Islamic Peripatetic philosophy, time is seen as linked to matter, while spirits may exist outside the realm of this material time.

This concept is characterized by a rigorous rational and deductive approach, distinguishing itself from other cosmological explanations by its focus on physics and logic to explain change.

The philosophy of metaphysics and the philosophy of space and time are considered the true essence of the concept of time, as they study its ontological nature—whether it is real, objective, or imaginary—and its independent existence or its relation to motion. The most

prominent conceptions include Aristotle's (time as a measure of motion), Kant's (time as a mental framework), and relational time (time as it relates to events).

**Aristotelian Philosophy (Relational Realism):** As mentioned earlier, Aristotle considers time to be "a measure of motion in terms of what is prior and subsequent," meaning that there is no time without motion or change.

**Kantian Philosophy (Transcendental Idealism):** Kant sees time not as something external, but rather as an "a priori forms which are innate, subjective structures of human cognition—specifically space, time, and the categories of understanding—that exist independently of experience", (a priori form, intuition, that is, a mental framework imposed by the mind to organize experience, and a real existence within our consciousness.) Modern metaphysical philosophy focuses on the "essence of time" (as seen in the later works of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi) and debates whether time exists independently of the mind (objectively) or is merely an imaginary construct.

Existential philosophy focuses on time as a real existence linked to Becoming; time destroys things as a means of their Becoming and Existence.

Time in the philosophy of science and physics connects the reality of time in physics (such as the theory of relativity, which considers it a fourth dimension) with its philosophical essence as a tool for ordering events.

In short, the study of "the philosophy of time" as part of metaphysics is the core that explores the "reality" of time from different

perspectives: Aristotelian (kinetic), Kantian (mental), or relational (related to existence).

One of the most important definitions of time is that of the French philosopher Henri Bergson. For him, time is synonymous with "duration" (*La durée*), which is lived and internal time that flows continuously and is indivisible, unlike scientific time measured by clocks, which Bergson considered spatial and illusory. Bergson emphasized the qualitative nature of time, viewing it as a vital flow intertwined with consciousness.

Key points of Bergson's philosophy of time:

-Duration (*La durée*): Real time is not the sum of separate moments, but rather a continuous, interconnected, and overlapping flow where the past dissolves into the present.

-Critique of scientific time: Bergson argues that clocks measure "space," not time. They divide time into separate moments (seconds and minutes), transforming time into a spatial line, which distorts its flowing reality.

-Personal (subjective) time: Duration is personal, with its rhythms varying from one individual to another. It is linked to our consciousness and psychological states, while scientific time is uniform and mechanical. Memory and the Past: Bergson considers memory the means by which the past remains in the present, where time flows as an indivisible whole, not as isolated moments.

-Intuition: Duration is perceived through direct "intuition," not through rational analysis, which freezes movement.

Bergson's philosophy included a confrontation with Einstein, as Bergson considered "Einstein's time" to be the time of clocks (physics), while his own time is the time of consciousness and life (metaphysics).

The concept of time in Saint Augustine's "Confessions" is considered a revolutionary subjective view, where time is a divine creation that did not exist "before" creation, and is merely an "extension" of the human soul (*Distentio animi*), not an external material reality. The past and future do not exist; time is concentrated in the "present," which we perceive through memory, attention, and anticipation.

Augustine's key ideas about time:

-Time as a subjective experience: Augustine views time as a measure of what we perceive in our consciousness, an impression left by the past (memory) and the future (expectation) on the present.

-The creation of time: Time is created along with the universe, and God could not have created anything "before" time because God is outside of time in eternity.

-God's eternity versus the temporality of creation: Augustine sees changing time as a characteristic of creation, while God is the eternal and everlasting "now."

-The Inability to Define Time: His famous phrase is: "What is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I wish to explain it to someone, I do not know."

Augustine linked time to the history of salvation, where time moves toward an ultimate goal: the triumph of the divine city over the earthly one.

In Martin Heidegger's philosophy, particularly in his book "Being and Time" (1927), time is considered a fundamental condition of Being (Dasein), not merely a physical measurement. Heidegger connects human existence to "temporality," where the past is a point of reference, the present is engagement, and the future is possibility. He argues that understanding Being requires recognizing human finitude and mortality.

The most prominent dimensions of time in Heidegger's work:

-Being and Time (Sein und Zeit): This is considered his seminal work, in which he analyzes human existence, considering "being" to be inextricably linked to the concept of time, where being-in-the-world is temporal being.

-Time-structure/Temporalization: Time is not external, but rather an internal structure of Dasein<sup>2</sup> "being-there" (*da* = there; *sein* = being), which is timed in its own existence; that is, humanity itself is time.

- Finite Temporality: Heidegger asserts that "time is inherently finite," and that awareness of this finitude (death) is what gives existence its true and authentic meaning.

The Three Dimensions (Being as Temporality):

-The Future: Represents possibility and openness to what will be.

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<sup>2</sup> Dasein is a central concept in Martin Heidegger's existential philosophy, literally meaning "being-there" or "presence." It refers to the human being as a conscious existence, questioning its own being and constructing its meaning through engagement with the world and time. Dasein is not merely a biological being, but a being-in-the-world that possesses the potential for authenticity or inauthenticity.

-The Past: Not merely a passing away, but the "reference point" upon which humanity constructs its identity.

-The Present: Not a static moment, but the realm of action and engagement with the world.

Heidegger revolutionized his philosophy, transforming the question of Being from an abstract, metaphysical question into an existential one linked to time and lived reality.

Albert Einstein revolutionized the concept of time through his two theories of Relativity (Special and General), transforming it from an absolute quantity into a fourth, relative dimension intertwined with space in a single fabric called "spacetime." For Einstein, time slows down with high speeds (time dilation) and is distorted by gravity. Therefore, there is no absolute "now" for the universe, but rather a variable time that depends on the observer and their speed.

Key concepts of time according to Einstein:

-Spacetime: Einstein combined the three spatial dimensions with time into a single four-dimensional entity, where space and time cannot be separated.

-Time Dilation: Time slows down for an object moving at a speed close to the speed of light compared to a stationary object.

-General Relativity and Gravity: Massive objects (such as stars and planets) distort the fabric of spacetime, and time slows down further as the object's mass increases or as it approaches strong gravity.

-Absolute Speed of Light: The constancy of the speed of light led to the understanding that time and space are relative quantities, not absolute as previously believed.

-Rejection of Absolute Time: There is no single "now" for the entire universe; What we see of distant planets is their past, not their present.

This concept makes time a flexible quantity that contracts and expands, influenced by speed and gravity.

## **In the Holy Quran**

Time is considered a divine creation, a great blessing, a vessel for deeds, and a field of testing, not merely a passing moment. The Quran connects astronomical phenomena (the sun, the moon, night, and day) with time, emphasizing its value, swearing by it to highlight its greatness, and pointing to the importance of utilizing it, while distinguishing between the limited time of this world and the eternal time of the Hereafter. The Significance and Concepts of Time in the Holy Quran:

**Time as a Divine Sign:** The alternation of night and day is considered one of God's cosmic signs, demonstrating His power and wisdom. (And He has subjected for you the sun and the moon, constant in their courses, and He has subjected for you the night and the day. And He has given you from all that you asked of Him. And if you should count the favors of God, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is ever unjust and ungrateful.) [Ibrahim 33-34]

**Time as a Field of Testing:** This worldly life is a defined period of time and a field of trial and action, in which the destinies of humankind are determined. (He who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.) [Al-Mulk 2] (And We dispersed them throughout the earth as nations. Among them were the righteous, and among them were those less than that. And We tested them with good and bad [times] that perhaps they would return [to Us].) [Al-A'raf 168]

**Time is created and predetermined:** Time is entirely subject to the will of God, and every movement and change defines time. And it is He who has made the night and the day alternate for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude. (Al-Furqan 25:62) It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outpace the day. Each floats in an orbit. (Ya-Sin 36:40)

**Oaths by Time:** God Almighty swears by parts of time (such as: the afternoon, the night, the morning, and the dawn) to emphasize its sanctity and importance. (By the morning brightness, and by the night when it covers with darkness, it has not forsaken you) Your Lord has not become displeased (Ad-Duha: 1-3)

**Words Denoting Time:** The Quran does not use the word "time" frequently, but rather uses words that denote time such as (day, hour, moment, instant, time, term, eternity). {And they say, "There is nothing but our worldly life; we die and we live, and nothing destroys us except time." And they have no knowledge of that; they are only assuming.} (Al-Jathiyah: 24)

Time in this world and the Hereafter: The time of this world is limited, while the Hereafter is the abode of permanence and eternity, where the perception and reckoning of time differ.

### 3. Creation: From Nothingness or from Potentiality?

It is common in rhetoric to say that God created the world "from nothingness." However, reflection on the Qur'anic text reveals that the concept of "nothingness" (al a'dam) is almost entirely absent as an explicit philosophical concept. The Qur'an uses: creation, origination, establishment, creativity, and the command (Be, and it is), and does not use the term "nothingness" as the opposite of existence.

﴿ God is the Creator of all things. ﴾

﴿ He created the heavens and the earth in truth. ﴾

﴿ Every day He is engaged in some affair. ﴾

﴿ And the heaven We constructed with might, and indeed, We are expanding it. ﴾

﴿ And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne was upon the water - that He might test you [as to] which of you is best in deed. And if you say, "Indeed, you will be resurrected after death," they will surely say... Those who disbelieve say, "This is nothing but clear magic." ﴾ Hud 7

﴿ Then He directed Himself to the heaven while it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, "Come [into being], willingly or by compulsion." They said, "We have come willingly." ﴾ 41:11

﴿ Are you more difficult to create, or is the heaven that He constructed? He raised its height, and He has equally ordered it. Its night He covers with darkness, and its forenoon He brings out (with

light). And after that He spread the earth. And brought forth therefrom its water and its pasture. And the mountains He has fixed firmly. (To be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle. ﴿ Al Nazia'at 32-37

This opens a different horizon for understanding creation, not as an event that occurred at a specific moment in time and then ended, but as an ongoing process and a constant renewal of existence. Creation is not a transition from “nothing” to “something,” but a transition from potentiality to actuality, from knowledge to manifestation, and from word to form.

#### **4. Eternal Knowledge and Temporal Manifestation**

If God is eternal, and His knowledge encompasses all things, then all of existence is present in His knowledge in a timeless way. However, this presence does not mean that things actually exist in time, but rather that they are known before they come into being. Herein lies the difference between existence in knowledge and existence in time. A thing may be eternal in knowledge but temporal in existence.

God's knowledge is not "expectation" within time (because expectation is inherently time), but rather a timeless encompassment. This encompassing knowledge is not necessarily equivalent to the "compulsion of will" in humans, because compulsion is one thing, and the revelation of the known in encompassing knowledge is another. "We are successive" because our consciousness is limited and perceives existence from within; and "He is all present" because His presence is not inherently within succession.

This distinction liberates us from the apparent contradiction between the eternal and the temporal. Time does not negate eternity; rather, it is one form of manifestation within the world of creation. (It is not right that presence in God's knowledge from eternity be equal to nothingness or non-existence!).

(Allah knows what every female carries, and what increases and decreases in the wombs. Everything with Him is according to a measure. The Knower of the Invisible and the Visible—the Grand, the Exalted. It is the same; whether one of you conceals his speech or declares it; whether he goes into hiding by night, or goes out by day. He has a succession—in front of him, and behind him—protecting him by Allah's command. Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves. And if Allah wills any hardship for a people, there is no repelling it. And apart from Him, they have no protector.) Al Ra'a'd 8-11

## 5. Time, Resurrection, and the Hereafter

The nature of time undergoes a radical transformation in the Qur'anic discourse when discussing the Hereafter:

❖ The Day We will fold (*natwi*)<sup>3</sup> the heaven like the folding of a scroll for writings. ❖ Qur'an 14:104.

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<sup>3</sup> In Arabic, the word '*tawa*' means "to fold", but also it connotes meanings: 'be past'; elapse; wear; of time; go by; be over; move lightly, softly, rapidly.

﴿ [It will be] on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well], and all creatures will come out before Allah, the One, the Prevailing. ﴾ Qur'an 14:48

Time here is not a familiar physical time, but a different existential time. The folding of the heavens is not merely a spatial end, but the end of one mode of existence and the beginning of another. This confirms that time is not absolute, but relative, linked to the nature of the world in which it unfolds: ﴿ And indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count. ﴾ Qur'an 22:47

## 6. Towards a Synthetic Vision

Through this distinction between the eternal and the temporal, knowledge and manifestation, possibility and determination, we can understand creation not as a rupture between God and the world, nor as a direct extension of the divine self, but rather as a continuous relationship between the absolute and the relative.

Existence is sustained by God, encompassed by His knowledge, manifested by His command, changing in its forms, and constant in its essence.

This understanding opens the door to the question of cosmic consciousness: If existence is sustained by God, encompassed by His knowledge, and renewed by His command, is it a silent existence, or an existence imbued with meaning? Is perception limited to humankind alone, or does the universe itself possess a mode of presence and response?

These questions will lead us in the following chapter to the concept of the universality of consciousness and to a reconsideration of humanity's place within a universe that is not inanimate matter, but rather a living arena of the relationship between Creator and creation.

## **Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter does not aim to definitively resolve the question of creation or time, but rather to establish a conceptual framework that liberates the discussion from the confusion between the eternal and the temporal. When we understand that God is not contained within time, and that creation is not merely a past moment, it becomes possible to consider the Qur'an, consciousness, and existence as manifestations of a meaning broader than the categories of beginning and end.

From this perspective, the real question arises: Is consciousness a local phenomenon within humanity, or a universal characteristic that permeates all of existence? This is what we will explore in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The Holism of Consciousness: From Humanity to Existence**



## Chapter Two

### The Holism of Consciousness: From Humanity to Existence

In this chapter, I borrowed the concept of “Logos”—as it appeared in Greek and Stoic philosophy—as the name for a simple idea: that the world is not a deafening chaos, but rather comprehensible, and that behind phenomena lies an order that makes meaning possible. However, this book does not adopt Logos as an alternative frame of reference, but rather uses it as a comparative mirror, then returns it to its Qur’anic lexicon: to the “command” by which existence comes into being, to the “truth” by which it is upheld, to the “balance” by which relationships are balanced, and to the “Book” which reads existence as signs. If Logos in philosophy is a “universal intellect” that weaves order, then the Qur’an presents a deeper order: an order that is not content with mathematical regularity, but adds the semantic dimension—that is, the world being a “place of discourse” and presence, not merely a stage for action.

Logos and consciousness represent two fundamental and interconnected aspects of reality. Logos is the objective, universal principle of rational structure, order, and meaning, while consciousness is the internal, subjective, and experiential awareness that perceives or embodies this structure. Logos is often viewed as the divine or cosmic intelligence that guides nature, while consciousness is the active, witnessing, and personal function.

-Logos: The structure of reality, referring to the "rational principle" that moves and organizes the universe, a "hidden harmony," that structures reality and connects human reason to the natural world. It is

a definition derived from Greek philosophy (especially Stoicism). Logos is often equated with "the Word," the cosmic order, and the underlying logic that makes the universe comprehensible. It is the active force that separates and structures, allowing for differentiation, logic, and meaning. In psychology, logos is associated with masculinity, "solarity," or conscious thought.

-Consciousness: The internal, subjective experience of being and observation. It is a personal function, or "internal witness," that enables us to perceive, interpret, and adapt to the environment. It acts as a recurring loop capable of tracing interconnectedness and organizing structure. While logos represents the framework, consciousness is the process by which this framework is perceived and understood.

The main differences and intersections between logos and consciousness lie in the distinction between the objective and the subjective: logos is the objective order; consciousness is the subjective experience. Then comes the concept of "structural interaction," where consciousness uses or works with logos to understand the world, suggesting that they are two sides of the same coin. In some views, logos and consciousness are integrated to produce the highest forms of consciousness by balancing the organized and rational logos with eros (emotional and associative energy). From an evolutionary perspective, some modern perspectives view logos as the "recurring witness" that allows the conscious system to adapt and persist.

In short, logos provides the rules of the game, while consciousness is the player who navigates them.

When discussing pantheism/immanentism, the focus shifts to the convergence of logos, monism, and consciousness. This convergence offers a worldview in which the universe is not merely matter, but an

intelligent, coherent, and interconnected system. This philosophical framework posits that the universe is a living, divine entity (pantheism), governed by a rational principle or universal mind (the Logos), of which human consciousness is a part or expression. The Stoics believed that "all is God," meaning that God and the universe are one. Reality is a single, integrated system, and the universe is intelligent. The Logos is the "spirit" of existence, a divine force that permeates and governs everything, thus establishing pantheism. This unity is not merely a fixed law, but an active, driving force (like fire or the soul) that propels growth and connects all parts of the universe.

Therefore, unlike personal, transcendent deities, the pantheistic God is impersonal, fully rooted in and interconnected with the world. Because all things are part of this single system, all things are interconnected manifestations of God.

### **Consciousness as Cosmic and Individual Consciousness**

-Cosmic Consciousness: Many pantheists and Stoics view the universe not as "inanimate matter," but as a conscious and perceiving entity. Humanity as Self-Awareness: A key perspective is that humanity is the "self-conscious universe." Individual consciousness is seen as a part or "branch" of the cosmic mind (Logos).

-Pan-consciousness/Pan-being: Some pan-monistic views align with pan-consciousness, the idea that consciousness is an essential property of matter, and that the universe operates as a conscious "top-down" entity.

## **Integration: The Living, Thinking Universe**

-Stoic Perspective: Marcus Aurelius and other Stoics saw the human mind as part of the cosmic mind (*Zeus/Logos*). Our goal is to align our individual consciousness with the rational flow of the universe.

-Modern Synthesis: Modern pan-monism is often blended with scientific naturalism, where the "Logos" is seen as the inherent order discovered through science (mathematics, physics), and consciousness as an emerging property of the complex and ordered universe.

-Key Analogy: The relationship is often described as being like the neurons in a giant, conscious body (the universe). In short, this triad describes a self-sufficient, rational (*Logos*), divine (*Pantheism*), and conscious (*Consciousness*) universe, where the individual finds meaning through realizing his role within the whole.

This book adopts the idea of a holistic consciousness without pantheism or immanentism, considering God as transcendent to the universe and creation, yet the source of consciousness. This view is closer to panentheism than to monism/pantheism. Our research here focuses on the evidence for the holistic nature of consciousness in the Qur'anic verses.

{So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down prostrating yourselves before him.} (*Al-Hijr 15:29*)

{Then He fashioned him and breathed into him of His spirit and made for you hearing, sight, and hearts. Little are you grateful.} (*As-Sajdah 32:9*)

{And Mary, the daughter of Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her of Our spirit, and she believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures and was among the devoutly obedient.} Prohibition: 12.

{And she who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her [through Our angel] from Our spirit, and We made her and her son a sign for the worlds.} (Al-Anbiya: 91)

(I create for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, then I breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by permission of Allah.) (Al Imran: 49)

(And when you create out of clay the likeness of a bird by My permission, then you breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by My permission.) (Al-Ma'idah) 110

“The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them glorify Him. And there is not a thing that doesn't glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving.” (Al-Isra: 44)

“And He taught Adam all the names, then presented them to the angels and said, ‘Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.’ They said, ‘Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have revealed to us.’” You have taught us nothing. Indeed, You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. He said, “O Adam, inform them of their names.” And when he had informed them of their names, He said, “Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you conceal.” (Al-Baqarah 2:31-33)

“Read in the name of your Lord<sup>2</sup> Who created, created man from a clot of congealed blood. Read: and your Lord is Most Generous, Who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know”. (96:1-5)

“And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks.” (An-Nahl 78) (*a blank slate*).

“So set your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah with which He has created mankind. There is no altering the creation of God. That is the correct religion, but most people do not know.” (Ar-Rum 30)

Throughout history, the concept of consciousness has been linked to humankind as the rational, conscious being capable of thought and reflection. This conception has become entrenched in modern philosophy and science, to the point that consciousness is often defined as a product of the brain or a higher function of the nervous system. However, this confinement of consciousness to humans alone raises profound questions when we read the Qur’an comprehensively. We find that the Qur’an attributes cognitive and volitional actions to non-human entities: to the heavens and the earth, to the mountains and trees, to birds and animals, and indeed to the entire universe.

Are we dealing with a poetic metaphor? Or are we encountering a different conception of consciousness as an existential characteristic that cannot be reduced to the human mind?

What is consciousness, and what is the role of the brain and the heart?

The Holy Qur'an does not explicitly mention the "brain" using its physical term. I do not know why the Qur'an does not refer to it as the centre of conscious activity and thought, except for the traditional interpretations which state that the Qur'anic discourse focuses on spiritual and cognitive functions (such as contemplation, reasoning, and faith) that are usually attributed to the "heart" in the Qur'anic context, considering it the centre of the mind, spirit, and reflection, and not merely an organ for pumping blood. Furthermore, the Qur'an addresses the conscience and insight, and the heart is the seat of tranquillity and guidance.

The reasons can be summarized in the following points:

The heart is the seat of reasoning: The Qur'an indicates that "reasoning" comes from the heart, as in the verse: {Have they not travelled through the land so that they may have hearts by which to reason?} Surah Al-Hajj: 46.

The spiritual versus the physical function: The Qur'an focuses on the heart as the source of emotions and faith (faith resides in the heart), while the brain (not mentioned in the Qur'an) is a physical organ responsible for bodily functions, making the heart more expressive of the spiritual and faith-based aspect.

The universality of the concept: In the Qur'an, the heart refers to the centre of "intellect" in its comprehensive sense, encompassing human thought, insight, and spirit, not merely abstract logical reasoning.

The origin of intellect in the heart: Some commentators (such as Ibn al-Qayyim) state that the origin of intellect is in the heart, and its fruit is in the head (brain), illustrating a functional integration.

Thus, the Qur'an uses the "heart" as a symbol of perception, awareness, faith, and emotion, which transcends the purely biological function of the brain.

Ancients held varying views of the brain. While the ancient Egyptians considered the brain a superfluous organ to be removed during mummification (liquefied through the nose) because they believed the heart was the centre of emotion and intelligence, Greek philosophers like Aristotle considered it merely a "radiator" for cooling the blood. Galen later described it as the centre of thought, with early references to it in the Edwin Smith Medical Papyrus.

Here are the details of ancient civilizations' views on the brain:

**Ancient Egypt:** The brain was considered unimportant and was removed through the nose using a hook, or by "liquefying" it and removing it for mummification, due to the belief that the heart was the centre of intelligence and emotion.

**Greeks and Romans:** The ancient Greeks' view of the brain evolved from considering it a secondary organ to the centre of perception. Alcmaeon of Croton (5th century BCE) proposed that the brain was the centre of intelligence and consciousness, and that it was connected to the body's extremities via canals (poroi). The Hellenistic period witnessed significant advancements, thanks to Herophilus of Chalcedon (3rd century BCE), who distinguished between the cerebrum, cerebellum, and ventricles. Erasistratus of Citium (3rd century BCE) conducted studies on brain and nerve functions, linking brain complexity to intelligence. Galen (170 CE), drawing on Greek anatomy, established the conclusion that the cerebrum (the "soft")

processes the senses, while the cerebellum (the "dense") controls the muscles, and he proposed the theory of "animal souls" residing in the ventricles.

