

# **Belief in God**

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**Module I****Section I: Existence of God**

- i. Intuitive Evidence**
- ii. Intellectual Evidence**
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**Section I: Existence of God****i. Intuitive Evidence**

Allah is the name of the being Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all other creations. The Qur'ān informs us that an acknowledgement of the providence of the Almighty is found innately in man's nature. It says that this matter manifested itself in the form of a pledge. The Qur'ān refers to this event as a real-life incident and not something metaphorical. Since man has been sent here for trial, the whole incident has been erased from his memory; however, its essence is etched on his heart and ingrained in his soul and nothing can obliterate it. Consequently, if man is reminded of it in the absence of any hindrance in his surroundings, he leaps to it the way a child leaps to its mother even though it never saw itself emerge from her womb and is drawn towards her with such conviction as if it already knew her. A person feels that this pledge of his with the Almighty was the answer to a very natural need found within him. Once he got this answer, all the requirements of his psyche were also fulfilled simultaneously. also The Qur'ān says that this testimony of man's inner-self is so undeniable that as far as the providence of God is considered, man will be held accountable before God merely on the basis of this testimony. While referring to this incident in which mankind pledged before God that He is their Lord, the Qur'ān says:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ ؕ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ؕ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا ؕ أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ. أَوْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ ؕ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْبُاطِلُونَ. وَكَذَلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ الْآيَاتِ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ. (١٤٢: ١-٤)

And remember when your Lord brought forth from the loins of the progeny of Adam their children and made them testify against themselves. He said: "Am I not your Lord?" They replied: "We bear witness that You are." This

We did lest you should say on the Day of Judgement: “We had no knowledge of that,” or present the excuse: “Our forefathers had already adopted idolatry and we later became their children so will You destroy us on account of what these false-doers did?” [We have fully explained things here] and thus do We explain Our revelations [so that people are left with no excuse to deny the truth] and so that they may return to the right path. (7:172-174)

## ii. Intellectual Evidence

Besides this innate guidance, man has also been equipped with the ability of deriving conclusions from what he hears, sees and feels – conclusions which are actually beyond these faculties. A simple example to illustrate this is the law of gravitation. An apple falls on the ground. When a stone is to be lifted from ground, strength must be exerted. It is difficult to ascend stairs than to descend them. The moon and the stars move in the skies. Man has been witnessing all these phenomena for centuries until it was Newton who discovered that they are a result of the law of gravitation. This law itself cannot be observed; however it is accepted as a scientific reality in the whole world. The reason for this is that all theories and known facts are in harmony with it. All observable realities are explained by this law and as yet no other law is able to explain various phenomenon as it has done.

This process obviously is the derivation of the tangible from the intangible. When a person makes use of this ability of his and studies the universe which stretches around him, then this study of his also vouches for this very reality found in his inner-self.

Thus he sees that everything of this world is a miraculous manifestation of creativity; everything has deep meaningfulness; it has been created with great diligence and thoroughness; there exists amazing wisdom, planning, usefulness and order; there are found superb mathematical and geometrical realities whose only justification is the fact that they have a Creator and this Creator is not an uncontrolled and unrestrained being. On the contrary, He has an unfathomable mind. This is because if power does not emanate from a wise and all-knowing being, then it should be mere tyranny; the truth of the matter is that this is not so: this expression of power and strength has aptness about it; it is also very harmonious and is very advantageous and produces great marvels which cannot be produced by an uncontrolled and unrestrained force.

This is an indisputable reality; without accepting it, in no way can the intellectual thirst of a person can be quenched. Consequently, the Qur’ān has asserted that belief in God is the light of the heavens and the earth. It lights up the horizon and in its absence this world is bleak and murky, meaningless and purposeless.

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكُوتٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاءٌ ۚ الْمِصْبَاءُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ ۚ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ  
دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ ۚ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُورٌ عَلَى

نُورٌ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (٢٤: ٣٥)

[Belief in] Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth! [In the heart of a person] the similitude of His light is like a niche in which there is a lamp – the lamp is in a glass, the glass as if it were a brilliant star – that is being kindled by the oil of a blessed olive tree that is neither of the eastern nor of the western [side]: its oil would all but light up, even though no fire touched it. Light upon light! Allah guides to His light whomever He wishes. [This is a similitude]. And Allah strikes these similitudes [to guide] people. [He deals with each person the way he deserves it]. And Allah has knowledge of everything. (24:35)

