

Man and Faith

Man and Animal

Man is a species of animal and thus shares many features with other animals. But many differences distinguish man from animals and grant him a special virtue, an elevation, which leaves him unrivalled. The basic difference between man and the other animals, the touchstone of his humanity, the source of what have come to be known as human civilisation and culture, is the presence of insights and beliefs.

Animals in general can perceive themselves and the external world and strive to attain their desires and objects in the light of their awareness and cognition. The same holds true of man, but he differs from the rest of the animals in the scope, extent, and breadth of his awareness and cognition's and in the level to which his desires and objects rise. This grants man a special virtue and elevation and separates him from the rest of the animals.

Awareness and Desire in Animals

First, the animal's awareness of the world comes solely through its external senses and is, accordingly, external and superficial; it does not reach into the interiors and internal relationships of things. Second, it is individual and particular; it enjoys nothing of universality and generality. Third, it is localised, limited to the animal's environment. Fourth, it is immediate, confined to the present, divorced from past and future. The animal is not aware of its own history or that of the world and does not consider or relate its endeavours to the future.

The animal is thus confined in a fourfold prison. If it should perchance emerge, it does so not with awareness, by intelligence and choice, but captive to the compulsions of nature, instinctually, without awareness or intelligence.

The level of the animal's desires and objects is also limited. First, it is material, not rising above eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, nesting, and copulating. For the animal there is no question of abstract desires and objects, moral values, and so on. Second, it is private and individual, related to itself or at the most to its mate and offspring. Third, it is localised and related to its environment. Fourth, it is immediate and related to the present. The animal thus lives within certain confines in this respect as well.

If the animal pursues an object or moves toward an end that is beyond these confines, for instance, if it shows concern for the species rather than the individual or for the future rather than the present, as do such social animals as the honeybee, this behaviour arises unconsciously and instinctually, by the direct command of the power that created it and administers the world.

Awareness and Desire in Man

Whether in the area of awareness, insights, and cognitions or desires and objects, the human domain reaches much further and higher than that of the animals. Human awareness and cognition traverse the exterior bounds of objects and phenomena to penetrate into their interiors, their essences and identities, their interrelationships and interdependencies, and the necessities governing them. Human awareness does not remain imprisoned within the limits of locale and place, nor does it remain chained to its moment; it journeys through both time and space.

Accordingly, man grows aware both of what is beyond his environment and of his own past and future, discovering his own past history and that of the universe - the histories of the earth, the heavens, the mountains, the seas, the planets, plants and other animals-and contemplating the future to the far horizons.

Beyond even this, man sends his thought racing after things limitless and eternal and gains knowledge of some of them. One who transcends a cognition of the individual and the particular discovers general laws and universal truths that embrace the whole world. Thus, he establishes his dominion over nature.

Man can also attain an elevated level from the standpoint of desires and objects. Man is a being that seeks values and aspires to virtues and ideals that are not material or utilitarian, that are not restricted to self or at most to mate and offspring, that are general and inclusive and embrace the whole of humanity, that are unconfined to a particular environment, locale, or time period. Man is so devoted to ideals and beliefs that he may at times place them above all else and put service to others and their comfort ahead of his own comfort.

It is as if the thorn that has pierced another's foot has pierced his own foot, or even his own eye. He commiserates with others; he rejoices in their joy and grieves at their grief. He may grow so attached to his sacred beliefs and ideals that he readily sacrifices to them not only his interests but his whole life and existence. The human dimension of civilisation, the spirit of civilisation, grows out of just such uniquely human feelings and desires.

The Touchstone of Man's Distinctiveness

Man's breadth of insight into the universe stems from humanity's collective efforts amassed and evolved over the centuries. This insight, expressed through special criteria, rules, and logical procedures, has come to be known as "science." Science in its most general sense means the sum total of human contemplations on the universe (including philosophy), the product of the collective efforts of humanity within a special system of logic.

