

## *Winning or Losing the Spiritual Test*

I had a thoughtful and hardworking spiritual brother who was a literature teacher. He was religious, but prayer felt burdensome to him. Sometimes he would embark on a quest and read Sartre. "I'm going abroad; I will serve the noble cause of Fethullah Hoca Efendi," he would say. Then, as the conflict between Erdogan and Fethullah intensified and millions were either imprisoned or condemned to hunger, he said to me, "Teacher, something is wrong here. If Allah existed, He would definitely help Fethullah." He had not fully understood that the world was created for a test. Despite my deep affection for him, he distanced himself from me for a long time. When he read my responses to Dücane in June 2023, he said, "Teacher, Dücane Cündioğlu is right." I replied, "I guess you haven't read the articles, otherwise you wouldn't say that." He said, "You see those pieces of information because you believe in Allah; I don't believe, so I can't see the information you derive from the Qur'an." It is for this reason that I felt the need to write this short article under this title. It goes like this:

The word "imtihan" means to melt elements like gold and silver in fire to separate them from ash and soil. The word "mihnet" derived from this root means the suffering and torment people endure with the fire of pain and adversity. The idiomatic meaning of "imtihan" has two stages:

1) The emergence of pure existence from the struggle between opposites in the dialectical structure of the universe through a long process of evolution. The Qur'an familiarizes us with real dialectics and knowledge through comparisons such as hot-cold, seeing-blind, salty-sweet, heaven-hell, night-day, darkness-light. 2) As the pinnacle of this first stage, the test of the realm of humanity takes place with thousands of testing factors, as if every individual develops or loses as much as a universe. In both stages, Allah's purpose in creation is to attain infinite meanings, perfections, and beauties. The name of this test in the Qur'an is "iptilad." In other words, a person is a seed, a grain, and with love and tribulations, they either sprout and gain infinity or decay. Winning the test in the Qur'an is called "fevz," which means increasing existence. Losing, on the other hand, is called "haybet," which means experiencing disappointment. Because infinity, which is the goal for humans, can only be realized and understood through imagination. (Surah Al-Hashr and Surah Ash-Shams).

Yes, as a result of this test, human beings, with their imagination and all their emotions, desire infinity and eternity, and they either become the perfect human being known as the "insan-ı kâmil" or remain as ordinary animals, overcoming nonexistence and decay. Let's remind ourselves: Absolute nonexistence does not exist.

If a person does not believe in eternity, they feel as if they are constantly being executed. If they believe but fail to fulfill the requirements, they are imprisoned underground. In other words, they cannot ascend to the stars. The explorers (those whose imagination is open) see this after death. During the Sumerian and Akkadian periods, people's upper cortices did not work much, and consequently, their unconscious senses worked more. They said that the soul either goes to the stars or to Hades (underground imprisonment).

I have found five reasons for winning the test: 1) Thinking in a way that overcomes risks; 2) Contemplation and reflection; 3) Not showing arrogance; 4) Since our era is the era of science, acquiring a foundation of language, science, and freedom; 5) Understanding the wisdom of evil and calamities by seeing the infinity of existence and life, and living accordingly. I learned the first three from the Qur'an and the last two from the school of life.

1. **Here, the primary key to winning the test is intellect.** The Qur'an mentions intellect a total of forty times. We will only include five verses here because prolonging speech is not the work of intellect. Intellect, etymologically, means "to make a decision in a way that overcomes risks and sees ahead" So, intellect is not a substance in the brain. It is making conscious decisions in conjunction with the upper cortex, in a conscious and risk-overcoming manner. Imam Ali's statement, "I worship as if He exists," is baseless. On the contrary, it contradicts his statement, "Even if the veil of the unseen (metaphysical realm) were lifted, my faith would not increase." Here are the five verses I selected regarding intelligent action:

- a) "O Jews, although you are people of the Book, how can you enjoin righteousness upon others while you forget yourselves? Do you not understand? (You fail to see the contradiction in this and its consequences in the Hereafter)" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 44)

- b) "We relate to you, [O Muhammad], the best of stories in what We have revealed to you of this Qur'an although you were, before it, among the unaware." (Surah Yusuf, 3)

Countless messages can be derived from the story of Yusuf, but the most important one is that existence and life are not meaningless and that goodness ultimately prevails. One of the most significant reasons for losing the test is falling into the pit of envy, like Joseph's brothers, due to narrow-mindedness.

