

Goal
of
Religion

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Introduction

In today's world, hatred and fear reign supreme. People fear for their lives and properties in every corner of this world. The atrocity and injustice in our world are unprecedented in human history. People live in hate and kill each other without hesitation or remorse in the name of national interest, self defense, freedom fighting, liberation, and any other name they can think of. Fear-mongering, dishonest, and corrupt political and social agendas as well as religious conflicts are fueling animosities and hatred. People's ignorance and mistrust of any opposing or differing views, beliefs, values, and principals, along with their blind emotional and behavioral extremism and fanaticism are fueled by their political, social, industrial, and religious leaders. This vicious circle – of expansion of power, wealth, and authority; ignorance, mistrust, conflicts of interest, extremism, and fanaticism; despise, hatred, and war – is destroying human civilization. It is time to stop and look at the root cause of this problem.

In this book, we attempt to shed light on one of the most important factors of today's terrorism and wars throughout the world, and that is religion. In this attempt, we also provide a roadmap for all who aspire to make this world a better place to live for everyone, a place where we all can live happily in kindness with peace of mind and without fear or anxiety.

In the first section, "The Goal of Religion", we will define religion and proceed to explore the purpose of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, which is to create a world free of injustice, poverty, ignorance, dishonesty, hatred, fanaticism, prejudice, racism, and war; a world where mankind can deservedly live harmoniously with kindness and respect.

In the second section, "Justice, Fairness, and Human Rights", we will review God's reason for sending his prophets, Holy Scriptures, and laws, and we will provide clear definitions for justice and human rights. We will also examine the verses from The Scriptures that relate to justice and human rights.

In the conclusion, we will provide a summary of key points and a roadmap to attain the religion's goal.

Throughout this short article, certain topics are discussed in repetition in an attempt to highlight their relative importance and reinforce key concepts.

It is our sincere hope that reading this book will be a pleasant experience for the readers and that it will help provide a much deeper understanding of the true religion and its goal. We also hope the readers will continue their education on the subject and contribute to the effort to unite the religious, the righteous, and the reformers in an attempt to encourage people to uphold true justice and build a new world based on justice, peace, kindness, contentment, happiness, and fulfillment for all.

Please send your comments and questions by e-mail to goalofreligion@gmail.com, and I will be more than glad to answer your questions as best as I can. Please keep in mind that the only references that will be used to answer your questions are the Holy Scriptures and their teachings.

THE GOAL OF RELIGION

In this section, we will discuss what religion is and introduce readers to the goal of religion – which is to unite people to stand for and uphold justice and to build a world based on fair and equitable justice for all, a world free of oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, racism, hatred, and war. Only in such a world will it be possible for people to live in harmony, peace, happiness, contentment, and personal fulfillment. We will also examine the reasons why many corrupt religious, political, and social leaders have committed the most heinous crimes in the name of religion.

WHAT IS RELIGION

For years, people have been killing each other in the name of religion. Wars have been fought, and many men, women, and children have been murdered in the name of religion. In today's world, nothing is more abused than religion. Atrocities, murders, and crimes are committed in the name of God and religion. Some believe they are the only righteous ones and everyone else is an infidel. Some religious leaders call the prophet of God a "terrorist". These divisions and self-prophecies made by people or groups of people have been ongoing throughout the times, and they are the reasons for the conflicts amongst religious people. Corrupt religious, political, and social leaders have used our ignorance and misunderstanding of religion to promote their own agendas. They do not want true religion to be known to humanity. They have a vested interest in keeping everyone close-minded, superstitious, and ignorant about religion, which has the most impact on their way of life.

The primary reason for such abuse of religion throughout history is the malicious practice by misguided influential leaders of misleading people by taking advantage of superstitions, misinformation, man-made rituals, and traditions to create divisions and distrust among the religious followers to prevent them from trusting and respecting each other. Divisions, mistrust, ignorance, and misunderstandings have created all the problems associated with religion throughout history.

So, what is religion? Religion is God's commandments conveyed to us through the prophets and the Holy Scriptures. The main goal of religion is to make a world in which people's rights are protected and where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, poverty, dishonesty,

ignorance, hatred, extremism, racism, oppression, corruption, or war. Without a doubt, everyone wishes to live in such a world.

God informs everyone: "The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - the which We have sent by inspiration to you (Muhammad) - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that you should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein" (Quran, 42:13). In another verse, we learn that God has established the same religion for all His prophets. "Say: We believe in God and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit." (Quran, 3:84). It is further emphasized that "you will never find a change in the way of God." (Quran, 17:77, 33:62, and 35:43). So why are people of faith fighting and killing each other in the name of God, who repeatedly proclaims that He will not change His ways. Where do all these differences and disputes come from?

God commands everyone to make no division in religion. And yet, in today's world, there is much animosity amongst the followers of religion. Are they, in fact, following God's commandments?

We want to emphasize the command, "Make no division in religion." This is a command to everyone, regardless of their faith or the Scripture they follow. But, unfortunately, people have been killing each other in the name of religion for years. The Crusades that took place from 1095-1291 are an example. Subsequent crusades continued into the 16th century and, still, in one form or another, continue to this date. More recently, we should take a look at conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland or between Sunnis and Shias in Iraq. These are a few examples of people who dispute, create conflicts, and wage wars against each other in the name of religion. How can they claim to be followers of God when they are directly disobeying God's commands and creating division in religion? It seems we are all forgetting about the essence of religion.

