Is there a god? If so, how do we define him?

Can faith be spread by violence? What are the myths?

Who was Muhammad? What do the intellectuals say?

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The world with all its phenomena and the vast universe in which it forms a mere speck, is undoubtedly a masterpiece of a great Artist and Designer. It would be foolish to believe otherwise, as many are beginning to realize. Gone are the days of Darwinism, and theories such as evolution seem antiquated now to intellectual minds. The more we progress in science the closer to God we are getting; science is indeed a blessing to humanity.

God, the Almighty, in His infinite wisdom, created this world and placed us within it for a lofty purpose; to recognize and worship him in this transient life to be able to deserve the eternal bounties of Paradise. To enlighten us of the purpose to life and our duties within it, God sent down numerous messengers. These human beings, who numbered approximately 124,000, lived normal human lives and sought to connect us to the Almighty. In light of the relatively smaller populations in earlier times, this indeed is a very large number and goes to show the compassionate nature of God.

To give credibility to their person and message, God also equipped these messengers with supernatural abilities that would compel people to believe in them with the least hesitation and questioning.

The Qur’an says every nation had its share of messengers. It mentions some famous ones including Adam, Noah, David, Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, Jonah, Isaac, Aaron, Solomon, Joseph, Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them all.

Each Prophet came to confirm the message of his predecessor and endorse him. This noble chain of prophethood ended with the final messenger Muhammad [pbuh], who endorsed and acclaimed all who came before him.

Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] has been highly misunderstood by the modern world. This is largely due to misportrayal, misinformation, and mainly misrepresentation. Unfortunately, countless myths have been contrived and perpetuated with respect to Muhammad [pbuh] with the intent of defamation and denigration, and, sadly, with some success.

To study the biography of Muhammad [pbuh] in an objective manner, would, therefore, be the most ethical and reasonable thing to do for men and women of the modern age.
During the centuries of the Crusades, all sorts of slanders were invented against Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). With the birth of the modern age, however, marked with religious tolerance and freedom of thought, there has been a great change in the approach of Western authors in their delineation of his life and character. The views of some non-Muslim scholars regarding Prophet Muhammad, given at the end, justify this opinion.

The West has still to go a step forward to discover the greatest reality about Muhammad, and that is his being the true and last Prophet of God for all of humanity. In spite of all its objectivity and enlightenment, there has been no sincere and objective attempt by the West to understand the Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh). It is so strange that very glowing tributes are paid to him for his integrity and achievement, but his claim of being the Prophet of God has been rejected. It is here that a searching of the heart is required, and a review of the so-called objectivity is needed. The following glaring facts from the life of Muhammad (pbuh) have been furnished to facilitate an unbiased, logical and objective decision regarding his Prophethood.

Up to the age of forty, Muhammad was not known as a statesman, a preacher or an orator. He was never seen discussing the principles of metaphysics, ethics, law, politics, economics or sociology. No doubt he possessed an excellent character, charming manners and was highly cultured; yet there was nothing so deeply striking and so radically extraordinary in him that would make men expect something great and revolutionary from him in the future. But when he came out of the Cave (Hira) with a new message, he was completely transformed.

Is it possible for such a person of the above qualities to turn all of a sudden into ‘an imposter’ and claim to be the Prophet of Allah and thus invite the rage of his people? One might ask, for what reason did he suffer all the hardships imposed on him? His people offered to accept him as their king and to lay all the riches of the land at his feet if only he would leave the preaching of his religion.

But he chose to refuse their tempting offers and go on preaching his religion single-handedly in the face of all kinds of insults, social boycott and even physical assault by his own people. Was it not only God’s support and his firm will to disseminate the message of Allah and his deep-rooted belief that ultimately Islam would emerge as the only way of life for humanity, that he stood like a mountain in the face of all opposition and conspiracies to eliminate him? Furthermore, had he come with a design of rivalry with the Christians and the Jews, why should he have made belief in Jesus and Moses and other Prophets of God (peace be upon them) a basic requirement of faith without which no one could be a Muslim?