- c) "O Muhammad, before you, We sent many messengers to villages and towns for their test. Did they not travel through the earth and observe the fate of those who failed the test (in a material sense)? And so, let them understand that the real gain lies in the abstract abode of the hereafter (from a spiritual perspective). So, will you not comprehend the value of understanding this test and its underlying reasons, both abstract and concrete?" (Surah Yusuf, 109)

- d) "The universe is created like coded files, like rosebuds; it is infinite and the concrete existence of Allah... Thus, no living being dies without Allah's permission. Allah inflicts a severe punishment upon those who fail to comprehend this infinite existence and mathematical triggering." (Surah Yunus, 100)

Here, we have been led to this interpretation because two sentences in the verse seem to have no apparent connection. Yes, those who fail to understand infinity, especially the infinity of Allah, are considered idolaters.

The terms "rics" and "ricz" in the verse refer to material and spiritual filth. In another part of the Qur'an, it is mentioned as "azaber-riczil-elim," which means a miserable and filthy punishment (34/5). The use of the phrase "azap kılar" (inflicts punishment) instead of "azap indirir" (inflicts punishment) emphasizes that those idolaters are purely filthy.

e) "And if you asked them, 'Who sends down water from the sky and gives life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness?' they would surely say, 'Allah.' Say, 'Praise to Allah'; but most of them do not use reason." (Surah Al-Ankabut, 63)

There are five points in this verse. a) Making the world and the atmosphere suitable for life within the universe requires infinite knowledge and power. b) Because of this infinity, people, even in the form of Deism, are forced to accept a God. c) The word "Praise" in the verse denotes infinite blessings and true maturity, encompassing the meaning of infinity that these blessings require. d) The verse, figuratively, states that Revelation is a spiritual water that comes from the heavens (metaphysical realm). Life is revived by it, but many fail to overcome the risks of the test and lose. e) The evidence for this is that the letters in the first sentence of the verse add up to 57 (19\*3). In the Qur'an, it is observed that the names Qur'an and Rahman, which represent concrete existence and indicate the nature of revelation, appear 57 times. The total number of letters in the verse is 83. This refers to the spiritual life promised in Surah Al-Qadr for eighty-three years. The number of the verse also indicates that the physical age of Prophet Muhammad was a living revelation.

2. **The second reason for winning the test is deep thought or profound contemplation.** The difference between contemplation and intellect: Intellect starts from the simple, the cause, and the lower level and reaches the conclusion. On the other hand, contemplation starts from the top and the result and reaches the lower-level cause. Etymologically, contemplation means "to dig the ground and extract the hidden core." This root appears again in the Qur'an, a total of forty times. We will only include five of them here.

a) "They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, 'In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people. But their sin is greater than their benefit.' And they ask you what they should spend. Say, 'The excess [beyond needs].' Thus, Allah makes clear to you the verses [of revelation] that you might give thought [to both worldly matters and the Hereafter]." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 219) To fully understand this verse, five points need to be noted:

1) Understanding the connection between verses within the Surah and the nuances of word choice is essential to grasp Allah's intent. Scholars like Zemahşeri, Cürçani, and Bediüzzaman insist on this. 2) The word "qul" is used only for matters that can be known through revelation or subsequent scientific research. 3) The term "ism" (with a lisp) in the verse means "an action that will inevitably result in significant harm." This can only be known through deep research and contemplation. 3) The Qur'an predicts that the harm caused by alcohol and gambling is greater, 1400 years in advance. Humanity only understood this in our era. 4) The term "ayet" means both ruling and miracle. In this context, it refers to a miracle. If you understand the connection between the five sentences of the verse, you will realize why it directs you to contemplation, research, and intelligent behavior. Yes, there is no legal ruling in this verse, no scholar gives a fatwa on alcohol and gambling. It is merely an invitation to contemplate and act intelligently.