### iii. Historical Evidence

Although these testimonies were sufficient, however in order to leave people with no excuse in rejecting them the Almighty took a step further: He initiated mankind by a human being who directly heard from God, saw his angels and in this manner bore direct witness to the truth. The Almighty took this step so that after the death of Adam, the first human being, this information could be transmitted to the descendents of Adam generation after generation and so that the concept of God and the Hereafter should not become alien in any period of time, in any place on the earth and in any generation of mankind. The Qur'ān says that after the creation of Adam and Eve certain superior creations were asked to prostrate before him. The objective was to tell them that it is not creation from fire or light which makes someone superior; on the contrary, real superiority lies in obedience to God. The Qur'ān says that in compliance with this directive all the angels and the jinn prostrated before Adam; however Iblīs (Satan) showed disobedience and refused to prostrate. After this, Adam and Eve were asked to live in an orchard where they had all the necessities of life but the fruit of one tree was prohibited to them. This tree was the tree of procreation whose fruit is the means of sustaining the existence of man in this world. The Almighty stopped them from tasting this fruit and warned that Iblīs being their open foe would certainly try to make them disobey God in this matter. Consequently, this is precisely what happened and Iblīs came over to them in the guise of a well-wisher and an anxious counselor and told them that the secret of eternal life and everlasting kingdom lies in this fruit from which they are being deprived. Adam and Eve were lured by these prompts of Iblīs and ended up tasting the fruit while being overwhelmed with its craving – something which normally grips a person when he tastes such a fruit. It became evident from this incident that man will face the greatest trials from two of his instincts: ego and sex. They were thus directed to come out from the orchard and take their abode at some other place in the earth. At this, Adam felt ashamed and turned to God. Seeing this, the Almighty blessed them with the urge to repent and Himself revealed to him the most appropriate of words for this repentance and then forgave them. The Qur'ān says:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۖ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ. وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ

اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ. فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ. فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ. (٣٤-٣٧)

And [in order to communicate the nature of trial through which man will be put through in this world, also narrate to them the incident] when We asked the angels to bow down to Adam and they bowed down except Iblīs: he refused and showed arrogance and in this manner became among the rejecters. And We said: “O Adam! dwell you and your wife in this orchard and eat freely in it from where ever you want to; but both of you! Do not go near this tree or you will become transgressors.” Then did Satan make them slip from the orchard, and had them turned out from the state they were in. And We said: “Move [out], all [you people] with enmity between yourselves and on earth will be your dwelling-place and a provision for a specified time.” Then Adam learnt from his Lord some words of [repentance and then repented before his Lord through these words] and his Lord accepted his repentance. (2:34-37)

Not only this, once Adam and Eve were sent to live in this world, the Almighty, for a considerable period of time, made a means for them to know and judge if their faith and deeds were acceptable to God or not. This was like making every person of that time directly experience and observe the truth so that he too could become among the witnesses along with his progenitors. It is evident from the Qur’ān (3:183) that the means adopted for this purpose was that people would offer sacrifice before God; then, as a sign of divine acceptance, fire would descend from the heavens to consume this sacrifice. The murder of Adam’s son, Abel took place as result of such an incident. According to the Bible (Genesis, 4:1-12), Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer. One day Cain brought forth some fruit of his land to present before God and Abel brought some first-borns of his cattle and some animal-fat. When these were presented before God, the offering of Abel was accepted and that of Cain was not. This angered the latter so much that he killed his brother Abel. The Qur’ān has described this incident in the following words:

وَاثْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأُ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ ۚ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۚ لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسٍ بِيَدَيْكَ ۚ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۚ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْوَأَ بَآئِنًا وَآثِمًا فَتَكُونَ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ ۚ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ۚ فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ. (٥: ٣٠-٣٧)

And recount to them in all truth the story of Adam’s two sons when each made an offering, and the offering of one was accepted while that of the other was not. He said: “I will kill you.” The other replied: “God accepts offerings only from the righteous. If you raise your hand to slay me, I shall

not raise mine to slay you; for I fear God, Lord of the Universe. I want that you should incur my sin and yours and thus become an inmate of the Fire and such is the punishment of the unjust.” At last, his soul prompted him to slay his brother; he slew him and thus became among the losers. (5:27-30)

It is evident from this discussion that the existence of God is an obvious reality and that the conception of God is inherited by a person through his ancestors. Both the material and the spiritual world bear witness to His existence.

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