Unlike Alcmaeon, Aristotle (335 BCE) believed that the heart was the centre of sensation and intelligence, and that the brain merely functioned as a radiator to cool the heart and blood—a view that influenced understanding for a considerable period.

In the Arab-Islamic culture, Arab and Muslim scholars revolutionized the understanding of the brain, transforming it from a mere "cranial stuffing" or secondary organ into a primary centre for perception, intelligence, and neurological functions. They developed brain anatomy, described neurological and psychological diseases, and contributed to the science of narcotic pharmacology and surgical anaesthesia, surpassing the theories of the ancient Greeks.

In his book "The Canon of Medicine," Ibn Sina (Avicenna) affirmed that the brain is the centre of the nervous system and the source of the senses and movement. He divided it anatomically into three main lobes or regions, each associated with different cognitive functions: the anterior lobe, which includes the common sense and imagination, where sensory information is gathered and stored; the middle lobe, which is responsible for thinking and idea (when the mind processes stored images); and the posterior lobe, which is dedicated to memory and retention. He described the cerebral membranes and ventricles, considering the brain a cold and moist organ and the cornerstone of psychological and mental functions. This made him a pioneer in linking anatomy to physiological functions. He discussed diseases such as stroke, epilepsy, paralysis, and amnesia, attributing them to an imbalance of humors of the body or compression of the ventricles. Ibn Sina's vision was distinguished by combining precise anatomical

observation with psychological philosophy, making the brain the supreme manager of human psychological and physical actions.

Ibn al-Nafis performed the first known dissection of the human brain, correcting the erroneous theories of Galen and Ibn Sina.

Ibn Zuhr (1072–1162 CE) provided a detailed description of neurological disorders, including intracranial thrombophlebitis and mediastinal germ cell tumours.

Ibn Rushd (1126–1198 CE) noted the existence of Parkinson's disease and the characteristics of retinal receptors, while Maimonides wrote about neurological and psychological disorders and rabies.

A theological and medical debate ensued regarding whether the intellect resided in the heart (as some suggested based on the Qur'an) or in the brain (as Ahmad ibn Hanbal stated, "The intellect is in the head"). "Lightness of mind" was linked to intelligence and mental processes.

### **Two levels of consciousness can be initially distinguished:**

Conceptual human consciousness: This is the consciousness associated with language, abstract thought, memory, planning, and moral judgment.

Existential or cognitive awareness: This is a mode of presence, response, and meaning that does not require conceptual thinking. Rather, it is based on the relationship of the individual to their surroundings and to the source of their existence.

This distinction allows us to understand awareness not as a binary state (existence or non-existence), but as a spectrum of varying degrees, differing among different beings. Humans are not the only beings who "exist" in existence, but rather the beings who are aware of their own presence and reflect upon it.

### **Consciousness as an existential characteristic, not a human privilege**

When the Qur'an attributes glorification, prostration, and obedience to the heavens, the earth, and all of creation, it is not speaking of blind, mechanical behaviour, but rather of a conscious, existential relationship with God:

“And there is nothing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification.”

“Each [of them] has already known its [way of] prayer and glorification.”

“And the stars and the trees prostrate.”

“Then He turned to the heaven when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, ‘Come [into being], willingly or unwillingly.’” They said, “We have come willingly.” Fussilat 41:11

“Do they not see what Allah has created of things whose shadows incline to the right and to the left, prostrating to Allah while they are humbled?” An-Nahl 16:48

“Indeed, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant.” Al-Ahzab 33:72

These verses presupposes perception, relationship, knowledge, and response. Even if this perception is unlike human perception, it is not negated simply because of its dissimilarity. A difference in degree does not negate the essence.

### **Between the Holism of Consciousness and the Unity of Being**

A common objection arises here: Does asserting the holism of consciousness mean that the universe is God? Or that God is the universe? The answer is no.

**The essential distinction in this book is between:**

**Pantheism/Monism:** Everything is God

**Holism of Consciousness/Panentheism:** Everything is in God without being God.

Cosmic consciousness does not mean immanentism, the indwelling of the divine essence in existence, nor its union with it. Rather, it means that existence is sustained by God, encompassed by His knowledge, dependent upon His command, and present before Him. Consciousness here is not an independent entity, but rather an effect of the relationship between the Creator and the created.

Consciousness can be conceived as layers or levels: Human consciousness: thought, language, contemplation, choice. Animal consciousness: perception, fear, desire, learning. Plant consciousness: response, growth, orientation. The consciousness of inanimate objects: order, obedience, and glorification. This does not imply equating these levels but rather acknowledging that existence is neither silent nor neutral but rather possesses a mode of presence before God.

To say that existence is “encompassed by consciousness” does not mean that beings possess a human intellect, nor that the universe is a single psychological entity, nor that the Creator dissolves into creation. The meaning here is more precise: the Qur’an describes the universe as existing within a relationship—a relationship of knowledge, response, and submission—that transcends blind mechanism. Mountains do not “think” like humans, but they are not outside of meaning; stars do not “speak” our language, but they are not outside of glorification. The criterion of this book is that the difference in modes of perception does not justify denying the origin of perception; because denying it does not stem from the text, but from a preconceived philosophical assumption that confines consciousness to the cerebral cortex alone. Thus, the universality of consciousness here becomes a result of a Qur’anic ontology that sees the world as existing by God—not as God—and surrounded by knowledge, will, and command that gives existence the character of “presence” and not the character of “silence”.

### **Consciousness and Meaning in the Universe**

If all existence is sustained by God, then the universe is not merely moving matter, but becomes a realm of meaning. Natural laws are not

interpreted simply as mathematical relationships, but as an order indicative of wisdom. Here, the question of consciousness intersects with the question of purpose: Is the universe merely blind chance? Or is it a meaningful structure?

The Qur'an answers this question in a non-reductionist way:

“We did not create the heavens and the earth and that between them in play.”

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves.”

A sign is not merely a physical phenomenon, but a meaningful symbol.

### **The universality of Consciousness and Modern Science**

The question of consciousness is no longer confined to philosophy and religion, but has become central to neurophysics, cosmology, and the philosophy of mind. Recent trends have emerged that view consciousness not as a mere incident in the universe, but as an integral part of its deep structure, as seen in panpsychism. However, this book does not adopt these theories as definitive truths, but rather as indications that reducing consciousness to the brain alone is no longer sufficient to explain the phenomenon of meaning and subjective experience (qualia).

Is consciousness an inseparable part of the fabric of the universe? The theory of pantheism suggests that consciousness is a fundamental aspect of reality. Galileo realized, more than 400 years ago, that while many phenomena are governed by mathematical laws, qualities such as

colour and taste exist only in consciousness. Modern science explains physical mechanisms, but it is unable to explain subjective experiences, which is known as the "hard problem" of consciousness.

Recent years have seen seminars and conferences discussing whether consciousness is a fundamental property of reality, like mass or charge. This idea, championed by thinkers such as Plato and Bertrand Russell, has garnered renewed attention, particularly after the publication of Philip Goff's "Galileo's Error" (2019), which revived the debate surrounding alternatives to materialism in explaining consciousness.

Panentheism offers an alternative explanation for how minds arise from matter, suggesting that consciousness has always existed.

However, mainstream science and philosophy typically view consciousness as emanating from complex systems like the brain. Most academic philosophers support this materialist perspective, while others favour alternatives such as panentheism. The debate continues, with some suggesting that the universe itself is conscious, or that the brain uses consciousness rather than producing it. Others point to consciousness beings that transcend the limitations of space and time. While these ideas challenge traditional views, materialism remains dominant due to its support for Empiricism.

## **Main Arguments in Conferences and Debates in Recent Years**

1. Panpsychism: Consciousness as a Fundamental Element: Panpsychism proposes that consciousness is a fundamental property of reality, like mass or electric charge. This idea has ancient roots and

has been revived in modern philosophical debates, notably by Philip Goff.

2. The Hard Problem of Consciousness: Modern science explains physical phenomena but struggles to explain subjective experiences (such as the redness of sunsets and the bitterness of lemons). This challenge is known as the "hard problem of consciousness," as David Chalmers termed it.

3. Materialism vs. Panentheism: The prevailing view in science and philosophy is materialism: consciousness arises from complex systems like the brain. Most philosophers support this view, but a significant minority favour alternatives such as panentheism.

4. Criticisms of Panentheism: Critics argue that panentheism fails to explain how simple forms of consciousness combine to form complex ones (the problem of combination) and lacks testable predictions.

5. Alternative Theories: Some suggest that the universe itself is conscious, or that the brain uses consciousness instead of producing it. While others suggest that consciousness may be linked to beings that transcend space and time.

6. Ethical Implications: Our understanding of consciousness affects ethical issues, such as the suffering of animals. Panentheism shifts the focus from observable behaviour to internal experience.

7. Empirical Support: Despite philosophical interest in panentheism, materialism remains dominant due to its stronger empirical foundation.

In my books “The Masks of Delusion” and “The Thoughton”, I discussed the concept of the field<sup>4</sup> of consciousness or the cosmic field of consciousness and some theories that adopt this concept, inspired by quantum physics. These theories posit cosmic fields from which atomic particles, photons, and various components of existence emanate. My view was clear: I favour this concept, considering universal consciousness, associated with God, to be pervasive throughout existence and connected to all beings. The human mind derives consciousness and perception from this universal consciousness through the brain, which acts as a receiver, not a generator of consciousness. The Thoughton is a quantum of abstract information that possesses properties of both abstract and concrete, like the photon and other particles, according to quantum theory. However, this topic is not among the topics of this book, so I have limited myself to a brief reference to it as a comprehensive awareness material that this book adopts.

## **Humanity Within a Conscious Universe**

If consciousness is a gradual property of existence, then humanity does not stand outside this universe, but rather at its very heart. Humanity is not an isolated being, but a point of convergence between matter,

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<sup>4</sup> Cosmic field theories are a physical framework that describes the universe through pervasive fields in which particles interact. The most prominent of these are Quantum Field Theory (QFT), which integrates quantum mechanics with relativity, and the Big Bang theory as a model for the origin of the universe, along with unification attempts (such as String Theory) to unify the fundamental forces. Quantum Field Theory (QFT): This is the modern physical formulation that describes elementary particles as excitations (vibrations) in fundamental fields that permeate spacetime.

life, intellect, and divine discourse. This transforms the image of humanity from absolute master of nature to witness within a system larger than itself, responsible for its relationship with existence, not its owner.

### **Conclusion of the Chapter**

The universality of consciousness does not mean that everything thinks as humans do, nor that the universe is a conscious entity in the psychological sense. Rather, it means that existence is not a silent mass, but a realm of relationship, meaning, and response. In this perspective, consciousness is not a selfish privilege or a purely material property, but an existential dimension that extends from inanimate matter to humanity. From this perspective, the following question becomes essential: If existence is encompassed by consciousness, how does the Qur'an express this consciousness? Is its discourse on the glorification, prostration, and response of beings merely rhetorical, or a description of an ontological reality? This will lead us in the next chapter to study the Qur'anic verses related to creation and the universality of consciousness, before we face the big rhetorical question: Are we facing a metaphor ... or a new cosmic vision of existence?

## **An Interpretive Application: The Light Model**

My interpretation of the verse "Light" might be the best example to complete this brief overview. Here is an excerpt from the book "The Masks of Delusion", Chapter II; Part 4 - Light Upon Light: The Architecture of Illumination in a Dual-State Universe:

"Humanity witnesses vivid images that transcend the boundaries of language, geography, and beliefs. Among the greatest of these is the Qur'anic metaphor of light:

**"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. His light<sup>1</sup> is like a niche in which there is a lamp, the lamp is in a crystal, the crystal is like a shining star, lit from 'the oil of' a blessed olive tree, 'located' neither to the east nor the west, whose oil would almost glow, even without being touched by fire. Light upon light! Allah guides whoever He wills to His light. And Allah sets forth parables for humanity. For Allah has 'perfect' knowledge of all things."**

### **al-Nur 24:35**

This verse is not dogma. It is cosmology. It is psychology. It is metaphysics. It is the physics of consciousness expressed in symbolic language.

### **Symbolic Interpretation**

#### **1. The Architecture of Inner Illumination**

Light → metaphorically representing absolute, all-encompassing knowledge, meaning, consciousness and background reference for qualia. The source of existence.

Light → Symbol of energy becoming particles. Embodiment of the abstract. Fundamental Fields excitations transforming fields into bundles of energy / material particles with mass, the physical universe.

Niche → cosmic vacuum, the constant positive space-time curvature of the universe, the human body, the physical vessel (mass) prepared to receive light.

Lamp → the flame of consciousness, enlightenment, the transformation of the Field of Consciousness into discrete informational quanta in the form of Thoughtons.

Glass Globe → The human brain and its network of neurons where "quantum collapse" occurs, information is exchanged, and meaning is given to personal experience. Interface for Consciousness and Qualia – the communication interface between the field of consciousness and the body. Like glass globe magnifies, spreads and directs light, the brain directs, amplifies, organizes, and distributes the information that moves the body; the instrument of causality, the place where knowledge or abstract thought meets physical matter.<sup>5</sup>

Bright Planet → the mind, intellect and awareness that possesses knowledge.

Lighted from a blessed olive tree → The Field of Consciousness, the source of knowledge and the wellspring of perception.

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<sup>5</sup> The concepts introduced in this chapter are philosophical and interpretive in nature; they are not proposed as physical mechanisms or scientific explanations, but as conceptual tools for thinking about the relationship between consciousness and its neural correlates.

Neither Eastern nor Western → Indicating the neutrality of the field of abstract Consciousness (Information), the properties of fields from which stimulations all material particles emanate.

Its oil would almost glow even without being touched by fire → this represents the comprehensive knowledge inherent in the Field of Consciousness, the stimuli within the field, and the possibility of quantum collapse (stimulations within the field in the form of superposition, i.e., the principle of superposition to wave function probabilities, to their collapse into Thoughtons carrying quanta of information), in the human brain. Comprehensive knowledge, or pure knowledge in this sense, exists within the field and is not limited to interaction with the brain. (The fields that fill the vacuum are constantly teeming with pairs of particles-antiparticles popping up into existence then collide, annihilate, and so on, all the time. The vacuum is not absolute emptiness or nothingness.)

Light upon light → All Existence, “matter upon mind”, originates from one reality (light, energy-physically, abstract and metaphorically). Communication and exchange between abstract thought and mass, that is, the material and the metaphysical; both have the same source, two sides of one truth: the universe is illuminated from without, and the mind is illuminated from within.

This architecture mirrors the structure of consciousness described earlier: Vessel, mediator, field, source. It is a metaphysical diagram encoded in holy scripture.

*The Quran is a book of ethics, not physics. I am not presenting this verse and interpretation here to prove scientific miracles in the Quran, but rather to illustrate how deep insight of prophets and great minds penetrates through layers of reality which most of us cannot.*

## 2. The Metaphysics of Reflection: How the Universe Sees Itself

Light has one extraordinary property: it reveals both the object and the observer. Your face in a mirror is only possible because photons carry information in both directions. Consciousness behaves exactly the same way. It reveals the world and the one who perceives the world. This is why every mystical tradition arrives at the same realization: the universe knows itself through consciousness, consciousness knows itself through the universe. Light upon light.

## 3. The Human Being as a Luminous Node

Humans occupy a unique position in the cosmos made of matter, animated by energy, illuminated by consciousness, capable of moral reflection, capable of self-awareness.

We are the only known species that can reflect on equilibrium itself. This is why religious texts emphasize the human role as: Khalifa (trust-bearer), imago dei (reflection of the divine), bodhisattva (awakened caretaker), the one who “names” creation. Not because we are biologically superior, but because we are light-receiving vessels capable of generating secondary illumination: knowledge, art, ethics, meaning, civilization. Just as stars create light, humans create meaning.

This is **“light upon light.”**

The union of physics and metaphysics.

The merging of destiny and will.

The structure of consciousness.

The architecture of meaning.

The law of equilibrium made luminous.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Universe Between Beginning, Perpetuity, and Consciousness**



## Chapter Three

### The Universe Between Beginning, Perpetuity, and Consciousness

#### 1. Modern Cosmology and the Question of Beginning

The question of creation is no longer confined to philosophy or theology; it has become central to modern science, particularly cosmology, which investigates the origin, structure, and destiny of the universe. The development of modern physics has led to the re-examination of these age-old questions in new forms:

Does the universe have a beginning? Did it originate from a moment of initial explosion? Is it accidental or eternal in some way? Does the regularity of its laws indicate a purpose or mere chance?

However, these questions, no matter how scientific they may appear, remain laden with philosophical and ontological implications that transcend the limits of equations and experiments.

#### A. The Big Bang Theory and the Beginning of the Universe

The prevailing theory in cosmology suggests that the universe originated from a state of extremely high density and temperature in what is known as the "Big Bang." This moment is often understood as the beginning of both time and space.

However, this "beginning" is not an absolute beginning in the metaphysical sense, but rather the beginning of a specific mode of

existence that can be described mathematically. Science does not describe what came before this moment, nor can it answer the question: Why did there be a “Bang” in the first place? Or why does a law exist that allows it to happen?

Thus, the Big Bang theory remains a description of a stage in existence, not a definitive explanation of its meaning.

## **B. The Universe Between Creation and Possibility**

In contrast to the concept of a universe with a single beginning, theories have emerged that speak of multiple universes:

The cyclical universe (expansion and contraction), a universe that is constantly being created and dying. These conceptions attempt to transcend the idea of an absolute beginning, but they do not eliminate the fundamental question: Why do laws exist that allow for multiple universes? And why does an order exist that allows for cosmic transformation and rebirth?

Even in the hypothesis of an infinite number of universes, the question remains open about the origin of the law itself, and about the meaning of existence in a universe that is not entirely arbitrary and has no clear purpose.

## **C. Fine-Tuning and the Problem of Design**

One of the most intriguing issues in modern physics is what is known as the "fine-tuning" of the laws of the universe. If the fundamental constants of nature (gravity, electric charge, basic masses) had varied by even the slightest degree, stars, atoms, and life itself would not have been possible. This has opened the door to three major interpretations:

1. An interpretation that posits intelligent design. 2. An interpretation that posits chance within an infinite universe. 3. An interpretation that sees the universe as having a structure with profound internal order. However, these interpretations, despite their differences, share the acknowledgment that the universe is not simple, blind chaos, but rather a highly precise system.

#### **D. The Limits of Science**

Science describes how the universe expands, how stars form, how elements originate, and how life evolves, but it does not answer: Why is there something rather than nothing? Why this system and not another? Why this law and not another? Here, science does not contradict faith, but rather stops at its natural limits, leaving the door of meaning open to philosophical and religious contemplation.

#### **2. Creation in the Qur'anic Vision: From Event to Perpetual Action**

While science describes how the universe came into being, and philosophy questions the meaning of existence, the Qur'an presents a cosmic discourse fundamentally different in nature: a discourse that views the entire universe within a relationship with God, not as inert matter, but as a realm of signs, glorification, obedience, and return.

The Qur'an does not present creation merely as an event in time, but rather within an ontological vision encompassing existence, time, consciousness, and destiny, and as a perpetual mode of being in which existence itself is sustained by continuous divine action. The universe is not something that came into being and then became independent

with its own laws, but rather a continuous relationship between will, meaning, and existence. In this sense, the universality of consciousness in the Qur'anic sphere does not imply God's indwelling in the universe, nor does it equate the universe with God, nor does it reduce the Qur'anic discourse to poetic metaphors about nature. Rather, it sees existence as created and sustained by God, and consciousness as not a purely neurological property, but rather an aspect of the relationship between creation and the Creator. Existence itself is open to meaning.

From this perspective, we can speak of a Qur'anic realm of existence that is not limited to humankind, but encompasses the heavens, the earth, and all that lies between them.

### **A. Continuous Creation, the Renewing Universe, and Sustainability**

Creation in the Qur'anic vision is not merely a physical event, but an act imbued with meaning:

“We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth.”

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth are signs for those of understanding.”

The universe is not simply an object of measurement, but a subject for contemplation.

When physics speaks of the expansion of the universe, the birth and death of stars, and the transformations of energy and matter, it

unintentionally approaches the concept of continuous creation. The universe is not a static mass, but an ongoing process. This is consistent with the Qur'anic vision: "Every day He is engaged in some affair" - "Say, 'Is there among your partners one who originates creation and then repeats it?' Say, 'Allah originates creation and then repeats it, so how are you deluded?'" - "And the heaven We constructed with might, and indeed, We are expanding it." So, creation is not just a past event, but a continuous act that is renewed in endless forms.

### **Verses on Creation: Existence as a Continuous Act**

From a doctrinal perspective, the Qur'an presents creation as a renewed act. The act of creation and bringing into existence is a requirement of the perfection of Lordship and an effect of God's Most Beautiful Names, such as "The Creator," "The Originator," "The Fashioner," "The One Who Made Things," and "The One Who Sustains."

This continuity can be illustrated in the following points: Continuous Creation (Provision After Origination): Existence is never independent of the Creator, not even for a single moment. God Almighty does not merely bring creatures into existence, but also sustains them with sustenance, provision, and life at every moment. This is what is referred to as "Sustaining."

The Renewal of Events: The universe is in a constant state of change and transformation. Every moment witnesses the birth of stars, the demise of others, the creation of new cells, and the giving and taking of life. {Every day He is engaged in some affair.} Al-Rahman: 29

Infinity: God's power and will are limitless, and His creation is inexhaustible. {Say, "If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted."} Al-Kahf 109

{And if all the trees on earth were pens and the sea [were ink], replenished by seven more seas, the words of God would not be exhausted. Indeed, God is Exalted in Might and Wise.} Luqman 27

After the Hour: The act of creation does not cease with the Hour, but rather transitions to a new and eternal phase. God creates Paradise and Hell and creates for the inhabitants of Paradise an ever-renewing and unending bliss, thus confirming that the attribute of creation is an inherent and permanent attribute of perfection.

﴿God is the Creator of all things.﴾

﴿He created the heavens and the earth in truth.﴾

﴿Every day He is engaged in some affair.﴾

﴿His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be," and it is.﴾

In the Qur'anic perspective, creation is not simply a past event, but an ongoing process, a continuous renewal, and an enduring relationship between the divine will and existence. This makes the universe more akin to a living, transforming entity, not a static machine operating according to self-contained laws: {Every day He is engaged in some affair} Qur'an 55:29.

## **B. Verses of the Word and Command: Creation through Discourse, Not Just Matter**

In the Qur'an, creation is linked to the "Word" and the "Command":

"And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice."  
(Al-An'am 6:115)

"If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted." (Al-Kahf 18:109)

"Our command is but one word, like a glance of the eye." (Al-Qamar 54:50)

This indicates that existence is not merely matter, but a manifestation of meaning, the Word, and the Will. The universe is not simply something that exists, but a divine, expansive statement.