Important Note: The design of the verse within the sentence's states that excessive wealth, like alcohol and gambling, intoxicates a person. And it says: If the majority of the Companions had understood this, they would not have lost their test by opposing Ali for the sake of accumulating excessive wealth. (Ali opposed the accumulation of excessive wealth in the hands of individuals and recommended distributing excessive wealth through charity-translators comment)

b) "Say, 'I do not tell you that I have the depositories [containing the provision] of Allah or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me.' Say, 'Is the blind equivalent to the seeing? Then will you not give thought [and contemplate the nature of this test and the triggers of revelation]?' (Surah Al-An'am, 50) Yes, the sciences have progressed greatly in this era. However, they have not yet substantiated, in a positive manner, the nature of dialectical conflict and the triggering of revelation. These are very profound topics.

c) "Have they not considered their companion, Muhammad? How could they not contemplate his sanity? He is not possessed; he is only a clear warner." (Surah Al-A'raf, 154)

d) "And your Lord inspired to the bee, 'Take for yourself among the mountains, houses, and among the trees and [in] that which they construct. Then eat from all the fruits and follow the ways of your Lord laid down [for you].' There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colors, in which there is healing for people. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who give thought." (Surah An-Nahl, 68-69)

There are numerous verses that encourage knowledge and research. Who said that the Qur'an is not a book of knowledge?

e) "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought." (Surah Ar-Rum, 21)

This means that there are many points that the sciences have not yet researched. The Qur'an commands its exploration 1400 years ago. Therefore, it is the abandonment of this book by Muslims and their immersion in conflicting narratives that has set them back. I am not even counting their empires because they were far behind in terms of knowledge.

3. **There are many reasons for losing the test instead of winning it. The Qur'an primarily highlights human arrogance, and there are forty verses on this topic.** We will only include five here. Yes, arrogance is a mathematical fallacy; it is when humans place their limited and mortal existence above the infinite Allah. Consequently, it leads to disappointment. Here are the five verses on this topic:

a) "Those who are arrogant and reject the truth without any evidence, I will turn away from My signs those who are **arrogant** upon the earth without right; and if they should see every sign, they will not believe in it. And if they see the way of consciousness and righteousness, they will not adopt it as a way; but if they see the way of error and deception, they will adopt it as a way. That is because they have denied our signs and they were heedless of them." (Surah Al-A'raf, 146)

b) "And [recall] when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture, [saying], 'Make it clear to the people and do not conceal it.' But they threw it away behind their backs and exchanged it for a small price. And how wretched is that which they purchased! They were not covering the truth with falsehood, but [in fact], they

knew it was the truth while they were covering it in defiance with their arrogance. So, the punishment of humiliation will cover them from where they did not expect. And they will be incurring loss in the hereafter." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 42-43)

c) "And among the people are those who purchase idle talk to mislead [others] from the way of Allah without knowledge and take it in ridicule. Those will have a humiliating punishment. And when our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, you recognize in the faces of those who disbelieve disapproval. They are almost on the verge of assaulting those who recite to them Our verses. Say, 'Then shall I inform you of [what is] worse than that? [It is] the Fire which Allah has promised those who disbelieve, and wretched is the destination.'" (Surah Luqman, 6-7)

d) "Your god is one God. You can only know the meaning of existence and life through Him. For without belief in Allah, there is no belief in eternity and the hereafter. Thus, these individuals' layers of consciousness do not recognize reality and existence. They turn, worshipping their own ego in arrogance, claiming to be the only truth. They are the ones who render existence and life absurd. But it does not matter because Allah knows everything, hidden and manifest. (And He will act accordingly.) Surely, Allah does not like the arrogant." (Surah An-Nahl, 22-23)

e) "So that You may forgive them, my Lord, I invited them to the right path every time, but they covered their ears with their fingers, wrapped their garments around their heads, and persisted in rejecting the right path. They exhibited great arrogance and haughtiness. As a consequence, the flood of insignificance overwhelmed them from all sides." (Surah Nuh, 7)

