

With the Noble Quran

The Conformity of Islamic Belief With Innate Human Nature (الفطرة Al-Fitrah)

(Translated)

<https://www.al-waie.org/archives/article/20443>

Al Waie Magazine Issue No. 481

Forty first Year, Safar 1448 AH corresponding to July 2026 CE

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Allah (swt) says, ﴿فَاقْمْ وَّجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَافِمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ **“So direct your face self toward the Deen, inclining to truth. Adhere to the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created mankind. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct Deen, but most of the people do not know”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 30].

This noble verse came after mentioning many of the signs of Allah (swt), including bringing forth the living from the dead, and bringing forth the dead from the living, reviving the earth after its death, creating man from dust, creating spouses for them to dwell with, creating affection and mercy between spouses, creating the heavens and the earth, the diversity of languages and colors, people sleeping at night and seeking His bounty during the day, and that He (swt) shows us lightning out of fear and hope, and sends down water from the sky to revive the earth after its death, and the heavens and the earth standing by His command, and His (swt) power to revive us after the resurrection, and that He (swt) owns whatever is in the heavens and the earth, all are obedient to Him, and that He (swt) begins creation and then repeats it; This noble verse we are discussing begins with the explanatory conjunction “fa” (الفاء then), which connects what follows to the meaning understood from the preceding context. The implied meaning is, “If you have come to know the power and greatness of Allah (swt) in the preceding verses, then set your face towards the Deen, inclining towards truth.” This is both eloquent and concise, as Allah (swt) suffices with this “fa” (الفاء then) which indicates the implied meaning understood from the context of several preceding verses.

Then came Allah (swt)’s command to His Messenger (saw) to turn his face towards the true Deen. Allah (swt)’s address to His Prophet (saw) is an address to his Ummah unless there is evidence making it specified to the Prophet (saw). Here, there is no evidence for specification, so the command to turn one's face towards the true Deen is general, encompassing both the Messenger (saw) and his Ummah. This is further emphasized by the verse that immediately follows, ﴿مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ **“Adhere to it, turning in repentance to Him, and fear Him and establish prayer and do not be of those who associate others with Allah”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 31]. Here the phrase ﴿مُنِيبِينَ﴾ **“turning to Him in repentance”** is in the plural, and the two commands and prohibitions that follow are addressed to the community (جماعة jamaa’ah), ﴿وَاتَّقُوهُ﴾ **“and fear Him”** ﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ **“establish Salah”** and ﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا﴾ **“do not be of those (who associate partners with Allah).”**

The establishment of the face that is commanded means straightening and adjusting the face to what it is looking at without turning to the right or left. It is a metaphor for complete and pure devotion to the Deen. The establishment of the face

and its direction is mentioned more than once in the Noble Quran, such as Allah's (swt) saying, relating the words of Ibrahim (as), ﴿إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ﴾ **“Indeed, I have turned my face [self] toward He who created the heavens and the earth”** [Surah Al-An'am: 79], and His (swt) saying, ﴿وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ﴾ **“and that you direct yourselves to the Qiblah at every place or time of prostration, and invoke Him, sincere to Him in Deen”** [Surah Al-A'raf, 29], and others.

The definite article Al (ال the) attached to Ad-Deen (الدين the Religion) is the established, ordained Deen commanded by Allah (swt), that is, the Deen of Allah (swt) revealed to His Messenger (saw).

As for ﴿حَنِيفًا﴾ **“upright”** the word Al-Haneef (الحنيف the inclining) means inclination, i.e., inclining away from falsehood towards truth. Truth and falsehood cannot coexist, nor can belief and disbelief coexist, because belief in Allah (swt) as the Creator and Sustainer necessitates disbelief in all else.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَمَنْ يَخْفَرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى﴾ **“So whoever disbelieves in taghut (false deities) and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 256] and ﴿فَإِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا﴾ **“Adhere to the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created mankind”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 30]. The word Innate Human Nature (الْفِطْرَةُ Al-Fitrah) is from the verb fatara (فطر) which means “created,” and from it is His (swt) saying, ﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾ **“All Praise is due to Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth”** [TMQ Surah Fatir: 1], meaning: Creator of the heavens and the earth. The nature is added to the name of Allah (swt) to magnify it because it is one of the signs of Allah (swt). Therefore, Allah (swt) swore by the soul that contains this nature and its formation in this form, so He (swt) said, ﴿وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا* فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا﴾ **“And by the soul and He who proportioned it and inspired it with discernment of its wickedness and its righteousness”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shams: 7-8]. Then, Allah (swt) affirmed this by describing the innate human nature (fitrah) as that upon which He created mankind, using the preposition ‘ala (على upon), which denotes superiority, due to the profound influence this innate human nature has on people, as if it were above them, dominant and firmly established within them.

