

Quran, a Lighthouse for the Humanity: A Research Review

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Abstract

The first surah of the Holy Quran is described as the “Prologue of the Holy Quran”. Surah Fateha is a perfect whole, complete and flawless it provide us truth and wisdom of life and every phrase high light the importance of rightness. It is known as an epitome of the Holy Quran and the Mother of Book. In the first five verses of this surah all the praises are done for Allah Almighty who is the Most Gracious and Ever Merciful. He is the Creator and the Master of the Day of Judgment. For all are desires, wishes, sorrows and problems we only seeks His guidance. In the six verse “Ih’dina,As-sirat,Al-Mustaqeem” ,we seek Allah’s help to guidance along the straight path. Human beings are weak and for their every worldly affair seek Divine help and support. Man confesses and acknowledges his weakness and submits his self through prayers to his Creator. This particular verse of surah Fateha embodies a humble request to Allah to show the right path which finally leads him to the fulfillment of his purpose and objective his life. This verse is the voice of human conscience appeals to God to reveal the purpose of human life. This Quranic verse provides complete guidance right from and awareness the purpose of human existence up to the actual realization of this purpose.

Keywords: Lord; Guidance; Right path; Soul; Purpose; Human’s life;Ih’dina,As-sirat,Al-Mustaqeem;Quranic knowledge; Man’s creation; Individual; National and international level

Introduction

It is a human nature when his mind and soul is fed up of the worldly deeds then he submits himself to the will of the Lord in an attitude of self-effacing humility and supercilious modesty, he concentrates on the voice of his soul and listens the voice

from the inner core of his heart to seek guidance in¹ the worldly affairs:

“O, my Lord, guide me along the right path”².

This is the voice of human soul and mind and besides it he confesses and acknowledges his helplessness in his worldly and other affairs of life. First of all, man determines the nature of goal or objective he strives to attain as his purpose of life. Man’s wrong decisions can directly lead him to hell where he will face torments and torture forever. On the other hand, the right decisions will take him to heaven where he can enjoy peace and bliss of his Creator. The man’s greatest desire is awareness of the right path which will lead him to fulfill his objective of his life. For the guidance, human conscience seeks his Creators help and assurance for the safe journey to attain his objectives.

Three Stages of Guidance

For human conscience, following three significant and compulsory acts are basically three technical phases which are known as:

understanding of the ideal and the objective

recognition of the right path that may assist the accomplishment of the purpose

apprehension of the objective or the ideal in order to eradicate any range of doubt and deflection from the right path The particular verse “Ih’dina,As-sirat,Al-Mustaqeem”

of Surah Fateha emphasis on an explanation of thesethree human compulsions, which are the three major phases of human conscience.

This Quranic verse provides complete code of guidance from an awareness of the purpose of human existence up to the actual realization of the purpose of man’s existence in this world. For the achievement and success in this world it provides guidance to mankind. By keeping the above mentioned, in view and concenter the words of the verse, the true meaning and spirit shell reveal its meaning to the apprehensive. The verse comprises of three segments which makes them parallel to the three phases of human conscience “Ih’dina,As-sirat,Al-Mustaqeem”.Ih,dina When a person utters the words of Ih,dina actually he submits himself to God to make him aware of the purpose of his existence. He confesses his own helpless entire universe and accepts the unlimited power of God Almighty. Man believes that it is God only who can confer on him the conscience of some purpose in this chaotic world. His faith