## **C. Verses of Resurrection and Immortality: A Shift in the Mode of Consciousness**

The Hereafter is not merely a return of bodies, but a transformation in the mode of existence:

"And the Trumpet will be blown, and at once they will rush forth from the graves to their Lord." Ya-Sin: 51

"They will not taste death therein except the first death." Al-Dukhan 56

Immortality here is not simply an unending time, but a new existential state.

#### **D. The Unity of the Qur'anic System**

When these verses are brought together, a coherent system emerges: creation is a continuous act, existence is established by the Word, the universe glorifies and knows, the earth bears witness, the heavens obey, and destiny is transformation, not annihilation. This system cannot be reduced to a fleeting rhetorical metaphor; rather, it presents a complete cosmic vision.

### **3. Humanity Between Vastness and Meaning**

If the universe is so vast, and if its beginning and destiny are constantly being questioned, then humanity's position changes radically. Humanity is no longer the geometric centre of the universe, but it may be the centre of meaning within it, as the being that questions its origin and destiny. Here, science and consciousness converge in a single question: What does it mean to exist in a universe of such vastness and precision? In contrast, the Qur'an answers this question with certainty, affirming in its verses that the reason for the creation of the universe is to glorify God, demonstrate His power, and worship Him. The heavens and the earth were created with truth and for a specific purpose, with all that is within them made subservient to humankind. Numerous verses in the Holy Qur'an explain the wisdom behind the creation of the universe, which can be summarized in the following objectives:

## A. Knowing God, His Power, and His Knowledge

The most important goal is for humankind to realize the greatness of the Creator: {Allah is He Who created seven heavens and of the earth, their like. [His] command descends among them so that you may know that Allah is over all things competent and that Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge.} Qur'an 65:12

## B. Worshipping God alone

The universe was made subservient to be a stage for the worship of God: {And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.} Qur'an 51:56

## C. Trials and Tests

God created life, death, and the universe to test humankind's actions: {He Who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed} Al-Mulk: 2

## D. Establishing Truth and Justice

God created the universe to be based on truth and just recompense: {And We did not create the heavens and the earth and that between them in play. We did not create them except in truth, but most of them do not know} Al-Dukhan: 38-39

## E. Subjugating the Universe for Human Benefit

The Qur'an states that everything in the universe is subjugated to serve humanity: {Do you not see that God He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Surat Luqman: 20

## Chapter Conclusion

Modern cosmology, however precise, remains within the bounds of description. It reveals a universe astonishing in its vastness, precise in its laws, mysterious in its beginnings, and open in its ends. It neither denies nor affirms creation in its metaphysical sense but rather presents us with a universe that demands an explanation deeper than mere mathematical description, while the Qur'an opens the horizon of meaning. Between description and meaning, the ontological question arises: Is the universe merely a physical fact, or is it an existential discourse?

If science teaches us how the universe began, the Qur'an asks us: Why does the universe exist? And why is this existence capable of being understood, praised, and witnessed? Hence, the question of cosmic consciousness becomes not a rhetorical one, but a question about the very nature of existence: Is it silent or does it speak with meaning?

This is what we will discuss in Chapter Six: *Against Rhetorical Reduction: A Critique of Reducing Cosmic Consciousness to Metaphor.*

## **Chapter Four**

**Verses on Creation Without Mention of Nothingness: Existence as a Renewed Act, Not an Emerging from Emptiness**



## Chapter Four

### Verses on Creation Without Mention of Nothingness: Existence as a Renewed Act, Not an Emerging from Emptiness

The concept of creation is one of the most central concepts in the Holy Qur'an. However, the way the Qur'anic text presents the act of creation differs profoundly from later philosophical conceptions, particularly the idea that creation is an emergence from "nothingness" into "existence."

A careful examination of the Qur'anic verses reveals the absence of the term "nothingness" as an explicit ontological concept, in contrast to the frequent use of other terms such as: creation, command, word, bringing into existence, truth, proportioning, predestination, and transformation. This absence is not accidental; rather, it reveals a different conception of existence and creation: a conception that sees creation as a continuous act, an ongoing relationship between God and the universe, not a closed event that occurred in the past and then ended.

Thus, it can be said that the Qur'an does not establish an ontology of nothingness, but rather an ontology of action, transformation, and meaning.

#### 1. Creation by Truth, Not from Nothingness

The Qur'an always links creation to "truth":

“He created the heavens and the earth by truth.” Al-An'am 6:73

“And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them except by truth.” Al-Hijr 15:85

Creation here is not arbitrary, nor random, nor does it originate from nothingness. Rather, it is based on meaning, order, purpose, and regularity. Describing creation by truth shifts our understanding from conceiving of creation as a leap from nothing to something, to conceiving of creation as the realization of meaning in an existential form.

"Truth" is not matter, but rather a principle of order and manifestation. Thus, existence itself becomes a manifestation of truth in multiple forms, not merely a mechanical product of blind forces.

2. “Be, and it is”: Creation by the Word, not by the mere formation of matter. The Qur’an links creation to command and word:

“His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.” Ya-Sin 36:82

“Our command is but one word, like a glance of the eye.” Al-Qamar 54:50

“Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created him from dust; then He said to him, ‘Be,’ and he was.” Al-Imran 3:59

Thus, existence, from this perspective, is not merely matter moving according to physical laws, but rather a response to a command, the fulfilment of a word, and the embodiment of a will. This elevates creation from a purely physical interaction to an existential discourse.

The universe, in this sense, is not something silent, but rather the result of a continuous response to the divine command. It is a verbal existence as much as it is a physical one.

3. The Folding of the Heavens: Creation is not merely a beginning, but an end and a transformation. The Qur'an speaks not only of the beginning of the universe, but also of its end and transformation:

“The Day We will fold the heaven like the folding of a scroll for writings.” Al-Anbiya: 104

“The Day the earth will be changed to another earth, and the heavens [as well].” Ibrahim: 48

These verses do not describe absolute annihilation, but rather a folding, a transformation, a change in the pattern of existence. Existence does not transition into nothingness, but into another form of existence. This confirms that the logic of the Qur'an is not the logic of annihilation, but the logic of transformation.

4. Creation and Divine Ordaining: Existence According to Measure and Meaning

In the Qur'an, creation is linked to divine ordaining:

“He Who created and proportioned, and He Who ordained and guided” Qur'an 75:8, “Indeed, We have created everything in precise measure” Qur'an 55:49.

Creation is not a chaotic expansion, but rather a measured act, governed by measure, direction, and guidance. This reinforces the

concept of creation as organization, harmony, and a meaningful structure.

#### 5. The Absence of the Concept of Nothingness in Qur'anic Discourse

It is noteworthy, as mentioned earlier, that the Qur'an does not use the concept of "nothingness" as the origin of existence. Instead, it speaks of dust, water, smoke, clay, the soul, the command, and the word.

(Then He turned to the heaven when it was smoke), (and We made from water every living thing.) Creation occurs from one state to another, from one form to another, not from absolute emptiness. This makes creation closer to an existential transformation than a leap from non-existence.

#### 6. Between Creation as a Physical Event and Creation as a Divine Act

Two levels of creation can be distinguished: creation as a physical event, as described by cosmology (the Big Bang, expansion, transformations), and creation as a divine act, as described by the Qur'an (the command, the word, the truth, the decree). These two levels are not contradictory but rather belong to two different realms: the level of scientific description and the level of existential meaning. Physics describes how the universe changes, while the Qur'an explains why the universe has meaning.

## Chapter Conclusion

The verses on creation in the Qur'an reveal a different conception of existence: not creation from absolute nothingness, nor a past event that ended, but rather a perpetual act, a continuous transformation, and a manifestation of meaning in a cosmic form.

From this perspective, the universe exists by divine will, is renewed by divine command, is governed by truth, and is ever-changing, not annihilating. Hence, the question of creation becomes not merely a question of beginnings, but a question of the enduring relationship between God and existence.

This understanding paves the way for the next chapter, where we move from the verses on creation to the verses on the universality of consciousness, to ask a deeper question:

If creation is a meaningful act, is existence silent or conscious?

And does the universe itself participate in responding to this divine command?



## **Chapter Five**

### **The Qur'an's Comprehensive Vision of Consciousness: The Universe as a Realm of Perception and Response**



## Chapter Five

### **The Qur'an's Comprehensive Vision of Consciousness: The Universe as a Realm of Perception and Response**

If the previous chapter demonstrated that creation in the Qur'an is not an emergence from nothingness, but rather an embodiment of God's eternal knowledge upon His word command "be", and a meaningful ever-renewing act, this chapter goes a step further to ask: Is this existence, created with truth, silent and neutral? Or is it an existence with its own dimension of perception and response?

The Qur'an presents a cosmic vision that differs radically from the purely mechanical view that sees the world as matter moving according to rigid laws. It portrays the heavens, the earth, and all of creation as being in a constant relationship with God, expressed through actions such as glorification, prostration, obedience, speech, testimony, and awe.

This language is not accidental; rather, it recurs in multiple places within a coherent semantic framework, thus opening the door to a conception of the universality of consciousness as a gradual existential characteristic, not exclusive to humankind.

#### **1. Cosmic Glorification: A Perception, Not a Mechanical Movement**

Among the most famous verses on this topic are:

"The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them glorify Him. And there is not a thing except that it glorifies Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification." Al-Isra: 44

“Each [of them] has already known its [way of] prayer and glorification.” Al-Nur: 41

“Do you not see that to Allah glorifies whoever is in the heavens and the earth and the birds with wings outspread? Each [of them] has already known its way of prayer.” Al-Anbiya: 41

And to Allah prostrates whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth of creatures, and the angels. Al-Nahl 16:49

Do you not see that to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth and the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and the creatures? Al-Hajj 22:18

And the stars and the trees prostrate Al-Rahman 55:6

Have they not seen what Allah has created of anything? Its shadows incline to the right and to the left, prostrating to God in submission. Al-Nahl 16:48

These verses do not describe mere physical order, nor are we speaking of a moral metaphor, but rather of a cognitive/existential act attributed to all beings: knowledge, prayer, glorification, and prostration.

These are actions that presuppose a kind of awareness and response, not merely mechanical movement. The Qur'an does not say that things merely "point" to God, but that they "glorify," "know," and "pray."

This transforms the universe from a silent object into a participant in a relationship.

Among the verses that most clearly demonstrate the universality of consciousness are:

“And there is nothing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification.”

“The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them glorify Him.”

“Each [of them] has already known its prayer and glorification.”

“And the stars and the trees prostrate.”

“And to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth.”

These verses do not attribute mere movement to created beings, but rather knowledge, prayer, glorification, and prostration—actions with a dimension. Cognitive, not mechanical.

## **2. Prostration and Obedience: A Relationship Beyond Physical Necessity**

“And to Allah prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, willingly or unwillingly.”

“And the stars and the trees prostrate.”

“And there is no creature on earth nor bird that flies with its wings except that they are communities like you. We have not neglected

anything in the Book. Then to their Lord they will be gathered.” Al-An'am 6:38

Prostration here is not merely a forced submission to a natural law, but rather it is described as: Willingly or unwillingly, this description indicates a kind of response, not merely mechanical determinism. The universe is not presented as a machine operating without consciousness, but rather as an entity integrated into a cosmic system of obedience.

### **3. The Discourse of Heaven and Earth: Speech and Response**

One of the most prominent verses of perception and response in the universe is:

“Then He turned to the heaven when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, ‘Come willingly or unwillingly.’ They said, ‘We have come willingly.’ Qur’an 11:11 This verse attributes to the universe speech, fear, memory, and testimony—concepts associated with consciousness, not inertia. This is manifested in hearing the discourse, understanding the command, and responding consciously: “We have come willingly.” This scene cannot be reduced to a simple rhetorical image without stripping it of its profound existential meaning.

#### **4. Awe, Memory, and Testimony**

It is not limited to glorification and prostration, but extends to awe and testimony:

“And indeed, some stones fall down for fear of God.”

“On that Day, it will declare its news.”

“And the earth will say, ‘What is wrong with it?’”

Awe, speaking, news, and testimony are all concepts linked to consciousness, not to inertia. This indicates that existence possesses an existential memory, not merely a physical presence.

## **5. Degrees of Consciousness: Not Equality, but Gradation**

The Qur’an does not say that human consciousness is the same as that of a stone, nor does it equate all beings. Rather, it presents a gradual consciousness: Humans: moral and prescriptive consciousness; animals: perception and response; plants: growth and direction; inanimate objects: order, glorification, and awe. Here, consciousness is not a single linguistic intellect, but rather: presence, response, and a relationship with divine command. This aligns with the idea that consciousness is not a single type, but an existential spectrum.

## **6. The Universe is Not an Object, but a Partner in Meaning**

When the Qur’an says, “We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves,” it connects human consciousness (the self) with the external universe (the horizons). The universe is not merely a stage for humanity, but a participant in revealing meaning.

## **7. Is This Metaphor or Ontological Description?**

Here arises the crucial question: Are these verses a rhetorical metaphor, or a revelation of the nature of existence? The repetition of this pattern of glorification, knowledge, speech, awe, and testimony makes it difficult to reduce it all to a single linguistic embellishment. The Qur'an does not use this language only once but rather constructs a complete worldview with it.

## **Chapter Conclusion**

### **On Refuting Immanentism**

The assertion of consciousness's universality within the Qur'anic framework does not, in any way, imply the indwelling of God within existence, nor does it consider the universe a divine essence or absolute consciousness. The Qur'an makes a strict distinction between the Creator and the created, affirming that God Almighty is "unlike anything else" Qur'an 42:11, and that all existence is sustained by Him, not contained within Him.

Attributing glorification, prostration, knowledge, and responsiveness to the heavens, the earth, and all beings does not indicate a unity of essence, but rather an existential relationship between the divine will and creation. In this relationship, consciousness becomes a mode of obedience to the divine command, according to the nature of each being. This removes this conception from the realm of immanence, which dissolves the distinction between God and the world, and places it within a monotheistic framework that views the universe as a created entity open to meaning, without being meaning itself. In this context, the universality of consciousness is not a unity of existence in the mystical-philosophical sense, nor a divine immanentism/incarnation in nature. Rather, it is the expansion of the realm of perception and response in creation, as an effect of the divine command, not a manifestation of God's essence. The universe does not possess an independent consciousness, but rather a dependent consciousness that is subservient to God. Its very existence is that of a created being, not a divine being.

Thus, this position is defined as a monotheistic ontological vision, not a pantheistic or materialistic one. It preserves divine transcendence on the one hand, and the significance of existence on the other.

When the Holy Qur'an reveals a universe that is not silent, but alive with relation and meaning, an existence that glorifies, prostrates, obeys, bears witness, and responds, this does not mean that the universe thinks like humans. Rather, it means that it possesses a mode of perception that suits its nature. Thus, consciousness transitions from being a purely human privilege to a gradual existential characteristic encompassing the entire world to varying degrees. This understanding paves the way for the next chapter, where we directly confront the methodological question: Is it permissible to reduce all of this to a rhetorical metaphor? Or is this a philosophical reduction of the Qur'anic text?

This is what we will explore in Chapter Six: *Against Rhetorical Reduction: A Critique of Reducing Cosmic Consciousness to Metaphor.*

## **Chapter Six**

### **Against Rhetorical Reductionism: A Critique of Reducing Cosmic Consciousness to Metaphor**



## Chapter Six

### **Against Rhetorical Reductionism: A Critique of Reducing Cosmic Consciousness to Metaphor**

Having presented the verses on creation as meaningful acts, and the verses on the universality of consciousness as a complete cosmic vision, we arrive at the crucial methodological question:

Is it permissible to reduce all this Qur'anic language to mere rhetorical metaphor? Or does this reduction itself carry an unstated philosophical assumption about the nature of existence and consciousness?

It has become common in modern exegesis to claim that the glorification, prostration, fear, speech, and discourse of beings are merely metaphorical representations to bring meaning closer to the human mind, not descriptions of an existing reality in the universe. However, this position, despite its prevalence, requires careful critical examination, not only from the perspective of rhetoric but also from the perspective of ontology.

#### 1. When is metaphor linguistically legitimate?

In Arabic rhetoric, metaphor is only resorted to when there is an impediment preventing the literal interpretation of a word. The default in language is literal meaning, and metaphor is derived from it. Metaphor is used in poetic imagery, but the Qur'an is nothing like poetry, and the Qur'anic verse declares clearly:

“And We did not give (Prophet Muhammad), knowledge of poetry, nor is it befitting for him. It is not but a message and a clear Qur'an.”  
Yassin: 69.

Therefore, the first question is not whether these verses can be metaphorical, but rather whether there is a rational or linguistic impediment preventing them from having a literal meaning. Does reason preclude non-human beings from possessing some form of perception or response? The answer is: there is no conclusive rational proof to preclude this, but rather a preconceived philosophical notion that confines consciousness to humankind alone. This means that reducing the verses to metaphor does not stem from language itself, but from a prior ontological conception of the nature of consciousness.

2. Metaphor here is a defensive solution, not a textual necessity. When it is said, "The star prostrates" (meaning it submits to the law of gravity), "The earth speaks" (meaning the effects of human actions are evident upon it), and "Everything glorifies" (meaning it points to the greatness of the Creator), we are not interpreting the text so much as replacing it with an external philosophical interpretation. Metaphor then transforms from a linguistic tool into a cognitive defence mechanism aimed at protecting a materialistic or rational conception of the universe as silent and neutral. Thus, the question is no longer rhetorical, but ontological: Is existence in itself without perception? Or does perception take multiple forms that cannot be reduced to human consciousness?

3. The unity of the Qur'anic structure prevents metaphorical interpretation. If a single verse were to mention the glorification of God by all beings, it could easily be interpreted metaphorically. But we are faced with a recurring and interconnected pattern: “And there is nothing that does not glorify Him with praise” – “Each [of them] has

already known its prayer and its glorification” – “They said, ‘We have come willingly’” – “On that Day, it will declare its news” – “And indeed, there are stones that fall down for fear of God.” This is a complete semantic network that attributes to the universe knowledge and speech, fear and obedience, and testimony. Reducing all of this to a single metaphor dismantles the Qur’anic pattern and transforms the cosmic vision into mere linguistic embellishment devoid of existential content.

#### 4. The Difference Between Metaphor and Conceptual Expansion

Not every departure from the norm is metaphorical. The text may be expanding the concept of consciousness itself. The Qur’an does not say that a mountain understands like a human, but rather that it has a mode of perception suited to its nature. Just as saying that angels have perception does not make them human, saying that the universe has perception does not make it human. Here, the concept of consciousness shifts from a linguistic mental faculty to a relationship, response, and presence before the divine command. This is not metaphor, but a redefinition of consciousness within a broader cosmic horizon.

#### 5. Fear of Anthropomorphism is Not a Justification for Reductionism

It is sometimes said: If we take these verses literally, we fall into anthropomorphism and corporealism. However, this objection confuses affirming perception with affirming the manner of perception. The scripture does not say that a stone feels as a human does, but rather that it has a mode of perception appropriate to its existence. Just as affirming hearing and sight for God does not mean likening Him to created beings, affirming perception for existing things does not mean equating them with humans.

## 6. The Impact of Rhetorical Reduction on the Concept of the Universe

When these verses are reduced to metaphor, the universe becomes inanimate matter, devoid of existential connection to God, lacking participation in meaning, merely a stage for human actions. In contrast, the Qur'an presents a universe that participates in cosmic worship. Thus, the difference transforms from a linguistic one to a difference in the very vision of the world.

## 7. Towards an Ontological Reading of the Language of the Qur'an

This book proposes a reading that sees the language of the Qur'an not only as describing phenomena but also as revealing the structure of existence and reshaping humanity's relationship with the world. The Qur'an does not employ rhetoric for mere embellishment but to establish a conception of a living, relational universe, a meaningful existence, and a gradual, evolving consciousness. This opens a door to a new understanding of the verses, not merely as didactic metaphors, but as allusions to a deeper truth in the nature of existence.

## **Chapter Conclusion**

Reducing the universality of cosmic consciousness to a mere rhetorical metaphor does not resolve the issue; rather, it conceals an unstated philosophical conception of the universe as silent and neutral. This chapter does not reject rhetoric or deny metaphor, but rather repositions it in its proper context: a linguistic tool when needed, not a key to obscuring the ontological dimension of the text. When the Qur'an speaks of the glorification, prostration, awe, and testimony of all beings, it presents not merely poetic imagery, but a cosmic vision of a world alive with relationship and meaning.

From this point, it becomes necessary to shift to the historical and philosophical level of the question: How did Islamic tradition engage with this vision? And where did the disagreements surrounding creation, consciousness, and divine speech originate? This is what we will explore in the next chapter: *The Ordeal of the Qur'an's Creation: Between the Eternal and the Temporal*.



## **Chapter Seven**

**The Ordeal of the Creation of the Qur'an: Between the Eternal and the Temporal**



## Chapter Seven

### **The Ordeal of the Creation of the Qur'an: Between the Eternal and the Temporal**

The issue of the “creation of the Qur'an” is not merely a jurisprudential disagreement or a passing political dispute in the history of Islam. Rather, it is the clearest expression of a profound philosophical question that has remained intertwined with religious thought since its inception: How does the eternal manifest itself in the temporal? How can the word of God be absolute, yet appear in human language, at a specific time, and within a particular historical context?

This question transformed into a major ordeal in the third century AH when a single doctrinal opinion was imposed by political force. However, the essence of the problem runs deeper than a power struggle; it is a perpetual tension between the eternal and the temporal, essence and manifestation, the absolute and the relative, God and language.

#### 1. The Origin of the Problem: Is the Word of God Within Time or Outside of It?

The issue stemmed from an intellectual attempt to affirm God's oneness and transcend multiplicity. The Mu'tazilites argued that the Qur'an is a created entity, because asserting its eternity implies the existence of something eternal other than God, which contradicts monotheism. In contrast, the Sunni majority argued that the Qur'an is the uncreated word of God, as it is an attribute of His, and an attribute cannot be separated from the essence, nor can it be described as

created. However, both sides were addressing the same question in two different ways: the Mu'tazilites feared the existence of multiple eternal beings, while the Sunnis feared denying God's attribute of speech. The disagreement was not merely doctrinal, but ontological: Is divine speech an act occurring in time, or an attribute existing in eternity?

## 2. The Ordeal as a Failure to Manage the Philosophical Question

When this disagreement was transformed into state policy, the philosophical question became a mandatory doctrine, and intellectual diversity became a crime. Herein lies the tragedy of the "Ordeal," not merely as a historical event, but as a failure to distinguish between open inquiry and closed dogma.

This disagreement could have remained an epistemological debate about the nature of the relationship between the eternal and the temporal, but it was transformed into an instrument of oppression. This reveals the danger of turning metaphysical questions into political laws.

## 3. The Qur'an Between Essence and Manifestation

This book proposes moving beyond the rigid dichotomy of created/uncreated towards a synthetic reading based on two levels:

-The Qur'an in God's knowledge, eternal in its divine eternity, unbound by time, language, or history.

