

A Short History of Knowledge and the Sciences

(In Six Cross-Sections)

I say six cross-sections. For the task of writing the history of science across all its ages is one that only all the research centers of the world together could accomplish. But these six sections, once well understood, cast light on all the sciences and all the ages of science. In our own age, which suffers a famine of meaning, a kind of enlightenment can then take place in the full sense of the word. I say *in the full sense* deliberately. For the twentieth century has very nearly reached perfection in terms of discovery, data, and the sciences. There is not much left to add. Yet if these six links in the chain — missing or misread, and it is they that have cost this age its meaning and its beauty — were known, that is, read correctly, enlightenment would be realized in the full sense. Immanuel Kant himself said of the eighteenth century, the so-called Age of Enlightenment, that this was only the *beginning* of enlightenment.

A — The Mythological Period (5000–700 BCE): From the Sumerians and Akkadians to the Beginning of the Greek Classical Age

Before turning to Sumer civilization, we need to look at humanity's earlier anthropological, pre-historic, and supra-historical periods. Thus:

(First, a brief analysis: These few pages of anthropological explanations are, rather than historical data, a brief account of the periods of humanity before civilization and at the beginning of civilization. They concern an important segment of human life that is not tied to a specific historical timeline. I ask that it not be misread. This preliminary explanation will serve as a foundation for understanding the article as a whole. So long as it is not treated as history, it will not be a source of confusion.)

The sciences of genes and bones — biology and paleontology — show that the human species separated from the animals roughly 55 million years ago. It then lived for nine million years as hominid (human-like) generations, and for 200,000 years has been *Homo sapiens*, which is to say the human line capable of culture and abstract thought; and for about fifty thousand years it has been able to speak. Yet however much *Homo sapiens* possessed a brain capable of abstraction, it has only managed to realize that capacity in the full sense over the last twelve thousand years — that is, from the Göbeklitepe period onward.

This twelve-thousand-year process likewise has six periods.

- 1) The branching and evolution of languages.
- 2) The first period of civilization. These two periods are generally expressed by *Adam*. As is known, the names of the prophets are not history; they are archetypal concepts, each the expression of an era.

3) A period of dense mysticism and spirituality alongside certain scientific openings. We still see this period today in some Turkic and Native American tribes in the form of Shamanism. In the Hebrew tradition the names of these spiritual and scientific periods are Seth and Akhnukh-Noah. Akhnukh's other name is Idris (Enoch). In the Egyptian, Greek, and Iranian traditions the names of these two are Agathodaemon and Hermes. This third period, too, lies before the Ice Age — that is, before the Flood. Let us note at once that the Flood was not universal, since a universal flood would be contrary to the science of physics.

4) The post-Ice Age period. Here human beings begin founding settlements. Many prophets appear, bringing clear beliefs and rules. The collective name of all the prophets of this fourth period is *Noah*. Noah is the first messenger-prophet. In this period religion in the sense we know it begins (Qur'an 4:163; 42:13). This first period of prophethood lasted 950 years (Torah and Qur'an).

In the Abrahamic sense, religion means bringing together and maintaining a balance between faith and reason, this world and the Hereafter, matter and spirit, the soul and the body, poverty and wealth, and women and men. Since these balances had not yet been fully realized at that time — that is, since humanity had not yet developed sufficiently — the spiritual teachings of Seth (Shith) and Enoch (Idris) came to dominate humanity completely, ultimately reaching the end of the era of Noah, when Abraham came. (Surah al-Saffat) Abraham was the first Muslim. (Surah al-An'am)

5) The fifth period is the period of Islam. *Islam*, as a word, means reconciling countless opposites — such as spirit and body — and uniting them on the middle way (the *ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*, the straight path). Those who remained outside this balanced period and adhered to the prophets Seth and Idris are called the Sabians. The name of the Abrahamic religion, which is religion in its successful form, is *ḥanīfism* and Islam. As words, both *Sabian* and *ḥanīf* mean an intense inclination toward a single point. Sabianism is an inclination toward the abstract and the spiritual: abandoning everything concrete — the body above all — and concentrating on the spirit. *Ḥanīfism* means uniting and reconciling all opposites at the midpoint, beginning with faith and reason. *Islam*, in its literal sense, means “bringing about peace.” (i.e. reconciling)

6) The sixth period is the period of Moses. Here there is a state, there is law, there is order. Its other name in the Qur'an is Judaism.

At this point five matters need to be addressed:

1) The state of belief that God approves in humanity is Islam. One of Islam's names is *the religion of tolerance* (al-Mā'idah 5:3).

2) Spirituality, asceticism (*zuhd*), and monasticism are not things God legislated. Rather, they are part of humanity's accumulated tradition; whoever wishes may turn toward that path — on condition of fulfilling its requirements (Sūrat al-Ḥadīd).

3) The true, that is ontological, name in existence of the religion of balance called Islam is *biology*. Biology is the midpoint between physics and metaphysics. It is life itself. It means living life, existence, religion, and civilization through both of their dimensions. It is another expression of Scientific Civilization.

4) Another name for this religion of Islam and Hanif monotheism is the Religion of Tolerance. Indeed, what Allah asked of humankind (from Adam onward) was not to seek immortality through wealth, possessions, or sexuality. Rather, it was to attain immortality through spiritual and abstract

values. Yes, for the first generation of human beings, represented by Adam and humanity, to experience the reality of Humanism, sexuality, language, and spirituality were first necessary.

5) In some sources both *Sabianism* and *ḥanīfism* have been characterized as deviance. This is because the established order of the great majority of humanity was polytheism and idolatry. Spirituality and Islam therefore amounted to stepping outside that established order.

Although the Qur'an gives priority to Islam and *ḥanīfism*, in hard times it accepts and even recommends the Meccan model — that is, living spiritually, in the manner of Jesus. (See my commentary and translation of *Sūrat al-Ṣaff*.) The word *ḥanīf* occurs twelve times in the Qur'an. Two of these are strong evidence for what I have said, and I quote them here directly:

“Abraham was neither a Jew (a defender of the material order) nor a Christian (a defender of the spiritual and otherworldly life). Rather he was a ḥanīf and a Muslim. Nor was he an idolater, as the Meccans supposed.” (3:67)

“Say: My Lord, who raised me and nurtured me, has guided me to the straight and balanced path—the way of Abraham, who lived as a Muslim and a Hanif, and was never a polytheist.” (6:161)

From these explanations, it can be understood that bringing together spirituality and materiality—the summer and winter of life—like Abraham means establishing life in the model of a spring (between winter and summer). However, Moses and Judaism promise to make life a paradise.

