

1 HOW MAN BECAME MISERABLE

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, the Creator of all things by His Word. Prayer and praise, thanksgiving and worship be to Him who formed us from the dust and marvelously created us. Indeed, in this are wonders for those who perceive and comprehend.

I witness that there is no god other than Allah, the one God, the only eternal God, and that He has no associate. He rescues from error, leads to the truth, and guides to the right path.

IN THIS LESSON YOU WILL STUDY THE FOLLOWING:

- Questions About Life
- Allah the Creator
 - Where did humans come from?
 - Why did Allah create us?
- The Origin of Evil
- A Broken Relationship
- Allah's Response

QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE

As for what follows, often people ask themselves: Where did I come from? Why do I exist? Who am I? What is my reason for being? Most probably you have not found the solution and answer to these questions. You are more and more troubled and frustrated, and you realize you are

lost, wandering in darkness. You may try to satisfy yourself by studying philosophy. However, philosophy cannot satisfy your heart or quench your thirst. You search here and there, but you are still just as lost.

So come along with me, my friend, and let's try to understand humans—where they came from; how they came into existence; where they stand now; and where they are going.

ALLAH THE CREATOR

Indeed, Allah, glorified and exalted, is a reality—not a product of people's imagination or fantasy. We cannot comprehend how Allah exists, for our understanding is limited. Allah is Spirit, and because our vision is finite, we cannot see Him. He is present in every place and in every age. Allah is eternal. He has absolutely no beginning or ending whatsoever. And Allah is everlasting. He never changes.

I read a story about a king who wanted to see Allah. He called together all his advisors and religious leaders and ordered them to show him Allah. He said: "If you do not show me Allah, I will kill you all!" They were all puzzled as to how to deal with this difficult situation. A peasant who heard about their dilemma, was sure he could help solve the problem. He asked to see the king and said to him: "Your Majesty, if you want to see Allah, you must first look at the bright sun with your bare eyes." The king angrily replied: "You foolish man, do you want me to become blind? How can I look at the sun?" The peasant replied: "Your Majesty, if you would become blind by just looking at one of Allah's creations, how could you possibly look at Allah himself?"

So, if we cannot see Allah, how do we know that He exists? How can we be certain that He is?

Look at nature, my friend; look at all of creation. It points to the existence of Allah. It is absolutely certain that behind the creation there is a Creator. And there can be no doubt that behind all the intricate designs of the world there is a Mighty Designer! Allah, mighty and exalted, by His power says to something, "Be," and it is.

WHERE DID HUMANS COME FROM?

So first of all, Allah created the heavens and the earth. Then He made plants, the sun, moon and stars, the animals and birds. After that, Allah

created man. He breathed life into him, and the man began to live. This was Adam. Then Allah took a rib from Adam, made a woman from it, and gave her to Adam to be his wife. This was Eve. At that time, evil did not exist in man. Ungodliness, sin, guilt, rebellion, pain, sickness, hatred, wars, and death—none of these were known. There was peace, joy, harmony, and unity.

WHY DID ALLAH CREATE US?

Allah Almighty gave Adam and Eve power and authority over the earth and over all created things of the earth, vegetation and animals. People became Allah's deputies (caliphs) to rule over the earth so that Allah—may He be praised and honored—would receive glory and exaltation for His wisdom and power.

Then Allah planted a garden in Eden, in the East, and there he put the man he had formed. He made all kinds of beautiful trees grow there and produce good fruit. In the middle of the garden stood . . . the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

Allah, exalted, instructed Adam, saying to him:

“You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.”

Death here means being cast away from Allah. It is spiritual death that leads to perishing in eternal hell.

Adam and Eve were naked and without shame, because they were completely innocent. They lived together in a state of happiness and well-being, and they had a good relationship with Allah, their Creator.

But one day, Satan came and slyly suggested to Eve to disobey Allah. Satan is humanity's worst enemy. His constant goal is to make people fall into disobedience. So Satan said to Eve:

“If you and Adam eat from the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad, you will not die. No, just the

opposite! Your eyes will be opened and you will become just like Allah, knowing what is good and what is bad.”

So Eve gazed at the tree and saw that its fruit was beautiful, appetizing, and good to eat. She took, ate, and gave some of the fruit to Adam, her husband: and he also ate the fruit.

Immediately, both of them realized that they were naked. They made garments of fig leaves as a covering for themselves. In the evening, Adam and Eve heard the voice of Allah in paradise. So they hid among the trees. Allah called to Adam and said:

“Where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden; I was afraid and hid from you, because I was naked.” “Who told you that you were naked?” Allah asked. “Did you eat the fruit that I told you not to eat?” The man answered, “The woman you put here with me gave me the fruit, and I ate it.” Allah asked the woman, “Why did you do this?” She replied, “The snake tricked me into eating it.”

This was man’s first sin. What was the result?

A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP

Allah cast Adam and Eve out of paradise. They lost their free access to Him because they had listened to the words of Satan and disobeyed the commandment of Allah.

Therefore, the relationship, friendship, and mutual belonging that had existed between the Creator and man was broken. Evil, iniquity, corruption, pain, sickness, despair, and death entered his life because he had fallen into sin by yielding to Satan and disobeying Allah.

ALLAH’S RESPONSE

But Allah, glorified and exalted, did two things. First, He made Adam and Eve garments of animal skin to use as a covering instead of the fig leaves. Second, He promised He would send a Person from among their descendants. This Messenger would defeat Satan by giving him a blow that would finally lead to his destruction.

Allah thus demonstrated His love and care for people. He did not want to leave them lost and perishing. Rather, He planned to rescue them from the disobedience into which they had fallen.

So then, my dear friend, we have discussed the answers to at least some of the questions we asked at the beginning of this lesson.

Where did you come from? Allah created you by His power. Why did He create you? So that you would be His deputy on earth, and that this would bring Him glory and exaltation. Where are you now? And where are you going? Allah willing, we will discuss these questions in the following lesson.

So, in the keeping and protection of Allah.

Your friend,

Sheikh Abdullah

TO HELP YOU LEARN

Please complete the following statements in Part A. Then answer the questions in Part B. You may write in your book or on separate paper. After you complete this assignment you may compare your answers with the correct answers provided in the section called *To Help You Learn – Answers* toward the back of this book.

Completing this part of lesson one called *To Help You Learn* will help you remember the important truths of this lesson.

A. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

1. The first man Allah created was _____ .
2. Allah gave Adam the freedom to obey Him, or to disobey Him; but Adam _____
3. Adam tried to cover himself with _____ but Allah made for him _____
4. Spiritual death is _____
5. Allah Almighty cares for people. That is why when man fell into sin, Allah planned to _____

B. ANSWER BRIEFLY

1. How do we know that Allah exists? _____

2. Who is a person's greatest enemy, and what is his goal? _____

3. Why did Allah expel Adam and Eve from the garden?

4. What is the cause of disease, hatred, and wars?

5. Allah promised to send a Messenger from among Adam and Eve's offspring. What would this Messenger do?
