Brothers and Sisters! In today’s khutba, I want to share some thoughts with you on a very profound and philosophical topic, and that is the worldview of Islam or the Islamic worldview. What is worldview? It is the way in which a person perceives and understands the world and his place in it. Throughout the history of mankind, there have been different ways of perceiving the world. The worldview a person holds shapes his or her attitude and affects the way he or she thinks, acts, or behaves.

A person’s worldview is largely shaped in accordance with his or her responses to the fundamental questions about man, life, and creation. Some of these basic questions are: Who am I? Where have I come from? What is the purpose of my life? Where do I go after I die? Has this world been created or it has been existing since eternity? People always demand answers to the ultimate and final questions pertaining to God, life, universe, and the unseen world. Throughout history, different answers based on speculations have been given to such metaphysical questions. With the onslaught of atheism, agnosticism, secular humanism, and an ever-increasing bombardment of ideologies that are diametrically opposed to the ideology of Islam, it is important that we as Muslims make ourselves conversant with the worldview of Islam.

The worldview of Islam is based on the primary sources of Islam—the Qur’an and the Sunnah, which give us the exact and accurate answers to these questions. To the question “Who am I?” one may say, “I am a human being.” But, to determine the reality and origin of the human being can only be a matter of theoretical speculation. Divine revelation is the only source of knowing about the origin of the human being.

We learn from the Qur’an that Allah (SWT) shared with the angels His plans of going to bring about the creation of man even before actually creating him.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقُ بَشَرًا مَّنْ صَلَصَالِ

منَ حَمَّامِ مَسْتَنْوٍ

“Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I will create a human being out of dried clay, formed from dark mud.” (al-Hijr, 15:28).

The word used by Allah (SWT) for the human being in this ayah is bashar, and elsewhere the word used is insan. Although the two words are often interchangeably used to mean man, there is a fundamental difference between the meanings of the two words. Bashar is the first stage of creation of man. This bashar became insan after Allah (SWT) blew into him from His spirit.
“When I have perfected him in due proportion and breathed My spirit into him, bow down in prostration” (al-Hijr, 15:29).

This took place at a time when this bashar had reached the stage of complete maturity (taswiyah). The spirit came from up high; from Allah (SWT) and the body came from the crust of the earth. Thus, according to the Quran, I am a creation of Allah (SWT)—a human being; made up of two entities—the spirit and the body. It is this spirit, blown into man, which elevates him, and distinguishes him from all other creation.

To the next question, “Where have I come from,” the common answer would be, “I have come from my biological parents,” which is true. How about them? Where did they come from? The answer would again be, “From their biological parents.” This chain continues until we reach the very first human pair and progenitor of all mankind—Adam and Hawwa (Alaihimussalam). And for the question: “Where did the first human come from?” The Qur’an says that Adam came from dust. Allah (SWT) explains:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تَرابٍ مَّنْ تَرَابَ يُمَضِي إِذًا أَنْتُم بَشَرٌ

“And of His Signs is that He created you from dust and behold, you became human beings, scattered far and wide.” (al-Rum 30:20).

Therefore the answer to the second question, “Where have I come from?” would be, “My spirit came from Allah (SWT) and my body came from the earth.” Now to the question, which came first, the spirit or the body, the answer is that the spirit came first. There is an ayah in Surat al-A’raf that answers this question. Allah (SWT) says:
وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورٍ هِمْ دَرَيْتَهُمْ َوَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىِ َّمِنْفُسِهِمْ آَلَسْتُ بِرِبَيْكُمْ قَالُوا بَلِيَّنَّكَنَا أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

“When your Lord took out all their descendants from the loins of the children of Adam and made them testify against themselves ‘Am I not your Lord? They said, ‘We testify that indeed You are!’ Lest you say on the Day of Rising, ‘We knew nothing of this’” (al-A’raf, 7:172).

This explains the reality of who we are; and where we came from. Indeed, there was a time when we existed in the forms of spirits without even having bodies. In our spiritual forms before our earthly existence, Allah (SWT) took a covenant from all potential human beings after which, He put them in a state of pause, which may be conceived as a state of death. He then created the entire universe; created man out of clay until we became humans, each spirit being united with every fetus in its embryonic stage.