The elevated and ideal aptitudes of humanity are born of its faith, belief, and attachment to certain realities in the universe that are both extra-individual, or general and inclusive, and extra-material, or unrelated to advantage or profit. Such beliefs and attachments are in turn born of certain worldviews and cosmologies given to humanity by prophets of God or by certain philosophers who sought to present a kind of thought that would conduce to belief and idealism. As these elevated, ideal, supra-animal aptitudes in man find an ideational and credal infrastructure, they are designated "faith" (*iman*).

It is therefore my contention that the central difference between man and the other animals, the touchstone of man's humanity, on which humanity depends, consists in science and faith.

Much has been said about what distinguishes man from the other animals. Although some have denied there is any basic difference between man and other animals, asserting that the difference in awareness and cognition is quantitative or at the most qualitative, but not essential, these thinkers have passed over all the wonders and glories that have drawn the great philosophers of East and West to the question of cognition in man. They regard man as an animal entirely, from the standpoint of desires and objects, not differing from the animals in the least in this respect. 1

Others think that to have a psyche makes the difference; that is, they believe that only man has a psyche, or anima, that other animals have neither feelings nor appetites, know neither pain nor pleasure, that they are soulless machines only resembling animate beings. They think that the true definition of man is "the animate being." 2

Other thinkers who do not consider man the only animate being in the universe but maintain basic distinctions between man and the rest of the animals may be grouped according to which one of man's distinguishing features they have dwelt upon.

They have defined man as the reasoning animal, the seeker after the Absolute, the unfinished, the idealist, the seeker after values, the metaphysical animal, the insatiable, the indeterminate, the committed and responsible, the provident, the free and empowered, the rebel, the social animal, the seeker after order, the seeker after beauty, the seeker after justice, the one facing two ways, the lover, the answerable, the conscientious, the one with two hearts, the creator, the solitary, the agitated, the devotee of creeds, the toolmaker, the seeker after the beyond, the visionary, the ideal, and the gateway to ideas.

Clearly, each of these distinctions is correct in its turn, but if we wish to advance a definition that comprehends all the basic differences, he can do no better than to speak of science and faith and to say that man is the animal distinguished from the other animals by the two features, "science" and "faith."

Relationship between Humanity and Animality

Those features man shares with the animal plus those features that distinguish him from the animal result in man having two lives, the animal life and the human life - in other words, the material life and the life of culture. What relationship exists between man's animality and his humanity, between his animal life and his human life, his material life and his cultural and spiritual life?

Is one the basis and the other a reflection of it? Is one the infrastructure and the other the superstructure? Since we are considering this question from a sociological, not a psychological point of view, we may express it this way: Among social structures is the economic structure, related to production and production relations, the principle and infra structure? Of the remaining social structures, especially those in which man's humanity is manifested, all constitute something derivative, a superstructure, a reflection of the economic structure? Have science, philosophy, literature, religion, law, morals, and art at all times been manifestations of economic realities, having no substantive reality?

This sociological discussion automatically leads to a psychological conclusion and likewise to a philosophical argument that concerns humanity, its objective and substantive realities - the question of what today is called humanism. This conclusion is that man's humanity has no substantive reality, that only his animality has any substantive reality. Thus, any basic distinction between man and animal is denied.

According to this theory, not only is the substantive reality of human beliefs denied, including the beliefs in truth, goodness, beauty, and God, but the substantive reality of the desire to know the reality of the universe from a human viewpoint is denied in that no viewpoint can be simply a “viewpoint” and disinterested, but every viewpoint must reflect a particular material tendency. Things cannot be otherwise. Curiously, some schools of thought offer this view and speak of humanity and humanism in the same breath!

The truth is that the course of man's evolution begins with animality and finds its culmination in humanity. This principle holds true for individual and society alike: Man at the outset of his existence is a material body; through an essential evolutionary movement, he is transformed into spirit or a spiritual substance. What is called the human spirit is born in the lap of the body; it is there that it evolves and attains independence. Man's animality amounts to a nest in which man's humanity grows and evolves.

It is a property of evolution that the more the organism evolves, the more independent, self-subsistent, and governing of its own environment it becomes. The more man's humanity evolves, in the individual or in society, the more it steps toward independence and governance over the other aspects of his being. An evolved human individual has gained a relative ascendancy over his inner and outer environments. The evolved individual is the one who has been freed of dominance by the inner and outer environments, but depends upon belief and faith.