4. **The most obvious reason for losing the test is the structure of our era.** In the past, people would come to faith through concrete ethics or miracles, even if they didn't understand the scientific aspects of religious truths. This has been disrupted in our era. Furthermore, for the educated class, there are tens of thousands of issues where religion seems to contradict with science. Additionally, in this materialistic age, religion cannot transform into ethics. To make matters worse, ignorant teachers who have been left uninformed about religion narrate thousands of superstitions. Therefore, those who do not believe in our era are not held responsible. This is because our era is a period of spiritual crisis. The period of spiritual crisis refers to a period when the message of religion is not effective. To free oneself from this negative structure and to succeed in the test in order to deserve eternity, the educated class must possess the infrastructure: they should have knowledge of language, including grammar, hermeneutics, and semantics, to the extent of being able to write books; they should have knowledge of the sciences to understand the lectures in medical amphitheatres, and they should liberate their minds from the captivity of historical interpretations. Only in this case can the educated class be held responsible.

So what happens if people are not subjected to the test? They remain innocent like ordinary children. They do not become sages like a Buddha, a Tao, an Isa, a Musa, or a Muhammad. But they also do not experience suffering and torment. That is why I still love my literary friend who does not believe, just as before.

Indeed, those with a clear vision and those who return to life after death view 99% of humanity as happy. These views indicate that our era is not held responsible. Otherwise, those who opposed the prophets like Pharaohs and Abu Jahls would certainly suffer torment. Let us emphasize once again: The torment they suffer is not Nuclear or Carbon-Hydrogen fire. But the great suffering they endure is perceived as the torment of Hell in the hearts (imagination) of the Prophets. In Surah Taha, Allah says, "We show those torments as Hell in order to deter people," (Taha, 113). You can refer to our article on the concepts of Hell and Paradise.

5. The first and foremost reason for winning the test is to understand the nature of existence and life, particularly the concept of infinity. This is called Tasawwuf or irfan. Yes, it is only with this irfan that we can understand the problem of evil that causes one to lose the test, and only in this state can we turn the crisis of evil into an opportunity. I wrote the following passage two months ago as an introduction to my daughter's comprehensive study on the problem of evil. I am including it here as it is: [My esteemed daughter Zehra prepared this short but comprehensive study as her graduation thesis from Marmara Theology. I provided significant assistance with the quotations from the Risale-i Nur. This thesis is sufficient for solving this problem. However, we learned something new this year (2023): Evil, chaos, and the event called death are not actually evil. It is the manifestation of a concrete reality, the emergence of a new order, a trigger and command from the realm of commands for stepping into life. Chaos, which is called chaos, has a high degree of mathematics. Within this high mathematics, one possibility among infinite possibilities comes into existence, and it is always that possibility. We constantly observe this in ecology, in life, especially in DNA and brain order. In fact, Bediüzzaman has always conveyed this truth in his discussions on life, death, and resurrection. However, during his time, DNA and Cybernetic systems were not known, so this truth remained somewhat concealed. Otherwise, he (may his station be exalted) explained this law, which is one possibility among infinite possibilities, stating that there are no causes in creation, life, and resurrection, as a widespread law. Although there is no concrete causality here since the process is in the form of software, there is still a process. In a holy hadith, Allah says, "Do not curse the process; I am the process." Yes, this problem can only be solved within the duality of death-life, chaos-cosmos, world-hereafter, good-evil, and in its balance and within a long process.]

Finally, it seems appropriate to summarize here the five key words that will lead us to win the test. Here they are:

1. IMAN (FAITH): Faith means trusting oneself. Emniyet (safety) also comes from the same root. The measure of faith is to believe in an infinite God, to believe in an eternal life, and as a result, to engage in beneficial practices (Surah Al-Baqarah, 62). The test of these three is that the believer neither fears nor grieves.
2. RAHMET (MERCY): Mercy means the manifestation of something abstract into something concrete. In this sense, it means to create. Therefore, it is also used to denote success. When we say "May Allah have mercy," it means may He grant a concrete existence suitable to His spirit. Yes, one key to winning the test is the concrete aspect of faith, which is manifested in acts of worship.

