



MAKING  
SENSE  
OF  
GOD

  
CONVEYING THE CALL



---

# Contents

---

Introduction	<u>3</u>
Why does it even matter?	<u>4</u>
Concept of God	<u>7</u>
The Natural State	<u>9</u>
Creation of the Universe	<u>13</u>
The Designed Universe	<u>19</u>
The God Conclusion	<u>25</u>



---

# Introduction

---

## God. What is there left to say that hasn't already been said?

These three little letters have always invited big reactions of every kind. Our interest in God has never waned. Philosophers, scientists, theologians and laymen alike have debated this topic for centuries and continue to do so.

Some people refuse to accept that the question of God is even important, while others maintain it is central to every moment of their existence. Some doubt if God exists. Others are as sure of God's existence as they are of their own existence!<sup>1</sup>

---

# Why does it even matter?

---

There are so many reasons why people hold back from belief in God.

Some might simply see no need for God in their lives, and the idea of submitting to a higher authority may be enough to close the entire conversation. For others, the idea of any drastic change in lifestyle can be too intimidating to contemplate.

Some may have had negative personal experiences with people who claim to be following some kind of God or religion. Certainly, many could be forgiven for not being tempted by belief, given the continuous stream of negative press on the topic of religion.

It is tempting to just brush off all religions, together with any discussion of God, and live like everyone else or just do what seems to feel good at the time. That may seem fine for a while, but in the end important questions remain unanswered and they never really go away.

## Dwell for a moment on this scenario:

Imagine you wake up. You find yourself on a fast moving train. You have no idea how you got there. Other people on the train are in the same situation. Panicked, you try and ask where the train is headed to and how you ended up travelling on it, but to your surprise no one seems to care.

Instead, they are busy talking, eating and reading the newspaper! Would you just join the rest of them and be indifferent to your predicament or would you continue to seek an answer? Whether you like it or not, you are on the train and you are going somewhere.

Those are the facts. Similarly we are here on Earth and we have been thrown into existence; we didn't choose to be here but we are here. Also, our time is limited and we will eventually die.

Death is something no one wants to talk about, yet it is something we all agree will happen. It is natural to wonder: "Why am I here?", "What is my destination?", "Is death the end, or another stage on the journey?"

If you reflect deeply about your own life and mortality, the issue of God's existence is immediately important. That is not to say that someone should believe in God simply because they are scared of death; rather it makes knowing the answer to the question of whether God truly exists more urgent.

If there is a God then we need to take notice and understand what we are created for. Everything that we as humans do has a purpose. Likewise, the parts of our bodies have certain purposes.

Our eyes are to see, our ears to hear, our hearts exists to pump blood. So it makes sense that we too are created for a purpose.

***Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us?***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 23, Verse 115*



---

# Concept of God

---

Before we look into why the belief in God is both natural and rational, we need to define what we are speaking about.

When someone says they do not believe in God, perhaps the first question we should ask is: “What sort of God is it that you don’t believe in?”

Sometimes the reason why people are confused about God is that there are various concepts of God which are incoherent, contradictory, and counterintuitive. It may even be the reason why some people claim to be atheists.

For example the idea of God as a grey bearded man in the sky, sitting on a chair and throwing lightning at evil people is a concept that doesn’t make any sense for several reasons.

First: What does it even mean to say that God could be the creator of mankind if He resembles mankind? If that were the case, then it makes sense to ask who made God? Second: It's obvious that not only evil people get struck by lightning, good people seem to get struck as well. If someone starts off with a wrong concept of God, it will not be surprising that they end up rejecting belief.

There is, however, a concept of God that is intuitive and rational. We can find references to it throughout history and across cultures. It is the idea that there is a Creator who is One, Eternal, Self-sufficient and Unique. This Creator-God is in no way like the creation, nor is the creation in any way equal or comparable to God.

Just like a carpenter doesn't become or is part of the table, with greater reason God is distinct from His creation. There is nothing incoherent or irrational about this belief. In fact, this concept is both intuitive and rational and is summed up superbly in the following verses of the Qur'an:

**Say, 'He is God the One, God the Eternal.  
He begot not nor was He begotten.  
No one is comparable to Him.**

*The Qur'an, Chapter 112, Verses 1 to 4*

---

# The Natural State

---

The religion of Islam teaches that every human being already has a type of essential and instinctive knowledge of God deep within themselves, and that the external world can bury that insight or grow it.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) explained that each child is born in a natural state; however, it is parenting and social effects that spoil it. The natural state is one within which the person acknowledges that there is a Creator and, that the Creator alone is worthy of worship.

Societal pressures, desires and other factors can cover this natural state with beliefs that are unnatural, such as worshipping entities other than God, humanising God, or denying God altogether. Belief in God does not require rational justification.

This is not to say that God's existence cannot be understood through rational arguments, of course it can. What should be comprehended is that rational arguments only serve as triggers to uncover the natural state. The Qur'an invites to uncover the belief in God by providing triggers for reflection, by presenting 'signs' and inviting critical engagement of the mind and heart.

***Your God is the one God: there is no god except Him, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. In the creation of the heavens and earth; in the alternation of night and day; in the ships that sail the seas with goods for people; in the water which God sends down from the sky to give life to the earth when it has been barren, scattering all kinds of creatures over it; in the changing of the winds and clouds that run their appointed courses between the sky and earth: there are signs in all these for those who use their minds.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 2 Verses 163 to 164*

Apart from rational arguments, traumatic, negative and extreme experiences also act as triggers to uncover our internal belief in God. It is not uncommon to hear about someone coming to belief in God due to such occurrences.

Even though mankind calls out to God when they face such experiences, they more often forget Him when the easy times come:

***It is He who enables you to travel on land and sea until, when you are sailing on ships and rejoicing in the favouring wind, a storm arrives: waves come at those on board from all sides and they feel there is no escape. Then they pray to God, professing sincere devotion to Him, 'If You save us from this we shall be truly thankful.' Yet no sooner does He save them than, back on land, they behave outrageously against all that is right. People! Your outrageous behaviour only works against yourselves. Take your little enjoyment in this present life; in the end you will return to Us and We shall confront you with everything you have done.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 10, Verses 22 to 23*

You don't even need to be in a dire situation to remember God. Taking a few moments and reflecting about the inevitable meeting with death, and the trivial nature of this very short life is enough to make you reconsider your relationship with God.

Another window of opportunity to uncover our natural state are spiritual experiences attained through worship.

Even if you happen to be someone who is unsure whether God exists, a spiritual experience may give you that certainty that no rational argument can. As humans, we are made of physical matter, but we also have a spiritual dimension. No amount of physical pleasure, whether it's from food, sex, fame, or anything else can fulfil our spiritual needs.

It is something only a connection with God can satisfy, and it has to be experienced to be appreciated and understood. It is like describing a new delicacy to someone, nothing you say can make them appreciate the delightful tastes and textures. They have to eat it themselves.

***Those who have faith and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of God, truly it is in the remembrance of God that hearts find peace, those who believe and do righteous deeds: joy awaits these, and their final homecoming will be excellent.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 13, Verses 28 to 29*

---

# Creation of the Universe

---

Within the Qur'an, God addresses the question of belief directly to us.

Through a series of questions appealing to our rational thought, we are asked to ponder on the origins of our lives; not as scientists or philosophers (though they are, of course, welcome also!), but as people who have faculties of reason and critical thinking.

To engage us intellectually, God presents a number of reasonable explanations for how everything came into existence:

***Or were they created by nothing? Or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and Earth? Rather, they are not certain.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 52, Verses 35 to 36*

Each of these possible explanations can be broken down into the following options:

- We were created by nothing;
- We are self-created;
- We are created by something self-created;
- We are created by something uncreated.

Although these explanations refer to the human being, they can also be applied to anything that began to exist, or anything that emerged. The universe was not always in existence, it once began to exist. There are many arguments to support this notion.

For instance there is philosophical, mathematical and empirical evidence to support the universe once having a beginning. It is not in the scope of this booklet to go into detail about proving the beginning of the universe; however, you will find the following reference useful.<sup>2</sup>

Since the universe had a beginning, the possible explanations mentioned above can be adapted into the following options:

- The universe was created by nothing;
- The universe was self-created;
- The universe was created by something created;
- The universe was created by something uncreated.



## The universe was created by nothing

This is the first option. To define our terms, “nothing” is the absence of all things—be that matter, energy, material or non-material objects or any causal condition.

To look at the universe and ourselves as something that came to be from no potential, no matter, nothing at all—is quite a tricky idea to wrap our heads around.

Basic logic would dictate that from nothing, nothing comes. From something, something comes. Can something arise when there were no causal conditions to bring it into being? The mere suggestion of it borders on the absurd, let alone holding it as a belief. This would be akin to saying that anything can happen with no causal condition preceding it.

A building could randomly disappear and we would think nothing of it; a bunch of rabbits could appear in your garden and you would think it completely reasonable to just assume that they just popped into existence. It is not a scenario any one of us would accept as logical. Some might argue: if something cannot come from nothing, then how did God create from nothing?

Even though Islamic scholars refer to God creating from nothing, this act of creation means that there was no material stuff. However, it does not assume that there were no causal conditions or potential. God's will and power were the causal conditions to bring the universe into existence.

## **The universe was self-created**

To 'self-create' means that the universe did not exist before it emerged. How can something create itself when it was once not even in existence? Would a woman be capable of giving birth to her own self?

It also stands to reason, if something once did not exist, could it have the power to create anything, let alone itself? This is why the attribute of God as "The Eternal" (and therefore uncreated) becomes so important to consider.

## **The universe was created by something created**

If we assume that the universe was created by something else created, the next question would surely be: what created that created thing?

Once we have the answer to that, we go another step to “what created that created thing which created that created thing...” and so on. We could go on with this ‘step up’ of creators indefinitely.

This is something called the ‘infinite regress of causes’. It keeps asking us to peel back the layers at every stage with “and then?” “and then?” and “and then?” as our answer, no matter how many times it was answered.

The universe—which is a created thing—could not, by necessity, be created by something that was itself created, ad infinitum. Another way of thinking about this is illustrated in the following example.

Imagine you want to walk into an office building. The security guard says you can’t enter as he needs to get permission from his manager, the manager says he needs get permission from his wife, the wife says she needs to check with her cousin and so on forever, you will never enter the building in that case.

There has to be someone that gives you permission to enter without depending on anyone else. In other words there has to be a first cause which is uncaused. Likewise the universe must have had a first cause.

## The universe was created by something uncreated

By a process of elimination, we come to the final option: the universe was created by something uncreated. Considering the previous option (that there cannot be an endless chain of temporary causes) then we conclude rationally that the beginning of existence started with something independent and uncreated itself.

If finite things exist, then they came to be by something which always existed. As one of His most defining attributes, God tells us that He is not created, nor is He similar to His creation in any way. He is “The First” with no beginning and “The Last” without end, as well as being “The Eternal”. Therefore the question ‘who created God?’ is nonsensical, because it is like saying ‘who created the uncreated creator?’

***He is the First and the Last; the Outer and the Inner; He has knowledge of all things.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 57, Verse 3*

---

# The Designed Universe

---

In the Qur'an, God asks you to look outwards as well as look inwards.

There is a universe which exists on a grand scale around us and within our very own selves. The bodies that we inhabit are considered a marvel of biomechanical engineering. There is a delicate, precise balance on which the universe runs and an orderly “cosmic architecture”, which points to purposeful design.

Just by taking a look outside of our window, we constantly observe a world which runs in cycles and opposites. The seasons ebb and flow on a predetermined order—bringing with them changes on the Earth. Water makes its way round its cycle with structure and routine. The moon goes through phases to signal the passing of time. Day and night do not stop their pattern, no matter what kind of day the sun is rising or setting on for us.

These are some of the most basic things which an untrained eye could list as the patterns of nature. There are of course infinitely more complex and nuanced examples, which are as numerous as they are awe-inspiring the deeper you delve into them. Everything within the universe obeys laws which—if were different—would not allow complex conscious life to flourish.

All of the physical phenomena we observe around us (from celestial objects, humans, animals, vegetation, alternation of night and day) are referenced as proof of divine precision in the Qur'an. God focuses particularly on the balance and harmony in which all things have been created:

***It is the Lord of Mercy who taught the Qur'an. He created man and taught him to communicate. The sun and the moon follow their calculated courses; the plants and the trees submit to His designs; He has raised up the sky. He has set the balance so that you may not exceed in the balance: weigh with justice and do not fall short in the balance. He set down the Earth for His creatures, with its fruits, its palm trees with sheathed clusters, its husked grain, its fragrant plants. Which, then, of your Lord's blessings do you both deny?***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 55, Verses 1 to 13*

This Qur'anic approach is in sync with the idea that this universe we have has a set of physical laws which are precisely set for life—in particular human existence. There is a sensitive arrangement in the natural laws of the universe, which allows for life to exist. Without them as they are, complex life wouldn't be possible.

Consider gravity as an example. It is the force of attraction between two masses. Without it there would be no force to aggregate things. This would mean no stars (or planets) and therefore no sustainable source of energy to facilitate life. Everything would be a dark, empty vacuum. Another interesting example is the electromagnetic force.

This unique force affects everything in the universe and is responsible for giving things strength, shape, and hardness. Atoms would not exist without it because nothing would keep the electrons in orbit. Without atoms, there is no life. The electromagnetic force also causes chemical bonding by attracting charges.

Without this too life could not exist. A startling fact about electromagnetic force is that it is a one force strength, yet it satisfies many different requirements. The defining point is that the strength of these forces is extremely precise. There is very little room for them to vary without life becoming impossible.

The arrangement of the universe displays an intricate order that allows life to flourish. Without this in place life most likely would simply not be able to flourish. There are many examples; however, a small selection here will suffice to demonstrate this order in action. Consider the position of our planet. One of the life-supporting features of our planet is its distance from the sun.

The Earth is located in what is called ‘the habitable zone’. This region is defined as the “region where heating from the central star provides a planetary surface temperature at which a water ocean neither freezes over nor exceeds boiling point”. If our planet was any closer to the sun, it would be too hot to host life. If it were farther away, it would be too cold to facilitate complex life such as you and me.

Take into account that the Earth has a friendly celestial ‘neighbour’: Jupiter. The absence of this gas giant in our solar system would have severe implications for life on Earth. This is because Jupiter acts as a cosmic shield. It prevents comets and asteroids from bombarding our planet. This is because of its gravitational pull, which “sucks up” asteroids. Without our friendly neighbour, the gas giant, the development of advanced life simply may not have been possible.



*Rebecca Martin, a NASA Sagan Fellow who studied the influence of Jupiter, states:*

***“Our study shows only a tiny fraction of planetary systems observed to date seem to have giant planets in the right location to produce an asteroid belt of the appropriate size, offering the potential for life on a nearby rocky planet...Our study suggests that our solar system may be rather special”.***<sup>3</sup>

Reflect on the lunar tides. The relatively large size of the Earth's moon is responsible for tides due to its gravitational pull. After the moon's formation, it was closer to the Earth than it is now, but this proximity was short-lived. If the moon had not receded there would have been serious effects on our planet. These include heating of the Earth's surface, which would have prevented complex life from emerging.

A closer moon would have flexed the Earth's crust and produced frictional heating, possibly melting its surface. Think about the stabilisation of the tilt of the Earth's spin axis, which the moon is responsible for. The angle of the tilt relative to the orbit plane remains almost fixed. It has remained steady for hundreds of millions of years due to the gravitational pull of the moon.

If the moon were smaller, or had a different location in relation to the Sun and Jupiter, it would not provide the long-term stability of the Earth's temperature.

If our planet didn't have a moon at all, the climate would be dynamic, severe and ever-changing. Small organisms may have emerged from this, but not complex life as we know it. Pondering upon these physical laws as well as the remarkable order of the universe implies a purposeful design behind the cosmos. Humans, which occupy this cosmos, are also a marvel of design and function.

The physical body with all its interconnected systems is known as one of the most advanced structures in the entire universe. Every day we are treated to novel and fascinating discoveries about how parts of our bodies function—from the vast information within our DNA to how our eyes and brain work together to paint the picture of the world which we see.

When we look into the biological world we see natural technologies that surpass anything humans can conjure up. All of the signs within the cosmos and within ourselves should lead us to be in awe of the creative power of God. The signature of design is all around us. We may have spent a lifetime looking for what is right in front of us.

***We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 41, Verse 53*

---

# The God Conclusion

---

Since God has created everything, He continually sustains the entire cosmos and provides for us out of His bounty.

The Qur'an continually repeats this concept in various ways. This, in turn, evokes a sense of gratitude and awe in the heart of the listener or reader:

***It was He who created all that is on the Earth for you.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 29*

***God is far above the partners they set up alongside Him! How can they set up with Him these partners that create nothing and are themselves created?***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 7, Verses 190 to 191*

**O mankind, remember God's grace towards you. Is there any creator other than God to give you sustenance from the heavens and earth? There is no god but Him. How can you be so deluded?**

*The Qur'an, Chapter 35, Verse 3*

Therefore, everything we use in our daily lives, and all of the essential things that we require to survive, are due to God. Since God created everything that exists, He is the owner and master of everything, including us. Hence, we must stand in a sense of awe and gratitude to Him. Since God is our master, we must be His servants.

To deny this is not only to reject reality, but it is the height of ingratitude, arrogance and thanklessness. We are not self-sufficient, even if some of us are deluded in thinking that we are. Whether we live a life of luxury and ease or poverty and hardship, we are ultimately dependent on God. Nothing in this universe is possible without Him and whatever happens is due to His will.

Our success in business and the great things that we may achieve are ultimately because of God. He created the causes in the universe that we use to achieve success, and if He does not allow us to succeed it will never happen. Understanding our ultimate dependency on God should evoke an immense sense of humility in our hearts.

We should humble ourselves before God and thank Him, as a form of worship. One of the biggest barriers to divine guidance and mercy is the delusion of self-sufficiency, which is ultimately based on ego and arrogance. The Qur'an makes this point clear:

***But man exceeds all bounds when he thinks he is self-sufficient.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 96, Verses 6 to 7*

Belief in God is not just some abstract idea; it has deep profound meaning in our everyday lives. There are deep questions for which our hearts are yearning for convincing answers: What is the purpose of life? What are we here for and what happens after we die? How can we attain inner peace? Why do evil things happen to good people? Will people who do wrong really escape justice or will they meet their just rewards in the next life?

Belief in God allows us to explore answers that make sense rationally as well as intuitively. This is because convincing answers to these questions can only reasonably come from the Creator of all things whose wisdom, insight and knowledge encompasses what ours never can.

***The life of this world is like this: rain that We send down from the sky is absorbed by the plants of the earth, from which humans and animals eat. But when the earth has taken on its finest appearance, and adorns itself, and its people think they have power over it, then the fate We commanded comes to it, by night or by day, and We reduce it to stubble, as if it had not flourished just the day before. This is the way We explain the revelations for those who reflect. But God invites [everyone] to the Home of Peace, and guides whoever He will to a straight path.***

***Those who did well will have the best reward and more besides. Neither darkness nor shame will cover their faces: these are the companions in Paradise, and there they will remain. As for those who did evil, each evil deed will be requited by its equal and humiliation will cover them – no one will protect them against God– as though their faces were covered with veils cut from the darkness of the night. These are the inmates of the Fire, and there they shall remain.***

*The Qur'an, Chapter 10, Verses 24 to 27*

If this booklet has awoken within you some sense of wonder about God (or even left you confused) just ask God for guidance, sincerely from the depths of your heart. He will guide you to recognise His signs and find peace of heart, so that you may find tranquillity in this life and the next.

---

# References

---

1. Most of this booklet is an adaption of various parts of Chapters 2, 4, 5, 8 and 15 of Hamza Andreas Tzortzis's book "The Divine Reality: God, Islam & The Mirage of Atheism" published by FB Publishing, 2016.
2. Hamza Andreas Tzortzis. The Divine Reality: God, Islam & The Mirage of Atheism. FB Publishing, 2016. Chapter 5.
3. 'No Jupiter, no advanced life? ' - evolution may be impossible in Star Systems without a giant planet (2012). Available at: [http://www.dailygalaxy.com/my\\_weblog/2012/11/would-advanced-life-be-impossible-in-star-systems-without-a-jupiter.html](http://www.dailygalaxy.com/my_weblog/2012/11/would-advanced-life-be-impossible-in-star-systems-without-a-jupiter.html) [Accessed 2nd October 2016].



CONVEYING THE CALL



LEARN MORE AT:  
**ONEREASON.ORG**