The definition of religion discussed does not contradict the right of any individual to practice his or her faith's details and rituals. God states, "To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. If God had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He has given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues" (Quran, 5:48). This implies that although every group has the same religion, one that prescribes submission to God, everyone should practice his or her own faith's details and rituals. So, we should set aside our differences and make no division in religion. That is God's command, and we should take it to heart.

In the Quran, God says, "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (Quran, 2:256). This implies that to submit to God, one should willingly commit his heart and soul to

God. The Bible also states that one should choose to obey God's commandment through knowledge and strive in the way of God with all of his or her being and possessions. "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Bible, Matthew, 22:37). From these verses, it is obvious that religion cannot be forced upon anyone, and there is no compulsion in religion.

In the Quran, God says He "has imposed no difficulties on you in religion" (Quran, 22:78). Compare this to all of our man-made traditions and difficulties that exist in the way people follow religion today. God says, "If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden, We will do away with your small sins" (Quran, 4:31). He also says, "Those who avoid great sins and shameful deeds, only (falling into) small faults, verily your Lord is ample in forgiveness" (Quran, 53:32). God tells everyone that He is the most forgiving, and if people stay away from the great sins, He will forgive small sins and faults. But, unfortunately, the religious leaders have written thousands of books about those small sins and faults that God has said He will forgive. They obviously think they know better and write books about some sins that God has not even mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. What is the motivation of these so-called religious leaders?

Throughout the centuries, some misguided religious leaders have created many traditions and ceremonies to protect their power and stature in the name of religion. They include singing, dancing, self-beating, celebrations, lamentations, and ceremonial clothing – including robes, hats, and turbans. These ceremonies and traditions have nothing to do with true religion. However, it is important to know that God has intentionally made some differences in the laws, rituals, and details of each faith; they all have their own unique way of practicing. Such details and rituals have nothing to do with the main goal of religion. People should not allow these minor differences to create divisions amongst them. They should understand that religion's goal is for people to stand for and uphold justice to improve humanity's way of life.

It is noteworthy to mention that throughout recent history, true religion has never ruled any society. It has always been abused by dictators and religious leaders for their personal benefits and power. They have abused religion to deceive people to promote their self-serving agendas.

It is important to note that there are many who criticize religion based on the actions of an individual, a group of people, or even a government. This is only a deception on the part of such people. Those individuals, groups, or governments should be evaluated based on their actions. They are the ones who either act according to religion or in contradiction to it. One should never evaluate or judge religion based on actions of individuals, group, or governments.

THE GOAL

The goal of religion is to fulfill the greatness God has bestowed upon mankind. So, throughout the years, God has sent us His commandments as the foundations for building a world where people are treated with justice, fairness, kindness, and equity, and a world where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, dishonesty, fraud, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, or war. In other words, religion's main goal is to lay the foundation for a world in which justice and fairness are for all and where no one's rights are violated or disregarded.

The main obstacle for establishing the glorious world that God has intended for us as conveyed through His commandments is the undue influence of greedy and misguided dictators and political, industrial, and religious leaders who would resort to murder, deception, oppression, and any other criminal acts to preserve and expand their power, authority, and wealth. Unfortunately, even today in the 21st century, we are witnessing the most heinous crimes and dreadful acts being committed by those serving such misguided leaders and influential people against their fellow men for the sake of gaining more power, authority, or wealth.

Religion teaches everyone to obey almighty God's commandments, as He is the only one who is worthy of unquestionable devotion and servitude. His commandments are solely for the benefit of mankind, as He has no need for power or wealth. In contrast, those with power in military, political, or religious arenas demand and expect their followers to blindly comply with their commands. Throughout history, because their primary motive has been to enforce blind obedience of their people, which is against religious teachings, those in power have always been contemptuous of religion.

Claiming they are the only righteous believers, extremist groups use different tactics, many of which include criminal acts against their fellow religious men and believers of other faiths. They also claim that anyone who follows God in a different manner is an infidel and deserves to be destroyed.

Ignorant people who commit these atrocities in the name of God and religion never understood that the goal of religion is to unite the religious, the righteous, and the reformers to rise and stand for justice. They blindly follow their leaders who have no notion of this invaluable goal, and thus create divisions in religion in direct contradiction to God's commandments.

Many world leaders, politicians, and dictators regularly commit enormous budgets to the development and production of their ever-growing arsenal of powerful bombs and destructive weapons. They intend to improve their military capabilities so they can rapidly destroy any opposing parties who are not in complete agreement with them. Furthermore, they constantly try to justify their crimes against the opposing parties by equating lack of

support with outright opposition, hence the phrase, "If you are not with us, you are against us."

How long do people have to tolerate the expenditure of such enormous resources for military ambitions to produce and unleash more powerful and destructive weapons on their fellow men? Why not utilize these resources to enhance the quality of life for mankind and to eliminate homelessness, poverty, starvation, and disease?

According to estimates by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the allocation of \$80 billion would suffice to meet the basic necessities of the world population, including safe drinking water, nourishment, shelter, basic education, and health care. This is such a modest amount as compared to the U.S. military budget alone, which in 2007 exceeded \$430 billion, excluding an additional \$120 billion earmarked for Iraq and Afghanistan operations. Such a contrast in objectives and priorities can only be considered as inhumane and a total disregard for the well-being of mankind. These crimes against humanity are committed primarily by misleading the public through the spread of misinformation, fear mongering, and fabricated accusations. Keeping the public uninformed and misguided provides many of the military, political, and/or religious leaders with an opportunity to benefit from such criminal acts.