Is it not an incontrovertible proof of his Prophethood that in spite of being unlettered and having led a very normal and quiet life for forty years, when he began preaching his message, all of Arabia stood in awe and wonder at his wonder-
ful eloquence and oratory? It was so matchless that the whole legion of Arab poets, preachers and orators of the highest calibre failed to bring forth its equivalent. And above all, how could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature contained in the Qur’an that no human being could possibly have developed at that time?

Last but not least, why did he lead a hard life, even after gaining power and authority? Just ponder over the words he uttered while dying: “We, the community of the Prophets, are not inherited. Whatever we leave is for charity.”

As a matter of fact, Muhammad (pbuh) is the last link of the chain of Prophets sent in different lands and times since the beginning of human life on this planet. Read the following writings of the Western authors:

**Lamartine, Histoire de la Turquie, Paris 1854, Vol II, pp. 276-77:**

“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls... the forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not.

“Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?”

**Edward Gibbon and Simon Ocklay, History of the Saracen Empire, Lon-**

don, 1870, p. 54:

“It is not the propagation but the permanency of his religion that deserves our wonder; the same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Mecca and Medina is preserved, after the revolutions of twelve centuries by the Indian, the African and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran...The Mahometans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. ‘I believe in One God and Mahomet the Apostle of God’, is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.”

**Bosworth Smith, Mohammed and Moham-**

madanism, London 1874, p. 92:

“He was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope’s pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without
a palace, without a fixed revenue; if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammed, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports.”

Annie Besant, The Life and Teachings of Muhammad, Madras 1932, p. 4:
“It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.”

W. Montgomery, Muhammad at Mecca, Oxford 1953, p. 52:
“His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement – all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad.”

“Muhammad, the inspired man who founded Islam, was born about A.D. 570 into an Arabian tribe that worshipped idols. Orphaned at birth, he was always particularly solicitous of the poor and needy, the widow and the orphan, the slave and the downtrodden.
At twenty he was already a successful businessman, and soon became director of camel caravans for a wealthy widow. When he reached twenty-five, his employer, recognizing his merit, proposed marriage. Even though she was fifteen years older, he married her, and as long as she lived, remained a devoted husband.
“Like almost every major prophet before him, Muhammad fought shy of serving as the transmitter of God’s word, sensing his own inadequacy. But the angel commanded ‘Read’. So far as we know, Muhammad was unable to read or write, but he began to dictate those inspired words which would soon revolutionize a large segment of the earth: ‘There is one God.’
“In all things Muhammad was profoundly practical. When his beloved son Ibrahim died, an eclipse occurred, and rumours of God’s personal condolence quickly arose. Whereupon Muhammad is said to have announced, ‘An eclipse is a phenomenon of nature. It is foolish to attribute such things to the death or birth of a human-being.’
“At Muhammad’s own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the noblest speeches in religious history: ‘If there are any among you who worshipped Muhammad, he is dead. But if it is God you worshipped, He lives forever.’”

“My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level.”
In earlier times, people used to reject prophets unless they brought forth tangible miracles, a right which God never denied them. Now after the demise of the prophets, people are in need of an equally reliable and concrete source of information which is capable of pointing them to the right direction. Darwinism produced atheism and extreme secularism, a worldwide sweeping dogma that has divorced humanity from true religion. Islam, being the last revealed and preserved religion, is standing now in the face of such unsubstantiated claims of atheism. Many findings of science that have been discovered very recently are to be found in the Qur’an, which was revealed more than 14 centuries ago.

God states in the Qur’an: “So verily, I swear by the stars that are veiled; and by the sweeping stars that move swiftly and hide themselves; and by the night as it departs; and by the dawn as it brightens; verily, this is the Word (the Qur’an) of a most honourable messenger.” [Qur’an, 82:15-19]

What Are Black Holes?
It is well known that stars change their nature as they age till they die; among the final phases of stars is the black hole.

