

Similarities between the Human and Other Beings

Structure of the Soul

What Behaviors Do We Share with Other Beings? What Are the Similarities between the Human and Other Beings?

With a simple look at our surroundings, we find ourselves surrounded by a world of a thousand colors. We live either in nature or in a house made of wood, stone, and bricks. Depending on where we live, perhaps at first glance, we do not see any similarities between the human and other beings around us. One of the wonders of our existence is that we are connected to everything and all beings in the universe no matter at what level they are, from inanimate objects and plants to angels and even God Himself. The only thing we know is that every single being has been created for us¹ and because we exist, and there is a connection between our existential structure and their existence.

With a little attention, we realize the alignment between the environment and the beings around us and our own needs; from the sun and the moon, which are exactly at the right distance according to our needs, to the water created to quench our thirst, minerals and inanimate objects that fulfil some of our needs, and countless other examples. In fact, it is impossible for two things to be completely aligned with each other without having any connection. If something happens by accident,

¹ . Quran, 2:29

there are millions of possibilities for its happening; in this case, expecting all these possibilities to be aligned with each other at once and create a connection between humans and their environment is nothing but an illusion.² Therefore, nothing is accidental in the universe, and everything is purposeful. Of course, we will explain more about this in future lessons, for now, we know that there must be compatibility between us and the structure of the universe. But the question here is that what do humans and other beings have in common, and in what manner?

The Relationship Between the Human Being and Other Beings

It is true that we live in a world full of diverse beings, but each of the beings around us is only connected to a beloved of its own kind and does not have the ability to establish a connection with something outside of its own existential structure. For example, we cannot expect a rock to grow like plants or strive for power like animals; as a solid object, a rock only exhibits characteristics that are defined for it, such as weight, dimension, elemental properties, etc. As humans, we have something in common with all these beings due to our multidimensional existential structure. Interestingly, each being in the material world not only shares compatibility with its own existential qualities, but also with the existential qualities of beings that are in a lower level of existence. Since, in addition to our human or supra-rational dimension, we also possess inanimate, vegetative, animal, and intellectual dimensions, we

² . World discipline

encompass the existential qualities and beloveds of all these dimensions and establish connection with them.

As we explained in the article “Introducing the Different Dimensions of Human Existence,” in more detail, there are multiple dimensions for our existence, and because of these different dimensions, we have a lot in common with other beings. Just like a solid object, we have weight, volume, and elemental properties; we also have tenderness and beauty like a plant, and our body absorbs nutrients, grows, and reproduce.

The similarities between the human and other beings, such as animals, are even more obvious. Perhaps it is because of these similarities that philosophers like Aristotle call us “rational animals.” That is because the similarities between us and animals is not limited to our physical characteristics, but they also include our behaviors. Like animals, we have instincts and various desires; we get married, have a sense of responsibility for and commitment to different matters, strive for our own and our family’s well-being, serve our fellow and non-fellow beings, defend ourselves and our family, have social life, move up social and career hierarchies, and so on. Of course, in addition to these dimensions, we have two other dimensions called the intellectual and supra-rational dimensions which we discussed in detail in the previous lesson.

The Benefits of Knowing the Similarities Between the Human and Other Beings

Is it really necessary for us to know about the similarities between the human and other beings? What benefit does this knowledge have for us, and what role does it play in achieving our ultimate goal? In fact, it is through knowing these characteristics that we can free ourselves from the bondage of our inanimate, vegetative, animal, and intellectual beloveds. Then we can quickly realize where we have lowered our dignity to the level of an inanimate object, plant, or animal, and have set a wrong goal.

In addition to what we have stated, by thinking about the relationship and similarities between the human and other beings, we understand the purpose of our creation. That is because although we have the characteristics of an inanimate object, plant, and animal, we are neither an inanimate object, nor a plant, nor an animal. In fact, everything we see around us has been created for the sake of us; that is why there is a connection and compatibility between our existential structure and these beings. Imagine for a moment that someone has invited you for dinner, but instead of food, he puts wood, straw, or paper on your plate, something that is not compatible with your existential structure, and you are not able to digest it. If we do not have any knowledge about the connection and similarities between the human and other beings, our relationship with them becomes meaningless.

The Necessity of Evaluating Similarities from the Outside

Usually when we evaluate something from the inside and as a member of a set, our perception and analysis of it lack comprehensiveness. This is because we do not have a holistic view of it; it is like examining the characteristics of a region without having aerial photographs of it. So we can say that our analysis becomes more accurate when we evaluate the subject both from the inside and the outside? What subject is more sensitive and precise than knowing the human being, around whose needs and characteristics the whole universe revolves? In fact, due to the creation of beings that share some similarities with us, we have the opportunity to evaluate our existential structure from both the inside and the outside, and thereby gain an accurate and comprehensive view of ourselves.

In this article, we explained that the universe has been created for the sake of the human being and that the human being's existential structure is compatible with all creatures. We referred to our shared beloveds with inanimate objects, plants, and animals and discussed the benefits of being aware of common characteristics between us and other beings. In the end, we stated that without evaluating our beloveds from the outside, we cannot achieve a comprehensive understanding of our own reality.

Moreover, we briefly discussed the shared aspects between humans and other beings. Have you ever paid attention to the similarities between the human and other beings? What is your opinion about this? If you are curious to know about

the difference between the human being and other beings, we recommend reading the article “Is There a Reason for the Difference between Humans and Other Creatures?”

Mentazer Mentazer

Mentazer Mentazer

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Mentazer Mentazer