To put an end to any further inhumane and oppressive conducts in our world, it is essential that all the righteous, the reformers, and those who believe in God to awaken and study their Holy Scriptures. Only then will they realize the simple truth and understand the underlying motivation for the consistent attempt by dictators and corrupt political, industrial, and religious leaders as well as influential politicians to hide it from them for such a long time. This simple truth is the recognition of the fact that people, in general, regardless of their differences, are all seeking a world free of oppression, poverty, ignorance, indignity, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, and war. In such a world, people would have peace of mind, happiness, fulfillment, and contentment, and would also treat each other with kindness, friendship, tolerance, and care.

By pondering upon the Holy Scriptures and their commandments, the faithful and the righteous will realize that, for centuries, they have been misled by their self-serving, power-hungry, ambitious, and arrogant leaders who maintained their power and wealth by creating divisions in religion and eliminating any impediment to their authority.

People have been misled and manipulated by their leaders to ignore the goal of religion and stay away from the Holy Scriptures. They have become subservient to the wishes of their leaders to bring about hatred, war, oppression, poverty, and disparity.

Education is the key to discover the real truth and differentiate it from the false beliefs and superstitions that are used to deceive people. This education can only be obtained through studying and pondering about the commandments of the Holy Scriptures to recognize their goal, which is to enable man to live without any fear from his fellow men and to have peace of mind knowing that his individual rights are protected in society and that he will be treated with respect and dignity.

We should all disregard the writings of people who have knowingly or unknowingly distorted the word of God, either for their personal benefit or for someone else's. If there is any doubt about anyone's genuineness in their words or writings, one should compare them to the Holy Scriptures and discard those that are inconsistent with the Scriptures.

Upon awakening to the truth, people should collectively stand up to their self-serving and arrogant leaders, politicians, and corrupt religious authorities who manipulate religion for their own gain. They should further demand that all their available resources be committed to building a world where justice, respect for human rights, tolerance, inclusion, generosity, care, and harmony are practiced without any exception. They should also demand an immediate end to any injustice, indignity, oppression, poverty, fraud, ignorance, indignity, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, war, and destruction of human lives and belongings.

A world with justice for all is what we all deserve.

DELUSION OR REALITY

Among His many living creations, God chose to grant human beings a unique blend of intelligence, imagination, creativity, and communication abilities to establish and continuously enhance their living conditions and societies. However, men driven by their greed and misguided beliefs in what brings them happiness focus their efforts on pursuing their self-indulgence in materialistic luxuries and desires rather than the important tenets of life. These widespread fantasies and delusions drive men into criminal and dishonest conducts, including theft, fraud, embezzlement, drug dealing, and murder.

When we genuinely examine our real needs in life, outside of our delusional thinking, we clearly recognize that it does not take much effort and resources to fulfill them. Therefore, instead of wasteful spending and indulgence in luxuries that would result in jealousy, hatred, and hostility, if we devote our resources in following God's teachings to help the needy and poor, create jobs and opportunities, and support valuable causes and charities, we will not only bring about more harmonious and caring societies, but will also achieve a far deeper sense of self-fulfillment and pleasure.

As evident in our contemporary societies, people indoctrinated in false beliefs about their self worth are trapped in a chaotic rat race in pursuit of money, power, luxuries, and short-term pleasures. Such a never-ending pursuit not only has prevented us from achieving true, long-lasting happiness and better societies, but has also caused a significant rise in crimes, drug and alcohol addiction, stress and illnesses, depression and mental disorders, hatred, suicide, broken families, poverty, moral decay, corruption, violence, and wars.

True happiness, contentment, and peace of mind is achievable through enhancing the quality of life for all members of society by expanding mankind's abilities and efforts in science, art, medicine, generosity, compassion, and reform. Therefore, constructive competition is encouraged to hasten these advancements. People should compete in doing good deeds, generosity, compassion, kindness, and reform, and they should take part and participate in the progression of science, art, and medicine.

Money, power, and the resources of society should be more synergistically used to unite people to eliminate poverty, illiteracy, corruption, oppression, and violation of human rights. To achieve such noble purposes, man must realize the simple fact that the pursuit of money and luxury as a source of happiness is a futile effort and that, in the end, he will not be able to take any of his possessions with him once he departs from this life. While money, power, and authority are God's blessings, true happiness and self-fulfillment can only be achieved if such blessings are utilized to enhance the quality of life for all rather than the pursuit of a wasteful and extravagant lifestyle at the expense of others.

It is quite unfortunate that dictators and political, industrial, and religious leaders who are in unique positions to use their powers and influence to serve their societies and lead by example often, instead, abuse their privileges, expect full autonomy, and selfishly exploit the rights and possessions of others for their own benefits. Such a flagrant disregard for the rights of others compel the religious, the righteous, and reform-minded individuals to steadfastly unite together to fight off this unlawful foray into their rights and possessions.

In a fair and equitable society, people's rights and dignities must be protected; education, health care, and opportunities should be available to all; and people should be entitled to pursue their goals and happiness without fear of injustice, oppression, corruption, racism, hatred, and war.

ACTIONS NOT WORDS

The word “*obey*” and its derivatives have been repeatedly used in the Holy Scriptures. They have specifically been used when referring to God’s commandments. Obey means “to carry out or fulfill the command, order, or instruction.” As the definition implies, to obey is the act of carrying out. Therefore, obeying God’s commandments is the act of carrying out his commands. Hence, people who praise God in words only but do not act in compliance with his command are disobedient.

This segment will examine several verses from the Holy Scriptures about obedience, and will clarify that people’s actions, not words, make them righteous and are what gives them the privilege of entering the kingdom of heaven in the hereafter.