¹ Al-Quran,Surah Fateha:06

² Al-Quran,Surah Fateha:06

in Allah is in only his submission to the will of the Lord. Man cries out in the court of God Almighty and prays to him that he is drowned in the alleys of ignorance, and darkness man admits that he is unaware of the purpose and creation of the life. He wants to know the objective of his creations man asks Allah for spiritual insight that may help him understand him the purpose of his existence. To full the purpose of his existence he seeks Allah's help. This voice of man is from the core of his heart so it is responded by the God Almighty. When a man's soul is transformed in to a cry of desolation, peeled of man's greed, pretense and pettiness, it is heard in the heaven and the Lords in infinite mercy and compassion compel Him to shower his blessings upon the suffering soul. Resultantly God reveal to man the purpose of this creation and existence. The response of Allah Almighty brings peace and calmness in the heart and soul of man its soothes him because he finds purpose in his life. This feeling fills him with strong desire to learn ways and means that may become a source in acquiring the purpose of his life in this world. As-Sirat When a person calls Allah and recite this verse, in this verse through the cry of As-Sirat man asks Allah to enlighten his Soule and mind him in identifying the path that takes him to the completion of the ideal by seeking Allah's guidance, man beseeches Allah to guide him to the right path that directly takes him to the place of destination. The path which man wants to lead is free from the thorns of ignorance. Man completely submits himself to Allah and confesses before Him that he has no wisdom to differentiate between the right and wrong path, the path that takes him to his destiny. He asked for special Marcy so he can be on the right path. The man asks Allah to grant him sense and awareness so he lead to the right path and may realize the purpose of his life. The most Marcy full Allah responds to the humble and sincere request of the man and grants him with the capability to recognize the right path. This divine response motivates in man another desire: the desire for a foolproof guarantee of achievement of the ideal (Al-Mustaqeem) When a person recites this verse, when he utters the last word (Al-Mustaqeem) this verse, he desires complete confirmation of stability and a guarantee of realization of the objective. Man seeks Allah's help and assurance to be on the right path without any flickering stability. The real essence of man's pray to God is that he wants Allah's blessing to keep him stable on the right path so that he may achieve his ideal with full sense of security and peace of mind. Man has fears that he may stray from the right path otherwise he would never be able to explore his destiny. He prays to Allah to guide him to the safe and secure path where Satan and other evil forcers cannot distract him. He asks Allah for complete

assurance for achieving the purpose of his life.

When this pray is answers with the blessing Allah's Al –Mighty, it reaches in divine court and He himself communicates to the man's soul and mind trough revelation of conformity and stability on the right path. God command man if he dries guarantee for achieving his goal then he must be in the company of those on whom he has lavished his blessing. Allah wants us to be the companion of those people who always try to please Him and they never go astray form the right path. "The path of those upon whom you have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked(Your) anger or of those who are astray"³. Therefore, all those men and women who seeks Allah's help and guidance and follow His commands will definitely get the purpose of their life and reach at their pre-decided destination. Such followers of Allah cannot be distracted from the right path because the satan finds himself helpless which is cleared from the following words of the Holy Quran. "(Iblees) said, My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make (disobedience) attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all"⁴.

The first sura, of Holy Quran sura Fateha, holds a special status in Holy Quran. This sura explains purpose of human life. This sura explains every aspect of human life that makes human beings unique and unconquerable creature of earth. This sura develops a balance between human limitation and ambitions. Hence, this sura not only details about the existence of human beings but also provides an assurance of the realization of this purpose without having any fright and dismay of vacillation form the right path which leads us to the heaven.

Uniqueness of Quranic knowledge from other concepts

The Quran has its distinctive knowledge which creates a difference with other philosophical knowledge or concept. The main concern is to discuss the purposiveness of life, so the other philosophical disciplines of knowledge will be discussed only in contrast to Quranic knowledge to find out the true spirit and purpose of life for human beings. By keeping in mind the translation and message conveyed in the Quranic verse, it is clear that the guidance which we perceive through Quran is not only philosophical but is practical too. Quranic message lays stress upon the practical aspect of human life. The verse not only highlights the purpose of life of human beings in this world but it

³ Al-Quran, Surah Fateha:07

⁴ Al-Quran, Surah Hijr: 39

make us familiar with the action plan which all the beings on this earth should follow. This the only thought provoking point where the Quranic wisdom draws a prominent line with other philosophical worldly knowledge.⁵

All the philosophical knowledge like ethics only deals with the nature of morals and morality, the standards and values set by them and concentrates to sort out the logical basis to justify moral standards and criteria while Quran explains the mutual link between moral standards and practical approaches of mode of survival and existence. If all the concepts are not interpreted into reality and practical framework of life then they remain only concepts and lose their importance in the world of practicality.⁶ It is on the religion Islam which can handle with relation between moral issues and their human repercussions without the least sense of elusion. Islam provides an ideal connection between man's speculative tendencies and his realistic compulsions.

