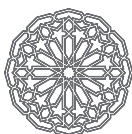




A Thinking Person's
Guide to the
TRULY HAPPY LIFE



H. R. H. PRINCE
GHAZI BIN MUHAMMAD

Foreword by Professor Sir Iain Torrance



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P R E S S



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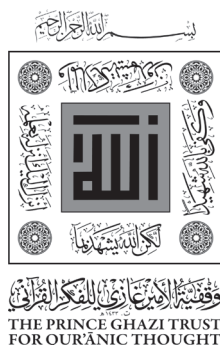
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Foreword



Christianity and Islam are the two largest faiths in the world. And despite attempts by various figures to tear us apart, the two faiths have much in common. This timely, clear and compelling book, though addressed to Muslims, may be seen as a continuation of the theological initiative begun in 2007 by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad with *A Common Word Between Us and You*.

Prince Ghazi's book on Happiness begins with our common, Muslim and Christian, belief in creation by God. God created the world and all that is in it, not because God lacked anything which needed to be completed before there could be perfection, not because God was influenced by some other force (which would imply that God was not alone), but because God created freely, from mercy and from love. Consequently, all people of faith understand themselves, at the most basic level, as products of that creation, as sisters and brothers, and as acknowledging God's transcendent purpose for their living.

In a world which we acknowledge as being contingent because it is created (in other words, not seeing everything in the world as necessary and so requiring no further explanation) we recognise that the world has been given its own order which we are invited to understand and contribute to. As created beings, we can look at the world and be thankful for it, we can marvel at its wonders and its beauty, and we can take our share in caring for it.

It follows from this that those who believe in God, cannot, as

part of that faith, understand life as being worthy or worthwhile if it is lived in disregard for the well-being of other people. And so Prince Ghazi's book shows how the practice of justice is utterly intrinsic to a happy life. We have a duty to the poor, to the stranger, to the vulnerable, as they—and we—possess certain basic rights to property, to family life and to the expression of our faith. Without guarding these rights, no created beings can be happy. In a similar way, people of faith cannot live worthy lives while being deaf to the cries of their physical environment (e.g. seas choked by plastic waste, pollution of various kinds, rapacious mining, destruction of forests and other acts of human greed). In a non-polemical way, the theme of the book, even though it is primarily about happiness, is an account of worthwhile living and a telling critique of the utilitarian tradition so endemic in western society in which value is constantly subordinated to outcome, and consumerism, with its attendant self-gratification, is confused with lasting happiness.

As Prince Ghazi shows, true happiness is only to be found in a life of *uninterrupted giving*. This perception, set out so clearly from the Qur'an, resonates with the deepest Christian beliefs set out in the New Testament, where Jesus teaches, 'forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be poured into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get . . . ' (*Gospel according to St Luke*, 6:38).

Prince Ghazi's book unfolds for us further dimensions of the *Common Word Between Us and You* and is to be welcomed by Christians as well as Muslims.

THE VERY REVEREND PROFESSOR
SIR IAIN R TORRANCE, DPHIL DD FRSE
President Emeritus of Princeton Theological Seminary
14 April 2018

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى خَاتَمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ

Introduction



A THINKING PERSON'S GUIDES

By the grace of God, this is the third book of the series of *A Thinking Person's Guides*. This series is aimed to provide brief, clear philosophical primers about a number of important topics that concern every human being, based on the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The series also aims to be a sensitive guide to what other religions and philosophies have written on these topics, in order to present a complete picture of each topic. People do not have time to do all the reading themselves—and in fact it takes years to do, and usually require a professional academic guide to help them through the topic—so this series aims to do all the academic and historical work for them. All that the reader is required to do is to be willing to think objectively a bit. Finally, in order to be accessible to everyone, the work contains no footnotes or endnotes and as little technical jargon as possible.

ISLAM AND THE HAPPY LIFE

From Socrates to Seneca; from St. Augustine of Hippo to Lord Bertrand Russell; and from to David Hume to the Harvard Grant