The evolution of society precisely corresponds to the evolution of the spirit in the lap of the body or the evolution of the individual's humanity in the lap of his animality. The germ of human society is economic structures; the cultural and ideal aspects of society amount to the spirit of society. Just as there is an interaction between body and spirit, so there is one between the spirit and the body of society, that is, between its ideal structures and its material ones.³

Just as the evolution of the individual leads to greater freedom, autonomy, and sovereignty of the spirit, so does the evolution of society. That is, the more evolved human society becomes, the greater the autonomy of its cultural life and the sovereignty of that life over its material life. Man of the future is the cultural animal; he is the man of belief, faith, and method, not the man of stomach and waistline.

Human society, however, is not moving inexorably and directly to the perfection of human values. At every temporal stage, it is not necessarily one step more advanced than at the preceding stage. It is possible for humanity to

pass through an era of social life in which, for all its scientific and technical progress, it declines with respect to human ideal values, as is said today of the humanity of our present century. This idea of human social evolution means rather that humanity is progressing in the sum total of its movements, whether material or ideal, but the movement sometimes twists to the right or left, sometimes stops, or occasionally even reverses itself. However, on the whole, it is a progressive, evolutionary movement. Thus, future man is the cultural animal, not the economic animal; future man is the man of belief and faith, not the man of stomach and waistline.

According to this theory, the evolution of the human aspect of man (because of its substantive reality) keeps step with, or rather anticipates, the evolution of the tools of production. It gradually reduces his dependency on and susceptibility to the natural and social environments and augments his freedom (which is equivalent to his dependence on belief, ideals, principle, and ideology), as well as his influence upon the natural and social environments. In the future, man will attain to ever more perfect spiritual freedom, that is, ever greater independence or ever greater dependence upon faith, belief, and ideology. Past man, while enjoying fewer of the blessings of nature and of his own being, was more captive to nature and to his own animality.

But future man, while enjoying more of the blessings of nature and of his own being, will be proportionately freer from the captivities of nature and of his own animal potentials and better able to govern himself and nature.

According to this view, the human reality, despite having appeared along with and in the lap of animal and material evolution, is by no means a shadow, reflection, or function of these. It is itself an independent, evolving reality. Just as it is influenced by the material aspects of being, it influences them. It, not the evolution of the tools of production, determines man's ultimate destiny, his substantive cultural evolution, and his substantive reality.

This substantive reality of the humanity of man keeps him in motion and evolves the tools of production along with the other concerns of life. The tools of production do not evolve of themselves, and man's humanity is not changed and transformed like the tools defining a system of production, such that it would be spoken of as evolving because it defined an evolving system of production.

Science and Faith

Relationship of Science and Faith

Now let us see what relationship to each other these two pillars or aspects of humanity bear, or can bear.

In the Christian world, owing to some textual corruptions in the Old Testament (the Torah), the idea of the opposition of science and faith has become widespread, an idea that has cost both of them dearly.⁴

This idea has its roots chiefly in the Book of Genesis. In Genesis 2:16-17, we find, regarding Adam, paradise, and the forbidden tree: “[The Lord God] told the man, ‘You may eat from every tree in the garden, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for on the day that you eat from it, you will certainly die.’”⁵

In Genesis 3:1-8, it is said: The Serpent was more crafty than any wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Is it true that God has forbidden you to eat from any tree in the garden?” The woman answered the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, except for the tree in the middle of the garden; God has forbidden us either to eat or to touch the fruit of that; if we do, we shall die.”

The serpent said, “Of course you will not die. God knows that as soon as you eat it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods knowing both good and evil.” When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good to eat, and that it was pleasing to the eye and tempting to contemplate, she took some and ate it. She also gave her husband some and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they discovered that they were naked; so they stitched fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

In Genesis 3:23, it is said:

[The LORD God] said, “The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; what if he now reaches out his hand and takes fruit from the tree of life also, eats it and lives forever?”