One of the branches of knowledge, sociology discusses the nature of the society its origin and the factors that play their roll to social adherence or social disorder. On the other hand Quranic knowledge deals not only with social concepts but also provides the practical aspects. It clarifies the element of convergence in to the divergent chaos of social concepts and assembles their diversity in to one molecular concept. Quranic knowledge shapes the irrelevance in concept and provides a comprehensive practical solution to bind them in to a dynamic unity⁷

Another vast subject, Poetical science clarifies the nature and evolution of the state. The various poetical systems their functioning with in a specific geographical territory is discuss and examined by the experts of poetical science. The a comparison of different political structures and their merits and demerit are discuss but this discipline of knowledge does not provide any guarantees for the smooth and balanced functioning of any poetical systems or it fails to give constant fundamentals for a strong poetical systems.

The history itself reveals that most of the strong political systems collapsed when they could not resist the pressure of external forcers' it is only the Quranic knowledge that is for superior to the other knowledge that structure other poetical systems. It believes in

⁵ Mokhtar Ihsan, 2003, Commentary on the Holy Quran-Sura Al-Fateha , Washington , P.10

⁶ Ayoub, Muhammad, The Quran and Its Interpreters, Vol .1, University of New York Press, P.49

⁷ Mark Hufnail, 2000, Islam and Humanity, Milliken Publishing company, pp.16-20

a strong and steady interaction between the people in authority and their subjects. It creates balance in the society by providing a political system which is based on equality for the people belonging to different status.⁸ It develops a society which is free of internal worries and external fears. The Islamic political system is an amalgam of inflexibility and flexibility, because it is based on human nature. Therefore the Islamic political system has attained universal value due to its universal political system while other systems face criticism.

Economics deals with the economic nature and development of society. It is concerned with the distribution of wealth and the process of its expenditure. It explains the mutual balance and equilibrium between labour and capital. If we study Quranic knowledge it discusses an equitable distribution of wealth. Islamic economic system is based on the concept of genuine economic growth which denies the accumulation of wealth with a few individuals. Quran, therefore, guarantees a harmonious economic system in which the poor do not suffer from the sense of deprivation and rich do not enjoy the good status of life.⁹

The subject of religious studies handles basically theoretical approaches. The noble and good deeds are detailed in this subject on the basis of faith and qualification. It discusses the difference between convictions are desirable or undesirable. The beauty of Quranic knowledge is that it first provides a determined solution of such problems then sort out their philosophical implications. Quran suggests practical ways and means to revitalize the dead link if convictions are turned into superstitions and dead rituals replace the actions. Quranic teachings are basically revolutionary; it has knowledge of wisdom and enlightenment. The building of Islam is constructed on the strong basis of strong and resilient faith.

The above mentioned discussion clarify that most of the disciplines of knowledge are based on intellect and provides intellectual theories and concepts. They mainly discuss the identification of problems and hardly offer solutions. In some cases even if they provide solutions but they are not completely solved. On the other side Quranic knowledge gives foundation to the solutions of the problems, it spells out suggestions and prescriptions to solve these problems. In this regard Quranic knowledge gains

⁸ Roche K, 2011, Classification of Al-Quran's contents, London, p.110

⁹ Mark Hufnail, 2000, Islam and Humanity, Milliken Publishing company, pp.24.

superiority over philosophical disciplines by laying maximum stress on the realization of the problem and providing solution. Unlike other philosophical disciplines does not support half- chewed system.