Yes, Judaism was the religion founded upon the legacy of all the prophets; it represents the state, law, science, industry, and philosophy. The Torah, with its 40,000 verses, guarantees this. Genesis, Chapter 2, promises this paradise to Adam (humankind). Thus:

“There was as yet no plant of the field (no useful natural formation) upon the earth, and no herb of the field (no natural principle) had sprung up. For God—the One who brings development—had not caused His rain (revelation) to fall upon the earth. There was no man (no civilized human being) to work the ground (to practice agriculture). But the vapor of human need rose up from the earth. It moistened the soil. From that moist soil came man (the civilized human being). God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (revelation). That civilized human being became a living, continuous civilization. God made Mesopotamia (the East) a garden. He settled those civilized humans there. He planted three trees there:

a) A tree pleasing in appearance (physical) and good to eat (chemical).

b) The tree of distinguishing good from evil (science, reason, and abstract metaphysical philosophy).

c) And in the middle of the garden (that is, as the midpoint of physics and metaphysics) He planted the tree of biology, and of sexuality in particular. Though eating from the other two trees was permitted, He forbade eating from this one. For God wants the

human being to attain immortality not biologically but spiritually.” (Genesis, chapters 2–3)¹

So the Mosaic civilization is superior to the Abrahamic (Qur’an 3:33), as a worldly civilization. Indeed the Prophet Muhammad said: *Do not hold me superior to Moses; on the Day of Resurrection he will be raised before me* (Bukhārī, Anbiyā’ 34). And the twentieth century is living precisely this. But the wing of spirituality and inwardness — that is, Aaron — is missing in this civilization. The Kabbalists try to represent it. Yet because they neglect the scientific character of the Torah and the law of Moses, this civilization still cannot fly; one of its wings remains broken. And Jesus is the Messiah who unites these two wings. But because the Church lost the tree of distinguishing good from evil (science), it lost the physical and chemical formations as well. Moreover, in the Church the tree of sexuality (family life) never existed at all.

Thus, modern humanity must consider the past and the future as a whole. It must put into practice all the principles and structural concepts of civilization, and use the “missile of balance” to soar into the infinite realms of the abstract. Otherwise, we will continue to have many deficiencies and many serious problems. Therefore, it can be said with certainty that nothing in today’s world is more absurd than a war between Jews and Muslims, the two major branches of the Abrahamic tradition.

(The analysis ends here.)

Now We Return Again to the Sumerian–Akkadian Period

B

The two-thousand-year Sumerian period is the period in which the first civilization, the first scientific thought, the first alphabet, and the first heavenly prophethood began. The sociological reason for this is the existence of city-states — that is, the full prevalence of freedom and prosperity in society. We will see this same sociological effect later in the Greek classical age. Yes, these things happened in Sumer, but people were still primitive in terms of their intellectual development. Belief, science, law, literature, and philosophy were written and read in a mythological language. The scientific, biological explanation of this is as follows.

In earlier times, from the beginning of history down to about 700 BCE, religion, poetry, science, philosophy, and folk tales were given within a single text in the form of epics. Then, in the period of Greek civilization, philosophy and science separated from mythology and folk tales. The religious dimension took on the form of poetry. But science, literature, and philosophy remained intertwined. This partnership of science and philosophy continued in the West until the end of the Renaissance, and among us continues to this day. Later, in the Age of Enlightenment — the 1700s — science too separated from philosophy and literature in Europe.

¹ This one verse can have three layers of interpretation. The first is the prohibition of sex for children. The second is prohibition of sex out of wedlock, and the third is the prohibition of seeking immortality merely by having offspring.

The scientific, biological explanation of this historical reality is this: in passing through the evolutionary process, humanity lived through a period of childhood. Because the upper cortex, which provides the capacity for abstract, did not work much in those ages, what Freud called the subconscious and Jung called the unconscious worked all the more — the reverse of the upper cortex. Consequently the mechanisms of perception operated more by concretizing abstract meanings and concepts and by discovery (clairvoyance), as in a dream. Indeed most religious and mystical knowledge comes to humanity along this dimension. Religions therefore narrate everything abstract — laws, principles, and other meanings — in concrete form. And they attend to concrete applications more than to abstract theories. Yes: in religions and in mythological periods it is the heart (the subconscious) rather than the reason (the upper cortex) that does most of the work.

Here, in summary, are five important examples of the thousands of pieces of knowledge that this five-branched Sumerian and Akkadian civilization left to humanity.

1 — The Identification of Immortal Abstract Beings

Sumer and Akkad called God, spiritual beings, and angels *the immortals*, as the expression of an abstract software. In their language, God was expressed by the word *immortal*. Because angels and spirits are also immortal, they called them gods as well. Although the sciences of physics and ontology did not yet exist, they had attained this conviction and this capacity for spiritual abstraction through their unconscious faculties. Because archaeologists do not know this, they translate as “god” words that mean “angel.” They take those two wise civilizations, possessed of many prophets, to be idolatrous. They say that, in anthropology, what is fundamental (i.e. original) is not monotheistic religions but idolatry.

2 — The Adam and Gilgamesh Archetype

After the Ice Age, people gathered around rivers such as the Euphrates, Tigris, and Nile, which were located in regions that warmed early, and as populations grew, their needs increased. From this emerged civilization and its sciences, beginning with thought, language, and writing. You may find this hard to believe, but the Sumerian and Akkadian civilizations were able to offer humanity, through these two concepts and archetypes (i.e. Adam and Gilgamesh), all the human behaviors and values—and scientific developments—that even modern people struggle to comprehend.

However, when people later lost their understanding of symbolic language, science and languages, which had once been blessings, turned into the poison of superstition. The first people to taste and swallow this poison were the Jews. By considering Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses to be their own direct ancestors, they have regarded themselves as superior to other peoples for the past 2,500 years. This misconception is the first and greatest of the five major misconceptions in humanity’s 12,000-year history.

Yes: neither anthropology nor paleontology nor archaeology nor religion nor history informs us of the existence of a first human, a first prophet, whose children lived in incest. And the sciences of evolution and biology eliminate this possibility altogether.

The second error is Greek sophistry. They said that there is no truth in existence or in life, and that if there is, we have no way of knowing it. And they still say it today.

The third error is that Europe mistook the Bible for a historical record and, when it failed to find its accounts reflected in history, discarded it as pure superstition. Consequently, all spiritual and abstract values were discarded as well. It is as though humanity had become fish left stranded without water.

The fourth error is that natural and social sciences — humanity's [meaning Adam's] greatest miracle — completely fell under the spell of materialism during the Enlightenment. It is the disappearance, in the true sense, of the natural dialectical structure.