According to this conception of man and God, of consciousness and rebellion, God's command (*din*) is that man must not know good and evil, not grow conscious - the forbidden tree is the tree of consciousness. Man, in his rebellion, his mutiny, against God's command (his balking at the teachings of the revealed laws and prophets), attains consciousness and knowledge and so is driven from God's paradise. According to this conception, all satanic

suggestions are the suggestions of consciousness; therefore, the suggestor, Satan, is reason itself.

To us Muslims, who have studied the Qur'an, God taught Adam all the names (realities) and then commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before him. Satan was expelled from the court for not prostrating before this viceregent of God, conscious of realities. And the sunna has taught us that the forbidden tree was that of greed, avidity, something of this sort, that is, something connected with the animality of Adam, not with his humanity, that Satan the suggestor always suggests things contrary to reason but conforming to the passions of the animal ego, and that what manifests Satan within man's being is the ego that incites to evil, not the Adamic reason. For us who are thus schooled, what we see in Genesis is quite astonishing.

It is this conception that divides the last fifteen hundred years of European history into the Age of Faith and the Age of Reason and sets faith and science at odds. But the history of Islamic civilisation is divisible into the Age of Flowering, or the Age of Science and Faith, and the Age of Decline, in which science and faith together have declined. We Muslims must eschew this wrong conception that has inflicted irreparable injuries on science and on faith, indeed on humanity; we must not take this opposition of science and faith for granted.

Let us now proceed analytically and ask in a scholarly fashion whether these two aspects or bases of humanity actually each pertain to a certain era. Is man condemned ever to remain half-human, to have only half his humanity in a given era? Is he forever condemned to one of these two species of misfortune: the misfortunes arising from ignorance and the misfortunes arising from want of faith?

Every faith is inevitably based on a special mode of thought and a special conception of the universe and of being. Many conceptions and interpretations of the universe, although they can serve as bases for faith and devotion, are inconsistent with logical and scientific principles and so necessarily deserve rejection. But is there a mode of thought, a kind of conception and interpretation of the universe and of being, that both draws support from the region of science, philosophy, and logic and can be a firm foundation for a felicitous faith? If such a conception, mode of thought, or worldview exists, then it will be clear that man is not condemned to the misfortunes arising from either ignorance or want of faith.

One can address the relationship of science and faith from either of two standpoints. One standpoint is whether an interpretation or conception exists

that is both productive of faith and idealism and supported by logic. Are all the ideas that science and philosophy impart to us contrary to faith, devotion, hope, and optimism? (This is a question that I will take up later in discussing the idea of a worldview.)

The other standpoint is that of the influences upon man of science on the one hand and faith on the other. Does science call us to one thing and faith to another, and opposed, thing? Does science seek to shape us one way and faith another, opposed, way? Does our science carry us in one direction and faith in another? Or do science and faith fulfil and complement one another? Does science shape half of us and faith the other half, harmoniously?

Science gives us enlightenment and power; faith gives us love, hope, and ardor. Science makes instruments; faith constructs purposes. Science gives speed; faith gives direction. Science is power; faith is benevolence. Science shows what is; faith inspires insight into what must be done. Science is the outer revolution; faith is the inner revolution. Science makes the universe the human universe; faith makes the psyche the psyche of humanity. Science expands man's being horizontally; faith conveys him upward. Science shapes nature; faith shapes man.

Both science and faith empower man, but science gives a power of discrimination, and faith gives a power of integration. Both science and faith are beauty, but science is the beauty of the reason, and faith is the beauty of the spirit. Science is the beauty of thought, and faith is the beauty of feeling. Both science and faith give man security, but science gives outward security, and faith gives inward security. Science gives security against the onslaught of illness, floods, earthquakes, storms; faith, against worry, loneliness, feelings of helplessness, feelings of futility. Science brings the world into greater harmony with man, and faith brings man into greater harmony with himself.

Man's need for science and faith together has greatly excited the interest of both religious and nonreligious thinkers. Allama Muhammad Iqbal of Lahore has said:

“Humanity needs three things today - a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. Modern Europe has, no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines, but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring.