In this scenario if take a deep glance and thorough reading of Surah Fatehah, it is clearly mentioned and introduced to human beings to the purpose of their existence.¹⁰ They are first demanded to seek Allah's guidance for the right path which may lead them to the achievement of the purpose, and afterwards mankind is asked to identify the purpose of their existence. Quran does not give commands only it asks man to ponder and develop a mode of questioning and diagnosis, this approach gives Quran a distinctive status among all branches of knowledge. Although there is great advancement in all the fields of science, scientists are really creative people with great minds but their intellect is the gift of God Almighty so their approaches cannot be greater than our creator, our Lord. In this world the greatest miracle is the human brain and without this divine blessing no greatest scientific revolution can be done by humans.¹¹ It is difficult to comprehend the skills and talent of human beings by their creations and theoretical knowledge. God knows the genetically prone intellect of scientists that is reflected through advancement in the field of science. Therefore, through the specific verse of Surah Fatehah , man seeks Allah's guidance and submits himself to the will of Allah in a condition of complete humility, first requests Allah to guide him along the right direction because right direction will can only guarantee of the right destination. It can be assumed that a man may know his destination but if the right path is not chosen then he cannot reach his right destination because in the will of man the will of God is compulsory. Most of the time it happens without seeking the guidance of Allah , human beings get astray on the way to their destination and in the darkness of misdirection and lose both wakefulness of reason and direction.¹² The under discussion verse of Surah Fatehah does not only highlight the nature of the problem but also focuses that every human being should seek Allah's or divine guidance to resolve the problems because theoretical knowledge and guidance is futile without practical assistance.

¹⁰ Gwilym Beckerlegge, 2015, The world religious reader, London, p.180

¹¹ Leman, Oliver, 2006, The Quran: an Encyclopedia, Routledge, P.614

¹² Mark Hufnail, 2000, Islam and Humanity, Milliken Publishing company, pp.24.

Purpose of Man's Creation and Quranic Guidance

The objective of man's creation is the achievement of his aims through Quranic Guidance. The Quran claims itself to be authentic sources of guidance. "This Quran is a clear statement to (All) the people and guidance and instruction for those conscious of Allah"¹³.

Therefore, this divine Book is to take out mankind out of the depths of darkness and ignorance and expose them to the world of truth and reality. Another place Allah Almighty himself states. "Alif, Lam,Ra". This is a Book which we have revealed to you,(O Muhammad) , that you might bring mankind out of darkness in to the light by permission of their Lord-to path of the Exalted in Might , the praiseworthy" (Al-Quran,Al-Ibrahim,1-2). The world has been created so that we may acquire Theological knowledge and relies that God is All – Power full and All knowledgeable. The knowledge of theology is the first in rank of all sciences, and all the other branches of science emerge from it. Therefore it is rightly said that the true knowledge is the light which God himself shines in the heart of those where He wants' to shower his blessings. The greatest wealth which a person receives is true knowledge. The purpose of the holy Book Quran is to drag out man from the world of darkness in to the light of knowledge and wisdom. Darkness dose not refer unawareness of man about its destination but also unawareness of the right path that leads towards that distention. Quranic instructions are waste on logic and the nature of its advice of is not full fantasy. Quranic massage directly handles the nature of the problem pragmatically and is deeply concerned by practical and theoretical formulation.

Therefore it is clearly mention in the holy Quran that this is the divine Book which leads mankind towards the secure and straight path. "

"Indeed, this Quran guides to that which is most suitable and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward.¹⁴ There are three levels at which hum men life functions that i.e. individual, national and international, so we are spouse to seek guidance at every levels of human existence form the holy Quran because Quran provide complete cod of life. Quran should not only be consulted for finding the purpose in ideal in human life but also for finding the methods that can help us undoubtedly in the achievement of this purpose and ideal .

¹³ Al-Quran,Surah Al-Imran: 138

¹⁴ Al-Quran,Surah Al-Israel :09

If we deeply study the creation of the universe then we come to know each and every particle of this universe is created for certain purpose, each and every pattern and design is inspired by the arrangement of the universe. The creation of universe is planned by a divine power; nothing is created without any purpose.

“Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or (lying) on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying) “our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire”.¹⁵ At another place it is clearly mentioned in the holy Quran the purpose of the creation of this universe.

“And we did not create the heavens and earth and that between them in play. We did not create them except in truth, but most of them do not know.”¹⁶ The above mention verse of Holy Quran explain the creation of the heaven and the earth is created for a specific purpose, if someone denies that the creation of this universe is purpose less then it is negation of divan glory and power, it is just do to human rigidity to except the creation of human life with purpose. If we hold a pebble or stone and observe it that reflects that even it is created out of some reason. A drop of water, a granule of sand and even a micro-organism is created by Allah Almighty with some purpose. So how we can say that the creation of human life is without a purpose and goal .like, all other creations of the universe, the human existence has authentic certification of it creation with meaning and purpose. The philosophy of life and death is detailed in Quran in the following verse.“(He) who create death and life to test you (as to) which of you is best in deed and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.”¹⁷ The man’s journey from cradle to grave explains that piratical struggle entails a purpose and an ideal, which serve as motivating forces. The action of the striving individual are determined and evaluated in accordance to the ideal. Life is the name of struggle for achieving this purpose and death is the natural climax of this struggle. Therefore the purpose of human existence is the basic statement for the vindications of the universe itself. There are three Quranic stages guidance in harmony with the three phases of human life. So in the light of Quranic knowledge human can get guidance for three level of human life. Quranic Guidance for human life at the individual level Indeed, this is a reminder, so whoever