During the life cycle of stars, stars change from one entity to another. One of these is the black hole. Black holes are formidable and fearsome entities.

Scientists have identified three kinds of black holes – small, medium and large.

(1) The small or low-mass black holes [stellar or galactic black holes].
These low-mass black holes form from collapsed stars that were once 100 times as big as our sun.
When such a massive star runs out of energy, it throws off its outer shell and is left with a core that is still 15 times as massive as the sun.
Scientists believe that our Milky Way Galaxy contains tens of thousands of these black holes, hence the name “galactic” black hole.

(2) Mid-size black holes.

(3) Super massive black holes. These reside in the centre of galaxies. Some scientists speculate that most galaxies, including our own, harbour a super massive black hole.

There are two main processes constantly going on in massive stars: nuclear fusion (which tends to blow
the star’s hydrogen outward from the star’s centre) and gravitation (which tends to pull all hydrogen back in the direction it had come). These two processes balance one another until all the star’s hydrogen is exhausted, allowing gravitation to take over.

When gravitation dominates, the star becomes unstable and starts to collapse. Once that happens, the star (and ultimately its atoms) caves inward upon itself, resulting in the formation of a black hole (Hewitt 186).

### Why Are Black Holes Black?

In order for a rocket to leave the surface of earth, it must travel faster than 25,000 miles per hour (7 miles per second). This is called ‘escape velocity’. If the rocket has a speed less than the escape velocity of an object, the object’s gravity will pull it back down. The escape velocity of a black hole is greater than 186,000 miles per second. That means a rocket would have to travel faster than 186,000 miles per second in order to leave the black hole. The speed of light is 186,000 miles per second, so light doesn’t travel fast enough to leave the black hole; hence it is black.

So when a star which has consumed all its fuel collapses in on itself, it eventually turns into a black hole with infinite density and zero volume and an immensely powerful magnetic field.

The Qur’an has referred to this fact [death of stars because of fuel exhaustion] in the following verse: “When the stars are extinguished.” [Qur’an, 77:8]

### Will All Stars Be Black Holes?

Not all stars upon gravitational collapse form black holes. A star less than 1.4 times the mass of the sun will become a white dwarf. A star between 1.4 and 3 times the mass of the sun will become a neutron star. It’s only stars greater than 3 times the mass of the sun that become black holes upon collapse. They are formed from the cores of super massive stars and can best be described as regions of space where so much mass is concentrated that nothing, not even light, can escape the gravitational pull. It is an area where the escape velocity is greater than the speed of light. Since nothing can travel faster than light, nothing can escape the gravity of a black hole.

God, the Almighty, swore
by these entities to confirm the fact that the Glorious Qur’an is a Divine revelation. He (Exalted and Glorified) says:

“So verily, I swear by the stars that are veiled; and by the sweeping stars that move swiftly and hide themselves; and by the night as it departs; and by the dawn as it brightens; verily, this is the Word (the Qur’an) of a most honourable messenger.” [Qur’an, 82:15-19]

**Conclusion**

In sum, black holes are stars in motion that move in their poles, and, as it were, hide themselves after having been visible, as they are at the end of their lives. They produce no light due to their gravity which enables them to suck in and clear everything in their way by swallowing up everything around. The Glorious Qur’an describes them as being ‘cleaners’ in conformity with the scientific description. Indeed scientists have defined black holes with precisely the same expressions as found in the Qur’an, such as, “it creates an immense gravitational pull not unlike an invisible cosmic vacuum cleaner, sucking in all matter coming its way, including light. The Arabic word “Kunnas” can be translated as ‘sweepers’ or ‘cleaners’.

The Qur’an’s accurate description of black holes includes the following:

1. They are in constant motion.
2. They are receding or veiled after being apparent.
3. They suck or sweep any matter.

Amazingly, all of the above-mentioned has now been corroborated by modern scientific knowledge.