3. ADALET (JUSTICE): Justice means balance. Whoever wants to pass the test must not deviate from balance because creation means balance. When Allah balances the positive and negative, existence emerges. Health means the balance of hundreds of hormones and organs in the human body. Islamic religion means finding the middle way, especially in terms of the balance between religion and science. Balance is the second great miracle of Prophet Muhammad after the Qur'an. The essence of religion, which is ethics, is the balancing of excess and deficiency.
4. KALITE (QUALITY): The expansion of the term "quality" refers to something being sound and aesthetic. Its explanation in the Qur'an is "itkân." To achieve this, one must be attentive and show interest in their work. This is referred to as "inâyet" and "itinâ" in Arabic. The essence of the word also comes from this root because the author shows great interest in the meaning.
5. CEHD (EFFORT): Effort and struggle mean endeavor and activeness. It never means killing someone. Indeed, one reason for losing the test is laziness and indolence. It is to postpone the work to another time or leave it to others.

**Another reason: The role of willpower and choice in winning the test:**

This is the most important key point in winning the test. Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, who pondered deeply on this matter, explains a concise statement containing six key concepts. Let me present it here and then provide an evaluation. It goes as follows:

"The innocent minority (sinless minority) shares in the calamity of the sinful majority. Because if the command (responsibility in the test) remains theoretical, choice (freedom to choose) remains. The secret of the command (essence of responsibility) manifests the wisdom of trial (purpose of calamity). If clarity and necessity were present in the command (responsibility in the test), it would become coercion (everyone would believe out of compulsion); the wisdom of the command (purpose of the test) would be lost. If an innocent person were to remain unharmed in the burning house of a sinner, the elevation of the spirits (which are like minerals) and their refinement, which are the essence of the mines of spirits, through the fulfillment of divine commands and the avoidance of prohibitions, like the diamond-like soul of 'Abu Bakr as-Siddiq,' and the transformation (charcoalization) of the soul of 'Abu Jahl' would not be possible." (Seeds of Truth-2)

Here are six key concepts: 1) The secret of the command (developing the essence of responsibility), 2) The test remaining theoretical (the test being theoretical rather than manifest), 3) Choice (freedom to choose), 4) The spirits being like minerals to be worked upon, 5) Worship and righteousness (avoidance of evil) for the development and purification of the spirits, which are the two aims of the test, 6) The differentiation of the spirits.

These six concepts enrich our minds wonderfully, but it seems that two of them do not conform to the Qur'an. This is because there is no good soul or evil soul; they all have equal opportunities after attaining sound reasoning. And as this article states, they either develop or deteriorate, just as the verses describe. In other words, Allah grants equal opportunities to everyone. If the questions are difficult, He provides the necessary strength and mental ability to the questioner. As the saying goes, "You get what you put in." Yes, Surah Al-A'raf, verses 172-173, states that after a healthy conception in the

womb, we make those descendants bear witness against their own souls. They all willingly acknowledge our Lordship (our developmental ownership) with a natural disposition. We make them bear witness in this way so that they cannot say, "We became polytheists because of our idolatrous fathers."

The Surah At-Tin (The Fig) also states from the beginning to the end: "We created all human beings in the best form. Except those who pass the test by believing and doing good deeds; others lose the test. They fall to the lowest of the low, meaning they become like dust."

## The Mentality of the Examination

I wrote a beautiful article about winning the exam (test of Allah). I drew a framework around the reality of the exam in six aspects. But I skipped the logic of winning the exam. However, this issue is described perhaps a thousand verses in the Qur'an. Here, I will only try to give the interpretation of five verses from the chapter of En'am. We will add this short article as an addition to that article:

**1) "Say in the language of revelation: *I am on a clear message from my Lord. And you denied it. It is not in my power to show the miracle you want urgently. Only Allah has the authority to send miracles. God is applying the laws of right on you with me. He is the best of those who solve problems.*" (6/57)**

A few analyzes:

a) The phrase "Say" at the beginning of the verse means "say in the language of revelation throughout the Qur'an". This word "Qul", which means Say, is a symbol of revelation. The statement that comes after it expresses that the knowledge can only be known through revelation. As a matter of fact, the first two sentences describe the 23-year state of the revelation from the very first years. And except for qul , which means say , the sum of the letters of those two sentences is 23.