¹⁵ Al-Quran,Surah Al-Imran :191

¹⁶ Al-Quran,Surah Al-Dhakhan : 38,39

¹⁷ Al-Quran,Surah Al-Mulk:02

wills may take to his Lord a way” (Al-Quran,Al-Muzzammil,19). The Quranic knowledge does not only provide guidance only to some specific group of people but its guidance is for all ages and all kind of people. Anyone who wants to seek guidance and help of Allah can take help from the divine book of Allah the Holy Quran. This verse does not specify the individual. The Quranic knowledge is an invitation for the people belonging to different caste, creed, race and religion without any prejudice and discrimination. It enlightens and illuminates the minds and souls of human irrespective of their religion and skin colour.

It is a human nature that every individual is a different being and every person has different desires and purpose of life. For the completion and acquisition of one’s desires and wishes if someone adhere itself with emotional sincerity and mental clarity with the holy book Quran, resultantly he will be able to shape his desires and purpose of life in a practical shape in the form of their practical realizations. It is the promise of Allah through His book the Holy Quran that human wishes and desires, which they pray in supplication, are destined in fulfillment. The Heaven showers its blessings upon those people and God instantly responds to the humans’ wishes in this materialistic world. God is benevolent and merciful so He cannot see his creation in misery and pain therefore He listens to the prayers of the people and with the reservoir of His blessings He fulfills their desires in the best of their interest. But only those prayers are entertained by the divine power, which are free of human pride and arrogance and that person submits himself sincerely to God. People belonging to different social groups require different levels of guidance to conform to their conditions and capabilities and to their particular situations. Every person has his some primary needs like a thirsty man need water, a hungry man needs food and a needy person needs money etc. after the fulfillment of basic needs man seeks for his secondary needs but it is a human nature that man only desires for primary needs. This point can be clarified by the example of man who daily prays to God only for a rose but God waits when this innocent man will request for the basket full of roses which are ready to be blessed to that man. In the same way man’s urgency only perches him on the primary needs while secondary needs are a step towards the strong bonding with our creator.

Guidance through Quran at the national level of human life

The Man is a basic unit of society. Society is formulated by collectivism of human being therefore the human life cannot achieve its purpose without collectivism a nationalism, in the same way all the religions cannot sustain their religious identity

without the provision of these two power full foresees. In the similarly, Islam sustains its religious social structure on collectivism and nationalism. The national way of life depends on these two foresees which ensures the establishment of an Islamic way of life.

Islam exists on collective life. Collective life is based on leadership, and leadership only sustains on submission and obedience. All the messages of Quran and Holy Prophet (PBUH) not only for individuals alone but the entire Ummah.“

“And indeed, it is a remembrance for you and your people, and you (all) are going to be questioned”¹⁸

The Ummah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is divide in to two groups.

Ummah-i-Dawad

This the group of all those Jinns and human beings who were invited by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to embrace Islam the authenticity of this invitation is cleared by the following Hadith .

ارسلت الى الخلق كافة وختمى النبيون

Which is reported by Hazrat Abu Hurayrah“I (PUBH) have been sent as messenger for all the creatures in my arrival heralds the end of the chain of the Prophet hood (Ibn-Habban,A-Sahih,Hadith No2313).

كان كل نبي يبعث الى قومه خاصة وليبعثت الى كل احمر واسود

In another Hadith of Prophet (PUBH) which jabir –bin- abullahAnsarequotes “Eech Prophet who preceded was set for a particular community . But I have been sent for every red or black individual of the world of mankind (Muslim,Al-Sahih,Hadith No 521). “and we have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most men know not”(Al-Quran,Al-Saba,28).There are many other verses in Quran in which the people of the Book, the Jews and Christians, the disbelievers, the idolaters and all mankind and even the jinn are called to Islam, and this an acknowledged fact.