“And call not, besides God, another god. There is no god but He. Everything (that exists) will perish except His Countenance. To Him belong the Command, and to Him will ye be brought back.” [Qur’an, 29:88]
The assertion that Islam was spread by the sword is nothing but an absurd myth. Qur’an, the primary source of Islam, has specifically forbade the spreading of the faith by force. It says: “There must be no coercion in matters of faith.” [Qur’an, :257]

True, Muhammad called for the use of the sword in his defensive war against opposing tribes in Arabia, when he was building his state. But that was a political act, not a religious one; basically a fight for territory, not for the spreading of the faith.

Jesus said: “You will recognize them by their fruits.”

The treatment of other religions by Islam must be judged by a simple test: how did the Muslim rulers behave for more than a thousand years, when they had the power to “spread the faith by the sword”?

Well, they just did not.

For many centuries, the Muslims ruled Greece. Did the Greeks become Muslims? Did anyone even try to Islamize them? On the contrary, Christian Greeks held the highest positions in the Ottoman administration.

The Bulgarians, Serbs, Romanians, Hungarians and other European nations lived at one time or another under Ottoman rule and clung to their Christian faith. Nobody compelled them to become Muslims and all of them remained devoutly Christian.

True, the Albanians did convert to Islam, and so did the Bosniaks. But nobody argues that they did this under duress. They adopted Islam in order to become favourites of the government and enjoy the fruits.

In 1099, the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem and massacred its Muslim and Jewish inhabitants indiscriminately, in the name of religion. At that time, 400 years into the occupation of Palestine by the Muslims, Christians were still the majority in the country. Throughout this long period, no effort was made to impose Islam on them. Only after the expulsion of the Crusaders from the country, did the majority of the inhabitants start to adopt the Arabic language and the Mus-
lim faith - and they were the forefathers of most of today’s Palestinians.

There is no evidence whatsoever of any attempt to impose Islam on the Jews. As is well known, under Muslim rule the Jews of Spain enjoyed a bloom the like of which the Jews did not enjoy anywhere else until almost our time. Poets like Yehuda Halevy wrote in Arabic, as did the great Maimonides. In Muslim Spain, Jews were ministers, poets, scientists. In Muslim Toledo, Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars worked together and translated the ancient Greek philosophical and scientific texts. That was, indeed, the Golden Age. How would this have been possible, had the Prophet decreed the “spreading of the faith by the sword”?

What happened afterwards is even more telling. When the Catholics re-conquered Spain from the Muslims, they instituted a reign of religious terror. The Jews and the Muslims were presented with a cruel choice: to become Christians, to be massacred or to leave. And where did the hundreds of thousands of Jews, who refused to abandon their faith, escape? Almost all of them were received with open arms in the Muslim countries. The Sephardi (“Spanish”) Jews settled all over the Muslim world, from Morocco in the west to Iraq in the east, from Bulgaria (then part of the Ottoman Empire) in the north to Sudan in the south. Nowhere were they persecuted. They knew nothing like the tortures of the Inquisition, the flames of the auto-da-fe, the pogroms, the terrible mass-expulsions that took place in almost all Christian countries, up to the Holocaust.

Why? Because Islam expressly prohibited any persecution of the “peoples of the book” [as well as all of the humanity in general]. In Islamic society, a special place was reserved for Jews and Christians. They did not enjoy completely equal rights, but almost. They had to pay a special poll tax, but were exempted from military service - a trade-off that was quite welcome to many Jews. It has been said that Muslim rulers frowned upon any attempt to convert Jews to Islam even by gentle persuasion - because it entailed the loss of taxes. Every honest Jew who knows the history of his people cannot but feel a deep sense of gratitude to Islam, which has protected the Jews for fifty generations, while others persecuted them and tried many times “by the sword” to get them to abandon their faith.

The story about “spreading the faith by the sword” is an evil legend, one of the myths that grew up in Europe during the great wars against the Muslims - the reconquista of Spain by the Christians, the Crusades and the repulsion of the Turks, who almost conquered Vienna.

I just hope people spent a little more time studying factual history than levelling allegations with malicious intent.

