

# The Quran and its Message

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سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

## TIAN TAN BUDDHA, LANTAU ISLAND, HONG KONG

*Joseph A Islam*

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### EXCERPTS FROM MY TRAVEL BLOG

#### *Travel blog background:*

After breakfast, I proceeded to see the Tian Tan Buddha (Big Buddha) and the Po Lin Monastery. I took a shuttle service (Bus number K3) to Kowloon Station. From there I proceeded to take the Tung Chung line to the final stop (Tung Chung) which was on Lantau Island. The journey took between 30-40 minutes on the train. The MTR was very clean. I wasn't too sure of what to make of the seats however. Metallic in nature, they felt frictionless as one slid on them with the motion of the train. Maybe I needed some suction cups, but complete stability throughout the journey was not easy coming. There was an interesting older gentleman practicing a form of relaxation / meditation in front of me. His rhythmical motion almost pandering to a gentle tune, which though inaudible, could yet be grasped by his gentle motion. It was lovely to observe. Once alighted at Tung Chung, I took the number 23 bus from Exit B of the MTR terminal to the Po Lin Monastery. The bus ride was fantastic. It took over an hour though, through steep climbs and meandering turns, each turn furnishing the beholder with an exquisite view of the island expanse.

Once at the foot of the Buddha's statue, I proceeded to climb the steep steps to the top.



I couldn't help appreciating the fact that irrespective of which Deity one showed veneration, there was something innate about prostration as the ultimate form of reverence.





This I also noted inside the Po Lin Monastery.

Reverence was also epitomised by the Buddhistic statues who though frozen in time, made offerings to the Tian Tan Buddha.



Prophet Abraham's <sup>(pbuh)</sup> argument seemed quite apt here:

**026.070-76**

"When he (Abraham) said to his father and his people: What do you worship? They said: We worship idols, so we shall remain devoted to them. He (Abraham) said: Do they hear you when you call (on them)? Or do they benefit or harm you? They said: Nay, but we found our fathers doing so. He said: Have you then considered what you have been worshipping: You and your forefathers?"

**006:081**

"How should I fear (the beings) you associate (with God), when you fear not to give partners to God without any warrant having been given to you? Which of (us) two parties has more right to security, (tell me) if you know?"

It was outside the Po Lin Monastery, I was greeted with another reminder of how human reverence had become inculcated into the beliefs and practices of many around the world. These beliefs often get passed down from generation to generation in the footsteps of the ancients without much scrutiny of their provenance and veracity. This is also not specific to any world religion and remains a trait often found in one form or another in many world religions.

**029:017**

"You only worship idols besides God and you create falsehood. Indeed, those whom you serve besides God do not control for you any sustenance. Therefore seek the sustenance from God and serve Him and be grateful to Him; to Him you shall be brought back"

One should only ever present their case for the veracity of their beliefs in One God with beautiful preaching. It is a standard we all should comply by.

**006.108**

"And do not insult those whom they call upon besides God, less out of enmity they insult God in their ignorance. Thus have We made alluring to each community their deed. Then to their Lord (is) their return and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did.

There has never been any compulsion in religion. It has always been a choice based on human volition.

**002:256**

"**Let there be no compulsion in religion:** Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects false deities and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God hears and knows all things"

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