Ummat-i-Ajabat

This is group of all those jenns and human being who accepted the initiations of the Holy Prophet (PUBH) and entered in to the circle of Islam. This groups is called the

¹⁸ Al-Quran,Surah Az-Zukhruf :44

Ummah of the Holy Prophet (PUBH), are national poet Allama Iqbal has designated it as (Qaum-i-Rasool-i-Hashmi) .

“Say (O Muhammad): mankind ! I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah –to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the hearth”(Al-Quran,Al-Araf,158).

The followers of other Prophet could not get universal consideration because they were guided by the particular requirements of their times. The Muslim community which accepted the finality of the Prophet hood of the last Messenger of God, enjoy a cosmic base. The message of Holy Prophet (PUBH) is universal and the superiority of his community is clearly explained by the Holy Book Quran.

Guidance through Quran at the International level of human life

The message of Quran is not only confined to the Muslim community but all other nations and communities can get guidance and can be influenced by it. The main purpose of its international or universal application is to up left the entire mankind from the world of darkness and ignorance. Allah himself says in the Holy Quran. “This Quran is the book of guidance for all the nations of the world” (Al-Quran,Al-Anam,90).

Conclusion:

This Quranic verse provides complete code of guidance from an awareness of the purpose of human existence up to the actual realization of the purpose of man’s existence in this world. For the achievement and success in this world it provides guidance to mankind. The Quranic Guidance in this particular verse of Surah Fateha has wholly concerned itself with the innovation of purpose; it would simply have attested the significance of knowledge and not of action. The Islam is not a defined mass of abstract rules and laws; it places the maximum quality on action. Both paper principles and paper tigers are condemned by Islam. They are the innovation of Western diplomats because Western diplomacy is essentially based on hypocrisy, crookedness and brazen chicanery. Islam encourages positive conduct and positive action, because in Islam there is no cleavage between theory and practice.

The mark of a Musalman is his essential solidity and not his incremental impalpability. This is the fundamental difference between true Muslim and other person. The conduct and action of a Muslim emit from the hard rock of his faith. Without this basis of faith his creative and inspiring flights are simply unnecessary. But a non-Muslim operates in nothingness. His faith is placed on a foundation of chalk stone, clay and sand. This is one of the reasons that Western culture represents a hotchpotch mixture of divergent,

self-cancelling philosophical attitudes. But a Muslim is inextricably twined with his faith; it is the spring and fountain of his action. Fundamental core of Islam is permanent: it has an in-built system of always springing back with the new recoil and life. The Western people are simply concerned with the discovery of purpose; But a Muslim is more concerned with the mode and manner of action that leads to the apprehension of intention and meaning. The willpower of the right course of action provides a guarantee for the discovery of the hidden purpose of human life. Without this initial factor, a man may have glimpses of the purpose but he may flounder in the dark of indecision, he may race into the trash of uncertainty, he may bash against the pointed projections of false temptations and in the resulting confusion he may lose the strong vision of his objective. This is the reason that the verse of Surah Fatehah emphasizes man's request to the Allah Almighty to guide him along the right direction. Islam is not only logical and philosophical splitting hairs and explanation: it is the creation of penalty and achievements through practical struggle. The Islam is not meant for opium addicts and lotus-eaters. It is meant for people who relish action and like to lead an active and meaningful life on this earth. The Holy Quranic knowledge supercedes all other forms of knowledge on relation of its importance on the practical and effective aspects of human life.

The word 'Sirat' is especially Surah Fatehah brings to light the specific direction and orientation of the Quranic guidance and instruction. The message of the Holy Quran is not mere tentative and logical clarification; its object is practical instruction and illumination. Its aim is to absorb people in a significant struggle to realize the purpose of their way of life after identifying the parameters of this purpose. The Quranic knowledge is a source of light and guidance for the whole mankind. The Quranic teachings illuminate the path of human life and provide guidance as well as help to lead a life which leads man to his Creator the Allah Almighty.