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The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies  
Special Issue on **Qur'anic Studies-V**



**Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust**

Bolpur, West Bengal, India (Reg. No. IV01697/14)

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## The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

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### Editor's Note

The Qur'ān is a divine book revealed in Arabic on the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh (PBUH) to guide the whole mankind. It took twenty three years to complete the process of its revelation. The Prophet continued to arrange it in an order as well as he busied himself to convey this divine message to his fellow companions. Apart from teaching this Book to his followers he kept on training some of his selected companions 'how to teach it' to other followers and 'how to ponder upon it' to find out its inner meanings and secrets these divine verses contained.

During the course of time a selected number of companions emerged to expertise over the Qur'ān. These companions not only indicated to its inner meanings they also propagated this message and trained a group of their pupils who continued to ponder upon the Qur'ān viz-a-viz to prepare some persons who transmitted this pious work and inherited this process to the coming generation which later got compiled these findings as the book form.

Since revelation of the Qur'ān its addressees were divided into two groups-one accepted its teachings while the other opposed it. Later on these opponents were divided into two categories one of them tried to refute it from any possible way while the other party did not oppose it though they did not embrace it. The same situation is here today save the opponents have organized their attempts. But Allah will never let His message to be refuted (وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ).

There was a third mention-worthy challenge which the Qur'ān faced, and that was contemporary science/sciences. At the

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time of its revelation the Qur'ān faced previous heavenly books and baseless objections of the pagans, then it faced the Greek and other strange sciences, thereafter the era of modern sciences came followed by different non-Arabic and un-Islamic thoughts and view-points which this divine book faced and it always successfully overcame them challenging each one and finally establishing its eternal philosophy of result-oriented teachings and thoughts.

This is fifth part of the Journal's special issue on the Qur'ān. It contains fourteen research papers on different issues related to the language of the Qur'ān, its being inimitable, its core message, its role in maintaining peace, its desired etiquettes in society, its guidelines to the business and trade, its guidelines to maintain relations with the non-Muslims, its perspective of multiculturalism, objections of the Hindus on its contents etc. The sixth part of its special issue on the Qur'ān will discuss the coherence in the Qur'ān *in sha Allah*.

At the end I wish to express my gratitude to all those who encouraged me and extended their help and support in preparation and publication of this issue including the members of the advisory, editorial and review boards of the Journal. It will be injustice if I do not offer my thanks to those who selflessly contributed their important articles to accomplish the missionary task involved. May Allah bestow upon us more and more desire and courage to serve the Qur'ān! I specially pray to Allah to bestow upon us 'rewards' in its return here and hereafter (وَعَاخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ).

**Dr. Aurang Zeb Azmi**

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## The Qur'ān: A Masterpeice of Arabic Language and Literature

✎...Dr. Md. Quamruddīn<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The Holy Quran is primarily the Book of guidance. Since its revelation it has been the subject of many extensive analytical and critical studies that focused on its theological and legislative aspects. 'Ulamā' and scholars painstakingly presented thousands of books on these subjects. Besides, they translated and interpreted it in world languages.

There is, however, another aspect of the Qur'ān and that is its linguistic and literay significance, for the Qur'ān is the masterpiece and undoubtedly the first compiled book in Arabic. It has far-reaching effects on the status, the content and the structure of the Arabic language. Scholars admit that it is the linguistic and literary aspects of the Qur'ān and its artistic beauty which attracted the Arabs first to accept its devine status. The Holy Qur'ān enriched the Arabic language in terms of its diction, vocabulary, structure, ideas, themes and many more. Also, it cleansed it from various internal and external elements which could destroy its vitality. Thus, the Qur'ān saved it from decay and made it reach the highest level of the linguistic and literary excellence. Above all, the significance and highest value of the linguistic and literary aspects of the Qur'ān is also due to its ijaz (inimitability).

**Keywords:** The Qur'ān, Arabic language, Arabic literature, Arabic masterpiece, liguistic aspect, literary aspect.

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor (on adhoc), Department of Arabic, Zākir Ḥusain Delhi College, University of Delhi, Delhi

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**Language, Form and Style of the Qur'ān:** The Qur'ān is in Arabic language (إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)<sup>1</sup>, in the very clear and vivid expression (وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ)<sup>2</sup>. It was revealed in the Arabic language because Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) who was to announce this message was an Arab and the message had to be in a language understood by the addressees to whom it was first addressed.<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān is very clear in its exposition of all things, it is the source of guidance and mercy and a glad tidings for those who believe in Allah.<sup>4</sup> It is the complete and perfect Book; its verses are clear and accurate in its meaning and theme. Allah says in the Qur'ān: كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ، ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١﴾ [(This is) a Book, the verses whereof are perfected (in every sphere of knowledge), and then explained in detail from One (Allah), who is All-wise Well-acquainted].<sup>5</sup>

The Qur'ān consists of 114 chapters. All the 114 chapters or Surhas have their specific names, which serve as a sort of headings. The names are often derived from an important or distinguishing word present in the chapter itself, such as e.g. al-Baqarah (2) or al-Anfāl (8).

Scholars divide the Qur'ān in other way also that they divide in *Juz'* (pl. *Ajzā'*) literally means part, portion. They divide the Qur'ān into 30 portions of approximately equal length for easy recitation during the thirty nights of a month, especially of the month of *Ramaḍān*.

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<sup>1</sup> Yūnus: 2

<sup>2</sup> Al-Naḥl: 103

<sup>3</sup> Fuṣṣilat: 44

<sup>4</sup> Al-Naḥl: 89

<sup>5</sup> Hūd: 1

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A renowned Arabic writer Ṭāha Ḥusain says that the Qur'ān is neither poetry, because it does not observe the metre and rhyme of poetry, and it is nor prose because it is not composed in the same manner in which prose is customarily composed. Rather the Qur'ān is detailed verses and has its own genre.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Khaldūn (d. 809H/1406), explaining the difference between literature and Qur'ān in general and differentiating between *Saja'* (سجع: Rhymed Prose) and Qur'ān in particular, writes:

"إعلم أنّ لسان العرب وكلامهم على فنين في الشعر المنظوم، وهو الكلام الموزون المقفى ومعناه الذي تكون أوزانه كلها على زوَيٍّ واحد وهو القافية وفي النثر وهو الكلام غير الموزون وكل واحد من الفنين يشتمل على فنون ومذاهب في الكلام فأما الشعر فمنه المدح والهجاء والرثاء وأما النثر فمنه السجع الذي يؤتى به قِطْعًا ويُلتزم في كل كلمتين منه قافية واحدة يسمّى سجعًا. ومنه المرسل وهو الذي يُطلق فيه الكلامُ إطلاقًا ولا يقطعُ أجزاءً بل يرسل إرسالًا من غير تقييد بقافية ولا غيرها ويُستعمل في الخطب والدعاء وترغيب الجمهور وترهيبهم، وأما القرآن وإن كان من المنثور إلا أنه خارج عن الوصفين وليس يسمّى مرسلًا مطلقًا ولا مسجعًا بل تفصيل آيات ينتهي إلى مقاطع يشهد الذوق بانتهاء الكلام عندها ثم يُعاد الكلام في الآية الأخرى بعدها ويُتّى من غير التزام حرف يكون سجعًا ولا قافية وهو معنى قوله تعالى: الله نزل أحسن الحديث كتابًا متشابهاً مثاني تقشعر منه جلود الذين يخشون ربهم....."<sup>2</sup>

[Summary: It should be known that the Arabic language and Arab speech are divided into two genres and categories. One of them is rhymed poetry ... The other is prose, that is, non-metrical speech and each of them has their own branches and ways... The Qur'ān is in prose but it does not belong to either

<sup>1</sup> Mir'ā-tul-Islām, PP, 129-130

<sup>2</sup> Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldūn, 1/566-567

of the two categories. It can neither be called straight prose nor rhymed one. It is in verses. One reaches their breaks where taste tells one that the speech now stops. It is then repeated in the next verse. Rhyme letters, which make speech rhymed prose, are not necessary, nor do rhymes (as used in poetry) occur. This situation is what is meant by the verse of the Qur'ān: 'God revealed the best story, a book harmoniously arranged with repeated verses ...' (al-Zumar: 23)].

Ibn Khaldūn at another place of his famous book *Muqaddimah*, dealing with certain aspects of the forms and style of the Qur'ān, writes:

"واعلم أنّ ثمره هذا الفن إنما هي في فهم الإعجاز من القرآن لأنّ إعجازه في وفاء الدلالة منه بجميع مقتضيات الأحوال منطوقة ومفهومة وهي أعلى مراتب الكلام مع الكمال فيما يختص بالألفاظ في انتقاءها وجودة رصفها وتركيبها..."<sup>1</sup>

[Summary: The l'jāz of the Qur'ān consists in the fact that its language indicates all the requirements of the situation whether they are stated or understood. They pose the high degree of speech. In addition, the Qur'ān is perfect in the choice of words and excellence of arrangement and sentence structure].

Highlighting the impressive qualities of the language and form of the Qur'ān, Professor Arberry, in his introduction to the Qur'ān, writes:

"The Koran undeniably abounds in fine writing; it has its own extremely individual qualities; the language is high idiomatic, yet for the most part delusively simple; the rhythms and rhymes are inseparable features of its impressive eloquence and these are, indeed, inimitable".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., P. 552

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Koran An Introduction with Selections, P. 28

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The Holy Qur'ān was revealed in a stretch period of time but it is one organic whole. It is smoothly integrated, harmoniously tuned, and is so wonderfully arranged and so marvellously composed, and so exalted is its literary excellence that it is beyond attainment of any creature.

**Miraculous Nature of the Qur'ān:** All the previous messengers, before Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), were given some miraculous signs, proving their prophethood. For example, in the time of the art of magic, Allah gave to Mūsá (AS) the power to divide the sea with his hand and staff and to let the rock bursting forth with water in desert, to 'Īsá (AS), He gave, the power to bring the dead back to life and to cure the blinds at the time of medicine. Likewise, at the time of eloquence, Allah gave to Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) the Qur'ān, that is full of eloquence unattainable by any creature.<sup>1</sup>

Other than the Qur'ān, Allah gave many miracles to the Prophet (PBUH), including splitting of the moon in half, the increase of an inadequate amount of food to very large quantity, the speaking of stones, animals and trees to him, etc. but the Qur'ān is his most exalted and permanent miracle.

The Qur'ān was revealed in an environment of poets who had impressive mastery of Arabic. The Arabs used to hang their most liked poems on the walls of Ka'ba and the famous seven poems which are still safe are the proof of their act. War of words, between two tribes, was more dangerous than the wars of blood. Even then these eloquent Arabs were completely intrigued by the eloquence and beauty of the Qur'ānic text. So it is obvious that the Qur'ān has a marvellous linguistic miracle.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Manāhil ul-'Irfān, 1/58-60

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī, Zayyāt, PP. 26 & 36

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Explaining the Qur'ān's miraculous nature and its truthfulness, Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī writes:

“Now, imagine the people of Arabia in the days of ignorance when oratory happened to be the most dominated passion in the society. Each and every person in the society had a natural taste for literature and poetry.

Eloquence and rhetoric were their life blood. The liveliness that marked their gatherings, the gaiety of their fairs and the virtues on which they boasted themselves so much all found their expression through poetry and literature. They were so proud indeed of their literature accomplishments that they contemptuously dubbed all the other peoples of the world as 'Ajam' The Dumb. It was in this atmosphere that there appeared on the scene an unlettered person Muḥammad (PBUH). He presented before them an oration and declared it to be the word of Allah, because,

قُلْ لَّيِّنَ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ  
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

Tr.: If mankind and the Jinn were together to produce the like of this Quran they could never produce the like thereof even if they are backed by one another.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'ān claims to be inimitable and challenges, at several places, its opponents to produce a work like it (e.g. 2:23, 11:13, 17: 88 and 52:33-34). The gradual challenges of the Qur'ān were faced by some scholars but they failed. For example the famous Jāhilī poet Labīd bin Rabī'ah and the famous writer and the poet Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. 727 CE) accepted this Qur'ānic challenge, they tried their best to

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Isrā': 88 / An Approach to the Qur'ānic Sciences, PP. 260-261

present like the Qur'ān, but they failed. These details prove that the Qur'ān cannot be imitated at all by any man of letter.<sup>1</sup>

The miraculous nature of the Qur'ān will remain so forever, in terms of its language, diction, style, and way of expression, rhetorical, veracity, eloquence, legislative, scientific and encompassing the whole spheres of life and others are the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. Untranslatability of the Qur'ān fully in any language of the world is also among its miraculous nature. The miraculous nature of the Qur'ān will remain unchallengeable in these and other aspects till the end of this world.

**The Qur'ān: A Masterpiece:** The Qur'ān is the masterpiece and the classical asset of the Arabic language and literature. It is the first compiled book in the Arabic language. The study of the Arabic language, literature and its history needs thorough and deep study of the Qur'ān because it is the manifestations of the intellectual and literary lives of the Arabs. It is the originator of the Arabic prose, is the source of the meanings, vocabularies, styles of the writing and knowledge that prevailed in that era.

Arabic language, before revelation of the Qur'ān, was mainly a spoken language. Prose was at a lesser ground but the poetry was at its high level of vitality and was the sole elaborate form of the artistic expression. The atmosphere wherein the Arabs lived made them easy to compose the poems. Along with this, they had strong memory power to preserve thousands of poems and the history of the past days.

Eloquence, prose and poetry were among the best traits the Arabs had in pre-Qur'ānic era. They used to compete in poetry and for this purpose many historical fairs were held in which

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<sup>1</sup> 'Ilme Jadīd ka Challenge (Urdu), PP. 146-147

witnessed poetry competitions. Sūq 'Ukāz (سوق عكاظ) was one of the most famous fairs which used to be held every year, wherein, poets competed for name and fame and were rewarded. The best chosen poems used to be hanged at the most sacred place of the walls of Baitullāh (بيت الله). The seven hanged (المعلقات السبع) poems are the example of this creative trait.<sup>1</sup> Stating the importance of poetry in Arab, Ibn Khaldun writes:

"إعلم أنّ الشعر كان ديواناً للعرب فيه علومهم وأخبارهم وحكمهم. وكان رؤساء العرب منافسين فيه وكانوا يقفون بسوق عكاظ لإنشاده وعرض كل واحد منهم ديوانه على فحول الشأن وأهل البصر لتمييز حوله حتى انتهوا إلى المناغاة في تعليق أشعارهم بأركان البيت الحرام موضع حجهم وبيت إبراهيم كما فعل امرؤ القيس بن حجر، والنابغة الذبياني، وزهير بن أبي سلمى وعترة بن شداد، وطرفة بن العبد، وعلقمة بن عبدة والأعشى وغيرهم من أصحاب المعلقات السبع..."<sup>2</sup>

[Summary: It should be known that poetry used to be considered by the Arabs a very high form of speech. Therefore, they made it the deewan of their history, the basis of their knowledge and wisdom. They used to compete in poetry and therefore they used to organise fairs such as 'Ukāz and the seven hanged poems to the wall of Ka'bah is the great witness to this].

The importance of poetry can be traced from the fact that the Arabs used to congratulate each other only on the birth of a child and when a poet arose among them.<sup>3</sup> In pre-Qur'ānic era, poet enjoyed a very prominent status. He was an artist, an entertainer, a journalist, a spokesman for his tribe, a historian who kept alive the history and glorious past of his

<sup>1</sup> Tārīkh al-Adab al-Arabī, PP. 27-28

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn, 1/580-581,/ See also 'Uyūn ul- Akhbār of Ibn Qutaibah

<sup>3</sup> Tārīkh al-Adab il-'Arabī, Dr. 'Umar Farrūkh, 1/76

tribe, an effective means for propaganda, sought by kings and tribal chiefs who generally rewarded them.<sup>1</sup>

Though the Arabs, in pre-Qur'ānic era, had a keen interest in the art of poetry at larger scale, in prose at a lesser scale, they were eloquent enough and they had strong memory power on the one hand, but on the other hand, their lives within their confined walls, fixed in their own tribes, far from other civilizations made their arts limited in their range.

In pre-Qur'ānic era, the subjects of poetry and prose were not broad; rather they dealt with limited range of subjects. The subjects of the prose were generally genealogies (أنساب), legends dealing with inter-tribal wars (أيام العرب), parables, wisdom tales, superstitions and old stories, and the poetry included, generally, praise, eulogy, defamation, love, memories and description of debris, horses etc.

**Arabic after the Revelation of the Qur'ān:** When the Qur'ān was revealed, it marked a history in enrichment and development of both the language and literature of Arabic. It, without doubt, provided a level of linguistic excellence unparalleled in the history of the Arabic language. The revelation of the Qur'ān was the most important event in the history of Arabic language. It was an event which had far-reaching and lasting consequences, for the Qur'ān gave Arabic a form which it had hitherto lacked. The effectiveness of the Qur'ān was ensured by the fact that it represented a level of eloquence unattainable even by their most eloquent speakers.

Under the banner of Islam, Arabic spread beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsula to far-off areas in Europe, South-east Asia and Africa. The Qur'ān helped to preserve Arabic from decay and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. PP. 26 & 36

deterioration, and due to its association with the religion of Islam, Arabic gained a good deal of prestige. Memorization and recitation helped keep alive the Arabic language.

The unparalleled sublimit of the language of the Qur'ān has put an enduring impact on the Arabic language and literature and endowed them with a unique position among other languages of the world. The most important impact of the Qur'ān on the Arabic language is that it gave way to many sciences related to the Arabic language and because of Islam these sciences spread fast in the whole world. The scholars devoted their lives to spread these branches of knowledge until the 4<sup>th</sup> century Hijrah calendar witnessed the golden period in which the Islamic knowledge and culture reached its highest level.<sup>1</sup>

According to Jurjī Zaidān (1861-1914), no religious book has had such an impact on the language in which it was presented as the Qur'ān has had on Arabic literature.<sup>2</sup> The noted American historian and the author of the famous "The 100", Michael Hart gives his opinion, about the Qur'ān's impact on the Arabic language too, in the following words:

"The centrality of the Koran in the Moslem religion and the fact it is written in Arabic have probably prevented the Arab language from breaking up into mutually unintelligible dialects, which might otherwise have occurred in the intervening thirteen centuries."<sup>3</sup>

F.F. Arbuthnot, expressing his views about the literary aspects of the Qur'ān and its inimitability, writes:

"From the literary point of view, the Qur'ān is regarded as a specimen of the purest Arabic, written in half poetry and half prose. It has been said that in some cases grammarians have

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<sup>1</sup> 'Ulūm ul-Qur'ān: Madkhal ilá al-Tafsīr al-Qur'ān wa Bayān-u-l'jāzihi, P, 24

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh-u-Ādāb il-Lughat il-'Arabiyyah, 1/196

<sup>3</sup> The 100, P. 9

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adopted their rules to agree with certain phrases and expressions used in it, and that though several attempts have been made to produce a work equal to it as far as elegant writing is concerned none has as yet succeeded.”<sup>1</sup>

**The Qur’ān as a Book of Language:** The Qur’ān is considered as not only the religious book, but also as the book of Arabic language and literature at their highest levels. In many countries, especially in Arabic countries, the Qur’ān are memorised by heart to be accustomed to use its vocabularies and styles. Many scholars read it as the book of literature also and they dive in it. Below is the brief study of the Qur’ān as the book of language, and its impact on and contribution to the Arabic language:

1. The revelation of the Qur’ān resulted in many reformation, addition, deletion and beautification in the Arabic language. The Muslims, in the beginning of the Islamic calendar, were so desirous to preserve the Qur’ān that they hurried to reform the form, grammar, pronunciation, Arabic alphabet and writing system and to make them developed. Arabic grammar was codified in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Islamic centuries. The foremost famous grammarian *Abū al-Aswad al-Daulī* (أبو الأسود الدؤلي) developed dot system in Arabic language in the first Hijrah.
2. The Qur’ān unified different dialects. Before the revelation of the Qur’ān, the Arabic language had several dialects and pronunciation used in different tribes and regions, but when the Qur’ān revealed, it unified the whole Arab on one dialect: the dialect of Quraysh. Because of the Qur’ān, the Quraysh dialect spread in the whole Arabs and was chosen as the ideal one. Thus, the Arabic language became one unified standard language.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Construction of the Bible and the Koran, P. 5

<sup>2</sup> I’jāz ul-Qur’ān wal-Balāghat-un-Nabawiyyah, P. 55

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3. The Qur'ān enriched lexicon of the Arabic language by bringing new words, phrases and expression. Since the Qur'ān came with a new religion, it came with abundance of new words of this new religion, words such as: *Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣaum, Ḥaj, Rukū', Sujūd, Qiyām* etc.
4. The Qur'ān expanded meanings, the themes and scope of Arabic language, as the Qur'ān helped to open new horizons and fields of study which the Arabs knew not before. These fields included disciplines such as the themes of Islamic Shariah: life after death, virtue and punishment according to the deeds, oneness of God, His unlimited power, the histories of the past etc. Later on, many associated '*ulūm* (knowledge and sciences) emerged as new themes, like rhetoric, Arabic grammar, morphology, Arabic diacritical marks, psychology, tafsīr, qiraat, fiqh and its principles, ḥadīth and its principles, thus, the whole Islamic sciences emerged out of the Qur'ān, and all these bore new meanings and themes.
5. The Qur'ān presented new locutions, ways of expression. It cleansed the Arabic language from unusual and obscure words. It provided with new expression and eloquence. The Qur'ān provided with clear, heart touching, ear-sweetening and influencing ways of expression. The style of the Qur'ān when it gives glad tidings is different from the style consisting of alarming and scolding ones.
6. And above all, it is the Qur'ān which saved the Arabic language from decay in different situations of ever-changing internal and external political changes.<sup>1</sup>

Later on, this Qur'ānic style was adopted by the writers and orators. Since the Qur'ān is the encyclopaedia of the Arabic language and literature. Writers and orators used to

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<sup>1</sup> Mir'ā tul-Islām, P. 138

quote words from the Qur'ān to make their works impressive and influential.<sup>1</sup>

**The Qur'ān as a Book of Literature:** Mainly the Qur'ān is the book of guidance; on the other hand it has its linguistic and literary aspects as well. Sayyid Quṭb has written a book on this very topic namely '*Al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān*' (التصوير الفني) (في القرآن). *Al-Zamakhsharī* (d. 1144) is also among the first who perceived the artistic beauty in the Qur'ān but his approach was limited.<sup>2</sup> For the Qur'ān's artistic portrayal, representation and depiction, Sayyid Qutb uses the word '*al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī*' (التصوير الفني). Explaining the idea of *al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī*, Sayyid Qutb writes:

"التصوير هو الأداة المفضلة في أسلوب القرآن. فهو يعبر بالصورة المحسنة المتخيلة عن المعنى الذهني، والحالة النفسية، وعن الحادث المحسوس، والمشهد المنظور، وعن النموذج الإنساني والطبيعة البشرية. ثم يرتقي بالصورة التي يرسمها فيمنحها الحياة الشاخصة، أو الحركة المتجددة. فإذا المعنى الذهني هيئة أو حركة، وإذا الحالة النفسية لوحة أو مشهد، وإذا النموذج الإنساني شاخص حي، وإذا الطبيعة البشرية مجسمة مرئية. فأما الحوادث والمشاهد، والقصص والمناظر، فيردها شاخصة حاضرة، فيما الحياة، وفيها الحركة، فإذا أضاف إليها الحوار فقد استوت لها كل عناصر التخيل"<sup>3</sup>.

Issa J. Boullata has expressed this above-mentioned Arabic text of Sayyid Qutb, in English, under the title: "Sayyid Quṭb's Literary Appreciation of the Qur'ān", in the following way:

"*Taṣwīr* is the preferred tool in the style of the Qur'ān. By palpable fancied images, it designates intellectual meanings, psychological states, perceptible events, visual scenes, human types, and human nature. It then elevates these images it

<sup>1</sup> Al- Bayān wal-Tabyīn, 1/118

<sup>2</sup> Al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī, P. 28

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 36

draws, and grants them living presence or regenerating movement; whereupon intellectual meanings become forms or motions, psychological states become tableaux or spectacles, human types become vivid and at hand, and human nature becomes visible and embodied. As for events, scenes, stories, and sights, it renders them actual and immediate, pulsating with life and movement. When it adds dialogue to them, it brings into full play all the elements of imaginative representation in them".<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Quṭb also talks about the rhythm and sounds and choice of words, artistic harmony and symmetry. He says that through this way the Qur'ān expresses its specific ideas or images in a beautiful manner. According to Quṭb, because of this quality in the Qur'ān the Arabs became impressed by it at first hand. Even the then stalwart enemies of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) became impressed by the beauty of the Qur'ān. 'Umar (MABPWT) accepted Islam, and Walīd bin Muḡhīra who turned away from Islam and then after much thought accepted the impact of the Qur'ān and said that the Qur'ān is nothing but a magic.<sup>2</sup>

According to Sayyid Quṭb, the first thing which impressed the minds of the Arabs was the artistic beauty of the Qur'ān. Quṭb rejects the idea that the Arabs were impressed by the Qur'ān because of its legislations, prophecies of the future and scientific information. Quṭb, giving the proofs on his argument, says that there is no legislation, prophecies and likewise subjects in the surahs which were revealed early. To him, the parts of the Qur'ān which contain these prophecies, scientific information and so on were revealed at later stage.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Literary Structures of Religious Meanings in the Qur'ān, P. 356

<sup>2</sup> Al-Muddaththir: 19-26 / Al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī, PP. 11-15

<sup>3</sup> Al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī, P. 18

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Advocating this same idea of Sayyid Quṭb that it is the Qur'ān's literary beauty that impressed the non-Muslims of Arab, Mustanşir Mīr says:

“The Qur'ān claims to be inimitable and challenges its opponents to produce a work like it (e.g. 2:23; 11:13; 17:88 and 52:33-34). The inimitability later came to be constructed essentially in literary terms, and the theologians made belief in the matchlessness of the Qur'ān part of a Muslim's faith. In its historical exposition, the doctrine of inimitability made the literary study of the Qur'ān a handmaiden to the theological aspect of the scripture. But the doctrine overlooks a crucial fact. The Qur'ānic challenge was addressed not to the believers but to the unbelievers, and was not simply denunciation of the unbelievers, but constituted an invitation to them to carefully examine the Qur'ān and see if it could have been, as they claimed it was, the product of the mind of a man possessed. Irrespective of what conclusion one reaches on the question of the Qur'ān's origins, one must agree that the underlying assumption of the challenge was that the merit and beauty of the Qur'ān could be appreciated even by those outside the fold of the faith. And if that is the case, then it would be possible to dissociate the literary study of the Qur'ān from the theological study of it”.<sup>1</sup>

If we read the Qur'ān thoroughly, at its literary ground, we acknowledge that the Qur'ān is a literary masterpiece. It makes, besides being a unity of coherence, use of literary devices and techniques to present its message: it tells stories, cites parables, uses figures of speech, and draws character sketches. Besides, it contains satire, and irony, narrative and dramatic techniques and presents characters and so on.

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<sup>1</sup> The Koran, 3/61, under the title: The Qur'ān as Literature

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In the following lines some literary aspects of the Qur'ān is being given in short, with some examples:

- a) **Pictorial Element:** The Qur'ān uses words with precision and subtlety. The Qur'ānic language is frequently picturesque with simile and the similitude as we see its examples in the Qur'ānic verses at different places. For example sketching the scene of the people coming out of their graves on the Last Day, the Qur'ān describes them as “if they were locusts scattered all over” *يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ* “if they were locusts scattered all over” *كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُنْتَشِرٌ*<sup>1</sup> and sketching the situation of the disbelievers who shy away from the divine message, the Qur'ān describes them “as if they are frightened assess that run away from a lion”, *(كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُسْتَنْفِرَةٌ ۖ فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ۗ)*<sup>2</sup>.

Apart from these examples there are many verses which bear this device as we see in the Qur'ān in verse 20 of chapter 54, in verse 39 of chapter 36, in verses 35-40 of chapter 24 and so on.

- b) **Humour, Satire, Irony:** The Qur'ān is a serious matter, and existence of humour in the scriptures makes a strange in appearance. But, to Mustanşir Mîr, it is not a strange thing as there are satires too in the Qur'ān. Humour is one of the devices to make a point. Humour can be used to convey a religious insight or elucidate a theological teaching<sup>3</sup>. Citing example from the Qur'ān, Mustanşir Mîr writes:

“In S. 11:69-73, angels visit Abraham and give him the good news of the birth of a son. Abraham's wife, who is at some distance but is listening intently, breaks into laughter. Her laughter was caused by incredulity, as the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qamar: 7

<sup>2</sup> Al-Muddaththir: 50-51

<sup>3</sup> Detail of possibility of the existence of humour in the Qur'ān can be seen in the book 'The Koran, 3/122-123, under the title: 'Humour and Qur'ān Translation'

text indicates: 'Woe to me,' she said, 'shall I give birth, being an old woman?'. The piece of news must have struck her as somewhat funny: a woman giving birth at such an advanced age! And she adds, pointing to Abraham: 'And there is this husband of mine! An old man! This is a strange thing indeed.'...<sup>1</sup>

Mustanşir Mîr quotes Jakob Jansson's definition of humour when used in scriptures as 'comical sayings and events, expressions and situations, that might provoke smile or laughter'.<sup>2</sup>

In the Qur'ān we find a touch of the humour also but the instances are less in number, and these humours are mainly humour of character or of situation. The instances can be seen in in the story of voyage of Mūsá (Moses) with his young companion in which Mūsá (Moses) asks his companion to bring out the food they have carried with them, which consisted of fish, but strangely they see that the fish had jumped into the water and disappeared. The Qur'ān says:

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿٨٣﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِقَتْلُهُ  
ءَاتَيْنَا غَدَاةً لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٨٤﴾ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ  
الْحُوتَ وَمَا أَنَسَنِيهِ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٨٥﴾<sup>3</sup>

The example of satire is that when Ibrāhīm (Abraham) addresses the idols and asks them in mock seriousness and says 'Why don't you eat?' (أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ)<sup>4</sup> and receiving no response he says 'why don't you speak?' (مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنْطِقُونَ).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For detail see 'The Koran, 3/113-114

<sup>2</sup> The Koran, 3/114

<sup>3</sup> Al-Kahf: 83

<sup>4</sup> Al-Şāffāt: 91

<sup>5</sup> Al-Şāffāt: 92

And when the affluent wicked people would get punishment in the Hereafter, they would be told: “Taste this boiling water! It is you who were the noble dignitary in the world!”<sup>1</sup>

The blend of humour and satire can be found in the story when after destroying all the idols, Ibrāhīm (Abraham) asks the custodian of the temple to ask the one remaining idol about who destroyed the all idols. ( قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا )

(فَسَأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ ۝٢٦)

The Qur’ān is rich in irony too,<sup>3</sup> “In tempting Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Satan suggests to them that the fruit of the forbidden tree could transform them into angels, but that God would not like them to become angels, hence the prohibition to eat of the tree (7:20). Ironically, the angels have already bowed before man and acknowledged his supremacy, so that man's attempt to become an angel would constitute a descent, and not an ascent, for man.”<sup>4</sup> There are other examples of irony too at different places in the Qur’ān for example in the verses 74-79 of the chapter 6.

- c) **Word Play:** The Qur’ān also uses the wordplay as in the use of the word *Miṣr* (مصر) in the Qur’ān, 2:61. *Miṣr* means ‘city’ as an indefinite noun and it means ‘Egypt’ as a diptote. Another example is the word ‘*Muftarayāt*’ (مفتريات). “the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Dukhān: 49

<sup>2</sup> Al-Anbiyā’: 63

<sup>3</sup> The related verse is:

فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْءَاتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَتَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ۝٥٠

<sup>4</sup> The Koran, 3/67

Meccan opponents of Muḥammad accused him of fabricating the Qurʾān and passing it off as divine speech. S. 11:13 challenges them to produce ten chapters like it, and then adds the word *muftarayat*, which means 'fabricated.' In the context, the word gives two different but equally applicable meanings: (a) if you succeed in producing a discourse like the Qurʾān, you will have proved that Muḥammad has fabricated the Qurʾān, so go ahead and make your attempt; (b) it is the discourse produced by you that will be a fabrication, so go ahead and fabricate".<sup>1</sup>

d) **Dramatic Dialogue:** Dialogue in scriptures means a significant verbal exchange that takes place between two or more parties in a given situation. The Qurʾān uses dramatic dialogues also. Generally the Qurʾānic dialogues are between the Prophet and the nation to which he was sent, between Allah and His Prophet, between human beings, between the people of Heaven and people of Hell in the hereafter and there are one-sided dialogues too. There are many examples of these dialogues, among them Surah Yūsuf is a good example. And one of its kind examples is the dialogue of Mūsá (Moses) and Fir'aun (Pharaoh) in 26:16. Explaining this Qurʾānic dialogue Mustanşir Mīr writes:

"The dialogue opens with Moses' declaration that he is a prophet sent by the 'Lord of the universe', and with his demand that Pharaoh allow the Israelites to go with him. Pharaoh condescendingly reminds Moses of the upbringing he received in Pharaoh's palace, and, by reminding Moses that he is guilty of killing a Copt, also makes an unambiguous threat (verse 19). Moses replies that his killing of the Copt was an accident. As for his

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 68

upbringing in Pharaoh's house, he acknowledges it as a favour by Pharaoh, but curtly tells him that he cannot on that count enslave the Israelites (verses 20-21). Cornered by this trenchant reply, Pharaoh makes another move, asking Moses in an obviously satirical tone: 'Who is this 'Lord of the universe' you speak of?' (Verse 24). Moses' reply is brief but to the point: 'The Lord of the heavens and the earth.' Pharaoh, who claims to be the supreme lord, feels the blow of the answer. At the same time, he senses that some of his courtiers may have been unduly impressed with the boldness of Moses, and so, in an attempt to laugh Moses off, he turns to his courtiers, saying: 'You hear that, don't you?' (verse 25). Undaunted, Moses presses the attack: 'Your Lord, and also the Lord of your ancestors of former times'. A powerful dent is made in the ancestral religion of Egypt, and Pharaoh, until now feigning self-control, shows visible signs of impatience. He suggests to his courtiers that Moses is insane (verse 27), hoping to put an abrupt end to the discussion. Moses refuses to let up: 'Lord of the East and the West', he adds. This is the last straw. Pharaoh threatens to imprison Moses (verse 30). 'Even if I should present a clear sign [miracle]' asks Moses. Pharaoh has to consent, for his courtiers must have been intrigued by the offer of Moses, and it would be imprudent of Pharaoh to disregard the mood of the court. It might also have occurred to him that if Moses showed a miracle, then he (Pharaoh) might be able to explain it away as a cheap trick. At any rate, he consents, probably grudgingly. When Moses performs his miracles, Pharaoh is perplexed, but soon pulls himself together, observing that Moses is at best an accomplished sorcerer. But something must be done about this sorcerer

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if he is not to steal the show. The courtiers advise that the official magicians be summoned to compete with Moses<sup>1</sup>

- e) **Characterization:** The main characters of the Holy Qur'ān are Prophet Muḥammad, Ibrāhīm (Abraham), and Mūsá (Moses) and others. A memorable character can be seen in the Qur'ān in 74: 18-25.
- f) **Literary Devices:** The Qur'ān has used many literary devices in its verses. The followings are some common literary devices used by the Holy Qur'ān:
- g) **Figures of Speech in Place of Simple Words:** Adding beauty and colour to plain words, the Qur'ān uses illustrations, imagery and metaphors extensively as the use of imagery and figures of speech is Qur'ān's preferred style. Using the genre of figures of speech the Qur'ān says:

وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Tr.: Nor will they enter the Garden until a thick rope can pass through the eye of a needle.<sup>2</sup>

Expressing the idea that the actions of the disbelievers will be of no use, the Qur'ān says:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ ۖ

Tr.: The parable of those who reject their Lord is that their works are as ashes on which the wind blows furiously as on a tempestuous day.<sup>3</sup>

And there are many examples of this genre in the Qur'ān, for examples we find in the places, 2: 261/ 2:265/ 22:2/ 29:41 etc.

<sup>1</sup> The Koran, 3/70-71

<sup>2</sup> Al-A'rāf: 40

<sup>3</sup> Ibrāhīm: 18

h) **Device of Anthromorphization:** Anthropomorphization (or personification<sup>1</sup>) is also a characteristic stylistic device which the Qur'ān uses extensively. For example: slandering is likened to eating another person's flesh. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ān:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اجْتَنِبُوْا كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ اِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ اِثْمٌ وَّلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا وَّلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعضُكُمْ بَعضًا اُجِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اَنْ يَّاْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مِثِّيْا فَكْرِهْتُمْوْهُ وَاَتَقُوْا اللّٰهَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيْمٌ<sup>2</sup>

There are many other verses in the Holy Qur'ān too, for examples, in (قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّيْ) <sup>3</sup>, (وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَاسًا)

<sup>4</sup>and so on.

i) **Rhythmic Pattern:** Rhythmic pattern is another feature of the devices of the Qur'ān. This pattern is a reflection of the special array of words and arrangement of phrases of the Qur'ān. For this very reason some scholars are of the opinion that the Qur'ān possesses the characteristics of both the prose and poetry. A good example of this rhythmic pattern is the Surah *al-Najm*.

j) **Narrative Techniques/Devices:** Narrative techniques are the mode by which an author presents characters, actions, settings and events which constitute the narrative in a work of fiction. It is the way characters and their traits are presented to the audiences, the action is constructed. In short, narrative techniques are the methods and approaches which are used by authors to present their works for their audiences.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropomorphism#Religious\\_texts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthropomorphism#Religious_texts) (viewed on 12-03-2014)

<sup>2</sup> Al-Hujurat: 12.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Naba': 10.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Kahf: 109.

<sup>5</sup> Summarized from A Glossary of Literary Terms, P. 173.

Since the Qur'ān is the most innovative divine Holy Book in terms of its way of presentation also, It uses many narrative techniques / devices or styles, and these devices are among many features of the Qur'ānic text. (As we find in the stories of Nūḥ (Noah), Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Yūsuf (Joseph), Mūsá (Moses), 'Īsá (Jesus) etc). Among these devices, the four literary techniques have been used in the Qur'ān extensively: (1) The Qur'ān begins a story with a short summary, followed by detail, from the beginning to the end, as we find in *Surah al-Kahaf*. (2) The Qur'ān begins a story with the presentation of the conclusion first, and then It derives the lesson from it, then It narrates the whole story as we find in the story of Mūsá (Moses) in *Surah al-Qaṣaṣ*. (3) The Qur'ān, without presenting an introduction, It presents the story directly, as we find in the story of Maryam (Mary) in the case of the birth of Isa (Jesus) in *surah Maryam*, and in the story of Sulaimān (Solomon) and the aunts in *surah al-Naml*. (4) The Holy Qur'ān presents the story through dramatization, with dialogues among the characters, as we see in the story of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Ismail in *surah 2*.

- k) **Symbolism and allegory:** Many translators and interpreters of the meanings of the Qur'ān are of the opinion that interpreting or translating a symbolic or allegorical verse is one of the challenging tasks. The interpretations of the allegorical verses are susceptible to more than one interpretation. *Surah Yūsuf* is one of such examples, which uses symbolism: the clash of good and evil.

The metaphysical aspect of the allegorical verses relates to the *al-ghalb*, the realm which is beyond the reach of a human perception and experience and that is why they can only be grasped through a parabolic illustration.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see 'The Koran, 4/291-294

l) **Mathal or Parable:** *Mathal* is one of the commonest terms in the Qur'ān that denotes apparently a literary form. The word *mathal* can be translated as simile, metaphor or parable, and in the context of the Qur'ān it includes proverbs and even ideals too. The *mathal* in the Qur'ān comes in three basic forms, the *muṣarrāh mathal* (stated), the *kāmin mathal* (hidden), and the *mursal mathal* (formless).

The *muṣarrāh mathal* (stated), as the name implies, contains an obvious comparison and is widely used in the Qur'ān, such as in the Holy Qur'ān, 2:17-20.

In the form of the *mathal kāmin* (hidden) the term of comparison is not used. This type of *mathal* conveys Islamic ideals readily acceptable to natural human instincts due to the deep and impressive meanings which they imply as we see in the Qur'ān, 25:67.

The *mathal mursal* (formless) covers short verses which convey lessons, many of which have become proverbs. In this form comparisons may be made or implied as we see in the Qur'ān, 2:216.<sup>1</sup>

m) **Coherent Unity of the Qur'ān:** One of the main features of the Qur'ān is that it is one organic whole and there is coherent unity of each of the Surah. According to this theory each Surah of the Qur'ān is connected with another and the verse is connected with another too. Each Surah is a unit of meaning and it rounds over a single axis, which gives a thematic and semantic unity. Each Surah has its special personality and feature around which the topics are tightly bound. The themes of Surahs may be different but the themes of each Surah are united in producing one Qur'ānic message.

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see the book 'Tafsīr' edited by Muṣṭafá Shāh, PP. 50-60

This term “coherence unity” can be translated as *Munāsabāt al-Qur’ān* or *Naẓm al-Qur’ān* (مناسبات/ نظم القرآن) in Arabic. Many scholars have penned on this subject. Among the earlier scholars al-Zarkashī (745-794 / 1344-1391) has devoted a full chapter to this topic in his book *al-Burhān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*. Suyūṭī (d. 9011/1505) has also penned down on this topic in his book *al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*. But the modern interpreters of the Qur’ān have elaborated and emphasised more in their books and interpretations. Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī, Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī, Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī of India and Sayyid Quṭb of Egypt are those who penned on this topic with detail. Maulānā Thānawī in his Urdu translation and interpretation of the Qur’ān: *Bayān al-Qur’ān*<sup>1</sup> (بيان القرآن) has used a title *Rabṭ* (ربط) and explained under this title the connection of each Surah and verse with each other<sup>2</sup>. According to Maulānā Farāhī every Surah has a central theme which he calls ‘*Amūd*’. All verses of a Surah are tightly connected to their ‘*Amūd*’ and thus the centrality of ‘*Amūd*’ is recognized. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī also interprets every Surah with reference to the ‘*Amūd*’, following the footsteps of his teacher Maulānā Farāhī. Sayyid Quṭb, too, is of the opinion that every Surah revolves around a principal idea and is to be understood with reference to it. For this axis or central thesis he uses the term ‘*Miḥwar*’.<sup>3</sup>

Explaining the concept of coherence unity of the Qur’ān, in his general introduction to Surah al-Baqarah (chapter

<sup>1</sup> For detail see ‘Bayān ul-Qur’ān’ (Urdu) of Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī

<sup>2</sup> See also ‘Sabq-ul-Ghāyāt fī Nasq-il-Āyāt of Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī and al-Fauz-ul-Kabīr of Shāh Waliullāh Dehlawī

<sup>3</sup> For detail see the book: The Koran, 4/198-209, article of Mustanşir Mīr entitled: ‘The Sura as Unity’

second of the Qur'ān), Sayyid Quṭb in his book *Fī Zīlāl al-Qur'ān*, writes:

"ومن ثم يلحظ من يعيش في ظلال القرآن أنّ لكل سورة من سوره شخصية مميزة! شخصية لها روح يعيش معها القلب كما لو كان يعيش مع روح حي مميز الملامح والسمات والأنفاس! ولها موضوع رئيسي أو عدة موضوعات رئيسية مشدودة إلى محور خاص. ولها جوّ خاص يظلل موضوعاتها كلها، ويجعل سياقها يتناول هذه الموضوعات من جوانب معينة، تحقق التناسق بينها وفق هذا الجو. ولها إيقاع موسيقي خاص - إذا تغير في ثنايا السياق فإنما يتغير لمناسبة موضوعية خاصة.. وهذا طابع عام في سور القرآن جميعًا."<sup>1</sup>

The summary of this above-mentioned Arabic text has been expressed well in English in the following words:

"Hence, whoever lives in the shades of the Qur'ān notices that each of its suras has a distinctive personality, a personality that has a soul with which one's heart lives as though with a living soul possessing distinctive features and traits. It (each sura) has a main topic or several main topics tightly bound to a special theme; it has a special atmosphere enveloping all its topics and helping it to deal with them from specific angles to achieve harmony among them accordingly; it has a special musical rhythm which, if it changes in the course (of the sura), changes for a specific consideration related to the topic. This is a general characteristic of all the suras of the Qur'ān".<sup>2</sup>

All the Islamic scholars and 'Ulamā' are of the opinion that the Qur'ān has a tight coherent unity and they engaged themselves within the theory of *naẓm* or *munāsabāt* and on this topic hundreds of books have been written,

<sup>1</sup> *Fī Zīlāl il-Qur'ān*, 1/27-28

<sup>2</sup> *Literary Structures of Religious Meaning in the Qur'ān*, P. 362

contrary to some orientalists who say that the Qur'ān is not a coherent unity. Thomas Carlyle said: "It is as toilsome reading as I ever undertook, a wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite" and R.A. Nicholson referred to "the opinion almost unanimously held by European readers that it is obscure, tiresome, uninteresting; a farrago of long-winded narratives and prosaic exhortations..."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 363, with reference to Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* and *On Heroes and Hero Worship*, and R.A. Nicholson's *A Literary History of the Arabs*

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**Concept of *Gharābat***  
*with Reference to*  
**Some Individual Qur'ānic Words and Expressions**  
**(Four Popular English Qur'ānic Translations-As Example)**

✎...Ibrāhīm Farīdī<sup>1</sup>

**Primary Discourse**

Whatever is to be submitted in the forthcoming lines is not more than a humble critical evaluation of the four popular English translations of the Holy Book of Allah, His Final Message to the entire mankind, with respect to a limited number of words out of the Qur'ānic vocabulary generally considered to be *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*. The objective is to conduct a meticulous survey of the English equivalents and word groups they have placed against the Qur'ānic expressions through an impartial comparison between the four translations and determining which one is better by reasons leading the critique to such conclusions.

**Qur'ān, A Shared Asset of the Entire Mankind**

Given the extraordinary import of the Qur'ān for all human beings, it has always been the centre of Muslim attention.

Ever since the earliest phase of the Islamic history, a much larger number of the endowed and fortunate people has been devoting the best part of their lives for the service of the Book of Allah in order to facilitate a systematic understanding of it to the world at large. Undeniably, the Qur'ān tops the list of the books men has ever served the most across the entire human history. The value of other scriptures and human

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<sup>1</sup> An Indian freelance scholar and multilingual translator

works apart, the Qur'ān is indeed of incomparable import for all human beings. Faith in the realities it imparts an unquestionable knowledge to men and the scheme of the human life it propounds must be judged by the world with a sense of complete impartiality. Although the matter of faith has been left absolutely to the will and choice of man, yet he has simultaneously been warned against the never-ending portentous consequences of disbelief and unbelief with respect to the Qur'ān. The attitude of unfaith, indifference and apathy towards the Qur'ān is bound to lead the man to the ultimate doom and destruction in the life just to begin as soon as man comes under the mighty attack of death. This fact lends even higher degree of import to the service of this Book. There have been numerous aspects of the service of the Qur'ān the scholars have been doing over ages. From among those aspects, one is to translating its meaning to other languages of the world. One more aspect is serving the Gharīb al-Qur'ān. Present humble study revolves round both these two aspects. As specified above, the methodology employed here is to critically examine the four designated translations with reference to their efforts they have made in rendering the so-called gharīb al-Qur'ān. In the very outset, this study examines the concept of the gharābat in relation to a great number of the individual Qur'ānic words and expressions.

The Holy Qur'ān is the Last Revealed Word of Allah and His Final Message to the entire mankind. Of its nature of revelation and the superlativity of its language in terms of clarity, perspicuity and sublimity the Qur'ān itself has spoken in the following words: "And verily, it is a revelation of the Lord of the worlds, which the True Spirit has brought down upon your heart, that you may be (one) of the warners. (It is) in plain Arabic language". (al-Shu'arā':192-195)

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This Qur'ānic statement establishes it beyond doubt that the text of the entire Qur'ān is fully clear and comprehensible to those who possess the knowledge of the Arabic language. Admittedly, there might be varying levels of understanding the meanings of the Holy Book of Allah, depending on the people's linguistic competence, perceptive dimensions and the levels of intellect they are born with.

### **Concept of Gharābat with Reference to Some Individual Qur'ānic Words and Expressions**

Strangely enough, notwithstanding the repeated Qur'ānic statements describing the Qur'ān to be a Book revealed in the lucid and unambiguous Arabic language, there exist exegetical opinions to claim that a vast number of the Qur'ānic words and expressions has ceased to be clear, expressive and lucid in communicating their meanings and message to their target audience. But on what this notion is predicated? Did those words lose their supportive evidence which were available in the pre-Islamic, early Islamic and those ages which closely followed them but unfortunately got lost in the subsequent ages of Arabic language and literature? If the opinion of gharābat is raised along such notions, it does not hold even a modicum of truth. It not just contradicts the Divine Promise of safekeeping the Qur'ān till the Day of Judgement, it is also at total variance with normal and well-established historic truths vouchsafed by the subsequent generations of the Muslim community overages in preserving the Book of Allah and all what is associated with it. The claim of gharābat is self-contradicting. In explaining the meanings of the so-called gharīb words and expressions these scholars make recourse, and naturally so, only to the existing literary evidence scattered about the vast literary legacy of the Arabic language.

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This undeniable fact demolishes the very base of this claim. As a modest scholar of the Qur'ān, we are opposed to such opinions, and are never prepared to associate even the slightest value to such absolutely unfounded and precarious notions. For those learned men of Islamic scholarship holding such notions we seek excuse from Allah.

There is a sizeable number of authors who have produced a vast literature in the Arabic language, the language of the Qur'ān itself, to deal with such words and expressions. Abān bin Taghlib and Zaid bin 'Alī are perhaps the first who took lead in writing on this genre. Following are those writers of note who lived before the fourth century of Hijrah: Muḥammad bin Ṣā'ib bin Baṣhar al-Kalbī (d.146), Abū Faid al-Mu'arrij bin 'Amr al-Ḥārith al-Sadūsī al-Baṣarī (d.174), Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin al-Ḥasan bin Abū Sarah al-Ruasī (d.190), Abul Ḥasan al-Nazar bin Shumail al-Makin (d.203), Abū 'Umar Ishāq bin Murārah al-Shimano (d.206), Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim bin Salmān (d.224), Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh bin Muslim bin Qutaibah (d.248), Abū Zakariyā Yaḥyá bin Ziyad al-Farrār (d.207) and Abū Said 'Abdul Mālik bin Qarīb al-Asma'ī (d.216) to name only a few. It is noteworthy that most of the works on the genre of the early writers could not reach us, and most of them, therefore, remained unpublished.

Apart from the position of the earlier and later men of Islamic learning vis-a-vis the traditional concept of *gharābat* with reference to the individual Qur'ānic words and expressions, the Farāhī school of Qur'ānic thought is absolutely opposed to such demeaning notions and erroneous concepts. The scholars belonging to this distinguished school of Qur'ānic studies have vehemently refuted such notions employing satisfying and sane arguments.

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Whatever just has been submitted in the preceding lines in connection with the concept of gharābat was intended to level the ground what has just been for drawing a systematic comparison between the above-mentioned four important English translations of the Holy Scripture of Islam with the purpose of determining the levels of their understanding of the textual implications of the Book of Allah and their choices of equivalents to express the meanings of such words and expressions as are generally regarded as Gharīb.

### **Translation of the Holy Qur'ān: Theory and Practice**

As a means of communication and sharing the knowledge with others on a much wider level the importance of translation has always been a matter of unequivocal agreement amongst the nations of the world. The origin of this useful tool could be traced back to the earlier generations of the human race. With the passage of time its importance grew much and assumed even wider dimensions. The proposition assumes still greater proportions when it comes to the translation of the religious scriptures. In order to widely circulate the set of religious tenets and teachings the translation is undoubtedly the most efficient tool. Since Islam is the religion of da'wah by its very nature, the question of translation gathers enormous and incomparable importance.

The question of lawfulness or otherwise in respect of the translation of the Holy Qur'ān has never been of relevance. Undeniably, there has been a scanty number of such scholars as hold the view of impermissibility of translating the Qur'ān into any language besides the Arabic language. This is, however, an extreme view, hence to be rejected outright. This question is of real need rather than being mere a theoretical one. Translating the Qur'ān into any language of the world is an onerous task. This task will invariably assume greater challenges and difficulties

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when the target language is English or any other language of the European continent. It is primarily because of those languages' lack of proper equivalents of most of the basic Qur'ānic and Islamic terms. Being the Qur'ān the only book of its kind, its translator must combine in his person a fuller competence and knowledge of both the source and the target languages. There exists a vast number of translations of the Holy Book of Allah in the English language. Present brief study by no way is intended to be a survey of the English translations of the Qur'ān. It is just limited to conduct a comparative study of four English Qur'ānic translations with reference to their respective approaches in rendering the words and expressions of the Qur'ān which are traditionally regarded as Gharīb. Brief as it is, this study includes only fifty words and expressions, besides drawing comparison between the translations of a number of the Qur'ānic verses and phrases that are grammatically open to more than one interpretations. The four translations selected for this high academic purpose are the following ones:

1. **'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī's**: Of Indian origin, the Late 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī was one out of the fewer men of high Islamic scholarship and great erudition who could combine in themselves an enviably higher degree of both the sacred and the secular knowledge at once. In order to undertake the challenging task of translating the Holy Scripture into a language of international character as English, he devoted much of his means and time for the purpose. The result was this excellent translation which was first published in the thirties of the past century, and has since gone into numerous reprints. With direct access to the Arabic, the source language of the Qur'ān, he was fortunate enough to largely benefit from the vast Urdu literature thus far available in this language of the Muslim community
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spread over the most parts of this vast subcontinent. In addition to the translation, his exegetical notes also hold immense good in understanding the meaning and message of the Holy Scripture.