The fifth error is that people, especially in our age, prefer to consume the concrete, quantity, and numerical abundance in place of meaning, art, modality, and quality.

Thus, Adam is not a historical person. He is the general name of fifty billion cultured human beings (*Homo sapiens*) — woman and man, child and elder. He is created from the elements of the earth. In his childhood he lives the life of paradise. Then, having eaten from the tree of sexual life, he is expelled from that paradise. This is what Adam means. Yet Adam is presented as a historical, concrete individual because the laws and conditions of humanity become concretized and appear in this form in mythological languages and religions. Indeed, this is how the prophets perceive humanity. But they also warn that these images are laws. Thus, humanity has misunderstood its first lesson, Adamhood, and needs to reread this entire chapter.

In sum: while Adam is the name — the genus-name — of all humanity, he is generally used as the expression of humanity's first civilized periods. Gilgamesh, meanwhile, is the expression of all humanity in every respect. Unfortunately most people take him too for mythological material without any meaning. Others take that magnificent sociological epic for history.

3 — The Noah and Flood Archetype

Along with the possibility that the many storms and great floods that followed the Ice Age left something like a flood archetype in humanity's collective subconscious, the existence of a physical flood inundating the whole world and all its landmasses, as narrated in the Torah, is not scientific. To accept such a flood as history would be a great scientific error.

That being so, the meaning of the Flood — both as a Sumerian and Akkadian epic and as the miraculous text of the Torah — is this: Noah is the expression of all the prophets of the first period who received revelation. In all three texts this Noah lived 950 (19×50) years. As is well known, religions are responsible for regulating morality and lawful conduct in human society. But sometimes immorality and corruption cover every place and every institution like a flood. One remedy alone remains: to build a ship (a human being); to fill it with — that is, to cultivate within it — all the dialectical pairs, and so to save the human line and civilization from annihilation. That the Sumerians and Akkadians could express this universal and highly detailed law in a few sentences like these, 5,000 and 4,000 years ago, is in itself one of humanity's cultural miracles.

In sum: this Noah and this Flood exist in every age, as archetype and as law. The Qur'an narrates the Islamic version of this period miraculously, as follows:

Verse 11:24: *“Yes, the likeness of the two parties is like that of the blind and deaf and of the seeing and hearing. Can these two ever be equal in life and in quality? Why then will you not understand and take the message!”*

Here we have the true perception of existence and life, the fully correct and balanced perception of religion, the wise and realistic path of philosophy and science, and a fruitful pedagogical method — all recounted in this one verse. So we may say: let the ears of those who take the Qur'an for a simple book be ringing. At this point the Qur'an moves, over twenty-five verses, into the story of Noah. There are nine figures and concepts here that call for interpretation:

1. The person of Noah
2. The notables of his people
3. The poor around him
4. The concept of the ship
5. The dialectical pairs loaded onto the ship
6. Noah's son, drowned in the flood
7. The mountain and the waves
8. The nature of the Flood itself
9. Noah's descent from the ship with peace

So we must first interpret and understand these nine figures and concepts, in order to know what the story means, and to know — together with the Prophet Muhammad — the story's relation to Islam and to Islam's destiny.

1. Noah, as a concept, means the first prophet and the possessor of the first heavenly religion. His own period is very primitive. Class distinction is only just emerging. Trade and exchange are conducted not with money but by barter. The lesson to be drawn here is that Noah is Muhammad. Muhammad is the first prophet to come to Mecca and to the primitive, idolatrous Arabs.

This figure and his detailed story in this sura are in no way history. For a human being cannot live 950 years (29:14). And a wooden ship cannot hold five million living creatures. And the quantity of water on earth is not so great as to drown everything and every creature on land, as narrated. Furthermore, as this sura itself states, nations and communities came into being apart from Noah and those on the ship. So this story recounts, one hundred percent, the destiny of Islam. It reports in particular what took place in Mecca during the Age of Bliss.

2. As the story recounts, Noah's people are not all held responsible. Only their leading notables are responsible. And indeed in Mecca it was only these notables who opposed Islam and the Qur'an.

3. The poor people whom the Meccans—that is, the people of Noah—regarded as simple-minded were the Companions. In reality, they were brilliant and wealthy. The leading polytheists saw them as an obstacle to themselves and did not want to be on the same level as them. At one point, however, the polytheists seemed willing to believe, apparently for the sake of social status.

4. In this story, building the ship means cultivating human beings. Otherwise there is neither proof of a wooden ship nor a universal flood in history. Note that the numerical value for the word *al-fulk* (the ship) is 161. The word *insān* (human being) also equals 161. Yes, the Companions whom Muhammad raised were saviors in the full sense. And yet at first the Meccans look down on them. They mocked Muhammad for giving them his attention. (11:38).

5. Yes, these Companions became geniuses great enough to govern the civilized world. Because he had placed living, dialectical pairs of concepts into the hearts, consciousness, and minds of those Companions, each of whom was like a ship, set them in dynamic tension, and enabled them to produce results through balance and fairness.

6. Noah's son (Islam's son) who did not board the ship means, here, the sciences that go one-sidedly and consider only the material values. Indeed, at the beginning of the twentieth century a great scholar labored for seventy years for the reconciliation of religion and science, saying: the religion of Islam is the father, the sciences are his son; father and son must not be in conflict.

7. In this story, the mountain either represents the state or God [Allah]. The waves represent "His Names," each of which corresponds to a branch of knowledge. Thus, the fact that the ship sails through the sea of social life and is brought into harbor is also by the Name of Allah; this expression points to this scientific dimension.

8. The Flood does not mean the opposing forces conflicting with one another, becoming balanced, and evolving toward infinite beauty. Rather, it means that the two opposing forces join hands and drown something. Indeed, the success of existence and of life—especially social life—is for it to flow along the Muhammadan path: for all opposites to be balanced upon the straight path, and through this balance to produce beautiful, wondrous, miraculous fruits. However, societies sometimes lose their dialectical structure. They become completely oppressive and unbalanced. As a result, a destructive Flood befalls them and drowns them.

9. The name in Islam for the reality of these living dialectical opposites fully dancing with one another in scientific balance, and yielding beautiful fruit, is *salām* (peace). The words *salām* and *islām*, both in the dictionary and as concepts, mean the reconciliation, balancing, and fruition of all opposites. True knowledge, true life, and true abundance lie here.