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Brain - A Hard Drive?
Your brain is a very complex structure and unlike any other in the world. It is sometimes likened to a computer hard drive, but this may be an erroneous comparison, at least in the following respect. In a computer hard drive, information can be stored, and if desired, can also be deleted at will; but the brain is incapable of such a function. An additional advantage with the technological device is the possibility of its disposal and destruction for permanent deletion of data. Such luxury is not available to the brain, which has to carry every bit of information – desired or undesired – for the rest of its life. The brain captures data as efficiently as a hard drive but cannot dispose of it in a convenient fashion like a hardware accessory. In sum, as brilliant a tool as it is, one has to be extremely cautious when using this natural memory device called ‘the brain’.

Immorality And Effects
Many forms of data can be entered into the memory of the brain with no way of removing it later on. Individuals indulgent in obscenities may not realize it, but once stored, it is impossible to remove these from the memory of the brain. It is also important to be cautious with the kids in particular with respect to the above. Young children are far more susceptible to these things than adults and obscene impressions on young innocent minds can damage their morality forever. People negligent in this matter may never be forgiven by their children when they grow up and realize the gravity of those flashbacks retained from childhood as a result of carelessness showed by parents. This also underscores the importance of monitoring TV broadcasts, especially with the multitudes of channels that come along with it nowadays.

More important than all this is probably the monitoring of the modern medium of entertainment and information [and a means of possible moral destruction], the internet. As beneficial as it is, the injurious effects of the internet can far outweigh the benefits if not used in an ethical manner. Internet is unfortunately liberally used among households, such that children have their own connections to ‘the net’ from their own bedrooms. This can indeed have disastrous effects as may be known to many. If it be a must then the least we can do is to ensure the installation of safety software and use them to the advantage of our children as well as keep access of it secure and under supervision.

Disciplining Children
We learn from the above that the brain’s wonderful ability of permanently storing data can sometimes prove to be a liability than an asset. As with the above, past memories of guilt can also become...
very haunting too later on in life. Murder and major crimes may be extreme examples, but even something as seemingly trivial as smacking your child can become a harrowing experience later. There are numerous stories of remorseful parents who, out of madness and on the spur of the moment, had taken to beating their kids, only to regret it later, and for the rest of their lives. True love will never instigate one to beat; one should rather let the moment of madness pass and then sit and reflect upon the situation. If the act is worth punishing, and where punishment would produce positive results, and not done out of vengeance, then some form of disciplinary measure be put in place; otherwise the child should be pardoned with a word of advice. Undoubtedly, love and kindness are far better teachers than violence. Children do not always remain children and unfair treatment at an early stage of life can scar them psychologically for the rest of their lives.

The same applies to treatment of other members of family, such as parents and spouses. Indeed it can be a terrible feeling for the brain to look back into life when the loving mother was once alive and you had mistreated her for some triviality. No amount of compensation would ever suffice for that one seemingly insignificant momentary error. Remember, incidents last for minutes, yet their memories last for a lifetime.

**Intellect And Foresight**

Like the brain, God has equipped us with an equally precious asset, which is the power of reasoning and foresight; something which the animals are bereft of. One who argues or fights unnecessarily with others – strangers or otherwise – demonstrates his sub-human traits. And even among these, those with some degree of conscience will carry the burden of that experience for lengthy periods, whilst others will leave their experiences behind on the spot of the incident, perhaps only to look for another elsewhere.

It follows from the above that every action of ours requires careful thinking before its execution, as it will be permanently stored in our memories and the memories of those present.

The matter is not to be taken lightly. How can it be when we know that many, if not all, suicides take place due to negative flashbacks resulting from previous actions. No one in their right minds would ever perpetrate an act if they knew that its consequence could possibly lead to self-inflicted death. But human failure to foresee the future accounts for many such deaths that take place within our societies. The blame is not attributable to this human failure but to the failure of not employing the power of reasoning which is supplied to every man and woman as a protective shield by God from such possible eventualities. So, if it’s a life and death situation, it at least merits some degree of serious attention.

