

which there is no benefit, and he is the one who mocks people. The wise man, on the other hand, thinks that one of the greatest shameful acts that undermine one's religious commitment and rational thinking is mocking a person who is a human being like him; even if he is superior to him, that superiority requires him to show gratitude to his Lord and compassion towards His slaves.

When Moosā said that to them, they realised that he was speaking the truth, and said: ﴿Pray to your Lord to make clear to us what [sort of cow] it should be﴾; how old should it be? ﴿He said: He [Allah] says: The cow should be neither too old nor too young, but somewhere in between. Now do as you are commanded!﴾ – and stop confusing the matter with so many questions.

﴿They said: Pray to your Lord to make clear to us what her colour should be. He said: He [Allah] says: A yellow cow, pure and rich in colour﴾ that is, of a deep colour ﴿pleasing to the beholder﴾ with its beauty.

﴿They said: Pray to your Lord to make clear to us [exactly] what she is, because to us all cows look alike﴾, and we still do not know what you want. ﴿And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided﴾.

﴿He said: He [Allah] says: A cow not broken in﴾ that is, trained ﴿to till the earth﴾ by ploughing ﴿or water the fields﴾ that is, she is not used for the purpose of irrigation; ﴿sound and whole﴾ that is, free of defects and not having been used for work; ﴿without blemish﴾ that is, there are no patches of any colour other than what was mentioned above. ﴿They said: Now you have brought the truth﴾ that is, now you have brought us a clear explanation. They said this because of their ignorance, for the truth had come to them from the outset. If they had gone and fetched any cow, they would have done what they were meant to do, but they made it difficult for themselves by asking too many questions, so Allah made it difficult for them. If they had not said ﴿if Allah wills﴾, they would not have been guided concerning this matter. ﴿Then they offered her﴾ that is, the cow that