This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced men while religion has always elevated individuals, and transformed whole societies. The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interest of the rich. Believe me, Europe today is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical achievement.

On the other hand the Muslim is in possession of these ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation, which, speaking from the inmost depths of life, internalizes its own apparent externality. With him the spiritual basis of life is a matter of conviction for which even the least enlightened man among us can easily lay down his life".⁶

Will Durant, author of the History of Civilisation, although nonreligious, says: "[Lucretius would suggest of our progress in mechanisation] that this was a difference of means and not of ends. ... What if all our progress is an improvement in methods, but not in purposes?" He also says: "Our wealth is a weariness, and our wisdom is a little light that chills; but love warms the heart with unspeakable solace, even more when it is given than when it is received."⁷

Today most people realise that scientism and the unalloyed scientific education are incapable of shaping the whole human being. The product of this education is the raw material of humanity, not the fully shaped humanity. It shapes a humanity with capacity, not one with attainment. It shapes a uniform humanity, not a multiform one. Today most people realise that the age of science-and-nothing-but has come to an end.

A vacuum in ideals threatens society. Some would fill it with philosophy; others have resorted to literature, the arts, and the humanities. In Iran, too, some propose to fill this vacuum with a humanistic culture, and especially with the literature of *'irfan*, including such writings as those of Rumi, Sa'di, and Hafiz. But they forget that this literature has derived its spirit and attraction from religion. The humanistic spirit of these literatures is that selfsame religious spirit of Islam. Otherwise why are some modern literatures so cold, lifeless, and unattractive, for all their humanist affectations? The humane content of our literature of *'irfan* derives from the kind of thought concerning the universe and man that is specifically Islamic. If we take the spirit of Islam from these literary masterpieces, we are left with nothing more than the dross, or a dead form.

Will Durant feels this vacuum and proposes that literature, philosophy, and art fill it. He says:

“Our schools and colleges have suffered severely from Spencer's conception of education as the adjustment of the individual to his environment; it was a dead, mechanical definition, drawn from a mechanistic philosophy, and distasteful to every creative spirit. The result has been the conquest of our schools by mechanical and theoretical science, to the comparative exclusion of such “useless” subjects as literature, history, philosophy, and art... An education that is purely scientific makes a mere tool of its product; it leaves him a stranger to beauty, and gives him powers that are divorced from wisdom. It would have been better for the world if Spencer had never written on education”.⁸

It is remarkable that although Durant acknowledges that the existing vacuum is, in the first place, a “vacuum of ideals,” a vacuum in the area of objects, ends, and aspirations, a vacuum leading to nihilism, although he affirms that it is a vacuum of a kind of thought for and a kind of belief in humane objects and goals, he nonetheless supposes it is remediable through any sort of ideal values, even though they may not go beyond the realm of imagination. He supposes that busying oneself with history, art, aesthetics, poetry, and music can fill this vacuum that arises from the depths of man's aspiring and idealistic nature.

Non-interchangeability of Science and Faith

Science cannot replace faith to give - besides illumination and power - love and hope. It cannot raise the level of our desires. Although it can help us attain objects and goals, to follow the road to them, it cannot take from us those objects, aspirations, and desires that by nature and instinct turn on individuality and self-interest and give us in their place objects and aspirations that turn on love and on ideal and spiritual bonds. Although it is a tool in our hands, it cannot transform our essence and identity. Likewise, faith cannot replace science, to enable us to understand nature, discover its laws, or learn about ourselves.

Historical experiences have shown that the separation of science from faith has brought about irremediable harm. Faith must be known in the light of science; faith must be kept far from superstition in the light of science. When science is removed from faith, faith is deformed into petrification and blind fanaticism; it turns on its own axis and goes nowhere. When there is no science and true knowledge, the faith of an ignorant believer becomes an instrument in the hands of the clever charlatans exemplified in early Islam by the Kharijites and seen in various forms in later times.⁹

Conversely, science without faith is a sword in the hands of a maniac, or else a lamp at midnight in the hands of a thief, so he can pick out the choicest goods. Thus, the scientifically informed person of today without faith does not differ in the least from the ignoramus without faith of yesterday in the nature and essence of his behaviour. What difference is there between the Churchills, Johnsons, Nixons, and Stalins of today and the Ghengises and Attilas of yesterday?