Actions that have a potential to scar the mind forever have a good reason to be contemplated [and abandoned] prior to their execution. But since we carry out thousands of actions on a daily basis, how are we to distinguish those that have the potential to leave a lasting impression on the mind from those that do not. The answer to this, however, requires no ingenuity. Since all actions that have a potential of causing misery stem from the conscious mind rather than the subconscious [including those resulting from negative emotions, such as anger], they will normally be preceded by some form of thinking and intention before their execution. This is sufficient time for contemplation and quick decision-making. Those who choose to heed this golden moment lead dignifying lives, whilst those who ignore it pay a heavy price later on.
The most concise definition of God in Islam is given in the four verses of the chapter Ikhlas [meaning sincerity]. It is as follows:

“Say: He is Allah, The One and Only. Allah, the Eternal, Absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.” [Qur’an, 112:1-4]

The word ‘Samad’ is difficult to translate. It means ‘absolute existence’, which can be attributed only to Allah, all other existence being temporal or conditional. It also means that Allah is not dependant on any person or thing, but all persons and things are dependant on Him.

**Surah Ikhlas - The Touchstone Of Theology**

Chapter Ikhlas (112) of the Glorious Qur’an is the touchstone of theology. ‘Theo’ in Greek means God and ‘logy’ means study. Thus Theology means study of God, and to Muslims this four line definition of Almighty God serves as the touchstone of the study of God. Any candidate to divinity must be subjected to this ‘acid test’. Since the attributes of Allah given in this chapter are unique, false gods and pretenders to divinity can be easily dismissed using these verses.

**What Does Islam Say About ‘God-men’?**

India is often called the land of ‘god-men’. This is due to the abundance of so-called spiritual masters in India. Many of these ‘babas’ and ‘saints’ have a large following in many countries. Islam abhors deification of any human being. To understand the Islamic stand towards such pretenders to divinity, let us analyze one such ‘god-man’, Osho Rajneesh.

Let us put this candidate, Rajneesh, to the test of chapter Ikhlas, the touchstone of theology:

The first criterion is “Say, He is Allah, one and only”. Is Rajneesh one and only? No! Rajneesh was one among the multitude of ‘spiritual teachers’ produced by India. Some disciples of Rajneesh might still hold that Rajneesh is one and only.

The second criterion is, ‘Allah is absolute and eternal’. We know from Rajneesh’s biography that he was suffering from diabetes, asthma, and chronic backache. He alleged that the U.S. Government gave him slow poison in prison. Imagine Almighty God being poisoned! Rajneesh was thus, neither absolute nor eternal.

The third criterion is ‘He begets not, nor is He begotten’. We know that Rajneesh was born in Jabalpur in India and had a mother and a father who later became his disciples.

In May 1981 he went to U.S.A. and established a town called ‘Rajneeshpuram’. He later fell foul of the West and was finally arrested and asked to leave the country. He came back to India and started a commune in Pune which is now known as the ‘Osho’ commune. He died in 1990. The followers of Osho Rajneesh believe that he is Almighty God. At the ‘Osho commune’ in Pune one can find the following epitaph on his tombstone:

“Osho – never born, never died; only visited the planet
Earth between 11th December 1931 to 19th January 1990.”

They forget to mention that he was not granted visa for 21 countries of the world. Can a person ever imagine ‘God’ visiting the earth, and requiring a visa to enter a country?

The fourth test, which is the most stringent is, “There is none like unto Him”. The moment you can imagine or compare ‘God’ to anything, then he (the candidate to divinity) is not God. It is not possible to conjure up a mental picture of the One True God. The following verse of the Glorious Qur’an conveys a similar message:

“No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things.” [Qur’an, 6:103]

By What Name Do We Call God?