"Then it was said: 'O Noah, disembark, with those who are with you, with balance and peace from Us (the Infinite), and with blessings. As for the other peoples, We will allow them to enjoy life for a while. But because they persist in imbalance and injustice, a painful punishment will ultimately befall them.'" (11:48)

Yes: neither anthropology nor paleontology nor archaeology nor religion nor history informs us of the existence of a prophet who lived 950 years. On the contrary, alongside the fact of evolution, the sciences of biology and history eliminate this possibility altogether.

4 — The Abraham Archetype

Abraham is an Akkadian word. He comes after the simple religious period expressed by Noah (Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt). He too is in no way merely a historical figure. He refers to a period that held dominance for a long time in human history. So Abraham is the collective name of all the prophets who reconciled every extreme opposite in the crucible of *tawhīd*, made summer and winter into spring, and cast out every kind of fear, oppression, and imbalance. The Prophet Muhammad is the last of them. Naturally, since ninety percent of humanity and the history that exists today trace their origins to this sacred religious lineage, Abraham became a collective name, used in the sense of a compassionate father and the father of everyone. The fact that Jews and Arabs have mistaken this sacred meaning for a historical individual and regarded him as their own direct genetic ancestor is a significant misconception. It has led to extreme aristocracy and oppression.

Let us immediately emphasize that all people who come from the lineage of monotheism and live a balanced and lawful life are aristocrats. Any additional claim to aristocratic status has no meaning today. That belongs to the Middle Ages.

5 — The Moses Archetype

Just as Adam, Noah, and Abraham are not individual historical persons, Moses is not a historical person either. He is the archetype of the periods in which law, sacred legislation (*sharī'a*), and commerce function soundly. *Moses* is not a Coptic word, as some suppose; it is a Hebrew word. It means the river of life flowing cleanly — that is, the Arabic form of the word *mashy*, meaning to walk. For the Jews are only one of the five peoples that made up the Akkadians, among whom this archetype was formed. These five are the Arabs, the Hebrews, the Syriacs, the Arameans, and the Phoenicians. The theory that Moses must be a loanword from the Egyptian language simply because the Jews migrated to Egypt is highly questionable. Because it is far more plausible that the story of Moses was an archetype that already existed during the Akkadian period.

The five peoples that made up the Akkadians are close relatives. They are generally given the name Semitic. Their languages and alphabets document this kinship. Yes, even today, these five closely related languages and alphabets are about 60 percent similar to one another. Moreover, we may say that there are these five proofs that Moses is not a historical person:

- a) The Torah from beginning to end recounts the Moses archetype. That is, Moses does not appear in the Torah as a prophet to whom the first five books of the Torah were revealed, as the Jews claim. Naturally, all the prophets of humanity — including the prophets of the Jews — who established law and sacred legislation take the archetypal name of **Moses**.
- b) Nowhere does the Qur'an say that We gave the Torah to Moses. It always says that We gave him the Book (the law and the sacred legislation).
- c) Archaeology, genetics, and historical scholarship have found no evidence of a leader or prophet named Moses in either Egypt or Palestine during the period traditionally associated with him, around 1200–1400 BCE.
- d) Even if the Jews existed as an ethnic group during the Akkadian period, their emergence in the full sense as a distinct nation, economic community, and religious tradition began with the Prophet Ezra (Uzayr), who compiled the Torah as a religious scripture from the archives of the Akkadians. The Qur'an alludes to this by describing the Jews as being brought back to life through him after a hundred years of death.
- e) If the whole of the Torah with its 39 books and the passages of the Qur'an concerning the Jews were fully examined, it would be seen that they support these prior four points clearly.

An Interlude

We do not know historically where the people who clustered around the Euphrates and the Tigris after the Ice Age and formed the Sumerian city-states came from, nor what became of them after they were defeated by the Akkadian Empire. But we do know that the Akkadians came from the south, and where they scattered two thousand years later. Even so, this much stands as fact: the abstract concepts and sacred knowledge that formed among the Sumerians and Akkadians, described above, were lost after the Akkadians. Humanity entered a period of deep idolatry. The

Jewish nation, which remained outside this trend, did not become fully idolatrous; hence they took the name Children of Israel. *Israel* is the name of Jacob. Israel/Jacob means the white man, and means the prophet who overcomes the poverty, sickness, hunger, and destruction that God has established on this earth as natural law. His brother Esau is described as dark-skinned and hairy, that is, as wild. (The Torah, Genesis)

In this sense, and in bringing humanity's sacred cultural and religious heritage down to the present day in the form of the Torah through Ezra, humanity is indebted to the Jewish people in an immeasurable way.

But let them not misunderstand this and grow proud. For as the Torah itself recounts, this quality of the "Children of Israel" later passed to the Abbasids. Then to the Ottomans, and now to Europe (i.e. The West). Yes, today the West is the Children of Israel. Because they alone fully uphold and protect law and humanity, and provide comprehensive responses to natural disasters. The Torah truly is a great treasure — if it is known and correctly applied not as historical material but as sociological and ontological laws and archetypes.

C — The Ancient Greek Period

Now we pass to our third cross-section, ancient Greece. This ancient Greek period, one of the most important sections in the history of human science, has five basic characteristics:

- 1) They are the first to be freed from the mythological perception and literature that had lasted eight thousand years.*
- 2) They are the ones who, even if still mixed with mythology and philosophy, managed to a certain degree causality and scientific thought.*
- 3) It is these Greeks who knew, under the names of form and image, that reality of "software" whose nature is only fully known in our own age. They considered this **form** and **image** as true being and as the principal cause.*
- 4) As a result of this explosion of thought in Greece, thousands of philosophical and intellectual schools emerged, and Sophistry too began as an important intellectual movement. They claimed that there is no truth in existence or in life, and that even if there is, we have no way of knowing it. The Turkish word *safsata* ("fallacy" or "nonsense") is derived from the word *Sophist*.*
- 5) As a result of the above four reasons, ontology (the science of being) and epistemology (the acquisition of certain knowledge) developed greatly. The names of these two fundamental scientific disciplines in Islam are the concepts of 'irfān and taḥqīq.*

Two years ago I summarized this ancient Greek period as follows:

"The word *onto* means "being" in Greek. *Ontology* thus means the science of being. *On*, the word's original root, means structure and personhood. *Oncology*, aka the study of cancer, thus means the science of structural disorder. When this word was translated into Arabic in the second century AH, the translators had difficulty finding an equivalent in Arabic. They coined the word *wujūd*, in the sense of 'that which is found.' I say *coined*, because in Arabic there existed only the verb

wajada–yajidu (to find); there was no noun or verbal noun. Yet there were more suitable words than *wujūd: shay’* and *kawn*. *Shay’* means an object that takes shape by the divine will (*mashī’a*). *Kawn* means becoming. Moreover, the original meaning of *wujūd* was not an ordinary object that is found, but something lost and later found. Yes, once this word *wujūd* entered Arabic, *ījād* and *mawjūdāt* were derived from it as well. *Ījād* was taken to mean bringing into existence out of nothing. *Mawjūdāt* was used to mean beings that came into existence out of nothing. *Yet in the Qur’an there is no word that means “creation out of nothing”*. The word *khalq*, mistakenly translated in the Qur’an as creating out of nothing, means giving shape. And *ibdā’* means bringing into being beautifully.