But, it might be said, is science not both light and power? Do the light and power of science not only apply to the external world, but also illuminate and reveal to us our inner world and so empower us to change it? If science can shape both the world and man, it can perform both its own function (world shaping) and that of faith (man shaping). The reply is, this is all correct, but the power of science is instrumental—that is, dependent upon man's will and command. In whatever area man wishes to carry out something, he can do it better with the tool of science. Thus, science is man's best aid in attaining the objects he has chosen, in traversing the roads he has decided to follow.

But when man puts the instrument to work, he already has an object in view; instruments are always employed in pursuit of objects. Where has he found these objects? Because man is animal by nature and human by acquisition, that is, because his human potentialities must be gradually nurtured in the light of faith, by nature he moves toward his natural, animal, individual, material, self-interested objects and employs his instruments accordingly.

Therefore, man needs a power not among his own instruments and objects that can impel man as an instrument in its own direction. Rather he needs a power that can detonate him from within and activate his hidden potentialities. He needs a power that can produce a revolution in his heart and give him a new direction.

This is not accomplished by science, by discovery of the laws governing nature and man. It is born of the sanctification and exaltation of certain values in one's spirit, which values in turn are born of a range of elevated aptitudes in man, which result further, from a particular conception and way of thinking about the universe and man that one can acquire neither in the laboratory nor from syllogism and deduction.

History shows the consequences of disjoining science and faith. Where faith has been, and science not, individuals' humanitarian efforts have produced no great effect—at times, no good effect. Sometimes they have given rise to fanaticisms, stagnations, and ruinous conflicts. Human history is filled with

such events. Where science has been, with the place of faith left empty, as in some contemporary societies, all the power of science has been expended on selfishness, egoism, acquisitiveness, ambition, exploitation, subjugation, deceit, and guile.

One can regard the past two or three centuries as the age of the worship of science and the flight from faith. Many thinkers came to believe that science could solve all man's problems, but experience has proven the contrary. Today no thinker would deny man's need for some kind of faith-if not religious faith, at least faith in something beyond science. Bertrand Russell, although he had materialistic tendencies, admits "Work of which the motive is solely pecuniary cannot have this value [of bringing a man into fruitful contact with the outer world], but only work which embodies some kind of devotion, whether to persons, to things, or merely to a vision".¹⁰

Today materialists are driven to claim they are materialists in respect to philosophy but idealists in respect to morals, that is, they are materialists in theory, but idealists in practice and aims.¹¹The question of how it is possible to be a materialist in theory and an idealist in practice is for the materialists themselves to answer.

George Sarton describes the inadequacy and incapacity of science to humanise personal relationships and man's urgent need for the power of faith: "Science has made gigantic progress in certain fields, but in others, e.g., in politics, national and international, we are still fooling ourselves." He admits that the faith man needs is a religious faith. He says this of man's need for the triad of art, religion, and science: "Art reveals beauty; it is the joy of life. Religion means love; it is the music of life. Science means truth and reason; it is the conscience of mankind. We need all of them - art and religion as well as science. Science is absolutely necessary but it is never sufficient." ¹²

Effects and Advantages of Religious Faith

Without ideals, aspirations and faith, man can neither live sane life nor accomplish anything useful or fruitful for humanity and human civilisation. One lacking ideals and faith becomes either selfish, never emerging from his shell of private interests, or a wavering, bemused being who does not know his own duty in life, in moral and social questions. Man constantly confronts moral and social questions, and must necessarily respond. If one is attached to a teaching, a belief, a faith, one's duty is clear; but if no teaching or method has clarified one's duty, one lives ever in a state of irresolution, drawn sometimes

this way, sometimes that, never in balance. So without any doubt, one must attach oneself to a teaching and an ideal.