b) The term "**Beyyine**" mentioned in the verse signifies clear knowledge, and it refers to a message and knowledge so clear that it necessitates the responsibility of the opposing side. Whoever fails to fulfill this responsibility, even if they are from the People of the Book, their faith in their own religion is no longer accepted. This is because if someone recognizes the value of gold as gold and then denies it, it implies that they do not recognize its value as gold. Such a person is no longer religious; they are only nationalist. Refer to Surah Al-Bayyina (Chapter 98) for more insight.

c) The verse number is 57 ( $19 * 3$ ). The numerical value of the word "bayyina" is 462 ( $19 * 24$ ). This signifies the miracle of 19, which is a possibility in infinity, denoting the 19 Miracle of the Quran. The phrase "I do not have that for which you are impatient" along with the hidden "ye" has 19 letters in total. This indicates that the Miracle of 19 will be present from the very early years of revelation.

**2) "Say with the language of revelation: *If that miracle you urgently wanted was through my means, I would have performed it immediately and you would have been finished. This is the disruption of the balance between religion and testing. Undoubtedly, Allah does not love those who upset the balance.*" (It does not make them successful.) (6/58)**



**A Few Insights:** This 58th verse, excluding the word "Qul," which means "Say," consists of 57 letters ( $19 * 3 = 57$ ). The statement "Allah does not love those who upset the balance" also comprises 19 letters. The numerical value of the "The matter between me and you would have been resolved" is 1412 ( $19 * 74 = 1412$ ). This indicates that the 19 Miracle would be discovered in the year 1974 and the correct interpretation would come to light 17 years later, in the Hijri year 1412 (1991). Yes, the phrase "Allah does not love wrongdoers (those who upset the balance)" also points to this incorrect interpretation. For more information about the 19 Miracle of the Quran, you can refer to the academia.edu website.

**3)** *"The keys of the Unseen (metaphysical) are with Him (Allah). No one but Allah knows them. He knows everything on land and sea. A leaf does not fall so that He does not know it. There is no grain in the darkness under the ground that He does not know about it. Wet and dry (all opposites) are only in a clear book (software). (6/59)*

### **A Few Subtleties About the Last Verse:**

a) The entirety of this verse consists of 114 letters ( $19 * 6$ ), signifying that the 114 chapters (surahs) of the Quran are the keys to the metaphysical realm.

b) Truly, to comprehend the infinite knowledge processing in metaphysics, one needs to be infinite like Allah. The knowledge processing in both the creatures of the sea and those on land is also infinite, but humans, through the mathematical science represented by 19, can understand it. Indeed, the phrase "He knows what is on the land and in the sea" consists of 19 letters.

c) The falling of a leaf also occurs through the command within DNA. Thus, it is still through Allah's knowledge. Grains are underground as well, yet Allah knows their DNA. Because in the balanced infinite existence system, everything that forms an infinite software (the Clear Book) and is balanced between those data points happens through that inter-data knowledge.

d) The word "Kitap" (Book) has a numerical value of 423 ( $19 * 22$ ). This value points to the binary 0-1 system, which is related to software. "Mübin" also equals 102, again reflecting the binary system.

e) The darkness of the Earth equals 2403. This is 19 multiplied by 126. This implies that even though light might disappear from the world, just like grains hidden underground, Allah knows the people and will resurrect them. The sum of the digits in both numbers is 9. This alludes to the biological cycles and periods of nine, reminding us of thousands of instances of resurrection.

**4)** *"The idolaters (who associate partners with Allah) swore with all their might that if a miracle were to appear to them, they would believe it for sure. Say in the language of revelation: Miracles are in the hands of Allah. You will know where? Even if the miracle appears to them, they will still not believe." (6/109)*

Thus, believing or not is related to deserving it; miracles merely encourage belief but do not inherently bring it about.

**5)** *"Allah has miraculously created humans with the ability to rule the earth. And He raised them in grades to test them. Since all existence is software, it is very easy to account for Allah. And that Allah is also Ghafur and Rahim." (6/165)*

Communism eliminated social classes. Since this was unnatural, communism ceased to exist. Islam, on the other hand, acknowledges social classes but invites the upper class to show compassion and mercy to the lower classes, and the lower class to show respect and reverence to the upper class. Thus, while Islam acknowledges social classes, it commands equality in sustenance among them (16/71). In summary, everyone is undergoing some form of test.

25.08.2023

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