-The Qur'an in history, manifested in the Arabic language, revealed within a social context, addressing humanity in time and space.

Thus, the Qur'an is eternal in essence and temporal in its manifestation. This does not imply a duality of truth, but rather a difference in the level of existence. Just as light is singular in its source but manifold in its reflections, so too is the divine word singular in its essence but manifold in its manifestations.

#### 4. Human Language as a Mediator, Not a Final Limit

The problem did not lie in the Qur'an itself, but in the language that conveyed it. Language is temporal, human, contextual, and limited. However, in the Qur'an, it becomes a mediator between the eternal and the temporal. This makes the Qur'an a unique case: divine speech in human language, absolute in its relative form, eternal in meaning, and temporal in its expression. Hence, the question of the Qur'an's creation becomes part of a broader question: how does the absolute manifest itself in history without losing its absoluteness?

#### 5. The Impact of the Ordeal on Understanding Consciousness and Existence

The question of the Qur'an's creation was not separate from the conception of consciousness and existence. Those who view the Qur'an as a purely contingent event might be inclined to conceive of a purely material universe with laws separate from meaning. Those who see the Qur'an as eternal and indistinguishable might be inclined to isolate the text from history, freezing it in a timeless form. The synthetic view, however, sees the universe as constantly renewed through creation, consciousness as gradual, and the Qur'an as part of this manifested existential order. The Qur'an is not a stone that descended from heaven, but rather an existential event in history.

## 6. The Ordeal as a Model of the Conflict Between the Eternal and the Temporal

The ordeal of the Qur'an's creation can be read as the clearest example of the conflict between those who wish to preserve the absolute from change and those who wish to understand its manifestation in time. This conflict persists today in matters of textual interpretation, the relationship between religion and science, the constant and the changing, and the unseen and history. The ordeal has not ended; rather, its forms have changed.

## 7. From Creed to Philosophy: Reopening the Question

This chapter does not call for reviving the old dispute, but rather for reopening it as a legitimate philosophical question: How can divine speech be eternal in its meaning and historical in its manifestation? This aligns with the book's view of creation as a renewed act, consciousness as a gradual existential characteristic, and Qur'anic language as an ontological revelation, not merely rhetoric. The Qur'an is not a text outside the world, but rather part of the movement of meaning within the world.

*The Qur'an Between Essence and Manifestation:* In the ordeal, the two views are two sides of the same coin, fundamentally identical yet perceptually different. The disagreement over the "creation of the Qur'an" can be seen as a disagreement at the level of perception, not in the reality of existence. The two opposing views—that the Qur'an is created and that it is eternal—are not contradictory in essence, but rather descriptions of two different levels of the same truth. The Qur'an, insofar as it exists in God's knowledge from eternity, is encompassed by divine eternity and is not subject to time and space, for it is the word of God and an attribute of His. However, insofar as

it is a revelation sent down in human language, within a specific historical context, and with words, letters, and temporal events, it is contingent in its manifestation, bound by space and time and the conditions of history. These two levels do not represent two opposing truths, but rather two facets of a single truth: eternal in essence and historical in its manifestation. The disagreement was not so much about the nature of the Qur'an as it was about the perspective from which it is viewed: whether from the perspective of divine eternity or from the perspective of its appearance in the world. Thus, the dispute becomes a classic example of the tension between the absolute and the temporal, not a contradiction between faith and reason.

### Time Between Change, Consciousness, and Eternity

In this view, time is not an independent, self-contained entity prior to existence, but rather the product of the perception of change in existing things. What we call "time" is nothing more than consciousness's method of arranging transformations: the transition of a thing from one state to another, from one position to another, from one form to another. The previous position retained by memory is what we call the past, and the subsequent position we anticipate is what we call the future. The present is merely a moment of awareness of continuous change. In this sense, time is not an independent ontological essence, but a cognitive language for understanding movement and occurrence.

From this perspective, creation does not occur in a time prior to it; rather, time itself is generated with the act of creation and renewal. Divine eternity is not understood as an endless temporal extension, but as a level of existence beyond the categories of "before" and "after." What appears to us as a temporal succession is merely a limited manifestation of a will that is not bound by time. Thus, the question is no longer: When did creation begin? But rather: How does existence

manifest itself in consciousness? Time is no longer a framework containing divine action, but rather a manifestation of its appearance in the world.

Thus, time becomes an aspect of the relationship between consciousness and creation, not an absolute, self-contained reality. The universe, in itself, is neither "ancient" nor "temporary" in the simple temporal sense, but rather a constantly renewing act perceived within the horizon of human consciousness as a series of moments. In God's knowledge, however, the beginning and the end, the past and the future, are present in a single, unchanging presence, not subject to succession or waiting. Here, the concept of renewed creation converges with the concept of eternity, in a vision that sees time not as a constraint on existence, but as one of its manifestations in human perception.

But does negating time as an independent entity render beings eternal like God, changing in position and not created? The precise answer is: not necessarily, if we distinguish between eternity and existential dependence.

It might be thought that saying time is not an independent entity, but rather a product of consciousness's perception of the movement and change of things, necessarily leads to considering beings eternal like God, or to denying them the attribute of creation. However, this conclusion is neither logically nor ontologically necessary. The fundamental difference between God and the world does not lie in whether or not they are subject to time, but in the very nature of existence: God is a necessary being, existing independently, while beings are contingent beings, existing through something other than them. Even if time is understood as a perceptual image of change, things do not become eternal in themselves, because they remain, in

every instance, dependent on the divine act that brings them into existence. Their presence in God's knowledge is eternal, but their existence in the world is a gradual manifestation perceived through movement and transformation. Thus, the concept of creation is not negated, but rather liberated from being an event that occurred at a first moment in time, to be understood as a permanent existential relationship between the Creator and the created. Eternity is an attribute of the Divine Essence alone. Existing things are not eternal in their essence but rather renewed in their manifestation and created in their dependence, even if their change appears to us as a temporal succession shaped by memory and consciousness.

First: Eternity is not merely the absence of time. Divine eternity is not simply the absence of subjection to temporal succession, but rather self-sufficiency in existence and the lack of need for a cause or act to bring it into being. As for things (creatures), even if we do not understand their existence within linear time, they remain contingent, dependent on something else, and constantly dependent on divine action. The fundamental difference is not in time itself, but in whether existence is self-subsistent or dependent on something else.

God = Necessary Being

The world = Contingent Being

Even if you remove the concept of time, this difference remains.

Second: The assertion that time is a product of consciousness does not make things eternal. When we say that time is a product of our perception of the movement and change of things, we are not saying that things were not created. Rather, we are saying that "coming into being" is not an event within a cosmic clock, but a renewed existential

relationship. That is, a thing does not become eternal because it moves without time but remains in need of something that sustains it in existence. This is very close to the idea of continuous creation (*creatio continua*) and the verse, "Every day He is engaged in some affair". Qur'an 55:29. A thing is neither ancient nor independent, but its existence is renewed in every moment of perception.

Third: The difference between eternity and manifestation. From the perspective of this book, God is eternal in and of Himself, beyond the categories of before/after. Things, however, appear in consciousness as change, but they are not eternal in and of themselves. Rather, they are eternal in relation, so to speak; that is, they are present in God's knowledge from eternity, but they do not exist independently. This is very important: the presence of a thing in God's knowledge from eternity—the eternity of a thing in its intrinsic existence. As we said about the Qur'an: eternal in essence, temporal in manifestation, so too is existence eternally known, manifested perceptibly.

Fourth: Do things become merely "changes of position" rather than creation? No, because a change of position presupposes an existence that is transferred, and this itself requires explanation. Even if we say there is no time, only changes of states, the question remains: where did these states come from in the first place? And why do they exist instead of not existing? Here, the concept of creation remains, but not as an event at a zero point in time, rather as a continuous existential act. Creation is not "before and after," but rather "perpetual dependence."

Fifth: This view does not lead to a material unity of existence. It may superficially appear to lead to things being eternal like God, but the difference becomes clear in that eternity equals a divine level of perception, while time equals a human level of perception. Existence

is not a single, undifferentiated entity, but rather closer to “existence being dependent on God,” not “existence being God.”

## **Chapter Conclusion**

From the Creation of the Qur’an to the Question of Existence

The question of the “creation of the Qur’an” is not revisited in this book as a historical doctrinal dispute, but rather as a philosophical model for a deeper question: How does the absolute manifest itself in the relative, and how does the eternal appear in the temporal without losing its transcendence? The issue is not so much whether the Qur’an is created or uncreated, but rather the level at which it is viewed: Is it to be understood from the perspective of its eternal source or from the perspective of its emergence in history? This is not an intellectual error, but rather a sign of the difficulty of the question itself.

Divine speech cannot be reduced to a mere temporal event, nor frozen in an eternity isolated from history. Rather, it is eternal in its source, temporal in its manifestation, revealing an enduring relationship between God and existence.

From this point, the inquiry shifts from speech to existence, from text to the world, because the same question recurs in the universe as it did in revelation: Is existence merely a temporal event, or is it a perpetual act inherent in God? Is the world inert matter, or a manifestation of meaning? Thus, the Ordeal of the Creation of the Qur’an becomes a philosophical entry point for understanding the perpetual tension between essence and manifestation, between the constant and the changing, and between God and the world—not as a contradiction, but as an existential relationship open to interpretation.



## **Chapter Eight**

### **The Unity of Existence and the Distinction Between Creator and Creation**



## Chapter Eight

### The Unity of Existence and the Distinction Between Creator and Creation

After examining the ordeal of the Creation of the Qur'an as an expression of the tension between the eternal and the temporal, we arrive at a deeper ontological problem: Is existence truly one or multiple? Is the world God, or does it exist through God, or is it entirely separate from Him?

This question reached its zenith in the debate surrounding the concept of "the unity of existence," which has been one of the most sensitive issues in the history of Islamic thought, as it directly touches upon the relationship between Creator and creation, the absolute and the relative, the eternal and the temporal, and consciousness and the universe.

This chapter does not seek to favour one theological doctrine over another, but rather to analyse the structure of the question itself and reveal the possibility of a synthetic reading that transcends the dichotomy of both fusion and separation.

#### 1. The Meaning of the Unity of Existence: Unity of Reality or Unity of Appearance?

When some Sufis said that "existence is one," they did not necessarily mean that God is identical to the world, but rather that true existence is one, and that multiplicity is a manifestation and expression of this

oneness. Unity here is not numerical unity, but a unity of source. Multiplicity is not an illusion, but rather a series of manifestations.

However, this symbolic language, when read literally, is understood as negating the distinction between Creator and creation, which provoked strong objections from theologians and jurists. This led to the question: Do we affirm the unity of existence? Or the unity of the Creator and the multiplicity of creation?

## 2. Ibn Arabi: Existence as Manifestation, Not Identity

Ibn Arabi believes that true existence is one, and that the world is not God, but rather a manifestation of His names and attributes. For him, creation is not an emergence from nothingness, but a continuous manifestation of divine truth in multiple forms. He emphasizes in many places the distinction between the unseen divine essence and its manifestations in the world. For him, the universe is a mirror of the divine names, not an independent entity, nor another god. However, his symbolic language ("Truth is existence") opened the door to sharp interpretations, some of which led to immanentism or union, while others understood it with a precise philosophical understanding.

## 3. Ibn Taymiyyah: Protecting the Distinction Between Creator and Creation

Ibn Taymiyyah's response to the concept of the unity of existence was sharp, as he saw it as a direct threat to monotheism. He insisted that God exists in Himself, and that the world exists through His creation, and that there is an essential difference between them that cannot be negated by any symbolic language. He believed that asserting the unity of existence leads to the denial of servitude, the blurring of the distinction between truth and falsehood, and the introduction of

philosophy into creed. However, Ibn Taymiyyah's objection was not to the spiritual dimension, but rather to the transformation of the Sufi experience into a general ontological theory.

#### 4. The Essence of the Dispute: Existence or Relationship?

If we examine the dispute deeply, we find that it is not only about God, but about the meaning of existence itself. Is existence a single entity with varying degrees? Or are there two separate existences: Creator and creation? Is the relationship between them one of manifestation? Or merely one of creation? Or one of constant presence? The disagreement is not linguistic, but conceptual. Do we see the universe as existing by God? Or as completely independent of Him?

#### 5. Between Pantheism and Immanentism: The Necessary Distinction

It is important to distinguish between philosophical pantheism and the doctrine of immanentism or union. Immanentism posits that God dwells within things, while union asserts that God and the universe are one. Many Sufis, however, maintain that existence is sustained by God, and that multiplicity is a manifestation, not an independent identity separate from the source. This is closer to the concept of "all in God" (pantheism) than to Spinozan pantheism, which equates nature with God (monism).

#### 6. The Impact of This Disagreement on the Concept of Consciousness

This disagreement did not remain merely theoretical; it influenced the understanding of consciousness itself. If existence is one, then consciousness extends throughout the universe in varying degrees. If existence is entirely separate, then consciousness is confined to humanity. This separation directly relates to the question of the

universality of consciousness: Is the universe materially silent, or does it participate in presence and meaning?

## 7. The Third Path: Existence is Subsistent in God, Not God

This book proposes a third path between two opposing positions: neither a unity of existence that dissolves distinction, nor a transcendence that isolates God from the world. Rather, it presents a vision that sees God as transcendent to the world, the world as subsisting in God, existence as manifested through divine command, and consciousness as degrees of response to this command.

The universe is not God, but it is not outside of God; rather, it is in constant relation to Him. This aligns with the verse: “God is the Light of the heavens and the earth,” without implying that the heavens and the earth are God.

## Conclusion of the Chapter

This chapter focused on analysing the disagreement surrounding the concept of “unity of existence” as an expression of a profound ontological question concerning the relationship between the Creator and the world, not merely a doctrinal or linguistic difference. It demonstrated that the conflict between the language of mystical manifestation and the language of theological transcendence reflects a tension between understanding existence as unity in its source and multiplicity in its forms, and the fear of erasing the distinction between Creator and creation. We saw that Ibn Arabi's position expresses a vision of existence as a manifestation of the divine names, not a divine identity of the world, while Ibn 'Ayamiyyah's position represents a rigid defence of the ontological distinction between God and the universe. The chapter revealed that the essence of the disagreement lies not in God Himself, but in the meaning of existence and the relationship between the absolute and the relative. The book proposed a third path, which sees existence as dependent on God, not as God, and multiplicity as manifestations of divine emanation without immanentism or union. This conception thus establishes a synthetic monotheistic vision that combines divine transcendence with the significance of the world, linking the issue of the unity of existence to the question of the totality of consciousness and meaning in the universe.

From here, we move from Islamic heritage to modern philosophy and ask: How does modern thought understand consciousness? Has this question resurfaced in a new form within theories of the totality of consciousness? This is what we will explore in Chapter Nine: Consciousness in Modern Philosophy: From Matter to Subjective Experience.



## **Chapter Nine**

### **Consciousness in Modern Philosophy: From Matter to Subjective Experience**



## Chapter Nine

### Consciousness in Modern Philosophy: From Matter to Subjective Experience

After reviewing the Qur'anic and traditional conceptions of creation and the universality of consciousness, we turn in this chapter to modern philosophical thought, where the age-old question has resurfaced in a new form: What is consciousness? Is it a product of matter? A universal property? Or a subjective experience that cannot be reduced to physics?

Modern philosophy has witnessed a profound shift in its approach to consciousness, moving from being a theological or metaphysical issue to a scientific and philosophical problem simultaneously, linked to the brain, society, language, experience, and existence.

#### 1. Consciousness as a Material Phenomenon: Neuroreductionism

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a prevailing trend held that consciousness was merely a function of the brain, and that it could be fully explained through neurological and chemical processes. According to this view: thought = neural activity, sensation = electrical reactions, and meaning = the product of biological evolution.

This trend, known as reductionist materialism, attempted to remove any metaphysical or existential dimension from the concept of consciousness, reducing it to the laws of nature alone. However, this position faced a profound dilemma: how can a physical movement

produce a subjective experience (qualia)? How can the sensation of pain, love, or colour arise from mathematical equations?

This is where the philosopher David Chalmers termed the "Hard Problem of Consciousness."

**2. What Modern Brain and Consciousness Studies Reveal?** The human brain is considered the most complex structure in the universe and the biological organ that surpasses the brains of other living beings. It is significantly larger relative to body weight than the brains of other living beings, including primates. The brain weighs approximately 1.5 kilograms and contains an average of about 86 billion nerve cells (neurons). These cells intertwine to form a complex network of more than 100 trillion synaptic connections, which are responsible for memory, thought, language, and emotions—the foundations of advanced abilities such as perception and consciousness.

It is well established that changes in brain function lead to changes in consciousness. For example, drugs that affect the brain alter subjective experiences, and stimulating specific brain regions can produce bodily sensations, visions, or certain emotional responses. Yet the fundamental cause of consciousness remains unclear.

The brain has a decentralized and distributed structure, where information is processed through interconnected networks rather than a central control part. Different regions are responsible for distinct functions—such as sight, hearing, speech, and movement—and yet these regions interact without a single control centre.

Despite this, human consciousness appears unified. It is typically described in three ways: as the contents of consciousness at any given moment, as a continuous flow through time, and as experiences

perceived by the self. Most brain activity occurs outside of consciousness, with only a small fraction ever entering the realm of awareness.

The distinction between conscious and unconscious processes raises important questions. Is there a specific region or type of neuron responsible for consciousness? Are there unique neural connections that produce conscious experience? Although many theories exist, none have provided definitive answers. Research into neurological phenomena, such as sensory interference and pain perception, has provided insights into the neural connections of consciousness. For example, pain is a subjective experience and a measurable neurological event, but correlation does not imply causation. The relationship between neural activity and conscious experience remains a subject of ongoing research.

Studies using obscure visual stimuli, such as the Necker Cube, have helped identify brain regions involved in conscious perception. However, while some regions show changes in activity that correspond to shifts in consciousness, the precise mechanisms underlying conscious experience are still not fully understood.

Neurological disorders, such as hemiparesis and amnesia, exemplify the complex relationship between brain function and consciousness. These conditions demonstrate the potential for consciousness to be fragmented or altered, challenging traditional notions of a unified self.

### 3. The Gap Between Objective and Subjective

Neuroscience and brain studies have not been able to pinpoint the origin of "consciousness and self," but they have not been entirely unsuccessful. They have produced a deep and detailed understanding

of brain structure and function. However, the "source" of consciousness and the "self" itself remained unknown because it relied on the assumption that subjective experience (how one is) could be explained by objective, third-person observations (neurons, chemical signals, data processing).

The following are some of the reasons why the gap between the "easy problems" and the "hard problem of consciousness" remains unbridged:

**A.** The "easy problems" involve identifying the mechanisms in the brain that correspond to behaviours (such as the connection between brain regions and vision, behaviour, or memory).

The "hard problem": It questions why these physical processes accompany any subjective experience at all.

The gap: There is no known logical link that explains how objective brain activity (neuron firing) translates into subjective sensation (the feeling of colour, pain, or joy).

**B.** The subjectivity-objectivity dilemma: Neuroscience relies on third-person scientific methods (scanning, imaging, and electrophysiology).

-Subjectivity: Consciousness is inherently subjective and can only be accessed from within by the person experiencing it.

-Obscure minds: Our minds are opaque to us; we are aware of the results of our thoughts (self or feeling), but we are unaware of the mechanism that produces them.

-The paradox: Scientists cannot observe a first-person perspective; they only observe a "report" of it.

**C.** The paradox of the brain studying itself: A fundamental limitation is that the brain attempts to study itself.

Self-referencing: Since the observer is the same as the observed, there is a "self-referential loop." Scale limitations: Just as a scale cannot measure its own length, the brain may be limited in its ability to fully comprehend its own subjective experience.

**D.** Correlation does not imply causation: Much of modern neuroscience focuses on the neural correlations of consciousness (NCCs)—the “minimal neural mechanisms that, taken together, are both necessary and sufficient for any conscious experience.”

Correlation limitations: Showing that a particular part of the brain is activated when you are “happy” does not explain why that activation is happiness, or whether it is the cause of that feeling.

Identity theory problems: The belief that “you are your brain” is insufficient, as neural activity cannot fully explain intentionality—the fact that our conscious mind “cares” about things outside itself.

**E.** The self as an “illusion” (the exclusionary view): Some researchers (such as Daniel Dennett, Patricia Churchland, and Keith Frankish) argue that neuroscience has not yet discovered the self because the “self” is merely a mental model, or a user-friendly interface created by the brain—an illusion.

The interface is easy to use: “Self” is simply a means of distinguishing oneself from others and of organizing information; it is not a solid, intrinsic physical entity.

False conclusion: Because we cannot directly access neural processes (the firing of nerve impulses by neurons), we mistakenly conclude that there is an underlying “entity” (the self) that must be in control.

**F.** “Seeing from nowhere”: Science seeks a “seeing from nowhere” (objectivity), which does not accommodate a “point of view” (subjectivity). The impersonal materialist view: Physical sciences often assume that the brain is a personless machine, making it impossible to identify the origin of “ownership” or “point of view” in physical matter.

**G.** Alternative interpretations and future directions: Given these challenges, some researchers suggest that instead of reducing consciousness to matter, it may be a fundamental feature of the universe (psychological pantheism), or that neuroscience needs to move beyond classical models and study the electromagnetic fields generated by brain tissue. In short, despite significant progress in mapping the neural basis of consciousness, many fundamental questions remain. The decentralized nature of the brain and the subjective character of conscious experience continue to pose challenges to scientific understanding.

#### 4. Consciousness as Subjective Experience: The Limits of Science

We have explored some of the debate surrounding the concept of self in philosophy, science, and religion. While many feel they possess an inner self or soul, scientific perspectives argue that brain processes are sufficient to explain experience, without the need for a separate “self.”

In addition to what we have already discussed, some philosophical views should be mentioned. Philosophers like Derek Parfit distinguished between “ego theory,” which asserts that we are interconnected selves, and “bundle theory,” which suggests that we are merely a collection of experiences linked by memory. David Hume championed bundle theory, arguing that the self is not an independent entity but rather a bundle of sensations.

Major religions often endorse the concept of the self, positing the existence of permanent spirits or selves. Buddhism, however, rejects this, teaching that the self is an illusion and that suffering stems from clinging to this illusion. Modern neuroscience also explores these ideas, particularly through conditions like hemispheric dissociation, where the brain appears to support multiple streams of consciousness.

Experiments with hypnosis and dissociative identity disorder demonstrate that a single brain can accommodate multiple conscious experiences, challenging the notion of a unified, singular self. Numerous theories attempt to explain the self, ranging from William James's distinction between "ego" and "self" to neurological models that view the self as a process or narrative rather than a fixed entity.

With the development of analytic philosophy, the idea emerged that consciousness cannot be reduced to an external description because it is based on internal experience, sensation, and personal meaning. The brain can be measured, but experience cannot. This opened the door to the idea that consciousness is not merely a physical function, but an existential dimension that cannot be grasped by empirical science alone. Here, an old question resurfaced in a new form: Is consciousness a phenomenon in the world? Or a window into the meaning of the world?