“In any case, let us return to the matter at hand. For 40,000 to 50,000 years humanity has wondered about causality and about the existence that surrounds us. To the degree of its capacity it has also given names to it. Over the last 12,000 years it has attributed sanctity and other meanings to it as well. Because knowing and understanding existence, even if imperfectly, gives human beings a sense of peace. Through this act of knowing, the wildness and savagery within human beings are subdued. In the language of Sufism, this process of knowing is called ‘irfān. It is indispensable to humanity.

“In these last twelve thousand years, especially in Sumer, Akkad, Egypt, and Greece, existence was known and voiced in mythological expressions. That is, because the upper cortex and reason did not work much in them, their deep unconscious saw existence as archetype, or angel, or spirit (call it what you will) formed as a result of the software hidden within it; for them everything was alive. It is true that owing to their primitive structure they sometimes expressed material causalities absurdly, but they possessed a different perception of existence and of life and death. For instance, among them there was no individual lifespan; there was the lifespan of a state or a nation — and it is in that period that we find lifespans such as a thousand or 950 years.

Then, in the 7th century BCE, because of prosperity and freedom; thought, the higher cortex, and reason in the Greek city-states broke away from their ancient mythological perception and its literature. Philosophy and systematic thought began. Thales (born c. 623 BCE) made some of the first scientific discoveries and predicted a solar eclipse.

In the 5th century BCE, Parmenides came along and reflected on existence from a broad perspective. According to him, existence was one, eternal, and everlasting. These visible forms and appearances were temporary. Although some scholars say that Parmenides believed matter to be eternal, this is not what he meant. He regarded matter as temporary. What he was referring to was a vast and infinite power.

According to Parmenides, this fundamental, singular, and formless existence was also motionless. Although everyone knows Plato as the originator of the concepts of epistemology and doxa, Parmenides articulated these two concepts before him. Epistemology means the study of certain, complete, and comprehensive knowledge. Doxa, on the other hand, means conjecture or opinion—that is, knowledge derived from outward appearance.

“Parmenides says that he obtained certain knowledge, that he met with God, and that he expressed this spiritual contact in poetry. (For these last matters you may consult Derya Önder, in *DergiPark*.)

“Heraclitus (535–475), a contemporary of Parmenides, likewise examined existence across a wide range, but unlike Parmenides he saw existence not as fixed but as a continually flowing river. For this reason he said that a person does not live the same life twice, that one does not bathe twice in the same river.

“In Greece, despite serious religious philosophers such as Parmenides and Heraclitus, the widespread philosophical currents among them had given birth to sophistry. A sophist is a philosopher, but one who says there is no reality whatsoever in existence or in life. Taftāzānī divides them into three. The *Lā-adriyya*: those who say that even if reality exists, I cannot know it. The *‘Indiyya*: those who say that even if reality exists, it does not exist for me. And the *‘Inādiyya*: those who say there is never any reality at all. While this current had at one point enveloped Greece, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle uprooted it. Socrates proved the existence of reality through faith and morality; Plato through the spiritual realm; and Aristotle through the sciences he discovered, formal logic above all. For 2,500 years the world has been living off this inheritance. Now, from among these concepts, we take the Logos here from a well-known encyclopedia:

“**Logos**, in Greek, means understanding through *nous* (the inner faculty of perception or intellect), which is the opposite of *pathos*, meaning the apprehension of things through the external senses.

“The word *logos*, which stands at the foundation of Heraclitus’s understanding of being and cannot be translated into another language, is a multifaceted term meaning: word, thought, reason, proportion, measure.

“In the fifth century BCE Heraclitus defined the logos as the rational principle that constitutes and sets in motion the universe as an orderly whole. Accordingly, the logos was both the principle of order underlying and shaping all formations, and the principle of knowledge decisive in grasping the universe as such an order; the universe was grasped according to determinate proportions, that is, according to law-like connections standing in reciprocal relation. In this sense the logos is above all the opposite of chance and randomness.

“The meaning Heraclitus gives is different from *nous*, the chief concept of Anaxagoras. The *nous* exists as an orderer prior to the universe and comes to the universe from outside; the logos, by contrast, is together with the universe and is within universal becoming.

“Heraclitus says that all things pass away; nothing in the universe is permanent. This continual universal change is ordered by the logos. It occurs according to the law of the logos.

“According to Plato, knowledge consists of Forms that are grounded in the Logos; these Forms are both thoughts and the infinite objects of those thoughts, independent of any particular principle. This is why there is an identity between thought and object: thought corresponds to its object because both are grounded in the Forms.

“For Aristotle, the logos is the sum of reason, communication, and action. The disclosure of reason takes place through these three. If these are absent in a person, reason too is absent in him. The questions of how and why things come to be as they are, and how and why things do not remain as they are, are important for Aristotle, and the answers

to these questions are present in our reason. And it is the logos that makes our reason possible. We disclose reason with the help of the logos.

“*Logos* is derived from the ancient Greek word *legein*. Heraclitus, the philosopher of Ephesus, who first used the word in Greek to denote a philosophical concept, expresses the term as the unchanging law governing all things (*logos*: in today’s language means software) or laws (*logoi*), as the universal laws that constitute and set in motion the universe as an ordered whole and secure its order, as the universal necessity that is the foundation of the universe.” (Wikipedia)

“To understand this quoted passage more fully, these seven notes need to be read closely.

“1) *Pathos* means the outward, external aspect of things. The word *pathology* comes from here. For according to the Greeks, true perfection lies in the logos and in the inner sense. That is, for them the outer and the outer senses are diseased. Indeed Bediüzzaman too says in the *Mathnawi* that the inner aspect of things is far more perfect than their outer aspect.

“2) Although Heraclitus was the first to think the concept of the logos, the one who truly systematized it, used it in the sense of the spirit of things, and expanded the field of the logos between objects is Aristotle. For 2,300 years humanity has not surpassed him.

“3) *Nous* means the abstract, necessary spirit and reason whose existence is from itself. So far as I know, the etymology of this word is *kernel*. Yes, true being is abstract, and this abstract dimension is what fertilizes the other forms of concrete existence.