Verses from the Bible:

“Not every one that said to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and in your name have cast out devils and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity” (Matthew, 7:21-23).

“...what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? He said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good but one, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments. He said to him, Which ones? Jesus said, you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother, and, you shall love your Neighbor as yourself” (Matthew, 19:16-19).

“... A man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard’. He answered and said ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said ‘I go, sir’ and did not go. “Which one of the two did the will of his father?” They said to him, The first” (Matthew, 21:28-31).

“...My mother and my brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it” (Luke, 8:21).

"...Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke, 11:28).

"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have the works? Can faith save him? ...Thus also faith by itself, it does not have works, is dead... But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without work is dead" (James, 2:14-20).

"My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John, 3:18).

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James, 1:22).

"You see then that a man is justified by work, and not by faith only... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without work is dead also" (James, 2:24, 26).

Verses from the Quran:

"God has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power)" (Quran, 24:55).

"...Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves" with their actions and beliefs (Quran, 13:11).

"There is the type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle you, and he calls God to witness about what is in his heart; yet is he the most contentious of enemies... But God does not love mischief" (Quran, 2:204, 205).

"Those who believe (in the Quran), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians, - any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work *righteousness*, shall have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." (Quran, 2:62, 5:69).

"But those who have faith and work *righteousness*, they are companions of the Garden:" (Quran, 2:82).

"Yes! whoever submits himself entirely to God and he is the doer of good (to others) he has his reward from his Lord" (Quran, 2:112).

"So believe in God. And His apostles: And if ye believe and do right, ye have a reward without measure" (Quran, 3:179).

"If any do deeds of *righteousness*, - be they male or female - and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them." (Quran, 4:124).

"Why do you say that which you do not do? It is most hateful to God that you should say that which you do not do" (Quran, 61:2, 3). God declares that saying things one does not do - words with no actions - is hateful.

Verses from the Torah:

"Thus did Noah; according to all that God Commanded him, so did he" (Genesis, 6:22).

"Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Genesis, 26:5).

"... and they said, All that the LORD has said will we do, and be obedient" (Exodus, 24:7).

"If you walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;" (Leviticus, 26:3).

"You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2).

"That you may love the LORD your God, and that you may obey his voice," (Deuteronomy 30:20).

"Fear God, and keep his commandments:" (Ecclesiastes, 12:13).

"Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you" (Jeremiah, 11:4).

These verses clearly instruct everyone that it is imperative to obey God's commandments. Therefore, the actions of a person - and not his or her words - determine if he or she has submitted to the will of God. And whoever submits to the will of God will be blessed in this world and in the hereafter. Anyone who acts according to God's commandments - does not commit murder, does not commit adultery, does not steal, does not bear false witness, honors his or her father and mother, and loves his or her neighbor as himself or herself, and does not covet nor lie - shall enter the kingdom of heaven. But anyone who praises God and his prophets in words yet acts in defiance of God's commandments will not enter the

kingdom of heaven. God also makes it clear that no one, and this includes religious and political leaders, is permitted to add or take anything from His commandments.

If we look at the “Avoiding Ten Evils” section of Buddha’s teachings, it is evident that it is all about abstaining from committing certain acts and, therefore, the only people who are in compliance with Buddha’s teaching are not the ones who just meditate and recite the words of Buddha but the ones who also do not commit those acts.

JUSTICE, FAIRNESS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Justice and fairness in society are based on respecting, preserving, and protecting individual rights. These rights, which form the foundations for individual happiness and fulfillment, include respect for people's lives, peace of mind, possessions, dignity, honor, parents, and neighbors.

Everyone is equal in the eyes of the law, meaning there should be no preferential or discriminatory practices in the judicial system, and individuals should be treated based on their actions. Therefore, regardless of their background and status in society, a murderer, a thief, a drug dealer, and someone who has committed a misdemeanor should not be treated equally. Similarly, people should be rewarded equitably based on their actions and works; therefore, a doctor, a scientist, and an unskilled person do not deserve the same rewards.

Justice and fairness are the goal of religion. God said, "Certainly We sent Our messengers with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may stand forth in justice" (Quran, 57:25). There are several important points in this verse. First, it states that all the prophets are sent for the purpose of teaching mankind how to "stand forth in justice." Second, it commands mankind to "stand forth," which tells everyone to rise up against injustice and make a united effort to bring justice to the world. Third, it commands all "men," which indicates that everyone – irrespective of their nationality, race, age, or other factors – should rise up and uphold justice.

Everyone – particularly the religious, the righteous, and the reformers – should unite and pursue this goal to achieve justice and fairness in the world. People should use every available means of communication to promote this goal and make everyone strive for a world in which our rights are protected, we have peace of mind, and are happy and content. We should be able to live in a world where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, ignorance, poverty, corruption, violence, dishonesty, hatred, fanaticism, racism, oppression, or war. This is the world mankind deserves and should strive for.

People should focus on this goal and stop concentrating on their differences and other irrelevant issues. This would eliminate the "divide and conquer" opportunity that dictators, corrupt politicians, and religious leaders have used to advance their causes.

These self-serving and corrupt leaders will not give up their power and authority without resistance. Therefore, the religious, the righteous, and the reformers should unite and utilize their resources and available mass media communication technologies – including books, magazines, brochures, audio and video tapes, disks, poetry, music, theater, movies, television, and Internet – to spread this message and confront anyone who opposes this goal.

People should also use their voting powers and elect representatives who will use legislative tools to achieve this goal.