In short, the self may not be a permanent, unchanging entity, but rather a constructive entity or a series of experiences. Accepting this may be difficult, as it challenges long-held assumptions about identity and continuity.

## **5. Panpsychism: The Return of the Universal Question**

In contemporary philosophy, the idea that consciousness is not exclusive to humans, but rather a fundamental characteristic of existence itself, has resurfaced. Some philosophers (such as Galen Strawson) argue that if matter produces consciousness, then matter itself must possess a primary cognitive dimension. Thus, theories have emerged that posit every being possesses a degree of awareness, that consciousness is a spectrum rather than a leap, and that the human mind is not an isolated miracle, but the culmination of a universal process. This aligns—structurally—with the Qur’anic view of the universality of consciousness, without being identical in source or purpose.

## **6. Social Consciousness: Marx and Mannheim**

The question has shifted from the individual to society. Marx argued that consciousness is formed within the economic and social structure. Mannheim maintained that ideas are not independent but rather linked to social and historical context. Here, consciousness is not merely subjective or universal, but historical and social. This reveals that consciousness is not a fixed essence, but a relationship between humanity, the world, and time.

## 7. The Unconscious: Freud and the Split Self

Freud came to overturn the image of the conscious self, revealing that humans are not fully aware of themselves, and that beneath consciousness lie layers of repressed desires, drives, and memories. Consciousness is no longer its own master, but rather part of a broader psychological structure. This brings us back to the idea that consciousness is not a simple unit but rather comprises degrees and levels.

## 8. Consciousness and Meaning: From Physics to Philosophy

Modern philosophy shows that physics explains how the universe works but does not explain why it has meaning. Consciousness is the point where the universe meets meaning, matter meets experience, and existence meets inquiry. This returns the question to its ontological root: Is the universe meaningless until humanity appears? Or is meaning part of the very structure of existence?

## 9. A Comparison with the Qur'anic Perspective

If we compare these approaches with the Qur'anic perspective, we observe that modern philosophy asks: How does consciousness arise from matter? The Qur'an asks: How does all of existence participate in glorification, obedience, and meaning?

Philosophy seeks the cause, while the Qur'an reveals the relationship. Both confront the limitations of language and reason in understanding this phenomenon. Some verses indicate that human consciousness itself is a divine gift: "And I breathed into him of My spirit" - "And He taught Adam all the names."



## Conclusion of the chapter

Modern philosophical thought reveals that consciousness is no longer merely a psychological matter, but a question about the very nature of existence. Answers have varied: material reductionism, subjective experience, cosmic universality, social consciousness, and psychological unconsciousness.

However, they all acknowledge the inadequacy of simple explanations. This brings us back to the perspective proposed by this book: that consciousness is not an accidental occurrence in a silent universe, but rather a degree of the relationship between existence and meaning.

Why has material reductionism failed to explain consciousness?

Material reductionism has failed to explain consciousness not because of a lack of scientific data, but because of the limitations of the philosophical framework from which it operates. It succeeds in describing the neural connections of conscious experience, but it fails to explain why these physical processes are accompanied by subjective experience in the first place—that is, why there is sensation, meaning, and feeling within. The transition from describing objective neural activity to explaining subjective experience presupposes a conceptual bridge that neither physics nor chemistry can provide, because their instruments operate from a third-person perspective, while consciousness is experienced from a first-person perspective. Thus, the failure of material reduction reveals that consciousness is not merely a physical function, but an ontological phenomenon that transcends the limits of mechanistic explanation, and it re-examines the question of meaning as an integral part of the structure of existence, not an incidental attribute.



## **Chapter Ten**

### **Consciousness in Islamic Tradition: The Mind, the Heart, and Cosmic Glorification**



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### **Consciousness in Islamic Tradition: The Mind, the Heart, and Cosmic Glorification**

After reviewing the paths of consciousness in modern philosophy, we return in this chapter to Islamic tradition to discover that the question of consciousness was not absent from it, but rather present in multiple forms: intellectual, theological, philosophical, and spiritual.

Why does Islamic tradition combine the mind, the heart, and the universe in the concept of consciousness?

Islamic thought did not treat consciousness as merely a brain function, but as a relationship between humanity and God, a tool for understanding the world, a bridge between knowledge and ethics, and participation in a cosmic order that extends beyond humanity alone. The mind is the instrument of perception and discernment, the heart the locus of witnessing and meaning, and the universe the realm of signs and response; none of these is complete without the others. In this sense, consciousness is not reduced to logical thinking, nor to inner experience alone, but is understood as a network of ethical, spiritual, and cosmological awareness. This synthesis reflects a monotheistic view that sees knowledge not as a separation from existence, but as participation in it, and that humankind can only become self-aware within a cosmic order established by God and open to meaning.

Three major approaches emerged within this tradition: intellectual awareness (theology and philosophy), spiritual awareness (mysticism), and cosmic awareness (the glorification of all that exists).

### 1. Reason as the Basis of Religious Obligation: The Mu'tazilites and Moral Consciousness

The Mu'tazilites established reason as the foundation for understanding religion and religious obligation, believing that humans perceive good and evil through reason before the revelation of scripture. Here, consciousness is the capacity for discernment, moral responsibility, and relative independence in understanding. They maintained that God only obligates those who possess reason, because obligation without awareness is injustice, and God is free from injustice. This made consciousness, for them, moral consciousness before it is cognitive, and linked to divine justice, not merely to biological capacity.

### 2. The Ash'arites: Reason is Limited, and Consciousness is Linked to Revelation

In contrast, the Ash'arites believed that reason is important, but insufficient on its own to discern good and evil, and that true consciousness is shaped by revelation. Here, consciousness is not the source of values, but rather a recipient of them, open to the unseen.

This does not mean negating reason but rather placing it within a broader framework of knowledge, where reason perceives, revelation guides, and the heart bears witness. Thus, consciousness appears in the form of cognitive consciousness, legal consciousness, and spiritual consciousness.

### 3. Muslim Philosophers: Consciousness, the Soul, and the Active Intellect

Muslim philosophers (such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina) linked consciousness to the concepts of the rational soul and the active intellect. For them, consciousness is the capacity to perceive universals, a transition from the senses to the intellect, and a connection with the universal intellect. The conscious person is one who ascends from sensory perception to intellectual perception to connection with the universal meaning. Here, consciousness becomes a rank on the ladder of existence, not merely a psychological state.

#### 4. Sufism: The Heart as the Centre of Consciousness

In Sufism, the centre of consciousness shifts from the mind to the heart. The heart is not merely a biological organ, but the seat of spiritual perception, the locus of knowledge of God, and the centre of witnessing.

Numerous Qur'anic verses affirm that the heart is the centre of consciousness, understanding, contemplation, and thought, and not simply a vessel for blood. The Qur'an describes it as possessing "intellect" and "understanding."

Among the most prominent verses that illustrate this is:

The Heart as the Centre of Intellect: {Have they not traveled through the land so that they may have hearts by which to understand or ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not the eyes that are blinded, but it is the hearts in the breasts that are blinded.} Al-Hajj: 46 The heart is the centre of understanding, comprehension, and awareness: {And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand.} Al-A'raf: 179.

The heart is the centre of reflection: {Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?} Muhammad: 24.

The heart is the centre of sealing and stamping in ignorance: {Thus does Allah seal the hearts of those who do not know.} Al-Rum: 59. The heart is the center of tranquility and faith: {Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.} Al-Ra'd 13:28

The heart is also the center of heedlessness: {And do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance.} Al-Kahf 18:28)

These verses indicate that the heart is the source of guidance, thought, and the making of faith-based and moral decisions.

Qur'anic verses mention the heart as the centre of consciousness: {They have hearts with which they do not understand.} Al-Kahf 18:28 clearly indicates that understanding here is not merely logical reasoning, but rather direct existential awareness. Sufi consciousness is based on: remembrance, contemplation, experience, and witnessing. This opens up a conception of consciousness that transcends thought and reaches the level of presence.

## 5. The Glorification of Existence: A State or Perception?

Exegetes and theologians have differed in their understanding of the glorification of existence. Some have said it is a glorification of state and indication, not of perception. Others have said it is a true glorification, the nature of which we cannot comprehend. This difference reflects two conceptions of the universe: a silent universe that points to God through its existence alone, and a conscious

universe that participates in worship in its own way. Here, it becomes clear that the question of cosmic consciousness was addressed within the Islamic tradition, not something foreign to it.

## 6. Consciousness and Existential Levels

In Islamic tradition, existence is conceived as having levels: for humans, moral and ethical consciousness; for animals, perception and sensation; for plants, growth and direction; and for inanimate objects, order and glorification, as mentioned in previous chapters.

## 7. Consciousness and Knowledge of God

In Islamic tradition, consciousness was not an end in itself, but a path to knowing God, understanding the world, and achieving servitude to Him. Consciousness is not cognitive neutrality, but an existential stance, a responsibility, and a relationship. Therefore, it has always been linked to piety, reverence, and insight, not merely to information.

## Conclusion

Islamic tradition reveals that consciousness has never been understood solely as a mental function, but rather as a mind that perceives, a heart that witnesses, and a universe that glorifies God. It is simultaneously ethical, spiritual, and cosmological consciousness. Its schools of thought varied, ranging from the rationalism of the Mu'tazilites and the transcendentalism of the Ash'arites to the philosophy of the philosophers and the mystical experience of the Sufis. Yet they all share a view of consciousness as a relationship between humanity, existence, and God.

From this point, we move to the next chapter, where a summary of the main ideas are listed.

## **Chapter Eleven**

**Summary of Previous Chapters: Towards a Synthetic Vision:  
Creation, Consciousness, and Eternity**



## Chapter Eleven

### **Summary of Previous Chapters: Towards a Synthetic Vision: Creation, Consciousness, and Eternity**

Having traced the paths of creation in the Qur'an, the universality of consciousness in its texts, and having examined some theological and philosophical disagreements concerning divine speech and the unity of existence, and then compared this with modern philosophy and its theories of consciousness, we arrive in this chapter at a synthetic attempt that does not aim to resolve all the problems, but rather to reformulate them within a broader horizon.

The question is no longer whether creation originates from nothingness or from matter? Is consciousness specific to humanity or encompassing the universe? Is the Qur'an created or eternal? Instead, the deeper question has become: What is the nature of the relationship between God, existence, and meaning? Is the universe a silent event, or a constantly renewing act charged with meaning and consciousness?

#### **1. Creation as a Continuous Act, Not a Finished Moment**

The Qur'anic reading reveals that creation is not a closed, past event, but rather a continuous act, a perpetual renewal, and an ongoing relationship between the divine will and the universe: {Every day He is engaged in some affair}. Existence is not something accomplished and then abandoned, but rather an ongoing process of renewal. This liberates the concept of creation from a mechanistic view and a simplistic, linear understanding of time, bringing it closer to the constant presence of meaning within existence.

## 2. Consciousness as a Relationship, Not an Isolated Property

Consciousness is not presented in this book merely as a brain function, nor as an essence independent of the world, but rather as a relationship between existence and divine command, a response to meaning, and a presence before the Truth. Humanity represents the highest stage of this consciousness, but it is not its beginning. The entire universe glorifies, prostrates, bears witness, and obeys, each in its own way. This opens up a conception of consciousness as a gradual existential spectrum, not an isolated biological leap.

## 3. The Eternal and the Temporal: Neither Discontinuity nor Dissolution

The ordeal of the creation of the Qur'an and the debates surrounding the unity of existence have demonstrated that Islamic thought has always grappled with a single question in various forms: How does the eternal manifest itself within the temporal? The synthetic perspective does not claim that the eternal is separate from history, nor that history is the eternal itself. Rather, it asserts that the eternal manifests itself in the temporal without being reduced to it, and the temporal points to the eternal without containing it. Thus, the Qur'an is eternal in its source, temporal in its language, and universal in its meaning. Similarly, creation is eternal in its will, historical in its manifestation, and perpetual in its relationship.

## 4. The Universe as a Realm of Meaning, Not Inert Matter

When creation and consciousness are understood in this way, the conception of the universe transforms from a silent machine to a realm of meaning. Stars are not merely celestial bodies, but signs. The earth is not simply matter, but a witness. Time is not merely succession, but

a sphere of manifestation. This does not contradict science but complements it: science explains how the universe functions, while the existential perspective explains why it has significance.

## 5. Humanity: The Meeting Point of Cosmic and Moral Consciousness

In this perspective, humanity occupies the centre of the universe not by force, but by responsibility. Human beings are conscious of their own consciousness, are questioned about their responses, and are held accountable for their relationship to meaning. This is why consciousness in the Qur'an is always linked to ethics, justice, witnessing, and trustworthiness. Consciousness is not merely knowledge, but an existential commitment.

## 6. What does this perspective add?

This synthetic perspective does not claim to establish a new science, nor to refute physics, nor to produce an alternative doctrine. Rather, it proposes a philosophical and spiritual framework for understanding creation as a meaningful act, consciousness as a cosmic relationship, the Qur'an as an ontological discourse, and humanity as a witness, not a possessor. It is a perspective that avoids material reductionism and dissolution, and preserves distinction within relation, and transcendence within presence.

Herein lies the philosophical aim of this book: not to offer definitive answers, but to reopen the question of existence and consciousness within a unifying horizon that transcends the dualism between science and religion, matter and meaning, and time and eternity.



## **Chapter Twelve**

### **Free Will Between Philosophy, Science, and the Qur'an**



## Chapter Twelve

### Free Will Between Philosophy, Science, and the Qur'an

#### Freedom in a Law-Governed Universe

Free will appears to be one of humanity's most self-evident yet perplexing concepts: we experience choice as an internal reality, and we build morality, law, and accountability upon its premise, only to be surprised that scientific worldviews, from physical causality to brain science, suggest that our actions may be part of a predetermined system.

This chapter does not seek to provide "conclusive proof" for or against freedom, but rather to reframe the question within a more complex framework:

How can humans be agents and responsible within a universe governed by laws?

Does freedom mean breaking causality, or does it mean a higher form of causality: a conscious, meaning-oriented causality?

Why does philosophy cling to the hypothesis of freedom?

Arguments in favour of free will generally stem from subjective experience, the necessity of moral responsibility, and the nature of conscious thought and creativity. These arguments are often put forward in opposition to strict determinism, the view that all events, including our choices, are predetermined by prior causes.

## **Main Arguments for Free Will**

**A. Subjective Experience of Choice:** The strong, direct, personal experience of making decisions and feeling in control of them is one of the most common arguments. From choosing a meal to determining a career path, individuals experience a sense of autonomy and agency—an internal feeling of making unconstrained choices. This lived experience is often considered intuitive evidence for free will.

**B. Moral Responsibility:** The concepts of law, reward, punishment, guilt, and praise are based on the assumption of individual moral responsibility. This philosophical argument assumes that holding people accountable for their actions is only just if they could have intentionally chosen to act differently. If actions were predetermined, punishment would serve only a utilitarian purpose (such as deterrence) rather than a punitive purpose based on moral merit.

**C. Deliberation and Rationalism:** The process of deliberation—weighing options and considering consequences—means that the outcome is not yet decided. The very acts of advising, persuading, and warning are only meaningful if people have the capacity to choose between different possible courses of action.

**D. Creativity and Innovation:** Human creativity and the ability to imagine and realize new possibilities through unforeseen choices are presented as evidence of free will. This suggests a level of spontaneous decision-making that does not simply result from a continuum of prior physical causes. Nanotechnology creates new molecular structures that the universe has never before formed.

**E. Pragmatic Arguments:** Some argue that, even if free will is an illusion, belief in it is essential for a functioning society and personal well-being. This concept can foster responsible social behaviour, encourage a sense of purpose, and is necessary for navigating the world in a meaningful way. The alternative (belief in rigid determinism) may lead to nihilism or despair for some.

### **Major Philosophical Positions: Determinism, Libertarianism, and Conformism**

The philosophical landscape can be summarized in three perspectives:

**(a) Strict Determinism:**

Every event—including decisions—is the inevitable result of prior causes; therefore, free will is an illusion. Strict determinism asserts that determinism is true, and because it is incompatible with free will, free will does not exist.

Albert Einstein was a staunch believer in determinism and considered free will an illusion. He frequently quoted Arthur Schopenhauer and Spinoza to express his beliefs.

Einstein found solace and insight in Schopenhauer's idea that "man can do what he wants, but he cannot want what he wants," noting that this concept guided him throughout his life and helped him accept the actions of others. He felt that this understanding of the absence of free will prevented him from taking himself and others seriously as independent beings and helped him maintain his composure. To illustrate his point, Einstein used the analogy of the moon, suggesting

that if it possessed consciousness, it would believe it moved of its own accord. He implied that a more astute observer would also view humanity's belief in free will as an illusion.

Regarding human behavior and responsibility, and despite his philosophical determinism, Einstein recognized the practical need to act as if free will existed within society. He stated that although he did not believe in free will, he was compelled to act as if people were responsible for living in a civilized society.

**(b) Libertarianism (Nondeterminism):**

Rejects determinism and sees humans as the ultimate source of their actions (meaning they could have done otherwise). Libertarianism is a non-conformist position that claims determinism is false and that humans possess genuine free will, that is, the capacity to be the ultimate source or creator of their actions.

**(c) Conformism:**

Sees that freedom does not mean escaping the network of causes but rather acting according to internal motives and reasons without compelling external coercion. That is, freedom as a “conscious appropriation of action” within a causal system.

This chapter approaches conformism, but it does not simply adopt its traditional form; rather, it redefines both causality and freedom.

Reimagining the Fundamental Conflict: The debate between proponents of free will and determinism can be reformulated within this new paradigm:

### **Arguments Against Free Will (Downward Laws):**

Deterministic arguments highlight universal constants, the law of causality, and the fundamental laws that govern all of existence, including human thought and action. Physical laws, they argue, drive the components of the universe toward a “pre-programmed” impasse, in which we have no will or choice.

Ultimately, while the feeling of free will is a universal human experience, its existence as an actual metaphysical capacity remains a profound and ongoing philosophical and scientific inquiry.

### **Arguments for Free Will (Upward Mechanism):**

The subjective experience of choice and moral responsibility is not an illusion, but rather the process by which fundamental natural laws operate. The capacity for action: Our capacity for deliberation and choice represents a "regressive" mechanism for change. We feel that we choose "of our own free will," and this feeling is essential for motivating the actions necessary for construction and progress.

### **Why does the "fifth force" model outside of causality fail?**

This becomes clear when examining the reasons for the failure of the "fifth force" model outside of causality when it invokes a separate, immaterial, free will, and how this model creates more metaphysical problems than it solves. This supposed force needs to intervene in the physical world without violating the laws of conservation, influence

neural matter without any detectable energy transfer, and remain scientifically undetectable while being the decisive factor in human action. This concept does not explain freedom; rather, it renames the enigma and introduces a supernatural flaw into a universe that could have been understood. Moreover, freedom achieved by breaking the chain of causality cannot be recognized as freedom at all; it is indistinguishable from randomness. And randomness—the occurrence of an action without a cause—is not will. It is the same thing.” Losing it.

### **Causality is not a chain, but a field.**

To get out of this predicament, we must update our concept of chain of causation (Causality). It is not a chain, but a field. The classical Newtonian picture of causality—a rigid chain of deterministic impulses—is an oversimplification. The modern understanding, grounded in quantum mechanics, complexity theory, and systems biology, suggests that causality is best viewed as multilayered, probabilistic, and highly contextual. It operates more by setting constraints and enabling spaces of possibility than by imposing precise outcomes. Within the limits of physical law, multiple future possibilities are often physically possible. Any specific future that unfolds is not always determined with extreme precision by the previous state of the universe. Causality, in this broader perspective, does not dictate every detail; it sets the scene and the rules of the game. Indeterminism without chaos.

This refers to the fact that indeterminism exists without chaos. At the fundamental levels described in quantum physics, indeterminacy is an inherent feature of reality. Events can occur without being

predetermined. Predetermined, yet occurring within statistically constrained ranges and without violating the general structure of physical law. This inherent openness is not, in itself, freedom. The probabilistic "choice" of the electron is not a model of human will. But this fundamental indeterminacy creates space—an existential openness—at the very foundation of reality. Freedom requires such openness, but openness alone is insufficient. It is the raw material, not the finished product.

### **Consciousness as Selector, Not Violator**

The ultimate factor is consciousness as selector, not violator. Consciousness does not operate by transgressing the laws of physics. It operates within the broad space permitted by physics, where multiple, physically possible outcomes exist—whether in cases of precise uncertainty in neural processes or in cases of the overall ambiguity of a complex structure. In the moment of decision, consciousness plays its pivotal role. It evaluates potential actions based on their anticipated meaning, integrates memory and future intentions, postpones automatic reactions, and chooses from among alternatives. This choice is not arbitrary but is informed by values accumulated over a lifetime, a formed personal identity, and a semantic understanding of the world. It is precisely here that freedom arises, not as an escape from causality, but as a conscious, value-guided navigation within the causal field. It is causality that becomes self-directed.

## **Freedom as Structured Openness**

Therefore, we can define freedom as structured openness. True, meaningful freedom is not the complete absence of constraints, but rather a defined structure requiring three elements:

1. Constraints: fixed laws and structures that allow for predictable outcomes and reliable actions. Without constraints, action becomes incoherent chaos.
2. Alternatives: a genuine plurality of permissible futures from which to choose. Without genuine choices, action is mere coercion.
3. Reflection: the conscious capacity to model these alternatives, weigh them according to values, and then choose one. Without this awareness, action lacks a sense of ownership.

## **Responsibility without a metaphysical burden**

These three conditions are strongly present within complex natural systems such as the human brain. Freedom, therefore, is not absolute openness, but rather a structured openness—the capacity for conscious and self-reflective creation within a world governed by laws.

This framework naturally supports the concept of responsibility without a metaphysical burden. If our actions were entirely and automatically determined by past conditions, the concept of responsibility would be meaningless—we would be mere puppets. If our actions were entirely without cause, responsibility would be impossible—we could not be held accountable for random events.

Responsibility finds its logical place in the middle ground: it exists because we are agents operating within known constraints, we can understand the potential consequences of our actions, and if faced with similar circumstances, we could choose and act differently based on reflection and evaluation. This is a sufficient basis for moral and legal responsibility. It does not require an immaterial spirit, but rather a conscious, causally integrated, and sufficiently complex self.

### **Freedom, Meaning, and Continuity**

We see, then, that freedom, meaning, and continuity are inseparable. Free choice is not merely selecting an option from a list; it is an affirmation of value, an expression of an aspect of identity, and an expansion of the coherent narrative of life. A choice devoid of meaning—like flipping a coin to decide or a random nervous twitch—is not seen as a free act, but as an arbitrary or bizarre event. Freedom, in its deepest sense, is the instrument by which the self establishes its identity over time and effectively constructs its story within the grand narrative of a law-based reality. Theological Reflection Without Intervention

From a theological perspective, this view liberates us from interventionism. The granting of freedom by God does not entail a periodic suspension of natural law, as if God were intervening to break the chains of determinism that bind us. Rather, freedom exists because the cosmic order is inherently structured—intelligible, open, and gradual—in a way that allows for, and even fosters, conscious participation. Creation is not a deterministic machine, nor is it a chaotic arena of miracles. It is a coherent and generous system, open enough to evoke genuine partnership from within.