“4) If you want to understand Logos in a way that matches the scope and conceptual framework of our age, look particularly at the realm of software—especially DNA and the human brain, which contain virtually infinite capacities for information processing. You will come to the conclusion that humanity truly inherited this banner of honor from Aristotle.

“5) Heidegger says that, contrary to what some people think, Logos and reason do not consist solely of the intellect and the higher cortex. The true Logos and reason reside in the human unconscious. And the convictions (*Doxa*) that human beings form through this unconscious do not always represent conjectural knowledge. Sometimes, they too constitute certain knowledge. Unfortunately, some people confuse paradox with *Doxa*. A paradox means going beyond knowledge held as an opinion—in other words, a contradiction. (Derya Önder)

“6) The translators of the ancient Greek books rendered this concept of the logos as *reason* (‘*aql*). But this too was mistaken, like the word *wujūd* they chose for the concept of “being”. For the correct equivalent of the logos is *logic* and *mentality*. Yes: the universe has a logic, which religion calls revelation. God, by triggering the system, transmits that logic into the hearts (the unconscious) of the prophets. Through those revelations the individual, the family, and society become alive and logical. And sometimes God sends down that logos and logic as a living human being as well — as in the case of Jesus. (See Qur’an 4:171.)”

D — The Golden Age of Islam (In Summary)

The Golden Age of Islam, or the Islamic Renaissance, denotes the period from the eighth century to the fourteenth in which most of the Islamic world stood at its peak scientifically, economically, and culturally.

The famous elephant clock built by al-Jazarī, the engineer of Cizre, was one of the most advanced technological devices of the period. A drawing showing the human digestive system, found in Ibn Sīnā's work *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb*, is another important example.

It is generally accepted that this period, which began in the Abbasid era with the founding by Hārūn al-Rashīd of a center of science in Baghdad called the Bayt al-Ḥikma (House of Wisdom), came to an end with the Mongols' siege and sack of Baghdad in 1258 and the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Some sources, however, state that this period lasted until the fourteenth century, others until the fifteenth, and still others until the sixteenth. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Khwārizmī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn al-Haytham, al-Bīrūnī, Ibn Rushd, Ismā'īl b. al-Razzāz al-Jazarī, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Ibn Khaldūn, Ulugh Beg, and many other famous Islamic scholars carried out their work in this period.

The truth of the matter is that after the tenth century there was no scientific development; they contented themselves with living off the old scientific inheritance. Yes, although the Qur'an's more than a thousand exhortations to dialectical thinking, reason, knowledge, and contemplation, together with the translated Greek heritage, enabled the Islamic world to experience periods of Renaissance in five to ten centers, particularly Baghdad, Andalusia, and Samarkand, it never truly attained enlightenment. Even today, it is not truly enlightened. In the genuine sense, the sciences do not exist; there is only memorization and imitation. Even the ideas of the few scientists who did emerge are not fully understood; they are approached merely through memorization and imitation. The Nour Community in Turkey and Jamaat-e-Islami of the Indian subcontinent are typical examples of this. (*Muhakemat*, Eighth Introduction.)

In the golden age of Islam, scientific work was carried out across a vast geographical area stretching from India to Andalusia, encompassing fields such as medicine, philosophy, theology, mathematics, astronomy, and Islamic law. During this era, knowledge and ideas produced by earlier civilizations, particularly Ancient Greece, were transmitted to the Islamic world through translations and, via Andalusia, onward to Europe. Through their wars and other interactions with the Chinese, the Arabs learned the techniques of papermaking. The use of paper instead of parchment made it much easier to produce and disseminate written works. In mathematics, the adoption of the zero and the decimal numeral system from India increased interest in and access to mathematics, making arithmetic something that even ordinary people could understand and use in daily life. Alongside mathematics and arithmetic, trigonometry also developed. Observatories were built, while the sciences of optics and chemistry advanced.

Despite this Golden Age of Islam, the Islamic world never truly attained enlightenment, for the following five reasons:

- a) The Middle Ages, which began with the Church mistaking the Bible for history and banning the intellectual heritage of Ancient Greece despite Jesus and the Gospels, did not provide a suitable environment for enlightenment.
- b) The Islamic world took that Greek inheritance not as science and philosophy but as a religious inheritance. Indeed we see the traces of that Greek inheritance very clearly in the Islamic sciences and schools of thought, above all in *kalām* and cosmogony.
- c) The Mongol invasion reduced everything to zero. Not only science and religion, but even the possibility of ordinary life itself disappeared from the Islamic world. Thankfully, some Sufi leaders, such as Rumi, managed to reverse this grim fate.
- d) Islamic scholars, especially Avicenna and Al-Farabi, made the Islamic religious texts conform to Greek philosophy.
- e) Naturally, the positive natural sciences that developed after the European Enlightenment came to be perceived, over the last two hundred years, as the opposite and the enemy of Islam. Even today seventy percent of the religious community hold this perception. They cannot achieve a peace between religion and science. Humanity therefore lives a dreadful schizophrenia.

E — The Enlightenment (Its Origins, Its Present State, and Its Future)

Both the universe, the living realm known as the biosphere, and humanity's capacity to learn abstract concepts have a dual foundation, which Hegel (1770–1831) called the transcendental dialectic. This dual foundation is filled by such elements as positive and negative, hot and cold, abstract and concrete, good and evil, feminine and masculine, poor and rich, beautiful and ugly, reason and heart, and faith and science. This dual structure is also an indispensable reality of the very structure of religions themselves. In this regard:

The Qur'an says that Islam is the same as the Abrahamic tradition, which dates back 4,000–4,500 years. (22:78) The name of this religion is Islam. Islam means reconciling and harmonizing all contradictory opposites by bringing them into balance, and turning the winter and summer of life into spring.

Christianity's emphasis on spirituality and Judaism's emphasis on the state and religious law were deviations from this balanced path, arising from historical necessity. Otherwise, they too were originally Islam. (3:84) Indeed, Judaism was the union of Moses and Aaron—that is, the union of religious law (*sharia*) and spiritual authority (*wilayah*). Christianity, on the other hand, was the union of the Torah and the Gospel—that is, the union of reason and the heart, and of science and spirituality. (Matthew 5) In the Gospel, Jesus also speaks of the sciences as a light that accompanies you, alongside the Holy Spirit. (John 12:36)

Returning to the beginning, humanity maintained a balance between *mythos* and *logos* for eight thousand years. However, around the 700s BCE, prosperity and freedom caused *logos* and philosophy to come to the forefront. Hundreds of philosophical schools sprang up like mushrooms. These philosophies put forward so many different and conflicting views that the Sophist movement, which claimed that there was no truth or meaning in existence or in life, and that even if there were, we could not know it, came to dominate the intellectual scene.