God has granted mankind the abilities and intelligence required to achieve this goal. He has also instructed us on how to reach this goal. People must actively use their resources and make every effort to bring about the necessary changes for achieving this goal. If we do not strive to achieve this goal with all of our possessions and resources, and with our hearts and souls, then we have none to blame but ourselves for the existence of injustice, ignorance, indignity, poverty, fanaticism, hatred, racism, corruptness, oppression, or war in the world.

In the next segments, we will review some of the commandments found in the religious Scriptures that are meant to protect human rights.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE BIBLE (NEW- TESTAMENT)

Let us review the following verses from the New Testament of the Bible:

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew, 5:6).

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew, 5:10).

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew, 5:20).

"...For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Matthew, 9:13).

"Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew, 13:43).

"...I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew, 15:24).

"...what good deed must I do to have eternal life? So he said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments. He said to him, Which ones? Jesus said, You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew, 19:16-19).

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe the mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others" (Mathew, 23:23).

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matthew, 23:27-28).

"...but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew, 25:46).

"...I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark, 2:17).

"You know the commandments, Do not commit Adultery' Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor your father and mother" (Mark, 10:19).

"I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Luke, 5:32).

"But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others" (Luke, 11:42).

"You know the commandments, Do not commit Adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother" (Luke, 18:20).

"For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified" (Romans, 2:13).

"... you shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Romans, 13:9).

"Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?" (1 Corinthians, 6:9)

"Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness" (1 Timothy, 6:11).

"But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled" (1 Peter, 3:14).

It is clear that justice, righteousness, and protecting people's rights are God's commandments and are demanded of everyone.

Christians should make every effort to make this a world where God's commandments are obeyed and enforced. They should actively work for and participate in building such a world. These verses show that having faith and believing are not sufficient alone and must be complemented by actions (refer to section "Actions not Words"). Christians should know that Jesus did not come to destroy the laws and prophets that had come before him. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, Till heaven and earth pass, one stroke or one pronunciation mark shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whoever shall do and teach them, the same

shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mathew, 5:17-20).

By understanding these and similar verses, true Christians recognize that anyone – regardless of who that person is – who exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, which is achieved by obeying God's commandments, will enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, Christians should strive to achieve the goal of religion for humanity, which is to rise up and uphold justice so we can all live in a world that is full of kindness, happiness, peace, and justice, and where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, or war. This is what God has intended for mankind. Therefore, any true Christian should stop divisions, disputes, and bickering, and should join hands and unite with the people of faith, the righteous, and the reformers to utilize their combined resources to the best of their abilities in order to carry out God's commandments and achieve this invaluable goal.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE QURAN

God tells us that human life is sacred and should not be taken by anyone. "Nor take life - which God has made sacred- except for just cause" (Quran, 17:33). "Say: Come I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you - that you do not associate anything with Him and show kindness to your parents, ... and do not take life, which God has made sacred, except by way of justice and law:" (Quran, 6:151).

Other verses in the Quran also show the value of human life. "We ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one killed a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people" (Quran, 5:32).

Also, God commands us to stay away from adultery. "Nor come near to ADULTERY: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)" (Quran, 17:32). There are several reasons for this command, including that the act of adultery threatens the stability of the family unit and can potentially lead to its destruction.

There are three categories of animals in nature: In the first category, the offspring do not need either of the parents after the birth. Turtles and frogs are examples. In the second category, the offspring require one of the parents, mainly the mother, for nourishment. Cats and dogs are examples. In the third category, the infant is nurtured and cared for by both parents. Pigeons are an example. In this category, the infants are incapable of taking care of themselves. Raising the offspring to self-sufficiency requires the cooperation of both parents. Humans are part of this category, and their offspring require more nurturing and caring than any other living being. This requirement necessitates the formation and continuation of a stable family unit to nurture the children. Therefore, religion promotes marriage and forbids adultery, which, as discussed, is a risk to the formation of a stable family unit. Family units that are built upon the covenant of marriage tend to be more stable, and, of course, such stable families provide an ideal environment for raising the human offspring.

The following commands in the Quran ensure that individuals' properties and possessions are protected:

"And do not devour your property among yourselves by false means and offer it not as bribe to the authorities that you may devour a part of the wealth of other people wrongfully while you know" (Quran, 2:188).

"...do not devour your property among yourselves falsely, except that it be trading by your mutual consent;" (Quran, 4:29).

"Woe to those that deal in fraud, those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due" (Quran, 83:1-3).

The Quran states that everyone will be responsible and accountable for all of their actions on Judgment Day, no matter how great or small. Therefore, a true believer will respect, protect, and preserve everyone else's financial rights, and will not steal, embezzle, rob, swindle, cheat, or defraud anything - no matter how small or significant - from anyone.

God also forbids us from slandering and defaming; name calling; ridiculing; being suspicious of, spying on, or falsely accusing others.

"O ye who believe! Let not some men among you ridicule others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor let some women laugh at others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: And those who do not repent are (indeed) transgressors. ... Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other behind their backs" (Quran, 49:11, 12).

God forbids us from spreading rumors or news we are not certain of because it could bring harm to an innocent person. False rumors can ruin people's lives, destroy people's reputations, and bring about disgrace, misery, and despair. "O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done" (Quran, 49:6). "For, you began to learn it from each other's tongue and then you uttered with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge, and you thought it to be a light matter, while in the sight of God it was a grievous thing" (Quran, 24:15). God commands that no one should ever spread rumors that could result in another person's misery, sadness, or anger (Quran, 24:17).