The implication of this covenant is that as believers, Muslims have no option but to honor that pledge and that covenant. This covenant in reality answers the third question—what is the purpose of my life? In simple terms, Allah (SWT) spells out the purpose of our existence by saying,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجَنِّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“I have not created the jinn and human beings except to worship Me” (ad-Dhariyat, 51:56).

While in our mother’s wombs, we go through the embryonic stages of creation and it is during this process that Allah (SWT) gives us the faculties of hearing, of sight, and of intellect. All these faculties are very important and Allah (SWT) gives them to man to help him fulfill his purpose on earth, which is to obey and worship Allah (SWT), and through these faculties, we are being tested by Allah (SWT) whether we are grateful or ungrateful to Him, and whether we honor the covenant we made with Him or not. And this is why we are here in this world; to be tested by Allah (SWT).
“It is He who created death and life to test which of you is best in action. He is the Almighty, the Forgiving” (al-Mulk, 67:2).

Coming to the fourth question, where do we go after we die, the Qur’an teaches us to say,

"We belong to Allah and to Him is our return” (al-Baqarah, 2:156).

We belong to Allah (SWT). We can now understand what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) meant when he said in a hadith: “Be in this world as though you are a stranger or a traveler on a journey.” Indeed, he spoke the truth. We are travelling. This is not our permanent home. In another hadith the Prophet (SAW) said: “This duniya is a prison for the believers and a paradise for the disbelievers.” A believer is bound by certain commandments that Allah (SWT) has set for him; of the permissible and the impermissible; of the do’s and the don’ts. He is free to move within the parameters set by Allah. May Allah (SWT) guide us, protect us, make us comply with His divine teachings, and make us live within the limits set by Him.

As Muslims, we believe that our death is a transition to another dimension of life wherein every soul shall be resurrected to give account to its Creator of its transitory stay on this earth and rewarded accordingly—everlasting bliss or eternal doom. The true believers are mindful of God and conscious of the covenant they made with Him. They work hard to please their Lord and their activities are focused toward being successful in al-akhirah (the hereafter). The Qur’an declares,
“Every soul shall have a taste of death. You will be paid your wages in full on the Day of Resurrection. Anyone who is kept away from the Fire and admitted to the Garden has certainly succeeded. The life of this world is nothing but an illusory enjoyment” (Aal ‘Imran, 3:185).

Studies in Anthropology have established that the concept of God is ingrained in human nature. Belief in God runs in our blood. By nature, every man and woman is a born believer. Especially in times of helplessness and in crisis, we discover that there is a Supreme Being. Every human being experiences this sometimes in his or her life. If the concept of God is present in our flesh and blood, why does one question the existence of God? And there are many who do so. The reason is very simple. People want to know whether there is a rational basis to their inner belief; whether there is some scientific proof in favor of their inner feelings.

Science tells us that the universe came into existence after the Big Bang which took place some 14 billion years ago. Scientists have found evidence to believe that in the beginning there was what they call a cosmic ball. All the particles now present in the universe were tightly bound to each other in this cosmic ball in a highly compressed state. According to known physical laws, only an inner journey was possible for these particles. Physically, there was no possibility of their outward journey to space.

Then, according to astronomical studies, this cosmic ball suddenly exploded. The compact particles scattered outward and the present universe came into existence. What external source caused the intervention so that the compact particles scattered outwardly? It was an intervener or Almighty God.

أَوَلََِْي َرَِالَّذ ينَِكَفَرُواِأَنَِّالسَّمَاوَات ِوَالَْْرْضَِكَان َتَاِرَت ْقًاِ ف َفَت َقْنَاهَُُاِ فَمَتْفَنَاهُمَا

“Do not those who deny the truth see that the heavens and the earth were joined together and that We then split them asunder? (al-Anbiya’, 21:30).

This miraculous phenomenon is enough to make us believe that the Big Bang explosion was certainly pre-planned. And when it is proved that it was pre-planned, it is automatically proved that behind this pre-planning there was a planner, and it is this super planner who is God Almighty. When we reflect deeply about our world, we find that all over the universe, there are clear signs of planning, design, and intelligent control. These signs lead us to believe that there is a creator of creation; a designer of designs, and a mover of movements. It is Allah (SWT) who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them and beyond them.

The entire creation submits to the will of Allah (SWT). It is man who after being given the guidance has also been given free choice to use his rational mind and choose between the right and the wrong. There is no discrepancy between reason and revelation in Islam. May Allah guide us on the right path.