Then Socrates, through the principle of morality; Plato, through the principles of Forms and spirituality; and Aristotle, through the power of logic and the sciences, challenged and weakened the Sophist movement. Yet apparently this three-pronged intellectual tradition regained strength around 325 CE, because Christianity, after gaining control of the state, banned all philosophy. Everything then turned into mere memorization and imitation.

Unfortunately, when the sacred dialectic in the human world was lost in this way, the Byzantine Empire grew steadily weaker. The European states that emerged after the Roman state could not put in a good performance either. Thank God the Muslims had translated Greece's philosophical and scientific inheritance, resting on logos and mythos, into Arabic in the ninth century. This inheritance passed to the West in the eleventh and twelfth centuries by way of Andalusia and Sicily. Then, with the conquest of Istanbul, Greece's own scientific classics, sitting in storage, were also smuggled away to the West; and in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries Europe experienced the Renaissance, which means the dawning of the light of the sciences.

Thanks to Copernicus (1473–1543), Europe became acquainted in the sixteenth century with a cosmology centered not on the earth but on the sun. That is, the sun was not revolving around the earth; the earth was revolving around the sun. Although Copernicus had learned this much earlier, for fear of the Church he could only disclose it on his deathbed. This reality was later fully clarified thanks to Galileo (1564–1642).

After this, in the eighteenth century, alongside Newton's (1642–1727) extraordinary discoveries in physics and the skepticism of David Hume (1711–1776), who took experience as his basis, and together with the French Revolution of 1789, the fifty years of intensive, reason-centered scientific and philosophical work of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) made the eighteenth century the Age of Enlightenment in the world.

Therefore, despite some shortcomings, Kant is the father of today's free Europe. Philosophically speaking, his thought has not yet been fully transcended.

In Ottoman Turkish, Enlightenment was referred to as *Münevverlik*. This meant being able to explain existence through physics, chemistry, biology, and astronomy. Unfortunately, however, these sciences were still very primitive at the time. For instance, the atom was not known in the modern sense in which we understand it today. The cell had not yet been fully or thoroughly understood. Although some chemical reactions were known, chemistry had not yet been established as a scientific discipline. Therefore, even though Kant wrote about chemistry, he did not regard chemistry as an established science.

In summary, the Enlightenment is not a process that lasted merely one or two centuries. Humanity has been pursuing this path continuously for seven hundred years, yet it has not reached its destination. There is still much to learn. Indeed, near the end of his life, at the beginning of the 19th century, Immanuel Kant said that we are still at the beginning of the Enlightenment and that what we do not know is greater than what we know.

According to Kant, Enlightenment means that human beings, by taking reason and the sciences as their foundation and maturing intellectually, do not simply look to their parents, religious authorities, or anyone else for guidance and follow them blindly. It means relying not on myths and superstitions, but on scientific and rational evidence. Yes, this was Kant's definition of Enlightenment. But his primary aim was to silence the Bible, consisting of 66 books, and the Churches that represented it. In fact, this effort to silence and marginalize the Church had begun much earlier and had already been seventy percent accomplished by the end of the Renaissance. This was especially so after Copernicus established the heliocentric model.

Yes, Kant was not wrong, because it was the Church that had condemned Europe to darkness and hunger. Therefore, the intellectuals were, to a considerable extent, justified in this regard.

The Level of Enlightenment of Kant, the Father of the European Enlightenment; or, the Present State of Enlightenment

1. Kant did not regard the enlightenment of the eighteenth century as sufficient. With his remarkable intelligence he began writing at the age of twenty-three. But this early work was on the sciences, and on the natural sciences in particular. With these he was trying to lay a foundation for enlightenment. He has some twenty to thirty books and essays. Then, in his fifty-seventh year, the age of his maturity, he wrote the *Critique of Pure Reason*. With it he was criticizing German rationalism — that is, the German reason. A few years later he wrote the *Critique of Practical Reason*. With that he was voicing the insufficiency of English empiricism. After that he wrote the *Critique of Judgment*. With that he was saying that the Church's judgments concerning God, the spirit, and teleological purposes could not be as certain as they needed to be. So it is these three fundamental critiques that truly represent Kant and his philosophy. With the first book, he answers the question, "What can we know through our reason?" With the second book, he addresses the possibility that empiricism may be insufficient—in other words, "What can we do? What can we put into practice?" With the third book, he answers the question, "What may we hope for?", particularly with regard to God, the soul, and meaning.

At the foundation of Kant's system is the doctrine of **transcendental idealism**, which emphasizes the distinction between things we can experience (the natural, observable world) and things we cannot experience (supersensible entities such as God and the soul). Kant argued that we can have knowledge only of things that are accessible to experience.

Accordingly, in answering the question "**What can I know?**", Kant says that we can know the natural, observable world, but that we cannot answer many of the deepest questions of metaphysics. (*Critique of Pure Reason*)

Kant's ethics is organized around the concept of the "**categorical imperative**," a universal ethical principle stating that a person should always respect the humanity in others and act only according to rules that could be universally applicable. Kant argued that the moral law is a fact of reason and that, consequently, all rational beings are subject to the same moral law. Therefore, in answering the question "**What should I do?**", Kant says that we should act rationally in accordance with a universal moral law. (*Critique of Practical Reason*)

Kant also argued that his ethical theory requires belief in **free will, God, and the immortality of the soul**. Although we cannot have *knowledge* of these things, reflection on the moral law leads to a justified belief in them, amounting to a reasonable rational faith. Thus, in answer to the question

“What may I hope for?”, Kant says that we may hope that our souls are immortal and that God truly exists as the one who orders the world according to principles of justice. (*Critique of Judgment*)

The Summit the Enlightenment Must Reach

1. In Kant’s sixty-year intellectual and philosophical career, his most important discovery, in his own view, was this: human beings can know only **phenomena**, the observable aspects of things and objects. He argued that we can never know their true nature or what they are in themselves, which he called the **noumenon**. He regarded this discovery and distinction as being as significant as Copernicus’s discovery of the heliocentric universe. Accordingly, the noumenal realities of God, the soul, and the essences of things could never be known fully and clearly.

However, a century after Kant, developments in physics—particularly quantum physics—as well as discoveries concerning the structure of the atom, the details of the cell, and the four-dimensional software that is fundamental to the universe, refuted his claim. They demonstrated that beings can be known in terms of both their phenomenal and noumenal dimensions. Kant himself had said that knowledge is a purely abstract entity, but he was unable to provide this idea with a concrete foundation.