## **Freedom as Function, Not Exception**

Thus, we conclude that free will is a function, not an exception. It is not a supernatural anomaly added to nature. It is a high-level function that arises naturally when material complexities, conscious integration, and semantic meaning converge. It arises legitimately from the properties of the universe and operates according to the principles of conscious causality. Freedom is not the absence of causality. It is causality that becomes self-aware, self-forming, and self-directing. It is the universe, in the form of a conscious being, learning to orient itself within its own currents.

## **Completing the Structure**

With this understanding, the structure is completed within the framework of the concept of the fixed and the variable in existence. The constant provides the uncompromising structure and constraint—physical law, biological necessity, and logical form. The changing provides the field of expression, adaptation, and new form. Consciousness arises as an integrative interface where form is translated into meaning. Freedom functions as the capacity for conscious choice within the openness provided by the variable, constrained by the fixed. Dynamic equilibrium is the principle that maintains the coherence of the whole through time. Nothing is added unnecessarily—no fifth forces, no supernatural interruptions. Nothing is arbitrarily removed—meaning, responsibility, and authentic choice remain intact, rooted in reality.

## Conscious Will in Neuroscience Research

The concept of free will raises an important question: Do we truly possess it? When we perform a voluntary action, such as moving our wrist, it appears to be a conscious decision. However, scientific evidence suggests that multiple brain processes are involved in initiating voluntary actions, and the precise mechanism remains unclear. Neuroanatomical studies show that voluntary movements activate several brain regions, including the prefrontal cortex, the premotor cortex, and the primary motor cortex, each contributing to the planning and execution of the movement.

Nevertheless, the role of consciousness in decision-making remains a subject of debate. Experiments, such as Libet's, indicate that the brain activity associated with movement begins before individuals are consciously aware of their intention to act. This finding challenges the traditional view that conscious will precedes and causes voluntary actions.

Philosophically, the question of free will is complex. Determinism assumes that all events are predetermined by prior causes, leaving little room for genuine choice. Some argue that free will and determinism are incompatible, while others maintain that making complex decisions within a deterministic framework is sufficient for moral responsibility.

The feeling of conscious control may be an illusion, as psychological and neurological studies show that people are capable of acting without full awareness and may attribute their will to others. This phenomenon is evident in conditions such as involuntary muscle movements and certain psychological disorders.

Ultimately, despite the strength of the subjective experience of free will, scientific and philosophical perspectives suggest that it may not reflect an underlying causal force. Nevertheless, this perception influences behaviour and notions of responsibility.

A 1985 experiment by neuroscientist Benjamin Libet demonstrated that unconscious brain activity (the readiness effort) precedes the conscious intention to act by approximately 300–500 milliseconds, indicating that voluntary actions begin unconsciously. The results suggested that consciousness decides on movement after it has been neurally generated, sparking debate about whether "free will" is an illusion.

Libet asked participants in his experiment to flex their wrists at least 40 times, at times of their choosing, and measured three things: the time at which the action was performed, the time at which brain activity began in the motor cortex, and the time at which they consciously decided to perform the action.

EEG scans showed that the timing of brain activity (readiness potential - RP) preceded the conscious intention to move by about 300–500 milliseconds, before participants reported their conscious intention (will to move) and the actual movement. Libet suggested that the brain initiates the action before we are conscious of it, but noted that consciousness still retains the ability to change or stop the action at the last moment.

In 2007, neuroscientist John Dylan Heinz, at the Bernstein Centre for Computational Neuroscience in Berlin, Germany, conducted a new experiment. In each experiment, participants were given a time limit to make a decision and act upon it. The decision was either to press a button with their left hand or a button with their right hand.

Simultaneously, participants viewed a screen displaying a rapid succession of letters. They were asked to identify the letter appearing on the screen at the moment they decided to press one of the buttons.

While Libet used electroencephalography (EEG), Heinz used the more advanced functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Both techniques record brain activity as it occurs, but fMRI readings offer higher spatial resolution, more precisely identifying specific brain regions as they are activated. Heinz claimed that by analysing fMRI data of a specific brain region, the prefrontal cortex, he could predict which button a subject would choose—left or right—with up to 60% accuracy a full seven seconds before they consciously made their decision.

However, few scientists are convinced that this negates free will. Marcel Brass, from Ghent University in Belgium, points out that 60% isn't much better than chance, but adds, "This shows that our decisions are influenced by events happening in our brains before we make the decision. But it doesn't prove that our decisions are completely predetermined." Jeff Miller, from the University of Otago in New Zealand, agrees, saying, "The discovery that brain activity predicts a decision doesn't undermine free will." He explains that the brain activity used in the prediction might simply be a predisposition toward one option over another, and that the final decision might have been made consciously.

Heinz himself acknowledges this possibility. Perhaps this early signal doesn't represent a final decision, but rather a signal that points you in a certain direction but doesn't definitively resolve your decision. So, what is meant by "decision-making"?

Heinz says, "It's not free will. Decisions result from unconscious brain processes, and then consciousness intervenes later." Heinz argues that our conscious decisions are predetermined by brain activity, even if we haven't yet fully deciphered this activity. He adds, "The belief that you have free will is a personal experience. It's unreasonable and contradicts the determinism of the scientific universe."

However, the philosophical implications of these findings are not conclusive for at least two reasons:

1. A preceding neural signal does not equate to a final decision: it may represent an inclination or predisposition, not a definitive choice.
2. Furthermore, freedom—as conceived in by many scholars—is not a single, isolated spark, but rather a process of integration, evaluation, postponement, and response across multiple time layers within the nervous system itself.

Thus, these experiences do not negate the possibility of free will, but they shift it from the image of a "conscious button being pressed" to a more complex one: the decision as a gradual formation within a conscious system.

### **The Problem of Human Will within the Framework of God's Will**

“And you do not will except that God wills. Indeed, God is ever Knowing and Wise.” Al-Insan: 30. This noble verse presents us with a fundamental theological paradox:

1. Necessitarianism (Predeterminism): Everything is predestined, and free will is an illusion.
2. Fatalism: God knows beforehand but does not compel.
3. Ash'ari: God is the creator of our actions; He creates everything, but humans “acquire” everything.

This book proposes a reading that distinguishes between two levels:

- God's Will: A foundational will that creates the system itself: its laws, possibilities, conditions, and capacity to produce conscious agency.
- Human Will: An active will that operates within this system as the capacity to choose one possibility over another (within Quantum Physics context), according to knowledge, values, and intention.

In this sense, human will is not negated, but rather understood as part of the "generosity of creation": **God willed to create a world within which choice could be real and meaningful.**

God's knowledge encompasses the entire "tree of possibilities"—the initial conditions, the laws, and the quantum probabilities. The universe is a dynamic system with real points of choice. God knows every possible path and the path that every conscious being will take. Thus, divine knowledge does not negate free will; it encompasses all possible choices.

**Manifestation versus Evolution:** We are not merely passive manifestations of a predetermined plan, but active participants in a rich system that includes:

-Necessity (the laws of nature)

-Probability (quantum mechanics)

-Freedom (conscious beings).

Our choices are real within this system, and God's knowledge encompasses all levels of interaction.

### **Analogy: The Universe as an Interactive Narrative**

In a traditional story, the author writes all the details, and the characters have no will. In interactive storytelling, the author designs the framework, characters, and scenarios, but the characters interact according to their attributes, leading to multiple possible outcomes. The author knows all the possible endings and what will happen but does not write every action. Similarly, God created a system that generates actions through genuine choice.

In short: God's knowledge is all-encompassing, but reality is not a "pre-written movie"; it is a complex system that makes its own history. There is determinism at a fundamental level, but it is a rich determinism that allows for real possibilities and choices. God's statement, **"And you do not will except that God wills. Indeed, God is ever Knowing and Wise,"** can be understood as follows: God willed to create a system in which His creation enjoys true freedom.

## **Divine Knowledge of the Future and the Illusion of Time**

Some of us might ask: If time is merely a mental and mnemonic construct—where the past consists of remembered locations, the present of the current state, and the future of anticipated locations—then time itself does not truly pass. Rather, only objects and motion exist within the coordinates of space. The Big Bang represents the beginning of motion and space, independent of any human observer who creates a sense of time. This raises a philosophical question: how can this perspective be reconciled with the belief in God's eternity and the idea that existence is ancient in divine knowledge but was only manifested with the Big Bang?

From a physical perspective, time might be a sequence of events in memory, while the universe is a static mass, and the mind creates the illusion of flow. Even without observers, there is an objective causal sequence; change is real, even if time itself is not. Theologically, God is outside the realm of time, seeing all moments simultaneously. Divine knowledge of the future is not prophecy but a direct vision of the entire mass of spacetime.

1. One possible solution lies in distinguishing between levels of time:

- Physical time: arises from motion and change and may be illusory from a higher perspective.
- Causal/Organized time: a real, logical sequence of events, independent of observers.
- The Divine Perspective: God is eternal and timeless, existing outside the realm of time, knowing all events as a whole.

Therefore, the illusion lies in our subjective experience of anticipating the future, not in the reality of the events themselves. The future exists in God's knowledge as part of the totality of creation. Whether the universe is deterministic or allows for free will, God is the creator of order and knows all outcomes.

In short, human time may be an illusion, but causal time is real and part of creation. God, being outside the realm of time, knows all events as a single reality. There is no contradiction between God's eternal knowledge and the existence of time in creation. The “Block Universe” is a created framework, while God's knowledge is eternal and encompasses all temporal arrangements at once.

Human perception is inherently linear and temporal, processing information sequentially and understanding concepts through cause and effect, before and after. Divine knowledge, on the other hand, transcends these limitations, encompassing all events simultaneously.

A mathematical analogy illustrates this distinction: while we experience the universe moment by moment, God knows the complete solution to its governing equations at all times. However, this does not imply absolute determinism. Modern scientific models, such as chaos theory and quantum mechanics, demonstrate that systems may be deterministic, but they are unpredictable, and probabilities play a fundamental role. Divine knowledge encompasses all possible outcomes and paths, including those arising from quantum uncertainty and complex systems.

It is important to note that omniscience does not imply automatic control. God created a system governed by initial laws and conditions, probabilities, and relationships, which produce complexity and emerging phenomena, including consciousness and free will. The

central philosophical challenge lies in reconciling absolute divine knowledge with genuine free will. Traditional solutions range from determinism to conformity, but the modern perspective suggests that God knows all possible cosmic decision paths and the choices that will be made, without denying the reality of those choices.

Rather than being passive manifestations of a predetermined plan, we are active participants in a rich system that allows for necessity, probability, and genuine freedom. Our choices are real and meaningful within this framework, and divine knowledge encompasses all levels of interaction.

2. My preferred solution (synthesis), though radical, is a view of observer-relative idealism<sup>6</sup> combined with a panentheistic vision of God:

Let us consider that fundamental reality consists of objects in space and their movements. "Time" is not a separate entity, but the experience generated when a conscious observer arranges these movements into a sequence of memory (past), attention (present), and anticipation (future). Without an observer, there is movement but no "time."

God is the primordial, infinite Observer. The entire universe - its matter, energy, and all its motions - exists within the reality of God.

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<sup>6</sup> An observer in Quantum Mechanics is conscious being or any system that interacts with a quantum object, such as a photon, a detector, or even air molecules, acting to "measure" its state. The Observer Effect is the act of measuring a quantum system inevitably interacts with it, changing its properties and causing the wave-like superposition to collapse into a particle-like state.

God's consciousness eternally attends to every position and every transition. This divine attention is not sequential; it is a total, simultaneous apprehension of all motion. For God, there is no 'past' or 'future,' only the everlasting, dynamic present of all existence in movement.

Therefore, the Big Bang marks not the beginning of existence, but the beginning of the particular sequence of movements that our derived consciousnesses experience as cosmic history. The "future" is real, not as an unwritten page, but as a set of positions and movements already fully present in the divine field of attention, which we, as finite explorers within God, will sequentially encounter.

In this view, there is no contradiction: God's eternity is the eternal act of observing all movement. Our time is the illusion of sequence we construct from that movement. Divine knowledge is perfect because God is the very medium in which the cosmic dance unfolds."

In this view:

"Movement" is primary. It is a relation between positions in space.

"Time" is secondary. It is not a dimension or a container. It is a cognitive artifact produced by a conscious observer when it remembers a past position (creating "past"), attends to a current position (creating "present"), and predicts a future position (creating "future").

Consciousness is the time-generator. No observer = no "time," only movement. A rock does not experience time; a conscious being does.

God is the Ultimate Observer. Before any finite consciousness existed, God's infinite consciousness was (and eternally is) "attending to" the movements and positions within Himself. God's observation does not

create time, because God's mode of attention is not sequential. God's observation sustains the reality of the movement itself.

This implies that Movement does not require time; it only requires an Observer to be real.

In this model:

The universe is in God (panentheism: all is within the divine reality).

The movements and changes of the universe are real changes for God. God is not a static block; God is the infinite; all dynamic movement of creation occurs within Him. His knowledge is not a frozen snapshot, but an infinite, active attending to all positions and their transitions.

Our human "time" is our finite, limited, and sequential way of parsing this infinite, divine dynamism.

This is a synthesis of ideas from process philosophy, idealist interpretations of quantum mechanics (where observation collapses the wave function), and classical theism.

## **The Holy Qur'an and Free Will**

In the Holy Qur'an, numerous verses emphasize human free will and personal responsibility for actions within the framework of the general divine will. Humans are held accountable based on their choice of guidance or misguidance, highlighting the principle of "There is no compulsion in religion."

Among the most prominent verses that point to free will and personal choice are:

The freedom to believe or disbelieve: "And say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve' Al-Kahf: 29.

Human will, limited by the will of God: "And you do not will except that God wills - Lord of the worlds" Al-Takwir: 29.

Bearing the consequences of choice: "Indeed, We guided him to the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful" Al-Insan: 3.

Self-transformation: "Indeed, God does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." Ar-Ra'd 13:11

Guidance and misguidance are personal choices: "Whoever is guided is only guided for [the benefit of] himself; and whoever goes astray only goes astray to his own detriment." Al-Isra 17:15

Rejection of compulsion: "There is no compulsion in religion. Righteousness has become distinct from error." Al-Baqarah 2:256

The Arabic root word (rwd) and its derivatives appear in the Holy Qur'an 132 times, signifying will, desire, command, intention, love, and request. When attributed to the Divine Being, it signifies will and command. When attributed to created beings, it signifies the ability to make sound decisions and overcome internal and external obstacles to achieve desired goals, restraining oneself from excessive desires, whims, and demands, and submitting to and accepting God's commands. In Islamic jurisprudence, will is defined as the ability to execute God's commands and accept them with complete intention and focus.

### **First: Types of Will in the Qur'an:**

**A- Divine Will:** This is absolute will and is sometimes called the Divine Precept:

{Our word to a thing when We intend it is only that We say to it, "Be," and it is.} (An-Nahl: 40) {...Indeed, your Lord is an effective doer of what He intends.} (Hud 107)

{Indeed, Allah decrees what He intends.} (Al-Ma'idah 1)

{His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be," and it is.} (Ya-Sin 82)

{And He created everything and determined its precise measure.} (Al-Furqan 2)

{Have you not considered how your Lord extends the shadow? And if He willed, He could have made it stationary. Then We made the sun

its guide.} (Al-Furqan 45) {The command of Allah is a decree determined.} (Al-Ahzab 38)

{So whoever Allah wills to guide - He expands his breast to [receive] Islam; and whoever He wills to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe.} (Al-An'am 125)

Have you considered the water that you drink? Is it you who brought it down from the clouds, or is it We who bring it down? If We willed, We could make it bitter. Then why are you not grateful? (Al-Waqi'ah 68-70)

**B-** The will of those accountable (rational beings) among God's creation:

{And We guided him to the two paths} Al-Balad: 10.

{Every soul is held in pledge for what it has earned} Al-Muddaththir: 38.

{And your Lord is not unjust to His servants} Fussilat: 46.

{God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what it has earned, and it will bear [the consequence of] what it has incurred} Al-Baqarah: 286.

{So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it} Az-Zalzalah: 7-8

{... 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. (Al Imran: 145)

{This is a reminder, so whoever wills may take a path to his Lord. And you do not will except that Allah wills. Indeed, Allah is ever Knowing and Wise.} (Al-Insan 76:29-30)

{Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments - We will fully recompense them for their deeds therein, and they will not be deprived of anything therein.} (Hud 11:15)

{And Allah wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow their desires want you to deviate greatly. Allah wants to lighten your burden, and mankind was created weak.} (An-Nisa: 27-28)

{Satan only wants to cause enmity and hatred among you through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?} (Al-Ma'idah: 91)

{And when We intend to destroy a city, We command its affluent ones [to obey Us], but they defiantly disobey therein; so the word comes into effect upon it, and We destroy it with [complete] destruction.} [Al-Isra: 16]

{They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, even if the disbelievers dislike it.} [As-Saff: 8]

{Rather, man desires to continue in sin. He asks, "When is the Day of Resurrection?"} [Al-Qiyamah: 6]

{Whoever desires the immediate life, We hasten for him therein what We will to whom We intend. Then We have assigned for him Hell, which he will [enter to] burn, disgraced and banished. But whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it as it should be striven for, while he is a believer - then those are the ones whose striving is appreciated.}  
[Al-Isra: 19]

## **Conclusion of the chapter**

### **Freedom as a responsibility and a meaning**

In light of the foregoing, free will is no longer a supernatural exception, nor an illusion that can be nullified, but rather a noble function that arises when material complexity meets conscious integration and value-based meaning.

Freedom is not the absence of causality, but rather causality when it becomes self-aware, guided by values and goals, capable of postponing spontaneity, and of embracing action as a "choice."

In this, philosophy, science, and the Qur'an converge on a single point: that humanity is not reduced to a machine, nor elevated to a force without law, but rather understood as a responsible being: one who chooses within the world and is accountable for their choices, because their choices have meaning.

## **General Conclusion / A New Beginning**

### **Between Question and Meaning**

This book was not so much an attempt to answer the great questions as it was an attempt to restore them to their rightful place at the heart of existence, and at the core of the relationship between humanity, the world, and God.

We began with the question of creation, moved to the question of consciousness, and traced the paths of the eternal and the temporal. Our approaches diverged between the Qur'an, Islamic tradition, and modern philosophy.

But the thread that united them all was one: that existence is not silent, that meaning is not incidental, and that humanity is not merely a neutral observer in a soulless universe, but rather a being who is questioned, called to understanding, and entrusted with a responsibility.

This book did not reveal a closed, mechanical universe, nor a consciousness confined to the brain alone, nor a religion isolated from the world, but rather a world renewed by creation, charged with meaning, evolving in consciousness, and maintaining a constant relationship with its source.

Here, the Qur'an is not read merely as a book of legislation, but as a book of cosmic vision, linking God, existence, consciousness, and humanity on a single horizon. We are not faced with ultimate certainty, nor with a closed system, but rather with an open horizon of understanding and contemplation. Every attempt to understand creation leads to a new question, every attempt to understand consciousness reveals its limitations, and every attempt to understand

eternity reminds us of the inadequacy of language in the face of vastness. Herein lies the value of the question: not in possessing the answer, but in remaining within the realm of wonder.

The most dangerous thing that can befall modern humanity is not ignorance, but rather reducing the world to meaningless matter, reducing oneself to a soulless function, and reducing religion to a slogan without vision.

This book is a call to resist this reductionism by seeing in the universe a sign, in consciousness a responsibility, in science a path to understanding, not a substitute for meaning, and in religion a presence in the world, not a withdrawal from it.

If this book has a final message, it is this:

We are not alone in this existence.

We are not the first to pose these questions.

And we will not be the last to walk this path.

We are part of an ongoing cosmic dialogue between Creator and creation, between mind and heart, between science and meaning, between time and eternity. When we realize this, questioning becomes not a burden, but an act of worship; thinking becomes not a danger, but a path to humility; and existence becomes not futility, but a sacred trust.

Thus, this book does not end with a conclusion, but with a new beginning: the beginning of an awareness that sees more than matter

in the universe, more than chance in humanity, more than scripture in religion, and more than bewilderment in questioning.

A journey that begins with wonder... continues with responsibility... and ends only in contemplative silence.



## **Glossary of Terms**

### **For the first axis: Creation and Ontology**

#### **Creation:**

In this book, creation is not understood as a closed, past event, but rather as a renewed act and an ongoing relationship between the divine will and existence. Creation is not a transition from absolute nothingness to existence, but a manifestation of meaning in transforming cosmic forms. It is a continuous act that connects the eternal with the temporal without reducing one to the other.

#### **Nothingness:**

In the Qur'anic discourse, nothingness is not used as an ontological origin of existence. Instead, absence is presented in favor of the concepts of transformation, estimation, and the word. In this book, the concept of absolute nothingness is critiqued as a later philosophical assumption with no textual necessity.

#### **Truth/Meaning:**

The principle of the order and meaning of existence, not merely a cognitive value. Creation through truth means that the universe is based on meaning, purpose, and order, not on chance or randomness.

#### **Command and Word:**

These terms indicate that existence is not inert matter, but rather a response to will and meaning. The divine word is not a linguistic sound, but a principle of manifestation and realization in the world.

**Destiny/Measure:**

The structure of existence's order according to measure and meaning, not a mechanical, inert determinism. It indicates that creation is balanced, directed, and open to transformation within limits.

**Manifestation:**

The appearance of the eternal in temporal forms without losing its transcendence. The universe is a manifestation of the divine command, not an identity of God Himself.

**Eternity:**

A level of existence beyond the categories of before and after, belonging solely to the divine essence, while the world appears in time as a limited manifestation of it.

**Time:**

Not an independent substance, but a perceptual image of the succession of transformations in existence. It is the framework of human consciousness for understanding change, not a constraint on the divine will. Existence Subsisting in God: A view that sees the world as neither God nor entirely separate from Him, but rather as existing in a permanent existential dependence upon Him without incarnation or union.

## **Second Axis: Consciousness and Awareness**

Consciousness: Understood as a relationship between existence and meaning, not merely a brain function. It is a hierarchical existential characteristic encompassing humanity and the universe to varying degrees, with humanity reaching its highest level as a morally responsible being.

**Panpsychism – Qur’anic sense:** A conception that sees awareness not as exclusive to humanity, but as an existential spectrum extending throughout the world according to patterns appropriate to each level of existence.

### **Qualia:**

The irreducible, internal aspect of conscious experience (such as pain, color, and meaning), considered evidence of the limitations of purely materialistic explanation.

### **Intentionality:**

The fact that consciousness is always directed toward something; that is, it is consciousness of meaning, not merely a closed, self-contained neural activity.