 Muslims prefer calling the Supreme Creator, Allah, instead of by the English word ‘God’. The Arabic word, ‘Allah’, is pure and unique, unlike the English word ‘God’, which can be played around with. If you add an ‘s’ to the word God, it becomes ‘Goddess’ that is a female God. There is nothing like male Allah or female Allah. Allah has no gender. If you add the word ‘father’ to ‘God’ it becomes ‘God-father’. God-father means someone who is a guardian. There is no word like ‘Allah-father’. If you add the word ‘mother’ to ‘God’, it becomes ‘God-mother’. There is nothing like ‘Allah-mother’ in Islam. Allah is a unique word. If you prefix tin before the word God, it becomes tin-God i.e., fake God. Allah is a unique word, which does not conjure up any mental picture nor can it be played around with. Therefore Muslims prefer using the Arabic word ‘Allah’ for the Almighty. Sometimes, however, while speaking to the non-Muslims we may have to use the inappropriate word God, for Allah. Since the intended audience of this article is general in nature, consisting of both Muslims as well as non-Muslims, I have used the word God instead of Allah in several places in this article.

God Does Not Take Human Form

Some may argue that God does not become a human being but only takes a human form. If God only takes a human form but does not become a human being, He should not possess any human qualities. We know that all the ‘God-men’, have human qualities and failings. They have all the human needs such as the need to eat, sleep, etc. The worship of God in hu-
man form is therefore a logical fallacy and should be abhorred in all its forms and manifestations. That is the reason why the Qur’an speaks against all forms of anthropomorphism. The Glorious Qur’an says: 

“There is nothing whatever like unto Him.” [Qur’an 42:11]

God Does Not Perform Ungodly Acts

The attributes of Almighty God preclude any evil since God is the source of justice, mercy and truth. God can never be thought of as doing an ungodly act. Hence we cannot imagine God telling a lie, being unjust, making a mistake, forgetting things, or having any such human failings, as all these are ungodly traits.

Philosophy Of Anthropomorphism

Many religions at some point believe, directly or indirectly, in the philosophy of anthropomorphism, i.e. God becoming a human. Their contention is that Almighty God is so pure and holy that He is unaware of the hardships, shortcomings and feelings of human beings. In order to set the rules for human beings, He came down to earth as a human.

This deceptive logic has fooled many through the ages. Let us now analyze this argument and see if it stands to reason.

The Creator Prepares The Instruction Manual

Suppose I manufacture a video cassette recorder (VCR). Do I have to become a VCR to know what is good or what is bad for the VCR? What do I do? I write an instruction manual stating guidelines, such as, “In order to watch a video cassette, insert the cassette and press the play button. In order to stop it, press the stop button. If you want to fast forward press the FF button. Do not drop it from a height or it will get damaged. Do not immerse it in water or it will get spoilt”. I write an instruction manual that lists the various do’s and don’ts for the machine. Our Lord and Creator Allah need not take human form to know what is good or bad for the human being. He chooses to reveal the instruction manual. The last and final instruction manual of the human beings is the Glorious Qur’an. The ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ for the human beings are mentioned in the Qur’an.

If you allow me to compare human beings with machines, I would say humans are more complicated than the most complex machines in the world. Even the most advanced computers, which are extremely complex, are pale in comparison to the myriad physical, psychological, genetic and social factors that affect individual and collective human life.

The more advanced the machine, the greater is the need for its instruction manual. By the same logic, don’t human beings require an instruction manual by which to govern their own lives? Allah chooses human messengers for this purpose. Allah need not come down personally for giving the instruction manual. He chooses a man amongst men to deliver the message and communicates with him at a higher level through the medium of revelations. Such chosen men are called messengers and prophets of God.