Yes, once the underlying software is understood, the soul, God, reason, and the entirety of multi-dimensional laws will also have been understood. This reality has not yet entered humanity’s epistemological repertoire. But in time, it will, through the power of integral mathematics, and humanity will have attained complete enlightenment.

Indeed, because David Hume did not know about four-dimensional software, he rejected what was then understood simply as two-dimensional causality, and this led Kant away from many metaphysical insights. However, if we approach reality through integral mathematics and take four-dimensional causal relationships into account, it will become very clear that causes are the screws and gears of existence and life—of cybernetic and holographic interaction.

For some Muslims to deny causality on the basis of this nihilistic and skeptical David Hume, and then attribute such a position to Islam, is a complete intellectual impoverishment. For Allah carries out all His works through causes, which are subordinate agencies, foremost among them spiritual and natural angels and human beings. And the sciences—the unique miracle of humankind—consist precisely in discovering these causal relationships.

Indeed, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi says that although the human mind is individually limited, the sciences—which constitute the senses of the human species—reveal truth and reality. However, in the time of David Hume (1711–1776) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), the sciences were still in their infancy. Therefore, rather than relying on the sciences, they could engage only in philosophy based on intellectual reasoning. Indeed, the distinguished English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626) likewise did not produce any specific scientific discoveries or scientific subject matter; he merely developed the methodology of science.

2. Although Kant himself accepted that human beings are the most perfect of all creatures, he argued that humans perceive objects through a simple sensory faculty—electrical impulses—just as a snake perceives things through heat and a bat through sound. He maintained that, in this

process of perception, the human mind and intellect perceive reality through “glasses” and “gloves” such as time and space, which are not actually realities in themselves.

However, time showed that human perception is not so primitive. The culmination of the sciences established across every field has demonstrated that human perception operates at an extraordinarily high level, approaching perfection. Time and space, too, are not merely pre-existing “gloves” and “glasses,” but two fundamental properties of matter that can transform into one another. A century after Kant, Einstein demonstrated this both physically and astronomically, making it evident even to the eye.

Furthermore, Kant’s emphasis on reason, duty, and moral imperative, his failure to account for the impulses and expectations of ordinary people who lack abstract perception, his recognition of the central role of the human mind in perception, and his relegation of the noumenal aspects of existence entirely beyond the realm of perception and knowledge ultimately led him to a partial understanding—one that excluded the universal dialectical structure of reality.

3. As a result of both Aristotelian philosophy and the Church’s theistic conception of God, God and the universe, spirit and body, essence and identity—or, in Kant’s terminology, noumenon and phenomenon—were regarded as separate in German Idealism. However, Spinoza (1632–1677) had written a century earlier that they were one and interwoven. Yet this conception of unity and interconnectedness was considered a grave offense in Germany at the time. Moreover, since the sciences were only beginning to develop, they did not support such a view. Consequently, those who held such ideas were not recognized as scientists and were expelled from universities.

Nevertheless, as humanity advances in ontology, comes to understand the unity of the abstract and the concrete, and sees the dominance of software everywhere and in every field, it will become clear that such a conception of unity is more scientific. As artificial intelligence comes to imitate the universe’s four-dimensional software, this holistic understanding will increasingly be recognized as the basis of genuine enlightenment. Thus, because such a unity is not apparent in Kant’s philosophy, we can no longer regard his philosophy and level of science as constituting true enlightenment.

Indeed, Hegel’s (1770–1831) highly detailed and multidimensional thesis centered on Spirit, which came after Kant, is itself an expression of this profound four-dimensional software, even though its true nature was not yet understood. It reflects a view of existence, life, and history as living and imbued with spirit.

F — Science and the Philosophy of Science in Our Own Day

It is certainly promising to see over the past fifty years the recognition that existence is infinite, that nothingness does not exist, that systems of existence—especially biological systems—are governed by software, and that the fundamental reality is not the atoms that constitute matter but rather the information and conscious interconnectedness embedded within systems and organisms. Yet the fact that the natural sciences are still interpreted through the lens of materialism and a one-sided perspective shows that true enlightenment has not yet been fully achieved in our time.

Yes, the world is shrouded in a great deal of fog. Neither believers in the West nor those in the East are able to say that existence and life are meaningful, blessed, and beautiful. A profound crisis of meaning is taking place. Suicide, drugs, wastefulness, and violence are increasingly regarded as the only ways out. Thus, above all, worthlessness and nihilism, along with atheism, agnosticism, hedonism, and destructive anarchism, continually confront us and block our path. Indeed, individuals are unhappy, while families and societies are broken and fragmented.

As a remedy for this contemporary swamp and affliction, this brother of yours proposes these five medicines:

1. Humanity must return to the old natural dialectical philosophy — the dialectic of matter and meaning, spirit and body, abstract and concrete, finite and infinite above all. It must abandon the materialist dialectic. In the East humanity tried to apply this philosophy with force, but because it was not natural it failed.

2. The Western world must abandon the thesis that the Bible is history. It must know it as a compendium of infinite archetypes and abstract laws and use it to inject meaning to existence and life through its miraculous knowledge. Although Jesus is a historical personage, the Gospels recount not this aspect of him but his aspect as Word and archetype. Carl Jung perceived this very well.

Yes, if the Bible is read hermeneutically, as archetypes and abstract laws, it will be seen very clearly that not one of its verses contradicts the sciences. My five books bear witness to this.

3. Humanity must abandon its medieval understanding of religion and science. It must leave those conceptions behind and develop—and live by—a new understanding and a new philosophy suited to our age. The advancement of the sciences to their highest level and the universality of the religious scriptures can serve as two fundamental pillars for building such a philosophy.

4. The traditional understanding of religion and science inherited from the past is in conflict on ten thousand issues. Every government and every religious community should establish important institutions to help bring about reconciliation between the two. In fact, if the proper interpretation were understood, there would be no conflict at all. You have seen five or ten examples of this in this article.

5. Religions have their ordinary historical laws. And they have laws above the laws, such as morality and spirituality. For humanity's prosperity and happiness, and for it to live a scientific age, it must leave the historical laws to history, accept science as it would a religion, and adorn it with spirituality and morality.

The Gospels fully support this approach. The Torah and the Qur'an likewise keep this path open as a more beneficial alternative.

Indeed, only through these five methods can humanity free itself from the devil of fear and anxiety. It can sleep peacefully in this world and in the metaphysical realm. It can preserve the soul—the software of its essential being—from every form of destruction. The sciences can have genuine meaning only in this sense.

Peace be upon existence and life, which are infinite and nothing but blessings and beauty.

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Bahaeddin Sağlam