### **The Self:**

Not a fixed, separate essence, but a narrative and existential structure formed through consciousness, memory, and moral responsibility.

### **The Unconscious:**

A level of psychological and neurological processes that precedes consciousness and does not negate it, but rather reveals that consciousness is a spectrum, not a simple unity.

### **Third Axis: Reason and Heart**

#### **The Reason:**

An instrument of moral and cognitive perception and discernment, not a self-sufficient source of truth. In Islamic tradition, it is part of a broader system that includes revelation and the heart.

#### **The Heart:**

The center of existential awareness, witnessing, and meaning in the Qur'an and Sufism, not merely a biological organ. It is the seat of jurisprudence, contemplation, tranquility, and awe.

#### **Witnessing:**

A mode of knowledge that transcends proof to presence, where consciousness becomes participation in meaning, not merely external observation.

## **Fourth Axis: Language and Meaning**

### **Metaphor and Reality:**

The Qur'anic discourse is not reduced to mere rhetorical metaphor. Rather, its language is read as an ontological revelation of the nature of existence, not simply didactic embellishment.

### **Rhetoric**

Ontology: A concept that sees the language of the Qur'an as describing the very structure of existence, not merely as figurative language.

### **Glorification:**

An existential act attributed to all beings as a response to the Truth, not merely a symbolic gesture.

### **Prostration:**

An expression of the universal relationship of obedience between existence and the divine command, not merely a physical movement.

### **Bearing Witness:**

The capacity of existence to preserve and express meaning on the Day of Judgment, indicating a universal memory.

Fifth Axis: The Eternal and the Temporal

### **The Creation of the Qur'an:**

An issue that expresses the tension between the eternal and the historical, where the Qur'an is understood as eternal in its source and temporal in its linguistic manifestation.

### **Unity of Existence:**

A Sufi concept that refers to the unity of the source and the multiplicity of manifestations, not to the incarnation of the Creator in the creation.

### **Incarnation and Union:**

Concepts that deny the distinction between God and the world, which this book rejects in favour of the concept of a relationship without dissolution.

### **Acquisition:**

An Ash'ari concept that sees humans as acquiring their actions within the will of God, without being mechanically compelled.

## **Sixth Axis: Freedom and Causality**

### **Free Will:**

The capacity of consciousness to make choices guided by values within an open causal field, neither departing from natural law nor submitting to it mechanically.

**Determinism:**

A view that sees all events as determined by prior causes, which this book reinterprets within a multi-layered, non-mechanical model of causality.

**Harmonism:**

A position that sees freedom as possible within a causal system, if defined as a conscious, uncoerced choice.

**Causality as a Field, Not a Chain:**

A modern conception that views causality as a network of constraints and possibilities, not a closed line of necessities.

**Seventh Axis: The Synthetic Vision****The Synthetic Vision:**

A philosophical framework that combines perpetual creation, gradual consciousness, and divine eternity, without material reductionism or mystical solutions.

**The Universe as a Field of Meaning:**

A conception that sees the world not as inanimate matter, but as a semantic space in which the relationship between God, existence, and humanity is manifested.

## **Humanity as Witness and Responsibility:**

Humanity is not the centre of the universe by potential, but by trust, as the being who is aware of meaning and accountable for its response to it.

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## **Eternal Words, the Musk of Ending**

Verses on creation, monotheism, and the greatness of God in the universe, as compiled and arranged by Sheikh Nadim al-Jisr (may God have mercy on him) in his book "The Story of Faith," are presented here for your reflection, along with a brief excerpt from their context within the narrative:

"The Sheikh: In short, O perplexed one, the verses of the Quran are almost entirely divided into: 1. an invitation to God, guidance to the proofs of His existence, His oneness, His knowledge, His power, His will, His care, His mercy, and all His attributes of perfection; promises and warnings to encourage obedience to Him and caution against disobedience, and confirmation of the Day of Resurrection and Judgment; 2. rulings on worship and transactions; practical wisdom for life; exhortation to noble character; and stories related to these six categories. However, the most important of these categories, and the greatest in God's sight, is the first, because faith in God is the foundation and basis for everything else. Therefore, as you peruse the Quran, you will see that the verses indicating..." God—the name of God is almost never absent from any chapter of the Quran; indeed, it is sometimes repeated within a single chapter.

*‘Hayran ibn al-Adh’af said: Then the sheikh handed me the notebook in which he had been writing the verses and said:*

Sheikh: This is the notebook in which I have compiled for you, in the order of revelation, most of the verses of the Quran in which God Almighty intended to establish proofs of His existence, and that He is the Creator, the Originator, the Fashioner, the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful, the All-Wise. In these verses, He, Glory be to Him, frequently alludes to the secrets of His power and wisdom, which demonstrate purpose, order, rulings, perfection, measure, and balance in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the sun, the moon, the planets, the stars, the night, the day, the winds, the rains, the mountains, the rivers, the seas, plants, animals, humankind, hearing, sight, hearts, and all the laws and principles inherent in this creation. So come, Hayran, let us read these verses and review them all at once, then study them in light of the secrets that science has revealed. Existence and Creation.

*Hayran: Why did my master choose to present the verses in the order of revelation, and not in the order of the chapters?*

The Sheikh: Because I wanted you to imagine yourself as someone from the era in which the Quran was revealed, so you could see how revelation unfolded and guidance continued, addressing people with these proofs pointing to God. This would make reciting these verses more impactful on you and easier for you to understand the noble style of guidance that the Quran follows.

*Hayran says: Then the Sheikh handed me that notebook and said: Read and recite it to me.*

*So I read the following verses:*

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

**Al-‘Alaq (96:1–5)**

1. Read in the name of your Lord who created—
2. Created the human being from a clinging substance.
3. Read—and your Lord is the Most Generous—
4. Who taught by the pen,
5. Taught the human being what he did not know.

**Al-A‘lā (87:1–5)**

1. Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High—
2. Who created and fashioned in due proportion,
3. And Who ordained and guided,
4. And Who brings forth the pasture,
5. Then makes it dry stubble, darkened and withered.

**Al-Ikhlāṣ (112:1–4)**

1. Say: He is God, One—
2. God, the Ever-Independent, the Sustainer of all.
3. He neither begets nor is begotten,
4. And there is none comparable to Him.

**‘Abasa (80:17–20; 24–32)**

17. Perished is the human being—how ungrateful he is!
18. From what thing did He create him?
19. From a drop of fluid He created him, then proportioned him.
20. Then He made the path easy for him.
21. So let the human being look to his food:
22. We poured down water in abundant pouring,
23. Then We split the earth in cleaving,
24. And We caused grain to grow in it,
25. And grapes and fresh herbage,
26. And olives and date palms,
27. And gardens dense with trees,
28. And fruits and pasture—
29. As provision for you and for your livestock.

**Ash-Shams (91:1–7)**

1. By the sun and its morning brightness,
2. And by the moon when it follows it,
3. And by the day when it reveals it,
4. And by the night when it covers it,
5. And by the sky and the One who built it,
6. And by the earth and the One who spread it out,
7. And by the soul and the One who fashioned it.

**At-Tīn (95:4)**

4. Indeed, We created the human being in the finest stature.

### **Al-Qiyāmah (75:36–39)**

36. Does the human being think he will be left without purpose?
37. Was he not a drop of emitted fluid?
38. Then he became a clinging substance, and He created and fashioned,
39. And made from it the two kinds: male and female?

### **Al-Mursalāt (77:1–6)**

1. By those sent forth in succession,
2. Then by the winds that blow with force,
3. And by those that spread widely,
4. And by those that separate distinctly,
5. And by those that cast the Reminder—
6. As an excuse or a warning.

### **Al-Mursalāt (77:20–27)**

20. Did We not create you from a humble fluid,
21. Then place it in a secure resting place,
22. Until a known term?
23. So We measured—how excellent are We in measuring!
24. Woe on that Day to those who deny.
25. Did We not make the earth a containing place,
26. For the living and the dead,
27. And set within it lofty, firm mountains, and give you fresh water to drink?

### **Qāf (50:6–11)**

6. Have they not looked at the sky above them—how We built it and adorned it, and it has no rifts?
7. And the earth—We spread it out and cast into it firm mountains, and caused to grow in it every pleasing kind,
8. As insight and a reminder for every servant who turns back.
9. And We sent down from the sky blessed water, and with it We caused gardens to grow, and grain of harvest,
10. And lofty date palms with clustered fruit,
11. As provision for the servants; and We bring to life with it a dead land. So is the emergence.

### **Al-Balad (90:8–10)**

8. Have We not made for him two eyes,
9. And a tongue and two lips,
10. And shown him the two paths?

### **Al-Qamar (54:49)**

49. Indeed, We created everything with measure.

### **Al-A'rāf (7:54)**

54. Indeed, your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then established Himself over the Throne. He covers the night with the day, pursuing it swiftly; and the sun, the moon, and the stars are subjected by His command. Surely, to Him belong creation and command. Blessed is God, Lord of all worlds.

### **Al-A'rāf (7:57)**

57. And He is the One who sends the winds as glad tidings before His mercy; until, when they carry heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land and send down water with them, bringing forth every kind of fruit. Thus We bring forth the dead—so that you may remember.

### **Al-A'rāf (7:185)**

185. Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and whatever God has created of things, and that perhaps their term has drawn near? Then in what message after this will they believe?

### **Al-A'rāf (7:189)**

189. He is the One who created you from a single soul and made from it its mate, that he might find rest with her...

### **Al-A'rāf (7:191)**

191. Do they associate with Him what creates nothing, while they themselves are created?

### **Yā-Sīn (36:33–40)**

33. And a sign for them is the dead earth: We give it life and bring forth from it grain, and from it they eat.

34. And We place in it gardens of date palms and grapes, and cause springs to burst forth within it,

35. So that they may eat of its fruit—though their hands did not make it. Will they not then be grateful?
36. Glory be to the One who created all pairs—of what the earth produces, and of themselves, and of what they do not know.
37. And a sign for them is the night: We strip from it the day, and suddenly they are in darkness.
38. And the sun runs to its appointed course—such is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knowing.
39. And the moon—We have measured for it stages, until it returns like the old curved palm stalk.
40. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day; each swims in an orbit.

### **Yā-Sīn (36:71–73)**

71. Have they not seen that We created for them, of what Our hands have made, livestock—so they are their owners?
72. And We subdued them for them; so some they ride, and some they eat.
73. And for them in them are benefits and drinks. Will they not then be grateful?

### **Yā-Sīn (36:77–81)**

77. Has the human being not seen that We created him from a drop—then he becomes a clear disputant?
78. And he sets forth a parable for Us and forgets his own creation. He says, “Who will give life to bones when they are crumbled?”
79. Say: “He will give them life who brought them into being the first time; and He is, of every creation, Knowing—”

80. “The One who made for you fire from the green tree—so from it you kindle.”
81. Is not the One who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yes—and He is the All-Creating, the All-Knowing.

### **Al-Furqān (25:2)**

2. And He created everything and measured it with precise measure.

### **Al-Furqān (25:45–50)**

45. Have you not seen how your Lord extends the shadow? If He willed, He could have made it still. Then We made the sun its guide.
46. Then We draw it back to Us with an easy drawing.
47. And He is the One who made the night a covering for you, and sleep a rest, and made the day a rising to life.
48. And He is the One who sends the winds as glad tidings before His mercy, and We send down from the sky purifying water,
49. That We may give life with it to a dead land and give drink from it to many of what We created—livestock and people.
50. And We have distributed it among them so that they may remember; yet most people refuse except ingratitude.

### **Al-Furqān (25:53–54)**

53. And He is the One who let loose the two seas: one fresh and sweet, and one salty and bitter; and He placed between them a barrier and an impassable partition.

54. And He is the One who created from water a human being, then made for him bonds of lineage and marriage; and your Lord is Ever-Powerful.

### **Al-Furqān (25:61–62)**

61. Blessed is the One who placed constellations in the sky, and placed in it a lamp and a shining moon.
62. And He is the One who made the night and the day to succeed one another—for whoever wishes to remember or to be grateful.

### **Fāṭir (35:3–4)**

3. O people, remember God's favor upon you. Is there any creator other than God who provides for you from the sky and the earth? There is no god but Him—so how are you turned away?
4. And if they deny you, then messengers before you were denied; and to God all matters are returned.

### **Fāṭir (35:9)**

9. And God is the One who sends the winds, stirring up clouds; then We drive them to a dead land and revive the earth after its death. Thus is the resurrection.

### **Fāṭir (35:11–13)**

11. And God created you from dust, then from a drop, then made you into pairs; and no female conceives or gives birth except with His knowledge. No long-lived one is granted

length of life, nor is any reduced in his life, except that it is in a record—indeed, that is easy for God.

12. And the two seas are not alike: one is fresh, sweet, pleasant to drink; and the other is salty, bitter. Yet from both you eat fresh meat and extract ornaments you wear; and you see ships plowing through it, that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be grateful.
13. He merges the night into the day and merges the day into the night; and He subjected the sun and the moon—each running for an appointed term. That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs dominion. And those you call upon besides Him do not own even a thin membrane on a date stone.

### **Fāṭir (35:27–28)**

27. Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky, and We bring forth with it fruits of differing colors; and among the mountains are streaks white and red, of differing shades, and intensely black.
28. And likewise among people and creatures and livestock are differing colors. Truly, among His servants, it is the learned who stand in awe of God. Indeed, God is Mighty, Forgiving.

### **Fāṭir (35:41)**

41. Indeed, God holds the heavens and the earth lest they cease; and if they did cease, none could hold them after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing, Forgiving.

### **Maryam (19:67)**

67. Does the human being not remember that We created him before, when he was nothing?

### **Ṭā-Hā (20:49–54)**

49. He said, “So who is your Lord, O Moses?”
50. He said, “Our Lord is the One who gave everything its creation, then guided.”
51. He said, “Then what of the former generations?”
52. He said, “Their knowledge is with my Lord in a record; my Lord neither errs nor forgets.”
53. The One who made the earth a cradle for you, and traced in it pathways for you, and sent down water from the sky—then with it We brought forth diverse kinds of plants.
54. Eat and pasture your livestock. Indeed, in that are signs for people of understanding.

### **Al-Wāqi‘ah (56:57–62)**

57. We created you—so why do you not affirm?
58. Have you considered what you emit?
59. Is it you who create it, or are We the Creator?
60. We have decreed death among you, and We are not to be outdone—
61. In that We may replace you with others like you, and bring you into a creation you do not know.
62. And you have known the first creation—so why do you not take heed?

**Al-Wāqi‘ah (56:68–70)**

68. Have you considered the water you drink?
69. Is it you who brought it down from the clouds, or are We the One who sends it down?
70. If We willed, We could make it bitter—so why are you not grateful?

**Al-Wāqi‘ah (56:71–74)**

71. Have you considered the fire you kindle?
72. Is it you who produced its tree, or are We the Producer?
73. We made it a reminder and a provision for travelers.
74. So glorify the name of your Lord, the Magnificent.

**Al-Wāqi‘ah (56:75–76)**

75. So I swear by the positions of the stars—
76. And indeed it is a mighty oath, if you but knew.

**Ash-Shu‘arā’ (26:7–8)**

7. Have they not seen the earth—how many noble kinds We have caused to grow in it?
8. Indeed, in that is a sign; yet most of them are not believers.

**An-Naml (27:60–61)**

60. Is He not the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the sky—then We cause to grow with it gardens of beauty, whose trees you could not

have made grow? Is there a god with God? Rather, they are a people who deviate.

61. Is He not the One who made the earth a firm dwelling, and made rivers through it, and set mountains upon it, and placed a barrier between the two seas? Is there a god with God? Yet most of them do not know.

### **An-Naml (27:86)**

86. Have they not seen that We made the night for them to rest in, and the day giving sight? Indeed, in that are signs for a people who believe.

### **An-Naml (27:88)**

88. And you see the mountains—you think them fixed, while they pass like clouds: the work of God, who perfected everything. Indeed, He is aware of what you do.

### **Al-Qaṣaṣ (28:68)**

68. And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses. They have no choice. Glory be to God, and exalted is He above what they associate.

### **Al-Qaṣaṣ (28:71–73)**

71. Say: Have you considered—if God were to make the night perpetual upon you until the Day of Resurrection—what god other than God could bring you light? Will you not then listen?

72. Say: Have you considered—if God were to make the day perpetual upon you until the Day of Resurrection—what god other than God could bring you night in which you rest? Will you not then see?
73. And from His mercy He made for you the night and the day, that you may rest in it and seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful.

### **Al-Isrā' (17:12)**

12. And We made the night and the day as two signs. Then We effaced the sign of the night and made the sign of the day giving sight, so that you may seek bounty from your Lord, and know the number of years and the reckoning. And We have set out everything in detail.

### **Al-Isrā' (17:66)**

66. It is your Lord Who steers the ships for you through the sea, so that you may seek His bounty. Surely He is ever Merciful to you.

### **Al-Isrā' (17:70)**

70. And We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with good things, and favored them greatly over many of those We created.

### **Al-Isrā' (17:85)**

85. And they ask you about the Spirit. Say: the Spirit is of my Lord's command—and you have been given of knowledge only a little.

### **Yūnus (10:5–6)**

5. He is the One who made the sun a radiance and the moon a light, and measured for it phases, that you may know the number of years and the reckoning. God created that only in truth; He sets out the signs for a people who know.
6. Indeed, in the alternation of night and day, and in whatever God has created in the heavens and the earth, are signs for a people who are mindful.

### **Yūnus (10:31–32)**

31. Say: Who provides for you from the sky and the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living? Who directs the affair? They will say, "God." Say: Will you not then be mindful?
32. That, then, is God—your true Lord. And after truth, what is there but error? So how are you turned away?

### **Yūnus (10:34–36)**

34. Say: Is there any of your associates who begins creation, then repeats it? Say: God begins creation, then repeats it—so how are you deluded?

35. Say: Is there any of your associates who guides to the truth? Say: God guides to the truth. Is then the one who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or the one who does not guide unless guided? What is wrong with you—how do you judge?
36. And most of them follow nothing but conjecture. Indeed, conjecture avails nothing against the truth. God is knowing of what they do.

### **Yūnus (10:67)**

67. He is the One who made the night for you to rest in, and the day giving sight. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who listen.

### **Yūnus (10:101)**

101. Say: Look at what is in the heavens and the earth; but signs and warnings do not benefit a people who do not believe.

### **Hūd (11:6)**

6. And there is no creature on earth but that its provision is upon God. And He knows its dwelling and its deposit; all is in a clear record.

### **Al-Hijr (15:19–22)**

19. And the earth—We spread it out and cast into it firm mountains, and caused to grow in it of everything in balanced measure.

20. And We made for you therein means of living—and for those you do not provide for.
21. And there is nothing but that with Us are its خزائن (treasures/storehouses); and We do not send it down except in a known measure.
22. And We sent the winds as fertilizing, and sent down water from the sky, and gave it to you to drink; and you are not its keepers.

### **Al-Ḥijr (15:26; 28)**

26. And We created the human being from clay—dry, from dark mud, molded.
27. And when your Lord said to the angels: “I am creating a human being from clay—dry, from dark mud, molded...”

### **Al-Ḥijr (15:85)**

85. And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth; and indeed the Hour is coming. So pardon with gracious pardon.

### **Al-An‘ām (6:1–2)**

1. All praise is for God, who created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light—yet those who disbelieve set up equals with their Lord.
2. He is the One who created you from clay, then decreed a term; and a determined term is with Him—yet you doubt.

### **Al-An‘ām (6:38)**

38. And there is no creature on earth, nor any bird flying with its wings, except that they are communities like you. We have left nothing neglected in the Book; then to their Lord they will be gathered.

### **Al-An‘ām (6:75–79)**

75. Thus We showed Abraham the dominion of the heavens and the earth, so that he might be among the certain.
76. When the night covered him, he saw a star and said, “This is my Lord.” But when it set, he said, “I do not love what sets.”
77. Then when he saw the moon rising, he said, “This is my Lord.” But when it set, he said, “If my Lord does not guide me, I will surely be among the people astray.”
78. Then when he saw the sun rising, he said, “This is my Lord; this is greater.” But when it set, he said, “O my people, I am free of what you associate.”
79. “Indeed, I have turned my face toward the One who originated the heavens and the earth, inclining to truth—and I am not of those who associate.”

### **Al-An‘ām (6:95–99)**

95. Indeed, God is the Splitter of the grain and the date stone; He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living—this is God, so how are you turned away?
96. Splitter of the dawn; and He made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for calculation—such is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knowing.

97. And He is the One who made for you the stars that you may be guided by them in the darkneses of land and sea; We have detailed the signs for a people who know.
98. And He is the One who produced you from a single soul— then a dwelling and a repository; We have detailed the signs for a people who understand.
99. And He is the One who sent down water from the sky; then We brought forth with it vegetation of every kind... Look to its fruit when it bears and as it ripens; indeed, in that are signs for a people who believe.

**Al-An‘ām (6:102–103)**

102. That is God, your Lord—there is no god but Him, Creator of everything; so worship Him. And He is Guardian over all things.
103. Vision does not encompass Him, yet He encompasses all vision; and He is the Subtle, the All-Aware.

**Al-An‘ām (6:141–142)**

141. And He is the One who produced gardens, trellised and untrellised... Eat of its fruit when it bears and give its due on the day of harvest, and do not waste—indeed, He does not love the wasteful.
142. And of livestock are those for burden and those for use; eat of what God has provided you and do not follow the footsteps of Satan—indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.

### **Aṣ-Ṣāffāt (37:11–12)**

11. So ask them: are they harder to create, or those We have created? Indeed, We created them from sticky clay.
12. Rather, you wonder, while they mock.

### **Luqmān (31:10–11)**

10. He created the heavens without pillars you can see, and cast into the earth mountains lest it shake with you, and spread in it every kind of creature. And We sent down water from the sky and caused to grow in it every noble pair.
11. This is the creation of God—so show me what those besides Him have created. Rather, the wrongdoers are in clear error.

### **Luqmān (31:20)**

20. Have you not seen that God subjected for you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, and lavished upon you His favors, outward and inward? Yet among people are those who dispute about God without knowledge, without guidance, and without an enlightening book.

### **Luqmān (31:27)**

27. And if all the trees on earth were pens, and the sea—supplemented after it by seven seas—were ink, the words of God would not be exhausted. Indeed, God is Mighty, Wise.

### **Luqmān (31:29–31)**

29. Have you not seen that God merges the night into the day and merges the day into the night, and subjected the sun and the moon—each running to an appointed term—and that God is aware of what you do?
30. That is because God is the Truth, and what they call upon besides Him is falsehood, and because God is the Most High, the Great.
31. Have you not seen that ships sail through the sea by God's favor, that He may show you of His signs? Indeed, in that are signs for everyone steadfast and grateful.

### **Saba' (34:6)**

6. And those who were given knowledge see that what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the truth, and it guides to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy.