Despite logical and rational arguments there are still people who choose to follow illogical, unreasonable and absurd systems - man-made or resulting from distorted Divine revelations. They not only believe in it themselves, but preach it to others too. Is this not an insult to human intelligence and to the Creator who gave us this intelligence?
Man has severed his relationship with his Lord and forgotten his duties for which he was liable. The obsession with life’s transient pursuits and possessions has overtaken all meaningful goals. Spirituality has become meaningless and virtues such as ethics and righteousness have lost their glamour. Abandoned is the message of God brought by all revealed religions; not least the final revealed message, Islam. Far from studying the religion with an objective outlook, modern man has fallen a prey to malevolent forces wishing to malign it. Unfounded claims and baseless assertions are now increasing-ly finding an audience, thanks to media misportrayal of it. Consequently, what we get is an extremely negative perception of the faith in the minds of those whose daily diet is the mainstream me-dia and cannot find time to explore for themselves where the reality lies.

This publication is a humble effort in this direction. It seeks to engender God-consciousness and spirituality in a material-oriented society. It also aims to develop critical thinking in minds accustomed to seeing the one side of the coin. It attempts to provide the readers with an alternative source of information.

This publication is distributed free of charge to major consenting public places, such as libraries, universities, prisons, etc, as well as other smaller establishments. It is also distributed individually wherever appropriate.

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Relate in the Book (the story of) Mary, when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East.

She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent her our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects.

She said: “I seek refuge from thee to (Allah Most Gracious: (come not near) if thou dost fear Allah.”

He said: “Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son.”

She said: “How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?”

He said: “So (it will be): Thy Lord said, ‘that is easy for Me: and (We wish) to appoint him as a Sign unto men and a Mercy from Us’: It is a matter (so) decreed.”

So she conceived him, and she retired with him to a remote place.

And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree: She cried (in her anguish): “Ah! Would that I had died before this! Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!”

But (a voice) cried to her from beneath the (palm-tree): “Grieve not! For thy Lord hath provided a rivulet beneath thee;

“And shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm-tree: It will let fall fresh ripe dates upon thee.

“So eat and drink and cool (thine) eye. And if thou dost see any man, say, ‘I have vowed a fast to (Allah) Most Gracious, and this day I will not enter into talk with any human being’”

At length she brought the (babe) to her people, carrying him (in her arms). They said: “O Mary! Truly an amazing thing hast thou brought!

“O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste!”

But she pointed to the babe. They said: “How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?”

He [Jesus pbuh] said: “I am indeed a servant of Allah. He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet;

“And He hath made me blessed wheresoever I be, and hath enjoined on me prayer and charity as long as I live;

“(He) hath made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable;

“So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)”!

Such (was) Jesus the son of Mary: (it is) a statement of truth, about which they (vainly) dispute.

It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! when He determines a matter, He only says to it, “Be”, and it is.

Verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord: Him therefore serve ye: this is a Way that is straight. But the sects differ among themselves: and woe to the unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgment of a Momentous Day!

How plainly will they see and hear, the Day that they will appear before Us! But the unjust today are in error manifest!

And warn them of the Day of Distress, when the matter will be determined: for (behold,) they are negligent and they do not believe!

It is We Who will inherit the earth, and all beings thereon: to Us will they all be returned.
Words of Wisdom

[of Prophet Muhammad pbuh]

“God will not give mercy to anyone, except those who give mercy to other creatures.” (Tirmidhi)

“When God created his creatures He wrote above His throne: ‘Verily, my Compassion overcomes my wrath.’” (Bukhari)

“What actions are most excellent? To gladden the heart of human beings, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the sufferings of the injured.” (Bukhari)

“If you put your whole trust in God, as you ought, He most certainly will satisfy your needs, as He satisfies those of the birds. They come out hungry in the morning, but return full to their nests.” (Tirmidhi)

“Kindness is a mark of faith, and whoever is not kind has no faith.” (Muslim)

“When you see a person who has been given more than you in money and beauty, look to those who have been given less.” (Muslim)

“God does not look at your appearance or your possessions; but He looks at your heart and your deeds.” (Muslim)

“A Muslim who plants a tree or sows a field, from which men, birds and animals can eat, is committing an act of charity.” (Muslim)

“Whoever is kind, God will be kind to him; therefore be kind to those on earth, He Who is in heaven will show mercy to you.” (Tirmidhi)

“Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind.” (Bukhari)