2. ***Muhammad Marmaduke Pichthall's***: This translation has its own merits. A Christian by birth, Pichthall was fortunate enough to embrace Islam, the only true religion of mankind. Being an enthusiastic convert, Pichthall applied himself to produce a fresh English translation of the Holy Scripture of Islam to widen the scope of its beneficiaries. To the best of our assembly and evaluation, Pichthall's translation endeavours are traditional in character and incorporates most of the characteristics and views of the traditionalism.
  3. ***Towards Understanding the Qur'ān***: It is a fresh English version of Maulānā Mauwdūdī's voluminous monumental Urdu exegetical work *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*. The late author's unmatched scholarship and erudition is unanimously far too above any dispute and controversy amongst the men of Islamic learning. The translator, Dr Zafar Ishāq Anṣārī, combines in his person great traditions of Islamic scholarship and a masterly command over English language. He is one out of the fewer Muslims who are able to make a fuller and all-round use of the English language.
  4. ***A Simple English Translation***: Originally prepared in the Urdu language by Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān, a celebrated man of Islamic scholarship of the present day India and world of Islam, the author himself, through an active assistance of his learned daughter, Dr, Farīda Khānam, undertook the task of rendering it into English. Needless to say, all the four translations have their own merits and shortcomings, and this investigative study is intended to assess them from this angle as well.
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This study is dedicated to examine the difference of opinions and approaches of the above-mentioned four English translators of the Holy Qur'ān with reference to their syntactical analyses of a number of key phrases that are grammatically open to more than one interpretation. Each translator has followed his own approach.

Other aspects apart, most of such differences might primarily be assigned to the translators' difference of opinions in connection with the syntactical implications of the pieces of the Qur'ānic text and their approaches to the clausal analyses of those items featuring in the concerned verses. Such differences often are of immense academic interest for devoted students of the Qur'ān. For such differences, almost invariably result in a variety of sound interpretations and take the students to hitherto unexplored heights of the vast Qur'ānic knowledge.

submitted in the preceding lines in connection with the concept of gharābat was intended to level the ground what has just been for drawing a systematic comparison between the above-mentioned four important English translations of the Holy Scripture of Islam with the purpose of determining the levels of their understanding of the textual implications of the Book of Allah and their choices of equivalents to express the meanings of such words and expressions as are generally regarded as Gharīb.

Before entering the topic in a systematic manner it seems in the fitness of things to determine the lexical meanings of the term 'Gharīb' (غريب). Lane's Arabic English Lexicon, a great and undisputed authority, explains the term Gharīb as: "A word or an expression that is obscure, strange. كلمة غريبة language, that is strange, far from being intelligible, difficult to understand. A gharīb word is, often, opposed to the كلمة فصيحة". In his

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Kashshāf Iṣtilāḥāt al-Funūn, Sheikh Muḥammad Thānawī has defined the Gharīb in these words: "Gharīb is the expression which causes no harm to faṣāḥat. Gharīb is actually the word whose meaning is not clear, and whose usage has ceased to be familiar. The Gharābat (غرابية) is never to be attributable to the pure (and native Arabs); it is to be attributed to us. So because the problem of Gharābat is actually something which might differ from people to people.<sup>1</sup>

Given the narrow scope of this paper, the number of the words and expressions selected for the purpose of comparison could not have been much larger. It is well under thirty. Still, the panoramic survey seeks to offer a wider spectrum of meanings and the range of connotations of those expressions and phrases in the light of the views of the English translators selected for this purpose.

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٥١﴾

These two verses of al-Fātiḥa are obviously meant to define the Straight Way, positively and negatively. While all the translators are unanimously agreed upon, and have a single view, concerning the meaning of the first verse, the defining clause which mentions ṣirāṭ's positive aspect, they have a disagreement with reference to the translation of the latter clause. The following comparison will make it clear:

- a) The way of those on whom You have bestowed your Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- b) The way of those whom You have favoured, who did not incur Your wrath, who are not astray. (Maulānā Mauwdūdī)

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the preface of Najīb al-Mājidī on Rāghib's Mufradāt, Dārain Bookdepo, Lucknow.

- c) The path of those whom You have favoured; not (the path) of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who go astray. (Pickthall)
- d) The path of those You have blessed; not of those who incurred Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

**Analysis:**

Out of the four English translations of the Qurʾān cited above, the first two tend to grammatically regard the صراط ..... to be a clause defining the positive aspect of it. The latter clause, beginning with غير— on the other hand, speaks of its negative aspect. Syntactically, this translation is appreciably plausible. Apart from its clarity and smoothness, it is closer to the original text. The translation attempted by the latter two scholars, in sharp contrast, is indubitably loose from a syntactical viewpoint. According to the first two translators there exists only a single way to be attributed as straight and the two subsequent clauses are intended to define the same way, positively and otherwise. But going by the latter two translators, there are actually two ways: one is followed by the People of Grace and Favour, and the other one of those who earned the wrath of Allah and went astray.

Much as this has been the majority view, it is obviously untenable. In his commentary note ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī has drawn attention to this important point. To cite the relevant portion here:

The negative غير should be construed as applying not to the way, but as describing men protected from two dangers by God's Grace. (N.24)

It will be interesting to note that the first translation was basically attempted by Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir (d.1230 AH), the

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renowned son of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi (d.1174 AH), in his maiden Urdu translation of the Qur'ān, named Muḍīḥ-ul-Qur'ān. Later, the same view was adopted by Maulānā Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan, a great luminary of Deoband (d.1920) and by others, though very rarely.

**(2) *Yuṭīqūnahū* (يُطِيقُونَهُ)**

This expression features in the verse no. 184 of al-Baqarah.

Given that the expression, among other things, involves juristic implications, its English translation has been challenging, giving rise to more than one juristic view.

- a) (And) for those who can do it (with hardship)... ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- b) For those who can fast with extreme difficulty. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- c) And for those who can afford it. (Pickthall)
- d) For those who are capable of fasting (but still do not fast). (Maudūdī)

**Analysis:**

While the first two translators have successfully tried to capture the primary meaning of the Qur'ānic expression by bringing appropriate English equivalent, plausibly closer to the original Qur'ānic expression, the latter two scholars have failed to maintain even a linguistic equivalence between the source and the target expressions. It hardly needs mention that the capability (Maudūdī) and affordability (Pickthall) are something which, rather than exempting from, brings legal responsibility to man. With the introduction of a command and obligation any exemption from shouldering the responsibility vis-a-vis the people with full legal capacity is obviously bound to defeat the very purpose of the command. Hardship of course may be considered a legal ground for

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exempting some sorts of people from performing a duty. For it is ease, and never hardship, which Allah wants with us, as spoken of in 2/185 and 4/28.

Worse, according to the latter translations, this portion of the verse has to be taken as abrogated. Whereas, in commands and injunctions, the original rule is upholding rather than abrogation.

**Lexical discussion of *yuṭīqūnahu*:**

The root word is طوق meaning neck-ring طوقته الشيء I made the thing to be his طوق. Thereby is expressed the idea of imposing (upon one) a thing that is difficult, troublesome, inconvenient.<sup>1</sup>

**To cite more an authority:**

The word, ṭāqat, meaning strength (qudrat, meaning 'power' is used in many senses in the Arabic language. In the first grade it is used to convey the meaning of istiṭā'at (capacity), and, in the last grade, of it iṭāqat (i.e., to endure with difficulty). In the latter sense it will be used to convey the impression that such and such task was so difficult that it broke one's back or left him thoroughly exhausted. Thus, if a person were to say that he could lift heavy stone, observe fasting continuously, or offer ṣalāt throughout the night, he will use the word uṭīqu for it. Now, the phrase wa 'alal-ladhīna yuṭīqūnahu, occurring in the above verse, denotes (those who can fast with serious difficulty or hardship, i. e. such aged men and women or sick persons who can venture to fast only at the risk of their life or health. In the light of this observation it is not at all necessary to treat this verse as abrogated, as many people do, or seek an ingenious interpretation of it. The same view has also been expressed by 'Alī, A Abū Hurairah and many other Companions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> E.W.Lane P. 1894, Pub.Kitāb *Bḥavan*, Delhi

<sup>2</sup> S. Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Hasanī Nadvī, *The Four Pillars of Islam*, Academy of Islamic Research & Publications, Lucknow, India, P. 192

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According to the translation of the expression and the exegetical note of Maulānā Maudūdī (2/ Note no.(183), the clause وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ stands abrogated by the next verse, (i.e, v.no. 185) which immediately follows the one under discussion which contains this expression. Notably, this view, although vulnerable to incontestable objections on more grounds than one, has been favoured by a large number of traditional scholars down from the early age of Islam till this day, though they accommodate other interpretations as well. His note is clearly suggestive of the fact that he, too, subscribes to the view of abrogation. This, according to him, was meant to get the people accustomed to fasting.

The supporters of this view, however, fail to furnish a satisfying explanation as to how this object was achieved when concession and exemption was granted in the same breath of introducing the obligation of fasting; and how the people got accustomed to fasting within a period of un-fasting that hardly lasted for less than a single year when the next verse is said to have been revealed by which the concession was revoked.

### 3. **فِتْنَةٌ** Fitnah

The expression fitnah as a noun has been employed by the Qur'ān to denote a variety of meanings. The range of meanings includes trial, test, dissension, discord, (religious) persecution, temptation, seduction, mischief, tumult, unrest, social and otherwise, oppression and so on. Since the contextual setting in which this expression has occurred talks about the Islamic normative principles of fighting against the unjust and the wrong-doers, the respective injunctions regarding the act of fighting shall have a direct bearing on the concept and practice of Islamic Jihad, a doctrine which largely

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remains misunderstood. Let's study this important expression in the light of the four English translations and examine their linguistic approaches as to what extent they have succeeded in capturing the real meanings of the expression.

**Text and Translation of the Verse:** وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ ۗ

- a) Fight them until there is no more fitna (religious persecution) and religion belongs to God alone. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- b) Keep on fighting against them until mischief ends and the way prescribed by Allah prevails. (Maudūdī)
- c) And fight them until persecution, is no more, and religion is for Allah. (Pickthall)
- d) And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

As it is evident, all the four translations are much the same as far as the representation of the meanings of the verse and the expression fitnah are concerned, though their phraseology is slightly different. Barring 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, who has brought tumult and oppression as English equivalent to fitnah, the rest three translators have placed persecution and mischief (Maudūdī) as equivalents of fitnah. According to our judgement, all the four translators have evinced valuable and profound knowledge in this connection. To explain the point more, during almost all ages of the human history preceding Islam religious persecution had been a common phenomenon rampant everywhere across the globe.

The primary objective of Jihad in Islam, as is abundantly clear from this verse and also from (8/39) which contains kulluhu (كله) as an intensifier of Dīn, is to bring an end to the state of religious persecution. For it is naturally the state of free-will which makes man properly capable of receiving and following

the religion of Islam, the most basic concern with regard to eternal success or failure of all human beings. To be more precise, the state of religious persecution, which may assume different modes under changed circumstances, is totally inconsistent with the nature of Islam. Despite being the only truth, it is totally opposed to imposing itself on others without their full free will. In the like manner, it could by no way afford to let others, societies or states alike, hinder people from embracing Islam and entering the religion of Allah if they so wish out of their will and volition.

To sum up, all the four translators have succeeded in translating the expression *fitnah* by choosing very appropriate English equivalents. Unfortunately, under the influence of the traditional Islamic juristic views the expression *fitnah* has commonly been translated as *shirk*, polytheism, as we find in most exegetical works available in Arabic and other languages. Since there is no compulsion in the matter of religion (cf Q.2/256), the doctrine of Islamic Jihad by no way is meant to eliminate the polytheism and other sorts of disbelief by the force of State. For this high and noble purpose, the doctrine of preaching the message of Islam by employing all sane and peaceful means has been incorporated in the very structure of the fundamental Islamic teachings.

#### (4) حَنِيفٌ Ḥanīf

This expression features in Noble Book of Allah in two verses:

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا (Āli 'Imrān: 67)

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا (al-Nahl: 120)

Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in Faith and bowed his will to God's. (Āli 'Imrān: 67)

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### **Contextual Background of the Verse:**

The contextual setting of this verse seeks to refute the claims of the Jews as well as of the Christians that Abraham was a Jew or Christian. The religious affiliations like so-called Judaism and Christianity did not exist in the age of Abraham. So, rather than being a Jew or Christian, he was a Muslim, ḥanīf, perfectly devoted to Allah.

He was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to God, (and) true in faith, and he joined not gods with God. (16/120) ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

The contextual setting of this verse, likewise, is meant to confute the false pretensions of the Qurashite idolaters who would tirelessly affiliate themselves to Ibrahim in terms of religious tenets and practices. The Noble Book Allah stated in clear words that Ibrahim was never an idol-worshipper. He was a Muslim, wholly devoted to Allah.

In both the verses the expression ḥanīf has been used as predicational description of the Prophet Ibrahim (upon him be peace and blessings). Besides these two verses, the Ḥunafā', the plural form of the same expression, has been used in two different verses. That is, 22/31 and 5/98.

### **Brief Lexical Discussion of Ḥanīf:**

*Ḥanīf*, meaning inclining to a right state or tendency, or inclining from any false religion to the true religion, inclining in a perfect manner to Islam.<sup>1</sup>

This explanation is based on a meticulous survey of the extensive classical Arabic usages. As far as the translations of relative verses are concerned, each one out the four

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<sup>1</sup>E.W.Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Kitāb Bhavan, Delhi, P. 656

translators has tried his best to communicate the meaning and linguistic significations of the expression in the best possible way..., who had surrendered (to Allah). Pickthall, 3/67)

(He was a Muslim), wholly devoted to God) 3/67.

True in faith (Maudūdī, 16/120

What is to be noted in respect of these translations being that no translator has succeeded in doing his job by the use of a single English expression to capture the full meaning and significations of ḥanīf. To our judgement, it is not to be attributed to the linguistic incompetence of the translator, but to lack of the language itself. As a linguist knows it well, the English language glaringly lacks in words and expressions, which may smoothly express the religious concepts and Islamic ideas.

#### (5) أَلْعَنَتْ al-'Anat

Lexically speaking, the expression signifies severe difficulty, hardship, distress, etc.

This word has occurred in the following verse:

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ أَلْعَنَتْ مِنْكُمْ (al-Nisā': 31)

- a. This relaxation is for those of you who fear to fall into sin. (Maudūdī)
- b. It is for those of you who fear lest he should fall into sin. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- c. This (permission) is for those among you who fear sin. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- d. This is for him among you who feareth to commit sin. (Pickthall)

Although not so plausible in terms of linguistic approaches to find equivalent combining both lexical meaning and exegetical

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insights along with the stylistic beauty, these translations are largely similar in their wording and hence share the fault on an equal footing. The result is naturally that all have glaringly failed to accommodate the lexical meaning and signification of the source expression. For the sake of explaining the point, they had to drift apart from the lexical meaning of the Arabic expression. Undeniably, the lexical meaning, hardship, severe difficulty, too, were enough to serve the purpose of the source word. It is a point of general observation that in matters of sex the Noble Qur'ān uses the veiled language and eschews direct references unless otherwise is genuinely needed.

#### (6) قَوْمُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ

الرِّجَالُ قَوْمُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ (al-Nisā': 34)

The opening portion of the above verse is indeed of incomparable import. It is meant to press home the natural truth, a great policy decision of Islamic social teachings that in the societal structure men have been assigned the role of protector and maintainer in relation to women. The expression the Holy Book of Allah has employed to express this natural truth is qawwām. As 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī has aptly explained, the expression qawwām signifies one stands firm in another's business, protects his interests and takes after his affairs, or his own affairs and interests. All the four translators of our present comparative study have either brought almost identical one-word or two-words English equivalents against the original textual expression, as is the case with 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, Maudūdī and *Waḥīduddīn Khān*; or the wording is very much similar to others, as has been the case with Pickthall, who has employed the phrase 'in charge' in the stead of protector and maintainer.

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The contextual setting in which this natural truth has been spoken of intends to effect substantial reforms to the marital relationship which in the pre-Islamic age of Ignorance had deteriorated and impaired beyond repair.

It is gratifying that no English translator out of the four ones has dragged himself to the outdated ideological discussion, which uses this Qur'ānic expression to prove and establish gender superiority of men over women. This has unfortunately been the case with most of the classic and traditional exegetical works available in Arabic and Urdu languages alike. According to the ideological foundations of pristine Islamic teachings that there exists a complete parity between both the genders of humankind as far as their primary rights and responsibilities are concerned, though the areas of their respective responsibilities are very much different from each other.

To put it differently, to all the four translators the expression *qawwām* is not meant to make a statement as to the superiority of the masculine gender. The most it intends to reassert the natural truth that in familial structure of the Muslim, rather human society it is men who have been invested with the ability to protect and maintain women.

Summing up the comparison, we are of the view that all the four translators have perfectly succeeded in capturing the mode of the original textual Qur'ānic expression, *qawwām*.

#### 7. خَلِيلًا فِيهَا

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَلِيلًا فِيهَا (al-Nisā': 93)

- a) Whoso slayeth a believer of set purpose, his reward is Hell for ever. (4/93). (Pickthall)
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- b) And he who slays a Believer wilfully, his reward is Hell, where he will abide (4/93). (Maudūdī)
- c) And if a man kills a Believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (for ever). ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- d) ..... His reward shall be eternal Hell. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

**Discussion:**

*Khālidan fīhā* is an important expression from both the linguistic viewpoint and the doctrinal position. The translation of the expression *khālidan fīhā* in terms of eternity and perpetuity poses a doctrinal problem for those holding that the perpetrator of any graver sin barring polytheism and dying in the same state is not to be condemned to Hell forever. This tenet is based on a number of explicit statements scattered about in both the Qur'ān and the Sunnat, the two primary sources of the precepts and practices of the actual Islamic faith. Slaying a believer is of course a sin incomparably graver sin and the committer is rightly threatened to bear the dire consequences of his evil-doing in the Hell. Still, it is a sin and never an act of polytheism, the only sin declared by Allah never to be forgiven. (4/48 and 4/115)

The expression, *Khālidan fīhā*, has also occurred in 4/14, and the sins mentioned there are disobedience to Allah and transgression of His ordained limits. Taken the textual expression at face value, as it has been customary since earlier times of Islamic scholarship, its translation in terms of eternity contradicts our doctrinal position. This is indeed an area of complexity in the Qur'ānic studies that could not be overlooked.

The primary question we are faced with here being: where does lie the root of this complexity? It is of course the expression itself. Let's examine it in the light of the Arabic

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usages. The root of this expression is *خلد* which signifies longer stay. *Khalada* means, he remained, stayed, dwelt or abode long. Or, he continued incessantly, always, endlessly or for ever, or perpetually in Paradise.

In the like manner, *khawālid* (sing. *khālid*) are the three pieces of stones, or rock, upon which the cooking pot is placed, remaining in their places. So called because of their remaining a long time, after the relics of a house have become effaced.<sup>1</sup>

The fact is that the lexical meaning of the root of this expression, as evidently established by the Arabic usages furnished above, does not necessarily signify the sense of perpetuality and eternity. It may signify the longer stay as well. What strengthens our position more on the expression is that had it been clear that it always signifies eternity, it never needed to be followed by *أَبَدًا*, a re-affirmative expression used by the Qur'ān almost invariably for the purpose in a number of places.

To sum up, it is the only right linguistic approach towards the expression which may safely deliver us from seeking refuge in far-fetched interpretations and from the doctrinal clash which we can hardly escape otherwise.

As to our four translators, we would like to put here that they have measurably failed to capture the real sense of the Qur'ānic expression. In their approaches, they have largely been faithful to the traditional exegetical literature. Notably, 'Where he will abide', (Maudūdī) is by far a better choice. But this is not to be attributed to the Late Maudūdī himself. His original Urdu work repeats the same linguistic fault as has been committed by many others. It is his English translator

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<sup>1</sup> E.W.Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, Kitāb *Bhavan*, Delhi, P.784

who deserves to be credited with this fine linguistic departure from the original. ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī has done well by translating the phrase, *Khālidan fihā*, with 'to abide therein'. Yet, by placing 'for ever' in brackets, he has simultaneously undone his well doing.

The translations of Maulānā Waḥīduddī Khān and the Late Pickthall, in this respect, are still far from being accurate. They both have used the wording which could only mean eternity and perpetuity.

8. **فَمُسْتَقَرٍّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٍ**

(Hūd: 6) وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا

- a) It is He Who has produced from a single person) here is a place of sojourn and a place of departure.(6/98) (‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī)
- b) and has given you) a habitation and a repository. (Pickthall)
- c) ... And appointed for each of you a time limit and a resting place. (Maudūdī)
- d) ... Then gave a place to stay (in life) and a resting place (after death). (Waḥīduddīn Khān).

**Discussion:**

The Qur’ānic expressions, 'fa *mustaqarrun wa mustauda'*, are of great significance. Going by their linguistic aptitudes and insights into the Qur’ānic studies, all the four translators have thankfully tried their best to render the significations of the original Arabic textual expressions into English by bringing the target equivalents, though their wording is not much the same.

The same expressions feature in 11/6 as well. At both the points of reference the contextual background, too, is almost the same.

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In sum, in spite of the difference between their linguistic choices, all the four translators have succeeded in communicating the basic idea of the Qur'ānic expressions.

### 9. **أَلْعَفْوَ**

(Al-Baqarah: 219) وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ أَلْعَفْوُ

*Al-'Afw*, an important Qur'ānic expression, has occurred in the verse no. 219 of *al-Baqarah*. With the view to communicate the primary sense of it, the choices of our four translators have been different. In other words, the English equivalents they have brought for the purpose are theirs own yet with a striking note of synonymity, running through them, as will be evident from the following detail:

- a) Whatever you can spare. (Maudūdī)
- b) That which is superfluous. (Pickthall)
- c) Whatever is beyond your needs. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- d) whatever is surplus to your needs. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

This phenomenon is of course assertive of the fact that the views of all our four learned translators on the meaning and connotations of **أَلْعَفْوَ** are much the same.

### 10. **ظُلْمٍ**

(al-An'ām: 82) الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

The expression we are chiefly concerned with in this verse is *zulm*. Let us put here the complete translation of the verse so as to take the discussion further smoothly.

*Those who believe and confused not their belief with wrong. That are (truly) in security, for they are on (right) guidance. (al-An'ām: 82).*

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As it may be seen, the Qur'ānic expression 'ẓulm' has been translated either by wrong, as being the case with 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, or by wrong- doing, as did the rest three translators-Maudūdī, Waḥīduddīn Khān and Pickthall.

The Qur'ānic expression *ẓulm* embraces graver modes of disobedience toward Allah. The *shirk* undoubtedly tops all. Elsewhere in the Qur'ān the *shirk* (associating others with Allah in His divinity) has been referred to as the gravest sin (Luqmān: 13), as it constitutes the most terrible form of disobedience. The expression '*wa lam yalbisū 'īmānahum biẓulm*' led some Companions to the misapprehension that perhaps this wrong-doing signified 'disobedience' in the general sense of the expression. Terrified, they placed their problem before the Apostle (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) pacified them by saying that *ẓulm* in this verse signified *shirk*, and not other sorts of disobedience common to human conduct.

The sum total of this verse being that peace, security and right guidance are the lot of those who do not tarnish their faith with any sort of *shirk*.

All the four translations are better and capture the mode of the source expression almost on an equal footing, though their choices of words are naturally different, according to their respective linguistic aptitudes.

#### 11. حَتَّى يُغْزِيَنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ 'ḥattá yuthkhina fil arḍ'

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيِّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَى حَتَّى يُغْزِيَنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ (al-Anfāl: 67)

*It is not fitting for an Apostle that he should have prisoners of war until he has thoroughly subdued the land.* ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, al-Anfāl: 67).

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The expression of our special attention here is 'ḥattá yuthkhina fil arḍ'. '*ithkhān*' means: making much slaughter, overcoming them, wounding others much, inflicting many wounds upon them, etc. In the contextual background of a systematic battle, it signifies causing heavy loss of lives to the enemy. The message of the verse, therefore, being that in the course of war between evil and the flag-bearers of Truth it is never a befitting practice for a Prophet to have war captives until a crushing defeat is inflicted upon the adversary, thereby rendering him unable to rise again against the forces of Good.

The Qur'ānic expression '*ithkhān*' has variously been translated by our four great translators. Brief exposition follows:

- a) .. until he has thoroughly subdued the land. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- b) ... unless he has battled strenuously in the land. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- c) ... until he has made slaughter in the land. (Pickthall)
- d) ... he has sufficiently suppressed the enemies in the land. (Maudūdī)

**Discussion:**

Thoroughly subduing the land, battling strenuously, sufficiently suppressing, making slaughter in the land, do express common meaning and different significations of the Qur'ānic expression '*ithkhān*'. The choices of the translators make it abundantly clear that slaughtering is not always the only meaning and primary sense of the expression. Since we are concerned here just to have a critical examination of the four translations in respect of '*ithkhān*', we cannot afford to deal with other aspects of the verse here.

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## 12. سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِي 'Sab'an minal mathānī'

(al-Hijr: 87) وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ ﴿٨٧﴾

'Sab'an minal mathānī' is the focal point of our discussion here. This expression features in verse no. 87 of Surah no.15.

*And We have bestowed upon you the seven oft-repeated verses and the Great Qur'ān. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, al-Hijr: 87)*

'Seven oft-repeated verses' is an obvious reference to *al-Fātiḥa*, the opening chapter of the Glorious Qur'ān. Since there is little choice for the translators to explore the available linguistic options to make use of as the English equivalent to the textual Qur'ānic expression, they all have brought the expression 'seven oft-repeated verses', excepting the choice of Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān, who has used 'seven oft-recited verses'. This insignificant difference actually accounts for nothing. All the four translations exhibit their authors' same approach to capturing the meaning of the Qur'ānic expression.

That 'the oft-repeated seven verses' refer to the Opening Surah of the Holy Qur'ān constitutes the opinion of an overwhelming majority of the Qur'ānic scholars since earlier times. This opinion is readily based on direct clarifying statements of the Holy Prophet himself. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Imām Bukhārī mentions two of such statements.<sup>1</sup> Besides this view, some Qur'ānic scholars have a different opinion on this meaningful Qur'ānic phrase. They hold that 'sab'an minal mathānī' actually refers to the seven longer surahs of the Qur'ān, each of which comprising around two hundred or more verses. These include: *al-Baqarah*, *Āli-'Imrān*, *al-Nisā'*, *al-Mā'idah*, *al-An'ām*, *al-A'rāf* and *al-Taubah*. As it is evident, all these surahs of the Qur'ān are longer in terms of both their texts and the number of their verses. As far as the

<sup>1</sup>See al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr

independent deliberations on the textual implications of the verse and on its contextual setting are concerned, the latter view too seems equally sound and tenable.

### 13. الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ **Muqtasimīn'**

كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾ الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ ﴿٩١﴾ (al-Hijr: 90-91)

These are two shorter verses of surah no.15, al-Hijr. 'Muqtasimīn', featuring in verse no. 90, and 'iḍīn', occurring in verse no. 91, are two expressions which we are to discuss here with reference to their English translations as attempted by our four learned translators. The objective is to determine how far they have succeeded in communicating the meaning and purport of these two meaningful Qur'ānic expressions. Let's first reproduce all the four translations one by one.

- a) Such as We sent down for those who make division. Those who break the Qur'ān into parts. (Pickthall, al-Hijr: 90-91)
- b) (Or just such wrath) as We sent down on those who divided (scriptures into arbitrary parts). So also on such as have made Qur'ān into shreds (as they please). ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- c) Even as We sent warning on those who had divided their religion into fragments; who had split up their scripture (Qur'ān) into pieces. (Maudūdī)
- d) Such as We sent down for those who are divisive; who have broken the scripture into fragments. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

A careful look at the four translations makes it crystal clear that all the four translators have tried their best to express the same meaning by using different word groups. Here we need to re-examine the translations of the two expressions we are primarily concerned about, 'muqtasimīn' and 'iḍīn'.

Who are divisive. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

Who make division. (Pickthall)

Who divided scriptures. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

Who have divided their religion into fragments. (Maudūdī).  
These translations have been attempted as equivalents to the  
'muqtasimīn'.

As regards the expression 'iḍīn', the following word groups  
have been used to express its meaning:

1. Who have broken the scripture into fragments.  
(Waḥīduddīn Khān)
2. Who had split up their scripture (Qur'ān). (Maudūdī)
3. Who break the Qur'ān into parts. (Pickthall)
4. So also on such as have made Qur'ān into shreds (as they  
please). ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

But, despite holding all the learned translators in high esteem,  
and acknowledging their valuable erudition and deeper  
insights into the Qur'ānic studies, we are absolutely opposed  
to their views vis-a-vis these Qur'ānic expressions. We are  
constrained to say that while deliberating on those verses  
little help has been sought from both the textual and  
contextual backgrounds. The result of such a lapse would have  
not logically been other than a faulty approach. Considering  
the high import of these expressions, we cannot afford to  
ignore the expressions. Within our limited scope, we must  
explain our position on these Qur'ānic expressions.

In order to get to the right interpretations of the verses  
containing the two expressions, the following points are to be  
considered:

- 1) The meaning and explanations furnished by our learned  
translators have nowhere their base in the Prophetic
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statements. They are based on mere misplaced speculations rather than on persuasive facts and contextual evidence.

- 2) These verses, rather the entire surah al-Ḥijr, were revealed in Makkah in an environment of extreme enmity after a couple of years had passed over Prophet Muḥammad's (PBUH) assuming the Divine office of Apostleship.

Let's examine the verses in the light of these two things :

The general exegetical view on '*al-muqtasimīn*' and '*iqīn*' being that they refer to the Jews, who believed in parts of their scripture and denied others. This, however, is by no way a sound view. The entire surah is obviously addressed to the Makkans to the exclusion of any other religious entity. Referring '*muqtasimīn*' to the Jews is undoubtedly a far-fetched and uncalled for explanation. The next immediate verse is clearly intended to define the preceding expression, '*muqtasimīn*'. Then, who are '*muqtasimīn*'? Is it not the Makkans themselves who almost always had a divided opinion on the Qur'ān? Sometimes they called it enchantment, other times they branded it as poetry; and yet another time the impregnable Qur'ān was titled by them as divinity. From among its Makkan audience there were such obstinate people as rejected it altogether calling it a falsehood. In verse no. 91, the '*Qur'ān*' refers to nothing except the Qur'ān revealed to Muḥammad (PBUH). For no earlier divine scripture has ever been referred to as the Qur'ān. So, it is the Pagan Makkans who committed the grave crime of subjecting the Qur'ān to their divisive statements. The list of the crimes the Jews did commit to harm their scripture and religion is already much too larger. One, therefore, needs not to make it larger still by including in it the crimes of the Pagan Makkans, particularly when it is of little avail for the Makkans.

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## 14. نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا 'Nanqusuha min Atraafihā'

(al-Ra'd: 41) أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا

From the translation viewpoint the last Qur'ānic sentence, '*nanqusuhā min aṭrafihā*' holds importance to us. What does this sentence actually mean? Going through the four translations, we shall try to study this Qur'ānic expression.

- See they not that We gradually reduce the land (in their control) from its outlying borders? ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- See they not how We visit the land, reducing it of its outlying parts? (Pickthall)
- Do they not see how We come to (their) land and shrink its borders? (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- Do they not see that We are advancing in this land, diminishing it by its borders on all sides? (Maudūdī)

According to our critical evaluation, the former three translations are not much good. They are markedly deficient and fail to convey the real force of the Qur'ānic expression. The fault actually lies in their choice of tense. They have evidently used the present simple tense. This brought insipidity to their translations. Maudūdī's translation, on the other hand, used the present progressive tense which captured the original mode of the Qur'ānic expression in a better way. On the surface, to the former three translators this Qur'ānic sentence refers to mere a natural and routine phenomenon open to the eyes of everyone. To the Maudūdī, this, however, intends to sound a warning to the Makkans, who, at this stage of things, remained largely inattentive to the message of the Qur'ān. In his exegetical note Maulānā Maudūdī has further clarified the point. To quote him:

*The opponents are reminded that Islam's influence was spreading to every nook and cranny of Arabia. This naturally*

meant the shrinking of the unbelievers' influence and growing pressure upon them. Did these not indicate that they were heading towards their doom? What God says here, viz. 'We are advancing in land' is very subtle and refined way of indicating the direction of the change which was then taking place. Since Islam is from God, Who supports the propounders of that message, the spread of Islam has been characterized as the advance of God Himself.<sup>1</sup>

This demonstrates well that the choice of proper tense holds great good in translating the Qur'ānic verb groups.

15. **مُتَوَفِّيكَ** 'Mutawaffika'

(Āli 'Imrān: 55) **إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ**

The expression 'Mutawaffika' featuring in the above verse, viz.3/55, is to be discussed here with respect to its translations done by our four translators.

- 1) I am gathering thee and causing thee to ascend unto Me. (Pickthall)
- 2) I will take you and raise you to Myself. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- 3) I shall take you to Me, and will raise you up to Me. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- 4) I will recall you and raise you up to Me. (Maudūdī)

The last three translations are by far better. They have employed the future tense to convey the meaning of the tenseless Qur'ānic expression '(wa) rāfi'uka illayyá'. The late Pickthall's choice of a progressive tense for the purpose could hardly be justified. For the purpose of conveying the meaning of a tenseless Qur'ānic verb form in English the use of a

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<sup>1</sup> Towards Understanding the Qur'ān, MMI Publishers, New Delhi Ed. 2014, 4/248

progressive tense is patently unfit. As for the last three translations, they use different word groups, but are unanimous on the use of future tense. Like the first one, they, too, are wanting in a number of respects. Actually, a tenseless verb group was needed to convey the timeless Qur'ānic expression here. For in many situations a participial verb form is the only option for properly conveying the force of the original verb form. Maulānā Maudūdī's following explanatory note on 'mutawaffika' is of immense value and clears the range of the meaning of 'tawaffá'.

*“The original meaning of 'tawaffá' is to take and receive something in full. Seizing person's soul constitutes only the figurative rather than the literal meaning of the word. In the present context of things the word has been used in the sense of 'recall', for example, the recall of an official from his work.”<sup>1</sup>*

#### 16. رَبْوَةٌ 'Rabwa'

(al-Aḥzāb: 50) وَأَوْيْتُهُمَا إِلَىٰ رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ

'Rabwa' is the expression which we are to examine here in the light of our four designated English translations.

- a) ..... And We gave them both shelter on high ground offering rest and security with springs. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, al-Aḥzāb: 50)
- b) Peaceful hillside. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- c) high ground level (areas) (Pickthall)
- d) ..... On a lofty ground.... (Maudūdī)

As evident, all the four translations are much the same in as much as the conveying of the meaning of the Qur'ānic

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<sup>1</sup> (For more detail and an exhaustive discussion of this Qur'ānic expression recourse may be made to Ikfārul Mulḥidīn, an authoritative treatise on the topic by Maulānā S. Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī (d.1352, AH)

expression. To be more precise, a note of syntactical synonymity runs through all the four translations attempted by our venerable Qur'ānic scholars, though they have beautifully maintained a difference of wording.

Lexically, رَبْوَةٍ means an elevation of ground, a hill, an elevated ground, an elevated place, so called because it is high.<sup>1</sup>

17. لَرَادُكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ *'larāduka ilá ma'ād'*

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَادُكَ إِلَى مَعَادٍ (al-Qaṣaṣ: 85)

Based on the Qur'ānic scholars' understanding of the Qur'ān and the levels of depth of the Qur'ānic insights they could gain, the expression *'larāduka ilá ma'ād'* has variously been translated into English. In the following lines, we are going to reproduce the four translations of this contentful Qur'ānic expression.

- a) He Who has entrusted you with the responsibility of the Qur'ān, will surely lead you to a successful end. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- b) Verily He Who ordained the Qur'ān for you, will bring you back to the Place of Return. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- c) He Who hath given thee the Qur'ān for a law will surely bring thee home again. (Pickthall)
- d) Surely, He Who has ordained the Qur'ān on you will bring you to the best end. (Maudūdī)

As it might be observed, two out of the four translators, viz. Waḥīduddīn Khān and Maudūdī, have much in common. In respect of the Qur'ānic expression under discussion their translation approaches are almost identical. To Maulānā Maudūdī, as he himself has clarified in his exegetical note, the

<sup>1</sup> E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, Kitāb Bhavan, N. Delhi, P. 1024

promise made in this verse is not just limited to the Next World, it equally applies to the good of this world as well. Pickthall's translation could be faulted on more grounds than one. The glaring fault, however, being that he has converted a common noun, 'ma'ād' into the proper one, that is, 'home', patently referred to Makkah. Such an alteration could only be justified if the translator is left with no other option than subjecting the translation to such a change. In the present sequence of things such an alteration is of course unwarranted.

'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī's choice of the noun phrase, 'Place of Return,' for the Qur'ānic expression 'ma'ād', too, is not up to the mark. With proper initials, the 'Place of Return' gets the colour of definitiveness and loses the flavour of infinity which has its own linguistic value in similar sequences of things.

While we greatly value the scholarship of our translators, these translations need updates and improvements.

#### 18. حَرَامٌ 'Haraam'

(al-Anbiyā': 95) ﴿وَحَرَامٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾﴾

As it is known to the students of the Qur'ān, the verse quoted above has never been so easy to comprehend and translate. People's deliberations on the verse led them to have different approaches to determine the meaning of it. In the following lines, we are going to have a comparative study into this verse in the light of the four English translations selected for the purpose.

- 1) It is ordained that no nation We have destroyed shall ever rise again. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- 2) And there is a ban upon any community which We have destroyed: that they shall not return. (Pickthall)
- 3) But there is a ban on any population which We have destroyed: that they shall not return. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

- 4) It has been ordained against every town We have ever destroyed that they shall not return (to enjoy a new lease of life). (Maudūdī)

To our critical estimation, the translations placed under (a) and (d) share a lot in common and are very much closer to the meaning and purpose of the verse. Those categorised as (b) and (c) are almost identical with no significant difference in their phraseology. Both, therefore, are faulty on the same grounds, as will be shown below.

*Ḥarām*'s translation by 'ban' is purely a legalistic approach, inappropriate under the contextual setting of the verse. Similarly, bringing 'community' or 'population' as English equivalents to 'qaryatin' is also another example of the linguistic impropriety.

'Ordained (against)' or 'ordained that' are relatively better translations of the Qur'ānic expression 'ḥarāmun' as might be seen in the translations of Maulānā Maudūdī and Waḥīduddīn Khān. While the translations of Pickthall and 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī offer a very deficient understanding of the message of the verse, those attempted by Maudūdī and Waḥīduddīn Khān give a fuller comprehension of this Qur'ānic verse, an epitome of Qur'ān's elliptical style. This verse comprises four content words, viz. ḥarāmun, qaryatin and (lā) yarji'ūn. The verb phrase 'lā yarji'ūn' has been rendered by three translators, 'that they shall not return. Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān, however, has brought a different word group, that is, 'shall ever rise again'.

We face here a very crucial question: what does the Qur'ānic verb phrase 'lā yarji'ūn' actually mean? Actually, this verse speaks of a Divine law operating in the nature. The human habitations subjected to an all-inclusive punishment by Allah

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due to their disobedient behaviour towards Allah's Messengers shall never be granted a second chance to have the life of this world yet again and earn Allah' good pleasure. Such habitations were completely destroyed, with no trace at all. More so, they had no posterity so that there is none to remember them or to take their generations further. This is the Qur'ānic statement which is corroborated by the known human history. In this respect, the People of Noah, the Aad, the People of Thamūd, the People of Aikah, the People of Shoab, the People of Harappa, etc., are only fewer historical examples. In the light of this Qur'ānic statement, the truth of its claim might be examined.

19. وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ  
 اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ

From the exegetical viewpoint, this verse has been an area of problem, open to diverse interpretations. Like our practice in the foregoing lines of this paper, we are not concerned here to have an exhaustive study into all the aspects of this verse. What we are concerned about here will naturally be limited to study some content words featuring in this verse in the light of our four designated translations. This is obviously to determine the value of their painstaking efforts, both from the linguistic and exegetical viewpoints. To begin with, we are reproducing the translations of the complete verse.

- a) Never did We send a messenger or a prophet before you, but, when he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into his desire, Allah will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and Allah will confirm (and establish His Signs). ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, al-Ḥajj: 52).
- b) Never sent We a messenger or prophet before thee but when he recited (the message), Satan proposed

(opposition) in respect of that which he recited thereof. But Allah abolisheth that which Satan proposeth. (Pickthall)

- c) Whenever We sent any messenger or prophet before you and he recited anything (of Our revelation), Satan tempered with it. But God abrogates Satan's interjections and then He firmly reaffirms His revelations. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- d) Never did We send a Messenger or Prophet before you (O Muhammad), but that whenever he had a desire, Satan interfered with that desire. (Then) Allah eradicates the interference of Satan and strengthens His Signs. (Maudūdī)

In order to have a deeper look at the linguistic equivalents our translators have brought to convey the meaning and import of the content words of this verse we perhaps have no better option than to analyse them one by one:

1. *Tamanná*. In the present context of things, while this verb has been employed by some scholars to signify its normal import, that is framing a desire or having a desire, others have used it to mean recitation of the Qur'ān. As may be seen, our two respected translators, viz. the Late Pickthall and Waḥīduddīn Khān, subscribe to the same aberrant linguistic standpoint. As far as we think, this is a terrible tendency to move away the Qur'ānic words from their normal meaning to a meaning different altogether. *Tamanná* is a word which has suffered the same fate. In the classical Arabic literary sources it has frequently been used to signify its normal meaning. It, therefore, must be translated by words meaning 'desire', as has plausibly been done by 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī and Maulānā Maudūdī.
  2. '*Yansakhu*' is the next content word of this verse. Originally, it implies removal of a thing by another. In Arabic usage it is called: *nasakhat al-shamsu al-zilla*, the sun removed the
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shade. It, in a like manner, may have other meaning as well. In the present verse, however, it has been employed to mean its primary meaning. The choice of our learned translators in bringing appropriate equivalents has been different. 'Allah will cancel' ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī), 'Allah abolisheth', (Pickthall) 'Allah eradicates', (Maulānā Maudūdī), 'Allah cancels' (Waḥīduddīn Khān) are linguistic equivalents that they have placed against the Qur'ānic expression. Cancelling, abolition, eradication all are far below the mark to convey the fuller force of the original expression. 'Abrogation is undoubtedly a right equivalent to *naskh*, but it is commonly used in legal contexts and its legal signification far outweighs its other senses. So, all the four translations of the word are faulty.

3. '*Yuḥkimu*', from '*lḥkām*', is the third content word featuring in this verse. This too has variously been rendered by our respected translators. Their wording being: strengthening, reaffirming, establishing and confirming. This too is not good enough, though acceptable. A yet another point is related to their choice of tenses. All the four scholars, barring 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, have preferred to use a present simple tense which obviously corresponds to the Qur'ānic tense. Translating '*fayansakhu Allāhu mā yulqishshaitānu thumma yuḥkimullāhu āyātihi*' by using a future tense, as has been the practice of 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, is absolutely unacceptable. It is not in consonance with the tense the Qur'ān has used for the purpose.

**20. '*Khātam al-Nabiyyīn*' (al-Aḥzāb: 40) وَلَكِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ**

'*Khātam al-Nabiyyīn*' is an important expression of the Holy Scripture. It intends to announce the fact that the door of

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prophethood has been closed once and for all. It is indeed gratifying to note that all the four translators are unanimous on the front of the Finality of Muḥammad bin ‘Abd Allah's prophethood. SEAL OF THE PROPHETS is the only English equivalent they have brought to express the meaning and purport of this important Qur’ānic expression. It is indeed the unshakably shared ideological foundations which do account for this doctrinal unity of our learned translators with respect to the prophethood, a very cardinal article of the Islamic Faith. We accord the warmest salutations to such a riftless doctrinal unity of the Islamic scholars.

21. (al-Zukhruf: 61) وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ

For a proper understanding of this verse, a student of the Qur’ān is required to determine the antecedent of the pronoun 'hu', the opening word of the verse. As far as the exegetical literature is concerned, we come across two opinions there in connection with determining the antecedent of this pronoun. To Ḥasan Baṣrī and Sa’īd bin Jubair, the third person singular pronoun refers to the Qur’ān itself. According to this interpretation the import of the statement would be: "And verily it is (the Qur’ān) a Sign of the Hour." However, this interpretation is entirely devoid of contextual support, and obviously inconsistent with the proper setting of things here. To the majority view, however, the pronominal grammatical item refers to Jesus (Peace be upon him). The contextual background, too, makes it abundantly clear. For there are more than one references to him across the preceding and the following verses. This sane interpretation too gives rise to a question: What is actually meant by his being the Sign of the Hour? The answer is very clear. It is his fatherless creation, his super human miracles like his making the figure of a bird of

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clay and breathing into it to make it alive by the leave of Allah, healing those born blind and leper and bringing the dead to life by the leave of Allah. Interestingly, from among our learned translators only the Late Pickthall has mistakenly left out the translation of the pronoun under discussion. To reproduce his translation:

"And lo! Verily there is knowledge of the Hour." As regards the rest three ones, among them there is a perfect unanimity that the pronoun's reference is to Jesus only to the exclusion of any other entity.

To reproduce their translations here:

*And Jesus shall be a Sign (for the coming of the Hour). ('Abd Allāh' Yūsuf 'Alī)*

*He is a sign of the Hour. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)*

*And he (Jesus the son of Mary) is indeed a Sign of the Hour. (Maudūdī)*

To our critical assessment, the translation of the Late Pickthall is undoubtedly faulty and needs a revision.

As regards the translation of 'Abd Allāh' Yūsuf 'Alī, it is right in as much as the finding of correct antecedent of the pronoun. His choice of future tense and the parenthetical explanatory words amply speak of his faulty understanding. To sum up, the verse projects Jesus as a sign of the advent of the Day of Judgment. But there is hardly any room in the wording of the verse to take it to mean that Jesus is a portent of the Hour and is due to appear towards the end of the world. Of course, there exists a number of such sayings of the Prophet (PBUH), which speaks of his second coming. But this is something based entirely on a number of solitary aḥādīth. It is never a belief based on this verse.

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## 22. اللَّمَمُ 'Lamam'

(al-Najm: 32) الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ

'Lamam' being the word of primary attention to us here. This expression has variously been rendered into English. To Maulānā Maudūdī and Waḥīduddīn Khān, its English equivalent is 'minor offences'. 'Abd Allāh' Yūsuf 'Alī has translated it as 'small faults'. To the Late Pickthall, 'unwilled offences' is the English expression, which he has placed in his translation against the Qur'ānic expression. To our critical estimation, all the four translators are correct and have hit the nail on the head. Translation per se is a difficult task. In the case of the translation of the Holy Book of Allah, this difficulty assumes even enormous proportions when the target is the Holy Qur'ān. Finding proper equivalents to the Qur'ānic vocabulary is of course highly challenging. If a translator fails to capture the original mode and import of a given Qur'ānic expression, he must have genuine excuses for his failure. All mistakes of a translator could be overlooked as long as he is competent enough to undertake such an onerous task.

After furnishing this important parenthetical note, we would like to discuss two other content words which have occurred in the same verse. They are '*kabā'iral ithmi wal-fawāḥiḥa*'. They both precede the 'lamam'. Much as the choice of the word groups our translators have adopted to convey the connotations of the Qur'ānic expression differ from one to another, the word group of each translator is good enough. 'Grave sins and open indecencies', (Maudūdī), 'grave sins and indecent acts,' (Waḥīduddīn Khān), 'great sins and shameful deeds,' ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī), 'enormities of sin and abominations' (Pickthall). Out of the four, the word group chosen by Pickthall is by far better and smells of great linguistic beauty.

What sort of sins the Qur'ānic expression '*kabā'iral ithmi wal fawāḥish*' signify here and elsewhere in the Qur'ān? Since this question is of high practical value, it seems in the fitness of things to briefly discuss the point here. In connection with the '*kabā'iral ithmi wal fawāḥish*' there are at least three references in the Qur'ān, viz. 42/37, 4/32 and 53/32. The 4/32, however, does not contain the expression '*fawāḥish*'.

Paradise, along with all of its contents, has been promised only for those fortunate Muslims who refrain from indulging in '*kabā'iral ithmi wal fawāḥish*'. As explained elsewhere by the Qur'ān itself, this expression refers to major and graver sins. A number of such terrible sins has been spoken of in the Qur'ān itself at more places than one. For example, 17/31-38, and this sublime discourse ends with the following important note:

*"This is indeed part of the wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you." In the Surah no. 25, verses Nos. 63---74, the high moral qualities of the Believing community have been enumerated."*

Keeping in view such statements and descriptions of the Qur'ān itself, it may safely be construed that this Qur'ānic expression refers to only major and deadly sins. At this stage it seems relevant to grasp the essential differences between major and minor sins. Keeping this question in mind, reflections on the Qur'ān and Sunnah make it crystal clear that three elements may turn an act of disobedience into a major and grave sin:

- 1) Gross violation of the rights---regardless of that the rights belong to Allah, one's parents, of other human beings or even ones' own self. The greater being a person's rights, the greater is the sin of violating them.
  - 2) Absence of the fear of Allah and arrogant and indifferent attitude towards Him. As a result, the person of such a
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character turns heedless towards Allah's prescriptions and prohibitions.

- 3) Sin might be aggravated by breaking those bonds and relationships upon which hinge the peace and tranquillity of the social order.

The expression 'lamam', contrariwise, implies only those acts which are unavoidably involved in the process of the commission of a graver sin. Those acts in their own right many or may not constitute some sort of disobedience towards Allah. To illustrate the point, walking, for instance, is a lawful act, yet this act might turn into a sin if one walked with the intention of committing theft or murder. Now if one was able to commit that graver sin, the act of walking, too, will turn into a sin as it is walking which facilitated the commission of the crime of theft, murder or illegal sexual activity. Should one, on the other hand, stepped back from the commission of the actual sin; the procedural acts are promised to be condoned and remitted. It is due to the fact that Allah is not overly exacting and severe in His judgement. He is not on the lookout for trivial omissions and lapses on the part of His creatures in order to punish them. He is always prepared to condone minor omissions, and may even spare a man from being presented with a charge-sheet provided his record is free of major sins. But if a man's record of deeds is full of major transgressions, he shall be required to explain all the sins he did commit during his worldly sojourn--both major and minor.

23. (al-Dukhān: 44) فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ

This is a verse of incomparable import. The expression '*amrin ḥakīm*', a majestic word of the magnificent Qur'ānic vocabulary, has variously been rendered by our four-translators. To reproduce them here one by one:

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- a. On that night every wise decree is specified. (Waḥīduddīn Khān)
- b. In the (Night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom. ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)
- c. Whereupon every wise command is made clear. (Pickthall)
- d. This was a night in which every matter is decided wisely by Our command. (Maudūdī)

The first three translations, as it may be seen, are not substantially different from each other in so far as their choice of the target vocabulary. The last one, however, is different from the rest three. The point of difference being that the original expression 'ḥakīm', a qualitative word, is patently meant to qualify the 'amr'. The last translation, on the other hand, considers the 'ḥakīm' as a sentence adverbial, and has translated the verse accordingly. This is of course a grammatical error. If it is intentional, it should have been better avoided as it lacks any justification. If it is by mistake, it has to be corrected at the earliest.

24. (al-Taḥrīm: 4) *إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا*

The meaning of the verb '*ṣaghat*', which features in this verse as an active verb with its subject '*qulūbukumā*', has been a subject of controversy amongst the exegetical fraternity, with two opposing views held by the Qur'ānic scholars. According to the majority view, the Qur'ānic verb '*ṣaghat*', from the root, '*ṣaght*' signifies swerving and deviating from. According to this view, the verse means, "If you both (women) repent to Allah, (it is better for you), for your hearts have swerved from the right path. (Maudūdī)

The Late Pickthall, too, shares the same view. To quote his translation:

*If ye twain turn into Allah repentant, (ye have cause to do so), for your hearts desired (the ban). Apart from a mistaken*

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translation of the verse, his parentheticals have badly hurt the import of the verse. Although this view is attributed to the majority of the Qur'ānic scholars, it undoubtedly is inconsistent with the verse's internal setting, and is devoid of circumstantial evidence. Actually, the root of the mistake lies in understanding the meaning and significations of the verb 'saght'. In determining the proper meaning of it mistakes have somehow crept into the minds. In the light of the standard Arabic usages it is an established fact that 'saght' means inclining to, having inclination to something. In other words, this 'innocent' Arabic verb has undergone a mistaken interpolation, with the result that a reverse meaning was created. Abd Allah' Yusuf Ali and Waḥīduddīn Khān, contrariwise, hold the otherwise view as reflects from their translations. To reproduce them here:

"If you two turn in repentance to Allah, your hearts are indeed so inclined." ('Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī)

"If only both of you would turn to God in repentance--and your hearts are already so inclined." (Waḥīduddīn Khān)

Though the last two translations seem defective on more counts than one, they represent the right view regarding the interpretation of the verse. It is quite natural that the wives of the Prophet (PBUH), like any other Companion of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), might have committed something impliedly wrong. We come across a number of such incidents in Hadithi literature. But since they possessed a much higher degree of Faith, they always maintained a submissive attitude, both internally and externally, towards Allah and His great Apostle. It is unbelievable about them they could ever adopt so rebellious an attitude towards Allah's Apostle that they were unable to step back from their blameworthy course of thinking and acting

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even in the face of Allah's censorious reprimand. Therefore, the 'ṣagħhat' must be taken to imply the meaning of inclining to repentance, and never to mean otherwise.

