

The Purpose of the Creation of the Universe

What Is Our Status?

What Was the Purpose of the Creation of the Universe, and Why Did God Design Such a Complex System?

As discussed in previous lessons, all the world's beings, from plants and animals to mountains, seas, and deserts, are moving toward a specific and purposeful destination based on existential guidance and a precise, engineered plan. Each one plays a unique role and has a unique place in the system of existence. For example, soil and its microorganisms serve as the foundation for plant growth. Mountains are mines for minerals, metals, and gemstones. Crude oil is formed deep beneath the ocean, and so forth ...

Upon closer examination, we will not find a single proton or electron that is idle or useless. Even species we might consider insignificant or destructive play important roles within nature's biological cycles, and removing them would disrupt the flow of life on earth. This is just a glimpse of the order and harmony present on earth. The sky offers another realm of wonders in itself. Despite all scientific advancements, human beings have yet to fully grasp the purpose behind celestial objects or the grand design of cosmos.

The world's order and harmony raise important questions:

- What is the purpose of the creation of the universe?
- What roles do humans play in this intricate system?
- Are we simple, ordinary earth members, like plants and animals? Or is there a deeper connection between us and the phenomena around us?

In this lesson, we will explore the purpose of the creation of the universe and humanity's status within the system of existence. But first, it is important to explain a crucial point concerning the primary question: "What is the purpose of the creation of the universe?"

Clarifying a Misconception

When we ask, "What is the purpose of the creation of the universe?" the question can carry two possible meanings:

- First, what purpose did God aim to achieve by creating the universe?
- Second, what purpose did God assign to the universe through its creation?

If we interpret the question in the first sense, the very nature of inquiry becomes incorrect. In this case, we compare God to ourselves and believe that God, like human beings, strives to achieve personal goals, while the objectives of God's actions are fundamentally different from our own.

As human beings, we are innately full of needs, and everything we do is to address our needs and deficiencies. For example, we eat food to satisfy hunger, wear clothes to protect ourselves from the heat and the cold, and seek knowledge to overcome ignorance. But God is the ultimate perfection, and has no needs or deficiencies to fulfill.

God created the world because He is the Creator (*Al-Khaliq*), and being a creator is intrinsic in His essence. Just as it is impossible to imagine a three-sided square, it is equally impossible to conceive of a God who is not a creator. A square with three sides is no longer a square; similarly, a God without the power of creation is no longer God because God embodies all the highest perfections and attributes.

Thus, God did not create the world to fulfill any personal purpose. But what was His purpose in creating the world?

The Universe Is at Humanity's Service

The universe is filled with countless phenomena, each necessary and effective in its own context; yet human beings are unique among all beings. Without humanity, the world would lose its intended meaning.

In general, human beings are part of the creation system, like other beings in the universe. However, when we examine closer, his position significantly differs from other beings. Humanity holds such a high value and position that God has subjected the heavens and the earth to him¹ and created everything on earth for him.² Thus, the purpose of the creation of the universe was paving the way for human presence, with all other species created to serve and meet human needs.

God has bestowed upon human beings extraordinary powers, including the power of intellect and reasoning. Through these powers, we can control the whole world. We can create submarines and explore the ocean depths, build spaceships and study other planets, and manipulate atoms and molecules to change their structure as we wish. We can harness the wind's energy to generate electricity. All of these demonstrate the unique status that God has granted us. On the other hand, our relationship with the universe is more than just a matter of physical presence. The dimensions of our existence are proportionate to the natural phenomena around us. When God created the universe, He did so with

¹. Quran, 45:13

². Quran, 2: 29

humanity in mind, tailoring the universe to our needs, from the wavelengths of light and frequencies of sound to nutrients in food, the oxygen concentration in the air, and thousands of other phenomena. When God created the universe, He considered our innate tendencies; for example, to satisfy our desire for beauty, he has created millions of magnificent flowers with different colours and fragrances; to satisfy our craving for variety in food, he has given us all kinds of fruits with different flavours and colours. In general, every desire we have corresponds to a compatible external pair, whether it pertains to natural and instinctive needs or *fitri* desires.

With such an amazing universe at our service, the question arises: What should we do with it? The purpose of the creation of the universe is satisfying our needs, but what was the purpose of our creation?

Everything for You, You for God

Given the preceding points, the first question we naturally ask ourselves is, “If this universe was created for me, then what am I created for?” I have been granted the heavens and the earth, then what should I do? What should I strive for? According to modern philosophers, is it my sole responsibility to exploit the universe’s resources to fulfill my economic goals? Or, as postmodern thinkers argue, is my entire relationship with the universe merely about seeking pleasure and consumption? What is my duty in this world, and when will the ultimate goal of my creation be achieved?

The answers to these questions were thoroughly explained in previous sessions, and we are certain that you can now provide thoughtful responses. However, to conclude the discussion, let us review the concept through an example.

Every creator has a primary and preset goal in mind when creating; nevertheless, achieving that goal necessitates certain prerequisites for success. For example, the main objective of setting up a school is to provide a favourable learning environment. However, in addition to building classrooms, the person responsible for constructing the school is also concerned with providing recreational and sporting facilities, school canteen, toilets, and so on. He understands that if students' basic requirements are not fulfilled, they cannot focus on studying, and the school's primary goal will not be met.

God's primary goal in creating human beings is for them to achieve perfection and become more like Himself. However, to walk this path successfully, we must first meet our material and physical needs, which God has provided in abundance. While meeting the needs of the inanimate, vegetative, animalistic, and intellectual dimensions is acceptable and important, they are not the primary goals. The primary goal is the development of our supra-rational dimension and the acquisition of a sound heart.

In this lesson, we learned about the purpose of the creation of the universe and humanity's status in the system of creation, but there are still many more things to learn. What do you believe they are?