### **Az-Zumar (39:5–6)**

5. He created the heavens and the earth in truth. He wraps the night over the day and wraps the day over the night, and subjected the sun and the moon—each running to an appointed term. Truly, He is the Mighty, the Forgiving.
6. He created you from a single soul, then made from it its mate; and sent down for you livestock in eight pairs. He creates you in your mothers' wombs, creation after creation, in three darknesses. That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs dominion—there is no god but Him—so how are you turned away?

### **Az-Zumar (39:21)**

21. Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky, then makes it flow as springs in the earth, then brings forth with it crops of varying colors, then they wither and you see them yellow, then He makes them debris? Indeed, in that is a reminder for people of understanding.

### **Az-Zumar (39:62–64)**

62. God is the Creator of everything, and He is 'Trustee over all things.
63. To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth; and those who disbelieve in the signs of God—those are the losers.
64. Say: Is it other than God you command me to worship, O ignorant ones?

### **Ghāfir (40:13)**

13. He is the One who shows you His signs and sends down for you provision from the sky; and none remembers except one who turns back.

### **Ghāfir (40:61–64)**

61. God is the One who made the night for you to rest in and the day giving sight. Indeed, God is gracious to people, but most people are not grateful.
62. That is God, your Lord, Creator of everything—there is no god but Him—so how are you turned away?

63. Thus are turned away those who used to deny the signs of God.
64. God is the One who made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky a structure, and formed you and perfected your forms, and provided you with good things. That is God, your Lord—so blessed is God, Lord of all worlds.

**Ghāfir (40:67–68)**

67. He is the One who created you from dust, then from a drop, then from a clinging substance; then He brings you forth as an infant, then that you may reach your full strength, then that you may become old—though among you are those taken earlier—and that you may reach an appointed term, so that you might understand.
68. He is the One who gives life and causes death; and when He decrees a matter, He only says to it: “Be,” and it is.

**Ghāfir (40:79–81)**

79. God is the One who made livestock for you, that you may ride some of them, and eat some of them.
80. And in them you have benefits, and that you may reach by them a need within your hearts; and upon them and upon ships you are carried.
81. And He shows you His signs—so which of God’s signs will you deny?

### **Fuṣṣilat (41:37)**

37. And among His signs are the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon, but prostrate to God who created them, if it is Him you worship.

### **Fuṣṣilat (41:53)**

53. We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is witness over all things?

### **Ash-Shūrā (42:11)**

11. Originator of the heavens and the earth; He made for you mates from yourselves, and mates from livestock—thus He multiplies you. There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

### **Ash-Shūrā (42:29)**

29. And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and whatever living creatures He has dispersed in them; and He is able, when He wills, to gather them.

### **Ash-Shūrā (42:32–33)**

32. And among His signs are the ships sailing in the sea like mountains.
33. If He wills, He can still the wind, and they remain motionless upon its surface. Indeed, in that are signs for everyone steadfast and grateful.

### **Az-Zukhruf (43:9–13)**

9. If you ask them who created the heavens and the earth, they will surely say, “The Mighty, the Knowing created them.”
10. The One who made the earth a cradle for you and made in it paths for you, so that you may be guided;
11. And the One who sent down water from the sky in due measure, and with it We revive a dead land—thus you will be brought forth.
12. And the One who created all pairs, and made for you of ships and livestock what you ride,
13. That you may settle upon their backs, then remember your Lord’s favor when you have settled upon them, and say: “Glory be to the One who subjected this to us, and we could not have mastered it on our own.”

### **Al-Jāthiyah (45:3–6)**

3. Indeed, in the heavens and the earth are signs for the believers.
4. And in your creation and in whatever living creatures He disperses are signs for a people who are certain.
5. And in the alternation of night and day, and in what God sends down from the sky of provision, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and in the directing of the winds, are signs for a people who reason.
6. These are God’s signs We recite to you in truth—so in what message after God and His signs will they believe?

### **Al-Jāthiyah (45:12–13)**

12. God is the One who subjected the sea for you, so that ships may sail upon it by His command, and that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful.
13. And He subjected for you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, all from Him. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reflect.

### **Al-Aḥqāf (46:3–4)**

3. We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth and for an appointed term. Yet those who disbelieve turn away from what they were warned.
4. Say: Have you considered what you call upon besides God? Show me what they have created from the earth—or do they have a share in the heavens? Bring me a scripture before this, or a remnant of knowledge, if you are truthful.

### **Adh-Dhāriyāt (51:20–21)**

20. And in the earth are signs for those of certainty,
21. And in yourselves—will you not then see?

### **Adh-Dhāriyāt (51:47–49)**

47. And the sky—We built it with power, and indeed We are expanding.
48. And the earth—We spread it out; and how excellent are We as spreaders.
49. And of everything We created pairs, so that you may remember.

### **Al-Ghāshiyah (88:17–21)**

17. Do they not look at the camel—how it was created?
18. And at the sky—how it was raised?
19. And at the mountains—how they were set firm?
20. And at the earth—how it was spread out?
21. So remind; you are only a reminder.

### **Al-Kahf (18:37)**

37. His companion said to him, as he conversed with him: “Do you disbelieve in the One who created you from dust, then from a drop, then fashioned you into a man?”

### **Al-Kahf (18:109)**

109. Say: If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted—even if We brought the like of it in addition.

### **An-Naḥl (16:3–4)**

3. He created the heavens and the earth in truth—exalted is He above what they associate.
4. He created the human being from a drop, and suddenly he becomes a clear disputant.

### **An-Naḥl (16:5–8)**

5. And livestock—He created them for you; in them is warmth and benefits, and from them you eat.

6. And for you in them is beauty when you bring them home and when you send them out to pasture.
7. And they carry your loads to a land you could not have reached except with hardship. Indeed, your Lord is Kind, Merciful.
8. And horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and as adornment; and He creates what you do not know.

### **An-Nahl (16:10–16)**

10. He is the One who sent down water from the sky; from it you drink, and from it grow trees among which you pasture.
11. With it He makes to grow for you crops, olives, date palms, grapes, and every kind of fruit—indeed, in that is a sign for a people who reflect.
12. And He subjected for you the night and the day, the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His command—indeed, in that are signs for a people who reason.
13. And whatever He has produced for you on the earth of varying colors—indeed, in that is a sign for a people who remember.
14. And He subjected the sea for you to eat from it fresh meat and extract from it ornaments you wear; and you see ships plowing through it, so that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be grateful.
15. And He cast into the earth firm mountains lest it shake with you, and rivers and pathways so that you may be guided,
16. And landmarks—and by the star they are guided.

### **An-Nahl (16:17–20)**

17. Is the One who creates like one who does not create? Will you not then remember?
18. And if you try to count God's favor, you cannot enumerate it. Indeed, God is Forgiving, Merciful.
19. And God knows what you conceal and what you reveal.
20. And those they call upon besides God create nothing, while they themselves are created.

### **An-Nahl (16:40)**

40. Our word to a thing, when We intend it, is only that We say to it: "Be," and it is.

### **An-Nahl (16:65–68)**

65. And God sent down water from the sky and revived the earth after its death. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who listen.
66. And indeed, in livestock there is a lesson for you: We give you drink from what is in their bellies; and for you in them are many benefits, and from them you eat.
67. And upon them and upon ships you are carried.
68. And We sent Noah to his people, and he said: "O my people, worship God; you have no god other than Him. Will you not then be mindful?"
69. and feed from 'the flower of' any fruit 'you please' and follow the ways your Lord has made easy for you." From their bellies comes forth liquid of varying colours, in which there is healing for people. Surely in this is a sign for those who reflect.

### **An-Nahl (16:78)**

78. And God brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing, and He made for you hearing and sight and hearts, so that you may be grateful.

### **An-Nahl (16:79–81)**

79. Have they not seen the birds, made subservient in the air of the sky? None holds them except God. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who believe.
80. And God made for you from your houses a dwelling, and made for you from the skins of livestock houses you find light to carry on the day of travel and the day of staying; and from their wool, fur, and hair furnishings and enjoyment for a time.
81. And God made for you, from what He created, shade; and made for you shelters in the mountains; and made for you garments that protect you from heat, and garments that protect you in battle...

### **Nūh (71:14–20)**

14. And He has created you in stages.
15. Do you not see how God created seven heavens in layers,
16. And placed the moon therein as a light and placed the sun as a lamp?
17. And God caused you to grow from the earth as a growing,
18. Then He will return you into it and bring you forth again.
19. And God made the earth for you as a spread,
20. That you may walk upon it broad paths.

### **Ibrāhīm (14:10)**

10. ...Is there any doubt about God, Originator of the heavens and the earth? He calls you to forgive you of your sins and defer you until an appointed term...

### **Ibrāhīm (14:24–26)**

24. Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable: a good word is like a good tree—its root is firm and its branches in the sky,
25. Giving its fruit at all times, by permission of its Lord. And God sets forth parables for people so that they may remember.
26. And the parable of an evil word is like an evil tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth—having no stability.

### **Ibrāhīm (14:32–33)**

32. God is the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the sky, bringing forth with it fruits as provision for you; and He subjected for you the ships to sail in the sea by His command, and subjected for you the rivers;
33. And He subjected for you the sun and the moon, constant in their course, and subjected for you the night and the day.

### **Al-Anbiyā' (21:30–33)**

30. Have those who disbelieved not seen that the heavens and the earth were once a joined entity, then We split them apart, and made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe?

31. And We placed in the earth firm mountains lest it shake with them, and made in it broad passes as paths so that they may be guided.
32. And We made the sky a protected ceiling, yet they turn away from its signs.
33. And He is the One who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon—each swimming in an orbit.

### **Al-Mu'minūn (23:12–22)**

12. And We created the human being from an extract of clay.
13. Then We placed him as a drop in a secure lodging.
14. Then We created the drop into a clinging substance, then created the clinging substance into a lump, then created the lump into bones, then clothed the bones with flesh; then We produced him as another creation. So blessed is God, the best of creators.
15. Then indeed, after that, you will surely die.
16. Then indeed, on the Day of Resurrection you will be raised.
17. And We created above you seven pathways, and We were not unaware of creation.
18. And We sent down water from the sky in measure, then lodged it in the earth; and indeed We are able to take it away.
19. Then We produced for you with it gardens of date palms and grapes; for you in them are many fruits, and from them you eat.
20. And a tree that emerges from Mount Sinai, producing oil and relish for those who eat.
21. And indeed, in livestock there is a lesson for you: We give you drink from what is in their bellies; and for you in them are many benefits, and from them you eat.
22. And upon them and upon ships you are carried.

### **Al-Mu'minūn (23:78–80)**

78. And He is the One who produced for you hearing and sight and hearts—little are you grateful.
79. And He is the One who dispersed you on the earth, and to Him you will be gathered.
80. And He is the One who gives life and causes death; and to Him belongs the alternation of night and day—will you not then understand?

### **As-Sajdah (32:7–9)**

7. The One who perfected everything He created, and began the creation of the human being from clay.
8. Then He made his offspring from an extract of a humble fluid.
9. Then He fashioned him and breathed into him of His spirit, and made for you hearing and sight and hearts—little are you grateful.

### **As-Sajdah (32:27)**

27. Have they not seen that We drive water to the barren earth, then bring forth with it crops from which their livestock and they themselves eat? Will they not then see?

### **Aṭ-Ṭūr (52:35–36)**

35. Were they created from nothing, or are they the creators?
36. Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain.

### **Al-Mulk (67:1–2)**

1. Blessed is the One in whose hand is dominion, and He is over all things powerful—
2. The One who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving.

### **Al-Mulk (67:3–4)**

3. The One who created seven heavens in layers; you do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return your sight—do you see any flaw?
4. Then return your sight again and again; your sight will come back to you humbled and weary.

### **Al-Mulk (67:15)**

15. He is the One who made the earth manageable for you—so walk in its paths and eat of His provision; and to Him is the resurrection.

### **Al-Mulk (67:19)**

19. Have they not seen the birds above them, spreading and folding? None holds them except the Most Merciful. Indeed, He is, of all things, Seeing.

### **Al-Mulk (67:23)**

23. Say: He is the One who brought you into being and made for you hearing and sight and hearts—little are you grateful.

### **Al-Mulk (67:30)**

30. Say: Have you considered—if your water were to sink deep into the earth—who could bring you flowing water?

### **Al-Ḥāqqah (69:38–39)**

38. So I swear by what you see,  
39. And by what you do not see.

### **Al-Ma‘ārij (70:40)**

40. So I swear by the Lord of the eastward points and the westward points—indeed We are surely able.

### **An-Naba' (78:6–16)**

6. Have We not made the earth a resting place,  
7. And the mountains as pegs,  
8. And created you in pairs,  
9. And made your sleep for rest,  
10. And made the night as a covering,  
11. And made the day for livelihood,  
12. And built above you seven strong (heavens),  
13. And made a blazing lamp,  
14. And sent down from the rain clouds abundant water,  
15. To bring forth thereby grain and vegetation,  
16. And gardens thick with growth.

### **An-Nāzi‘āt (79:27–33)**

27. Are you harder to create, or the sky? He built it—

28. Raised its height and fashioned it,
29. And darkened its night and brought forth its morning  
brightness,
30. And the earth, after that, He spread it out,
31. Brought forth from it its water and its pasture,
32. And set firm the mountains,
33. As provision for you and for your livestock.

### **Al-Infīṭār (82:6–8)**

6. O human being, what has deceived you concerning your  
Lord, the Generous—
7. Who created you, fashioned you, and proportioned you,
8. In whatever form He willed, He assembled you.

### **Ar-Rūm (30:8)**

8. Have they not reflected within themselves? God did not  
create the heavens and the earth and what is between them  
except in truth and for an appointed term. Yet many people,  
regarding the meeting with their Lord, are disbelievers.

### **Ar-Rūm (30:17–25)**

17. So glorify God when you enter evening and when you enter  
morning;
18. And to Him belongs praise in the heavens and the earth—at  
nightfall and at midday.
19. He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the  
dead from the living, and revives the earth after its death—  
and thus you will be brought forth.

20. And among His signs is that He created you from dust; then you are human beings spreading out.
21. And among His signs is that He created for you mates from yourselves, that you may find rest in them, and placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reflect.
22. And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and your colors. Indeed, in that are signs for those who know.
23. And among His signs is your sleep by night and by day, and your seeking of His bounty. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who listen.
24. And among His signs is that He shows you lightning, fear and hope, and sends down water from the sky, reviving the earth after its death. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reason.
25. And among His signs is that the heaven and the earth stand by His command; then when He calls you with a call from the earth, you will come forth.

### **Ar-Rūm (30:46)**

46. And among His signs is that He sends the winds as bearers of good news, to let you taste of His mercy, and that ships may sail by His command, and that you may seek of His bounty—so that you may be grateful.

### **Ar-Rūm (30:48–50)**

48. God is the One who sends the winds, stirring up clouds; then He spreads them in the sky as He wills and makes them fragments, and you see the rain emerge from within them.

- And when He causes it to fall upon whom He wills of His servants—then they rejoice,
49. Though they had been, before it was sent down upon them, in despair.
  50. So look to the *آثار* (traces) of God's mercy—how He revives the earth after its death. Indeed, that is the One who gives life to the dead, and He is over all things powerful.

### **Al-'Ankabūt (29:20)**

20. Say: Travel through the earth and observe how He began creation; then God produces the latter creation. Indeed, God is over all things powerful.

### **Al-'Ankabūt (29:41–43)**

41. The parable of those who take protectors besides God is like the spider that takes a home; and indeed, the frailest of homes is the spider's home—if only they knew.
42. Indeed, God knows whatever they call upon besides Him; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.
43. And these parables We set forth for people, and none understand them except the learned.

### **Al-'Ankabūt (29:61)**

61. And if you ask them who created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon, they will surely say, "God." So how are they turned away?

### **Al-‘Ankabūt (29:63)**

63. And if you ask them who sent down water from the sky and revived the earth after its death, they will surely say, “God.” Say: All praise is for God. Yet most of them do not understand.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:21–22)**

21. O people, worship your Lord who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful—  
22. The One who made the earth a resting place for you and the sky a structure, and sent down water from the sky and brought forth with it fruits as provision for you. So do not set up equals with God while you know.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:28–29)**

28. How do you disbelieve in God, when you were lifeless and He gave you life; then He will cause you to die, then give you life again; then to Him you will be returned.  
29. He is the One who created for you all that is on the earth; then He turned to the sky and fashioned it into seven heavens; and He is knowing of all things.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:117)**

117. Originator of the heavens and the earth; and when He decrees a matter, He only says to it: “Be,” and it is.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:164)**

164. Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships that sail in the sea with what benefits people, and what God sent down from the sky of water, reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing therein every creature, and in the directing of the winds and the clouds subservient between sky and earth—are signs for a people who reason.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:171)**

171. And the parable of those who disbelieve is like one who cries out to what hears nothing but calls and sounds: deaf, mute, blind—so they do not reason.

### **Al-Baqarah (2:189)**

189. They ask you about the new crescents. Say: they are times for people and for pilgrimage. And righteousness is not that you enter houses from their backs, but righteousness is in being mindful; so enter houses by their doors, and be mindful of God so that you may succeed.

### **Āl ‘Imrān (3:6–7)**

6. He is the One who forms you in the wombs as He wills. There is no god but Him, the Mighty, the Wise.
7. He is the One who sent down upon you the Book: in it are verses precise—these are the foundation of the Book—and others ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow what is ambiguous of it, seeking discord and seeking its interpretation. But none knows its interpretation except God. And those firmly grounded in knowledge say:

“We believe in it; all is from our Lord.” And none remembers except people of understanding.

### **Āl ‘Imrān (3:18)**

18. God bears witness that there is no god but Him—and so do the angels and those endowed with knowledge—upholding justice. There is no god but Him, the Mighty, the Wise.

### **Āl ‘Imrān (3:26–27)**

26. Say: O God, Owner of dominion: You give dominion to whom You will and take dominion from whom You will; You honor whom You will and humble whom You will. In Your hand is all good; indeed, You are over all things powerful.
27. You merge the night into the day and merge the day into the night; and You bring forth the living from the dead and bring forth the dead from the living; and You provide for whom You will without reckoning.

### **Āl ‘Imrān (3:190–191)**

190. Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for people of understanding—
191. Those who remember God standing, sitting, and on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: “Our Lord, You did not create this without meaning. Glory be to You—so protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”

### **An-Nisā' (4:1)**

1. O people, be mindful of your Lord who created you from a single soul, and created from it its mate, and dispersed from the two many men and women. And be mindful of God, in whose name you ask one another, and of the womb ties. Indeed, God is ever Watchful over you.

### **Al-Ḥadīd (57:6)**

6. He merges the night into the day and merges the day into the night; and He is knowing of what is within hearts.

### **Al-Ḥadīd (57:17)**

17. Know that God revives the earth after its death. We have made the signs clear to you, so that you may understand.

### **Ar-Ra'd (13:2–4)**

2. God is the One who raised the heavens without pillars you see; then established Himself over the Throne, and subjected the sun and the moon—each running for an appointed term. He directs the affair; He details the signs so that you may be certain of meeting your Lord.
3. And He is the One who spread out the earth and placed in it firm mountains and rivers; and of all fruits He made in it pairs—two of each. He covers the night with the day. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reflect.
4. And in the earth are neighboring tracts, and gardens of grapes and crops and date palms—growing from one root or from separate roots—watered with the same water, yet We make

some exceed others in fruit. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who reason.

### **Ar-Ra'd (13:12)**

12. He is the One who shows you lightning, fear and hope, and brings forth heavy clouds.

### **Ar-Ra'd (13:16–17)**

16. Say: Who is Lord of the heavens and the earth? Say: God. Say: Have you taken besides Him protectors who possess no benefit or harm even for themselves? Say: Are the blind and the seeing equal? Or are darkness and light equal? Or have they set up associates with God who created like His creation, so the creation seemed alike to them? Say: God is Creator of everything; and He is the One, the Overpowering.

### **Ar-Raḥmān (55:1–5)**

1. The Most Merciful—
2. Taught the Qur'an,
3. Created the human being,
4. Taught him speech and expression,
5. The sun and the moon move by precise calculation.

### **Al-Insān (76:1–2)**

1. Has there not come upon the human being a span of time when he was nothing mentioned?
2. Indeed, We created the human being from a mixed drop, to test him; so We made him hearing and seeing.

### **Aṭ-Ṭalāq (65:3)**

3. ...And He provides for him from where he does not expect. Whoever relies upon God—He is sufficient for him. Indeed, God brings His matter to completion. God has appointed for everything a measure.

### **An-Nūr (24:43–45)**

43. Have you not seen that God drives clouds, then brings them together, then makes them into a heap, and you see rain emerging from within them; and He sends down from the sky—out of mountains within it—hail, striking with it whom He wills and turning it away from whom He wills; the flash of its lightning almost takes away the sight.
44. God turns over the night and the day; indeed, in that is a lesson for people of insight.
45. And God created every creature from water: among them are those that crawl on their belly, and among them are those that walk on two legs, and among them are those that walk on four. God creates what He wills. Indeed, God is over all things powerful.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:5–7)**

5. O people, if you are in doubt about the resurrection, then indeed We created you from dust, then from a drop, then from a clinging substance, then from a lump, formed and unformed, so that We may make clear to you; and We settle in the wombs whom We will until an appointed term; then We bring you out as infants, then that you may reach your full strength; and among you is one who dies, and among you

is one returned to the most feeble age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth lifeless; then when We send down water upon it, it quivers, swells, and grows of every pleasing pair.

6. That is because God is the Truth, and because He gives life to the dead, and because He is over all things powerful.
7. And because the Hour is coming—there is no doubt in it—and because God will raise those in the graves.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:11)**

11. And among people is one who worships God on an edge: if good befalls him, he is reassured by it; and if a trial befalls him, he turns back on his face—he has lost this world and the Hereafter. That is the clear loss.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:46)**

46. Have they not traveled through the earth so that they may have hearts by which they understand, or ears by which they hear? For it is not the eyes that go blind, but the hearts within the chests that go blind.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:61–64)**

61. That is because God merges the night into the day and merges the day into the night, and because God is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.
62. That is because God is the Truth, and what they call upon besides Him is falsehood, and because God is the Most High, the Great.

63. Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky and the earth becomes green? Indeed, God is Subtle, All-Aware.
64. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Indeed, God is the Self-Sufficient, the Praiseworthy.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:65–66)**

65. Have you not seen that God subjected for you whatever is on the earth, and the ships that sail upon the sea by His command, and He holds the sky from falling upon the earth except by His permission? Indeed, God is Kind and Merciful to people.
66. And He is the One who gave you life, then causes you to die, then gives you life again. Indeed, the human being is deeply ungrateful.

### **Al-Ḥajj (22:73–74)**

73. O people, a parable is set forth, so listen to it: indeed, those you call upon besides God will never create a fly, even if they gathered together for it. And if the fly were to snatch something from them, they could not recover it from it—weak is the seeker and the sought.
74. They did not measure God with His true measure. Indeed, God is Strong, Mighty.

### **At-Taghābun (64:3)**

3. He created the heavens and the earth in truth, and formed you and perfected your forms; and to Him is the final return.

4. End