The verb is understood as an implied verb, meaning: Follow or adhere to what your innate nature, upon which Allah created you, dictates, namely, directing your face towards the Deen of Allah. Then, Allah (swt) affirmed the steadfastness, continuity, and unchanging nature of this innate nature in people by saying, ﴿لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ﴾ **“There is no altering the creation of Allah”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 30]. Thus, from Aadam (as) until the last human being on Earth, all people are created with this innate human nature, which never deviates. This innate human nature is the inherent disposition with which humankind was created and formed, characterized by a natural sense of helplessness and imperfection, which necessitates the glorification of the Creator alone, Allah (swt).

As for ﴿ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ﴾ **“That is the upright Deen”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 30], the demonstrative pronoun “that” (ذلك dhalika) is used to further distinguish and emphasize this Deen. Al-Qayyim (القيّم Upright) is an adjective (وصف wasaf) on the pattern fee'il (فَعِيل) like hayyin (هَيِّن easy) and jayyid (جَيِّد good). This pattern indicates the strength of the quality it embodies, which is Al-Qayyim (القيّم Upright),

metaphorically used to mean the absence of crookedness, as in the verses, ﴿وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ﴾ **“And has not made therein any crookedness * upright”** [TMQ Surah Al-Kahf: 1-2], and the verse, ﴿ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ﴾ **“That is the upright Deen”** [TMQ Surah At-Tawbah: 36].

As for ﴿وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ **“But most of the people do not know”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Rum: 30], this is a clarification to explain the reality of most people, the disbelievers and polytheists, who are preoccupied with their worldly affairs and neglect the knowledge that leads to understanding the true Deen. This aligns with the description of the majority of people as lacking knowledge, belief, and gratitude in many places in the Noble Quran.

The term innate human nature (الفطرة Al-Fitrah) in this context refers to the innate drives for behavior that have been placed in man, including organic needs such as the need for food, drink, sleep, and others, and the three instincts: spiritual, survival, and procreation, with their various manifestations, and the feelings and inclinations related to them.

The Prophet (saw) said, «كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ» **“Every child is born upon Al-Fitrah but his parents convert him to Judaism or Christianity or Magianism”** [Sahih Ibn Hibban, and it was narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim]. Muslim narrated in his Sahih that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَالَ: وَإِنِّي خَلَقْتُ عِبَادِي حُنَفَاءَ كُلَّهُمْ، وَإِنَّهُمْ أَتَتْهُمْ الشَّيَاطِينُ فَاجْتَالَتْهُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِمْ، وَحَرَّمْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا أَحَلَلْتُ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ، وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ أَنْ يُشْرِكُوا بِي مَا لَمْ أَنْزِلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا» **“Allah, the Exalted and Glorified, said: “I have created My servants as ones inclined to the worship of Allah but the Satans came to them and turned them away from their Deen and he makes unlawful what has been declared lawful for them, and he commands them to ascribe partnership with Me, although he has no justification for that.”**

Thus, the innate human nature (الفطرة Al-Fitrah) aligns with the pure monotheism and with submitting oneself to Allah (swt) meaning acknowledging the inherent limitations and imperfections of humankind, and the necessity of venerating (تقديس taqdees) the Creator and Sustainer alone. Therefore, what aligns with the Fitrah is the foundation of belief: the Oneness of Allah (swt) and dedicating worship and governance solely to Him. This is the common principle in the Risaalaat (messages) of all the Prophets (as).

The Shariah rulings came to regulate the satisfaction of the manifestations of organic needs and instincts in the correct way that achieves happiness for man. They do not unleash satisfaction nor suppress it. Instead, the philosophy of Islam is based on mixing the material with the spiritual, so man performs his material actions while adhering to the commands and prohibitions of Allah (swt), so the spiritual aspect is achieved for him, even if those Shariah rulings contradict his desires, temperaments, and inclinations.