Only religious faith, however, can make man truly “faithful” – can make faith, belief, and principle dominate selfishness and egoism, can create a kind of devotion and surrender in the individual such that he does not doubt the least point the teaching advances, and can render this belief something precious to him, to the extent that life without it is hollow and meaningless and that he will defend it with zeal and fervour.

Aptitudes to religious faith prompt man to struggle against his natural, individual inclinations and sometimes to sacrifice his reputation and very being for the sake of faith. This grows possible when his ideal takes on an aspect of sanctity and comes to rule his being completely. Only the power of religion can sanctify ideals and effect their rule in its fullest force over man.

Sometimes individuals make sacrifices and relinquish their fortunes, reputations, or lives not for ideals and religious belief but driven by obsessions, vindictiveness, and revengefulness, in short as a violent reaction to feelings of stress and oppression. We see this sort of thing in various parts of the world. The difference between a religious ideal and a non-religious one is that when religious belief appears and sanctifies an ideal, sacrifices take place naturally and with complete contentment. There is a difference between an act accomplished in contentment and faith – a kind of choice – and an act accomplished under the impact of obsessions and disturbing internal stresses – a kind of explosion.

If man’s world view is a purely materialistic one founded on the restriction of reality to sense objects, any sort of social and humane idealism will prove contrary to the sensible realities through which man then feels related to the world.

“What results from a sensual world view is egoism, not idealism. If idealism is founded upon a world view of which it is not the logical consequence, it amount to nothing more than fantasy. That is, man must figuratively make a separate world of realities existing within him, from his imagination, and be content with them. But if idealism stems from religion, it rests on a kind of world view whose logical consequence is to live by social ideals and aspirations. Religious faith is a loving bond between man and the universe, or to put it differently, is a harmony between man and the universal ideals of being. Non-religious faith and aspirations, on the other hand, constitute a kind

of “severance” from the universe and an imaginary construction of a world of one’s own that is no way reinforced by the outer world.” 13

Religious faith does more than specify a set of duties for man contrary to his natural propensities; it changes the mien of the universe in man’s eyes. It demonstrates the existence of elements in the structure of the universe other than the sensible ones. It transforms a cold, dessicated, mechanical, and material universe into one living, intelligent and conscious. Religious faith transforms man’s conception of the universe and creation.

William James, the American philosopher and psychologist whose life extended into the early part of the present Christian century, says: “The world interpreted religiously is not the materialistic world over again, with an altered expression; it must have, over and above the altered expression, a *natural constitution* different at some point from that which a materialistic world would have.”14

Beyond all this, there is an aspiration to sacred truths and realities that can be worshipped innate in every human individual. Man is the focus of a range of potential extramaterial aptitudes and capacities waiting to be nurtured. Man’s aptitudes are not confined to the material and his ideal aspirations are not solely inculcated and acquired. This is a truth science affirms.

William James says: “So far as our ideal impulses originate in this [mystical or supernatural] region (and most of them do originate in it, for we find them possessing us in a way for which we cannot articulately account), we belong to it in a more intimate way than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong.” 15

Because these impulses exist, they should be nurtured. If they are not rightly nurtured and rightly profited from, they will deviate and cause unimaginable harm leading to idolatry, anthropolatry, nature worship, and a thousand other forms of false worship. Erich Fromm says: “There is no one without a religious need, a need to have a frame of orientation and an object of devotion.... He may be aware of his system as being a religious one, different from those of the secular realm, or he may think that he has no religion and interpret his devotion to certain allegedly secular aims like power, money or success as nothing but his concern for the practical and expedient. The question is not *religion or not* but *which kind of religion.*” 16

What this psychologist means is that man cannot live without worship and a sense of the sacred. If he does not know and worship the One God, he will erect

something else as the higher reality and make it the object of his faith and worship.

Therefore, because it is imperative for humanity to have an ideal, an aspiration, and a faith and because, on the one hand, religious faith is the only faith that can really penetrate us and, on the other hand, by our nature we seek for something to hold sacred and to worship, the only road open to us is to affirm religious faith.

The Noble Qur'an was the first book:

1. To speak explicitly of religious faith as a kind of harmony with the creation: