

Beauty Of Islam

Mufti Ebrahim Desai

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Peace and salutations be upon the final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad (Salla Allahu Alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him)

Honourable Chair and respected participants,

I greet you with the greeting of Islam,

Assalaamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullaahi Wa Barakaatuh

May the peace of Almighty Allah, the mercy of Almighty Allah and the blessings of Almighty Allah be upon you and all those who seek the truth.

It gives me great pleasure and honour to be part of this conference). I make du'aa and pray to Almighty Allah that He accept the efforts of the Council and may He make the Council grow from strength to strength in benefitting humanity, Aameen.

I also wish to express my gratefulness and gratitude to Professor for being instrumental in my association with the Council. I make du'aa that Allah bless him and his family. I also make du'aa for all the silent soldiers behind the success of the Council. May Allah bless each and every one of you, Aameen.

Respected audience, the religion of Islam is a Divine code of life and therefore it is complete and comprehensive, perfect and absolute. There are no flaws and deficiencies in Islam. It provides guidance in every aspect of our life from the time of birth till death. It provides guidance in our domestic life, social life, economic life and political life.

It also provides guidance on food, drinks and nutrients which is of paramount importance for a healthy way of life. After all, 'Healthy food is healthy life'. We are what we eat.

Respected audience, I want to take advantage of this opportunity and address you in sequence of priority – First things first.

A teacher once wanted to convey an important lesson of life to his students. He took a jar and filled it with rocks. He asked the students if the jar was filled. They said yes. He then took pebbles and put it in the jar. The pebbles found their place in the spaces between the stones. He again asked the students if the jar was filled. They said yes. He then took sand and shook the jar. The sand filled all the empty spaces in the jar.

The teacher then told his students the rocks resemble the most important things of your life – your religious values and beliefs. The pebbles resemble issues second to belief, that is your actions and deeds and the sand resembles all other sundry aspects of life.

The first and foremost thing in the life of a human being, that which serves as the rocks of one's life is the recognition of Almighty Allah is Supreme with all supreme powers. He is One and Unique. There is no equal to Allah. His Might, Power and Magnificence is reflected in His creations around us.

We cannot ignore and deny the manifestations of the power of Allah in His creations around us. If we choose to, then at least, we cannot ignore our ourselves, the human physical structure. Allah tells us in the Qur'aan:

‘And don't you see [my power] in yourselves.’ (Surah51 Verse21)

Our bodies are small worlds. The flesh resembles the earth. The bones resemble the mountains. The growth of hair and nails resemble greenery and vegetation. The thousands of blood vessels resemble the streams that flow through the earth. Furthermore, the human body contains approximately 100 trillion cells, which are primarily regulated by the heart, the lungs and blood vessels. What is more amazing that the 100 trillion cells, the heart, lungs and blood vessels are regulated by the pituitary gland, a small piece of flesh which is the size of a pebble. When we examine all this, a magnificent structure is revealed before us which is a clear manifestation of the Power of Almighty Allah.

An old man was once admitted to hospital for not being able to pass urine. When he was treated and the bill was presented to Him, he began crying. He was asked the reason for crying, he said, ‘For 70 years, I ate food and drank and I ate and I passed toxins with ease and not once did Allah send me His bill.’

A great scholar and jurist, Imaam Shaafi'ee [ra] was asked, ‘How did he recognise Allah.’ He said, ‘Through a malberry leave. When a gazelle eats the leaf, it produces musk, when a silkworm eats it, it produces silk and when a goat or sheep eats it, it produces dung. Who else besides Allah has changed the malberry leave into musk and silk?’

Allah is our Creator and He is also our Sustainer. He provides food and sustenance for us and every creation in miraculous ways. Look at a mosquito, it lays its eggs in dirty and murky water. When the egg hatches, after three days it is able to detect its food- suitable blood in a radius of 40 miles. The mosquito injects its victim, secretes a fluid and takes in the blood. Which school, college or university did the mosquito attend?

A macaw is a beautiful bird known for its dazzling colours. It breaks poisonous seeds with its beak. It is obvious that poison would cause harm to it. It then eats pieces of rock that serves to absorb the toxins in the seeds. Where did the bird learn this from?

It may be useful to share with you the incident of Sulaimaan [Solomon] (alayhimus salaam). He was a prophet and a king. He had control over jinns, animals, birds, etc. He was able to converse with them. As a king, he had everything at his disposal. He once requested Allah to grant him the opportunity to host all the animals of the animal kingdom and fish of the sea. Sulaimaan (alayhimus salaam) prepared food for a whole year and when the appointed time came one fish of the sea ate all the food. Sulaimaan summoned the fish and reprimanded it. The fish said, ‘O Sulaiman, you took the responsibility to feed me today, yet today I ate only ¼ of what I eat daily.’ [Nafhatul Arab]

Allah states in the Qur'aan:

‘Verily, Allah is the Great sustainer. Full of Power and Strength. (Surah51 Verse58)

The Qur'aan reminds us to be conscious of the power and bounty of Allah before slaughtering an animal and consuming the meat. The meat of an animal is crucial for our

survival and good health. Meat contains iron. If there is no iron in the body, the red cells will decrease and that will lead to a person getting ill. Meat contains zinc. Yes, certain plants do contain iron and zinc but in relatively small proportions. Meat contains vitamin B12. This is never in vegetables [The existence of the vegetarian Muslim – Karima Burns]. How can we slaughter an animal and benefit from its nutrients – iron, zinc and Vitamin B12 – and never reflect on Allah’s power and bounty. It is, therefore, compulsory to think of Allah and recite the name of Allah before slaughtering an animal. Allah orders us:

‘And do not eat from those animals upon which Allah name is not taken.’ (Surah6 Verse121)

If an animal is slaughtered and Allah’s name was not taken, that animal is regarded to be a carrion as we would be ungrateful to Almighty Allah. It is prohibited to eat the meat of such an animal as we did not reflect on the Creator of the animal and did not take His name.

Respected audience, Almighty Allah is our Creator and He is our Sustainer. However, the purpose of Allah creating us and sustaining us is to worship Him. That is to express slavery, complete submission and subjugation to all the ordains of Almighty Allah. Almighty Allah is our Master and we are His slaves. We do as He says. We have no choice in any matter against His orders.

Worshipping Allah is not confined to prayers and charity. While prayers and charity is important, worshipping Allah refers to a complete way of life.

Our domestic life, how we deal with our wives, children and family. Our social life, how we deal with fellow human beings. Our economic life, how we earn our income. Our political life, how we manage our overall issues.

Respected Audience Islam means peace and Islam is a religion of peace. The general embodiment of Islam is based on mercy, love, care and affection. The foremost personality in Islam, our beloved Prophet (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) was a mercy unto mankind, a fountainhead of mercy and a champion of true human values. The birth of our beloved Prophet was an earth-shaking event. He endured a childhood as an orphan . His father passed away before he was born. His mother passed away when he was only six years of age. He grew up as a person with sound character. He was known as As-Sadiq (The truthful one) and Al-Ameen (The trusted one).

When he was 40 years of age, Allah appointed him to be His Prophet and guide the people. This was a very difficult task as the Arab peninsula was infested with all types of evils. Children used to be buried alive. Women were abused and had no rights whatsoever. Killing and murder in the Arabian peninsula was the order of the day. It was the noble character of Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) that won the confidence of people and changed their lives.

Consider this incident: in the prime stages of Islam, when Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) began announcing his Prophethood and inviting the people to the oneness of Allah. There was much propaganda against him. Some called him a witch, others called him a poet. Some claimed he was possessed by an evil spirit. It is an

unfortunate reality that the innocent and simple minded people do get affected and brainwashed during propaganda. We witness this all the time.

Nevertheless, at that time, when there was much propaganda against Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him), there was an old lady carrying her luggage with much pain. Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) approached her with much kindness and affection calling her ‘Ma’ to assist her. She did not know Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him). As Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) was carrying her luggage, he observed she was upset and angry. When he enquired from her, she started giving vent to her anger and began speaking ill of Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him). She did not know the person she is speaking ill about is the same Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him), but he still comforts her.

When they reached their destination out of Makkah, she enquired from Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) who he was. Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) did not want to reveal his identity. He said my purpose was to comfort you. When she insisted, then Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) revealed his identity. The woman was humbled by his humility and affection that she accepted Islam. Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) was an unlettered person but changed the destiny of the entire humanity in just 23 years. He was a single person with multiple capacities who carried out the stupendous task of reforming humanity in a short period of time amidst untold adversities.

Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) was a perfect human being with sublime character. A perfect husband having granted due consideration to his wives. A perfect father having nurtured his children. A perfect friend always ready to assist. A perfect politician with the agenda of advancing the cause of perfection in humanity. In brief, Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) an icon of all the previous prophets – Adam, Moses, Jesus, who were icons in their own accord and each prophet educated their followers about the final Prophet, Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him), and urged them to follow him.

Let us consider the statements of others regarding Prophet Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him):

John William Draper states ‘Four years after the death of Justinian, AD 569, was born at Makkah, in Arabia that man who, of all men exercised the greatest influence upon the human race ... Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him).’ (A history of Intellectual Development of Europe, London 1875.)

A Hindu Scholar, Diwan Chand Sarma, says: ‘Muhummad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him.’ (Prophets of the East, Calcutta, 1935)

George Benard Shaw states, 'I have studied him – the wonderful man – and in my opinion far from being an anti-christ, he must be called the saviour of humanity.' (The Genuine Islam)

R Bosworth-Smith states, 'By a fortune absolute unique in history, Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) is a threefold founder of a nation, of an empire, and of a religion.' (Mohammed and Mohammedanism, 1946)

'Mohammed was the most successful of all religious personalities.' (**Encyclopaedia Britannica**, 11th Edition)

I urge one and all to obtain authentic Islamic literature about this great personality and enrich yourselves with the information of Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him). No human can afford being in this world and being ignorant of Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him). After all, our salvation in the hereafter depends upon bringing faith in the Oneness of Allah and in all the Prophets including the final prophet – Messenger Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him).

Respected participants, It may be useful to share with you some core values of Islam.

First and foremost, Islam teaches us to love every creation and to be kind to every creation. Allah is Merciful and He loves us to be merciful to His creation. Our beloved Prophet taught us that one cannot be a perfect believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. Obedience to parents and maintaining family ties is a deeply entrenched value in Islam. One cannot be a perfect believer until his neighbour is not taken care of. Mercy is not confined to human beings. It is for every living creature under the sun.

One very important value in Islam is shame and modesty. The laws of Islam are compatible with human nature. That is because Allah is our Creator and He knows our nature. He has granted laws compatible with our nature. It is natural that every human being is attracted to the opposite gender. And it is precisely for this reason Islam prohibits intermingling of sexes. Islam teaches us to be modest in our clothing and appearance. It is through this conduct that we are able to exercise restraint and respect the opposite gender. What is the point of having a law prohibiting sexual harassment when there is no restriction of such conduct that actually leads to sexual harassment? The doors and avenues to a crime should be locked, rather than opening the doors and doing control damage. Today, the entire world is grappling with women's abuse due to the lack of shame and modesty. It is unfortunate to note that woman abuse is prevalent in many parts of the world. According to the United States Department of Justice, somewhere in America a woman is raped once in 2 minutes. (Rape Survival, Defence and Healing). In England and Wales, 1 in 20 women are raped. (The Guardian, July 23, 2002). Tens of thousands of women from Eastern Europe are sold into sexual slavery to work in brothels in other parts of Europe. (Trafficking of women in Europe). Our hearts cry out at the unfortunate plight of such women. Our united efforts can remedy the situation of abused women as Muhammad (Salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) was successful in condemning women abuse and granting them a right to live with dignity and honour.

When one examines the Islamic code of dressing for a woman in relation to the immodest appearances of a woman and the subsequent harms, the wisdom of Islam comes to the fore.

I should also point out to you that the institution of Nikah (marriage) in Islam is the center of maintaining one's shame and modesty. The institution of marriage is sacred and carries along with it certain responsibilities. It is not just to fulfill one's passions and desires. The husband is required to care of his wife, show her compassion and fulfill her worldly requirements. He should be tolerant to her and consider her feminine nature. Our beloved Prophet mentioned, "The best among you is he who is best to his wife." It is unfortunate that many married women feel a sense of insecurity, She does not know when her husband will leave her. To her, marriage is not a permanent commitment. It is a day to day matter with much pain and anxiety. This is one of the reasons a woman goes to work to secure herself but unfortunately undergoes immense stress. In a recent research by the Universities of Bristol, Bath and Kent, it was revealed that working mothers juggling the demands of a career undergo a stressful experience. Cortisol, a hormone which regulates blood pressure and controls the heart and immune system in such women is exceptionally high. The research also found that there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that most career-pursuing women prefer to stay at home. (The Star South Africa, November 2005) In Islam, marriage is a sacred institution and a husband is required to keep up to his commitment. He is not just to use the wife and create a feeling of insecurity and anxiety in her. A wife is a precious pearl to be well guarded and secured.

This leads me to point out the natural consequences of working mothers. That is the Absent Parent Syndrome (APS). Every human being has a natural demand of love. The first avenue is the mother. If the mother is not at home, the child is deprived of that love. The mother returns home tired and then cannot show attention to her child. The child grows up frustrated and searches for love elsewhere. That may be some person with bad qualities and hence we lose our children at the expense of creating security for ourselves and materialistic demands.

Respected audience, I understand that many people here today are from the business sector. It will be prudent to discuss some issues of the economic system of Islam which will be of interest to you. Islam is not an economic system like capitalism and socialism. Economics is just one part of Islam but the most perfect economic system. Human values form the core of economics in Islam rather than just enriching oneself.

1) It is for this reason Interest is prohibited. (Surah3 Verse130) Why should we enrich ourselves at the desperation of another? Islam encourages helping and assisting fellow human beings for nothing in return or enter into a joint venture where both can benefit.

2) When there is a fear of shortage in a commodity in the economy, one should not take advantage of that and purchase large quantities of that commodity and hoard it only to sell it at an exorbitant price thereby taking advantage of an unfortunate situation. (Tirmidhi) Our beloved Prophet prohibited hoarding as that is against kindness and humanity.

- 3) When two people have concluded or are about to conclude a deal, Islam prohibits the third person to intervene and derail that deal. (Tirmidhi)
- 4) Similarly, taking wealth by coercion is also prohibited. (Surah4 Verse29)
- 5) Consideration to the other in economics is part of Islam.

A young and old man entered into a partnership of grains. There was an understanding that each one would take some grains every alternate day. After some time the heap of grains remained as it was. The young person asked the old person what prayer does he perform that the grains do not decrease. The old man replied, "I wanted to ask you the same question." The young boy then replied, "I should not take my share of the grains in consideration of you as you are old. I am young and I can still earn." The old man replied, "I too, should not take my share of grains in consideration of you as you are young and you need more. I am old and do not have much demands."

Islam teaches us to live with dignity and honour. We should work hard and earn our own income. We should not rely on people and governments to support us indefinitely. The situation of need and necessity is different. One person came to our beloved Prophet and presented his need. The prophet told him, "Should I not show you a better way of life than merely begging?" He asked the companion if he possessed anything. He said "Yes, a bowl and a mat." The Prophet called for that and auctioned that. He then told the companion, "Take the 2 silver coins, purchase food with one coin and purchase an axe with the other. Cut wood and sell that wood. I should not see you for two weeks." That companion sold wood and enriched himself. We believe in creating people who live with dignity and honour and not people who live off others.

I must clarify, one is the principles of Islam and the other are the practice and conduct of Muslims. If the practice and conduct of Muslims do not conform to Islam that is not Islam. Let us judge Islam by its principles.

I do concede that Islam would be better understood if it was correctly adhered to by Muslims. However, that should not serve as an obstacle and excuse to search for the truth as is the case in any state of confusion.

Obtain a copy of the Quran and study it. It is a word to word revelation of Allah and it contains a wealth of information and guidance. In this world of scientific calculations and technological advancements, you will be amazed to know that recent scientific discoveries are already in the Quran revealed 1400 years ago. Scientists have researched and recently discovered the issue of chromosomes in a human being. Upon fertilization of the male and female sperm, the features of the child are determined. This is already in the Quran. (Surah80 Verse17,18,19)

Which University did Muhammad (Salla Allahu Alayhi wa sallam – May peace be upon him) go to?

Scientists have made a detail study on embryology. How the fetus is formed in the womb of the mother. That is accurately stated in the Quran. (Surah22 Verse5)

Dr. Keith Moore of Canada, an embryologist studied the Quranic version of embryology and stated there could not be anything more accurate on embryology than the Quran.

The issue of origin of life, amoeba, the big bang theory, and the world being a gaseous mass, all is already stated in the Quran.

The Quran refers to the mountains as a peg. (Surah78 Verse7)

The mountain having a root and serving as a peg is only being researched now.

Steel being extra terrestrial and out of this universe is being researched. That is already referred to in the Quran.

Skin anatomy is being researched. That is already in the Quran.

Respected audience , it should be clear from all this, the faith is supreme and everything else, logic, science, etc is subservient to faith. Bring faith and then you will be truly guided.

I wish to conclude with an example of the echo of life.

A father and son were strolling in a jungle. The son exclaimed 'Aah'. He then heard a sound 'Aa'h. the son asked, 'Who are you?' The sound replied, 'Who are you?' The son got angry and said, 'You coward.' The sound came back 'You coward.' He didn't know what was this. His father then told him, 'Son, listen to me now.' The father then said, 'How are you.' The sound responded 'How are you?' The father said, 'How wonderful you are!' The sound responded, 'How wonderful you are!' The son then asked the father, 'Dad, what is this?' the father then explained, 'The sound is an echo. You get back what you said. Son, this is exactly what life is all about. If you do good, you get back good. If you do bad, you get back bad.'

Respected chairman, I am proud to be associated with your organisation as it is dedicated to the service of mankind. Your efforts are recognised and appreciated. May Allah reward you and all abundantly, Aameen.

I thank you for your patience and apologize for any over indulgence.