God also commands us to be kind to our parents, relatives, neighbors, the needy, orphans, companions, wayfarers, and slaves - and to treat them well.

"... be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbor of (your) kin and the alien neighbor, and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess" and in 2:83 "And remember We

took a covenant from the Children of Israel (to this effect): Worship none but God; treat with kindness your parents and kindred, and orphans and those in need; speak fair to the people; be steadfast in prayer; and practice regular charity." (Quran, 4:36).

God also teaches mankind how to treat our parents and how to show gratitude and appreciation for everything they went through to raise us as children. "Thy Lord has decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor" (Quran, 17:23). In another verse, God states, " ... Show gratitude to Me and to your parents" (Quran, 31:15).

In another verse, God commands kindness to both parents. "We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents" (Quran, 46:15).

It is worth noticing that although slavery existed during earlier times, the Quran orders treating slaves well and promotes freeing slaves as an alternative for the punishment of some sins.

Now, let us examine the importance of justice.

"...stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you swerve, and if you distort (justice) or decline to do justice..." (Quran, 4:135).

"...- whenever you speak, speak justly even if a near relative is concerned;" (Quran, 6:152).

"...when you judge between people, that you judge with justice ... " (Quran, 4:58).

"Surely God enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion;" (Quran, 16:90).

"...My Lord has commanded justice ... " (Quran, 7:29).

"...let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety:" (Quran, 5:8).

God commands us to be on the side of justice. When testifying in any matter, only the truth should be taken into account. Friendships, family connections, maternal/paternal relationships, hatred, and enmities should not impact the testimony nor affect the course of justice. **No relationship is more important than justice.**

Testifying against rich, powerful, poor, or needy individuals should be for the sake of the truth and for promoting justice. Sometimes people incline to change their testimony and side with the rich and powerful in exchange for some future favor or protection. People also sometimes change their testimony because they pity the poor or needy. In such a case, people should help the poor and needy with their own possessions rather than stepping on truth and justice. Truth should be upheld in any testimony, and people should remember that God is aware of everything.

No one's social or religious status and power should impact the truth or deter the course of justice. No one should distort information, decline to testify, or perplex the truth to change the course of justice.

Until humans stand for justice and protect others' rights, justice will continue to be just another dazzling word that will be used frequently to deceive other human beings.

God's commandments order everyone to put justice above all friendships, hatred, and enmities. People should always be just and promote justice for everyone without any exceptions. This is the pillar for building a society where people can live in happiness with peace of mind and where their rights are protected and preserved. Therefore, one should always keep in mind: **Justice is above all friendships and hatred.**

By pondering upon the aforementioned verses, anyone who believes in the Quran and claims to be Muslim should recognize that the goal of religion is for people to rise up and uphold justice so they can live in a world that is full of kindness, happiness, peace, and where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, or war. This is what God commanded mankind. Therefore, any true believer of the Quran and any true Muslim will stop divisions, disputes, and bickering, and will join hands and unite with all the people of faith, the righteous, and the reformers to utilize their combined resources to the best of their abilities to carry out God's commandments in order to achieve this invaluable goal.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE TORAH (OLD TESTAMENT)

"Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the land which LORD your God is giving you. You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house, You shall not covet your neighbors' wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's" (Exodus, 20:12-17).

These commandments are all repeated and reiterated in Deuteronomy 5:16-21.

The following verse affirms that no one, including religious leaders, is permitted to add or delete anything from God's commandments and that we should all obey His commandments. "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy, 4:2).

The following verses from the Torah:

"...that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice," (Genesis 18:19).

"Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds" (Isaiah, 3:10).

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless" (Isaiah, 10:1-2).

"No one calls for justice; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil" (Isaiah, 59:4).

"Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the strangers, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place" (Jeremiah, 22:3).

"Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it" (Micah, 2:1).

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah, 6:8).

"And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart" (Zechariah, 7:10).

"You shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another...You shall do no injustice in judgment. Not be partial to the poor nor honor the person of mighty" (Leviticus, 19:11, 15).

"Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy" (Ps, 2:3).

"Keep justice, and do righteousness" (Isaiah, 56:1).

These verses clearly identify that justice, righteousness, and protecting people's rights are God's commandments and are demanded of everyone.

There are many more reaffirmations of these verses in the Torah. Therefore, the Jewish people should strive for achieving the goal of religion for humanity, which is to rise up and uphold justice so they can live in a world that is full of kindness, happiness, peace, and justice, and where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, or war. This is what God commanded mankind. Therefore, any true Jewish person who follows the ways of Abraham and Moses will stop divisions, disputes, and bickering, and will join hands and unite with all the people of faith, the righteous, and the reformers, and utilize their combined resources to the best of their abilities to carry out God's commandments in order to achieve this invaluable goal.

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN BUDDHISM

Buddhism is a religion/philosophy based upon the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as Buddha (486-566 B.C.). In his teachings, Buddha claims, "I will teach you the Truth and the Path leading to the Truth."

Buddhism is a philosophy or way of life to more than 300 million people around the world. The Buddhist path can be summed up as a way to lead a moral life, to be mindful and aware of thoughts and actions, and to develop wisdom and understanding.

In Sigalovada Sutta, Buddha said the followings to Sigalaka:

"Inasmuch, young householder, as the noble disciple has eradicated the four vices in conduct, inasmuch as he commits no evil action in four ways, ... ,he is favored in this world and in the world beyond. Upon the dissolution of the body, after death, he is born in a happy heavenly realm.

"What are the four vices in conduct that he has eradicated? The destruction of life, householder, is a vice and so are stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying. These are the four vices that he has eradicated."

... He spoke yet again: Killing, stealing, lying and adultery, These four evils the wise never praise.

"In which four ways does one commit no evil action? Led by desire does one commit evil. Led by anger does one commit evil. Led by ignorance does one commit evil. Led by fear does one commit evil "But inasmuch as the noble disciple is not led by desire, anger, ignorance, and fear, he commits no evil."

..."And how, young man, does the noble disciple protect the six directions? These six directions should be known: mother and father as the east, teachers as the south, spouse and family as the west, friends and colleagues as the north, workers and servants as the lower direction, and ascetics and Brahmans as the upper direction. "In five ways should a mother and father as the eastern direction be respected by a child: 'I will support them who supported

me; I will do my duty to them; I will maintain the family lineage and tradition; I will be worthy of my inheritance; and I will make donations on behalf of dead ancestors.”

In the “Avoiding Ten Evils” section, Buddha said:

All acts of living creatures become bad by ten things, and by avoiding the ten things they become good. There are three evils of the body, four evils of the tongue, and three evils of the mind.

The evils of the body are, murder, theft, and adultery; of the tongue, lying, slander, abuse, and idle talk; of the mind, covetousness, hatred, and error.

I exhort you to avoid the ten evils:

1. Kill not, but have regard for life.
2. Steal not, neither do ye rob; but help everybody to be master of the fruits of his labor.
3. Abstain from impurity, and lead a life of chastity.
4. Lie not, but be truthful. Speak the truth with discretion, fearlessly and in loving heart.
5. Invent not evil reports, neither do ye repeat them. Carp not, but look for the good sides of your fellow-beings, so that ye may with sincerity defend them against their enemies.
6. Swear not, but speak decently and with dignity.
7. Waste not the time with gossip, but speak to the purpose or keep silence.
8. Covet not, nor envy, but rejoice at the fortunes of other people.
9. Cleanse your heart of malice and cherish no hatred, not even against your enemies; but embrace all living beings with kindness.
10. Free your mind of ignorance and be anxious to learn the truth, especially in the one thing that is needful, lest you fall a prey either to skepticism or to errors. Skepticism will make you indifferent and errors will lead you astray.

Buddha’s teachings make it clear that justice, righteousness, and protecting people’s rights are demanded of everyone.

If followers of Buddha understand the teachings of Buddha, they shall live without committing any of the ten evils, which are killing, adultery, stealing, lying, jealousy, hatred, spreading false rumors, gossip, and false accusations. They should try to build a world where no one is committing any of these evil deeds. This sounds very much like the goal of the religious, the righteous, and the reformers. Therefore, a true Buddhist will stop creating division, disputes, and bickering, and will join hands and unite with all the people of faith, the righteous, and the reformers, and utilize their combined resources to the best of their abilities to eliminate the ten evils throughout the world. It is then that people can live in kindness, happiness, justice, and peace.

By reviewing the commands and teachings of the Scriptures regarding justice, fairness, and protection of human's rights, it is evident that if the followers of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism – who comprise about four billion people, approximately two-thirds of the world population – stop divisions and disputes, join hands, unite, and use their combined resources, they can easily achieve the goal of religion and build a world that is full of kindness, happiness, peace, and justice, and where there is no sign of injustice, indignity, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, hatred, extremism, prejudice, racism, or war.

CONCLUSION

We demonstrated that the goal of religion, which is conveyed to us through the prophets and the Scriptures, is:

“To build a world in which justice and fairness applies to everyone, and where there is no sign of injustice, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, indignity, hatred, extremism, racism, prejudice, or war; a world where mankind lives in happiness, kindness, and fulfillment with contentment and peace of mind.”

We discussed the fact that God has revealed the same religion to all His prophets and commanded everyone to make no division in religion. God has affirmed that all the prophets, Holy Scriptures, and laws are sent so people would stand for and uphold justice. Names and rituals are unimportant. What matters are good deeds, good thoughts, and good words.

“It is the cult of your father Abraham. It is He Who has named you Muslims” (Quran, 22:78). God says it was Abraham who originally used the term “Muslim”. In the same verse, God declares that He “has imposed no difficulties on you in religion”. God declares religion as “And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship God, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith); to establish regular prayer; and to practice regular charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight” (Quran, 98:5).

God tells us that some things are not mentioned in the Quran so that we will not have difficulty. So why do we have so many books and interpretations about things God has left out? “Ask not about things which, if revealed to you, would cause you trouble, though if you ask about them while the Qur'an is being sent down they will be revealed to you. God has left them out on purpose” (Quran, 5:101).

“Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand- hold, that never breaks” (Quran, 2:256). This verse implies that people should understand the teachings of religion, choose to obey God’s commandments through knowledge, strive in the way of God with all their beings and possessions, and stand for justice. No one can be forced to accept religion.

God informs us that there is guidance and light in the Torah (Old Testament), the Bible (New Testament), and the Quran. Each one of these Scriptures confirms the previous one. God intentionally made people different, and He judges everyone based on the Scriptures they were given. He also says people should set aside their differences and unite with one

another to achieve the stated goal of religion. "But they (mankind) have broken their religion among them into sects, each group rejoicing in its tenets" (Quran, 23:53). God has commanded us not to divide in religion. However, we continue to divide ourselves into different sects. Members of each group falsely believe they are the only righteous ones and that all others are wicked, sinful, and immoral, whereas each group should respect other's beliefs and values as long as they are according to God's commandments. They must stop name-calling and abstain from falsely accusing each other and creating divisions. Comments made by a so-called religious leader calling one of the prophets of God a "terrorist" must stop because it only fuels division and animosity. Everyone must concentrate on their commonalities, which are God's commandments and the stated goal of religion. They should stop focusing on rituals and minor differences.

True Muslims, people who submit to God's will, should invite everyone to the way of God. They should utilize their wisdom, insight, intelligence, reasoning, and knowledge to engage in discussions with their best approach and conduct. They should respond to others' rudeness and harshness with gentleness, calmness, and peacefulness, as it is commanded in the following verses:

"Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord knows best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance" (Quran, 16:125).

"Nor can goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: Then will he between whom and you was hatred become as it were your friend and intimate! And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint, none but persons of the greatest good fortune" (Quran, 41:34, 35).

"Say: "This is my way: I do invite unto God, on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes, I and whoever follows me. Glory to God. and never will I join gods with God" (Quran, 12:108).

A true Muslim, one who submits to God's will, listens with patience and tolerance. The prayer of Moses states, "O my Lord! Expand me my breast; Ease my task for me; and remove the impediment from my speech, so they may understand what I say," should be used as the guide for everyone, in the manner and approach of their discussions with others (Quran, 20:25-28). These verses should be used as the guide for everyone in the manner and approach of their discussions with others.

Anyone knows that most people have grown up in a limited and small environment and have been knowingly or unknowingly misled by their corrupt religious, social, or political leaders, or relatives and friends. They have constantly been blitzed by one-sided views,

judgments, and outlooks in every situation, and have been brainwashed by one-sided media reporting and journalism.

People have acquired erroneous and flawed information by either reading the writings of or listening to people who intentionally or unintentionally have distorted, altered, or misinterpreted God's commandments. Their belief systems and opinions are developed based on these misleading notions. Unfortunately, they have no clue that their beliefs and opinions are based on false information and are erroneous and flawed. They believe from the bottom of their hearts that they are right and that anyone else with different beliefs is wrong. Therefore, it is the duty of every Muslim to listen and converse with such misinformed people while being patient and tolerant. Using undisputable truth from the Holy Scriptures, Muslims should identify the flaws in peoples' beliefs and inform them in the best manner possible, without offending them.

"It was We who revealed the law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. ... And in their footsteps We sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him: We sent him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear God. To you We sent the scripture in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it, and guarding it in safety: ...To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. If God had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He has given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to God" (Quran, 5:44-48). God says He sent the Law (the Torah, Old Testament), the Gospel (the Bible, New Testament), and the Quran, each one confirming the previous one, and there is guidance and light in all of them. God created people in different groups, and He will test and judge each group with what He has instructed them. People of every faith prove their submission to God with different rituals and practices, but they all have one common religion, and that is submission to God, or Islam. We should concentrate on our shared beliefs and common religion, and stop focusing on our differences. We should set aside those differences and make no division in religion. That is God's command, and we should take it to heart.

It is noteworthy to remember that God does not change His ways – as stated in the Quran (verses 17:77, 33:62, 48:23) –, and, therefore, His commandments to everyone are the same. According to His will, there are minor differences in performing details and rituals, such as praying and fasting. There are also some changes to the laws that determine the penalty for committing a sin. But the goal of religion – which is the reason for sending all the prophets, Holy Scriptures, and laws – is for people to rise up and stand for justice, to build a world that is full of kindness, peace, and justice, and where there is no sign of injustice, poverty, adultery, defrauding, stealing, lying, indignity, oppression, corruption, ignorance, hatred, extremism, fanaticism, racism, or war.

Most of those who think they are against religion have never understood the true religion. When they understand the true religion and its goal, most of them will gladly join in and unite with the religious, the righteous, and the reformers, and will try hard with their resources to build a prosperous a world for this generation and generations to come.

There are some pessimists that constantly say, "This cannot be done" or "If it could be done, it would have been done by now." They do not realize that one of the main reasons for not achieving this goal is that promoting this idea without access to today's available mass media communication technology has been nearly impossible. But consider what humans have accomplished utilizing these technologies. How long did it take for Russia and China to become Communist? And how long it did take for Russia's fall from Communism? Would such events have been possible without access to propaganda machines that utilizes mass media communication technologies?

Today's superior technologies for communication, media, and traveling have presented us with a unique opportunity for educating and promoting the true goal of religion in a very short time. Tomorrow will bring more advanced technologies that will accelerate this progress. By educating and promoting the goal of religion to the masses, the prospect for unity is more realistic than ever before. Unity and cooperation will empower us to rise up and stand for justice. With justice reigning supreme in the world, we shall have a world that we deserve, a world full of happiness, kindness, and fulfillment for everyone.

**Achieving the goal of religion is the only choice
we have to attain the good life we all deserve.**

Everything in the universe – stars, planets, mountains, oceans, plants, and all living creatures – is made up of tiny invisible particles called atoms. These tiny particles bind together and form our universe and everything in it.

Imagine if we put aside our differences, eliminated our divisions, and joined hands, cooperated, and united with one another. There is nothing beyond our reach.

Take the first step: Educate yourself and help others to get educated about true religion. Then join hands, cooperate, and unite to spread and implement the goal of religion.

Build a world where justice and fairness is for all; a world where there is no sign of injustice, oppression, corruption, poverty, ignorance, indignity, hatred, extremism, racism, prejudice, or war; a world where mankind lives in happiness, kindness, and fulfillment with contentment and peace of mind.

We must start today.