**Conclusion:**

In the foregoing lines a much smaller number of the Qur'ānic vocabulary has been surveyed in the light of the four Qur'ānic translations of the English language designated for the purpose of comparison with an intention to assess the range of the difficulties a translator might face in finding English equivalents to those Qur'ānic expressions as are considered by the Qur'ānic scholars to be gharib, or difficult to understand. For the scholars of the Qur'ānic studies such a study might be of great significance. Due to its narrow scope, this study, at its present stage, is limited to explore a very small number of the Qur'ānic *mufradāt*. As far as the width of this hitherto unexplored area of Qur'ānic studies is concerned, it is actually the subject of a full-length book, for there are hundreds of such individual words of the Qur'ānic vocabulary as has been branded by the earlier scholars as *gharīb*. In future, if Allah provides such an opportunity, this work might be expanded and further dimensions may also be added to its present structure to make it more comprehensive and useful.

Anyway, this is not more than a humble service towards the Book of Allah. Should it prove useful for any class of the fortunate students of the Qur'ān, it will naturally be a matter of joy for the author and he shall be grateful to Allah, Who provided an opportunity for doing some service, however humble it might be though, towards His Final Word. On these words, I conclude this paper and take leave of the sincere readers.

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## Farāhī's Contribution to the *I'ijāz al-Qur'ān*

Prof. Obaidullah Fahad<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

There are some scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim World who discussed the matchless Qur'ānic challenge of producing a book or its some chapters or only few verses similar to the Qur'ān, in the *i'ijāz al-Qur'ān* paradigm to focus on the historic coherence the Qur'ān adhered to; and the artistic portraiture in the revealed Book. The first was theorized skillfully by the modern Indian scholar of the Qur'ān 'Abdul Ḥamīd al-Farāhī and second was advanced to expose the inimitability of the Qur'ān by Sayyid Quṭb, the famous literary critic, thinker and revivalist leader of Egypt.

There are other scholars of the Qur'ān like Bint al-Shāṭī, 'Abdul Ḥamīd al-Zarquānī, Nu'aim al-Ḥimṣī, Bahjah al-Baiṭār in the Arab world and Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī in Pākistān who exposed some new dimensions of the *i'ijāz al-Qur'ān*. Bint al-Shāṭī emphasized the literary taste (*tadhawwuq*) as essential to access the inimitable features of the Qur'ān and differentiated the *i'ijāz* from the challenge. Al-Zarquānī elaborated the historical discussions on the *i'ijāz al-Qur'ān* made by the earlier scholars and performed some new exercises in this context. To Nu'aim al-Ḥimṣī the most effective dimension of *i'ijāz* is implied in its rhetorics, while al-Baiṭār substantiated the historic challenge of the Qur'ān as being the inimitable one, by sound arguments and rational discussions. These constitute a rich contribution to the theory of *i'ijāz*.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh

**Al-Farāhī:**

Al-Farāhī,<sup>1</sup> born in A'zamgarh, India, was a maternal cousin of the famous theologian – historian Muḥammad Shiblī Nu'mānī (1857-1914). About twenty years of age, he got admission in Moḥammadan Anglo Oriental College – developed later on into 'Alīgarh Muslim University – to study modern disciplines of knowledge. As a student therein he rendered parts of the *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* of Ibn Sa'd al-Zuhrī into Persian, and the translation was included in the college syllabus. He obtained his B.A. degree from Allāhābād University however.

For the next many years al-Farāhī taught Arabic at various institutions, including 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh and Dārul 'Ulūm Hyderābād. He subsequently came to Sarā'i Mīr, A'zamgarh, India in 1925, where he took charge of the *Madrasah al-Iṣlāḥ*, an institution based on the educational ideas of Shiblī Nu'mānī and al-Farāhī and till his death in 1930 continuously he devoted most of his time and energy to managing its affairs and teaching there in.

An erudite scholar, al-Farāhī commanded knowledge of a number of languages, among them Hebrew and English. His chief interest, however, was the Qur'ān, the focal point of all his writings. Most of his published works are in the form of the notes that were later compiled by his students. Among his books are *Mufradāt al-Qur'ān*, *Asālīb al-Qur'ān*, *Jamharah al-Balāghah*, *Im'ān fī Aqsām al-Qur'ān*, *Dalā'il al-Niḏām*, *al-Takmil fī Uṣūl al-Ta'wīl*, *Tafsīr* of fourteen shorter chapters of the Qur'ān as that of *al-Fīl*, *al-Lahab*, *al-Fātiḥah*, *al-Mā'wun*, *al-Kauthar*, *al-Taḥrīm* and others being collected altogether and published with the title of *Tafsīr Niḏām al-Qur'ān*.

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<sup>1</sup> Mir, Mustansir, *Coherence in the Qur'ān-A Study of Islahi's Concept of Naẓm in Tadabbur-i Qur'ān* 1406/1986, American Trust Publications, Washington, PP. 6-8

**Coherence in the Qur'ān:**

The concept of coherence (*naẓm*) in the Qur'ān, to be defined by al-Farāhī, was different from the traditional scholars. The al-Farāhī's *naẓm* possessed thematic and structural coherence at the same time, and this coherence exists in the Qur'ān in complex but regular and interwoven patterns. He has offered a number of arguments to show that the Qur'ān is possessed of *naẓm*:

- i) Most of the scholars have recognized the coherence in the Qur'ān but none of them were able to give a satisfactory explanation of the idea of coherence.
- ii) Those who deny the existence of coherence in the Qur'ān, do so because they were only partially successful in unraveling that *naẓm*.
- iii) The chronological arrangement of the Qur'ān was drastically changed by the noble Prophet (PBUH), a proof that the new arrangement must have a wisdom and rationale that would have been lost had the original arrangement been preserved.
- iv) The order in which the chapters are arranged in the Qur'ān, is evidently not determined by the rule of decreasing length, a rule that would have come in handy if the Qur'ān had lacked the coherence. One must, therefore, find another way to account for the fact that short chapters sometimes follow but sometimes also precede longer chapters. It is *naẓm* that supplies the needed explanation.
- v) No sensible discourse may lack coherence. It is indeed surprising that the Qur'ān, a book of proven inimitability, should be thought to be marked by incoherence.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Al-Farāhī, 'Abdul Ḥamīd (al-Mu'allim), *Dalā'il al-Niẓām*, A'ẓamgarh, Dā'irah Ḥamīdiyyah, 1388 AH., PP. 23-26. The English rendering is taken from Mir, Mustansir, op.cit., PP. 30-31

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Al-Farāhī draws a distinction between the classical scholars' concept of *tanāsub* or *munāsabah* (structural coherence) and his theorisation because the first forms a linear coherence between the verses and the chapters, and only a part of *naẓm*. The *tanāsub* between the verses would not show the Qur'ānic discourse to be a unified entity in its own right. The seeker of *tanāsub* often contents himself with any kind of coherence he can think of. This simply implies the linking up of the sentences of a discourse in disregard of the possibility that the discourse is more than the sum total of its constituent sentences.

But what does al-Farāhī mean by the term *naẓm*? He himself elaborates: "In brief, by *naẓm* we mean that a chapter be a totality, and also be related with the chapter that precedes it and the one that follows it, or with that which precedes or follows it at one remove.... On the score of this principle, the entire Qur'ān will be seen to be a single discourse, all of its parts, from start to finish, being well-ordered and well-knit".<sup>1</sup>

Al-Farāhī concludes by saying that *niẓām* is something over and above *munāsabah* and *tartīb* (sequential order). This "something over and above" he calls *waḥdānīyyah* (unit). He then remarks that the three key elements of *naẓm* are *tartīb*, *tanāsub* and *waḥdānīyyah*. But at this point al-Farāhī puts a different construction on the word *tanāsub*. Until now he has used it in the sense of simple "linkage", contrasting it with *naẓm*. But now he uses it in the sense of "proportion". Also, the word *tartīb*, which means "order" is now given the meaning that was originally carried by *tanāsub*, namely, "linkage". As for *waḥdānīyyah* it imparts unity to a discourse, making it a whole that is more than the sum total of its parts. According to al-Farāhī, the element of *waḥdānīyyah* is missing from the other scholars' concept of *naẓm*. That is why he describes their concept as the concept of *munāsabah* and his

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 38

own as that of *naẓm*. To sum up, a discourse will possess *naẓm* when it has *tartīb*, *tanāsub* and *waḥdānīyyah*, that is, when it is well-ordered, well-proportional and well-unified.<sup>1</sup>

The basic *naẓm* unit in the Qurʾān is the chapter. Every chapter has a central theme called *ʿamūd* (pillar, column) around which the entire chapter revolves. The *ʿamūd* is the unifying thread in the chapter, and the chapter is to be interpreted with reference to it. There is also a logical link between all the chapters as they follow one another in the present Qurʾānic arrangement. The chapters fall into nine groups, and each group is, like a chapter, a unity. Every group begins with a Makkan chapter and ends with a Madīnan chapter.

A chapter may have parenthetical verses in it, which means that sometimes its verses will be connected with one another at one or several removes. In a chapter group, likewise, there may be a chapter that is supplementary to the preceding one, which means that two chapters may be connected with each other at one remove.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Inimitable Arrangement:**

Al-Farāhī concentrates on the thematic and structural coherence fully maintained in the Qurʾān along with all the considerations, prerequisites and exigencies discussed by him in his writings in detail, and takes it as the strongest and most influential factor in the inimitability (*iʿjāz*) of the Qurʾān. Going into the detail of the inimitable sequence (*al-Tartīb al-Muʿjiz*) of the Qurʾān, the learned commentator says:

“If you go through the order and the sequence maintained in the discourse of God, you will find the statement shifts from one point to the other following each as the objective. The hearts are thus satisfied and the minds are enlightened. The

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<sup>1</sup>Mir, Mustansir, op.cit., PP. 32-33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, PP. 34-35

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statement then turns to the beginning and forms thus a ring connecting all the points, and it is hard to trace the ‘*amūd* (the column on which the building is to be constructed) and that what is the connecting medium”.<sup>1</sup>

The Arab orators were habitual of this sequence and *naẓm* al-Farāhī argues. He quotes al-Jāḥiẓ from his *Kitāb al-Bayān wa al-Tabayīn*<sup>2</sup> that Abū ‘Ubaidah (728-825) has composed the couplets in describing this style of sequence and order. He says an orator speaks insolently. In the mean time he is reminded of his beginning in the speech on which he had based his argument and then turns to the point he had initiated in the start. In case there arises any hue and cry he cuts his speech all of sudden. He, however, connects his statement in the second part with that in the first part so that no part might be treated as better than the other. Abū ‘Ubaidah then recited the follow:

“In case they created a hue and cry that disturbed the sequence of the speech, you are fully capable to connect it with what was cut by the hue and cry. If you possess the talent of a weaver you will benefit from the speech by adding a word as the honey is enjoyed delightly with the cold and fresh water”.

Al-Farāhī comments approving this statement of al-Jāḥiẓ and says that the Qur’ān used this style of structural and thematic coherence so beautifully that all the masters of Arabic language were unable to resist the Qur’ānic challenge and the Qur’ān proved to be inimitable. If one reflects in the Qur’ān with the insight the beauties of the Qur’ānic *naẓm* would be exposed to him. Those who constitute the adversaries of the Qur’ān are well illustrated in the Qur’ān in the following verses:

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Farāhī, *Dalā’il al-Niẓām*, op.cit., P. 43

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 88

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مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ رَدَّ بَصَرَهُ فَيَبْصُرُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصْبَعَهُمْ فِيْءِ آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَرِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

Tr.: Their similitude is that of a man who kindled a fire; when it lighted all around him, God took away their light and left them in utter darkness. So they could not see. Deaf, dumb and blind, they will not return (to the path). Or (another similitude) is that of a rain-laden cloud from the sky: in it are zones of darkness, and thunder and lightening: they press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder-clap, the while they are in terror of death. But God is ever round the rejecters of Faith! The lightening all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (helps) them, they walk therein, and when the darkness grows on them, they stand still. And if God willed, He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for God has power over all things”.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Farāhī says that those who are faithful, enjoy pleasantly and excitedly with the beauty of the Qur’ān and the unbelievers are, conversely, confused because of the thunders, the lightenings, the thrashings and the knockings the Qur’ān implied. The coherence and the beauty of the Qur’ān is inaccessible to them. “It is essential to realize the *ijjāz* of the Qur’ān being implied in the coherence, to be equipped with the good nature, good taste as well as a responsible personality that does drink (academically) and is not intoxicated; and he plunges into the depths (of knowledge) and does not sink”<sup>2</sup> the learned author metaphorically speaks.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Bqarah: 17-20

<sup>2</sup> Al-Farāhī, *Dalā’il al-Nizām*, op.cit., P. 55

The exact formalisation of the Qur'ānic coherence and the water-tight compartmentalization in this regard, as perceived by al-Farāhī, was however challenged by the modern scholars and researchers of the Qur'ānic studies, and the inimitable position of the Qur'ān being confined into the coherence was seriously resisted. The *naẓm* was regarded as a sort of the *latā'if* (stylish and elegant points derived from the Qur'ān in addition to the fundamental one) in relation to *ījāz al-Qur'ān* and not as that of *lawāzim* (inseparable and fundamental part of the inimitability of the Qur'ān).

Al-Farāhī, however, necessitates for enjoying spiritually with the coherence incorporated in the Qur'ān, the innocent, pure and free nature inclined to right and virtue and endued with the true understanding.<sup>1</sup> The learned author, therefore, writes that: "we are awarded a Book and a nature like the two copies of a manuscript. As the first copy of the Book was distorted by the followers of the ancient religions, the second copy of the book (e.g. the nature) was also to be affected and a comparison between the two was, therefore, unavoidable". Al-Farāhī, then differentiates one from the other as given below:

- i) The first copy (the Book) was sent down to the purest and the most refined heart of the world, while the second is inherited to the common people.

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<sup>1</sup> The holy Qur'ān in the chapter *al-Rūm* verse No. 30 has clearly defined that the true nature of a man is as true as the nature of a lamb is to be gentle and of a horse is to be swift, as ordered by God to establish "God's handiwork according to the pattern He has made mankind". But man is caught in the meshes of customs, superstitions, selfish desires, and false teaching. This may make him pugnacious, unclean, false, slavish, hankering after what is wrong or forbidden, and deflected from the love of his fellow men and the pure worship of the One True God. The problem before the spiritual Teachers is to cure this crookedness, and to restore human nature to what it should be under the Will of God. 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Holy Qur'ān: Text, Translation and Commentary*, 1983, Amana Corp. P. 1059, footnote no. 3541

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- ii) The first copy was rehearsed and recited to the Prophet (PBUH) while the second is inspired from and conforms to what was recited.
- iii) Sometimes the first copy is claimed by one who is not a prophet and commits, therefore, the mistakes being a liar

In case the nature is pure, free from outer circumstances and endued with true understanding, and comes out its light, it does face the light of the revelation (*wahy*) and both conform each other, explains al-Farāhī very reasonably. This was illustrated in the Qur'ān metaphorically as following:

يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ

Tr.: Whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light!<sup>1</sup>

Not every heart is capable to access this rank successfully. The human beings approach this rank varyingly according to their status and level of understanding. Nearer to this rank becomes nearer to the revelation. When he approaches the revelation successfully his inner light comes out and conforms to the *wahy* as the Qur'ān describes:

أَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللَّهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلَى نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ ۗ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم

Tr.: Is one whose heart God has opened to Islam, so that he has received Enlightenment from God (no better than one hard-hearted)?<sup>2</sup>

This man constituted the lamp ever-ready to lightening; whose inner light was concealed and came out after he heard the revelation, al-Farāhī illustrates.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Nūr: 35

<sup>2</sup> Al-Zumar: 21

<sup>3</sup> Al-Farāhī, *Dalā'il al-Nizām*, op.cit., P. 55

## Interpretation of “إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ”

(Indeed, Allah is needy, while we are free of need)

✎...Maulānā Nasīm Zahīr Iṣlāhī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. Mohd. Mo'ataṣim Azmi<sup>2</sup>

Allah says quoting the saying of Jews in chapter Āli-'Imrān:

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ  
حَقٍّ وَتَقْوُلُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٣﴾

Tr.: Allah has certainly heard the statement of those [Jews] who said 'Indeed, Allah is needy, while we are free of need.' We will record what they said and their killing of prophets without reason and will say 'Taste the punishment of the Burning Fire.'

The following incident, narrated by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās is quoted in interpretation of this verse:

“One day Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq went to a Jews' school. He saw that many people were gathered around a man named Faḥkhāṣ ibn-i-'Āzūrā' who was a great scholar of the Jews. Abū Bakr told him “Fear Allah and embrace Islam, by God! You know well that Muḥammad (PBUH) is the Messenger of Allah. He is mentioned in your Devine books of Taurāt (Psalms) and Zabūr.” Faḥkhāṣ replied: O Abū Bakr! We are not dependent

<sup>1</sup> The author teaches Qur'ān and Ḥadīth in the famous institute of A'zamgarh (Madrasah al-Iṣlāh)

<sup>2</sup> Guest Lecturer, Department of Arabic, University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India, Member of IJAIS

<sup>3</sup> 'Āli-'Imrān: 181

on Allah but Allah is dependent upon us. We do not need him. If He does not need us then He did not ask for a loan from us.” As Abū Bakr heard this, he became very angry and he badly slapped his face very strongly and said: I swear by Allah who has full right of my life. O enemy of Allah! If we did not have a pact with you, I would cut your head.” Thereafter Fakhkhāṣ reached the Prophet and said: See, what did your companion do with me? The Prophet enquired Abū Bakr: “Why did you do this?” Abū Bakr replied: “O Messenger of Allah! This man uttered a very bad thing; he said: “Allah is poor and we are rich.” Fakhkhāṣ denied this version of Abū Bakr and told that he did not say anything like this.” Then Allah sent this verse certifying the narration of Abū Bakr.”<sup>1</sup>

While Qatādah (the eminent-Commentator) says: “This verse descended about Ḥuyy ibn-i-Akḥṭab. When this verse “مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا”<sup>2</sup> (Tr.: Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan,) descended, he said: “Is our Lord asking loan from us? The poor asks loan from rich only<sup>3</sup>. “يستقرضنا ربنا إنما يستقرض الفقير الغنى”.

Ḥasan Baṣārī says: “When the verse “مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا”<sup>4</sup> [Tr.: Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan?] was revealed, the Jews astonished and said: “Allah is needy and asking for a loan”<sup>5</sup> إن الله فقير يستقرض.

<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Ṭabarī: Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, 4/242, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, Beirut, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1421 A.H./ 2001 A.D.

Al-Muḥarrir al-wajīz: Ibn ‘Atiyyah, 1/547, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 1413 A.H./ 1993 A.D.

Rūh al-Ma‘ānī: Sayyid Muḥammad Ālūsī, 4/141, Mustafā’iyah Publications, Deoband

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ḥadīd: 11

<sup>3</sup> Ṭabarī, 4/243, Ibn ‘Atiyyah, 1/548, Rūh al-Ma‘ānī, 4/141

<sup>4</sup> Al-Ḥadīd: 11

<sup>5</sup> Ṭabarī, 4/243, Ibn ‘Atiyyah, 1/548, Rūh al-Ma‘ānī, 4/141

These are three sayings which are mentioned by our predecessor exegetes about the interpretation of this verse which our common commentators have adopted and concluded these sayings in a way that firstly Fakhkhāṣ and Ḥuyy ibn-i-Akḥṭab the scholars of Jews told this thing and then the ordinary Jews began to quote them.<sup>1</sup>

**Ambiguities:** But when we look at the words and context of the verse, many ambiguities appear that endorse above commentary as an appropriate point of view:

A: The verse in which the quotation of giving loan to Allah is mentioned “مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا”<sup>2</sup> [Tr.: Who is it that would loan Allah a goodly loan?] the address of this verse is common. All are addressed to this, not only Jews are addressed to this. Rather they are not addressed totally. This demand is for the Muslims only. They are the true addressee of this verse, so how can the comments of the Jews and the Jew scholars in its response or reactions to the above mentioned narrations be correct?

B. Similarly, in the case of the commentary mentioned above, the reason for their saying “إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ” [Tr.: Indeed, Allah is needy, while we are free of need] was also understandable. If they had to say it, they should have said, “إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَعِبَادَهُ أَغْنِيَاءُ” (Tr.: Indeed, Allah is needy and His slaves (men) are free of need) What is the reason behind focusing the expression using “we” the personal pronoun and specifying the wealth only for themselves in compassions of others? (or devoting the wealth to themselves in preference to others.)

<sup>1</sup> Al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ: Abū Ḥayān Andalūsi, 3/454, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1412 A.H./1992 A.D., ibn ‘Aṭīyyah, 1/458

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ḥadīd: 11

C: Allah says after quoting the Jews' saying: " سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا " وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ " means the conjunction of قَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ is on مَا قَالُوا that is we will record what they said and their killing of prophets without reason even though the whole background which is the reason of descendign for the verse being discussed, therein the killing of prophets is not mentioned anywhere. Therefore; this conjunction seems strange and irrelevant while the rule is that there must be a connection between the Ma'tūf (Conjugated) and Ma'tūf 'alaih (Conjugated to),<sup>1</sup> and there is no connection between them. That is why this conjunction seems absolutely spotless. The commentators have responded to this abguility by saying that its purpose is to show that this saying and that act are serious crimes which Allah will never forget.<sup>2</sup> "إِندَانَا بَأْنَهُمَا فِي الْعِظْمِ أَخْوَانٌ" But it is evident that this answer is merely a formality which does not solve the problem of incompatibility.

The statement of narrations shows that the Jews have said these things publicly to the Muslims. But the words and style of the verse express that they have told these things in their special assembly and they are convinced that these things will remain a secret among them. Therefore; the style of this verse is precisely the same what the first verse of the chapter al-Mujādalāh "فَدَّ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ" (Tr.: Certainly Allah has heard the speech of the one who argues with you [O, Muḥammad]) bears indeed.

<sup>1</sup> Ma'tūf; first of two words or clures joined together with a conjunction. Ma'tūf 'Alaih; second of two words or clures joined together with a conjunction.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, 4/554, Al-Kaṣhshāf: Zamaḥsharī, Dār al-Ma'rifah, Berut

'Ā'isha says regarding this verse:

"الحمد لله الذي وسع سمع الأصوات، لقد جاءت المجادلة إلى النبي تكلمه وأنا في ناحية البيت، لا أسمع ما تقول فأنزل الله "قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا".....<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: All the praise is to Allah who hears all voices. The pleading woman came to the Prophet (PBUH), she was talking to him while I was in a corner of my house and unable to listen what she was saying, then Allah revealed this verse "قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا" (Tr.: Certainly Allah has heard the speech of the one who argues with you [O, Muḥammad], concerning her husband).

This verse of chapter al-Mujādalah, by reason of its descending implies the nature of "قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ" and "لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ" that the Qur'ān uses this in the context of whispering and secret conversation where the sayer thinks that the person is just listening to him to whom he is talking of.

In the verse under discussion, emphasized by "لَقَدْ" rather than "قَدْ", (it) implies that the same-incident is more secretive than the incident of Mujādilah whereas the impression of narrations is just opposite of that.

These are four reasons by which the interpretation in above mentioned verse, adopted by the commentators on the basis of the above narrations does not seem to be correct.

Now the question is: What is the correct interpretation?

In order to know its correct interpretation, it is necessary to consider other verses that are similar to it and try to reach the correct interpretation in their light.

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<sup>1</sup> Musnad Ḥanbal: Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, 7/70, Dār al-Turāth al-'Arabī, Berut, 1414. A.H./ 1993 A.D.

Allah says in similar verse of chapter Fātir:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾ إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: “O mankind, it is you who are in need of Allah, while Allah is the free of need, the Praiseworthy. If he wills He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.”

One verse is from th chapter Muḥammad:

هَآأَنْتُمْ هُنُوْلَآءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَلَكُمْ ﴿٣٨﴾<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: “Here you are –those invited to spend in the cause of Allah but among you are those who withhold [out of greed]. And whoever withholds only [benefit] from himself; And Allah is the Free of need, while you are the needy. And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be likes of you.”

**Meaning of فقير (needy) and غني (Free of need):** It is very clear that the word فقراء in both the verses does not mean pauper and penniless. Similarly the word غني does not mean independent and prosperous. The Qur’ān itself reveals more the intention of their meaning in these verses. So He says in the verse of chapter Fātir:

إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

Tr.: If He wills He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.

<sup>1</sup> Fātir: 15-16

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad: 38

And it is mentioned in the verse of chapter Muḥammad:

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبَدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَلَكُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

Tr.: If you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be likes of you.

Imām Rāzī says about first verse:

قال تعالى: إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ، بياناً لغناه وفيه بلاغة كاملة..... ثم إنه تعالى زاد بيان الاستغناء بقوله ويأت بخلق جديد، يعني إن كان يتوهم متوهم إن هذا الملك له كمال وعظمة فلو أذهب لزال ملكه وعظمته فهو قادر بأن يخلق خلقاً جديداً أحسن من هذا وأجمل وأتم وأكمل.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Allah said: إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ (Tr.: If He wills, He can do away with you and bring forth a new creation.) a statement of his needlessness and there is a complete eloquence in it. Then Allah added the statement of regardlessness by His saying "He can bring forth a new creature" means that if anybody assumes that He has power and glory over this world despite it Allah eliminates his power and glory will be ended. He is able to bring forth a new creation better than this and more beautiful, complete and perfect.

Abū Ḥayyān Andalūsi writes in this regard:

هذه الآية موعظة وتذكير وإن جميع الناس محتاج إلى إحسان الله وإنعامه في جميع أحوالهم لا يستغنى أحد عنه طرفة عين وهو غني عن العالم على الإطلاق... ولما ذكر أنه الغني على الإطلاق ذكر ما يدل على استغناءه عن العالم وأنه ليس بمحتاج إليهم فقال: "إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ" أي إن يشأ إذهبكم يذهبكم وفي هذا وعيد بإهلاكهم.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Kabīr: Fakhruddīn Rāzī: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabi, Berut, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

<sup>2</sup> Al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, 9/23

Tr.: This verse is a sermon and a reminder and indeed all people need the favour and blessings of Allah in all their conditions. No one is indispensable to Him even blinking of an eye and He is free of need from the world at all... And when it is mentioned that He is not in need of anyone and is fully independent at all, thereafter he mentioned the evidence of dispensing with the world and that He does not need them. He said: If He wills, He can do away with you means if He wills, He can destroy you, He can do away with you. There is a warning to destroy them.

This means that Allah by sending His Messenger to the people is inviting them to worship Him, not because he has any work to do and He needs people's obediences. But He is doing so only because of His mercy upon them.

فلا يأمركم بالعبادة لاحتياجه إليكم وإنما هو لإشفاقه عليكم.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: He does not command you to worship because of His need to you, but it is to pity you.

The same thing was mentioned by the commentators regarding the last part of verse of chapter Muḥammad:

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أُمَّةً لَكُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾

Imām Rāzī says:

إنه ذكره بياناً لاستغناه كما قال تعالى (في سورة فاطر) إن يشأ يذهبكم ويأت بخلق جديد... كأنه تعالى يقول: الله غني عن العالم بأسره فلا حاجة إليكم.... بل الله قادر أن يخلق خلقاً غيركم يفتخرون لعبادته وعالمًا غير هذا يشهد بعظمته وكبريائه.<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: He mentioned it to point out His dispensing as Allah said (in chapter Fātīr) (Tr.: If He wills, He can

<sup>1</sup> Rāzī, 26/13

<sup>2</sup> Rāzī, 28/75

do away with you and bring forth a new creation.)... As if Allah says: Allah is free of need from the whole world, and there is no need of you.... but Allah is able to bring forth a creation other than you who will be proud of His worship and a world other than this that will witness His greatness and pride.

Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' writes in 'Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān':

"Allah has made it clear to being Himself free of need that Allah has no need of your wealth even your existence. If you all abide by our commandments, as long as we have to keep the world to be survived, we will create another nation that will not abstain from the Shari'ah, as you do but will also fully obey us.<sup>1</sup>

The first fact is clear by this detail that the financially straitened and needy for others are not called poor in these verses. Similarly, the rich and the free from need of others are not called rich. Rather the poor are the ones who need the help of others in their conditions and issues and the rich are the ones who have no regard for anyone. Therefore; these words should have the same meaning in the verse under discussion.

And the second fact is clear that the purpose of the aforesaid verse and such other verses is to warn and prevent people from following the path of infidelity and arrogance to choose the path of belief and obedience and do not invite the wrath of Allah.

**Interpretation of Verse:** There is a warning to the Jews like the warning in the same chapter, shortly before the verse under discussion:

وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: But whoever disbelieves –then indeed, Allah is free from need of the worlds.

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<sup>1</sup> Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān: Muftī Muḥammad Shafī', 8/151

<sup>2</sup> Āli-'Imrān: 97

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After this warning, it was necessary that People of Scripture (Jews) be aware and refrain from their hostility and arrogance, but on the contrary, they became even more arrogant, even though they were devoid of intellect and started mocking in their special councils and started saying to their people with brazen and shamelessness "إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ" (Tr.: Indeed, Allah is needy, while we are free of need.)

This is what they mean that although Allah is scolding us, He cannot be free from our need. He cannot find any creature that can succeed us in and replace us. In other words, Allah will be compelled to make them happy and will resurrect them with previous dignity. (May Allah destroy them.)

They may have involved in this hauteur, because Allah gave them a many opportunities and gave them several favours. Despite their all insurrection, disobedience, arrogance and such crime of killing of the Prophets, Allah continued sending prophethood and apostleship among them for centuries. Therefore; they fall prey to the fact that despite their abusive and unfortunate behavior with the Prophets and Companions the Prophethood has to remain within them simply because they are the best nation. They have the superiority and privilege over all communities and nations, so the prophethood and apostleship are their natural right and their speciality. And it will come back to them again.

It was their thinking and because of that they used full strength to opposing the Prophethood of Muḥammad and united in a scheme of hatred and enmity against Him night and day. That was the same thought and utter so they were shamelessly and impolitely saying in front of their followers "إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ" (Tr.: Indeed, Allah is needy, while we are free of need). The work of Allah cannot go on without us.

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And because their thoughts and their views are a continuation of their past stand, which they have adopted for the ages the past regarding their prophets and apostles. And as a result they involved in such serious crimes as the killing of prophets. So Allah Almighty has included both this saying and that action of them as a warning and said:

سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٨١﴾

Tr.: We will record what they said and their killing of prophets without right and will say “Taste the punishment of the Burning fire.<sup>1</sup>

In this way, Almighty Allah, in the prespective of their present presumptions and underneath the psyche of the mind, unmasked their past tales and put their original face in front of the common people with utmost eloquence. And made it clear that their behavior was not new and accidental but their history is full of such types of crimes. Now, instead of being honored, they will become the fuel of hell.

This interpretation of the verse is very clear, free from all types of ambiguities, compatible with thoughts and nature of Jews, evidence and coherence of verses.

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<sup>1</sup> Āli-‘Imrān: 181

**Selected English Translations of the Qur'ān: A  
Critical & Analytical Study**  
**Chapter-IV, Sub-Chapter-II**  
***Selected Idioms and Phrases***

✎...Dr. Aurang Zeb A'zmī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. Abū Ādam Farīd bin 'Abdul Ḥafīz al-Hindī<sup>2</sup>



As for the discussion of the vocabularies what the Arabs used in their pre-Islamic writings the same along with its additional meanings were employed by the Qur'ān, were discussed in the first sub-chapter. But the second sub-chapter is mainly dedicated to “selected expressions” came in pre-Islamic writings, were later employed by the Qur'ān in the same way and same connotation that can be termed as “idioms or phrases”. The Qur'ān has frequently used them to convey Islamic message to the general Arab folks who were well aware with them and used them in their conversation. Here I do not want to encompass all such expressions but I have chosen some expressions so that the reader may not get exhausted while reading them.

1. **Abramū Amran** “أبرموا أمراً”: This is like ‘abrama al-ḥabla’ (أبرم) (الجبل) means to twist a rope and from this the meaning has been derived for ‘abrama amran ybrimuhu’ “أبرم أمراً يبرمه”

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<sup>1</sup> Editor and Assistant Professor, Department of Arabic, Jāmia Millia Islāmia, New Delhi

<sup>2</sup> Chairperson, Review Committee of the Journal and Consular Officer, Embassy of Lebanon, New Delhi

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means to decide anything decisively.<sup>1</sup> And this meaning also came in one place in the Qur'ān that is about the infidels who decided severely not to have faith in the Prophet Muḥammad as Allah said: **أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ** (al-Zukhruf: 79)

As for the selected eminent translators, they differed in understanding the verse, therefore, they differed in the translation as well. The one who thought that it means 'to plot a matter against any one so he translated this verse according to his own understanding. And they are Irwing, Arberry, 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, M. Shākir, and Taquiuddīn and his co-translator Muḥsin Khān who translated in such expressions what they actually did not understand.

Let's look into few renderings of it:

As Irwing translated "أَمْ أَبْرَمُوا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ": "Or have they tried to use some scheme (against you)?, Well, we will try something too!"

Arberry rendered the word "أبرم أمراً" as 'to contrive' that actually means to 'plot some plan' what was followed by Taquiuddīn and his co-translator.

As regards to 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī and M. Shākir they translated it as 'to settle a plan/affair' that convey the same meaning.

So all these translators thought that it is related to 'a plan against the Prophet while it is in-fact wrong. It's because it is related to their firm decision to remain on infidelity indeed. Hence Allah warned them (infidels) for final punishment on this nation.

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<sup>1</sup> Lisān al-'Arab: برم

As for the rest translators, they came to the real meaning that is 'to determine' while Pikthal thinks it is a plot against the Prophet which is actually wrong. Look into some translations they are:

As Pikthal rendered it: "Or do they determine anything (against the prophet) Lo! We (also) are determining".

Sher 'Alī translated it: "Have they determined upon a corpse? Then we too are determined."

But there is another defect in this rendering that they thought it is related to present time whereas it is in-fact related to future time that show the punishment to come on the determination of the infidels, therefore, its appropriate translation to me is:

"If they have decided anything then we will also decide {a severe thing}".

**2. Balgha Ashuddahu "بلغ أشده":** This expression is like the expression of 'balgha al-hulm' (بلغ الحلم) means 'to attain puberty; to become matured' but there is a little difference between them as it appears from the Qur'ānic term 'balgha ashuddahu' (بلغ أشده) that it posses three stages of life: (a) childhood (b) manhood (c) old age. In this regard the mature age cannot be called if some one attains puberty only unless he posses the characteristics of distinguishing between right and wrong and benefit and harm but he should also posses the quality of giving judgement and this ability can be seen in him/her at a time when he/she attains puberty or he/she exceeds in age means he/she may reach the age of forty. The manhood with above quality prescribed can be seen in the verses bellow as Allah said:

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وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنٌ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ  
إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَدِّكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ  
أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of 'al-rushd' (الرشد) is maturity of mind that can be determined with the word 'balagha' (بلغ) came in another place in the chapter al-Nisā'. Allah said: *وَابْتَلُوا الَّتِي تَمَنَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا* (al-Nisā': 6)

Hence the period of 'rushd' is the period of 'bulūgh' {; the age of maturity} indeed. As Allah said: *ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ* (al-Hajj: 5)

And Allah too said: *ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا شُيُوخًا* (Ghāfir: 67)

In brief it can be said that the period of bulūgh (بلوغ) (maturity) is the period after childhood and before old age and Allah Himself determined this period at a time when one possesses the quality of giving judgement as Allah said:

*وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَاسْتَوَىٰ ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا* (al-Qaṣaṣ: 14)

While He determines this period by the age of forty as Allah said:

*حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً* (al-Aḥqāf: 15)

It appears from these holy citations that the period of 'bulūgh' (بلوغ) is the period when one is able to distinguish between right and wrong and benefit and harm that can also be called in

<sup>1</sup> Al-An'ām: 151-152

another term ‘bulūghul ḥilm’ (بلوغ الحلم) (age of maturity; puberty) and this sheer maturity {of mind} can be seen in the age of 20, 30, or 40 years. The accurate meaning which specifies this expression ‘balagha ašuddahu’ is the age of maturity of mind indeed which distinguishes between good and bad.

Let’s look into deferent translations of the expression ‘balagha ašuddahu’ came in frequent places in the Qur’ān and the selected eminent translators have rendered them according to their own understanding {came in diferrent verses} are shown in the table bellow:

	152/6	5/22	28/14	46/15
1- Irwing	to become of age	to reach full growth	to come of age	to attain full growth
2- Arberry	to be of age	to come of age	to be fully grown	to be fully grown
3- Pkthal	To reach maturity	to attain full strength	to reach full strenth	to attain full strenth
4- ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf	to attain the age of full strength	to reach age of full strength	to reach full age	to reach the age of full strength
5- M. Zafullāh Khān	- do -	to attain full strength	to reach age of full strength	to attain full maturity
6- Sher ‘Alī	to attain maturity	to attain age of full strength	- do -	- do -
7- M. Shākir	- do -	to attain maturity	to attain maturity	to attain maturity
8- ‘Abdul Mājid	to reach maturity	to reach maturity	to attain full strenth	to attain full strength
9- Taqiuddin and his co-translator	to attain age of full strength	to reach age of full strenth	to attain full strenth	- do -

If you look into the defferent translations of this expression, you will see that all the said celebrated translators except M. Shākir seem confused and discontent in their own renderings as they, sometimes, translate it by ‘bulūghul ḥulm’ (بلوغ الحلم) to reach age of puberty; maturity of mind while another meaning they convey is ‘bulūgh al-quwah al-tāmmah’ (بلوغ القوة التامة) to attain full strength, and third meaning they convey is by ‘bulūgh al-kāmil’ (البلوغ الكامل) to be fully grown. The fact is that it is nothing but to attain maturity and the word ‘maturity’ means complete maturity with wisdom to give judgement as complete ‘bulūgh’ posseses the complete meaning of ‘rushd’ and it utterly gives comprehensive meaning to ‘rushd’ and ‘ḥulm’ the both.

**3. Ajma’ū Amrahum** “أجمعوا أمرهم”: This is a particular expression of Arabic means ‘to agree all on one thing or agree unanimously as the pre-Islamic poet Zuhair bin Sulmá said:

فقال لهم خيرًا وأثنى عليهم      وودعهم وداعً أن لا تلاقيا  
وكان، إذا ما اخلولج الأمر، ماضيا      وأجمع أمرًا كان ما بعده له<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: He said to them ‘ok’ and then he praised them and bid them farewell in a way that there would be no more any meeting.

He agreed on one thing and whenever there happened any problems to be solved, he took decision for one thing.

And Ḥārith bin Ḥillizah said about the tribe of ‘Amar bin Kulthūm:

<sup>1</sup> Dīwān Zuhair bin Abī Sulmá, P. 108

زعموا أن كل من ضرب العيب — رموال لنا وأنا الولاء  
 أجمعوا أمرهم بليل فلما — أصبحوا أصبحت لهم ضوضاء  
 من مناد ومن مجيب ومن تص — هال خيل خلال ذاك رغاء<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: They think that every camel-owner is our slave and we are his lord.

They took decision in the night and when it became morning, they started to make hue and cry.

As some were calling some one, some of them were replying and among this 'hue and cry' there heard of the neighs of the horses.

Hence "ijmā'-ul-amr" (إجماع الأمر) means 'to take firm decision and to agree on it unanimously'. As it came in the Qur'ān Allah said:

وَأْتَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ يَتَقَوْمِ إِن كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقَامِي وَتَذَكِيرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿٧١﴾ (Yūnus: 71)

Now let us look into the renderings of "Ajmaul Amrkum wa shurakaukum" (فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ) by the bellow translators.

Irwing translated: "... so make your designs on me and those you have associated (with God) ..."

Pikthal undertook its translation as: "... so decide upon your course of action, you and your partners ..."

'Abdullāh Yūsuf translated it as: "... get you then an agreement about your plan and among your parents ..."

<sup>1</sup> *Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'd al-'Aṣhr*, PP. 297-298

Zafrullāh Khān carried out its rendering as: “ ... determine your plan on your side, along with your associate gods ...”

Sher ‘Alī translated it as: “muster then all your designs, you and your partners”

M. Shākīr performed its translation as: “... then resolve upon your affairs and (gather) your associates ...”

‘Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī rendered it as: “... so devise your affair, you and your associate – gods ...”

And Taqīuddīn and his co-translator translated it as: “... so devise your plot, you and your partners ...”

All of them rendered the above expression and reached an intended meaning but few of them who translated “amr” (أمر) by ‘plan’ or ‘plot’ their renderings are appropriate so its preferred translation to me is:

“... determine/devise your plan/plot, you and your associate - gods ...”

**4. Aḥṣana Farjahu “أحصن فرجه”:** ‘Allāmah ‘Abdul Ḥamīd Farāhī said about this expression in the footnote of commentary of the Qur’ān:

“‘Aḥṣana Farjahu (أحصن فرجه) means ‘taḥaṣṣana min al-sū’ (تحصن من السوء) to be safe from evil as it is said: ‘sadda al-sulmah’ (سدّ السلمة) means to fill a gap, ‘rataqa al-fataq’ (رتق الفتق) – to patch up, ‘jabara al-kasr’ (جبر الكسر) – to set {broken bones}, ‘ḥamiya al-baiḍah’ (حمي البيض) – to protect egg. What intended from it, is the reality of single words and ‘farj’ (فرج) herein denotes the same meaning is not based but on place of doubtful thing like ‘gap’, ‘cleft’ and ‘crack’ and it is used for men and women the both and the gap between the legs of the horse.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Footnotes of Imām Farāhī on the Qur’ān, P. 334

The author remarks: {'Farj' (فرج) means the place wherein suspicion of evil seems to be happened indeed}.

Labīd bin Abī Rabī'ah al-'Āmirī said:

فغدت كلا الفرجين تحسب أنها مولى المخافة خلفها وأمامها<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: She covered the place of both the suspicious things thinking that there is fear in the front and back side the both.

Zuhair bin Abī Sulmá said:

وكل غريبي كأن فروجه إذا رقعته منه فروح حصان<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: Every camel whose middle place {his back} is empty when it gets up as if the gap of the two legs of the horse.

Imru' al-Qais said:

لها ذنب مثل ذيل العروس تسدّ به فرجها من دبر<sup>3</sup>

Tr.: Its (camel's) tail is like the braid of the bride by which she covers her empty place from behind.

'Amr bin Qumai'ah said:

ولم يحم فرج الحي إلا محافظ كريم المحيّا ماجد غير أحردا<sup>4</sup>

Tr.: There is no one who may protect the suspicious place of the area except the one who is gentle, noble and belongs to the noble family.

Mutammim bin Nuwairah said:

أهوى ليحيي فرجها إذ أدبرت زجلاً كما يحمي النجيد المشرع<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dīwān Labīd bin Abī Rabī'ah al-'Āmirī, P. 311

<sup>2</sup> Dīwān Zuhair bin Abī Sulmá, P. 258

<sup>3</sup> Dīwān Imru'l Qais, P. 64

<sup>4</sup> Dīwān 'Amr bin Qumai'h, P. 30

Tr.: When she turned back, he got inclined towards her voice in order to save her like a brave warrior.

The same expression came in the chapter ‘al-Anbiyā’ in praise of Maryam’ as Allah said:

al-) وَالَّتِي أَحْصَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾  
(Anbiyā’: 91)

So ‘aḥṣanat farjaha’ (أحصنت فرجها) means “to close up the suspicious places”.<sup>2</sup>

Now we examine its translations performed by the below translators:

As Irving, Arberry, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, Ṣafrullāh Khān, Sher ‘Alī, M. Shākir, ‘Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī and Taqīuddīn Hilālī and his co-translator translated ‘aḥṣanat farjaha’ (أحصنت فرجها) as:

“... guarded/preserved her chastity...”

As for Pikhthal, he said: “... she who was chaste...”

All of them mean by ‘farj’ (فرج) ‘chastity’ whereas this meaning is actually not taken here because ‘aḥṣanat’ (أحصنت) is not a separate part from ‘farj’ but these two words are compound expression means one single expression as ‘idiom’ so it means ‘to guard the places of suspicion’ therefore, the appropriate meaning to me is:

“... who guarded her places of suspicion...”

5. **Kharrā lahu Sājīdan** “خَرَّ لَهُ سَاجِدًا”: This is a particular expression wherein the word ‘kharrā’ (خَرَّ) does not give its

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mufaḍḍaliyāt, P. 50

<sup>2</sup> Mufraḍāt al-Qur’ān, P. 335

original meaning but it gets inclined to the meaning of its adjective which came after it hence the meaning of 'kharra sājidan' (خَرَّ سَاجِدًا) is 'to prostrate' indeed as the poet 'Amr bin Kulthūm said:

إذا بلغ الفطام لنا صبي      تخرّ له الجبابر ساجدين<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: When our baby gets weaned, (even) the great chieftains prostrate before them.

And Umayyah bin Abī Ṣalt said composing the story of prostration of the angels before Ādam:

من الحقد نيران الغداوة بيننا      لأن قال ربي للملائكة اسجدوا  
لآدم لما كمل الله خلقه      فخرّوا له طوعاً سجوداً وكدّوا<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: The fire of enmity broke out between us due to jealousy when Allah ordered the angels to prostrate {before Ādam}.

... when He created Ādam, they (angels) prostrated before him.

And this expression with its attribute came in frequent places in the Qur'ān. Allah said:

وَلَقَدْ دَاوُدُ أَتَمَّا فَتَنَّهُ فَأَسْتَغْفِرَ رَبَّهُ، وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿٢٤﴾ (Sād: 24)

Allah again said:

إِذَا تَثَلَّى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَبُكِيًّا ﴿٥٨﴾ (Maryam: 58)

Allah added:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿٧٣﴾ (al-Furqān: 73)

<sup>1</sup> *Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'd al-'Aṣhr*, PP. 288

<sup>2</sup> *Umayyat Abī al-Ṣalt, Ḥayātuhu wa Shi'ruhu*, P. 186

He also said:

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا (Yūsuf: 100)

Now it's proved from holy citations that the word 'kharra' (خَرَّ) which completes its meaning after the adjective is added to it but it always gives the meaning of 'adjective' with 'verb' so 'rāki'an' (رَاكِعًا), 'sujjadan' (سُجَّدًا), 'bukīyyan' (بُكِّيًّا), 'ṣumman' (صَمًّا) and "umyānan' (عَمِيَانًا) all are adjectives and give adjectival meaning to their verbs.

Lets look into the rendering of the last part of the verse with the adjective 'sujjadan' (سُجَّدًا).

All the selected noted translators performed the same translation as 'fell down prostrate' which is a 'word to word' translation not literary translation as per the phrasal expression.

Arberry translated: "... and the others fell down prostrate before him".

Sher 'Alī rendered: "... and they all fell down prostrate before God for him".

While Irving performed its rendering: "... and they fell down on their knees before him."

And in this perspective the translations of Irving and Sher 'Alī indicate to this point wherein they both do not believe in their (angels') prostration before the Prophet Yūsuf which is prohibited for human being but they do not know that the 'prostration' was legal as per the old Sharī'a (former Scriptural Law).

Hence, the appropriate rendering to me (auther) is:

"... and they prostrated before him..."

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6. **Dallāhumā bighurūr** “دَلَاهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ”: This word ‘dallá’ (دَلَّى) whose original form is ‘adlá bi dalwin’ (أَدَلَى بِدَلْوِي) so it is actually ‘adlá bighurūr’ (أَدَلَى بِغُرُورٍ) and ‘adlá’ (أَدَلَى) later by the common usage became ‘dallá’ (دَلَّى) which is not from ‘dalla Yadullu dalālatan’ (دَلَّ يَدُلُّ دَلَالَةً) and its preposition is ‘alá’ (عَلَى).

Its usage can be seen in the pre-Islamic writing as Abū Jundub al-Huḍalī said:

أَحْصَ فَلَا أَجِيرَ وَمَنْ أَجْرَهُ فَلَيْسَ كَمَنْ يَدِّي بِالْغُرُورِ<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: I feel that I do not give anyone shelter but when I give someone shelter, I do not deceive him.

While the Qur’ān used this expression in relation to Devil’s deceive to Ādam and Eve (Ḥawwā’). Allah said:

وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِيبٌ ۖ فَدَلَّهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا  
(al-A’rāf: 21-22)

After this discussion we look into the renderings of the mentioned translators critically e.g. Irving, Arberry, Piktal, ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī and Taqīuddin Hilālī and his co-translator Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān:

“He led them on? Misguided by deceiving/delusion/guide”

In this rendering they thought that the said expression is from the pattern of ‘dalla yadullu dalālatan’ (دَلَّ يَدُلُّ دَلَالَةً) and that is why Daryābādī said in its commentary:

“Thus the Qur’ān exonerates completely and in a language that is unmistakable and unequivocal Ādam and his consort of

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<sup>1</sup> Lisān al-‘Arab: دَلَّى

all deliberate sin. ‘dalla’ (دَلَّ) denotes a fall both physical and spiritual”.<sup>1</sup>

There is a group of translators (the selected ones) who translated this idiom in a way that it is closed to the meaning of the expression. As ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, Ṣaḥrullāh Khān, Molvī Sher ‘Alī and M. Shākir translated:

Molvī Sher ‘Alī performed its rendering in this way:

“thus brought about their fall into disobedience by deceit...”

M. Shākir translated:

“then he caused them to fall by deceit...”

The fact of the matter is that its actual pharisaic meaning is: “He deceived them” only while ‘gharrahumā’ (غَرَّمَا) is enough to express this meaning as Allah used such expression in frequent places in the Qur’ān but this expression with ‘dalla’ (دَلَّ) suits more where there is a rhetorical meaning. It means that the Devil provoked them to have interest in that thing as one does before the animal when he offers food ....

**7. Istarāqa al-Sam’a** “استرق السمع”: This is a particular expression as idiom which is used when any one hears stealthily, particularly, gives ear or hearken behind a barrier which may occur between the hearer and speaker. This expression what Qur’ān used for the Devil who was trying to hear stealthily the talks between the angels and {Allah} in the sky. As Allah said:

وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا لِلنَّاظِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ ﴿١٧﴾  
إِلَّا مَنْ اسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَاتَّبَعَهُ، شَهَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ (al-Hijr: 16-18)

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīrul Qur’ān (English), 2/101

This is what the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) said:

"سمعتُ أبا هريرة رضي الله عنه يقول إن نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "إذا قضى الله تعالى الأمر في السماء ضربت الملائكة بأجنحتها خضعاناً لقوله كأنه سلسلة على صفوان فإذا فزع عن قلوبهم قالوا ماذا قال ربكم؟ قالوا للذي قال الحق وهو العلي الكبير فيسمعها مسترق السمع ومسترق السمع هكذا بعضه فوق بعض فيسمع الكلمة فيلقها إلى من تحته، ثم يلقها الآخر إلى من تحته، حتى يلقها على لسان الساحر أو الكاهن فربما أدركه الشهاب قبل أن يلقها وربما ألقاها قبل أن يدركه، فيكذب معها مائة كذبة فيقال أليس قد قال لنا يوم كذا وكذا كذا وكذا؟ فيصدق بتلك الكلمة سمعت من السماء"<sup>1</sup>

Herein the Prophet (PBUH) also used that particular expression of Qur'ān.

As for the translation of 'istraqa al-sam'a' (استرق السمع), the translators have differed in its renderings, for instance, one group of translators translated according to English language styles, whereas another group prefers Arabic style of meaning. As Irving, Arberry, 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, Ḥafṣullāh Khān and Molvī Sher 'Alī say:

"It means 'eaves hear stealthly, hear by stealth, listen by stealth and drp stealth hearing."

I do not agree with this last rendering. It is because whenever we transfer anything into target language, it is essential for us to mold the expression according to the culture of the native speakers of the {target language} lest the rendering will go against the cultural style of the target language like the saying of the poet.

However, I turn from this point and come to criticize the translation of the first group which prefers English language

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm, 3/545

style in their renderings. This group also divides into two out of which one group prefers eloquent English language whilst another one prefers simple English style and I am with the first group. Hence, in this perspective I prefer the style of the target language if it is possible otherwise literary translation as per English language style is: ‘overhear or eaves-drop’. As for the rendering of the verse “...إِلَّا مَنْ أَسْرَقَ أَلْسَمَعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شَهَابٌ مُبِينٌ”, I would discuss about it when I will discuss about the rendering of the meaning of the verse or verses.

**8. Saqaṭa fī Aidīhim** “سقط في أيديهم”: This is an expression which indicates to ‘repentance of a person and his lamentation or regret on something’. As for its original meaning, the scholars differ about it.

Ibn Manẓūr said: ‘saqaṭa min yadi wa saqaṭa fī yad al-rajul’ (سقط من يدي وسقط في يد الرجل) ‘to slip or make a mistake’.

It is said that ‘saqaṭa fī yad al-rajul’ (سقط في يد الرجل) means to repent.

- Al-Fārsī said: ‘Saqaṭa fī aidīhim’ means ‘ḍarabū biakaffihim ‘alá akuffihim min al-nadam (ضربوا بأكفهم على أكفهم من الندم) means to ‘ring one’s hands’ due to repentance.
- Al-Farrā’ said: ‘Saqaṭa fī aidīhim’ means ‘saqaṭa fī yadihi wa asqaṭa min al-nadāmah (سقط في يده وأسقط من الندامة) to repent.
- Al-Zajjāj said: It is said about the person who repents on what he did (قد سقط في يده وأسقط).<sup>1</sup>

To me this expression is used for the person who sees his consequences or the result of anything with his eyes when he

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<sup>1</sup> Lisān al-‘Arab: سقط

finds anything in his hand so this is an expression to put any result into one's hands, and it is supported by the sentence followed it:

وَأَتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُ خُوَارٌ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾ وَلَمَّا سَقَطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ يَرَحْمَنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ (al-A'rāf: 148-149)

If we ponder upon this verse once again, we would find another thing which is close to the reason that if we carefully determine the meaning of 'saqaṭa fī al-yad' (سقط في اليد) then we will find the meaning of the verse, so the sentence which comes after it is: 'وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا' (Tr.: And they saw that they had been misled.) would be the result of this action. This is what I mean here thereafter Allah knows better and right and the appropriate rendering to me is: 'perceive or realize'.

In this regard all translators (the selected ones) preferred the first meaning in their renderings (to repent) except Irving who adopted word to word translation as follows:

"... and when the matter was dropped in their mind.."

In this respect 'word to word translation' does not determine the intended meaning indeed. As for other translators, they translated in this ways:

'Abdullāh Yūsuf, M. Shākir and 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī rendered: "... when they regreted..."

Zafrullāh Khān and Sher 'Alī translated:

"... when they were afflicted/smitten with remorse..."

While Taqīuddīn and his co-translator translated in this way:

"... when they repented..."

And Arberry rendered: "... when they smote their hands...".

But this is not the actual English translation what he meant indeed.

As for Pikthal, he came close to the mentioned meaning but he could perform the actual translation as he did herein:

"... when they feared the consequences thereof..."

9. **Shadda Asrrahu** "شَدَّ أَسْرَهُ": This expression is about to make 'the joints of the man strong enough' but it does not include the meaning of 'power or strength of mind and thought' herein because there is another expression for it that is: 'balagha ashuddahu' (بلغ أشده) and 'balagha al-ḥulm' (بلغ الحلم) mean he mentally became matured. As Allah said:

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا أَسْرَهُمْ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَا أَمْثَلَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾ (al-Insān: 28)

The coherence of the chapter is based on our point {about the mentioned expression} which came in the chapter al-Insān or chapter al-Dahr and it agrees with the chapter al-Qiyāmah in which Allah has replied to a question of the infedils about their doubts regarding 'resurrection after death' (البعث بعد الموت). And Allah said in this verse that he is able to resurrect man after death in a complete shape as He created him and made him strong, and similar doubts and replies have frequently come in many places in the Qur'ān. Therefore herein the mention of mind of man or his intellect is not meant but it is the mention of man to be strong enough by physic. But in this regard 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī adopted the meaning of strong mind not strong physic is totally wrong as he says in the fotenoot of the translation of the Qur'ān:

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“Allah has not only created men, but ‘made their frame’ i.e, given them the power and strength to withstand the temptations of Evil and stand firmly in the Path of Right”.<sup>1</sup>

And Pikthal also followed him but we do not see in his translation ‘the mention of mind save that his translation resembles the rendering of ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf.

As far as the rest (mentioed) translators are concerned, they rendered it as: “sinews”, “joints”, “make” or “built” all are correct but “make” or “form” is litrary translation indeed.

**10. Ḍaraba Ṭarīqan “ضرب طريقًا”:** This idiom means ‘to make way’ as the exgetic Zamakhsharī said:

“There is a saying of the Arabs: to make share in someone’s wealth and to churn mik (to make butter)”.<sup>2</sup>

This expression what the Qur’ān used in the story of prophet Mūsá (Moses) who made/ opened a dried way on the river by the strike of his staff as Allah said:

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي فَاصْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَا تَخَافُ دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ ﴿٧٧﴾ (Tāḥa: 77)

Even though this is a particular expression, it does not relate to the words but the word ‘ḍaraba’ (ضرب) points out to a reality related to the story of Moses who struck on the river by his staff as Allah said: “ فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَانفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾ (al-Shu’arā’: 63)

As far as the art of translation is concerned, we never care for the mere words but we translate as per the expression based on meaning and sense, so those who translated the mentioned

<sup>1</sup> The Noble Qur’ān, P. 1869

<sup>2</sup> Al-Kaṣhshāf, 2/30

idiom as “to open or make” they are right in their renderings while the translators who rendered it as “to strike” is wrong translation, which is why the first translation is preferable to me and to Irving and M. Shākir as well. As for the other rendering, it is performed by Arberry, Pikthal, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, Ḥaḥḥullāh Khān, Molvī Sher ‘Alī, ‘Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī and Dr. Taqīuddīn and his co-translator. Here are given some examples:

Irving translated it as:

“... open a dry road through the sea...”

Arberry rendered it as:

“... strike for them a dry road in the sea...”

In this regard the rendering “open” is, to me, more eloquent than “to make” in respect of river indeed.

**11. Ḍuribat ‘Alaihim al-Ḍhillah “ضربت عليهم الذلة”:** This is a particular expression derived from ( ضرب الطين اللازب على الجدار ) – the striking of sticking soil on the wall or the striking (building) of domb on the earth as the poet Nābighah Ḍhubyānī said:

ولا يحسبون الخير لا شر بعده ولا يحسبون الشر ضربة لازب<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: They think that evil will not come after good and neither they think evil as everlasting.

Another poet said:

إن السماحة والمروءة والندي في قبة ضربت على ابن الحشرج<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: The generosity, benevolence and magnanimity are locked in that domb which was built on Ibn al-Ḥashraj.

<sup>1</sup> Dīwān al-Nābighah al-Ḍhubyānī, P. 41

<sup>2</sup> Al-Balāghah al-Wāḍiḥah, P. 229

The Qur'ān used it about the Children of Israil, Allah said:

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَى لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُثْمِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِن بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ أَهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مِمَّا سَأَلْتُمْ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ اللَّيْلَةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّنَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

(al-Baqarah: 61)

And the commentator Zamakhsharī said in its explanation:

“The abasement has covered them so they are in it like the one who is buried in the domb which is built upon him (or stuck on him) and in the same way the abasement is stuck to him as the soil is struck on the wall and then it gets sticked”.<sup>1</sup>

And I mean by this idiom to strike the soil on the wall and this is more eloquent that the domb is built on the earth what advocate Imām Farāhī and his student Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāhī.

Now let's look into the renderings performed by the translators: As Irving, Zafrullāh Khān and Molvī Sher 'Alī think that it is not a particular expression but it is an ordinary expression so they translated it as “cover” and “beat” whereas Piktal, 'Abdullāh and Taqīuddin and his co-translator assume it derived from the verb “ختم على” and thus they translated it as “stamp” and in the same way Arberry thinks that it is like 'ḍarabah al-qubbah 'alā al-'ard' (ضرب القبة على الأرض) to build a domb on the earth what Zamakhsharī advocates hence he rendered it as “pitch upon”. As for me, I acknowledge the rendering of 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī who did in this way:

“and stuck upon them were abasement and poverty”

<sup>1</sup> Al-Kaṣhshāf, 1/145

**12. Ḍaraba ‘Anhu al-Dhikr Ṣafḥan (ضرب عنه الذكر صفحًا):** This is a particular phrase that means “to ignore utterly” and this expression in the same way or having a little bit of changes can be seen in the pre-Islamic writings. As the poet Shanfurī said:

أديم مطال الجوع حتى أميته وأصرف عنه الذكر صفحًا فأذهل<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: I ignore the hunger unless I get it died (ended it) and I forget it utterly.

Imām Muslim used this idiom in his writing:

"وقد تكلم بعض منتحلي الحديث من عصرنا في تصحيح الأسانيد وتسقيمها يقول لو ضربنا عن حكايته وذكره صفحًا لكان رأيًا متينًا ومذهبًا صحيحًا"<sup>2</sup>

Zamaḵsharī used it in his Maqāmah (sitting; a genre of Arabic Rhythmic prose)

"يرى به الغرض إلى الدين ضارًا صفحًا عمن يطلبه"<sup>3</sup>

Ibn Kathīr used it in his writing and said:

"ذكر ابن أبي حاتم وابن جرير هنا آثارًا عن بعض السلف رضي الله عنهم أحببنا أن نضرب عنها صفحًا لعدم صحتها فلا نوردها"<sup>4</sup>

This is the meaning of the mentioned idiom what appears in the pre-Islamic writings, and in order to understand it in the light of the coherence of Qur’ān wherein the chapter indicates to those people who did not pay attention to Divine Message and they turned away from it and disgraced it then Allah ruined them and He said:

<sup>1</sup> Muḵhtārāt Ibn al-Shajrī, 1/18

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1/22

<sup>3</sup> Maqāmāt al-Zamaḵsharī, P. 13

<sup>4</sup> Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm, 3/499

حَمِّ ۝ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ۝ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝ وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِّ حَكِيمٌ ۝ أَفَتَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمْ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا أَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُسْرِفِينَ ۝ وَكَمْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَبِيِّ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ۝ فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا وَمَضَى مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝ (al-Zukhruf: 1-8)

The intended meaning herein is that it is for those who do not believe in this Book they would be surely punished as their predecessors were punished when they denied the former scriptures. Now we will examine the translations of the translators who did it in this way they are Irving, Arberry, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, Ṣafrullāh Khān, Sher ‘Alī, M. Shākir, ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī and Taqīuddin and his co-translator:

“Shall we turn away the Remembrance from you, for that you are a prodigal people?”

All of them assumed that ‘Dhikr’ (ذِكْر) here means Remembrance which is meant the Qur’ān itself but the matter of the fact is that this ‘Dhikr’ is in fact the part of that idiom about which we discussed in detail. Even though Daryābādī understood it, he at last stuck to the word ‘Remembrance’ as he says:

“The phrase is taken from a rider’s striking his beast with his stick when he desires to turn him from the course that he is pursuing.”<sup>1</sup>

And the one who understood rightly, he is Marmadeuke Pikhthal who rendered as:

“Shall we utterly ignore you because yee are a wanton folk”

**13. Ḍaraba Mathalan** “ضرب مثلاً”: This phrase posses two meanings:

<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr al-Qur’ān (English), 4/147

1- to present example to understand something.

2- to coin titles to make fun of someone.

The first meaning appears in the poetry of Yazīd bin al-Ḥakam al-Thaqafī:

يا بدر والأمثال يضرب بها لذي اللب الحكيم<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Oh Bader (name of a person)! The wise man gives proverbs to the one who has intellect.

This idiom was used in the Qur’ān after the mention of valley Allah said:

كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَاطِلَ فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً وَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ ﴿١٧﴾ (al-Ra’d: 17)

This term even came in the Qur’ān after the mention of the goodly tree Allah said:

وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ (Ibrāhīm: 25)

While the phrase with second meaning ( to coin titles to make fun of someone) came in the chapter Al-Isra Allah said:

أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلاً ﴿٤٨﴾ (al-Isrā’: 48)

The same expression came in the chapter of al-Furqān (Verse no. 9)

The first meaning of this idiom can be expressed “to coin similitudes” whereas the second meaning can be stated “to make fun of” or “to caricature” or “to present caricatures”.

Now let’s examine the renderings of this phrase undertaken by the translators: Arberry, Pkthal, Sher ‘Alī, ‘Abdul Mājid and

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<sup>1</sup> Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah, 2/47

Taqīuddin and his co-translator who did it as: “to stike/to coin similitude’s” and this specific meaning is not right as mentioned before. The translations bellow can be observed:

The first translator rendered: “Behold, how they strike similitude’s for thee...”

While the another one translated: “See how they coin similitude’s for you...”

Whereas Irving says that ‘Amthāl’ (الأمثال) herein means stories owing to much mention of the stories like ‘Amthāl’ perhaps they did not see any other things for which the word ‘al-Mathāl’ was presented like the ‘good tree’, ‘bad tree’, ‘spider’ and the mosquito etc. and moreover, these meanings or such others are used for the first meaning in this expression and another meaning meantioned does not mean herein as follows: “Watch what sort of stories they up about you...”

Although ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, M. Shākir and Zafrollāh Khān came close to the target meaning but they did not reach the actual intended meaning as the first translator carried it out in this way:

“See what kind of comparision they make for thee...”

The second one translated:

“See what likenesses do they apply to thee...”

The third one performs its translation in this way:

“Observe, what kind of thigns do they attribute to thee...”

The first meaning which was mentioned earlier is “to coin/strike similitudes” and second meaning is “to present caricatures” for giving titles to someone to make fun of.

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14. **Fāra al-Tannūr** “فار التنّور”: This is also a particular expression about which Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī says:

“Fāra al-Tannūr is an expression which is like ‘Ḥamiya al-Waṭīs’ (حي الوطيس); “something to be heated” and the like. Such expressions are not translated by the words but by the conceptual meaning which suits the words as a whole so it means coming of storm”.<sup>1</sup>

As for the details of the punishment of Noah, it is mentioned in the commentary of the chapter al-Dhāriyāt undertaken by ‘Allāmah Farāhī as he says:

“... when we look into the narrations of the Torah and Qur’ān they clearly explain and indicate that they (people of Noah) were ruined by the strong wind that is mentioned in the chapter al-‘Ankabūt it came: *وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ* إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ” the word al-Ṭūfān (storm) is not the gerundial meaning of al-Daurān (Cyclone) what the Arabs use when the strong wind blows. As al-Rā’ī said praising a camel:

تمسي إذا الريح أدركنا نكائتها      خرقاء يعتادها الطوفان والزود

And likewise you will see different names of such storm in different languages for example ‘Girbād’ is the rolling wind in Persian language and ‘Cyclone’ in English language, and ‘Bagolā’ in Hindi language while the Egyptians call it by the god of strong wind which they name ‘Typhone’ especially the wind which comes with heavy rain and gushing of water from the sea and we witness it as storm which comes from the Eastern India to its western part which I witnessed when I was

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 5/315

in the city of Karāchī; it rained heavily and the boats were cast on the mountains, that can be compared with the storm of Noah what came in the Qur’ān and Torah. As Allah said in the chapter al-Qamar: (فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ ﴿١١﴾ وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا ) (فَأَلْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدِّ قُدِّرَ ﴿١٢﴾) and it came in the mention of Creation “في ذلك اليوم انفجرت كل ينابيع الغمر العظيم وانفتحت طاقات السماء” and it came in the chapter Hūd (وَهِيَ تَجْرِي بِهِمْ فِي مَوْجٍ كَالْجِبَالِ) and it is known through sea travelling that the waves seem like the mountain which do not erupt but by the strong wind and its effect indicates its effectiveness, and the Qur’ān explained it in numerous verses which is between the eruption of waves and the wind—as Allah said: (هُوَ الَّذِي يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَرَيْنَ بِهِم بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا جَاءَتْهَا رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْمَوْجُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ) and Allah too said: (وهي تجرى بهم ... الآية) point out to the wind as the Qur’ān advocates Allah said:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٣٢﴾ إِنْ يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ الرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ (al-Shurá: 32-33)

And He also said:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ الرِّيحَ مُبَشِّرَاتٍ وَلِيَذِيقَكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَلِيَجْزِيَ الْفُلْكَ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلِيَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ (al-Rūm: 46)

This account clarifies the point that Allah sent on the people of Noah a strong wind having heavy rain and the water gushed from the seas around their lands which caused strong waves and caused the Ark of Noah to sail to the Mountain Jodi then it stationed therein”.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt, PP. 33-35

And the Qur'ān also used the above mentioned expression in two places in the chapters of 'Hūd' and 'al-Mu'minūn' and in both the places it came in the description of the people of Noah Allah said:

فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ  
(al-Mu'munūn: 27)

Allah also said:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فُلْنَا أَحْمِلَ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ  
الْقَوْلُ (al-Hūd: 40)

Now let's examine its renderings performed by the translators:

Irving translated: "... the reservoir bursts open..."

Arberry rendered: "... the oven boils..."

'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī: "... the oven gushes forth..."

Pikthal performed its translation as: "... the oven gushes water..."

Ẓafrullāh Khān and Sher 'Alī did as: "... fountains of the earth gush forth..."

M. Shākir translated: "... the velly overflows..."

'Abdul Mājid carried out its translation as: "... the oven boils over..."

Taqīuddin and his co-translator rendered the translation as:

"... water gushes forth from the oven..."

Those who translated it as "oven" they followed lingual meaning except Arberry who adopted word to word translation as "particular oven" that is mentioned in the rare

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traditions and that is why he wrote it with capital letter as “Oven”. The one who differed from them in its rendering as “fountains” following the commentary of Ibn Kathīr, he intended it as “fountain”. However, there are two translators among this group who adopted another different way of translation thinking that it happened in the sea due to storm therefore they rendered it as “reservoir” or “overflow of valley”. They are Irving and M. Shākir whose translations are more close to the intended meaning save that the appropriate translation they avoided herein is: “Typhoon” or “Cyclon” or “Hurricane” and this storm caused the water of the sea overflow to the valleys and villages. However the appropriate translation to me is: “... Typhoon spurts water...”

**15. Qaṭ’a Dābir al-Qaum** “قطع دابر القوم”: This particular expression means to uproot and “Dābir” (دابر) means part of anything and ‘Qaṭu’ Dābir-i-Aḥad’ means to uproot someone and to destroy him completely. Allah has used this idiom in four places in the Qur’ān. He said:

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ (al-An’ām: 45)

Allah too said:

وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَمَا كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ (al-A’rāf: 72)

Allah again said:

وَرِيدُ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُحَقِّقَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧﴾ (al-Anfāl: 7)

Almighty also said:

وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ ذَلِكَ الْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَتُولَاءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ (al-Hijr: 66)

We study its translations in the first example.

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As Irving, Arberry, Pkthal, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf, Ṣafrullāh Khān and Sher ‘Alī rendered it as “last remnant” the matter of the fact is that “remnant” itself denotes the word “dābir” (دابِر) and the addition of the word “last” is a unnecessary sort of translation so their rendering is based on wrong translation entirely. Let’s look into the translation of Irving he did:

“The last remnant of the folk who had been doing wrong was cut off”

While M. Shākir, Dr. Taqīuddin and his co-translator think that it is the “root” which is word to word translation indeed and the last two translators rendered it as:

“So the root of the people who did wrong was cut off”

As for the one who adopted the meaning of the expression is ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī who translated it as “cut off completely” as he did:

“Then the people who committed wrong were cut off completely”

Whereas the appropriate translation to me is “extirpate” or at least “uproot”.

**16. Kashafa ‘an Sāqin “كشَف عن ساق”:** This expression is used at a time when any big incidence or event happens in which men and women run away having taking off their lower clothes from their calves as the poet Dhū al-Rummah said:

قطعت بنهاض إلى صعدائه إذا شمريت عن ساق خمس ذلاله<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: I reached its height with the horse when the war reached its peak.

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<sup>1</sup> Dīwān Dhī al-Rummah, P. 125

And Abū Jundub Ḥuḍalī said:

وكننت إذا جار لمضووفة أشمر حتى ينصف الساق مئزري<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: When any neighbor comes {to me} for any need, I take off my trouser and become ready for his service.

And this usage is very common in the trouble time of war as Ḥātim Ṭā'ī said:

أخو الحرب إن عضت به الحرب وإن شمريت عن ساقها الحرب شمرا<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: He becomes a warrior when the war bites him, he also bites it and when the war takes off its trouser, he too takes off his trouser.

And Sa'ad bin Mālik said:

كشفت لهم عن ساقها وبدا من الثرّ الصراح<sup>3</sup>

Tr.: He bared his calf even the war brook out severely.

Ḥārith said being proud before the Eperor Kisrá:

"أبها الملك إن الفارس إذا حمل نفسه على الكتيبة مغرّراً بنفسه على الموت، فهي منية استقبالها، وحياة استدبرها، والعرب تعلم أني أبعث الحرب قدمًا، وأحبسها وهي تصرف بها حتى إذا جاشت نارها وسعرت لظاها، وكشفت عن ساقها، جعلت مقادها رمحي، وبرقها سيفي، ورعدا زئيري، ولم أقصّر عن خوض خضخاضها..."<sup>4</sup>

One poet said poiting out to this reality:

تذهل الشيخ عن بنيه وتبدي عن خدام العقيلة العذراء<sup>5</sup>

Tr.: It makes man forget his children and shows the anklet of a beautiful girl.

<sup>1</sup> Ash'ārul Hudhaliyyīn, P. 358

<sup>2</sup> Dīwān Ḥātim Ṭā'ī, P. 49

<sup>3</sup> Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah, 1/193

<sup>4</sup> Jamharat Khūṭub al-'Arab, 1/58

<sup>5</sup> Lisān al-'Arab: خدم

Another poet said:

كان منا المطاردون على الأخرى إذا أبدت العذراء الخداما<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: They were among us who were causing them to flee at a time when young girls were showing their anklets.

It appears from these citations that the meaning said idiom herein is the severity of any matter as it came in the Qur'ān Allah said:

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ (al-Qalam: 42)

Allah meant here the same meaning what the other verse supports it that came in the chapter al-Ma'ārij, Allah said:

يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَى نُصُبٍ يُوفِضُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ خَشِيعَةً أَبْصَرُهُمْ تَرَهِقُهُمْ ذَلَّةٌ ذَلِكِ الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ (al-Ma'ārij: 43-44)

Allah also said in the chapter of Yāsīn:

مَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ (Yāsīn: 49-51)

Now we examine the rendering of the translators who are divided into five groups: The first of it includes Irving and Arberry who think that it is a common meaning and it is not a peculiar expression which was translated as “the leg shall be bared” and “their shinborn will be led bare” and the second group specifies it with the “hereafter” when Allah will get man’s leg bare and this opinion is based on the traditional views that explain that Allah will get man’s leg bare in the Doomsday. This group consists of the names of ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf, ‘Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī and Taqīuddin al-Hilālī and his co-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid

translator who rendered it as “when the shin shell be laid bare” and the third group includes Ṣafrullāh Khān and M. Shākir who think that it means as “when there shall be a severe affliction/calamity” and the fourth group consists of the names like Pikhthal who thinks it as mere the happening of any matter and translated it as “when it befallerh in earnest”. As for the fifth group which consists Molvī Sher ‘Alī leads, he considers it as the meaning of the content of the Qur’ān that indicates to the clarity of the reality of the invitation of the Prophet (PBUH) and that is why they will prostrate and thus he renders it as “... on the day when the truth shall be laid bare”.

The first group among them is wrong in its rendering because it meant it as an ordinary meaning what did not mean here. As for the meaning of the second group, it relates to the meaning of another place (verse) that is actually not related to this verse and this context, and the fourth group imitates the first group and as far as the fifth and the last group is concerned, it avoided the actual meaning of the phrase and brought a meaning related to the contents of the Qur’ān. If he cared for the expression, it would be better to be meant. And as for the third group which actually understood the phrase and tried to translate it into English language which was advocated by the renowned Urdu commentator Ashraf ‘Alī Thānawī what was considered unpreferable by Daryābādī while the appropriate translation as actual meaning to me is:

“Remember the Day when the people will be in panic...”

**17. Lisānu Ṣidq “لسان صدق”:** This is a particular expression of the pre-Islamic people that is ‘good eternal remembrance’ and the lisān (لسان) meant here remembrance and trueness in this genre means certainty and stability of

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something as the Arabs used this phrase. The poet 'Antarah bin Mu'āwiyah bin Shaddād al-'Ubsī said:

جاءت يداي له بعاجل طعنة بمثقف صدق الكعوب مقوم<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: My hands replied him with a haste injury (in the war) through spear which was straight, strong and well-made.

So the "صدق الكعوب" is strong and perfect.

Ḥassān bin Thābit al-Anṣārī said:

فتيان صدق كالليوث مساعر من يلقيهم يوم الهياج يعود<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: They are perfect youth warriors who add fuel to the fire (of war). The one who faces them, he is at once defeated by them.

And the same phrase came in the poetry of Miskīn al-Dārmī:

وفتيان صدق لست مطلع بعضهم على سر بعض غير أني جماعها<sup>3</sup>

Tr.: They are perfect youths to whom I do not disclose any secret though all of them gather to me.

And Ḥassān al-Anṣārī again said:

وندمان صدق تمطر الخير كفه إذ راح فياض العشيات حضرمها<sup>4</sup>

Tr.: I have several true friends whose palm rains generosity (means he spends generously) when the night of generosity comes, he becomes like a sea.

'Amr bin Ma'dīkarib al-Zubaidī said:

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<sup>1</sup> *Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-'Aṣhr*, P. 238

<sup>2</sup> *Dīwān Sayyidinā Ḥassān bin Thābit al-Anṣārī*, P. 37

<sup>3</sup> *Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamāsah*, 2/2

<sup>4</sup> *Dīwān Sayyidinā Ḥassān bin Thābit al-Anṣārī*, P. 96

واسميتقنوا منا بوقع صادق هربوا وليس أوان ساعة مهرب<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: And they believed firmly that they have to face a severe attack from us but they flew while it was not the time to flee.

He also said:

لقونا فضّموا جانبينا بصادق من الطعن مثل النار في الحطب اليبس<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: They met us and threw into our chest a strong spear which was like a fire in the dry fuel.

The same idiom the Qur'ān used in frequent places as it came in the chapter of Yūnus, Allah said:

أَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ أَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمٌ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ قَالَ الْكٰفِرُونَ إِنَّ هٰذَا لَسَجْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢﴾ (Yūnus: 2)

It came in the same chapter:

وَلَقَدْ بَوَّأْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مُبَوَّأً صِدْقٍ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ فَمَا أَخْتَلَفُوا حَتَّى جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ (Yūnus: 93)

And it too came in the chapter al-Isrā':

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَدْخِلْنِيْ مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِيْ مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَأَجْعَلْ لِّيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ سُلْطٰنًا نَّصِيْرًا ﴿٥١﴾

And likewise it came in the chapters 'Mariyam' and 'al-Shua'ra':

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُمْ مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٥١﴾

وَأَجْعَلْ لِّيْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

Lisānu Ṣidq (لسان صدق) means here good and eternal remembrance the same phrase Ibn 'Abbās used it in his explanation:

<sup>1</sup> Shi'r 'Amr bin Ma'dikarib al-Zubaidī, P. 50

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 114

“Alī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah said narrating Ibn ‘Abbās that it means good praise”.

And the same opinion has been given by the commentators al-Suddī and Mālik bin Anas.

Now let’s look into the rendering done by the selected translators as Irving translated it as “sublime tongue for telling truth”, Arberry performed it as “a tongue of truthfulness, sublime’, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf did it as “lofty honour on the tongue of truth” and M. Shākir has undertaken it as “a truthful mention of eminence”. The fact is that all of them could not understand the actual meaning of the phrase so they missed the true translation. While Pikthal, Ṣafrullāh Khān, Molvī Sher ‘Alī and ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī meant it “a high and true renown”, “true and high renown, “a true renown” and “a lofty renown” and this is the right opinion based on the writing of the Arabs.

As for Dr. Taqīuddīn and his co-translator Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān, they understood its rendering according to Urdu expression that they meant it as “honour on the tongue of all the nations” but the appropriate translation to me is: “very stable renown”.

**18. Makkana lahu fī al-Arḍ** “مَكَّنَ لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ”: This expression came in frequent usages in the Qur’ān and it appears from it in these places that it means power and glory in the city. As Allah said about the prophet Yūsuf who passed by different stages of examinations. Allah said:

وَقَالَ الَّذِي اشْتَرَاهُ مِنْ مِصْرَ لِامْرَأَتِهِ أَكْرِمِي مَثْوَاهُ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلِنُعَلِّمَهُ مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ (Yūsuf: 21)

And Allah also said about the oppressed Muslims who would perform prayer and give Zakāh (prescribed Islamic Tax) when they would be bestowed power, positions and glory in the city Makkah and in its sroudings. Allah said:

أَذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهَدِمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾ (al-Hajj: 39-41)

And Allah too said about those who were ruined after they denied prophets' message despite having all good livings:

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِمَّن قَرَّبُوا الصَّلَاةَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ﴿٦﴾ (al-An'ām: 6)

This expression in-fact means 'to have power in the city' as it means 'to have glory and to get all good livings' so its rendering is: "power and awe".

As for the selected translators, majority of them meant it as luxury of life and it is sort of glory and pomps but it lost the meaning of power which can establish justice so their translation is: "to establish" which does not denote the meaning of power indeed and it also does not show the meaning of glory at all but it merely indicates to good living.

This opinion was supported by Irving, Arberry, Pikthal, Zafrullāh, Sher 'Alī, 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī and Taqīuddīn and his co-translator. Let's examine the translation of Irving and 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī:

Irving translated it as: “we establish them on earth”.

‘Abdul Mājid rendered it as: “we should establish them in the land”.

In this perspective the usage of earth for ‘Arḍ’ (أرض) is incorrect. It means land here only.

And ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī added a little bit to it and translated it in this way:

“to establish a firm place for them in the land...”.

But the meaning of power does not possess in the rendering of M. Shākir as he did: “... and to grant them power in the land...”

The appropriate translation to me is:

“... to grant them power and awe in the land.”

**19. Na’á bijānibihi** “نأى بجانبه”: This is a particular expression about which Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī said in his book of commentary “Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān”:

“Na’á bijānibihi’ denotes the meaning of ‘tawallá biruknihi’ (تولى بركنه) and ‘thāniya ‘Itfihi’ (ثاني عطفه) and the likes. This phrase means to turn one’s face with pride so it means that when the human being turns his face from some one with pride he turns his shoulder.”<sup>1</sup>

Allah said:

وَإِذَا أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَا بِيَجَانِبِهِ ۖ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَدُوَّ دُعَاءٍ عَرِيضٍ ﴿٥١﴾ (Fuṣṣilat: 51)

Let’s look into the translations undertaken by the selected translators as Arberry did it as:

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 7/127

“And when we bless man, he turns away and withdraws aside...”

Irving rendered it as:

“Whenever we show man some favour, he spurns it and drifts off to one side...”

Pikthal and Taqīuddīn and his co-translator undertook it as:

“And when we show favour to man, he withdraws and turns away...”

‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī carried it out as:

“When we bestow favours on man, he turns away, and gets himself remote on his side (instead of coming to us)...”

Zafrullāh Khān translated it as:

“When we bestow a favour on man, he turns away, and veers aside...”

M. Shākir did it as:

“And when we show favour on man, he goes away, turning aside...”

Sher ‘Alī rendered it as:

“And when we bestow a favour on man, he goes away, turning aside...”

And ‘Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī did it as:

“And when we bestow a favour on man, he goes away, turning aside...”

The fact is that all of them could not understand the eloquence of this expression so the word ‘veer’ is not used to turn the shoulder, rather it comes to change the views or the wind or its directions as the word ‘turn’ or ‘withdraw’ do not

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give the meaning of i'rād bil istikbār (إعراض بالاستكبار) and as for drifts is used for the current and likewise 'get remote' gives the meaning one side of the intended meaning wherein another word istikbār (استكبار) is not in the context at all so the preferable translation to me is:

"And when we bestow favours on man, he turns away in pride..."

**20. Tawallá Kibrahú "تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ":** This phrase means here to start something or to lead the leadership in any issue, and it does not include the meaning to take big part in the issue if it was like that then another phrase had to come for it.

This expression came in relation to the statement of forfeiting falsehood against 'Ā'ishah (MABPWH) done by the hypocrites then Allah exposed them by warning that the committer of sin would suffer from punishment according to one's crime. As for the one who forfeited this falsehood and led this issue to be raised, he would face severe punishment and it indicates to 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy who made the Muslims agry particularly the Prophet (PBUH) and he was hatching conspiracy to disgrace their nobility and glory and to creat problem and hatred in them.

As Allah said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ  
مَا أَكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ (al-Nūr: 11)

As for the rendering of the mentioned phrase, the translators are divided into four groups due to it. Then the first group includes the translators Arberry, Pikthal and Taqīuddīn and his co-translator who think that the meaning 'to take grater part'

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of the issue has been added in this phrasic meaning. As Arberry translated it as:

“... every man of them shall have the sin that he has earned charged to him, and whosoever of them took upon himself the greater part of it, him there awaits a mighty chastisement.”

And the second group which contains the names like Irving and ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī think that it is the leadership of an issue which Irving translated as:

“... While whoever has assumed his leadership over them (through such gossiping) will have serious torment.”

The third group which consists the names are Zafrullāh Khān, Sher ‘Alī and M. Shākir who think it to initiate a principle part in this issue and they rendered it as:

“... and he who took principle (Sher ‘Alī: chief/ M. Shākir) part therein shall have a greivous punishment (M. Shākir: chastisement)”

As for the last group which includes ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī only which is neither advocated by the Qur’ān nor by the pre-Islamic writings. As he translated it:

“... and he among them who took the bulk of it, him shall be mighty torment.”

In this regard the word ‘bulk’ is the extra word which does not convey its meaning to the phrase, is incorrect too.

The first meaning ‘who has caused it’ or ‘who led it’ seems appropriate rendering indeed.

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## The Message of the Qurān (Creation Plan of God)

✎...Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān<sup>1</sup>

If you read the Qurān, you will find that it deals with all of the subjects relating to human beings. But the basic theme of the Qurān is the creation plan of God. All other subjects touched on by the Qurān are related to this basic theme, directly or indirectly. God Almighty created the universe, and, it is God Almighty who revealed this book that is called *al-Qurān*. The primary purpose of the Qurān is to reveal that divine plan according to which the world was created and people were settled in it.

This theme, which is central to the Qurān, is thus described in chapter sixty-seven, *al-Mulk* (The Kingdom):

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

Tr.: He created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you is best in conduct. (*al-Mulk*: 2)

Here the words “life” and “death” refer to two different periods of humanity. The word “life” represents the pre-death period and the word “death” represents the second period of life, which may be called the post-death period. God Almighty created man as an eternal being but he divided his life into two periods—the before-death period and the post-death period. The pre-death period is very short, about hundred years, while the post-death period has no such limit. It will continue for all eternity.

According to the Qurān, God Almighty created an ideal world that is called Paradise. The present world — the planet earth —

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<sup>1</sup> A Great Muslim Thinker of India

has all those things that man needs or desires. But, in this world everything is imperfect in its form. In Paradise, on the other hand, everything will be perfect and ideal. Paradise will be free of every kind of limitation or disadvantage. Moreover, Paradise is an eternal world. Paradise has a beginning but it has no end.

God Almighty created man and woman, bestowed them with freedom of choice and then settled them on the planet earth. Through His prophets, God Almighty gave guidance to humanity. In every age the prophets told the people of all races about right and wrong. They told them what was good and what was bad.

This was simply a piece of guidance: there was no compulsion for people to follow it. People were asked to develop their thinking in such a way as to bring about moral consciousness in themselves and to lead a good life by their own choice. In this sense, everyone is being tested. Then God Almighty established a system of complete recording. This recording system is managed by the angels. It is so comprehensive that it can record the intentions, the speech, the behaviour and the dealings of every single person. This system is operative at all times, day and night. The purpose of all these arrangements is to select the kind of men and women who deserve to gain entry into eternal Paradise. At the time of Doomsday, God will appear with His angels and according to the angelic record He will select those men and women who passed the test.

What are those qualities that are required for a person to be a deserving candidate for Paradise? In a single word, it is spirituality. Paradise is a spiritual world and only those men and women who have developed spiritual qualities in their personality will be blessed with entry into Paradise.

According to the Qur'ānic description, "Paradise is the home of peace." (10:25). Paradise is a place where there is no

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nuisance, no noise and it is free of all kinds of pollution. The inhabitants of Paradise will be positive thinkers in the complete sense of the phrase. The environment of Paradise will be free of all kinds of negative states, like anger, malice, hate, revenge, wrong desires, jealousy, fighting, exploitation and dishonesty, for these negative factors cannot be part of the psychology of the spiritual inhabitants of Paradise.

**Hopeful Beginning:** *Bismillāh hir raḥmān ir raḥīm* is the first verse of the Qurʾān. It is repeated no less than one hundred and fourteen times. This repetition shows that, according to the Qurʾān, this verse has great importance in the scheme of things given in the Qurʾān.

The translation of this verse is: “In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.” The Prophet of Islam said that at the beginning of everything you do you should recite this verse. So, one can say that this is the word of beginning.

Beginning in this way is very important. It gives you great hope. After reciting this, you can believe that you are starting your work in a world that is controlled by God Almighty and that, if you follow the right path, you will have divine help bestowed upon you.

This belief, freeing you of tension and despair, gives you great psychological courage. It inculcates the spirit of positivity. The recitation of this verse is not simply lip-service: it shows your conviction about the creation plan of God.

Recitation of this word not only gives you courage but it also helps you to build a positive mode in your personality. This positivity makes you able to plan your life on a realistic basis. This removes all the negative thoughts from your mind. It enhances your creativity.

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When you say, “I begin in the name of God Almighty,” you establish a relationship with the greatest power of the universe. You feel that you are not alone in this world. God Almighty is on your side. You feel that you are not an alien in this world, but an integral part of your surroundings.

Saying *bismillāh hir raḥmān ir raḥīm* is not a ritual. It is a real part of belief. It is a conscious act. On the one hand, it is an acknowledgement of the Creator of the Universe and, on the other, it is a solemn expression of honesty and sincerity.

‘I begin in the name of God’ means I ask for the help of God Almighty in my work and in my life. Reciting these words amounts to refining your soul and engineering your mind on the lines of modesty. It is an acknowledgement from the creature to the Creator. Saying *Bismillāh* is, thus, an acknowledgement of the higher authority—that without God’s blessings you could not achieve anything in this world.

In the chapter *al-Qalam* (the Pen), the Qur’ān narrates the story of certain horticulturalists who omitted to say *Bismillāh*. This event is referred to in the Qur’ān as follows:

We have tried them as we tried the owners of a certain orchard, who vowed to harvest all its fruits the next morning, without saying, ‘If it be God’s will.’ A calamity from your Lord befell the orchard as they slept. And by morning it lays as if it had already been harvested. (68:17- 20)

This means that no one can achieve anything in this world without it being God’s will. God is the Lord of this universe. When one says, “*Bismillāh...*” one invokes God to provide His help. This is like seeking the permission of God Almighty. So, saying *Bismillāh* ensures the success of any task in this world.

**The Creation Plan of God:** Everyone asks the same questions: Who am I? Why I am here on this planet earth?

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What is the purpose of man? What is success and what is failure? These questions may be summed up in a single sentence: What is the creation plan of the Creator? Chapter sixty-seven of the Qur'ān, *al-Mulk* (The Kingdom), gives the answer to this question. The translation of the relevant verse is as follows:

“God created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you is best in conduct. He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving One.” (67:2)

According to the Qur'ān, man was created as an eternal being. In the above Qur'ānic verse ‘death and life’ represent both the pre-death period of life and the post-death period of human life. So, death and life cover the entire eternal life span of human beings.

The fact is that God created man with a well thought-out plan, the essence of which is to give man complete freedom—not simply as a gift, but as a test. The result of this test would enable God to know who misused his freedom and who put his freedom to the best use. This was, and still is, the divine scheme of things for man.

This test is not just for the sake of testing mankind. It is for a high purpose. Before creating man, God created an ideal world, that is, Paradise. Now God wanted ideal men and women who would merit being settled in this Paradise for all eternity. Therefore, the present world is a selection ground for Paradise.

According to this divine scheme, the present human lifetime affords a great opportunity to man. In the pre-death period of life, man has the chance to qualify himself for Paradise, so that in the post-death period of life he may be settled as a deserving candidate in this perfect world.

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This divine scheme gives man great hope. The present world may be one of problems, for in this world there are sorrows, pains and unwanted situations. But the divine scheme of life prescribed in the Qur'ān gives us a great solace. It is like a bright light in the darkness. It gives men and women great hope that all those sorrows they experience in the present world are for the temporary period of testing, and that once they qualify in the test, they will be fortunate candidates for eternal Paradise.

This Qur'ānic notion explains human life. It explains not only the existence of man, but also all the misadventures that he faces in this world. It gives great meaning to all the good and the bad in life.

Man is born with unique qualities, he is born with unlimited desires, his mind has enormous capacity but, before realizing his potential and before fulfilling his desires, his life comes to an end.

Given his often untimely demise, man seems to be a completely inexplicable phenomenon, but in the light of the above divine scheme, human life becomes completely explainable and understandable. Keeping this in mind, one sees how everything falls into place.

**Life after Death:** It was December 6, 2013. I switched on my radio to listen to the morning news. Suddenly appeared the breaking news that Nelson Mandela had passed away. Then after a moment, that speech was broadcast which Mandela had delivered as President in the South African parliament on May 10, 1994. The speaker was physically no more, but his voice could be heard by all without the slightest alteration.

I had the same experience last month on November 12, 2013. I heard the voice of Mahatma Gandhi on radio, although he

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had died sixty-five years ago in 1948. Gandhiji had gone to the studio of All India Radio on November 12, 1947 to give a live address to over two lakh refugees from Pakistan who had gathered at a camp in Haryana. This speech is aired every year on November 12 on All India Radio.

Experiences of this kind are very common. They remind us of the fact that when a person dies, he still lives on through his voice. Voice is part of the human personality. And, if a part of our personality is alive after death, why cannot the whole personality be alive after death?

According to dictionary, death is the permanent end of life. However, the Qur'ān maintains that the human being is an eternal being, and death is only a phase in its eternal journey. Apart from other reasoning it offers for life after death, the Qur'ān also gives the above argument in chapter *al-Dhāriyāt* (Scattering Winds) in these words:

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْتُمْ تَنْطِقُونَ

Tr.: And by the Lord of the heavens and the earth, it is most surely the truth, just as you do speak. (*al-Dhāriyāt*: 23)

**Journey towards Final Destination:** The well-known American evangelist Billy Graham (b. 1918) narrates one of his life's experiences. Once he received an urgent message from an American statesman who wanted to meet him at the earliest. On receiving this message, Billy Graham cancelled his appointments and immediately set out to meet this man. When he arrived at the statesman's palatial home, he was immediately taken to a room, where Billy Graham and the statesman sat on chairs facing one another. Then, in a serious tone, the statesman said to Billy Graham: "You see, I am an old man. Life has lost all meaning. I am ready to take a fateful

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leap into the unknown. Young man, can you give me a ray of hope?" (*The Secret of Happiness*, Billy Graham, 1955, P. 2)

This is a common question. Every man and woman, consciously or unconsciously, have this question in their minds. This is the first concern of every human being. To find out the real answer we have to try to understand the creation plan of God. God is the Creator of this world. And, only by gaining an understanding of the Creator's creation plan can we get the right answer to this question.

The Qur'ān, the preserved book of God, gives an answer to this question. According to the Qur'ān, man is born as an eternal being, but his lifespan is divided into two parts: pre-death period and post-death period. The pre-death period is very short, and the post-death period is eternal.

Everyone feels that they have enormous desires, but that they are not being able to fulfil these desires. The reason is that the present world is a limited world with many kinds of disadvantages.

This means that there is a contradiction between man's nature which seeks fulfilment of his desires, and the world which is incapable of fulfilling man's desires. Man, by nature, wants a world where his personality can find total fulfilment, but the present world fails to provide such fulfilment. Sir James Jeans in his book, *The Mysterious Universe*, has rightly pointed out this fact in these words: It appears that man has strayed into a world that was not made for him.

According to the Qur'ān, the present earth is not a habitat for man. Man's habitat lies in the world hereafter. According to the divine plan, man must develop his personality in the pre-death period, so that he is selected as a deserving candidate for this habitat, or Paradise, in the post-death period.

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The Qur'ān tells us that the above habitat or Paradise is perfectly equipped to fulfil all the desires of man in the utmost sense of the word.

Man is born with total freedom. The only requirement for finding entry into Paradise is that he should use his freedom properly and avoid all kind of misuse of freedom. It is the divine criterion that will decide whose case was one of proper use of freedom and whose was that of misuse of freedom.

Here, the chapter *al-Tīn* (The Fig) of the Qur'ān is worth quoting.

We have indeed created man in the best of mould, then We cast him down as the lowest of the low, except for those who believe and do good deeds—theirs shall be an unending reward! What then after this, can make you deny the Last Judgement? Is not God the greatest of the judges? (95:4-8)

It means that while man is born as a complete personality, his present abode – the planet earth – is incomplete. Because of this disparity, man's condition on earth becomes like that of a fish out of water. The present world has highly intelligent design. But the disparity between man's nature and the limitations of the present-world to fulfil all his desires indicates the need for man to have a real habitat. This habitat is Paradise. Only those men and women will find entry into Paradise who qualify themselves as deserving candidates for it. The planet earth is a selection ground for this purpose.

In chapter *Fuṣṣilat* (Revelations Well Expounded) the Qur'ān tells us about Paradise in these words:

وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُنَّ أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ

Tr.: Therein you shall have all that your souls desire, and therein you shall have all that you ask for. (*Fuṣṣilat*: 31)

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The Qur'ān mentions all aspects of Paradise in detail and then guides man in these words:

لِيَمِثِلَ هَذَا فَاَلْعَمَلِ الْعَمِلُونَ

Tr.: For the like of this, then, let the workers work. (al-Şāffāt: 61)

**Making the Right Choice:** The chapter *al-Tīn* (The Fig) of the Qur'ān is very short, but it has a great lesson, a universal message for all men and woman—an eternal formula for a successful life. The translation of the relevant verses is as follows:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿١﴾ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ

Tr.: We have indeed created man in the best of moulds, then We cast him down as the lowest of the low. (al-Tīn: 4-5)

Anyone who goes through these verses will discover great meaning in them. Everyone by nature has a unique personality, but nothing in this world is all good—the human personality has minus points as well as plus points. One who makes the most of his plus points is successful, whereas one who becomes a victim of his minus points is doomed to failure.

The plus and minus points can be summed up under the headings of reason and emotion. One who obeys reason achieves success, while one who is led by his emotions is bound to face disaster. Reason, implying unbiased thinking, leads to a realistic approach. It makes you a mature person and guides you to give well-considered responses and to plan all your actions in a rational way. A life which is based on reason is invariably marked by success and salvation.

The emotional approach is only another name for an irrational approach. One who is swayed by his emotions becomes unrealistic in his dealings. His actions are typified by the well-known saying: 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' With

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a single word-change, the formula goes like this: 'Emotional people rush in where angels fear to tread.'

The emotional approach is not a very simple one and can come at a great cost. Dealing with things emotionally is like mishandling glassware. You can mishandle ironware, but you cannot behave like that with glassware, because it might fall down and be smashed. In any human situation, you have similarly to handle matters with great care, otherwise the result will be like the smashing of delicate glassware. If this happens, it will lead to a breakdown in relationships and you cannot afford such a breakdown.

The human personality, a unique combination of mind and body, is a great boon for every man and woman. If you use your personality to the best advantage, you will become a super achiever. But then there is the other possibility, that is, of putting your personality to the wrong use. Misusing your personality is like mishandling glassware. You are doomed to paying a heavy price for doing so. But, if properly used, it will lead to super achievement. Improper use will lead to dismal failure.

There are numerous creatures in this world, but out of all of them, man is quite unique in having freedom of choice. Freedom of choice is a valuable asset that elevates man to the highest rank. But freedom of choice is a double-edged sword. It may kill your enemy but at the same time it can kill you too. So, while one who is extremely cautious can become a universal hero, one who opts for rash, ill-considered courses of action will be reduced to a total zero.

**The Forbidden Tree:** The story of Adam and Eve is common to both the Bible and the Qur'ān. According to the Qur'ānic account, God created Adam and his wife, Eve and settled the pair in Paradise. Where was this Paradise? The Bible is specific on this point:

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The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. (Genesis, 2:8)

This was the beginning of the social life of man. God gave both Adam and Eve a basic direction:

God said, 'O Adam! Settle, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat freely from it anywhere you may wish. Yet do not approach this tree lest you become wrongdoers.' (al-Baqarah: 35)

The 'forbidden tree', in one sense, was a symbol of social taboos. Breaking these taboos means involving oneself in social wrongdoing, as mentioned in the above Qur'ānic verse.

When God created Adam and Eve, it was not just creating a pair, rather it was creating the first unit of society. Adam and Eve were not created to live simply as a pair forever but were destined to start a generation; and form a society complete in every respect, subsequently paving the way for the building of a civilization.

Adam and Eve were given complete freedom but their freedom was a restricted freedom. They were to refrain from all activities which would go against their fellow men. In other words, they were forbidden to indulge in any kind of social wrongdoing, otherwise they would fail to fulfil the divine plan.

What is 'wrongdoing'? Anything that proves to be harmful to one's fellow men is wrongdoing. In other words, Adam and Eve were required to follow the well-known formula: You are free but your freedom ends where another's nose begins.

This was the first social lesson given to the first man. As well as having freedom bestowed upon him, man was created with great qualities and all kinds of infrastructure to allow him to make use of his talents. Thus man potentially was the master of his environment. He was able to create a world of his own,

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with the sole condition that he should not misuse his freedom. He must refrain from approaching the 'forbidden tree.'

If the members of society refrain from indulging in wrongdoing and all use their freedom within the prescribed limit, then in such a society everyone will be able to develop his personality. Moreover, this society will grow in every way for the better. Living in such a society is like living in Paradise.

**Submission to God:** The Qur'ān advocates the culture of spirituality. Qur'ānic spirituality has nothing mysterious about it. It is a well-known discipline. It is only an alternative name for intellectual development. The formula for Qur'ānic spirituality is expressed thus in a Qur'ānic chapter: Become men of God. (al-Nisā': 79)

Becoming a man of God means adopting a God-oriented life. The God-oriented way of life is a complete way of life. It calls for the use of all human faculties. It means God-oriented thinking, God-oriented speech, God-oriented behaviour, God-oriented morality, etc.

The God-oriented life is another term for the spiritual life. In this verse, the Qur'ān uses the word '*al-rabbānī*'. It means a spiritual person or a *rab*-oriented person. In fact, Islam is a religion of spirituality. It is a discipline that can be explained in terms of reason. Islamic spirituality is based on thinking.

Islamic spirituality is based on contemplation rather than meditation. It is mind-based rather than heart-based: it arises from the awakening of the intellectual faculty. When you think about the truth and you discover it, then you become a spiritual person.

When you ponder over the world around you, when your thinking goes beyond your immediate surroundings; you discover the truth that is beyond you, beyond time and space.

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You become conscious of yourself as well as your Creator. This is the beginning of the spiritual process in your personality and this process will continue to evolve.

Islamic spirituality is, in essence, God-centred and not self-centred. When you discover your Creator, you instantly establish communication between yourself and your Creator. It is like establishing a connection between the electric bulb in your room and the powerhouse situated outside your room. Just as the electric connection illuminates your room, so also does the divine connection illuminate your whole personality. Then you become a '*rabbānī*', or a man of God.

The formula for Qur'ānic spirituality is very simple—simple living and high thinking. Simple living prevents you from succumbing to distractions, thus allowing you to find more time to engage your mind in meaningful arenas. Simple living and high thinking are interdependent. Simple living gives you more time for high thinking, and high thinking makes you a man capable of simple living.

Spirituality is the essence of divine life; spirituality leads to a life where there is no tension, no negative thought. In other words, spirituality makes us positive human beings.

**Remembering God much:** One of the commandments of the Qur'ān is given in chapter *Al-Aḥzāb* (The Confederates) in these words:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اذْكُرُوْا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا

Tr.: Believers, remember God with much remembrance. (*al-Aḥzāb*: 41)

According to this Qur'ānic verse believers must remember God very much, every day and every moment. This is the most

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important teaching of the Qur'ān, and it is also the highest form of worship. One who does this will be blessed with the greatest reward by God Almighty.

What is much remembrance of God? It is not in the sense of repetition of some word, but in the sense of thinking. Much remembrance, or *dhikr-i-kathīr*, is not a kind of lip service. It is rather a high kind of intellectual activity. Much remembrance is a sign of deep discovery of God.

Remembering God much is the result of a chain reaction in a person's thinking process, that is, a series of thoughts in which each thought causes the next one. *Dhikr-i-kathīr*, or much remembrance, is a result of creative thinking. It is a product of a prepared mind. If you are a prepared mind, then your mind is bound to be triggered at every experience or observation. You will start discovering one item after another of God-realization. In this way a chain reaction will be initiated in your mind.

It is this intellectual activity that is called in the Qur'ān *dhikr-i-kathīr*. For example, if it is raining, a believer will very soon present his *shukr*, that is, acknowledgment to God. Then he will start thinking further: what caused the downpour? He will discover the natural processes that resulted in rain. He will think that when the water was in the ocean, it was salty, but when it took the form of downpour, it turned into freshwater. So step by step he will discover how God created various process which finally provided him water to drink. This is an example of chain reaction in thinking, and through this chain reaction, you begin to discover items of realization of God. If you are a prepared mind, then this process will continue without limit.

This chain reaction of *dhikr* will enhance your *ma'rifat*, that is, realization and discovery of God. It will enhance your relationship with God. It will increase your wisdom and power

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of analysis. This will enhance your capacity to sort things out, and so on.

According to the Qur'ān, believers are given a unique blessing, that is, they are able to add faith to their faith. (48:4) This is not a mysterious phenomenon, it is a direct result of the above kind of chain reaction. This chain reaction of *dhikr* is very important for personality development. A believer increases his divine spirituality through this process.

**Real Worship:** According to the Qur'ān, worship of God controls one's character. In chapter *al-'Ankabūt* (The Spider), the Qur'ān says:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ

Tr.: Surely prayer restrains one from indecency and evil (*al-'Ankabūt*: 45)

This Qur'ānic verse gives us a very important aspect of worship. It presents the true picture of the worship of God.

Worship is not a spiritless ritual. Worship is a living act. A worshipper recites verses of the Qur'ān during his prayer. These verses tell him about the dos and don'ts of his daily life. They tell him what the secret of success is and how one can obtain salvation in the world hereafter. This means that *ibadat* (or worship) makes a worshipper very conscious about his daily behaviour and his social conduct—in his family and other walks of life. After performing the prayer, when the worshipper returns to the society, he is a man with a difference.

For example, in his worship, the worshipper repeatedly says *Allahu Akbar*, which means, 'God alone is great, greatness is only for God Almighty'. This saying inculcates the spirit of modesty in the worshipper. At the end of this worship, he

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addresses all of mankind by saying, *Assalāmu alaykum wa rahmatullāh* (peace and blessings of God be upon you)

A believer who worships every day and imbibes within himself this spirit from his worship is bound to become a person who is very cautious in his behaviour. He would live a life of modesty. He would live with the spirit of peace for all mankind.

This Qur'ānic verse gives us a criterion to judge the veracity of worship of every individual. If one's worship qualifies this criterion, then it is worship in the true sense of the word. Those whose worship does not fulfil this criterion, it is merely a spiritless ritual and not true worship.

According to the Qur'ān (al-Jinn: 43), worship (*ṣalāt*) is like a ticket to Paradise. But this ticket will be granted by God Almighty only to those persons who qualify the criterion given in the above verse of the Qur'ān (al-'Ankabūt: 45).

**Like a Good Tree:** According to the Qur'ān, man must be like a good tree. A good tree is a natural analogy for a good man. The translation of the relevant verses is as follows:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٤٥﴾ تُوْتِي  
أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

Tr.: Do you not see how God compares a good word to a good tree? Its root is firm and its branches are in the sky, it yields its fruit each season with its Lord's permission—God makes such comparisons for people, in order that they may take heed. (Ibrāhīm: 24-25)

The tree is a unique phenomenon of Nature; moreover, the tree sets an example for man. It is required of man that he translate this tree culture into human life. This culture implies being deep-rooted, vastly spread out and at all times giving out benefits.

A good man is one who is like a good tree. What is a tree? A tree begins from a seed, then it turns into a plant, then a strong trunk, then branches and leaves, and then flowers and fruits. A stone cannot grow, but a tree continually grows till it becomes completely lush green with many fine attributes, as referred to in the above Qur'ānic verse.

The same is required of men and women. All men and women must develop themselves like a tree. Where the tree develops itself in physical terms, men and women must develop the same qualities in terms of morality.

Every human being should firmly establish himself on his roots; he should be strong like a tree trunk, he should have a vibrant character like the leaves, he should prove himself fruitful for society, he should convey to people positive vibrations of life, just as a tree supplies fresh oxygen to man, and he should provide shelter to his fellow human beings.

A green tree makes our world beautiful. Without trees, our Earth would be barren. A tree is a giver member of our world. It gives everything but on a unilateral basis. For example, a tree continuously supplies fresh oxygen but it never sends the bill for it. Similar behaviour is required of both men and women.

Men and women must live in their society as giver persons. They must adopt this culture on unilateral basis. They must live in their society in such a manner that society may always benefit from them. Like this, men and women can make their society like a beautiful garden.

**After Night there is Day:** In the early period of his mission, when the Prophet of Islam and his Companions were in Makkah, they were facing great hardships that led to despair and frustration. It was a grim situation. The Companions

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started asking whether their mission had strayed into a blind alley. At this critical time, God Almighty revealed chapter ninety-three of the Qur'ān. It reads:

وَالضُّحَىٰ ﴿١﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ﴿٣﴾ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ﴿٤﴾

Tr.: The glorious morning light is a witness; and the night when it darkens is a witness that your Lord has not forsaken you, nor is He displeased with you, and the future will indeed be better for you than the present. (al-Ḍuḥá: 1-4)

These Qur'ānic verses refer to a phenomenon of nature. Due to the rotation of the planet earth on its axis, there is a constant succession of day and night. This natural phenomenon gives us a great lesson for our life. The succession of day and night symbolizes the succession of positive experience and negative experience.

In our life also there are dark nights and bright mornings, despair and hope, obstacles and ways out. These show that one should not become the victim of frustration by looking only at one's present. One must be hopeful about the future.

The present is temporary, like the night, and it is certain that after some days there will be a bright future. So, the best policy for a person is to work in the present and be sure that some day success will come and bear him aloft.

In the case of the Prophet of Islam and his Companions, this principle proved to be true in the complete sense of the word. In their present, they adopted this Qur'ānic formula and then, in the later days, they achieved an unprecedented success in their mission.

This law of nature is eternal; it applies to individuals as well as to groups of people. Individual success and group achievement are both covered by this common principle.

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Quite simply, this principle means: work hard in the present and be hopeful about the future.

Life is divided into two parts: the period of struggle and the period of achievement. The period of struggle is like night and the period of achievement is like day. Night certainly leads into morning, and this is true likewise of human life. One's struggle is bound to create a bright future. The only policy we are required to adopt is 'wait and watch.'

**How to Face Problems:** The Prophet of Islam started his mission in the first quarter of the seventh century in Arabia— an age of religious persecution. The Prophet's mission was based on the oneness of God, while the people of that time were believers in idolatry. So they became hostile to the Prophet and he and his companions became victims of various kinds of problems.

It was obviously an unfavourable situation for the Prophet and his companions. At this critical juncture, God revealed a meaningful piece of guidance which is recorded in chapter ninety four of the Qur'ān. This divine guidance is as follows:

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٦﴾

Tr.: So, surely with every hardship there is ease; surely with every hardship there is ease. (al-Sharḥ: 5-6)

In this Qur'ānic verse the same phrase is repeated twice. From this repetition, the Prophet drew a very meaningful inference. That is, according to the law of nature, the situation of ease is double that of the situation of difficulty. So he formulated this principle: "Two situations of ease will surely prevail over one of difficulty."

The fact is that in every situation there are problems, but at the same time there are opportunities. This is a law of nature.

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But it is also a law of nature that the quantum of opportunities will be more than the quantum of problems. This being so, the best course to adopt is to ignore the problems and divert one's energy to availing of the opportunities.

Complaint about or protest against problems is of no value. Problems are not created by some person: they are a part of the creation plan of God. No one has the power to change the course of Nature. We have no option but to accept this natural course. The above Qur'ānic formula is the only formula which it is feasible to follow in our world.

So when you face a problem, don't be negative. Be normal. Don't be disturbed. Don't allow tension to develop in your mind. Simply assess the situation and, by avoiding the problem, try to discover the opportunities. Believe with complete conviction that there are enormous opportunities waiting for you—either hidden or open. So, set about discovering them, using all your mental powers and energy.

In such a situation, lodging complaints and making protests are nothing but a waste of time. Developing tension in your mind is only the result of your failure to understand the law of nature. So, be a realist and ensure your success.

**How to Avoid Tension:** How to attain a tension-free life? It is a question asked by every man and woman. The Qur'ān gives us a simple solution, which is mentioned in the chapter of the Qur'ān entitled *al-Ra'd* (The Thunder). The relevant Qur'ānic verse is as follows:

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

Tr.: Those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of God—surely in the remembrance of God hearts can find comfort. (al-Ra'd: 28)

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This Qur'ānic verse refers to the creation plan of God. The formula given in this verse is:

Contentment in this world is only for those who willingly accept the creation plan of God.

According to the Qur'ānic explanation, the present world was created for only a limited period and also for a temporary purpose—that is, to develop your personality so that you may become eligible to enter the next world that is called Paradise.

Now the problem is that, although man was born with an ideal nature, and is an ideal-seeking animal—in the sense of wanting to have all the best things in life—the present world was not created for this purpose. In terms of personality development, the present world has enormous scope but, in terms of material achievement, the present world is very limited in its scope.

Those who want to fulfil their material desires in the present world will very soon find that they have failed to build the edifice of their dreams. Anything that they achieve seems to them less than ideal. This is a source of all kinds of tension and stress.

The formula given in the Qur'ān is this: try your best to evolve your personality in terms of spiritual development and intellectual development. But, as far as your material requirements are concerned, adopt the need-based formula and not the greed-based formula. All kinds of tension and stress are the result of trying to achieve things that are not achievable in this world.

The problem is that people judge things by a wrong yardstick; they judge their achievements by an ideal yardstick. This is unrealistic. The realistic formula is: use the ideal yardstick only when judging your personality development. But when it

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comes to your material needs, use a different yardstick. Here, you have to realize that only less than ideal can be achieved.

If you want to have a tension-free life in this world, adopt the realistic approach. Don't run after your desires, for, in reality, they are impossible to fulfil.

**No Wastage of Money:** There is a general tendency for those who earn money to believe that it is their own property. They feel that they can spend their money as they please without any restrictions from outside. This tendency was also prevalent in Arab society. With this background, the Qur'an in chapter *al-A'rāf* (The Heights) gives this general guidance:

يَبْنَیْ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

Tr.: O Children of Adam, dress yourself properly whenever you are at worship: and eat and drink but do not be wasteful: God does not like wasteful people. (al-A'rāf: 31)

Spending your money is not simply a matter of choice. There are other aspects to be considered. For example, if, by spending your money you take unhealthy food or unhealthy drink, it will destroy your physical fitness. You will cause your health and your activities in life to deteriorate.

In fact, money has two different aspects—the positive and the negative. Positive expenditure of money is undoubtedly good but negative expenditure of money is bad.

Money is a great source of distraction, and it is this distraction that is called in the Qur'an '*isrāf*'. *Isrāf* literally means going beyond all limits. And, in this sense, any waste of money is *israf*. When one indulges in *isrāf*, it will very soon become a habit and one will habitually go beyond limits in other matters also. And that will prove to be disastrous.

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Money is a great asset for the earner. It helps him to live a better life. It helps to pay the bills for his real needs. But when he fails to differentiate between positive expenditure and negative expenditure, it shows that he has become the slave of his desires, spending his money on such items as afford no real benefit in life.

For this reason, every man and woman must be very cautious in his or her shopping, buying in a strictly selective way. When you are in a shopping centre, don't give in to whims of the moment, but see what your real needs are. The system of modern shopping, or modern consumerism, is the greatest cause of the wastage of money.

Use your money on things that give you some constructive result in return. The kind of expenditure that is not going to give you any return is a sheer waste of money. Spending money is like sowing a seed. If the seed will bring you a good harvest, then it is well worth sowing, otherwise better not sow it at all. The same is true of spending money.

**The Real Achiever:** In chapter twenty-eight, the Qur'an records a story which has a great lesson for every man and woman. Qārūn, or Korah, was a wealthy member of the Israeli community of ancient Egypt. When Qārūn became arrogant because of his wealth, some of his community members told him that arrogance would not serve him well. According to the Qur'anic version the story is as follows:

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُورُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ  
أُولَى الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ  
الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي

Tr.: Korah was one of Moses' people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them. We had given him such treasures that their very keys would have weighed down a band of strong men. His people said to him, 'Do not exult in your riches, for God does not love the exultant. But seek the Home of the Hereafter by means of that which God has bestowed on you; do not forget to take your portion [of the Hereafter] in this world.' Be good to others as God has been good to you and do not strive for evil in the land, for God does not love the evil-doers.' But he said, 'I have been given it only because of the art I possess.' (al-Qaṣaṣ: 76-78)

According to the Qur'ānic account, Qārūn was punished by God on account of his arrogance. This story enshrines one of the divine laws: if someone receives wealth, he should be grateful to God, otherwise he will be disgraced by God Almighty.

Any achievement in this world is due to two factors: (1) one's own efforts, and (2) the support of the infrastructure established by God in this world. The ratio is very unequal. One's own share is less than one per cent, while the share of the divine infrastructure is more than ninety-nine percent. This being so, it is quite unrealistic for a man or a woman to become arrogant. The only realistic behaviour for an achiever is for him or her to show complete modesty.

Arrogance means denying the bounty of God and modesty means acknowledgement of God's contribution. According to the Qur'ān, the arrogant should be punished for their ungratefulness and the modest should be blessed with greater bounty.

This, moreover, is directly related to personality development. Arrogance vitiates one's personality with negativity, while modesty creates positive thinking. There is a great difference between the two: negative thinking is the source of all kinds of

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evils, while positive thinking is the source of all kinds of goodness. Wise men are always modest in their behaviour.

**Actions Matter:** At the time of the Prophet of Islam, there were certain people in Madinah who talked of the truth, yet they did nothing for its sake and used beautiful words to cover up their misdeeds. Exposing these people, the Qurʾān says in chapter three:

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُجِبُونَ أَنَّ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ  
الْعَذَابِ ۗ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Tr.: Those who exult in their misdeeds and love to be praised for what they have not done should not suppose that they are secure from punishment; they shall suffer a grievous punishment. (Āli ‘Imrān: 188)

According to this divine principle set forth in the Qurʾān, it is only real action that matters: empty words have no value in the eyes of God. Those who utter such words are referred to in the Qurʾān as hypocrites. And hypocritical behaviour is not acceptable to God.

One who talks of the truth, yet does nothing for the truth, is guilty of falsity. He is trying to receive credit for something which he never did at all. He will be discredited before God; no credit will be given to him.

Why do some people speak like this? They do nothing but they try to utter beautiful words or write beautiful essays. These people try to please others—their audiences or their readers.

These people may be applauded by their audiences and elicit praise from their readers, but this kind of speech or writing has no value before God.

There are always people, both men and women, who can be fooled by false words but God Almighty, who is all-knowing,

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cannot be fooled in this way. According to the Qur'ān, mere lip service—for example, just saying 'sorry' when a mistake is made, or saying 'thank you' when receiving help—is not enough.

When a mistake is made, you have to repent in your heart and when you are given much-needed assistance, you have to be grateful with all your heart and soul. Words are no alternative to deeds.

There is a great difference between social manners and real morality. Social manners are nothing but a self-deceiving practice; while real moral value is quite different, being based on great moral and ethical sensibility.

God Almighty grants His rewards only to those men and women who are honest and sincere; who are the well-wishers of others and who try to do something for them in a substantial sense and not simply for show. Never try to take false credit.

**Law of Success:** During the time of the Prophet of Islam, two battles took place in Arabia—Badr (624 AD) and Uhud (625 AD). In the Battle of Badr, the Prophet and his companions were the winners but, in the Battle of Uhud, they were defeated by their opponents. After the defeat at Uhud, some Muslims fell into despair. They said: “We were following the true path, so why did we suffer a defeat at the hands of those who had adopted falsehood in their lives?” At that time, God Almighty revealed the following verse in the Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ إِنْ يَمَسُّكُمْ فَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ  
فَرْحٌ مِثْلُهُ، وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ  
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

Tr.: And do not become faint of heart, nor grieve—you will have the upper hand, if you are believers—if you have suffered a wound, they too have suffered a similar wound. We

bring these days to men by turns, so that God may know those who believe, and choose witnesses from among you; and God does not love the unjust. (Āli 'Imrān: 139-140)

This observation set forth in the Qur'ān at that time, also has a general application. It tells us of a universal law of nature, according to which success is not the monopoly of a single person or group. According to the law of nature, everyone is bound to experience both success and failure, sometimes one and sometimes the other.

It is usual for everyone to become happy when experiencing success and to become despairing when experiencing defeat. This kind of fluctuation is unrealistic. We must face both situations with a normal mind. We have to accept both the situations as being in the usual course of things.

This law of nature is not a random law. It is useful for every man and woman. It means that when you have success, you have to be grateful to God. And when you fail, you have to learn some lessons and re-design your plan after making a reassessment of the situation.

These twin experiences are common to all human beings, both as individuals and as groups. Those who are unaware of this law of nature fail to learn any lessons from either experience. But those who are aware of this fact will surely learn from these experiences, and then lead a life that is free of tension and negative thinking.

The ups and downs in life are subjects of management. Learn this art of management and both these experiences in life will prove to be good for you.

**Universal Brotherhood:** In the very first chapter of the Qur'ān, *al-Fātiḥah* (The Opening) the concept of universal

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brotherhood is highlighted. The translation of the relevant verse is as follows:

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

Tr.: All praise is due to God, the Lord of the Universe. (al-Fātiḥah: 2)

According to this Qur'ānic verse, God is not the God of some community or group, He is the God of all mankind. He alone is the Creator; He alone is the Sustainer; He alone is the Lord of the Universe.

This oneness of God is the basis of the oneness of humanity. It means that God is one and so also is humanity. In the eyes of God, there is no difference between one man and another, between the whites and the blacks, between the poor and the rich. When, in the eyes of God, all humanity is one, it is but natural that mankind should adopt this kind of thinking and live as one divine people.

There is a beautiful story about the Prophet of Islam which is a fine illustration of this Qur'ānic concept. This story is totally authentic because it is narrated by al-Bukhārī, who has the highest status among the group of *muḥaddithīn* (narrators of the Prophet's traditions). The story goes like this:

The Prophet of Islam started his mission in 610 AD. Thirteen years later, he migrated to Madīnah, the second most important city of Arabia. At that time there were some Jewish tribes living in Madinah. It happened that one day the Prophet saw a funeral procession passing through a street in the town. The Prophet was seated at that time, but on seeing the funeral, he stood up out of respect. Then one of his companions said: "O Prophet, that was the funeral of a Jew. Why are you giving so much respect to a deceased non-

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Muslim?" The Prophet replied: *Alaysat nafsan* (Was he not a human being?) (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1312)

This example set by the Prophet of Islam shows that irrespective of religion or tradition, all men and women are equal, all are human beings, all are equally honourable members of humanity at large. Everyone was created by God like oneself and one's community. This concept of universality is the first basis of universal unity among all mankind.

Universal brotherhood is not simply an abstract idea. It has the capacity to inculcate the highest human values among all men and women. It widens the horizon of the individual, it makes people broadminded. It elevates people above all kinds of superficial thinking. It gives people a higher standard by which to live their lives. It revolutionizes people's minds and fosters this universal belief: I am for all and all are for me.

The concept of universal brotherhood is a killer of all kinds of negative thinking. It originates a new kind of thinking, by which people are bound to adopt God-based thinking. After adopting this principle, every society becomes a kind of universal society. This concept serves as a bulldozer that bulldozes all kinds of prejudices and discrimination.

**Purification of the Soul:** In the chapter *al-Shams* (The Sun) of the Qur'ān, you will find these verses: "He who purifies it will indeed be successful, and he who corrupts it is sure to fail." (91:9-10). These Qur'ānic verses refer to the importance of personality development, laying emphasis not on its physical but on its spiritual aspects. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the main theme of the Qur'ān, personality development being its basic goal.

What is purification of the soul? It is to purify your mind of all kinds of bias and negativity. In other words, it is to de-

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condition your conditioning. This is the mind the Qur'ān tries to build. One who fails in this de-conditioning process will become a corrupt or an unwanted personality in the divine scheme of things.

Man's personality is like an onion. An onion has a central core, but this core is covered by many layers. If you want to reach the core, you have to remove all these covers or layers. The same is true of the human being. A human personality is always subject to the process of conditioning, which wraps it up in many layers.

The process of conditioning begins right from birth. Initially, it is an unconscious process. The individual's family, his institutions, his society, and his community: all are sources of this conditioning. From childhood up to adolescence, he is affected by this conditioning. Only after reaching adulthood does he become able to understand this problem consciously.

From here onwards begins what is called personality development. It calls for an awakening of the mind and a conscious discovery of this problem. At this stage, the individual must develop the capacity for anti-self thinking. He must engage in introspection. He must try to de-condition his previous conditioning with complete objectivity. This is the most important task for every man and woman.

What is de-conditioning? It is a process of sorting out the items you have stored in your mind, all of which you must view with complete objectivity if you are to overhaul your personality in a dispassionate manner. You have to remove the negative thoughts in your mind if you are to turn your negativity into positivity.

A man once asked the Prophet of Islam a question—a very comprehensive one. He said, "O Prophet, give me a master

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piece of advice by which I may be able to manage all the affairs of my life.” The Prophet replied: “Don’t be angry.” (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6116)

This means that you must try to purify yourself of anger. Don’t allow anger to become a part of your personality. It is only in this way that you can truly develop your personality.

**Anger Management:** Social problems are the constant concern of the Qur’ān and it sets about addressing them. One of these kinds of problems is anger—a phenomenon which is in evidence in every society. In fact, wherever there are two persons, there must also be provocation and anger. On this subject, the Qur’ān gives a piece of guidance in the chapter *Āli-‘Imrān* (The Family of ‘Imrān). Its translation is as follows:

الَّذِينَ يَنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَنُظُمِ الْعَظِيمِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Tr.: For those who spend, both in prosperity and adversity, who restrain their anger and are forgiving towards their fellow men—God loves those who do good works. (*Āli ‘Imrān*: 134)

In this verse the Qur’ān does not say that a true believer is devoid of anger; it says instead that a true believer is one who is able to restrain his anger. So, the definition of a true believer is not one who is free of anger, but one whose faith is so powerful that he is able to control his temper whenever the fire of anger begins to smoulder in his heart.

Anger is not an evil. It is a part of human nature. In fact, anger is a negative expression of a healthy aspect of human nature. Man is a sensitive animal endowed with intuition and, by his intuition, he knows what is good and what is bad. So, it is but natural that when he sees some unprincipled behaviour or an immoral act, he becomes disturbed. But in such a situation, there are two options: to show a negative reaction or give a positive response.

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Anger is a negative reaction. But a true believer is one who has the ability to give a positive response at that time. A negative response arises out of hate, whereas a positive response flows from love and compassion. A true believer must develop compassion in that situation. He must try to reform his bad habits. He must try to de-condition his conditioning. The message of the Qur'ānic verse is: Do not give a hateful reaction but try rather to give a compassionate response.

Anger is generally the result of provocation and provocation is a test of your capacity to exercise self-control. It helps to view provocation simply as a challenge to your imperturbability. So at the time of provocation, prove to be a person who can maintain his equilibrium and rise above all irritants. Be the master of your negative sentiments. This upholds the true dignity of human beings, both men and women.

**A World Full of Friends:** The world is full of friends. Someone is your actual friend; another is your potential friend. You are living in a world in which there are friends all around. This is one of the universal concepts given in the Qur'ān in the chapter *Fussilat* (Revelations Well Expounded). I would like to quote some relevant verses from the Qur'ān on this subject:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

Tr.: Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend. (*Fuṣṣilat*: 34)

These Qur'ānic verses have a background. When the Prophet of Islam was in ancient Makkah, people became hostile to him and to his mission. The Makkan people used to abuse him and sometimes try to cause him physical harm in their show of

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hostility. Clearly, it was an undesirable situation for both the Prophet and his companions.

At this moment of crisis, the Prophet and his companions were given the above guidance. It meant: Don't show a negative reaction; don't be resentful; don't try to adopt the policy of tit for tat. Contrary to this, God Almighty revealed the above guidance, the essence of which was to keep one's patience, and to give a positive response in return for negative behaviour.

This formula worked very well. Very soon hostilities ceased altogether. The majority of those who had been hostile became the friends of the Prophet—first in Makkah and then gradually throughout the whole of the Arabian Peninsula.

Why did this formula prove to be so effective? The reason is very simple, good behaviour in return for bad behaviour has a far-reaching effect; it touches the conscience of others. And it is a fact that when you are able to touch the conscience of the other person, you will successfully change his heart. According to the law of nature, this behaviour is like a psychological compulsion; no one can afford to go against his conscience.

This Qur'ānic teaching is based on a principle that may be called unilateral ethics. Bilateral ethics is not part of the social scheme of the Qur'ān. There is no doubt that in terms of result, unilateral ethics is far more effective than bilateral ethics.

If you read the Qur'ān, you will find that almost all its verses convey the same positive message, either directly or indirectly. The Qur'ān tries to establish a society in which all its members, both men and women, adopt this kind of positive behaviour. Reactionary behaviour forms no part of the scheme of the Qur'ān.

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**Do Not Provoke Others:** During the Prophet's time, some of his companions used objectionable language against the gods of the non-believers. This resulted in a reaction from the other party. In this situation, God Almighty gave a very important piece of advice to the believers. This is recorded as follows in the chapter *al-An'ām* (The Cattle):

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ  
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

Tr.: Do not revile those [beings] whom they invoke instead of God, lest they, in their hostility, revile God out of ignorance. Thus to every people We have caused their actions to seem fair. To their Lord they shall all return, and He will declare to them all that they have done. (*al-An'ām*: 108)

It is obvious that God Almighty never guided the Muslims to require others not to abuse Him or the Prophet of Islam; instead, God Almighty advised Muslims to refrain from using derogatory language about the idols of others. That would only provoke them and in return they would abuse God and His Prophet.

This verse sets an example. Muslims must unilaterally uphold ethical standards on this issue. In other words, the Qur'ān points to the reason for conflict: provocation. If one refrains from provocation, one will automatically save oneself from retaliation.

If you are hurt by the negative statements of others, you are not allowed to demand that others should not hurt you. It is your problem and not that of others. According to Qur'ānic teachings, one must keep one's patience and refrain from giving the other party the chance to hit back. This principle can be called the 'save yourself' formula. Don't make demands of others, but rather control yourself in your speech and behaviour.

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This formula gives the easiest solution to problems of antagonism. Moreover, by this method you can save your time and energy and can find more time for constructive activities. This formula saves you from being a victim of distraction, for distraction always leads to useless, time-consuming activities.

It is pointless to say to others: "Don't hurt me!" It is better to avoid hurting others and then the problem is instantly solved. If anyone reviles God or the Prophet, God will punish him, if he has committed a crime in the actual sense of the word. It is not the believer's job to complain about others' behaviour or to demand that others remain silent or refrain from using such language as does not suit the believers. Everyone is accountable before God and God knows how to deal with people's misdemeanours.

**The Value of Silence:** One of the values on which the Qur'ān lays emphasis is silence. But it is not silence just for the sake of silence. Qur'ānic silence is for contemplation, to understand more and more, to enhance your learning. It is a culture of silence in the complete sense of the word. There is a relevant verse in the chapter *al-A'rāf* (The Heights), the translation of which is as follows:

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

When the Qur'ān is read, listen to it with attention, and hold your peace, so that you may receive mercy. (*al-A'rāf*: 204)

This means that when the Qur'ān is recited, you should remain silent and listen to it with total attention. This verse gives us a general principle with a particular reference, that is, when you read or listen to or observe something, keep complete silence and try to understand it, focusing all your attention on it. This kind of habit is very important if the spirit of learning is to be inculcated.

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The Qur'ān tries to develop one's thinking capacity, it tries to build a mind that can understand things in their deeper sense and analyze them with objectivity. The art of silence is necessary to be able to accomplish all these things.

There is a saying: "When I am speaking, I am not listening, and when I am not listening, I am not learning." This saying has the same meaning as is expressed in the aforementioned verse of the Qur'ān.

Silence is not simply refraining from speech. It is more than that. When the human mind, with its unlimited capacity, stops speaking, it instantly starts thinking. The mind is a super computer, switched on at the time of birth and continuing to function eternally. It can never be switched off. Thinking is a continuous process of the mind. The word 'rest' is not to be found in the human lexicon where the mind is concerned.

What is thinking? It is to reflect, it is to consider, it is to activate and utilize your intellectual capacity. Bringing the intellectual faculties into play enables one to arrive at meaningful conclusions. The mind is the most elevated part of a human being and thinking is its supreme role.

It is said that man is a thinking animal. So thinking is the most important process which occurs in a human being. All the great discoveries have been the result of thinking.

But thinking is not an occasional activity of the mind: it is a continuous process, and it happens not only in the daytime, but also when you are asleep at night. The only difference at that time is that it is transferred from the conscious to the sub-conscious mind.

The issue of silence can be understood in this context. According to the nature of mind, speaking means to stop the

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process of thinking, while when you are silent you are allowing your mind to carry on its thinking processes without any interruption. Just as a speed breaker on the road reduces the speed of the passing vehicles, human speech breaks man's continuous journey of thought. Silence is a positive habit, it helps you to learn more and more and develop your personality unhindered.

**Right Use of Speech:** People are generally in the habit of speaking more and thinking less. The Qur'an is critical of this unhealthy habit. In chapter *al-Nisā'* (Women), the Qur'an says:

لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ  
ذَلِكَ أُتِيَ مَرْضَاتٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

Tr.: There is no good in most of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin charity and kindness, or reconciliation between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of God, We will give him an immense reward. (*al-Nisā'*: 114)

This Qur'anic verse sets the standard for secret as well as open talk, namely, soundness and utility. One can only live up to this standard by being sincere in what one says and speaking only after analyzing the matter in hand. What one says should stem from a positive mind. According to this verse, a person must refrain from futile talk. He should never indulge in talking just for the sake of talking.

Now, the question is, what is the best manner of speaking? And what content of one's speech may be regarded as worthwhile? The Qur'anic criterion for proper social intercourse is based on three principles. All three principles are described in the above verse of the Qur'an, which sets them forth as follows:

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1. Charity, that is, speaking with the true giving spirit;
2. Kindness, that is, speaking with the spirit of well-wishing towards others;
3. Conciliation, that is, speaking in such a way as to create an atmosphere of harmony among people.

This is what constitutes well thought-out speech and is the only legitimate use of one's tongue. This kind of speech is useful to both the speaker as well as the listener. For the speaker's part, it conveys sincerity and positivity, while for the listener it is also fruitful in all respects.

The tongue is a very important organ of a human being; but it is like a double-edged sword. It has plus points as well as minus points. The right use of the tongue can produce a healthy atmosphere in society. Conversely, the wrong use of the tongue is so baneful that it may destroy the whole social fabric. The right use of the tongue can create the spirit of love among people, while the wrong use of the tongue will create hatred and intolerance in society.

The tongue is a great blessing for mankind. No creature other than man possesses such an asset. Meaningful speech is a very rare phenomenon in the universe. No two astronomical bodies, no two trees, no two animals, and no mountain or river can enter into a meaningful conversation. It is only human beings who have this unique capacity.

But in terms of use, this unique blessing can be described in two different ways—healthy use and unhealthy use. One who uses his tongue along healthy lines will receive a double reward. This will help develop his personality and then he will receive more and more blessings from the Creator. Make your speech the result of positive thinking, rather than an abrupt expression of ill-considered ideas.

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**The Value of Differences:** Uniformity is not the culture of our world. This lack of uniformity is observable all over the world. The Qur'ān affirms this fact. It says that the stones of the mountains are different in colour (35:27), in plants there are diverse varieties (20:53), and the same picture is observable in the animal world. Regarding man, the Qur'ān, in the chapter *al-Rūm* (The Romans) has this to say:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ  
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Tr.: Another of His signs is that He created the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your languages and colours. There truly are signs in this for those who know. (*al-Rūm*: 22)

It is a fact that our life is full of differences. In fact, every man is Mr. Different and every woman is Ms. Different. Diversity is an integral part of nature and is immutable.

What to do in such a situation? The only option in this case is to adopt the principle of tolerance. Maturity is the ability to accept things that we cannot change. And every man and woman should prove to be a mature person in this regard.

In such a situation, everyone should learn the art of difference management, rather than try to eliminate the differences, for this can lead to nothing but failure.

Difference management is not a difficult task. In terms of the capacity of the human mind, it is certainly an easy task. Regarding the capacity of the mind, it has rightly been said: "I am large enough to contain all these contradictions."

Difference is not an evil: it has a great positive value. Difference is a challenge. Difference awakens the mind. Difference invites discussion and dialogue. And, dialogue and

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discussion lead to intellectual development. Difference saves us from being a victim of intellectual stagnation.

There is a saying: “If all think alike, no one thinks very much.” This saying aptly explains the value of difference. Uniformity is not part of the scheme of nature. The scheme of nature is based on diversity rather than uniformity.

Tolerance is not a passive attitude. Tolerance is an amalgam of all kinds of noble values, such as exercising patience, giving respect to others, forbearance, deep wisdom, and the willingness to co-exist with others. These qualities are what make up a good person. One who is lacking in the spirit of tolerance is bereft of all kinds of human values.

Distraction from worthwhile objectives is a fatal lapse in any man or woman, but the spirit of tolerance saves one from such deviation. One who is tolerant will certainly be spared unpleasant situations, while one who is intolerant will find himself involved in all manner of things that are not to his liking. Individuals who are intolerant, both men and women, are bound to ruin their lives—partially if not totally.

Tolerance means giving a well-considered response in any given situation. It is the sign of a sound mind. A person of sound mind is one who refrains himself from instant reaction, who tries to examine the situation, who judges the pros and cons of his actions, and only then does he give his response. This is the spirit of tolerance; and tolerance is the sign of a wise person.

**A Course in Self-Control:** In the chapter *al-Baqarah* (The Heifer) of the Qur’ān, believers are enjoined to fast during the month of Ramadan, fasting being one of the five pillars of the religion of Islam. The translation of the relevant verse is as follows:

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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

Tr.: Believers, fasting has been prescribed for you, just as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard yourselves against evil. (al-Baqarah: 183)

What is meant by fasting? In this context, it is to abstain from eating and drinking for one whole month. The period of fasting begins from sunrise and ends at sunset. Throughout this month, believers can eat and drink during the night, but not in the daytime.

According to Islamic teaching, fasting is not simply about experiencing hunger and thirst. In fact, hunger and thirst are symbolic of purifying one's soul and training oneself to control one's desires. The Prophet of Islam has said to this effect that one, who fails to abstain from using abusive language and persists in his evil habits, will not have his abstinence from eating and drinking accepted by God.

The fact is that everyone has enormous desires, everyone has an ego and there are so many negative thoughts hidden in the human heart. To live the life of a true believer, one is required to control one's desires and to try to live a life of self-restraint.

By giving up eating and drinking in the month of Ramadan, one tries to train oneself for a greater form of fasting, that is, refraining from all kinds of evil habits. Psychological studies show that if someone forms a habit of fasting over a period of a whole month, this habit becomes a part of his second nature. In one sense, fasting in the month of Ramadan is based on this human psychology, which is used to bring about moral training.

Self-disciplined behaviour has the greatest value in the life of a man or a woman. Self-discipline makes one a predictable

person and a good member of society. Self-discipline makes one a man of principle, thus enabling one to perform one's duties. Self-discipline develops a mature personality and makes it possible for one's potential to be utilized in significant ways. Self-discipline, in helping one to evolve as a developed personality, is the key to all kinds of success. It saves one from provocation, anger and unnecessary involvement. It is a master formula by which one can manage all the affairs of one's life. Without self-discipline, one is like an animal, whereas with self-discipline one becomes a man in the complete sense of the word. Self-discipline, in setting bounds to one's freedom, helps one to manage one's desires and checks one from going astray.

Self-discipline is an act of the present, but it brings one great benefit in the future. Self-discipline is the best formula for future building. It saves one from saying: "Alas, I missed the bus!"

**The Complex-free Soul:** In the chapter *al-Fajr* (The Dawn) the Qur'an states that the reality of human life is coloured by human responses to it. One who responds to situations negatively is a failure, whereas one who responds to situations positively is a success. After explaining this, the Qur'an says:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٧﴾ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٨﴾ فَأَدْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٩﴾ وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: [But to the righteous, God will say], 'O soul at peace, return to your Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing. Join My servants. Enter My Paradise.' (al-Fajr: 27-30)

According to this, the best course for man to take is to prove that he is a complex-free soul. A complex-free soul is one who accepts the creation plan of God, who can give a positive response in any situation, good or bad, who develops no

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negative feelings in any adverse situation and who never becomes proud or arrogant in a favourable situation. He is one who can face either situation with a balanced attitude. He is the one who stands up to the test.

Our world is a world of differences, unwanted situations and provocations, therefore, at all times we have to face predicaments that are not to our liking. This diversity of situation is a part of nature. Since no one can remedy this, one cannot a world free of all these aspects. We have no option but to accept the world as it is.

Man is required to face all these odds with a tranquil mind. He is required to take them as a challenge and to do so in a positive way. Man is required to give a positive response even in negative situations. Those who prove themselves capable of doing this are complex-free souls.

A complex-free soul is one who accepts God's scheme: in return God will accept him and reward him with eternal Paradise. A complex-free soul does not mean a soul without complexes. A complex-free soul is one who is able to deal with all kind of adversity. A complex-free soul exhibits the capacity to manage things rather than the capacity to eliminate them.

The 'management of odds' is not simply the management of unwanted situations. It is more than that. There are always untoward factors in the external world but the art of their management is a function of the mind. It is the mind that, by its internal exercises, can manage all external factors.

This means that all those external problems have their plus points. That is, they can serve as food for the mind, but only if you prove to have that kind of mind which has developed the art of difference management.

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A prejudiced mind is the opposite of the complex-free soul. Manage the intellectual problems, make yourself free of all kinds of prejudices and then you will become a complex-free soul. A complex-free soul is the highest state according to Qur'ānic ethics and the way to achieve this elevated state is to keep your mind positive at all costs.

**In Conclusion:** If you read the Qur'ān, you will find that it lays great emphasis on *ṣabr* (39:10), *ṣulḥ* (4:128), forgiveness (42:40), avoidance (7:199), contentment, and so on. Why all these teachings? These teachings apparently seem to advocate passivity. But that is not so, for they embody great wisdom. The Qur'ān tries to build that kind of mind which is able to manage all the affairs of life on the basis of spirituality. It is not passivity that is advocated but skill in the proper management of life's problems. The purpose of this formula—indeed, it is the Qur'ān's greatest concern—is to concentrate on high goals and one who wants to achieve high goals has no option but to foster the aforementioned qualities. He has to try to effectively manage all undesirable situations. Otherwise, he will become preoccupied by trivial issues and will fail to continue his journey towards higher goals.

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## The Qur'ān on Islamic Education

✎...Sheikh Nādīm al-Gisr<sup>1</sup>

As a prelude, leading to the study of the Qur'ān as guidance for education, I shall outline briefly some modern thinking on education as a process.

### I. The Man Intended to be Educated

Man is made up of bones, flesh, blood and nerves. His body is furnished with various systems such as the respiratory, the alimentary and the reproductive systems. These are necessary for the preservation of human life and the species. Above all comes the nervous system which controls all the other systems either voluntarily or involuntarily. Allah has provided man with a spirit, reason and instincts (Blessed be Allah, the noblest Creator).

What concerns us here is the nervous system together with the reason and the instincts. As for the spirit, we believe in its existence but fail to comprehend its reality.

Accordingly, we shall content ourselves with the study of these three elements, referring to scientific facts and conclusion reached by psychologists and comparing them with those propounded by the most Omniscient and Wise.

### II. Modern Theory's of Psychology and Pedagogy

**1. Nervous System:** It is no exaggeration to say that of all the organs of the human body the nervous system is the most

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<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Nadim AL Gisr, AL Azhar Academy of Pakistan Researches.

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marvelous and complex, being the seat of the sprit, reason and instincts. Two of its features are most important in the field of education:

First, the unconscious mind which proves a powerful motive force in overt behavior and controls our actions and wills without noticing it.

Second, the nerves which are so sensitive and elastic as to be easily affected by repetition, which forms habits. The repetition of an action makes it easy to perform it and increases the tendency to practice it until it becomes a habit, which forms behavior.

2. **The Effect of Habits:** Habits have a great effect on the physical, normal, and behavioural aspects of private and social life. Most virtues are the outcome of fixed habits. It has been established that 99 percent of man's actions are merely mechanical habits. Hence it is said that habit is second nature.
  3. **Riddance of Evil Habits:** According to psychologists one can get rid of a bad habit only when one abandons it irrevocably. A relapse into an old habit will destroy the effect of previous efforts to get rid of it and a new attempt has to be made all over again. This may be likened to a reel which slips out of the hand and must be rewound once more. The same example is given by the Qur'ān in the verse: "وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِي نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَا" (Tr.: Be not like a woman unravels to bits the thread which she has firmly spun. al-Nahl: 92)
  4. **Instinct:** According to the modern theory, as generally accepted, instincts are innate. Allah has endowed man with many such instincts so that he may live and preserve his life and his offspring on earth. The most important instincts connected with the field of education are:
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1. The food instinct, 2. The instincts of hoarding and acquisition, 3. The pugnacity instinct, 4. The instinct of fear and escape, 5. Sexual instinct, 6. Maternal and paternal instinct, 7. The instinct of ostentation, self-assertion and love of praise, 8. The instinct of curiosity, 9. The instinct of imitation, 10. The instinct of sociability.
  5. It is a psychological fact that instincts cannot be crushed because they are necessary for the preservation of life. It is wrong to repress them, for this would only serve to drive them down into the sphere of the unconscious where they give rise to serious psychological complexes. But instincts may, or rather must, be controlled, modified and sublimated through proper methods of education.
  6. When unchecked the instincts may develop into pernicious passion and carnal desires. The check lies in the reason which distinguishes between right and wrong. But reason is not always sufficient to control instincts, being unable to distinguish between right and wrong in all cases except after long experience. Hence the need for guiding the reason in this respect. This guidance can only be given by Divine Revelation.
  7. Sublimation is one of the chief methods of curbing ungovernable instincts and directing their energies. To sublimate an instinct is to direct its energy from a baser aim to a higher and noble one. The pugnacity instinct, for instance, may be sublimated into defence of one's country and honour and of the weak and oppressed; the instinct of luxury and extravagance into charity for the cause of Allah.
  8. One of the facts established by modern psychology is that man is the most anxious about everything relating to his personal interest. Man is not actuated in most cases by the dictates of reason and logic. These have to be supported
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by persuasive methods affecting his own interests, including the interest of his children and property.

9. Among the facts of psychology in the domain of education is the fact that fear is the chief deterrent to evil actions.
  10. Prompted by the ostentation instinct, man loves praise and respect and hates condemnation and contemp. This tendency is one of the chief persuasive methods used by the Qur'ān to urge man to do good and divert him from the path of evil.
  11. An idea suggested by a tutor or reformer would be more readily accepted and adopted if supported and respected by society.
  12. The influence of a teacher or a preacher upon his learners or hearers varies according to the concord between his teaching and practice, seeing that example is better than precept and actions speak louder than sermons.
  13. Repetition and emphasis also helps to fix ideas in the mind. Pedagogues tell us that the same lesson should be reiterated in a different accent and illustrated in a variety of ways, so that boys may pay attention without losing interest. Stories and parables render a great aid in this respect.
  14. **Monotony and Variety:** But repetition should not verge on monotony which gives rise to boredom and consequently distracts the attention of boys, nay, it may cause them to feel drowsy. In contrast to this, variety attracts and excites their attention. This method is also adopted by the Qur'ān.
  15. **Interest:** Psychologists also tell us that lesson should be short and interesting. The average child cannot concentrate his attention on abstract subjects for a long time. His attention should, therefore, be stimulated by interesting things such as stories. This course is also adopted by the Qur'ān in relating true stories of the prophets.
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16. Among human inclination arising from the instinct of ostentation is the fact that man is apt to attribute to others many of his own defects and vices in order to relieve his sense of guilt and contempt of society. This is also taken into account by the Qur'ān.
17. A man steeped in vice is prone to lure his companions into the abysmal depth of his moral degradation, with a view to relieving his pricks of conscience and the contempt of society. This is a course usually adopted by misers who encourage avarice in others as well as by infidels who tempt the faithful to abjure their religion.
18. It is a well-established fact that sound sleep is the most effective remedy for fatigue, being most beneficial during night.
19. It is an established fact that energy begins just before dawn and reaches its climax at 10.a.m, then slackens until it becomes lowest at 2.p.m. when it begins to rise gradually up to 9.p.m, after which hour it decreases rapidly down to dawn and so on. Night, therefore, is the most suitable time for rest.

### **III. Instincts, Dispositions and Propensities in the Qur'ān**

The instincts, dispositions and propensities discovered by the psychologists in the nineteenth century were mentioned, expressly or implicitly, by the Qur'ān in the seventh century.

1. In the following verses there is a reference to the instinct of hoarding and acquisition ingrained in man:-
    - a, "Man is ever niggardly." (17:100)
    - b, "He loves riches with all his heart." (100:8)
    - c, "You love riches with all your heart." (89:20)
    - d, "Man is prone to avarice." (4:128)
  2. In verses quoted below there is a reference to the instinct of fear and human weakness, the instinct of niggardliness,
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impatience and the unruliness of instincts beyond the control of reason:-

a, "Man was created weak." (4:28)

b, "Truly man was created very impatient, fretful when evil touches him and niggardly when good reaches him." (70:19, 20,21)

c, "Truly man is ever impatient." (17:11)

d, "Man is a creature of haste." (21:37)

e, "Nay, but you love the fleeting life." (75:20)

3. "The human soul is certainly prone to evil." (12:53)

Here we find a reference to the inordinate nature of instincts.

4. "We said: 'Get you down, all (you people) with enmity between yourselves.'" (2:36)

This verse refers to the instinct of pugnacity and struggle for existence.

5. "But man is, in most things contentious." (18:54)

This refers to the instinct of inquisitiveness and tendency to follow fancy and whims.

6. In the following verses there is a reference to the instinct of ostentation, arrogance and boastfulness:

a, "Allah loves not any arrogant boaster" (31:18)

b, "Nay, but man does transgress all bounds, in that he looks upon himself as self-sufficient." (96:6-7)

c, "Think not that those who exult in what they have brought about, and love to be praised for what they have not done, that they can escape the penalty." (3:188)

7. In the following verses there is a reference to the instincts of fear, ostentation and man's failure to exercise control over his instincts:

a. "Verily man is given to injustice and ingratitude." (14:34)

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- b. "Truly man is most ungrateful." (17:67)
  - c. "Man does not weary of asking for good (thing), but if ill touches him, he gives up all hope and is lost in despair." (41:45)
  - d. "If We give man a taste of Our mercy, and then withhold it from him, he yields to despair and becomes ungrateful. But if We give him a taste of Our favours after adversity has touched him, he is sure to say. "Gone are my sorrows from me, and grows jubilant and boastful." (11:9-10)
  - e. "There are among men some who serve Allah on the very fringe of the true faith. When an ordeal befalls them they turn upon their heels." (22:11)
8. Here are two verses referring to the maternal and paternal instinct:
- a. "It is he Who created you from a single person, and made his mate of like nature, in order that he might dwell with her in love. When they are united, she bears a light burden and carries it about. When she grows heavy, they both pray to Allah their Lord saying 'If you give us a goodly child, we vow we shall ever be grateful.'" (7:189)
  - b. "Let those who are solicitous about the welfare of their young children after their own death take care not to wrong orphan. Let them fear Allah and speak for justice." (4:9)
9. The following verses imply that belief in God is ingrained even in the minds of confirmed atheists, manifesting itself in times of danger:
- a. "When some trouble touches man, he cries unto his Lord, turning to him in repentance." (39:8)
  - b. "When a waver covers them like a canopy (of clouds), they call to Allah, offering Him sincere devotion." (31:32)
10. "O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other." (49:13)
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In this verse there is a reference to the instinct of sociability.

#### **IV. Inculcation of Virtues**

The virtues inculcated by the Qur'ān are too numerous to be counted. Considering that this paper is meant for non-Muslim who should have a clear notion of the Qur'ānic ethics, reference will be made only to such moral qualities as are set forth by the Qur'ān in explicit terms.

**1. Sublime Character:** The Qur'ān praised the Prophet Muḥammad as having a sublime character, for thus Allah says: "Verily you are of a sublime character." (68:4) The other prophets though all of them are infallible, are credited with a special trait of human character. Some are praised as clement and patient, others as righteous and truthful, others again as grateful and kind to their parents. The term "sublime" with which the character of the holy Prophet is credited indicates that in his personality are combined all virtues such as patience, courage, fulfillment of promises and covenants, honesty, justice, magnanimity, kindness to kindred, support of the weak, hospitality to guests and succor to the needy. It was the Qur'ān which preached this nobility of character, as is clear from the following verses:

**2. Truthfulness:**

"Believers, fear Allah and be with those who are true in word and deed." (9:119)

"Believers, fear Allah, and speak the truth." (38:78)

**3. Establishment of Testimony:**

"And keep your testimony upright for Allah." (65:2)

"Who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from Allah?" (2:140)

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“Conceal not evidence; for whoever conceals it, his heart is trained with sin” (2:283)

“The witness should not refuse when they are called on for evidence.” (2:282)

**4. Honesty:**

“Believers! Betray not the trust of Allah and the Apostle, nor misappropriate knowing thing entrusted to you.” (8:27)

“Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants.” (24:8)

**5. Fulfillment of Engagements and Treaties even with Enemies:**

“And fulfill every treaty, for every treaty will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)” (17:34)

“Fulfill the covenant of Allah, when you have entered into .....” (16:91)

“Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah, and fail not in their plighted word,” (13:20)

“But if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance,” (8:72)

“But the treaties are not dissolved with those pagans with whom you have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided any one against you. So fulfill your engagement with them to the end of their term: for Allah loves the righteous,” (9:4)

**6. Giving Just Measure and Weight:**

“Give measure and weight with full justice” (6:152)

“Give just measure and weight, nor withhold from people the things that are their due” (7:85)

“So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance.” (83:1-3)

**7. Justice:**

“Allah enjoins justice.” (16:9)

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“When you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned.” (6:152)

“Believers, fulfill your duties to Allah and bear true witness. Let not your hatred for other men turn you away from justice. Be just; that is next to piety.” (5:8)

**8. Patience:**

The holy Qur’ān has laid stress on patience in about 70 verses. Here are a few of them:

“Believers, persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance.” (3:200)

“Allah is with those who patiently persevere.” (2:153)

“And bear with patient constancy whatever betide you, for this is firmness of purpose in the conduct of affairs.” (31:17)

“And exhort each other to patience.” (130:3)

“But give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, who say, when afflicted with calamity: To Allah we belong and to him we shall return.” (2:155)

“I swear by the declining day that prediction shall be the lot of man, except for those who have faith and do good works and exhort each other to justice and fortitude.” (103:1-3)

**9. Forgiveness:**

“So overlook any human faults with gracious forgiveness.” (15:85)

“The recompense for any injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree); but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah.” (42:40)

“Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you.” (24:22)

**10. Modesty and Gentleness:**

“And lower thy wing to the believers who follow you.” (26:215)

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“Were you sever or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you.” (3:159)

**11. Doing good:**

“But do good, for Allah loves those who do good.” (2:195)

“For the mercy of Allah is near to those who do good.” (7:26)

**12. Self-sacrifice:**

“They give others preference over themselves, even though poverty were their own lot. Those that preserve themselves from the covetousness of their own souls shall surely prosper.” (56:9)

**13. Mercy:**

In more than 200 verses of the Qur’ān Allah credited Himself with the attribute of mercy. Further, each chapter of the Holy Book opens with *basmala*, which includes the two divine names of Most Gracious and Most Merciful, Mercy is recommended in many verses of the Qur’ān, of which only a few may be mentioned:

Then will be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, and deeds of kindness and compassion.” (90:17)

“We sent after them Jesus, the son of Mary, and bestowed on him the Gospel; and we ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy.” (57:27)

“And He has put love and mercy between your hearts.” (30:21)

“Therefore, treat not the orphans with harshness.” (93:9)

**14. Kindness of Parents:**

Final piety is enjoined in many verses of the holy Qur’ān. This enjoinder is linked up with the command to worship the One True God, as is evidenced by the following verse:

“Thy Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but with a word of humility, and say:

'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy mercy even as they cherished me in childhood'. (17:23-24)

"We have enjoined on man kindness to parents." (29:8)

"And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents; in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), show gratitude to Me and to thy parents, To Me is thy final Goal," (31:14)

"But if they strive to make you join in worship with Me things of which you has no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear company in this life with justice and consideration....." (31:14-15)

**15. Kindness to Neighbours:**

"And do good – to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet)

Kindness to neighbours and kinsfolk may help in solving the problem of social security which is engaging the attention of social reforms at the present time. If every rich man begins by paying the poor-rate to his neighbours and relation in his own locality the number of the needy and destitute will become less in the country and the aims of social security will be achieved.

**16. Kindness to Kith and Kin**

"Allah commands justice, the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin....." (16:90)

"And render to the kindred their due rights as also to those in want, and to the wayfarer...." (16:90)

"Let not those among you who are endowed with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want,....."

But it is righteousness – to believe in Allah, and the Last Day, and the Book, and the Messenger, to spend of your

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substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves..."(2:177)

**17. Kindness to Non- Muslim:**

"Allah does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who have neither made war on your religion, nor driven you from your house. Allah loves the equitable." (60:8)

**18. Concession and Charity:**

"If a debtor is in difficulty grant him time till it is easy for him to repay. But if you remit it by way of charity, that is best for you... (2:280)

**19. Defence of the Weak;**

"And how should you not fight for the cause of Allah, and for the helpless old men, women, and children... (4:75)

**20. Rendering aid to Women:**

"And when he (Moses) arrived at the watering place in Madyan, he found there a group of men watering their flocks. He said, 'What is the matter with you? They said: 'We cannot water our flocks until the shepherds take back their flocks; then he turned back to the shade, and said: 'O my Lord! Truly am I in desperate need of any good you send me!" (28:23-24)

**21. Kindness to orphans:**

"They ask what they should spend in charity, Say; 'whatever you bestow in charity must go to your parents and kindred, to the orphans and to the poor man and to the wayfarer..." (2:215)

"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan and the captive..." (76:8)

"Yet he would not scale the Height. Would that you knew what the Height is! It is the freeing of a bondsman; the feeding, in a day of privation, of an orphan with claims of relationship, or a needy man in distress." (90:11,16)

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Nay, nay! But you honour not the orphans! Nor do you encourage one another to feed the poor! (89:17-18)

**22.** Kindness to the wayfarer:

The foregoing verses and the verse of alms (9:60) mentioning specifically the right classes of people having a claim to alms.

**23.** Kindness to the Captive:

**24.** This is one of the highest moral qualities preached by the Qur'ān. Speaking of the virtues of the righteous, the Qur'ān says: "They feed, for love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, saying, 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks'" (76:9), The verse refers to the old state of things when captives were often starved, slain and flayed and their flesh was given as food to wild animals.

**25.** Generosity, Liberality and Munificence:

The Qur'ān does not preach charity in terms of which the pagan Arab were proud. On the other hand, it includes numerous verses which enjoin charity for the sake of Allah. The reason for the omission of these terms in the Qur'ān seems to be that the Arabs practiced generosity and liberality for the sake of ostentation and self -glorification which gives rise to envy and disputes between the rich and the poor. The Qur'ān aimed at sublimating this tendency into a nobler aim. It enjoined charity for the sole aim of seeking Allah's pleasure, and not in return for someone else's favour, or in expectation of any recompense; for thus says Allah: "I warn you, then, of the blazing fire, in which none shall burn save the hardened sinner, who denies the truth and gives no heed. But the good man who purifies himself by alms giving shall keep away from it: and so shall he that does good works for the sake of the Most

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High only, Seeking no recompense. Such men shall be content (92:14,21)

**26.** Hospitality:

This is referred to in the verse:

“Have you heard the story of Abraham’s guests? They went to him and said: ‘Pease! He answered, and seeing that they were strangers, betook himself to his family and returned with a fatted calf. He set it before them saying: ‘Will you not eat?.... (51:24,27)

In this verse and another verse of chapter 11 (Houd) which says: “and hastened to entertain them with a roasted call” there is a reference to the duty of extending hospitality to guests, even if they are strangers.

**27.** The covering of Adornments and Finery:

“Enjoin believing men to lower their gaze and restrain their carnal desires. This will make their lives purer. Allah is well acquainted with all their actions. And enjoin believing women to lower their gaze and to preserve their chastity; to cover their adornments except such as normally displayed to draw their veils over their bosoms and not to reveal their finery .... And let them not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments.” (24:30-31)

**28.** Asking permission before entering chambers:

The Qur’ān lays stress on rules of decorum within the family circle. It enjoins servants and children to ask permission before they entre the chambers of their masters and parents; for thus says Allah: “Believers let those whom your right hands posses and the children among you who have not come of age, ask your permission when they come in to see you on three occasions; before morning prayer, the while you doff your clothes in the heat of moon and after the late night prayer. These are three times of undress.... (24:58)

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29. Asking permission before entering others' houses:  
"Believers, do not enter the dwellings of other men until you have asked their owners' permission and wished them peace...." (24:27)
30. Low voice in conversation:  
"Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Surely the harshest of voices is the braying of the ass." (31:18-19)

### **V. Denigration of Vices**

Anyone who counts the vices forbidden by the Qur'ān would think they exceed the virtues preached by it. This illusion will soon vanish if we remember that the enjoinder of a virtue implies the prohibition of its antithesis and vice versa. In fact the numerous subdivisions of the same vice are implied in the roots of major virtues. For instance, the prohibition of falsehood, hypocrisy, lie, perjury is implied in the enjoinder of truthfulness, just as the prohibition of injustice, libel, backbiting, calumny and dishonesty is implied in the enjoinder justice. But the Qur'ān did not charge people with the task of drawing their own conclusion. It called vices by their names, inasmuch as there are certain ethical points which might present some difficulty to the elite, much less the layman who is more in need of by their weakness, or ignorance, or rather the desire to excuse themselves as ignorant people say that wine is not prohibited in express term except for the verse which enjoins that it should be avoided. Should they reflect a little, they would find that the same verses described wine as an abomination, a term usually applied by the Qur'ān to unbelief and polytheism, which are much worse than wine. It was for this reason that the Qur'ān called every vice by its name in order to shut the door of false pretexts in the face of the ignorant and the sinners.

1. Falsehood:
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“They swear to falsehood knowingly. Allah prepared for them a severe penalty: evil indeed are their deeds.” (58:14)

“And the witness will say, ‘Those are the ones who lied against their Lord! Behold! The curse of Allah is on those who do wrong!’” (11:18)

2. False accusation:

“Who does more wrong than he who invests a lie against Allah.’ (6:21)

“The forger must suffer frustration.” (20:61)

“And those who traduce believing men and women undeservedly, shall bear the guilt of slander and glaring sin.” (33:58)

3. Hypocrisy and ostentation:

“Woe to those who pray but are heedless in the prayer; who make a show of piety.....” (107:4-6)

“Believers, do not mar your almsgiving with taunts and mischief-making like those who spend their wealth for the sake of ostentation and believe neither in Allah nor in the Last Day.” (2:26)

“And who spend their wealth for the sake of ostentation, believing neither in Allah nor in the Last Day.” (4:38)

“The hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire.” (94:145)

“The hypocrites are rebellious and perverse.” (9:67)

“When they rise to pray, they stand up sluggishly: they pray for the sake of ostentation..... (4:142)

4. Defamation of chaste women:

“Those who slander chaste women, indiscreet but believing, are cursed in this life in the Hereafter: for them is a grievous penalty.” (24:23)

“Those that defame honourable women and cannot produce four witnesses shall be given eighty lashes. No

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testimony of their shall be admissible over after, for such men are wicked transgressors.”(24:4)

5. Spreading slanders:

“Those who delight in spreading slanders against the faithful shall be sternly punished in this word and in the next. Allah knows them all, but you do not.” (24:19)

6. Public scandal of evil:

“Allah loves not that evil should be noised abroad in public speech, except where injustice hath been done.” (4:140)

7. Backbiting:

“Nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, you would about it.... (49:12)

8. Scandal-mongering, defamation, offensive nicknames, mutual ridicule:

“Woe to all scandal-mongering and backbiters.” (104:1)

“As for those that taunt the believers who give freely and scoff at those who give according to their means, Allah will scoff at them. Theirs shall be a woeful punishment.” (9:79)

“Believers, let no man mock another woman, who may perhaps be better than herself. Do not defame one another, nor call one another by nicknames, It is an evil thing to be called by a bad name after embracing the true faith.... (49:11)

9. Bearing false witness:

“And shun the word that is false” (22:30)

“Those who do not bear false witness and who avoid futilities in a dignified way”

10. Discrepancy between word and deeds:

“Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not.” (96: 1-3)

11. Calumny:

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“Head not the type of despicable man- ready with oaths, a slander, going about with calumnies.” (68:10-11)

“Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, from the mischief of the slinking prompter who whispers in the hearts of men; from jinn and men.” (114: 1-6)

“Believers, if a wicked man comes to you with news, ascertain the truth, lest you harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what you have done.” (46:6)

12. Spying:

“And spy not on each other.” (49:12)

13. Arrogance and haughtiness:

“Is there not in Hell an abode for the haughty.” (39:60)

“Thus doth Allah seal up the hearts of arrogant and obstinate transgressors.” (40:35)

“Those who believe arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right - them will I turn away from My signs.” (7:146)

“And frustration was the lot of every powerful obstinate transgressor.” (14:15)

14. Wrong -doing and trespasses (excesses of every kind)

“As fir the wrong-doers, He has prepared for them a grievous penalty.” (76:37)

“Allah... He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice and rebellion...” (16:90)

“Say: the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are: shameful deeds, whether open or secret, sins and trespasses again truth or reason...(7:33)

“The blame is only against those who oppress men with wrong-doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice: for such there will be a penalty grievous.” (42:42)

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15. Miserliness and avarice:

“But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient and repudiates the good – We will indeed make smooth for him the path to misery; nor will his wealth profit him when he falls headlong into the pit.” (92:8-10)

“Let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which Allah has given them of His grace, think that it is good for them: nay, it will be the worse for them; soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks and their collar on the Day of Judgment.” (3:180)

“Allah does not have arrogant boastful men, who are themselves niggardly and enjoin others to be niggardly also; who conceal the riches which Allah of His bounty has bestowed upon them, for We have prepared a shameful punishment for the unbelievers.” (4:37)

“Men’s souls are swayed by greed.” (4:128)

“And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls,-they are the ones that achieve prosperity.” (59:9)

“Proclaim a woeful punishment to those that hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah’ cause. The day will surely come when their treasures shall be heated in the fire of Hell, and their foreheads, sides, and backs branded with them. Their tormentors will say to them: “These are the riches which you hoarded. Taste then the punishment which is your due.” (9:3-5)

“Truly man was created very impatient, fretful when evil touches him, and niggardly when good reaches him.” (70:19-21)

“Throw into Hell every contumacious rejecter (of God).” (50:24)

16. Extravagance, wastefulness, stinginess:

“But waste not by excess; for Allah loves not the wasters.” (6:141)

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“Squander not your wealth in the manner of a spendthrift. Verity spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones.” (25:67)

17. Greediness and gluttony:

“Eat and drink, but waste not by excess, for Allah loves not the wasters.” (7:31)

“Here the word “waste” is used not in the sense of squandering wealth but of eating too much as is seen from the verse:

“Say: Who has forbidden the beautiful gifts of Allah, which He has produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, which He has provided for sustenance? “(7:32)

17. Luxury:

“When We resolve to annihilate a people, We first warn those of them that live in luxury. If they persist in sin, We rightly pass Our judgment and utterly destroy them.” (17:16)

“We have sent to apostle to any nation whose message was not denied but those of them that lived in comfort.” (34:34)

18. Treachery and dishonesty:

“Allah loves not one given to perfidy and crime.” (4:137)

“Allah loves not the treacherous.” (8:58)

“Allah loves not any that is a traitor to faith, or shows, ingratitude.” (22:38)

“Believers, betray not the trust of Allah and the Apostle, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you.” (8:27)

19. False oaths:

“And take not your oaths to practice deception between yourselves, with the result that someone’s foot may slip after it was firmly planted...” (16:04)

“And they swear to falsehood knowingly.” (58:14)

“Heed not the type of despicable man, ready with oaths.” (68:10)

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“Those that sell the covenant of Allah and their own oaths for a party price shall have no share in the world to come. Allah will neither speak to them, nor look to them, nor purify them on the Day of Resurrection. Theirs shall be a woeful punishment.” (3:77)

20. Perjury and the concealment of evidence:

“Shun the abomination of idols and avoid all falsehoods.” (22:30)

“Those who witness no falsehood and avoid futilities in dignified way...” (25:72)

“Conceal not evidence, for whoever conceals it, his heart is tainted with sin.... ” (2:283)

“We should hide not the evidence before Allah, for we should then be wrong-doers.” (5:109)

“Who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from Allah?” (2:140)

“And establish the evidence as before Allah.” (65:2)

21. Conjecture and suspicion:

“Conjecture avails nothing against truth.” (49:12)

“Believers, avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion, in some cases, is a sin.” (49:12)

“Do not follow what you do not know. Man’s eyes, ears, and heart- each of his senses shall be closely questioned.” (17:36)

22. Circulation of False Rumours:

“If the hypocrites and those who have tainted hearts who circulate false rumours in Medina do not desist, We shall stir you up against them and their days in the city will be numbered.” (33:60)

23. Envy:

“Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of Daybreak from the mischief of His creation; from the mischief of the darkness as it over so reads; from the mischief of conjuring witches; from the mischief of the envier, when he envies.” (113)

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24. Reminders of charity:

“Believers, cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury... (2:264)

The above are the majority of vices referred to in the Qur’ān. As for the major sins, namely, unbelief, polytheism, murder, theft and fornication, the prohibition is well known in all religion. That is why I have deemed it unnecessary to mention the verses prohibiting them, and confirmed myself to stating the details of virtues and vices which the Qur’ān alone revealed and prohibited.

**VI. General Principles of Islamic Education and Persuasive Methods Prescribed by the Qur’ān**

We next state a few of the general principles, mental, psychological and social, prescribed by the Qur’ān as a basis for Islamic education.

1. Allah imposes no burden on man that he cannot bear:

“Allah does not charge a soul with anything beyond its capacity.” (2:286)

“Fear Allah as much as you can.” (64:16)

“Allah has given no man two hearts in his breast.” (33:4)

2. Avoidance of destruction:

“Do not cast yourselves into destruction with your own hands.” (2:195)

3. Mistake and intentions:

“But there is no blame on you, if you make a mistake therein, what counts is the intention of your hearts.” (33:5)

4. Necessity:

“But if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits- then he incurs no sin.” (2:173)

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“But even so, if a person is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits- thy Lord is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (6:145)

5. Concession:

“It shall be no offence for the blind, the lame, and the sick to eat at your tablets...” (24:61)

6. Facilities:

“Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties...” (2:185)

7. Danger of Tumult and oppression:

“And guard yourselves against tumult or oppression which affects not in particular only those of you who do wrong...” (8:25)

“Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.” (2:217)

8. Danger of Disputes:

“And fall into no dispute, lest you should lose courage and your resolve weakens.” (8:46)

9. Fancy and Truth:

“Truly, fancy can be of no avail against truth.” (10:36)

10. Falsehood is weak:

“Falsehood shall never triumph.” (17:81)

11. Wisdom of the Law of Equality:

“Men of understanding! In the law of equal retribution there is a safeguard for your lives that you may restrain yourselves.” (2:178)

12. The result of Luxury:

“When We resolve to annihilate a people, We first warn those of them that live in luxury. If they persist in sin, We rightly pass our judgment and utterly destroy them.” (17:16)

“And how many populations. We destroyed, which exalted in their life of ease and plenty.” (28:58)

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13. Good things are allowable:

“Say: Who has forbidden you to wear the decent clothes or to eat the good things which Allah has bestowed upon His servants...” (7:32)

14. Divine Balance:

‘Had Allah not checked one set of people by the might of another, the earth would have been utterly corrupted.’ (2:251)

15. Freedom and Compulsion:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion” (2:256)

“Will you compel mankind against their will to believe?” (10:199)

“Have we not shown him the two paths” of virtue and vice. (90:10)

“We have shown him the right paths: whether he be graceful or ungrateful rests on his will.” (76:3)

“By the soul and Him that moulded it and inspired it with knowledge of sin and piety...” (91:7,8)

“Say: This is the truth from your Lord. Let him who will, believe, and him who will, reject it. (18:29)

16. Personal Responsibility:

“Each individual is responsible for his deeds.” (52:21)

“And if any one earns sin, he earns it again himself.” (4:111)

“No soul shall bear another’s burden.” (35:18)

“Each man shall be judged by his own labours.” (53:40)

“Whoever works evil, will be required accordingly.” (4:125)

“Verily, never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves.” (13:11)

Because Allah will never change the grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their own souls.” (8:35)

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### VII. Particular Principles of Islamic Education

Now that we have mentioned the general principles of education, we shall proceed to point out the particular ones.

1. Teaching people in their own language:  
“We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ān, in order that you may understand.” (12:2)  
“A book, whereof verses are explained in detail a Qur’ān in Arabic for people who understand.” (41:3)  
“We sent not an apostle save with the language of his own people..” (14:4)
  2. Attention and Listening  
“When the Qur’ān is read, listen to it with attention.” (7:204)  
“Verily, in this is a message for any that has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and earnestly witnesses the truth.” (6:36)
  3. Meditation:  
“Will they not ponder on the Qur’ān? Are there locks upon their hearts?” (47:24)  
“A book which We have sent down unto you, full of blessing that they may meditate on its signs and that men of understanding may receive admonition.” (38:29)
  4. Appealing to Reason and Understanding:  
The verses in which the Qur’ān calls upon us to appeal to reason are too numerous to mention. Following are a few of the most eloquent verses in this respect:  
“For the worst of beats in the sight of Allah are the deaf and dumb and those who understand not.” (8:22)  
“He will visit His scourge upon those who will not understand.” (2:171)  
“Deaf, dumb and blind, they will not understand.” (2:171)
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5. Following Fancy and Conjecture:  
The Holy Book condemns conjecture and fancy in many verses. Suffice it to mention the following:  
Fancy can be of no avail against truth." (10:36)  
"They follow nothing but conjecture, and conjecture avail nothing against Truth." (53:28)
  6. Following the Example of Ancestral:  
The Holy Qur'ān prohibited adherence to ancestral and superstitions of yore, as is seen from the following verses:  
"When it is said to them: 'Follow what Allah has revealed they say: Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers, what! Even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance? (2:170) "They say: Enough for us the ways we found our fathers following." What! Even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance." (5:107)
  7. Disputing without knowledge:  
"But why do you dispute in matters of which you have no knowledge?" (3:66)  
"Do not follow what you do not know. Man's eyes, ears and heart -each of his senses shall be closely questioned." (17:36)  
"You uttered with your mouths things of which you had no knowledge; you thought it to be a light matter, while it was most serious in the sight of Allah." (24:15)  
"And yet among men there are such as dispute about Allah, without knowledge.." (22:3)
  8. Reasoning in the most courteous manner:  
"Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation. Reason with them in the most courteous manner." (16:125)  
"Dispute not with the followers of the Scriptures except in the most courteous manner." (29:46)
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9. Repelling Evil with Good:

“Repel evil with good, and who is your enemy that will become, as it were, your intimate friend. But none will be granted such goodness save those who exercise patience and self-restraint and are greatly favoured by Allah.” (41:35)

10. Divine Vigilance:

“It was We who created man, and We know the prompting of his soul, for We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.” (50:16)

“There is no secret in heaven or earth but is recorded in that glorious book.” (27:75)

“Allah knows what you conceal and what you reveal.” (16:19)

“Nothing whatever is hidden from Allah, whether on earth or in Heaven.” (4:58)

“Allah knows the furtive look and the secret thought.” (40:19)

“They may hide their crimes from men, but they cannot hide them from Allah seeing that He is in their midst when they plot by night, in words that He cannot approve, and Allah compasses round all that they do.” (4:108)

“Whatever deed you may be doing, We are witness thereof.” (10:61)

11. Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong:

“You are the best of the people, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong.” (3:110)

“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity.” (4:104)

“The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and what is evil.” (9:71)

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“The hypocrites, men and women, hold together. They enjoin evil and forbid what is just.” (9:67)

12. Mutual teaching of Truth:

“I swear by Time (through the ages) that man is in loss except such as have faith and do righteous deeds, and join together in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of patience and constancy. (103)

13. Enjoining patience and compassionate kindness:

“Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience (constancy and self-restraint) and enjoins deeds of kindness and compassion.” (90:17)

14. Courteous Speech:

“Tell my servants to be courteous in their speech.” (17:53)

15. A Goodly Word:

“A goodly word is like a goodly tree whose root is firmly fixed and its branches reach the sky; it yields its fruit at all times by the leave of its Lord.” (14:24)

“Thus Doth Allah (by parables) skin the Truth from Vanity. The scum is cast away, but that which is of use to mankind remains.” (13:17)

16. Secrecy for good ends:

“In most of their secret talks there is no good, but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men, secrecy is permissible. To him who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, we shall soon give a reward of the highest value.” (4:114)

“Believers when you hold secret counsel, do it not for iniquity, and hostility...(58:9)

17. Do not despair of God’s Mercy:

“Your Lord has inscribed for Himself the rule Mercy. Verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented and amended his conduct, Lo! He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (6:54)

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“Say: O My servants who have transgressed again their souls! Des-pair not of the Mercy of Allah, for He forgives all sins.” (39:53)

“If any one does evil or wrong his own soul but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (7:153)

“Truly, no one despairs of Allah’s soothing Mercy, except those who have no faith.” (12:87)

“And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord but such as go astray?” (12:87)

### **VIII. Self-Discipline**

For promoting self-control the Qur’ān has established many measures and principles, viz, pilgrimage, fasting, atonement, observance of religious duties, fulfilment of promise and covenants, repentance, perseverance in giving up bad habits and resistance of temptation.

The Qur’ānic principle in combating vice is that prevention is better than cure. It is well known that man cannot easily resist temptation. Hence the Qur’ān has made it incumbent on the Muslim to lower his gaze and on the woman not to show her adornments and finery save to her husband. It has also enjoined asking permission before entering chambers at the times of undress whether by day or by night. It also prohibited wine entirely.

The Qur’ān has also paid great attention to physical training and has planned many measures for perfecting it.

#### **1. Purification:**

Cleanliness is incumbent on Muslim all day long from dawn till bed time, since it is an essential condition for the validity of the five daily prayers.

#### **2. Ablution (Wuḍū)**

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Ablution is required for saying the five prayers. It consists of washing the hands, the mouth, the nose, the face, the arms, head, the ears and the feet after a certain manner. It invigorates the body and strengthens it.

3. Bathing (Ghusl)

Ghusl is bathing the body with pure water after sexual intercourse, menstruation, and child-birth. It purifies the body and renders it active.

4. Prayer:

Prayer constitutes also a very useful bodily exercise for all the organs of the body.

5. Fasting:

Fasting which is enjoined for one month during the whole year and as a means of atonement is very beneficial to the body. It accustoms man to bear hunger and thirst and to restrain his organs from satisfying their lusts, specially in cases of emergency such as travel, siege, and war. Moreover, the assigning of a lunar month for fasting is meant to accustom man to physical endurance in all the season of the year.

6. Pilgrimage:

Pilgrimage teaches both men and women how to sacrifice oneself for God. It also teaches how to face hardships during travel. It again teaches people to abandon luxury and finery and to rough it. The fact that pilgrimage is also incumbent on women proves that Islam aims to make the Muslim woman a strong patient creature able to endure the hardships of travel.

7. Temperance:

The Qur'ān urges moderation in everything, especially in food and drink, and warns against gluttony which leads to many diseases, especially the weakness of the liver.

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8. Sleep by night:

By urging man to go to bed at night and work to earn his living by day, the Qur'ān has shown us its deep understandings of human nature. Modern science has confirmed the advantage of this practice. This fact is quite evident in many a divine verse:

“It is He who has ordained the night to cover you as garment; and sleep to give you rest; and has ordained the day for waking.” (10:67)

“And of His signs is your sleeping by night.” (30:23)

“And He hath ordained the night for rest.” (6:96)

“Do they not see that We have ordained the night that they may rest therein.” (27:86)

### **IX. Social Training**

It is self evident that society consists of individuals; if these individuals are good, the whole community will be good. Our purpose here is not to deal at length with the details of social trainings, as this would require deep researches in sociology, economics and politics, the sciences which deal with our social life.

I shall confine myself to three commandments within the framework of Islamic social training. Here they are in brief:

1. Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.
2. Mutual teaching of Truth and Mercy.
3. Co-operation for good ends.
4. Reconciliation of hearts.
5. Prevention of sedition.
6. Resistance to excess and luxury.

What concerns us most as regards social trainings are the last three commandments.

1. Reconciliation of hearts;
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The Qur'ān says: "Alms are to be distributed only unto the poor and the needy, and those who are employed in collecting and distributing them, and unto those whose hearts have been reconciled, and for the redemption of captives, and unto those who are in debt and insolvent, and for the advancement of God's religion, and unto the wayfarer. This is an ordinance from God; and God is knowing and Wise." (9:60)

Where is the portion assigned to the reconciliation of hearts to go now that Islam has been firmly established? I am of the opinion that this portion should be allotted to two purposes: the first is the reconciliation of those Muslims who out of poverty and infirmity side with the enemies of Islam and work as mercenaries for them, and the second is the preaching of the Islamic call. This can be achieved by training preachers and teaching them foreign languages, by translating and publishing books, and establishing cultural and religious centres in foreign countries, some maintain that the money required for preaching the call should be taken from the portion assigned to the advancement of Allah's religion. But although this is admissible my view is that it is preference to take this money from the portion assigned to reconciliation of hearts and to spend the portion assigned to the support of Allah's religion on defence and establishment of hospitals and schools.

2. Prevention of Seditious:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

"Beware of sedition, it will not affect those who are ungodly, among you particularly, but all of you in general. (8:25)

Sedition does not mean merely dividing people into hostile groups, but it also means all that leads to the weakening of

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Muslim and the invasion of their land by enemies. It has catastrophic results not only for those who take part in it, but for all people in general! Therefore, those who incite it should be severely punished.

3. Resistance to Intemperance in Luxury:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“When We resolve to annihilate a people, We first warn those of them that live in luxury. If they persist in sin, We rightly pass our judgment and utterly destroy them.” (17:16)

The fact embodied in this divine verse has been treated in detail by Ibn *Khaldūn* in the introduction of his historical treatise. Luxury corrupts manners and men's conscience, weakens their bodies, and breeds cowardice and effeminacy. Luxury makes people money-hunters whether by honourable or dishonourable means such as theft, treachery and externally. This will lead to the entire collapse of the nation internally and externally. We should stick to what the Qur'ān has guided us, as it directs us to the right path.

“Verily this Qur'ān directs unto the way which is most right.” (17:9)

“Now have We proposed unto mankind, in this Qur'ān, every kind of parable, that they may be warned.” (39:27)

“Do they not therefore attentively meditate on the Qur'ān? Are there locks upon their hearts?” (27:24)

Public opinion as a means of Islamic training is of great significance in the view of Islam. The Qur'ān has urged us in many verses to propagate the right and forbid the evil, and has imposed this duty on every Muslim, where male or female, This duty has to be carried out within everyone's power as can be clearly deduced from the tradition of the Prophet -may Allah bless and give him peace:

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“Whosoever sees as evil has to forbid it by force, if it is not in his power to do so by publicly condemning it, or if he could not do either, by disapproving it in his heart.” This type of persuasion is dependent upon the instinct of ostentation, love of praise and fear of scorn and condemnation. The wisdom of the Qur’ān underlying this principle and the sublimation of instincts are quite in line with the latest theories adopted by psychologists and pedagogues.

There are some people to whom all the previous persuasive methods are of no avail. Fortunately they are a minority. Then there is another method which is more powerful, namely, persuasion through authority. This method consists in punishment prescribed by the Qur’ān for some crimes, there punishment being usually carried out by the rulers.

Thus we have clearly seen that the Qur’ān has not confined its admonitory and persuasive methods to a single type or to two types but enjoins resort to all the methods that may produce the desired effect on the individual concerned. Neither is resort to reason, nor resort to conscience, nor to threat or promise, nor fear of public opinion or of God’s punishment sufficient by itself. Appealing to reason may prove useful only with wise and learned people, and appealing to conscience may be futile in the case of unscrupulous criminals. Intimidation without the other methods would be of no use for those who doubt resurrection or those who love this fleeting world, nor public opinion be of any use in the case of many of those who are steeped in vice. Persuasion through public opinion may be ineffective when vice prevails to such a degree that there is no feeling of shame. We pray to the Almighty that we may not be cursed like those to whom the following verses refer are cursed: “Those among the Children of

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Israel who believed not, were cursed by the tongue of David, and of Jesus, the son Mary. This befell them because they were rebellious, and transgressed: they forbade not one another the wickedness they committed; and woe unto them for what they committed.” (5:78-79) But all these methods combined may prove effective measures for reforming the majority of people and this is the wise method adopted by the Qur’ān.

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## The Qur'ān and Peace & Security

✎... 'Abdur Raḥīm Aṣhrāf Baloch<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. Moḥammad Ajmal<sup>2</sup>

This essay will analyse and explain what is Peace and Security? What is its significance and what are the necessary measures to create an atmosphere of peace and security? And in this way, by exercising peace and security measures, what the good example (أُسوة حسنة) or perfect manner the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) has prescribed for us.

Although the need and significance to establish the atmosphere of peace and security, is quite clear and it is not indispensable to present any evidence or proof in this regard, because, on this planet whosoever be there, he will not wish to protect his wealth and property and safeguard his wife and family or he intends that even a trivia of strife and unrest or havoc and destruction may destroy him or his any belonging, although it is an insignificant sort of thing for him, perhaps any unsound person can think so. In this perspective we do not present here the point of view of the common people, rather the idea of holy Qur'ān is in consideration, therefore, the analysis of this subject, will be presented in the light of Qur'ān only:

The Qur'ān narrates that when Allah announced before the angels that He has planned to appoint His successor on the earth:

إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

(Tr.: I am putting a successor on earth. al-Baqarah: 30)

<sup>1</sup> One of the writers on peace and security

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, CAAS, JNU, New Delhi

The objection of angels over this, was that:

أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ

Tr.: Will You place someone there who will cause corruption on it and shed blood. (al-Baqarah: 30)

They mean: Do You employ on the earth a person who will spread unrest among people and shed blood of each other?

Replying to this objection, Allah said:

إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

Tr.: Surely, I know that which you do not know. (al-Baqarah: 30)

From this question of angels and the reply of Allah, it appears that intrinsically and by nature the mankind is defiant, insolent and rebellious, and has inclined towards corruption, destruction and stubbornness, otherwise, neither the angels would have objected nor Allah by ignoring the actual question, would have only confined to warn them about His knowledge. Apart from this, there are numerous verses available in the Qur'ān which tell us that in the nature of human being good and bad elements, both are found side by side as the Qur'ān narrates:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿١﴾ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴿٢﴾

Tr.: We have indeed created man in the best of mould, then We cast him down as the lowest of the low. (al-Tīn: 4-5)

Similarly, Allah said:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: By the soul and how He formed it, then inspired it to understand what was right and wrong for it. He who purifies it will indeed be successful, and he who corrupts it is sure to fail. (al-Shams: 7-10)

And the same notion is found in the following verse wherein Allah says that We have shown the mankind both the paths (guidance and astray):

وَهَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَيْنِ ﴿٥٣﴾

Tr.: And shown him the two paths. (al-Balad; 10)

Now, it appeared that in the human instincts evil and malevolence are available in such a way as it has the goodness and kindness also, and thus he is to be examined just in this way only. This battle of good and evil in the human being will remain inclined in him till his death. His bad soul keeps trying to get his mind inclined to the evil,<sup>1</sup> thereby, the human being, in compliance to his self-obedience mostly goes away from the moderate path and by indulging in to their self-desires, adopts the path of malevolent activities and in this way, the earth of Allah becomes the battle field of strife and corruption consequently. The human society comes across with the risk of ruin and destruction so in this case the atmosphere of peace and security for the existence of human beings is indispensible while the other living beings of this universe also need to have a suitable environment. Therefore, to establish peace and security is a fundamental duty of the human being, and it is for his own benefit therefore they must eradicate conflict and corruption among themselves so as to establish peace and security for stable society.

In order to establish peace and security in the society, basically, it is extremely essential to work on the two fronts; first front is internal while the other front is called external unless on both the fronts, similar attention will not be paid to

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<sup>1</sup>. Yūsuf: 53

establish peace the guarantee of peace and security cannot be ensured. And then, in this case the internal front always remains open to battle against evil and is always important for the individuals so here those measures will be discussed which possess basic importance on this front. Then different other aspects of establishing peace on external front will be discussed, so first of all we will highlight those measures which are essentially important and fundamental. After that we would analyze the different aspects of the establishment of security and peace on the external front.

By internal front, we mean the family, tribe, clan or group or the people, who are under the control of the chiefs and those territorial borders in which by amalgamation of people formation of a society, and to keep them under control of moral code of conduct and social barrier and restrictions, are executed so to keep the society on the right path, it is essential to keep it away from corruption and uprising. Similarly, proper justice should necessarily be in practice, that the weaker sections of people may enjoy full protection. Hence crimes must be uprooted and the differences and conflicts should be resolved permanently for the sake of unity and integrity.

Amongst the basic purposes to establish security, the most important and essential purpose is that the protection of humanity be ensured, and in regard to this, it is necessary to uproot corruption from the society. Although, in one way or the other, every person dislikes uprising and hates corruption, many people are inclined to commit it all the time. Hence the Qur'ān grossly condemned the acts of these people and it has also explained the disadvantages of uprising and corruption thereby it has outrageously prohibited to do it. As Allah said:

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وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

Tr.: Do not corrupt the land after it has been set in order. This is for your own good. (al-A'arāf: 85)

It means that Allah has created the earth for you and He has made it to fulfill your all needs and necessitates. Therefore do not spread corruption in the land and do not close the door of mercy and benevolence of Allah, otherwise there will be no unthankful other than you. Because spreading of corruption and unrest in the society, is to shut the door of getting benefit from the benevolence and blessing of Allah, and to make the environment of the earth incompatible and inappropriate to grow and nurture the generation of birds and animals and various types of farm and field of cultivation. Therefore, spreading strife and unrest have been regarded as major crime like murder and killing.<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of killing a person or an animal is to deprive one or the other from life and survival. But due to corruption and uprising or unrest the entire earth confronts with havoc and devastation, and cultivating farm becomes ruined. And for the generation of animals and also for the human beings the door of benevolence becomes shut and they come across with hunger, poverty, drought and dearth. So, the duty of the followers of truth is that they should control the corrupt and bad elements so as to rout out the strife, corruption and uprising, on the contrary if the (truth and) followers of truth bow down before the wrong-doers and follow the followers of falsehood, then the earth and heaven will become confluence of strife, corruption and uprising and the meaning of the earth and heaven, not other than, is the destruction of humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Baqarah: 191

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The Messenger of Allah (PBUH), by giving an example of the followers of the self-desire, has been narrated as saying:

عن النعمان بن بشير عن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال: مثل القائم على حدود الله عزّ وجلّ والواقع فيها كمثل قوم استهموا على سفينة فأصاب بعضهم أعلاها وبعضهم أسفلها – فكان الذي في أسفلها إذا استقوا من الماء مروا على من قولهم، قالوا لو أنّا خرقتنا في نصيبنا خرقتنا ولم نؤذ من فوقنا – فإن يتركوهم وما أرادوا هلكوا جميعاً وإن أخذوا على أيديهم نجوا ونجوا جميعاً.

Tr.: Nu'mān bin Bashīr narrated the Prophet (PBUH) saying, “The example of the person abiding by Allah's commands and of those who violate them is of those persons who drew lots for their seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part while the others in the lower. When the latter needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, 'Let us make a hole in our share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from being troubled. So, if the people in the upper part left the others do what they had suggested, all the passengers of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both the parties would be safe<sup>1</sup>.

**Establishment of Justice:** To establish the atmosphere of security and peace, the second important measure is to establish justice and equality. To achieve this goal, at the one hand, there should be an effort that every individual of the society should be just, and must follow the path of Justice and hate from corruption and tyranny. To achieve this objective, every individual of the society must be trained in a way, that he must not pay heed to his personal interest, family, tribal and regional interests for himself, rather take the truth into consideration and does not let turn away from the moderate path.

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<sup>1</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukḥārī, Kitāb al-Sharīkah

On the other hand, those who are responsible to implement the justice and equality, they should perform their duties and pay full attention to the principles of justice so that no one may suffer from injustice and oppression.

First, the system of justice should be implemented in a way that no one may dare to commit injustice and oppression, in spite of that, if anyone comes across such unlawful activities in one way or the other, then immediate effort must be made to arrange immediate Justice and compensation and the oppressor must be punished. Because, any society, which tolerates or overlooks at injustice, atrocities and oppression on the weaker section of the society, and there is no arrangement of an affective measure to curb it necessarily, it will creat unrest and mayhem, consequently, the mutual enmity and hate will increase with each other in the society and the door of strife, corruption and uprising will open which will make the society hollow and push it to the ruin, destruction, uncertainty and unpredictable situation to beware.

Regarding justice and equality, the Qurānic commandments made clear that the Qurān has provided the mankind a complete and everlasting set of rules which apart from personal interests and desire oblige on justice, Muslim can opt for.<sup>1</sup> And partiality has been prohibited very strictly.

وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ

Tr.: When you speak, observe justice, even though it concerns close relatives. (al-An'ām: 152)

**Security for Weaker Sections:** The third important and fundamental aspects to establish peace is indeed in the protection of poor people and safeguardness of the rights and

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mā'idah: 8.

interests of subjugated communities. For the followers of truth, it is essential to arrange system for the protection of honor and dignity and security of life and property of the weaker sections and downtrodden of the society. And they should not permit anyone to exploit them in either condition, to get the rights of the weaker and subjugated people. The Qur'ān permits us to fight with the oppressors so as to safeguard or to retain our rights. Therefore in order to save the society from tyranny and suppression and to run it on the path of peace and security, strict measures must be taken to protect their rights and their economic upliftment.

**Unity and Integrity:** To establish the peace and security to stabilize the society, it is also utmost mandatory that the community as a whole must be united and there should be no any basic controversy, because controversy and division with each other for a peaceful society is not less than a poisonous killer. Due to this evil, not only the embarrassment on internal level gets increased but the external enemies also get an opportunity to interfere with it, and thus the whole community gets indulged in problem and dismay<sup>1</sup> notwithstanding, if controversies come in the way, then mandatory measures must be taken to come up with the controversies. Allah says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: Surely, all believers are brothers. So make peace between your brothers. (al-Hujurāt: 10)

Likewise, if the controversies arise and reach that much of extreme level, hitherto the community gets divided into various groups and factions and their different groups confront with

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Alnfāl: 46.

each other, then herein it is also very essential to exercise the conciliation and bring people on the table of negotiation and even after the compromise, if any of the groups get inclined to fight then it is also obligatory for the entire community to fight with them until they bow down before the command of Allah and refrain from outbreak and uprising.

The social crime weakens the foundation of the society as the termite does to the woods, are social and moral crimes. If there is no any system or the rational and apt measures are not available, or they are available but they are not exercised strictly then internal stability in any way cannot remain established. So, the Qur'ān, to eradicate the social crimes, has prescribed appropriate punishment for example, for theft, punishment of chopping hands<sup>1</sup>, for robbery and sabotage type of crimes, chopping of hands and legs or hang to death or punishment of imprisonment has been set out<sup>2</sup> in such a way, for murder and shed of blood, there is death sentence over Diyat and for rape and adultery type of crimes there is a punishment of stoning and lapidating to death or hitting by hunter<sup>3</sup> and if someone commits a crime of dishonoring modesty of a woman or man or throws claim of indictment, for this crime, punishment of hunter hitting has been set out<sup>4</sup>, in the same way, regarding less weighing,<sup>5</sup> hoarding wealth, business of mixing in pure and bribery<sup>6</sup> also have been described as severe crimes, and in this regard, there are very appropriate directives to be followed.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mā'idah: 38.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mā'idah: 33

<sup>3</sup> Al-Nūr: 2

<sup>4</sup> Al-Nūr: 4

<sup>5</sup> Al-Tatfif: 1-3

<sup>6</sup> Al-Baqarah: 188.

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**Necessary Measures for Stablising Peace and Security:**

Whatever we have described so far, it was about any society's internal security and stability. Now, we will discuss these measures which are mandatory to run any society on the perfect system to remove the external obstacles and dangers. In regard to internal front, it consists on matters or issues of family, tribe, group or external issues of the country among these issues.

It is a claim from Muslims that Islam is a religion of peace and its preacher and introducer, the Prophet (PBUH), was a messenger of security and peace. The word Islam in itself signifies security, peace and protection. The evidence against this proclamation by Muslims is the Book which was sent down upon the last Prophet (PBUH), the Holy Qur'ān, and its directives and commandments have been made for the survival, existence and security of humanity. The reality is that the Qur'ān as a whole is the complete constitution of Peace and Security and its entire verses and instructions are for the success and welfare of mankind, whether it is worldly success or success in hereafter. But herein we will especially analyze those verses and directives which link directly to war or peace. In this regard, if we, by and large ponder on the verses of Qur'ān, it gives a notion that the Qur'ān extremely dislikes or hates corruption, uprising, destruction, war and fighting and permits war only in extreme need and that is only with many restrictions and limitations. Therefore, the Qur'ān has adopted a separate terminology which is called Jihad (holy war).

**Jihad (Holy War):** The Qur'ān considers killing anyone without reason or taking anybody's life, as the killing of all human being<sup>1</sup>, because, killing anyone in the light of the teaching of

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mā'idah: 32

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Islam, according to the Islamic principle, is to open the door of destruction of the human generation, similarly saving a life of a human, ensures the safety of all mankind and its survival, nevertheless, if killing of a person becomes indispensable, that, the person himself becomes a challenge for the survival of humanity, then to leave this person alive becomes against the principle of peace and security, so this person, making him deprived from his life or let him live, is permissible.<sup>1</sup>

It is because when the Qur'ān considers shedding blood as important part as to cut the bone contend on, it orders to make it as mandatory rule.<sup>2</sup>

Keeping in mind, this very spirit of Qur'ān, the Prophet (PBUH) has prevented from wishing waging war or making confrontation and he has permitted it only in the unavoidable circumstances as the Prophet (PBUH) said:

لا تتمنوا لقاء العدو، واستلوا الله العافية، وإذا لقيتوهم فاصبروا.

Tr.: Do not wish to fight with your enemy and seek goodness from Allah Exalted, however, if the fight becomes indispensable then fight with great zeal.<sup>3</sup>

So, it becomes clear that the Prophet (PBUH) did not like battle or waging war, however, when war was imposed by enemies on him or he realized it indispensable, then in this regard, neither he did any negligence nor tolerated any carelessness from his any companion. Therefore, in his early life, despite having tough time and difficulties, he refrained from war and battle until received any command from Allah to begin war<sup>4</sup>, because, despite having power and position if the

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<sup>1</sup> Al-An'ām: 151

<sup>2</sup> Al-Baqarah: 179

<sup>3</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Jihād

<sup>4</sup> Al-Ḥajj: 29

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followers of truth tolerate oppression and tyranny and they do not take any action against it, then it will be considered the advocate of oppression and tyranny and to allow the enemies of humanity to do oppression openly. Then they may destroy the structure of peace and security which can not be permitted at any cost.

**Gaining Power:** In order to make the world a cradle of peace and security, and for stable society the peaceful Muslim brethren must prepare readied themselves for war anytime and in this regard constant struggle must be made strictly, because, for the stable peace and security the balance of power is extremely necessary, which without war preparation and increase abilities of warfare becomes impossible and to not let the world a place of strife and malevolence the sue of power is the only solution as Allah said:

وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ الْبَاطِلَ عَنْ بَعْضِهِمْ بَعْضًا لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ

Tr.: Had it not been for Allah's repelling some people by means of others, the earth would have been filled with corruption. (al-Baqarah: 251)

From this verse of the Qur'an, it becomes clear that those few people who are to be receptive of strife and bloodshed, Allah suppresses and ruins them, through the people who are responsible to establish peace and security, gets suppressed and erode them, so that the elements of evil might not overcome over good, and the powers of good might suppress the evil unless or until it has more power in comparison with second party. Therefore, Allah says:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ  
مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ

Tr.: Prepare any strength you can muster against them, and any cavalry with which you can overawe Allah's enemy and your own enemy as well, and others besides them whom you do not know, but who are known to Allah. (al-Anfāl: 60)

Similarly, the Qur'ān gives importance to defence preparations like weapons and ammunition and different other war weapons such as provision of defence umbrella, digging of tunnel, making tanks and missiles as Allah said:

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلَالًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ أَكْنَانًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُم بَأْسَكُمْ

Tr.: Allah has granted you shade out of what He has created, places of shelter in the mountains, garments with which to protect yourselves from the heat and coats of mail to shield you in battle. (al-Nahl: 81)

Allah, in this verse, making of defense weapons digging of tunnels in mountains, and making of bullet proof uniforms etc. attributing them all to Himself, He has highlighted their importance.

Likewise, Allah describing the Prophet Dawūd said:

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

Tr.: We taught him the art of making coats of mail for you, to protect you in battle. Will you then give thanks? (al-Anbiyā': 80)

To be stable in terms of defense, it is not necessary only because, that in the condition of war, by taking less risk, the intention of enemy may be weakened or failed, moreover, to become powerful in terms of defense is itself an important tool to be safe from war, because, to fight with a powerful nation or country and committing foolishness of waging war just may be equal to commit suicide, notwithstanding, it may

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be glorious objective before the nation for which fighting with the greatest power and to achieve one's life for that purpose can be a blissful and delighting dead. Nevertheless, after the increase of war capabilities comes a stage where battle and waging war with any nation becomes indispensable.

Methodologically, there are various kinds of wars which are known by different names, but the wars according to their objectives have different types of natures some of them are fought only for honor or prestige, while some other, only because the opponent might be considered to be weak. And so much so, that there is nothing except, punishment of weakness of criminality is a sudden death, so to snatch the right to live from them, the war is imposed on them. Likewise, some of the wars happened to be defensible which are fought for survival, existence and safety. As far as method and process of wars is concerned we do not want to discuss it, because it depends on the situations and the greatest of war strategy is to take advantage from the obliviousness of the enemy, this is what, the Prophet (PBUH) has described it as "*War is a deception*", that War is a tactics per se, however, according to their purposes, the different kinds of wars are concerned with that is most important, because, the Qur'an permits the war only in the case of unavoidable circumstances and that is also not for name and fame, rather it is for the sake of sublimit of the religion of Allah and for safety and security of human being and moreover, it has also many limits and restrictions, acceding to which it is completely impermissible.

The Qur'an permits its believers to fight in the case when righteous people might realize that their safety and interest are in danger and to keep the war exciting enemy them away from war Allah said:

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وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

Tr.: And fight in Allah's cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression—for surely, Allah does not love aggressors. (al-Baqarah: 190)

In this verse, though, fighting with enemies is permissible, however, till that time, until the enemy wants to continue the battle, but if the enemy, refrain from fighting, then it is not allowed to attack on them, rather they will be left on their own condition. However, if the enemy continuously engage in war mongering activities, and does not abstain from hatching a conspiracy, then till the end of strife and bloodshed, the Qur'an permits for battle in the following words:

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ

Tr.: Fight them until there is no more fitna {religious persecution} and religion belongs to Allah alone. (al-Baqarah: 193)

Hence, to eradicate the bloodshed, if some destructions were made for rehabilitation, then it is permissible as the Qur'an says:

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّن لِّيْتَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَىٰ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥﴾

Tr.: Whatever palm trees you cut down or left or left standing on their roots, it was by Allah's leave, so that He might disgrace the transgressors. (al-Hashr: 5)

The reason of this, is that when disease becomes out of control and the life of patient may fall in danger at that time operation are taken to cure or heal, similarly, as eradication of corruption and strife is an important religious duty of Muslims, and this duty is called Jihad as per the Qur'anic diction, therefore, whenever such evil erupts Muslims are allowed to take

measures against the forces of evil doing, for example to harm the economic structures of the enemies so that they may stay away from any mischievousness, malice and fighting.

This Jihad, with non-believers every time and in every field continues, whether that period might be peace or situation of war so to show weakness in comparison with them and showing back in the light of Qur'ān is a big offence and crime. Thus the Qur'ān declares that showing cowardice and back is a coercive crime.<sup>1</sup>

And because, the Jihad doesn't take place only in the battle field with the unbelievers and hypocrites rather the jihad with them, is very wide, so in confronting with them in any field getting defeated will be considered a cowardice act. Therefore it is mandatory for that Muslims that they must carry out jihad at every stage. So if they want to restore their glorious past then there is no way other than to adopt the path of Jihad only, and it should have multi-purpose and multi-dimensional strategies and after all it should be started from one's own house, so, first of all Muslims should start Jihad against illiteracy, poverty and economically backwardness, then by adopting the ways of industrial technical and military advancement, they perform Jihad against those obstacles which happen due to their own backwardness and created by the enemies for them. so, by this way only, the lost honour and dignity can be achieved in the world again and they can be a great nation in the world and they also can be blessed with the mercy and benevolence of Allah in the life hereafter.

**Precautionary Measures:** As sometime war and fighting become necessary for establishing peace at the same time, to take some precautionary measures are also very indispensable

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Anfāl: 15-16

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so that at a possible extent avoiding war is better, nevertheless, or if the war begins, then it is essential to save the establishment of military, economy, industry and the communication system from the attacks of enemies, therefore, the Qur'an, narrates safety measures in the verse below as Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ

Tr.: You who believe, take your precautions. (al-Nisā': 71)

Safeguard of oneself and self interest is necessary because the enemy every time lie in wait for a chance that Muslims may become unaware from their duty and they find an opportunity to attack on them suddenly.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً

Tr.: Those who deny the truth want you to be negligent of your arms and your baggage, so that they may fall upon you suddenly. (al-Nisā': 102)

Among these precautionary measures there is a system which is called espionage for intelligence. To be aware of the intentions of the enemy every time, in their (Muslims) own surrounding, appointing their own espy in their own surrounding to catch the spies of enemy and make them failure in their willingness is extremely important, so that the enemy by knowing the aspect of weakness could not harm.

The Qur'an says:

وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّاعُونَ لَهُمْ

Tr.: And among you there were some who would have willingly listened to them. (al-Taubah: 47)

Likewise, Muslims are prohibited to befriend with unbelievers and make them secret or confidential, because, they can never

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be the well-wisher of the Muslims; rather they become happy when they harm them.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the system of espionage has much importance for Muslims, because Muslims being unaware of their surrounding and because of their ignorance they may harm their own establishments and interests.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from this, if the system of espionage will be reliable and effective then by spreading rumor from enemies in the groups of Muslims, the effort can be made failure. In order to be careful from spreading rumor and by condemning rumor mongering, Allah stated:

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَّاعُوا بِهِ ۗ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ

Tr.: When they hear any news, whether of peace or of something fearful, they spread it about; whereas if they referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those of them who sought news would have investigated it. (al-Nisā': 83)

**Covenants and Agreements:** The sole mission of the followers of truth is to create the atmosphere of peace and security and to give stability to the society, so, if the enemy refrains from battle or war and express their will for compromise with their good intention and takes it seriously then the Qur'ān commands its followers for compromise and exhorts for conciliation.

وَإِن جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾

Tr.: Then if they should be inclined to make peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in Allah. (al-Anfāl: 61)

<sup>1</sup> Āli 'Imrān: 118

<sup>2</sup> Al-Hujurāt: 6

In fact, the Qur'ān wishes to see the earth a cradle of peace, therefore, if the elements of evil stay away from their wrongdoing, and prostrate before Allah to restraint from their activities, then there is no need to fight with them,<sup>1</sup> however, if apparently they bow down and their activities remain the same and continue it, then the Qur'ān permits Muslims to uoprrot tem completely:

سَتَجِدُونَ عَاخِرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلٌّ مَا رَدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ

Tr.: You will find others who wish to be safe from you, and from their own people, yet whenever they find an opportunity of inflicting harm, they plunge into it. So if they neither withdraw, nor offer you peace, nor restrain themselves from fighting you, seize and kill them wherever you encounter them. (al-Nisā': 91)

But if the agreement of ceasefire with any people or nation has taken place and the unbelievers violate the norms of the agreement or any apprehension of violation may be occurred, then to deal with them vociferously is permissible, only in the case of that this agreement has been abolished explicitly.

وَأَمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Tr.: And if you learn of treachery on the part of any people, throw their treaty back at them, so as to be on equal terms, for Allah does not love the treacherous. (al-Anfāl: 58)

Muslim would adhere with the agreements only in the case of that the opponents also adhere with them the same<sup>2</sup> unlike, if they do not comply with the norms of the agreements, in this case, Muslims are permissible not to refrain from the agreements.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Nisā': 90

<sup>2</sup> Al-Taubah: 7

The discussion what we have done so far, if it has hopefully become clear that, what concept the Qur'ān presents regarding peace and security, and in this connection what system it has prescribed. Now we briefly discuss about the life of Prophet (PBUH) and his perfect manners, so that you may presume that how the Prophet (PBUH) accomplished this concept of Qur'ān and how come a symbolic society formed and presented an incredible and perfect example for the human being, and he was conferred a magnificent title of Raḥmatullil 'Ālamīn (*Mercy for All the Worlds*) by the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup>

If we study the history and analyze prophet's life then it will appear that he was completely qualified for this magnificent title and he proved by his sayings, actions and character that he was a self mercy. The Qur'ān says regarding the Prophet:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Tr.: There has come to you a Messenger of your own. Your suffering distresses him: he is deeply concerned for your welfare and full of kindness and mercy towards the believers. (al-Taubah: 128)

His affection and mercy was for the entire creatures of this universe and even for the trees and stones too. The books of biography are filled with the stories and instances of his gentleness and mercy. Regarding him and his companions, the comprehensive verse come down that, if we ponder upon it then the possessor of high morals group and the role of its leader comes before us, that they were soft for each other soft like silk and they were hard enemies like the iron soothed sword, their night passed in worship of Allah only and the days passed in the works of willingness of Allah.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Anbiyā': 107

<sup>2</sup> Al-Fath: 29

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In order to highlight wholly the status of becoming Raḥmatullil ‘Ālamīn (*Mercy for All the Worlds*) of the Prophet (PBUH), if we study his biography and carry out comparative study, from the character of the conquerors of world, then it becomes crystal clear that the Prophet was a complete mercy and perfect affectionate to the entire world. The Qur’ān itself, whatever narrates regarding the other conquerors that to be compared with those commandments which he has been given, then it appears that how his position is high in comparison to others!

The Qur’ān says:

إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعْرَاجَ أَهْلِهَا آذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

Tr.: When mighty kings invade a country, they despoil it, and humiliate its noblest inhabitants ----these men will do the same. (al-Naml: 34)

This is the character of the kings and other conquerors which the Qur’ān has narrated through the queen of Sheba, look at the Qur’ān itself addresses to the messenger of Allah, when the unbelievers started teasing and did act of aggressions on him to an extreme extent and he became embarrassed from their cunning and annoying activities then he began to curse against them, on this, the command of Allah came down:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Tr.: You have no say in this affair to decide whether He will relent towards them or He will punish them: they are wrongdoers. (Āli ‘Imrān: 128)

Remember, this treatment of the Prophet (PBUH) when he entered Mecca triumphantly and his old enemies who surrendered before him in ashamed or those who were made prisoners, by forgiving them, he says, in these historical words:

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لا تثريب عليكم اليوم، اذهبوا، أنتم الطلقاء.

Tr.: This day, there is no reproof against you, go your way, you are free.<sup>1</sup>

Is there any such example or instance in history, in which a conqueror has shown this type of manner and character? Yes, a less degree of example there may be found but that is also in Muslim conquerors only.

فيا ربِّ صلِّ وسلِّم دائماً أبداً على حبيبك خير الخلق كلهم

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<sup>1</sup> Zād al-Ma'ārij, Vol. 2 (Conquer of Makkah)

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## **Qur'ānic Perspective of Multiculturalism**

✎... **Dr. Zubair Ḥamīd<sup>1</sup>**

Every society aims to preserve its social fabric in its own way (i.e. live in peace and harmony), especially the plural society with diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultures. Allah loves diversity and in fact, diversity can be a source of strength and success of a society, although at first it may seem difficult to unite all the different communities in a society. It is quite challenging for everybody to co-exist with the 'others' of different background, culture and most importantly religious differences. Regardless of the area you live, be it metropolitan, urban or rural, cultural and religious differences will have some effects on the way a person deals with the others. Multiculturalism in Islam is not a novel concept rather began with the advent of divine revelation. It encourages ethnic groups to maintain a distinctive identity and engage in the politics of recognition within a single society. Respect and inclusiveness has been the subject of discussion for a long span of time. It has been a highly controversial and contested discourse in all its manifestations and as such has been a central issue in the debate about the nature of modern societies being transformed by globalization. In this world there is a dire need to address the challenges in the modern arena, how to live together within the religious community and with other communities as well. So, this paper will be a humble attempt to explore Qur'ānic perspective on the notions of Multiculturalism.

**Key words:** Multiculturalism, Ṣaḥīfah al-Madīnah, al-'Ahd al-'Umariyyah

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<sup>1</sup> The author has been awarded Ph.D from Department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

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**Multiculturalism:** Although multiculturalism is found in the human societies for the ages, it, as a new name or new concept having prescribed democratic norms, entered the public discourse in the second-half of the twentieth century when Australia and Canada started supporting it. Multiculturalism never aimed at segregation and separation rather it has involved the creation of structures that incorporates immigrants and minorities fairly and to retain aspects of their cultures.<sup>1</sup> It refers to the doctrine that several cultures can coexist peacefully and equitably in a single country. Defining multiculturalism is problematic as it means different things in different contexts.<sup>2</sup> A multi-cultural society includes a wide range of socio-cultural junctures and preferences emerging out of multi-religious, multi-regional, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual spirit of the people sharing each other's hopes and fears and bound together by common interest and sympathy. It is a manifestation of unity amid diversity, of oneness amidst many. It not only means co-existence but more significantly it means convergence of divergent cultures. Multiculturalism aims to provide equality, respect and civil rights to every member in order to establish a tolerant society for the construction of social harmony.<sup>3</sup> An idea that culturally binds different groups of people to coexist in one state,<sup>4</sup> besides, advocating the notion of multi-cultural citizenship and multi-cultural nationhood. At a broader level it

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<sup>1</sup> 'Alī Rattansi, *Multiculturalism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2011, PP. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> Giuliana B. Prato, *Beyond Multiculturalism: Anthropology at the Intersections Between the Local, the National and the Global*, n.d., P. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Joanna Fomina, *Multiculturalism as an Antidote to Nationalism: But What Kind of Multiculturalism to Choose?* Warsaw, November 2009 can be accessed from [http://www.ifispan.pl/pliki/3\\_2009\\_multiculturalim\\_joanna\\_fomina.pdf](http://www.ifispan.pl/pliki/3_2009_multiculturalim_joanna_fomina.pdf).

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aims at reconciliation of cultural diversity and political unity.<sup>1</sup> The present notions of globalization and human migration around the globe at an exceptional scale brought forth the notion of multiculturalism to the public and academic debates and encouraged scholars to discuss its practicality from various dimensions.

The 'term' is very commonly used to describe societies of different cultures, religions, languages and races. Nowadays multiple words and connotations are used interchangeably to point same meaning like the terms plurality, diversity, tolerance and multiculturalism.<sup>2</sup> It refers to the numerous cultures as well as understanding and acceptance of other cultures, respecting their social beliefs and religion. It stands on the core principles like equality, responsibility and identifying collective benefits. Multiculturalism is a fact of contemporary political life, simultaneously it is an issue that poses a threat to undermine the practicality of a modern democratic state, with its ideal of equal citizenship.<sup>3</sup>

**Qur'ānic Injunctions on Multiculturalism:** The Qur'ān mentions the dignified status bestowed to humans by Allāh. This status applies equally to Muslims as well as non-Muslims as the following verse reveals:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْوَيْبِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ  
مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٥٦﴾

<sup>1</sup>Anwar Alam, *Liberal States and Muslim Minorities*, [http://www.india-seminar.com/2011/621/621\\_anwar\\_alam.html](http://www.india-seminar.com/2011/621/621_anwar_alam.html)

<sup>2</sup> Sreelekha Mishra, C. Bharath Kumar, *Understanding Diversity: A Multicultural Perspective*, in *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 19, Issue 9, Ver. IV, Sep. 2014, P. 63.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce Haddock, Peter Sutch (eds.), *Multiculturalism, Identity and Rights*, Routledge, London and New York, 2003, P. 2.

Tr.: And indeed We have honored the sons of Adam; provided with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of Our Creation.<sup>1</sup>

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ

Tr.: Mankind was one single nation, and God sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book of Truth, to judge between people in matters wherein they differed.<sup>2</sup>

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافَ اللِّسَانِ وَالْوَلَوْنِ

Tr.: And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours.<sup>3</sup>

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

Tr.: If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind one people: but they will not cease to dispute.<sup>4</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Tr.: O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who

<sup>1</sup> Al-Isrā': 70. The translation of the Qur'ānic Verses in the paper have been taken from; *The Glorious Qur'ān*, 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī (*The Glorious Qur'ān*, American Trust publications, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> Al-Baqarah:213.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Rūm: 22.

<sup>4</sup> Hūd: 118.

is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).<sup>1</sup>

**Amānah (trust) & 'Adl (justice):** As the soul in a human being is a trust (*Amānah*) which will render back to its origin i.e. Allah says, the trust of anyone kept with another has to be returned to its real inheritor maintaining the *status quo*. As Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

Tr.: God doth command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice. Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For God is He Who heareth and seeth all things.<sup>2</sup>

After the Conquest of Makkah, the Prophet (PBUH) called 'Uthmān bin Abī Ṭalḥa whose family had been the bearers of the keys of Ka'abah, took keys from him to open the door of Ka'abah and entered. When the Prophet (PBUH) came out, his uncle Abbas (MABPWH) submitted to entrust the keys to Banu Hashim what the Prophet (PBUH) did not agree and said: this is the day of generosity and one of the gifts and donations. Then 'Uthmān was called and keys were handed over to him by saying: "whoever tries to snatch them from you will be an Usurping tyrant."<sup>3</sup>

Allah commands the believers in the Qur'ān, to stand for justice even if it goes against your own interests, as:

<sup>1</sup> Al-Hujurāt: 13.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Nisā': 58.

<sup>3</sup> Qāḍī Sulaimān Masūrpūrī, *Raḥmatul Lil 'Ālamīn*, tr. Eng. Sharīf Aḥmad Khān, Ādam Publishers, New Delhi, 2000, PP. 132-34.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا  
تَعْدِلُوا ءَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

Tr.: O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God, as witness to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear God. For God is well-acquainted with all that ye do.<sup>1</sup>

While dealing with the matters ones intentions must not be dominated by the hatred of the other as Allah says:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا

Tr.: And let not the hatred of some people in (once) shutting you out of the Sacred Mosque lead you to transgression (and hostility on your part).<sup>2</sup>

In the year (6 A.H.) the pagans, by way of hatred and persecution of the Muslims, had prevented their access to the Sacred Mosque. When the Muslims returned to Makkah (after conquest), some of them wanted to retaliate and take revenge. But the hatred of the wicked is not a justification for the hostility from our part, it is condemned. Rather, we have to help each other in piety and keep distance from hatred and enmity. We may have to nip the evil but not in a spirit of malice and hatred but in a spirit of righteousness.<sup>3</sup> Allah commands to make peace and act justly as the Qur'an maintains:

فَإِن فَآءَتْ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾

Tr.: Make peace between them with justice, and be fair: For God loves those who are fair (and just).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Mā'dah: 8.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mā'dah: 2.

<sup>3</sup> 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *The Glorious Qur'an*, American Trust Publications, edition 2<sup>nd</sup>, USA, 1977, fn. P. 239.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Hujurāt: 9.

**Concept of *Ihsān*:** *Ihsān* refers to the beautification of a thing or an act. It means to give better treatment to the good and best to the better. It refers to the doing of the good deeds or inner purification. The interpretation of this term is the well known Ḥadīth-I Jibrā'īl asking the Prophet about three sources of how to behave (Islam, Īmān and Ihsān) wherein Ihsān refers to the actualization of the inward and the outward.<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān uses the term at many instances like:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

Tr.: God commands justice ('Adl), the doing of good (Ihsān), and liberality to kith and kin.<sup>2</sup>

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

Tr.: Speak fair (Husnah) to the people.<sup>3</sup>

وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Tr.: But do good: For God loveth those who do good.<sup>4</sup>

أَحْسِن كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Tr.: But do thou good, as God has been good to thee, and seek not (occasions for) mischief in the land: For God loves not those who do mischief.<sup>5</sup>

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Tr.: Those who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men; For God loves those who do good.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Leaman (ed.), *The Qur'ān: An Encyclopedia*, Routledge, London, 2006, P. 289.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Naḥl: 90.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Baqarah: 83.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Baqarah: 195

<sup>5</sup> Al-Qiṣaṣ: 77

<sup>6</sup> Āli 'Imrān: 134

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا  
إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾

Tr.: God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loveth those who are just.<sup>1</sup>

Even with unbelievers, unless they are rampant and out to destroy us and our faith, we should deal kindly and equitably, as is shown by our Prophet's (PBUH) own example.<sup>2</sup>

**Dialogue:** In the present state of the world dialogue is necessary at the individual and the collective level to enhance peace and harmony in a multicultural society. As Allah says:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

Tr.: Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.<sup>3</sup>

We must invite all with wisdom and discretion, meet people on their own ground, and convince them with illustrations from their own knowledge and experience. Our preaching must be gentle, considerate and courteous arguments.<sup>4</sup>

**Freedom of Religion:**

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

Tr.: Let there be no compulsion in the religion: truth stands out clear from the error.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Mumtaḥinah: 8

<sup>2</sup> 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *Op. Cit.*, fn., P. 1534.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Naḥl: 125

<sup>4</sup> 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *Op. Cit.*, fn., P. 689.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Baqarah: 256.

Compulsion is alien to religion as religion depends upon faith and will, and these would be invalid if induced by force. Truth and error have been so explicitly portrayed by the mercy of God that there should be no doubt in the mind of any person of good-will as to the fundamentals of the faith.<sup>1</sup>

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿١١﴾ لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ ﴿١٢﴾

Tr.: Therefore do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish. Thou art not one to manage (men's) affairs.<sup>2</sup>

The prophet of God is sent to teach and direct people on the way. He is not sent to force their will, or to punish them, except in so far as he may receive authority to do so. Punishment belongs to God alone.<sup>3</sup>

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ﴿١٣﴾

Tr.: It is not required of thee (O Apostle), to set them on the right path, But God sets on the right path whom He pleaseth.<sup>4</sup>

It refers to relieve all those who are really in need, good or bad, Muslims or otherwise. One's chief motive should be God's pleasure and his own spiritual good.

**Examples from the Muslim History:** In the course of Muslim history, there are examples of living together in multicultural societies the basis of what is the Qur'anic injunctions that guide the humanity how to deal with 'the others'. The incident of placing of the black stone of al-Ka'bah where Prophet (PBUH) made the arbitration between the people of Quraysh and suggested that the stone would be put

<sup>1</sup> 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *Op. Cit.*, fn., P.103.

<sup>2</sup> Al-*Ghāshiyah*: 21-22

<sup>3</sup> 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, *Op. Cit.*, fn. P. 1729.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Baqarah: 272.

in a rug and all the tribes would hold it and he (PBUH) picked it up and placed it.<sup>1</sup>

During the Prophetic era Muslims and non-Muslims were brought together to defend the *Madīnah* from the external aggression. Prophet (PBUH) invited religious and tribal leaders to come to an agreement known as *Ṣaḥīfah al-Madīnah*, which reads that all those who live and come together to sign the agreement, devoid of their religious grounds, are recognized as *Ummah*. The main objective of which was to unite the tribes and resolve the disputes among them. Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) also confirmed freedom of religion, possessions, rights and the duties on the Jews in this document.<sup>2</sup> It states multi-religious, multi-ethnic, pluralist political identity and sanctions co-existence and recognition of different communities.<sup>3</sup>

Islamic history is an example of prosperous relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, another example which is the document of *al-‘Ahd al-‘Umariyyah*, a significant document made for the Muslims and non-Muslims who resided in *Bayt al-Maqdis*. It reads as:

This is an assurance of safety given by servant of God (the second Caliph, ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattāb, the Amīrul Muminīn), to the people of Aelia<sup>4</sup> He confers on assurance of safety for their

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<sup>1</sup> Mahmoud Mataz Kazmouz, *Multiculturalism in Islam: The Document of Madīnah & ‘Umar’s Assurance of Safety as two Case Studies*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Submitted to the University of Aberdeen, 11 May, 2001, P. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Mahmoud Mataz Kazmouz, *Ibid.*, P. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Mahmoud Mataz Kazmouz, *Ibid.*, PP. 134-35.

<sup>4</sup> The word ‘Aelia’ in this text refers to Islamic Jerusalem (*Bayt al-Maqdis*). *Aelia* is a word introduced by the Roman leaders in order to determine the area from which Jews are forbidden from entering, about 500 years before the advent of Islam. Please refer to Moshe Gil (1997), *A History of Palestine 634-1099*, New York: Cambridge University Press, P. 71; John

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lives and properties, churches and crosses; the healthy and the sick (to everyone with no exceptions); and for their whole religious community.<sup>1</sup>

During the Ottoman empire Muslims, Christians and Jews all were viewed as self-governing units, thus allowing minority religions to co-exist with the dominant one.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, prior to the conflict in Yugoslavia Muslims shared a common life, language, physical appearance, history with Serbs and Croats and the primary division there was on the basis of rural and urban.<sup>3</sup> There are other numerous examples in the history of Islam where Muslims lived in the societies of diverse cultures like Muslims in Spain and Abbasid societies which are a landmark and a practical for the possibility of multicultural society.

**Conclusion:** Human society is just like a human body which consists of different systems every one of which is equally important for its well-being. Just as there is diversity in the human body so is in the society that is made up of different communities living together on the concept of social interdependence –building block of the society– for the general and collective gains. A society can be a real society only if it possesses true values and attributes, like beauty, perfection, goodwill and justice, towards which Humans are naturally inclined. If it is devoid of these things, it can lead humanity to deception and disaster, a proof of which

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Wilkinson (1990), *Jerusalem Under Rome and Byzantium*, P. 88.) See; *Islam and Multiculturalism: Between Norms and Forms*, ed. Fukami Naoko and Sato Shohei, JSPS Asia and Africa Science Platform Program, Organization for Islamic Area Studies, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, 2012, P. 56, fn. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al Rusūl wa al-Mulūk*, (tr. Urdu) ‘Abdullāh al-‘Amādī, Maktaba Razzāqī, Karachi, 1949, P.168.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Haddock, Peter Sutch, *Op.Cit.*, P. 125.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 163.

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Humanity has witnessed in the form of two Great Wars, claiming the lives of millions. In the present day scenario one finds chaos, confusion, deception and communal conflicts round the globe. So a co-existence of plurality of diverse cultural groups is looked for who sometimes share conflicting values and ways of life.



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## Muslim-Non-Muslim Relationship in the Light of the Qur'ān

✎...Dr. Moḥd Enāyatullāh Asad Subḥānī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Niha Nazima Muneer<sup>2</sup>

People have always been taking advantages of and enjoying the favors and blessings of Allah, but when it comes to accepting the religion and understanding the Qur'ān He has sent down, their hearts become blind and their minds freeze. They say it is for Muslims! What do we have to do with this Book?

But why do they talk like this is a question of discussion.

The reason might be because they haven't seen the exact picture of the teachings of the Qur'ān and Islam. They just got to see the picture of Islam where they do not come to know how merciful and compassionate our Lord is. They do not see the glory of our Lord and the charm in Islam which they see in rays of sun and light of moon, in the beautiful gathering of stars, in the pleasant breeze of mornings and in the merciful rain where each drop bestows life. They know that all these blessings are given by their Lord, but to think in the same way that Islam and the Qur'ān have been sent by their Lord becomes difficult for them.

Why is it so? There might be many reasons:

One of the reasons may be that the blessing [divine teachings] which we gain from the Qur'ān is not received directly from Allah, rather it is obtained indirectly. Our beloved Prophet

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<sup>1</sup> A Great Indian scholar who wrote different books on Arabic and Islamic Studies in Arabic and Urdu.

<sup>2</sup> Engineer, Computer Science, Cnannarayapatna, Karnataka

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(PBUH) received it through Gabriel, then through Prophet (PBUH) companions obtained, then through companions, the people who came after them acquired, like this the blessing transferred from one generation to the next and this will continue till the Doomsday.

So, this is the case where the grace of the Qur'ān and Islam is obtained indirectly but the other favors can be attained directly, without the need of any intermediate. People see it, feel it and get benefitted from it directly. But the blessings of the Qur'ān and Islam has to be obtained indirectly, so there should be complete trust on the medium which is in between, until there are no full trust people do not give attention towards it, instead, they look at it with eyes full of doubt and try to avoid it.

Nevertheless, it also has happened in many cases when the medium which is in between is highly trustworthy, clear and transparent, above all the doubts, and everyone could see clearly that it's a blessing for them but the leaders who find it against their interests made false propaganda and brainwashed the people and subsequently people started supporting those leaders. The same happened with the prophets. There was no prophet on whom people didn't have trust. People used to have complete trust on prophet's truthfulness, honesty and well-wishing. Every prophet before announcing their prophecy used to be the apple of their people's eye. But still, the majority of the communities used to refuse their invitation and kept on supporting their selfish and evil-minded rulers.

Unfortunately, most often people do not use their reason and logic with the religion of Islam and the Book of Allah, rather they follow whims, conjecture and wrong propaganda.

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Another reason for neglecting the Qur'ān could be that; it is a blessing which could neither be touched through hands nor be seen through eyes, rather it is to be understood and felt through heart and mind. And not everyone can use their minds and hearts in the right way, and not everyone can come to the right conclusion.

The third reason for not believing in the Qur'ān could be that; their delight and blessing cannot be obtained immediately because Islam is a system of life which overpowers the whole life and until the whole life doesn't get adapted to it benefitting from its blessings is impossible. It requires hard-work, consistent practice, a lot of sacrifices and passing through many levels of trials and tests.

These are the different reasons for which acceptance and recognition of the blessings of Islam and the Qur'ān are found less. What could be told about non-Muslims, Muslims who inherited the blessings of Islam and the Qur'ān from their forefathers even they are unable to understand the greatness and importance of it. In spite of being Muslims, they are unaware of the delight of Islam and the Qur'ān. Their minds are blocked by different opinions and thoughts of their own and they always wander in darkness. Blessings of the Qur'ān and Islam are greater than all of the blessings which people witness, take advantage of and would even die for. Other blessings last for a few days which are related to this life only and despite being blessings they cause harm and can even kill people.

The same air and water which provides life, can cause dangerous storms and floods and takes away whole towns and cities with it. The child whom people long for and when he is born, they celebrate, distribute sweets and think that this child will be their supportive in their old age, but generally the same child becomes punishment and pain for them.

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Hence all of the blessings in the world have two faces, one is blissful and the other is dreadful! Unlike this, the religion (Islam) is a blessing which remains as blessing and blissful forever. And it also becomes the reason for a person's respect and honour in every situation. It makes a person's head high not only in this world, but also leads to success in the hereafter.

The world needs to know that Islam is not only for Muslims but for everyone. The Qur'ān has been revealed not only for the Muslim community but for the whole of mankind. The same way as the light of sun and moon is not only for Muslims but for everyone. The question here is all about who accepts this blessing and who doesn't.

Islam is the religion of those who have accepted it and even of those who rejected it. Qur'ān is a book of those who identified and accepted it and even of those who rejected and turned away from it. When Prophet Muḥammad's prophecy was declared and, the Qur'ān was revealed, and when Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) started inviting people to Islam at that time there was not even a single Muslim on this earth. Qur'ān addressed first and foremost to non-Muslims and worshippers of idols, then how can the teachings of Qur'ān discriminate between Muslims and non-Muslims?

Fundamentally, all human beings are slaves and creatures of Allah, therefore all are equal for Allah and each and everyone has an equal share in all blessings of Allah. Similarly, all human beings may be Jews, Christians, Muslims, Zoroastrians and Hindus all are children of same parents, i.e. Ādam and Ḥawwā'. Hence, they be Muslims or non-Muslims; men or women all are brothers and sisters. Almighty Allah has mentioned this in the Qur'ān, and also warned people about their responsibilities.

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Allah says:

"يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝".

Tr.: O mankind! Fear your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;- fear Allah, through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (fear) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you (al-Nisā': 1)

The Qur'ān never teaches to hate non-Muslims, rather it tells that all humans are brothers to each other, to the limit it tells that prophets are brothers to their people even those who are not accepting the truth.

Allah says:

1. "وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا" (Tr.: --- and unto (the tribe of) Ād (We sent) their brother, Hūd. Al-A'rāf: 65)
2. "وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا" (Tr.: --- and to Thamūd, We sent forth their brother, Ṣāliḥ. Al-A'rāf: 73)
3. "وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا" (Tr.: --- and to Midian, We sent forth their brother, Shu'aib. Al-A'rāf: 85)

These prophets by their behaviour proved that they are the good-willing and sincere brothers of their people. Their love and care is for those who believed in them and for those who did not and even for those who strained every nerve to make them fail. We find in the Qur'ān that, when Muḥammad's people became completely blind and deaf towards him and began replying to his love and care by abusive words and throwing stones, and when they were not ready at any cost to

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accept his message, Muḥammad became very upset that how could he make them follow the right path, and how could he save them from Allah's anger and punishment. So, Allah consoled him by saying that:

1. “فَلَعَلَّكَ بَئِخٌ تَفْسُكَ عَلَىٰ ءَاثَرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾” (Tr.: [O Muḥammad], if they do not believe in this message, you will perhaps torment yourself to death with grief, sorrowing over them. al-Kahf: 6)
2. “أَفَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءَ عَمَلِهِ فَرَءَاهُ حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ”  
 “تَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَاتٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٨﴾” (Tr.: Can that person be guided whose evil deeds are so fair-seeming to him that he considers them good? The fact is that Allah leaves to stray whom He wills and guides to whom He pleases. Therefore, O prophet, let not your soul expire in sorrow on their account. Allah is aware of all their actions. Fāṭir: 8)

History witnessed that the face of Muḥammad, the most generous person on the earth, was blood-filled by his people, still his heart held the same love and compassion for them. While wiping drops of blood from his face, he said:

O Allah! Forgive my people, for they are unable to understand now.

In Mecca, while Muḥammad used to pass through the road pagans threw trash on him! And put thorns in his way. When he was offering prayers in the Sacred Mosque (المسجد الحرام), during his prostration camel's intestine was placed on him. When he used to recite the Qur'ān, he was treated so brutally that humanity got ashamed.

And when the Prophet Muḥammad himself was treated in this way, then how would have been his companions got treated? It doesn't need to be explained; there are a lot of books on this subject.

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Pagans of Mecca did not leave any stone unturned in torturing Muḥammad (PBUH) and his followers. But we have to see that after all these torments what was the behavior of the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions towards pagans of Mecca.

Even after dealing with all these tortures, it never happened that the Prophet (PBUH) or his companions did anything against them to take revenge. Instead, they always replied to bad with goodness, to oppression with forgiveness, to hatred with love. They always followed their merciful lord's words:

"وَلَا تَسْتَوِ الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ  
وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾".

Tr.: (O Prophet), good and evil are not equal. Repel (evil) with that which is good, and you will see that he, between whom and you there was enmity, shall become as if he were a bosom friend (of yours). (Fuṣṣilat: 34)

Disbelievers of Mecca always tortured Muḥammad and his companions even when all Muslims migrated from Mecca to Madīnah, Meccans did not sit quietly, they constantly spread hatred against Islam and encouraged people to fight against Muslims. What to be considered here is, when Muslims became powerful after many battles, and enemies became feeble and helpless and when all the enemies were obligated to kneel down in front of Muḥammad (PBUH) and when Muḥammad (PBUH) was in position that all the enemies could have been killed by his single indication, at that time, how did the Prophet (PBUH) behaved with the enemies?

Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) did not treat them as enemies, rather he embraced them, showered his love and affection on them, and honored them in a way which cannot be imagined. And this amnesty of Muḥammad (PBUH) was not unexpected

for the people of Mecca; rather their hearts were telling that Muḥammad (PBUH) will establish an example of love and mercy and he will never take revenge. Therefore, when they were asked, what do you expect from me?

They all said in one voice:

"خيرًا أخ كريم وابن أخ كريم".<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: We expect good from you! You are a very good brother, and son of a very good brother of ours!

Their speculation turned out to be true, the person, who was sent down by Allah as a mercy for all mankind, took them all in his mercy, not even a single person was ruled out of his mercy! In spite of the fact that these are the people who were thirsty of his blood! Who tried to suppress his voice, who tried hard to make him fail in his mission!

Whatever happened and discussed above, is Islam. Islam which is the religion of Allah and the Qur'ān which is a book of Allah, teaches the same love, compassion and kindness.

Muslims or Hindus, people should never forget this behavior of Islam.

Islam is the religion of love, forgiveness, well-wishing for all mankind, backing of the weak, and wiping tears of the oppressed. So, any person who can think and understand, he will get attracted to Islam for its goodness.

There was a time when Islam was spread all over the world like the light of sun and moon spreads. The reason behind this lightning speed of spreading of Islam was nothing but its message to the world, The Message of Peace, Love, Respect and Freedom.

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<sup>1</sup> AL-Sunan al-Kubrā of Baihaqī, 9/118

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At the time when humanity was oppressed and crying with helplessness, the religion of Islam freed it from oppressors. Except for the rulers or kings and their families, every human being was tied to slavery. Islam cut down all the ties and returned them their lost freedom.

Allah has blessed everyone with the beautiful attire of honor and respect, no matter if one is Hindu or Muslim, Allah has announced clearly in Qur'ān that:

"وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْوَيْبِ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾".

Tr.: And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what we have created, with [definite] preference. (al-Isrā': 70)

The attire was torn out by selfish and cruel leaders. Islam returned to the children of Ādam their precious attire. Hence, the humanity which was tramped under oppression again acquainted with the dignity of life.

If today the world is thinking that the religion of Islam is dangerous for them then it is their utter misunderstanding, rather the fact is that it is their self-deception. The religion which is sent by Allah could never be hazardous to any nation. Today, where there are a lot of destructive things happening in the world, where all mankind is living in danger, there is only one way to get out of this threat, that is Islam and its incomparable teachings.

The creator of this world and whole mankind did not send the religion (Islam) to put them in danger, but to bring them out from humiliation towards honor and success. The Goodness of human beings is only in identifying their lord and following the

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religion sent by him and save themselves from all dangers. Except for the path which is shown by Allah, all other paths will lead to failure every other path chosen by them will take them nearer to destruction from where returning will become impossible for them.

May Almighty Allah grant us the ability to think, understand and take the right decision.



## Understanding the Qur'ānic Philosophy of Business Ethics

Samee-Ullah Bhat<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Islam provides us the complete ethics of business. If it is implemented transparently, it can bring revolutionary moral changes in the field of business and economy. Ethics is basically considered the moral standards by which people judge behaviour. Islam places great emphasis on ethical values in all aspects of human life. In Islam, ethics influences all aspects of life. Ethical norms and moral codes discernible from the verses of the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth are numerous, far reaching and comprehensive. In an Islamic system, ethics and business are not only compatible but also they are inseparable. Islam establishes the link between business and religion. It provides a perfect way of life. A human manner and behavior in small and medium enterprises cannot be effectively clarified without references to the Islamic ethics. Thus, this research paper will discuss the Islamic business ethics on one hand and its philosophy on the other hand.

**Key-words:** Ethics, Islamic Business Ethics, Philosophy, Qur'ān and Sunnah

### Understanding the Qur'ānic Philosophy of Business Ethics

**Introduction:** Business ethics in Islam is an enormous term. The ethics exist greater in quality and power. A lot can be

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<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar (Ph.D), Shāh-i-Hamadān Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Main Campus, Srinagar

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demonstrated on this term from the Holy Book, Qur'ān and Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) which provide us the open invitation to make our vision clear about business ethics in Islam. Islam provides us complete ethics of business. If it is implemented transparently, it can bring moral revolutionary changes in the field of business. The significance of Islamic business ethics can be well comprehended by comparing it with the foundation of a building. It plays the same vital role just like the foundation plays in constructing a building structure. As no one can imagine a building without foundation and in the same way no business can be profit-oriented in this life and the Hereafter without Islamic business ethics. Therefore, in this research paper, an attempt is made to discuss ethics, Islamic business ethics in general on one hand and the philosophy of Islamic business ethics in particular in the light of Qur'ānic texts on the other hand.

**Ethics: A General Overview:** Ethics deals with the conduct, behavior and character of human beings. Ethics is a set of moral principles which enable a person to distinguish between things which is good and which is bad. The term ethics is often used as morality, and morality in action is very important component and no behavior can be positive without ethics. Ethics also sustains behavior and it leads to good attitude. (**Dr. Ṣabāḥuddīn A'ẓmī**). Basically the word ethics, if we see it in the Islamic perspective, means to see what is good and bad socially as well as morally because ethics is something which plays important role for making and developing a sound and pious society. (**Sayyid Abul A'lá Maudūdī, 1994**)

**Islamic Business Ethics: An Overview:** Islam gives much emphasis on the ethical character of human beings, if we study the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah, we shall find a discernible verses and the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) on

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ethical norms and moral codes. Islam emphasized to follow these ethical norms not only in personal and family life but also to follow them in business dealings and transactions.

Islam is a complete way of life. It provides guidance for all activities either these are individual, social, material and moral, legal and cultural, economic and political and national or international. Islam invites the man to enter the fold of Islam without any vacillation and to follow Allah's guidance in all fields of life. (**Khurshīd Ahmad, 1999**)

The Qur'ānic verses and the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) tell us about the wide range of ethical norms to be followed. i.e. in our social contract, contract with family, in equality of the genders, contract with individuals, dealings regarding neighbors, friends, relatives, in business transactions, public and private life, chastity of women, security of the life and property, justice, protection of honor, ethics with non-combatants, combatants, sanctity of the property, dead body, and rules regarding the declaration of war (**Abul A'la Maudūdī, 1999**). In the noble Qur'ān Allah says:

"لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا".

Tr.: You have indeed in the messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah much. (al-Aḥzāb: 21).

"The Prophet (PBUH) said "the best among you is one whose character is best" (al-Bukhārī). He also said "A person devoid of kindness is devoid of any good" (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim). In another narration he said, A time will come upon people when they will not differentiate what they earned is legitimate or unlawful" (al-Bukhārī, 1941). At another place the tradition of Prophet (PBUH) states, "To say a good word is just a charity"

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(agreed). And said “Every good deed is charity” (al-Bukhārī). The Prophet (PBUH) again said, “He who deceives is not of us”. At other place the Prophet (PBUH) said, “The honest merchant will be rewarded on the day of judgment with prophets, pious people and martyrs” (al-Tirmidhī, 1130.)

### **Qur’ānic Philosophy of Business Ethics: An Overview:**

Here, I shall briefly discuss those philosophies which Islam authorizes to implement in business dealings and which come under the scope of Islamic business ethics.

1. Justice
2. Trust
3. Legitimate norms of acquiring properties
4. Ways of expenditure
5. Zakāt
6. Parsimony (thriftiness).
7. Lawful earning
8. Honesty in business
9. Avoiding Usury
10. Sincere intention

**1. Justice:** Traders must establish ‘Adl, or Justice. This means that the traders must be temperate in all things without any benefit, equal treatment or fair to all customers, taking into consideration fair and unbiased dealing and giving the right to the right person (**Nor, 2012**). In other words, justice means putting things in the right place. Allah says in the Qur’ān:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ".

Tr.: Verily, Allah commands you to do justice and kindness”. (al-Naḥl:90)

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This verse clearly shows that how Allah emphasizes on justice in business. This is because justice in the business of the purchase and sell will ensure justice to all men.

2. **Trust:** A trader must not cheat, or betray customers by selling any commodity and delaying payments to suppliers. Traders must ensure trust in every transaction. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Tr.: O believers! Do not betray (trust) in Allah and His Messenger, and (do) not betray your trusts while you know (them)". (al-Anfāl: 27)

Therefore, all actions and decisions made in a business that is based on the nature of trust is necessary to ensure that the business is fair to everyone whether they are a buyer or a seller. Fraud and oppression cannot happen if all parties are trustworthy and true. By the nature of this trust, the traders (sellers) will gain appreciation and the buyer will get the goods or services corresponding to the price paid.

3. **Legitimate Norms of Acquiring Property:** The main thing which Islam allows its followers is, to get rightful source of wealth and property. If one earns, he must distinguish between lawful and unlawful source of income. This distinction is based on such criteria that if one person earns and the other person suffers loss, then Islam does not permit such kind of earning and transaction. Islam only allows those transactions in which both the parties have the benefit and their free consent. (Maudūdī, 1974) Allah Almighty says in the Qur'ān:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالِكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

Tr.: O believers, Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by

mutual consent, and do not kill yourselves, Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you". (al-Nisā':29)

4. **Ways of Expenditure:** The basic teaching of Islam instructs us to spend wealth and not to hoard it. But here the purpose of spending is not that a man may spend on his or her luxury. But he must spend on his needs and in the way of Allah. So Islamic concept here is totally different from other concepts, here Islam says that if one spends for the sake of Allah, his wealth increases, and there will be blessing in his property and wealth and Allah will give him recompense. We can find a several verses in the Holy Qur'ān in which Allah ordained to spend for His sake and He will requite for it. Allah says:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ

Tr.: And they ask you about what they ought to spend. Say: "that which is beyond your needs." (al-Baqarah:219.)

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Tr.: Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to commit Fahshā' (evil deeds); whereas Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and Bounty, and Allah is All Sufficient for His creatures needs, and Allah is All Knowing." (al-Baqarah:268.)

وَمَا تَنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤْتِ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

Tr.: And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged." (al-Baqarah:272)

5. **Zakāt:** Zakāt is an Islamic tax; a prescribe share of one's earning. In this perspective Islam forbids earning only for

self and not caring about the poor people in the society. It prevents the concentration of wealth in few hands but ensures the distribution among the poor people in a prescribed rate. Zakāt will be collected from all those who are involved or engaged in any productive business activity or having excess money or holding assets for a period of not less than one year. Islam ensures the best of social security and brings Cooperation with the rest of the community members. (**Ḥabībūr Raḥmān, 2003.**)

Because Zakāt purifies the wealth and brings prosperity in a state and efface the concept of socialism and capitalism in which wealth comes under the control of one hand. In various places in the noble Qur'ān Allah says:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ

Tr.: Take Sadaqa from their wealth in order to purify them". (al-Taubah:103)

And at other place Allah says "al-Ṣadaqāt are only for poor al-Masākīn, and those employed to collect it and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined, and to free the captives, and for those in debt, and for Allah's cause. (al-Taubah:60). In the chapter al-Baqarah Allah orders "Establish worship and pay the poor due (give Zakāt), (verse no 43.) "Perform al-Ṣalāt and give Zakāt (poor due) and that is the right religion." (al-Bayyinah:5)

6. **Parsimony (Thriftiness):** Islam also prohibits Muslims from spending on unnecessary requirements so it does not like a prodigal person. It instructs every Muslim to spend according to his needs so he must keep up the concept of parsimony. Those who are extravagant, spendthrifts and niggard persons are not liked in Islam. Islam has also closed all the doors of extravagance and prodigality and made clear rules and

regulation for all the things which may provide equal distribution of wealth. It forbids all those activities which create spiritual and moral problems. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا

Tr.: And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but hold a medium (way) between those extremes". (al-Furqān:67)

Allah again says:

إِنَّ الْمُبَدِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ<sup>ط</sup> وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا

Tr.: Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the *Shayāṭīn* (devils) and the Satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord". (al-Isrā':27)

7. **Lawful Earnings:** Islam gives much emphasis on legitimate earning. Islam sternly warns those business men who conduct their business dealings through unlawful and unligitemate means and earn profit unjustly. It permits only legitimate business as Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ<sup>ع</sup>

Tr.: O believers: Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it may be trade among you by mutual consent". (al-Nisā':29)

In the chapter al-Baqarah Allah says:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ

Tr.: These are they who have purchased error for guidance, so their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided". (al-Baqarah: 16)

Islam forbids tyrannical dealings such as *Riba* (interest) and condemns it. Allah says in the Quran says:

وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا

Tr.: Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba". (al-Baqarah:275)

The Prophet (PBUH) said "may Allah send down His curse on all the persons who use, pay, witness and write down the Riba". (Musnand Aḥmad, 624)

8. **Honesty in Business:** Both parties traders and consumers should take their responsibility to ensure the fair business. The Qur'ān repeatedly reminds traders to be honest and strictly prohibits fraud and corruption in business. Note that it repeatedly illustrates that fraud in various forms that often happens in the business dealing (Nor, 2012). Allah says:

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ

Tr.: Woe to those who cheat the people who, when they receive by measure from men, take full and otherwise when they measure or weigh for others they cut (the measurement or weight)" (al-Muṭaffifin:1-3).

This verse explains that the fraud from any point of view is illegal in the Islamic rules and business ethics because the fraud would create problems in the relationship between buyer and seller. While Islam prohibits to sever the ties of kinship, therefore, traders must avoid impartiality in business affairs.

9. **Avoiding Usury:** Usury is forbidden in Islam because its practice causes oppression and inequality in the society and the national economy itself. This will cause the rich to become richer and the poor to become poorer. The prohibition against the practice of usury is mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows:
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الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

Tr.: Those who devour interest do not rise except as rises one whom Satan has smitten with insanity. That's because they say: 'Trade also is like interest' whereas Allah has made trade lawful and made interest unlawful. So he to whom an admonition comes from his Lord and he desists, then will that which he received in the past be his; and his affair is with Allah. And those who revert to it, they are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide. (al-Baqarah: 275).

10. **Sincere Intention:** Intention is the basis of an act because it sets a target or goal in the heart. Good faith is usually accompanied by the implementation chosen by Allah. This is very different from the policy of 'the end justifies the mean' a proud and not feel guilty achieve goals in the misery of others (Ma'amor, 2001). Allah says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ

Tr.: Indeed We sent down the Book (the Qur'an) to (bring) the truth. So worship Allah sincerely". (al-Zumar:2)

Therefore, a Muslim entrepreneur should ensure that the real intention is to serve a noble purpose and to gain the pleasure of Allah in every aspect of life.

**Conclusion:** From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Islamic business ethics can play an eminent role in the modern business modules if the prescribed principles are sincerely followed.

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## Corruption of the Eminent (Causes, Remedies & Solution in the Light of the Qur'ān)

✎... 'Abdul Bar Atharī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Ḥinā Fāṭimah Sayyid<sup>2</sup>

**Meaning of Eminent:** The Eminent are those people who influence on others by one way or the other irrespective of their belonging to the ruling class for whom generally Qur'ān considered as 'king':

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

Tr.: She said, 'Kings, when they enter a city, disorder it and make the mighty ones of its inhabitants abased. Even so they too will do. (al-Naml: 34)

In another place Allah said:

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ أذكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا  
وَءَاتَاكُمْ مِمَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

Tr.: And remember when Moses said to his people, 'O my people, remember God's blessing upon you, when He appointed among you Prophets, and made you kings, and gave you such as He had not given to any being. (al-Mā'idah: 20)

Or it may be the class of the rulers to whom Qur'ān generally considered chieftains:

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<sup>1</sup> Director, Faros Educational Foundation, Mumbai

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor (on ad hoc), Department of Arabic, University of Mumbai, Mahārāshtrā

قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٣٢﴾

Tr.: She said, 'O Council, pronounce to me concerning my affair; I am not used to decide an affair until you bear me witness. (al-Naml: 32)

The same expression came in the story of Prophet Joseph which the Egyptian ruler has used for his courtiers:

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعُ عِجَافٍ وَسَبْعَ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَاتٍ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي رُءْيَايَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّءْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Tr.: And the king said, 'I saw in a dream seven fat cows, and seven lean ones devouring them; likewise seven green ears of corn, and seven withered. My counselors, pronounce to me upon my dream, if you are expounders of dreams. (Yūsuf: 43)

Or be it the religious leaders who are called as 'Aḥbār' or 'Ruhbān':

وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

Tr.: And when his Lord tested Abraham with certain words, and he fulfilled them. He said, 'Behold, I make you a leader for the people.' Said he, 'And of my seed? He said 'My covenant shall not reach the evildoers.' (al-Baqarah: 124)

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

Tr.: And We appointed from among them leaders guiding by Our command, when they endured patiently, and had sure faith in our signs. (al-Sajdah: 24)

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ

They took their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God, and (similarly they did with) the Messiah son of Mary. (al-Taubah: 31)

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

Tr.: It is the knowledgeable who fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Ever Powerful, Oft-Forgiving. (Fāṭir: 28)

In our simple language VIP, Elites classes are also used. It should be cleared that eminent connotation sometimes depends on association (attribute), is there any relative or companion who is special to us while for commoners he is common. Such eminent also influence. That's why basically it doesn't make any difference.

**Influence of the Eminent:** Eminent class is a cream of society. It possesses strength, power, knowledge and mastery over the people. This is the reason when this class fixes the direction of the society. And wherever wishes, leads the society. If this class pursues the way of goodness so the society turns into a den of peace and prosperity. And if this class trades on the way of evil, so nothing can save the society from the destruction. Commoners follow their ways only, for which the example is famous 'الناس على دين ملوكهم' (Tr.: People are on the religion of their kings.)

Because of this reason in Ṭabrī's famous speech Walīd was custodian of edifices, because in his time this taste was common, and people used to just discuss about these constructions. Sulaimān had a great interest for women and marriage, for this reason people in his time used to discuss about the maid slaves and marriages. But when 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz took over the rule as a successor, the people's topic got changed and religion and worships' details came into existence.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See for more detail: Ṭabrī, PP. 1272-1273

**The Corruption of the Eminent is the Cause of Destruction:**

There is a famous parable, "Fish gets rotten from its head". This is the case of corruption in the national and social life. Initially corruption and distortion starts from the head. Means the evil and dishonestly begins in the influential group of any generation. And then it gradually penetrates in the whole nation and destroys every one. Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī said once: Due to the just superiority in wealth and riches of business and family and lineage, they are called "aristocrat", Oblivion from the community's benefits and their requirements and heedlessness, extravagant, misuse of wealth and the effect of negligence from the community. It doesn't decide its destiny as the way community's leaders, chiefs, heads, renowned people of vision and intellect's weakness does. For which we can say it as the ignorance of the Muslim ummah.

This caliber instead of paying attention to hearts' voice, call of the community and desperateness of the conscious, gives preference to the personal benefits and individual merits, and gets indulge into the disease of reverence for the position and the pursuit of authority, and makes it aim of life and peak of advancement, for saying truth his tongue gets dumb and lips get closed, in the major issues of community there is no sense of compassion found in him. And it doesn't have that guts to call the oppressor as oppressor, he bears all the loss of the community and swallows the tragedies for the sake of saving his position and for the sake of maintaining his glory and to acquire it. It doesn't hesitate to sign on any sentence instead sometime for the pity benefit and limited and temporary position and authority he gets ready for putting the whole community into the risk or trading the most sacred heritage and legacy of their. The great Urdu poet Iqbāl portrayed the

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same caliber by calling them “Man of Chamber”, unfortunately in whose hands comes the leadership and the rule of community. He says:

یہی شیخ حرم ہے جو چرا کر بیچ کھاتا ہے  
گیم بوذر و دلق اولیس و چادر زہرا

With the history and attributes of communities and nations, the history of this community particular class, and their remorseless, selfishness, greed for the position and authority has extinguished the most established and long-living dominions, and humiliated the whole community in a moment. End of the Abbasid dynasty, destruction of Baghdād, seize of crusaders the Baitul Maqdas, decline of Mughal dynasty, termination of emerging power of Mysore, the beat of Tepo, defeat of Turk and coming in the influence of federation of Kingdom of Saudi, everything is the result of venality of this class and the greed of position and authority and the matter of ego.<sup>1</sup>

### **Reasons & Causes of Corruption:**

- 1. Arrogance:** The main cause in the corruption of the influential persons is pride; means they try to be superior as they possess the prominent position in the society, and carry the status. And only consider they deserve this, and can't bear to snatch away at any cost. That's why they always try their best to carry on their position. So they always consider others as lesser than them, and never urge to give the equal rights like themselves. This is the reason why they justify all misbehavior with them.

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul Ḥasan Nadwī, *Khuṭbāt Mufakkir-i-Islām* (Com. by: Muḥammad Nāzīm Nadwī), Dār al-Qalam, Dhākakāurī, Lucknow, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, January 2000, PP. 362-364

Likewise, they wish to have all wealth especially for themselves and never get ready to accept others deserving for it. So the Qur'ān always highlighted this class:

وَاذْقُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اَسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْا اِلَّا اِبْلِيسَ اَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۳۴﴾

Tr.: And when We said to the angels, 'Bow yourselves to Adam'; so they bowed themselves, save Iblis; he refused, and waxed proud, and so he became one of the unbelievers. (al-Baqarah: 34)

Likewise, the Children of Israil had requested to appoint a King so that they can defeat their enemy by encountering them. So Saul got appointed on their demand. But they doubted his position due to his weak financial and social condition:

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ اِنَّ اِلٰهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوْتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوْا اَنَّىٰ يَكُوْنُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ اٰحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتْ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ اِنَّ اِلٰهَ اصْطَفٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِى الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللّٰهُ يُؤْتِ مُلْكَهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَاللّٰهُ وَّاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۴۷﴾

Tr.: Then their Prophet said to them, 'Verily God has raised up Saul for you as king.' they said, 'How should he be king over us who have better right than he to kingship, seeing he has not been given amplitude of wealth? He said, 'God has chosen him over you, and has increased him broadly in knowledge and body. God gives the kingship to whom He will; and God is all-embracing, All-knowing (al-Baqarah: 247)

Similarly when the Prophet (PBUH) got prophet-hood, the Children of Israil pretended to refusal just due to he belonged to the Children of Ismail, as they regarded the Children of Israil to deserve the chain of the prophet-hood. They refused him by giving the accusation that he belonged to the maid descendent. Even the Quraish and Arabs of this class used to say this that if Allah had willed to appoint a

messenger, he would have appointed among the chiefs of Makkah and Ṭā'if as the Qur'ān explicitly states:

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

Tr.: They say, 'Why was this Qur'ān not sent down upon some man of moment in the two cities? (al-Zukhruf: 31)

This mentality has been considered by the Ḥadīth as self-admiration and counted among the destructions:

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله ﷺ ثلاث منجيات وثلاث مهلكات: فأما المنجيات – فتقوى الله في السر والعلانية، والقول بالحق في الرضى والسخط والقصد في الغنى والفقر، وأما المهلكات -- فهوى متبع وشح مطاع وإعجاب المرء بنفسه وهي أشد من.

It is narrated by Abū Huraira (MABHWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) has said: Three things are the cause of rescue & three things are destructing. As for the things which give rescue, they are the piety of Allah in secret and open, and the truthful saying in ease and anger and moderation in richness and poverty. And as for the destructing things, they are following of desires and increasing greed and self delusion which is worst than all.<sup>1</sup>

2. **Following Desire:** The Eminent possess all the facility and privileges so they fulfill all their wishes or try to fulfill it and slowly they become the habituated or instead slaves of desires. So in case of necessity and by compulsion if they have to stop or they have to leave all their desires so they don't get agree easily. At the time of conquest of Madīna the King of Iran Yazadgard fled in such a miserable condition that cannot be imagined but in that haste and hardship also the stuff he had taken away, can help to imagine his mentality and standard of his legacy. The

<sup>1</sup> Takhrij Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ: 5049, al-Albānī said: حسن بغيره

author of 'ايران بعهد ساسانيان' (Iran in the Age of Sasanian) writes: "Yazadgard had taken away one thousand cook, one thousand singers, one thousand falconries and many others and this figure was still less for him".

Likewise, when Hurmuzan first came to Madīna after the defeat and was presented to 'Umar (MABHWH) so he asked for water. The water was brought to him in the thick cup, then he said whether I will die without water but would never drink from this pathetic cup, then he was given water in another pot by which he was able to drink. From these two incidents it can be imagined how the habits of Iranian people were distorted,<sup>1</sup> and they were habituated to the artificial life and the formalities to what extent, and how far they had gone from simple and natural life. And for this bad habit they crossed all boundaries.

The Qur'ān portrayed the person fell in this disease in the chapter of al-A'arāf:

وَأَنْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْعَاوِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثُ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصِصْ الْقِصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

Tr.: And recite to them the tiding of him to whom we gave our signs, but he cast them off; and Satan followed after him, and he became one of the perverts. If We wished We would bring his out of it but he inclined towards the earth and followed his will so his similitude is like a dog who ousts his tongue if you load it or not. This is the similitude of those people who denied Our signs so narrate the story in order to make them think. (al-A'arāf: 175-176)

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul Ḥasan Nadwī, *Insānī Duniyā par Musalmānon ke 'Urūj wa Zawāl kā Athar*, Majlis Taḥqīqāt wa Nashriyāt-i-Islām, Lucknow, 13<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2000, PP. 77-78

Qur'ān also mentioned that they indulge in this even though they possess knowledge and Allah left them straying.

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمِهِ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشًّا فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Tr.: Have you seen him who has taken his caprice to be his god, and God has led him astray out of knowledge, and set a seal upon his hearing and his heart, and laid a covering on his eyes? Who shall guide him after God? What, will you not remember? (al-Jāthiyah: 23)

Due to luxury and plenty of wealth this class exceeds the limit in every matter and gets into the disease of extravagance, which Qur'ān has described as the disease of eminent.

Because of this extravagance and bad habit arrogance is born in him, which leads him to the disobedience as pointed out by the Qur'ān:

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً قَرَّبْنَا خَبَرَهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا ﴿١٦﴾

Tr.: And when We desire to destroy a city, We command its men who live at ease, and they commit ungodliness therein, then the Decision is finally taken against it, and We destroy it badly (al-Isrā': 16)

So due to indulgence in this disease destruction becomes their destiny, as the Qur'ān explains in the very same verse. So Sayyidd Abul A'lá Mudūdī explains this verse as follows:

“In fact the reality to which they have been scolded is that the thing which destroys a society, is the corruption of its elite class. When any nation comes close to the curse, its wealthiest people and authorities start sinning, wrongdoings and indecency and only this very mess sinks the whole nation. So it should observe the sins of

authorities so that the keys of wealth should not be put into the hands of means and corrupts.<sup>1</sup>

3. **Greed (Craze for money and Selfishness):** To keep up the status high as well as to fulfill the increasing overwhelming desires the demand for wealth gets increasing so as to overcome those demands, first of all love of wealth and disease of selfishness get born in them, which ends at eating unlawful. Allah says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لِيَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ  
وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

Tr.: O believers, many of the rabbis and monks indeed consume the goods of the people in vanity and bar from God's way. Those who treasure up gold and silver, and do not expend them in the way of God -- give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement (al-Taubah: 34)

Explaining this verse Sayyid Abul A'la' Mudūdī had stated as follows:

“The wrongdoers don't oppress by this way only that they sell the Islamic verdicts and eat bribery, but they snatch the grants, invent such a religions rules and norms by which people would purchase their salvation from them. So that their lives and deaths, and their mourning and celebration can't be accomplished without feeding them. So that they will consider them the master of their fate whether they polish it or to ruin it. Moreover due to their own benefits these people mislead the creation of God in

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul A'ala' Madūdī, *Talkhīṣ Tafhīm al-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktabah Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, November, 2000, P. 453

the dilemma of puzzle. And thus whenever any caller of the truth stands for the improvement, first of all these people begin to stop their ways through their cunning intellect and plots of delusions".<sup>1</sup>

So by whichever means their own wish gets fulfilled they reach there. No longer had they possess manners or the humanity. For them, the most important thing is to fulfill their wishes. They sacrifice all other relations. The extreme evident example for this is Qārūn who was among the nation of the Moses but for the benefits he went along to Pharaoh. Likewise, Abū Lahab was the real uncle of the Prophet (PBUH) but in the Sha'b Abī Tālib he didn't remain with the Hāshims and left them to join the chiefs of Quraish.

Because of this mentality hypocrisy also comes into the existence. Generally the tendency of hypocrisy is found in this class. When they have their interests they put their targets on eyes but when their interest finished or not fulfilled, they crumble them with their feet.

- 4. Deviation of Religion:** For accomplishing their wishes when this class reaches to eating unlawful, they get ready to sale and purchase the religion as well as Shar'at so they distort the region by selling its verses with low price:

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا  
 قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

Tr.: So woe to those who write the Book with their hands, then say, 'This is from God, 'that they may sell it for a little price; so woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for their earnings. (al-Baqarah: 79)

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul A'alá Madūdī, *Talkhīṣ Tafhīm al-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktabah Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, November, 2000, P. 313

This was also the practice of early Jew scholars as it was mentioned by the following verses:

أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِن بَعْدِ  
مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

Tr.: Are you then so eager that they should believe you, seeing there is a party of them that heard God's word, and then tampered with it after they had comprehended it, wittingly? (al-Baqarah: 75)

Today also the scholars and leaders are indulging in this disease. So by interpreting Divine verses they try to prove wrong concepts, the explicit example of this is the invalid interpretation of "خاتم النبیین" and "إنما أنا بشر مثلكم" even on the basis of complaints of Aslam Jairājpurī and Ghulam Ahmad Parvez the orphan grandson was declared as a legal heir in Pākistān.

5. **Plotting (Secret Planning/Conspiracy):** The affluent take all the measures to control emerging power of their counterpart. So that their glory will be continued and on any cost they don't seize from plotting and conspiracy. The following verse of Qur'ān explains this act:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَرًا مُّجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا  
يَبْشُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

Tr.: And even so We appointed in every city great ones among its sinners, to devise there; but they devised only against themselves, and they were not aware. (al-An'ām: 123)

The measures which the chiefs of Quraish had taken to create hurdles in the way of our beloved Prophet (PBUH) all of it has been mentioned in many places of the Qur'ān. For example:

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وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُبْتُوكَ أَوْ يِقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Tr.: And when the unbelievers were devising against you, to confine you, or slay you, or to expel you, and were devising, and God was devising; and God is the best of devisers. (al-Anfāl: 30)

Likewise it's not hidden what conspiracy the Christian leaders did against the Prophet (PBUH) and thus tries to poison the Prophet (PBUH), and brought the people of Makkah on the occasion of Battle of Trench. And what scheme the courtiers of Pharaoh planned is also obvious from the following verse of the Qur'ān:

وَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَقْصَا الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَا مُوسَى إِنَّ الْمَلَأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَاخْرُجْ  
إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

Tr.: Then came a man from the furthest part of the city, running; he said, 'Moses, the Council are conspiring to slay you. Depart; I am one of your sincere advisers. (al-Qaṣaṣ: 20)

How the wife of the 'Azīz of Egypt falsely accused Joseph and sent him to prison may also be kept in this section.

## 6. The Avoidance from Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil:

When the affluent class embraces the ways of corruption, pays no heed towards their fundamental duty of enjoying good and forbidding evil, it leads them to more corruption. Because if it continues, everyone will take each other's account and the equity and justice will be maintained. But when the eminent start corrupting, so for the sake of hiding their own weakness and faults, they restrain from spreading goodness and stop others from their mistakes. And so the evil things survive and keep

increasing until the whole society reaches on the verge of destruction and the demonstration becomes destiny as the Qur'ān portrays it:

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْأَثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

Tr.: You see many of them vying in sin and enmity, and how they consume the unlawful; evil is the thing they have been doing. (al-Mā'idah: 62)

As this task is tough because one has to keep control over oneself first and then he has to bear all the tough reactions of others. That's why people generally carry the attitude of flexibility, and this is the flexibility that drowns them as the Ḥadīth discussed this attitude in respect of the Christian scholars:

قال رسول الله ﷺ لما وقعت بنو إسرائيل في المعاصي نهتهم علماءهم فلم ينتهوا فجالسهم في مجالسهم وأكلهم وشاربهم فضرب الله قلوب بعضهم ببعض ولعنهم على لسان داؤد وعيسى ابن مريم ذلك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون.

Tr.: The Prophet (PBUH) said when the Children of Israil indulged in sinning, their scholars forbade them but they did not stop and they themselves started having involved in their gathering and eating with them and drinking with them so Allah made their hearts like them and had cursed them with the tongue of Dāwūd and 'Īsā the son of Mary. This is because they used to disobey and to transgress.<sup>1</sup>

- 7. Getting puzzle and Making puzzle in Very Silly Things:** To keep the masses indulge in silly things so as to not give them chance to stand up and become their counterpart. Because if the masses will be beautified with

<sup>1</sup> Sunan al-Tirmidhī: 3047 al-Tirmidhī said: حسن غريب

high goals and determinations, they will also associate with affluent class and will become the part of special provisions of the eminent. That's why it's their efforts to get them confused so that they may not reach their level. And for this very reason they throw different issues and keep them trapped in it. This attitude has been mentioned in the Qur'ān in this way:

وَأَتَيْنَهُم بَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيْبًا بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Tr.: We gave them clear signs of the Command; so they differed not, except after the knowledge had come to them, being insolent one to another. Surely thy Lord will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection touching their differences. (al-Jāthiyah: 17)

In another place it came:

كَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلْقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلْقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلْقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاصُوا أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَلُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

Tr.: Those before you, who were stronger than you in might, and more abundant in wealth and children; they took enjoyment in their share; so do you take enjoyment in your share, as those before you took enjoyment in their share. You have plunged as they plunged. Those -- their works have failed in this world and in the world to come; those they are the losers. (al-Taubah: 69)

In the historical narrations it is recorded that when the army of Muḥammad the Conqueror entered into the Constantinople, at that time this issue was under the

discussion with the people of knowledge that in the heavenly dinner the breeds which the Prophet 'Īsá (PBUH) had eaten was the natural or made of yeast. There were several heavy arguments and so many fingers were raised.

### Remedies

1. **To rise Feeling of Enslavement:** If a person thinks that he is the "Abdullāh" (the Slave of Allah) then no pride or arrogance will be arisen in him. That's why the first thing needed is to arouse the feeling of enslavement in him. And declaration of "Kalimah Ṭayyibah" and "Kalimah Shahādat" while getting into the fold of Islam is nothing but the acknowledgement of this truth. So this condition of human being has manifested time and again. The first point of the call of the Prophet (PBUH) was to worship Allah which has been repeated while mentioning the prophets of Allah and the same has been pointed out by them while introducing themselves:

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾

Tr.: He said, 'Lo, I am God's servant; God has given me the Book, and made me a Prophet. (Maryam: 30)

And it was clarified about Jesus that he did not deny his being servant of Allah:

لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾

Tr.: The Messiah will not disdain to be a servant of God, neither the angels who are near stationed to Him. Whosoever disdains to serve Him, and waxes proud, He will assuredly muster them to Him, all of them. (al-Nisā': 172)

The expression of 'نعم العبد' (The best servant) was used while praising the messengers:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ رَءُوفٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

Tr.: And We gave David Solomon; how excellent a servant he was! He was a penitent. (Şād: 30)

To arousing this feeling of piety the instructions of being conscious of Allah are used again and again.

All other associations along with slavery have been mentioned for introduction and identification and have not been used for the sake of virtues. So the same point has been highlighted in the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Tr.: O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and tribes, that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you. God is All-knowing, All-aware. (al-Ḥujurāt: 13)

It came in the Ḥadīths:

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولا تباغضوا ولا تدابروا ولا تنافسوا وكونوا عباد الله إخوانًا.

It is narrated from Abū Huraira that the Prophet (PBUH) has said, don't keep hatred for each other, don't chase each other (in mutual enmity), don't abandon each other in helplessness and be the bondsmen of Allah like brothers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> صحیح: Şaḥīḥ al-Jāmi': 7199, al-Albānī said:

And when feeling of slavery comes to one's mind it is followed by the feeling that every one is equal and none has superiority over the other. This fact has been highlighted on the occasion of the Last Speech of the Prophet (PBUH):

الناس بنو آدم وآدم خلق من تراب.

Tr.: All human being are Ādam's sons and Ādam has been created of dust.<sup>1</sup>

2. **Sacrifice:** If everyone wishes to be superior there will be inevitable quarrel and enmity, but if everyone prefers others to his ownself, this quarrel will be stopped. So whenever this problem rises, sacrifice can extinguish its fire. After the demise of the Prophet (PBUH) Aus and Khazaraj chiefs had tug of war that who will be the chief. They went to make the leader to Sa'ad bin 'Ubādah but Abū Bakr recommended the name 'Umar and Abū 'Ubaidah by convincing them while 'Umar took a pledge of alliance to Abū Bakr and thus everyone agreed.

After the martyrdom of 'Alī people chose Ḥasan and after the selection he had a complete right whatever process he will deal with but due to the anticipation of more good he handed over his right to Mu'āwiyah and the bloodshed got seized. On every occasion this class should be ahead and should prefer others over oneself. By praising the Anṣār Allah stated that:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيْمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْنَهُ فَاُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

<sup>1</sup> Ghāyat al-Marām: 312 al-Albānī said: حسن

Tr.: And those who made their dwelling in the abode, and in belief, before them; love whosoever has emigrated to them, not finding in their breasts any need for what they have been given, and preferring others above themselves, even though poverty be their portion. And whoso is guarded against the avarice of his own soul, those -- they are the prosperous. (al-Ḥaṣhr: 9)

They had love for those who migrated to them, and did not feel any ambition in their hearts for what is given to them, and give preference others over themselves, even though they are in poverty. And those who are saved from the greed of their hearts are the successful.

Whenever, the time of sacrifice came, the beloved Prophet (PBUH) has been at the forefront. On the occasion of Ḥunain, when the fight was on peak and it was appearing that the Muslim army is leaving the battleground being on the verge of defeat, on that time also, the Prophet (PBUH) continued going forward fighting with the enemy of Islam bravely. Whenever the time asked for sacrifice, the Prophet (PBUH) forwarded his relatives to fight. Despite the presence of great fighters like Sa'ad, Ṭalḥa, and Abū 'Ubaidah, he put his son-in-law 'Alī, his uncle Ḥamzah and his cousin 'Ubaidah bin Ḥārith forward. Similarly, after he announced the interest forbidden, he first declared forbidden the interest of his uncle 'Abbās bin 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.

Dismissing the pre-Islamic custom for the revenge of blood, he first announced the forgiveness of his nephew Ibn Rabī'a bin Ḥārith's blood, who was killed by Hudhail tribe, while he was under the care of Laith tribe for breastfeeding.

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It is also mentioned in the history that Fāṭimah once asked for a slave, the Prophet (PBUH) excused her referring the requirements of Companions of Ṣuffah and perhaps, it is one of the reasons to prohibit Zakāt to be given to the family of Ḥāshim.

Abū Bakr accepted only Kifāf during his caliphate on the request of his fellow authorities, but at the time of his death, he made his will to return all the wealth given to him as kifāf to the treasury. Actually, it is the sacrifice of higher people which matters and motivates the ordinary people.

3. **Accountability System:** It is expected from everyone to slip from the right path affecting by the colorful world due to human weakness. Therefore, in order to save from it, "Amr bil Ma'rūf wa Nahy 'an al-Munkar" (enjoying good and forbidding wrong) is an important aspect of Islam providing a complete system of accountability. As long as it is carried out, the humanity goes on track and as soon as it weakens, the humanity starts following the path of stray and destruction. So, Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī writes in his book "Tazkiyah al-Nafs" (Self Purification):  
"At the time, when an evil begins sneaking in a society, it is not more powerful. If, at the same time, the members of the society stand up for its accountability, and send a befitting warning to the evil-doers, it halts it from further spread. But, if it is ignored, then slowly the same minor evil takes root, and becomes out of control. The source maybe getting to the desire- Do not cross over to the shovel. For this accountability, famous term of Qur'ān is "Amr bil Ma'rūf wa Nahy 'an al-Munkar".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, Tazkiyah-i-Nafs, Markazī Maktabah Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, April, 2005, P. 135

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Thus, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) highlighted it, saying:

إن الله عز وجل لا يعدّب العامة بعمل الخاصة، حتى يروا المنكر بين ظهرانهم وهم قادرون على أن ينكروه، فإذا فعلوا ذلك عذب الله الخاصة والعامة.

Tr.: Indeed, Allah does not punish the ordinary people for the evil doings of the particular people until they see it spreading among them, but they do not deny, even they are capable to deny it, and when they do so, Allah punishes both the ordinary public and the elite.<sup>1</sup>

Then, the Prophet (PBUH) also emphasized saying:

الذي نفسي بيده لتأمرنّ بالمعروف ولتتهوّن عن المنكر أو ليوشكنّ الله أن يبعث عليكم عقابًا منه، ثم تدعونّه فلا يستجاب لكم.

Tr.: By Him in Whose Hand my life is, you either enjoin good and forbid evil, or Allah will certainly send soon His punishment to you. Then you will make supplication and it will not be accepted.<sup>2</sup>

4. **Simplicity:** It is important to teach the simplicity to the particular people in order to keep them away from the extravagance and show off. Therefore, the glorious Qur'ān has emphasized repeatedly to work with sincerity for the sake of Almighty Allah. For this reason, the extravagance is prohibited in Islam and it is advised to keep balance in expenditures as the Qur'ān says:

"ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾"

Tr.: Then you will be asked about all the pleasures (you enjoyed in the world). (al-Takāthur: 8)

<sup>1</sup> Fath al-Bārī (of Ibn Ḥajr), 6/13 Ibn Ḥajr said: إسناده حسن وله شاهد

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī: 2169, al-Bānī said: إسناده حسن

Probably, it was the main reason, due to that 'Umar had issued a formal ordinance to his Cabinet saying:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَزِيَّ التَّنَعُّمِ وَزِيَّ الْعِجْمِ، وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالشَّمْسِ فَإِنَّهَا حَمَامُ الْعَرَبِ، وَتَمَعَّدُوا  
وَاحْشَوْسُنُوا وَاخْلُوقُوا، واقطعوا الركب، وأنزوا على الخيل نَزْوًا، وارتموا  
الأغراض.

Tr.: Stay away from extravagance, show off and the clothes of non-Arabs (luxury cloths). Make your habit of working hard and bearing the heat of sun, because it is Arabs' bath. Make habit of hardship, simplicity, patience, wearing simple clothes, be used to leap on horseback and have pin tip accuracy in your targets.<sup>1</sup>

In short, the last and most important thing is that the status of eminent, and their effects of distress and distortion requires that whenever a reform and revolution movement carried out, they should be addressed first, so that it could bring a fruitful result. Thus, the same thing appears from the history of prophets in the Qur'ān. As Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī describes in his famous book "Da'wat-i-Dīn aur uskā Ṭarīq-i-kār":

"The Prophets first address the influential people of the society and make their reform lead to the reform of common people. Ibrāhīm first invited his family, who were considered the religious leaders of the nation. Then, he invited the king, who was holding the political power in his hands and was considering himself as the master of the people's life and death. (Tr.: Did you not see the one who argued with Ibrāhīm about his Lord, because Allah had given him kingship?) Allah the Almighty commanded Moses to address Pharaoh first. أَذْهَبَ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى ﴿٧٧﴾ فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ

<sup>1</sup> Insānī Duniyā par Musalmānon ke 'Urūj wa Zawāl kā Athar, P. 359

إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَرْجِيَ ۖ وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ (Tr.: Go to Fharoah. Indeed, he has crossed all bounds. And say (to him,) ‘Would you like to purify yourself, and that I should guide you to your Lord, so that you fear (Him). Daniel invited the great king of his time, Banū Khudh Naṣr. The prophet Yarmiah was the prophet of the kings of the north. ʿĪsá first invited the Jewish scholars. Similarly, Nūḥ, Hūd, Shu’aib did as mentioned in Qur’ān. All these prophets first challenged the ruling power & arrogant people and opposed their thoughts. In last, the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was sent and ordered to invite his close relatives. They were holding the power religiously and politically, therefore, they were leading the Arabs from both the sides. In order to invoke the rest of the world, besides the Arab world, what the Prophet (PBUH) guided is that he had written various letters to the rulers, and first presented Islam before them and asked them to embrace it. Otherwise, you will be responsible for yourself and your followers as well. It indicates that later, the leaders of the Ummah should follow the same way for the general preaching. The entire history of the guided caliphate that the companions of the Prophet (MABPWT) followed the same way of preaching certified by Allah the Almighty and the Prophet (PBUH).<sup>1</sup>

In today's context, it should be noticed that the Islamic movements in action follow this method of prophets or not. If, yes, then it is good, otherwise they should change their working methods and plan their efforts in the light of prophets' method, and the main point of this method is to address the ruling people, try to reform them and make them convinced for your cause.

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<sup>1</sup> Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, *Da’wat-i-Dīn aur uskā Ṭarīq-i-Kār*, Markazī Maktabah Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2000, PP. 39-40

If the Islamic movements are analyzed in this view, they are proved to be falling behind. As far as Tableeghī Jamat is concerned, it considered peoples' movement, but the Jamiat 'Ulamā Hind which considered the group of 'Ulamā also does not focus on the ruling and influential people, even a person who is not an 'Ālim (Islamic Scholar) can hold power in this group.

It was believed that Jamat-e-Islami is the group of scholars and influential people of the community, but now it is an old thought. The current situation is that most of its plans are based on public opinion. What is the plan for influential people? Even if they are rulers, bureaucrats, doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists, scholars, *imams*, or leaders of different groups. What does it mean to cry for experts in all fields? However, in the light of the discussion, it is needed to correct the procedures and methods of preaching. May Allah grant them *taufīq*. Amen

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## **Objections of the Hindu Extremists on the Qur'ān (An Analytical Study)**

✎...Dr. Muḥammad Raḍīyyul Islām Nadwī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Nafis Ma'rūfī<sup>2</sup>

Objections on the Qur'ān had been started since the start of its revelation. The polytheists of Makkah, who were at the forefront of the Islamic hostility, raised different kinds of allegation regarding it. Sometimes they said: it is tales of the ancient people, and they explained it occasionally by saying it is the poetry, divination or magic. After the migration of Muslims to Madīnah, Jews started to show their enmity towards Islam openly and they also began to put different allegations on the Qur'ān itself. The Qur'ān responded with evidence to all allegations that were put on it and proclaimed to be purified from such wrong allegations.

The allegations and objections on the Qur'ān continued in the later days as well. The enemies of Islam targeted it in every era and criticized its teachings. It was especially the orientalist, who played a vital scientific role in the Qur'ānic field but their objectives behind these works were only to raise Islamic hostility and they left no stones unturned in attributing several baseless claims to it.<sup>3</sup>

In India, the objections have been continued to be raised by the opponents of Islam from time to time. The Christian

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<sup>1</sup> One of the great scholars of Jama't Islami (Indian) and author of thousands of books on Islam

<sup>2</sup> One of the graduates of Dār-ul-'Ulūm, Deoband, U.P. India

<sup>3</sup> See my article on objections of the Orientalists on the Qur'ān published in special issue on the Qur'ān of Raṣṭriya Sahārā daily dated: 14/10/2006

machineries have been at the forefront and the Hindu extremists also showed their interest in these activities. This article will analyze their (Hindus) objections on the Qur'ān.

Svami Dyanand Saraswati (1824-1883) is a well-known name among the Hindu objectors. He categorized a special chapter to criticize Islam in his book "Sityarth Prakash" which has been written to criticize Judaism and Christianity. By mentioning many verses of the Qur'ān, he described their concocted meanings and tried to prove Islam as an aggressive and irrational religion.<sup>1</sup>

A lot of objections on Islam and the Qur'ān continued to be raised by the extremist Hindu organizations too. For instance, Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha released a folder on the title of "Why do the riots break out in the country?" in which it tried to show by narrating 24 verses of the Qur'ān or their some parts that the Qur'ān commands Muslims to fight against the followers of other religions. And it was said that the riots happening in the country can't stop unless these verses are not removed from the Qur'ān."<sup>2</sup>

A petition was filed in Calcutta High Court under these allegations and it was tried to impose a ban on the Qur'ān, but the honorable judges rejected it with their wisdom. In this perspective the effort will be made to examine and explain the right view about the objections which have been generally raised by the Hindu extremists and will be discussed in this article.

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<sup>1</sup> See for Swāmī Dayānand and his book *Satyārth Prakāsh*: Hindu Dharm kī Jadīd *Shakhṣiyat* by Maulānā Muḥammad Fārūq *Khān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi. He claimed that the chapter related to religion, to some critics, is additional and has not been written by Swāmī Dayānand.

<sup>2</sup> See: Qur'ān Majīd kī *Chaubīs Āyāt par bejā I'tirādāt*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1993, P. 3

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**Meaning and Explanation of the Word Kāfir?** It is said that the Qur'ān has used the word 'Kāfir' for the followers of the religions other than Islam. It includes Hindus as well. This word has the meaning of malice, hate and disdain. The things the Qur'ān has said about the disbelievers and the way of behaving with them was ordered in this world and it was reported how to be dealt with them in Hereafter, all incite hate in the hearts of Muslims to keep distance and propagate to end up all types of relationship with disbelievers. The question arises that, is this the sense of kāfir?

Kāfir is an Arabic word which means to hide or cover something.<sup>1</sup> The words which have come from the origin of this word in Arab's writing or usage all must have this meaning in a way or the other. The expert in Arabic lexicon Ibn Duraid al-Azdī has written: "The origin of kufr is to cover something".

Arabs, therefore, apply the word kāfir for the things which cover something. For example, this word was found in their sentences to be used as follows:

Night: it covers all things with its darkness and hides from the people's eyes.

Ocean: it hides all big things inside it.

Big valley: that people hide from others' eyes by reaching there.

River: that hides all things big or small into it.

Dark cloud: that hides stars, moon and sun.

Farmer: that puts seed under the land and hides it.

Armour: that hides the body of a soldier.

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<sup>1</sup> Azdī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin Duraid, *Jamhara-tul-Lughah*, Dā'irah al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmīyah, Hyderābād, 1345, 2/401

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The remote area where nobody passes by: that the residents in this area hide from the eyes of common people.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly the word 'Kufr' denotes the meaning of ungratefulness in which the original meaning is found because the person who does ungratefulness as if he conceals the benevolence of his benefactor and covers it as it is mentioned in the book 'Jamhara-tul-Lughah': وكفر فلان النعمة إذا لم يشكرها (Tr.: He hid the boon as if he did not thank on it.)<sup>2</sup>

But the word kufr in Arabic language is mostly used as a term compared to Islam and faith. The experts in lexicon have elaborated it. Azdī has written: الكفر ضد الإسلام (Kufr is opposite of Islam.)<sup>3</sup> while Jauharī and Firozābādī say: الكفر ضد الإيمان (Kufr is opposite of faith).<sup>4</sup>

The word kufr has been used in the holy Qur'ān for different linguistic meanings and as a term vis-a-vis to faith too. It has been used for original linguistic meaning (to hide) in a place. Saying the worldly life is amusement, the example of this meaning has been described:

كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ

Tr.: Like rain (that) its plants pleased the farmers.... (al-Ḥadīd: 20)

In this verse the word kuffār has been used for the farmers. The reason of describing the farmers as kāfir is that as they hide seeds under the land during cultivation. This word has been used in the sense of thanklessness compared to thank at some places:

<sup>1</sup>Firozābādī, Majduddīn Muḥammad, al-Qāmūs, Naval Kishore Publications, Lucknow, 1/54

<sup>2</sup>Jamhara-tul-Lughah, 2/401

<sup>3</sup>Ibid

<sup>4</sup>Jauharī, Abū Naṣr Ismā'īl bin Ḥammād, Tājul Lughah wa Ṣiḥāḥul 'Arabīyyah, Egypt, n.d. 1282H, 1/394, al-Qāmūs, 1/54

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرُكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

Tr.: So remember me, and I will remember you. And do not be ungrateful. (al-Baqarah: 152)

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٣﴾

Tr.: We guided him to the way, be he thankful or disgraceful. (al-Dahr: 3)

And because thanklessness implies the refusal of blessing it has, therefore, been used in the sense of refusal and acquittal at some places:

وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَانًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا

Tr.: And he said, "you have chosen idols instead of Allah, out of affection for one another in the worldly life. But then, on the Day of Resurrection, you will disown one another curse one another. (al-'Ankabūt: 25)

Kufr has been used in the Qur'ān as a reformation compared to faith.

There are many verses about this subject. Two verses are mentioned here as an example:

وَمَن يَتَّبِدِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Tr.: Whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has strayed from the right path. (al-Baqarah: 108)

أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ

Tr.: Is it that you believe in some parts of the Scripture, and disbelieve in the others? (al-Baqarah: 85)

The interpreters of the Qur'ān and experts of Arabic lexicon have explained that the word kāfir has all meanings for which it is used in Arabic language. 'Allāmah Ibn al-Jauzī has written: "The root of the word means "to cover". Kāfir is described as kāfir because he hides the truth".<sup>1</sup> Jauharī adds:

"Kāfir is described as kāfir because he denies Allah's benevolence and hides His blessings and favours".<sup>2</sup>

**Removal of one Misunderstanding:** A wrong idea has been presented that "one who does not believe in the fundamentals of Islam, can't be called kāfir, because this word is not synonyms of non-Muslims. This is only used for a person to whom the message of Islam is given then Islam is proved with all evidences, yet, he does not accept Islam. No one can be called kāfir definitely even after the complete argument too". This is not true. Because the term kāfir has been used compared to Islam and faith. Whoever does not believe in Allah's religion and does not acknowledge Islamic beliefs, is called kāfir. The word kufr in many verses of the Qur'ān has referred to Jewish, Christians and Idolaters.<sup>3</sup>

Islam differentiates between the followers of true religion and others who do not follow in order to deal with them separately about implementation of its orders which can be made obligatory for the followers of true religion while others who don't follow, can be excepted. Neither the hatred has been expressed to the non-Muslims by using this word nor does it literally mean malice, hatred, disdain and disgrace.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Jauzī, Abū al-Faraj Jamāluddīn 'Abdur Raḥmān bin 'Alī al-Baḡhdādī, Zādul Masīr fi 'Ilm al-Tafsīr, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, Beirut, 1407H, 1/27

<sup>2</sup> Tājul Lughah, 1/395

<sup>3</sup> See: al-Baqarah: 89, al-Mā'idah: 72, 73, 78, al-Bayyinah: 6

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### **The Qur'ānic Verses that define the Punishment of Hellfire, provoke hatred in the Hearts of the Polytheists:**

It is also claimed by the Hindu extremists that the punishment of hellfire in the Hereafter has been mentioned in detail in the Qur'ān and stated that those who won't accept Islam, will be punished. For instance, they refer to these verses such as:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِمْ نَارًا كَمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

Tr.: Those who reject our verses- We will scorch them in a Fire. Whenever their skins are cooked, We will replace them with the other (fresh) skins, so they will experience the punishment. Allah is Most Powerful, Most Wise. (al-Nisā': 56)

فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ النَّارُ لَهُمْ فِيهَا دَارُ الْآخِرَةِ جَزَاءُ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

Tr.: We will make those who disbelieve taste an intense agony, and we will recompense them according to the worst of what they used to do. Such this is the recompense of Allah's enemies- the Fire- where they will have their permanent home, in recompense for having disregarded Our verses. (Ḥa Mīm al-Sajdah: 28)

They say that these verses cause to create hate and scorn emotions in the hearts of Muslims about non-Muslims.

The punishments to be given to the disbelievers in Hereafter, that have been described in the Qur'ān, are exactly as per Allah's law of justice and fair. These punishments do not create hatred in the hearts of Muslims about disbelievers but sympathy and incite them to strive to protect their unbelieving brothers from Hell-fire.

Allah has created mankind in this world and gifted countless blessings to them which demand that they must embrace Islam and follow His orders. Those who do not do so, are in fact very ungrateful. Allah says:

أَفِيَا لَبِطِلٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ اللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

Tr.: Will they then believe in falsehood, and refuse Allah's favors? (al-Nahl: 72)

The People, who worship Gods and Goddess that indeed do not benefit them nor harm them except Allah or with Him. However, they do not recognize Allah's superiority. Their behavior is like sedition. They seem like rebellions. They deny Allah's signs and ignore His orders. They are guilty in the sight of Allah. He has prescribed for them the punishments which they deserved:

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: Who does greater wrong than someone who fabricates lies about Allah, or denies His verses? The guilty will never prosper. (Yūnus: 17)

This world is the home of examination and Hereafter is the home of reward. In Hereafter mankind will get reward of what he will do in this world. The people who will live being rebel and guilty in this world and violate His norms, will be extremely punished in the Hereafter. It is exactly according to the justice to make difference between obedient and disobedient, submissive and rebellious, righteous and guilty, but these differences will appear by the leave of Allah in the Hereafter. It does not make any impact on the human rights of non-Muslims in the world as well as it does not create hatred and dehumanization against them in the hearts of Muslims.

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**Are the Idolaters Impure?** It is said that in the Qur'ān Hindus have been described as impure and dirty which express hatred and scorn against them. The objectors point at following verses are:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا

Tr.: O you who believe! The polytheists are impure, so let them no approach the Sacred Mosque after this year of theirs. (al-Taubah: 28)

While it is the fact that impurity means in this verse defect in belief and dirtiness in polytheism it is not physical and material dirtiness indeed. All exegetics and scholars have agreed with it. Imām Nawāwī says:

“Allah has stated: The idolaters are impure. It means impurity and dirtiness in belief. It doesn't mean that their body parts are impure like urine and toilets or the likes”.<sup>1</sup>

Islam doesn't compromise flexibilities regarding beliefs and tenets. It is adherent of monotheism and is strict against polytheism. It claims that polytheism is a dirty thing which causes the mind of a person believing in other gods associated with Allah. Hence Islam dislikes it and wants to purify mankind from it. Allah's messenger Ādam (peace be upon him) was the follower of monotheism. He built the Holy Kaba to worship Allah the Only One, but his followers involved in polytheism with the passage of time. They started to worship thousands of gods and goddess associating them with Allah. They fixed idols in the walls of Kaba and there were 360 idols inside Kaba. After the conquest of Makkah in 8<sup>th</sup> year of the Hijrah it was naturally to clean the centre of monotheism from spreading polytheism. It was publicly announced on the occasion of Ḥajj

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<sup>1</sup> Nawawī, Yaḥyá bin Sharaf, Sharḥ Muslim, Bāb: al-Dalīl 'alá anna al-Muslim lā yanjusu

next year of the conquest of Makkah that the Holy Kaba is the House of Allah and Masjid al-Ḥarām is the holy place. Therefore anyone who involves in polytheism will not be permitted to enter there.

As far as the dirtiness of the unbelievers and polytheists is concerned, if they take care of cleanliness then without reason Islam does not regard them as dirty nor does order Muslims to isolate them and stay away from them. The messenger of Allah and his companions lived together with the unbelievers and polytheists. He met them and they came to the Masjid and he and his companions took water from their pots to drink and make ablution, and ate meals and wore cloths prepared by them, but it never happened that He ordered Muslims to wash the things which unbelievers and polytheists touched by their hands or bodies.

Ḥasan reports that when the delegation of the tribe of Thaqīf came to Madīnah, they had been stayed in Masjid al-Nabawī. Some of His companions asked “O messenger of Allah! They are polytheists” (probably their intention was that Masjid would be impure if they stay there) the Prophet answered: The earth is not defiled by anything.<sup>1</sup>

‘Imrān bin Ḥusain said stating the situation of a journey with the Prophet that on the way, there was a need for water in a bivouac. Some companions got out to search it. They met a non-Muslim woman with two small leather bags full of water which they brought to Prophet Muḥammad. Then he and his companions quenched their thirst by drinking water.<sup>2</sup>

Jābir reports that we accompanied the Prophet in the wars then during wars the water ports which we recovered from

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<sup>1</sup> Muṣannaf ‘Abdur Razzāq, Kitāb: al-Ṣalāh, Bāb: al-Muṣhrik Yadkhulu al-Masjid

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb: al-Manāqib, Bāb: ‘Alāmat al-Nubuwwah fī al-Islām, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb: al-Masajid, Bāb: Qaḍā’ al-Fā’it

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non-Muslims we used them but the Prophet did not put restriction to use them.<sup>1</sup>

Once Abū Tha'laba *Khashnī* asked Prophet Muḥammad about the pots of non-Muslims, in which they would possibly cook pork and drink wine. He said: Do not use these suspected pots if other pots are available and if not, then you can use them after washing well.<sup>2</sup>

These details make clear that the impurity of polytheists means dirtiness of belief, not body. As for human relationships and common affairs of life, there is no discrimination with polytheists and there is no room of such behavior that causes hate and scorn in Muslims against them.

**Prohibition of Friendship with Disbelievers:** There is another objection raised by Hindu extremists that in the Qur'ān Muslims have been prohibited to have friendly relations with the followers of other religions declaring them enemy. It is obvious that this causes to promote emotions of hate and animosity and plans are being made to harm them. Following verses are presented as proof for the answer of this objection in the verse bellow:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكٰفِرِينَ اءُولِيَآءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ<sup>٤</sup>

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not befriend disbelievers rather than believers. (al-Nisā': 144)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ اءُولِيَآءَ تُلْفُونَ اءِلَيْهِمْ بِاَلْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اَلْحَقِّ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not take my enemies and your enemies for supporters, offering them affection, when they have disbelieved in what has come to you of truth. (al-Mumtaḥinah: 1)

<sup>1</sup> Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb: al-Aṭ'imah, Bāb: al-Akl fī Āniyat Abhl al-Kitāb

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Buḫārī, Kitāb: al-Dabā'iḥ wa al-Ṣaid, Bāb: Āniyat al-Majūs, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb: al-Ṣaid wa al-Dabā'iḥ, Bāb: al-Ṣaid bi al-Kilāb al-Mu'allamah

These verses need to be pondered upon in the light of their correct context.

The believers have been told not to make disbelievers friends. Auliya' is an Arabic word and plural of wali whose origin is ولي.

The sense of wali' is that two or more things come together in a way that there is nothing in-between them which is different from them. And this word metaphorically denotes the meaning of nearest whether is the nearest of place or relationship, religions or friendship, relief or belief. The person with whom the kinds of nearness are proved, is called wali.<sup>1</sup>

The word Auliya' has been used for the most nearest sense in above verses and other verses like these. 'Allamah Qurṭubī says:

أولياء أي خاصتكم وبطانتكم منهم.

Tr.: Do not befriend disbelievers i.e. very close and faithful and trusted friend.<sup>2</sup>

'Allamah Zamakhsharī explains its sense:

لا تتخذوهم أولياء تنصروهم وتستنصروهم وتؤاخوهم وتصافوهم وتعاشروهم معاشرة المؤمنين.

Tr.: Do not befriend disbelievers i.e. you do not treat with them in such a way that you help them and seek help from them. And have relations of brotherhood, sincerity and love with them and live with them like Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, al-Mufradāt fī Ḡharīb al-Qur'ān, al-Maṭba'ah al-Maimaniyyah, Egypt, 1324H, P. 555

<sup>2</sup> Qurṭubī, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Anṣārī, al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān (Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī), al-Hai'ah al-Miṣriyyah al-'Ammah li al-Kitāb, Egypt, 1987, 5/425

<sup>3</sup> Zamakhsharī, Abul Qāsim Jārullāh Maḥmūd bin 'Umar, al-Kashshāf an Ḥaqā'iq al-Tanzīl, Maṭba'ah Muṣṭafā'ī al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī wa Aulāduhu, Egypt, 1973, 1/619

To understand these verses it is necessary to keep in mind the circumstances in which they have been revealed. By that time Muslims were facing tough situations. The enemies of Muslims had declared war against them and strived to uproot them completely. The behavior of Jews and Christians was based on the open hostility. They were helping disbelievers against Muslims. There was third group of hypocrites who were presenting themselves as Muslims as well as they included themselves among Muslims. But in reality they were friends of disbelievers. When Muslims got success, they felt pain in their hearts and celebrated if Muslims were harmed. They all were united on the hostility of Islam and Muslims. It was very dangerous for Muslims to have close relationship with their enemies in such circumstances religiously and politically. The Qur'an, therefore, emphasized Muslims clearly about each group separately that they do not have relation of friendship with the disbelievers:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا الْكَافِرِيْنَ اَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not befriend disbelievers rather than believers. (al-Nisā': 144)

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصْرٰى اَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَّمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ  
مِّنْكُمْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنْهُمْ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not take Jews and Christians as allies; some of them are allies of one another. Whoever of you allies himself with them is one of them. (al-Mā'idah: 51)

وَدُوْا لَوْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ كَمَا كَفَرُوْا فَتَكُوْنُوْنَ سَوَآءً ۗ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ اَوْلِيَاءَ

Tr.: They would love to see you disbelievers, so you would become equal. So do not befriend. (al-Nisā': 89)

In this matter the Qur'an emphasized that the Muslims whose fathers and brothers did not accept Islam and preferred

disbelief to belief they should not keep relationship with them like believers. Because it is possible that their secrets may reach through them:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ ءَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ  
وَمَنْ يَتَّوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not ally yourselves with your parents and your siblings if they prefer disbelief to belief. Whoever of you allies himself with them—these are the wrongdoers. (al-Taubah: 23)

The Qur'ān has explained these reasons in some verses which prevent to keep very close relation with others except Muslims.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوعًا وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن  
قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَفَّارَ ءَوْلِيَاءَ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not befriend those who take your religion in mockery and as a play, be they from among those who were given the Scripture before you, or the disbelievers. And obey Allah, if you are believers. (al-Mā'idah: 57)

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ ءَوْلِيَاءَ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not take My enemies and your enemies for supporters. (al-Mumtaḥinah: 1)

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُواكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ  
أَن تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَّوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

Tr.: But Allah prohibits you from befriending those who fought against you over your religion, and expelled you from your homes, and aided in your expulsion. Whoever takes them for friends—these are the wrongdoers. (al-Mumtaḥinah: 9)

The first verse says that they have themselves considered your religion as fun and game and they do not take it seriously. While second verse says that they are your enemies and it has been elucidated in third verse that they are fighting against you only for your religion. They expelled you from your country or helped for it. These reasons demanded rightly that there should be no close relation with them.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةَ مِن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ  
الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ

Tr.: O you who believe! Do not befriend outsiders who never cease to wish you harm. They love to see you suffer. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is worse. (Āli 'Imrān: 118)

In the above verse there is very eloquence sense in Arabic word Baṭānah which is used to clarify the inner part of the cloth that touches body. As a metaphor it is used for a person whom one considers bosom friend, intimate and confident.<sup>1</sup>

In this verse Muslims have been advised that they should not make a close relation with non-Muslims that they may disclose their secrets to the disbelievers. Because they are not your well-wishers. They do not miss any chance to harm you and their hostility and hatred with you are reflected by their behavior.

The prohibition from keeping close relation does not mean that Muslims have been prohibited from keeping human relations with common non-Muslims but it means to keep only the relation that they may not lead to disclose the political and military secrets of Islamic State and creat problems for Muslims. This prohibition is for those who want to fight war

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<sup>1</sup> Ṭabrī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad bin Jarīr, Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Tawīl Āyi al-Qur'ān, Dār al-Ma'ārif, Egypt, 1969, 7/138, al-Kaṣhshāf, 1/458, Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī, 4/178

against Muslims or are helping the enemies of Muslims. As for non-Muslims who are not engaged in fighting against them and nor their behavior are based on malice and brutality and hostility. In this case Muslims are ordered to do justice, keep good relations and behave well with them. Allah says:

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾

Tr.: As for those who have not fought against you for your religion, nor expelled you from your homes, Allah does not prohibit you from dealing with them kindly and equitably. Allah loves the equitable. (al-Mumtaḥinah: 8)

This verse is very important regarding keeping relations with non-Muslims. It has two sentences: *تقسطوا إليهم* and *أن تبرؤهم*. Al-Birr is an Arabic word which means to do connoisseur of beauty and kind relationship.<sup>1</sup> It has the meaning of doing connoisseur of beauty the most. (البر التوسع في الإحسان إليه).<sup>2</sup> The commentators have explained the meaning of *تقسطوا إليهم* that; behave fairness and justice with them, while some others described its sense that; give them some of your wealth as kind relationship.

أن تعطوهم قسطاً من أموالكم على وجه الصلة.<sup>3</sup>

Some of them (the exegetes) nullify these verses but most of them say that it is applicable not aborted (وقال أكثر أهل التأويل هي محكم).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Kathīr, Abul Fidā' 'Imāduddīn Ismā'īl, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Azīm (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr), al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, Egypt, 1356H, 4/349, Lisān al-'Arab, 4/54

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mufradāt fī Ḡharīb al-Qur'ān, P. 93

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-'Arabī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-Mālikī al-Ishbīlī, Aḥkām-ul-Qur'ān, Maṭba'ah al-Sa'ādah, Egypt, 1331H, 2/249, al-Mawārdī, Abul Ḥasan 'Alī bin Ḥabīb al-Baṣārī, al-Nukat wa al-'Uyūn (Tafsīr al-Mawārdī), Maṭābi' al-Maqhāwī, Kuwait, 1402H, 4/223, Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī, 18/59, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, 8/134

Imām Qurṭubī writes:

هذه الآية رخصة من الله في صلة الذين لم يجدوا المؤمنين ولم يقاتلهم.<sup>2</sup>

Allah has allowed to behave good with non-Muslims who are not enemies of Muslims and did not fight against them.

Imām Rāzī says:

قال أهل التأويل: هذه الآية تدلّ على جواز البر بين المشركين والمسلمين وإن كانت الموالاة منقطعة.<sup>3</sup>

The commentators said that this verse tells that it is lawful to deal goodness and connoisseur of beauty, though there is prohibition to keep close relation with them. It made clear that it does not been prohibit Muslims to keep all kinds of relations with non-Muslims but prohibition is emphasized only to keep Wilāyat (close relation of a particular type). As for keeping common human and social relations, it is not under it. As 'Allāmah Qurṭubī says:

الإحسان والهيئة مستثناة من الولاية.<sup>4</sup>

Wilāyat does not include keeping good relation with non-Muslims and giving them something as present.

### **The Orders to fight against Opponents and kill them:**

One of the greatest objections by Hindu extremists on the Qur'ān is its concept of Jihād. It is said that Muslims have been ordered to fight disbelievers and idolaters and deal severely with them and watch for an opportunity against them and kill them where you find. This verse is presented as a proof:

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī, 18/59

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Rāzī, Faḫruddīn Muḥammad bin 'Umar, Mafātīḥ al-Gḥaib (al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr), al-Maṭba'ah al-'Āmirah, Egypt, 1308H, 8/134

<sup>4</sup> Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī, 8/94

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يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً

Tr.: O you who believe! Fight those of disbelievers who attack you, and let find severity in you. (al-Taubah: 123)

فَأَقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْصُرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ

Tr.: Kill polytheists wherever you find them. And capture them, and besiege them, and lie wait for them at every ambush. (al-Taubah: 5)

يَأْتِيهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَتَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٩﴾

Tr.: O prophet! Strive hard against the disbelievers and hypocrites, and be stern with them. Their abode is Hell. What a miserable destination! (al-Taḥrīm: 9)

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Tr.: Fight them, Allah will punish them at hands, humiliate them, help you against them, and heal the hearts of a believing people. (al-Taubah: 14)

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَلَغُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Tr.: Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden, nor abide by the religion of truth—from among those who received the Scripture—until they pay the due tax, willingly or unwillingly. (al-Taubah: 29)

It is said by presenting such verses that the survival of the fittest is not possible between Muslims and non-Muslims unless these verses are in the Qur'ān.

Actually this misunderstanding results for not examining the orders and teachings of the Qur'ān in the right scenario as

well as reading their relevant verses by ignoring them from the context. It is necessary to be considered on this subject from several aspects:

**(a) Islam is against Compulsion:** The Qur'ān asserted that Allah has clarified the right before you along with freedom of choosing it that

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٣﴾

Tr.: We guided him to the way, be he appreciative or unappreciative. (al-Dahr: 3)

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ

Tr.: and say, "The truth is from our Lord. Whoever wills- let him believe- let him disbelieve". (al-Kahaf: 29)

**(b) Muslims have been permitted that they can defend the cruelty being treated against themselves when they are persecuted:**

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَن يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ

Tr.: Permission of war is given to those who are oppressed, and Allah is Able to give them victory. Those who unjustly evicted from their homes, merely for saying, "Our Lord is Allah." (al-Hajj: 39-40)

The history of Islam witnessed that Muslims did not start war, but it was imposed on them. The plan of enemies was to wipe out Muslims who were then weak in very first stage and blow out the light of Islam. In this circumstance Muslims were ordered to make a blunt reply and destroy their plans, but they were affirmed to avenge as much as they were oppressed, do not overstep:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَكْفِرُونَ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

Tr.: And fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not commit aggression; Allah does not love the aggressors. (al-Baqarah: 190)

**(c) The following verses of fighting are not related to the common circumstances, rather there are instructions in the course of war in above verses:** When there is war with a group, one should not compromise with his opponent in the battle field, but each one should try to harm his opponent and kill his enemies in huge number and cut their military power. Showing any weakness and kindness in this situation is like to put yourself in danger.

**(d) War is Unfavorable but Inevitable in Unavoidable Situation:** Therefore there are orders in different religions about it. The religions in which there is no any teaching about war, their followers are also compelled to fight on several occasions. There are orders and laws about war in the religious books which do not mean that their relation with enemy nation is common behavior, but it is clear that they describe the specific situations of war. For instance, here are some references from the religious books of Hinduism:

“O Goddess! May grant us domination in the battle field or bravery influence, with experiment and growing that gains plunder. We may defeat our enemies in the battle with your help, whether they are ours or other, we may become victorious over enemy. O brave! We may be happy by killing both types of enemies with your help, with great wealth.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Righveda, 6:1:8-13

"O Fire-God! Subjugate the groups of those encumbering us, make run our enemies. O Ajit! Kill the opponents who do not believe in deities and give your worshippers dignity and greatness."<sup>1</sup>

"O Manu! Come here having become more powerful than an ordinary powerful and destroy all our enemies by your wrath... Come to us with all types of treasure and trove."<sup>2</sup>

The subject of *Bhagavad Gītā* is nothing but war. In fact this consists of *Krishnā's* long instructions which he gifted the leader of *Pandva's* *Arjun* to propagate and provoke him for fighting and war.

One thing should be noted here that the Islamic States and its army have been addressed in these verses. The holy *Qur'ān* hasn't given full freedom to Muslims for killing disbelievers at their will anywhere but only the leader of State has authority to make the decision of fighting with disbelievers having enmity with Islamic States. Only he is supposed to defer either war should be done or not? If yes, then when and how. Subjects must obey the leader in all cases. As 'Allāmah *Ibn Qudāmah* writes:

"The leader of the State is responsible to decide war. Only he will make decision for it and subject must accept his decision."<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, it is permitted to kill only those of a nation, who fight in the battle field or able to fight. While it is prohibited to subject the people who are old, sick and women. *Anas* narrated that the messenger of Allah said: *ولا تقتلوا شيخًا فانيًا ولا*

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<sup>1</sup> *Yajurveda*, 9: 37

<sup>2</sup> *Atharveda*, 4:32:1-3

<sup>3</sup> *Ibn Qudāmah*, *Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh bin Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Maqdisī*, *al-Mughnī 'Alī Mukhtaṣar al-Khaqī*, *Maktabah al-Riyāḍ al-Ḥadīthah*, *Riyādh*, 1981, 8/352

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طفلاً ولا صغيراً ولا امرأة. (Tr.: Do not kill an old woman, nor a child, nor a baby, nor a woman.<sup>1</sup>)

All the objections raised by Hindu extremists are only based on emotions. An attempt is made to incite their sentiments against Muslims by them. Some verses of the Qur'ān are chosen for this ugly purpose and presented by isolating them from their true context, and self-described meanings are described. No objections will come out when these verses are studied in the correct context and kept eyes on the circumstances in which they were revealed in order to be exposed their reasonableness for readers.

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<sup>1</sup> Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb: al-Jihād, Bāb: Fī Du'ā' al-Muṣhrikīn

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## **Social Etiquettes (in the Light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah)**

✎...Prof. **Ẓafarūl Islām Iṣlāḥī**<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. **Muṣhtāque 'Ālam**<sup>2</sup>

This is an irrefutable fact that the Qur'ān is the best and complete source of guidance for entire humanity. It provides rules, regulations and guidelines for every aspect of human life and compliance, and has enacted guarantees to the welfare and success of mankind. These rules and guidelines are so comprehensive and firm that their significance, beneficence and meaningfulness have remained undisputed over the centuries. The rules and guidelines set forth by the Qur'ān regarding the social life, are of this very nature. The Qur'ān's illuminating guidance is indeed available with regard to each and every aspect of social life, ranging from entering a house to greeting, eating, drinking, standing, sitting, walking, dressing, hospitality, gifts and offerings etc, provided that we try to know and understand them. In the following, rules and guidelines of social life will be explained in the light of the Qur'ān and Prophetic traditions.

### **Etiquettes and Manners for Entering a House**

**a) How to seek permission:** With regard to social etiquettes, the first thing that we come across in the Qur'ān is about how to enter a house and that if one wants to enter someone's house, he must seek permission

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<sup>1</sup> Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh

<sup>2</sup> Ph D in Arabic from Jāmi'a Millia Islāmia (New Delhi) and Translator/Interpreter (Arabic-English-Urdu)

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and enter after salutation. It also commands that if the house owner denies entry and asks you to go back, you should not feel shy in doing that. Even if the house is vacant, one should avoid entering until he gets permission. As Allah says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوْتِكُمْ حَتّٰى تَسْتَأْنِسُوْا وَتُسَلِّمُوْا عَلٰى اَهْلِهَا ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَاِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوْا فِيْهَا اَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوْهَا حَتّٰى يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ وَاِنْ قِيْلَ لَكُمْ اَرْجِعُوْا فَاَرْجِعُوْا هُوَ اَرْزٰكِيْ لَكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُوْنَةٍ فِيْهَا مَتَعٌ لَّكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Tr.: O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that you may heed (what is seemly). If you find no one in the house, enter not until permission is given to you: if you are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves: and Allah knows well all that you do. It is no fault on your part to enter houses not used for living in, which serve some (other) use for you: And Allah has knowledge of what you reveal and what you conceal. (al-Nūr: 27-29)

These verses reveal that permission should be sought before entering a house and the Qur'ānic way of permission for it, is to salute. If permission is not granted and you are asked to go back, you should do that without any sense of humiliation. In respect of this verse in which it has been instructed to ask permission for getting entry into the house of one's own mother, some interpreters of the Qur'ān have observed that 'other than your own' in the above verse stands for a house in which a person lives alone.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Muftī Muḥammad Shafi', *Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān*, Maktaba Muṣṭafayī, Deoband, n.d., 6/388

The noteworthy in this verse is that the Qur'ān first makes an injunction that one should not enter someone's house without permission and if he is asked to go back, he should not be hesitate in doing so. Subsequently, the Qur'ān reiterates that this is the virtuous and chaste way. Purpose of this commandment is very clear that both of these things what the people sometimes like to follow or they do not like to do so. Therefore, it was necessary to engrain the fact that all virtues lie in compliance with the Qur'ānic teachings which get expounded in the Prophetic traditions. It is narrated in a Ḥadīth that a person of Banū 'Āmir came to the house of the Prophet (PBUH) and asked seeking permission of entry in the house: "May I come in? (and so forth)." The Prophet (PBUH) sent his servant and asked him: "Go and teach him how to seek permission (that he should say:) السلام عليكم. أَدْخُلْ (Assalām-u-'Alaikum. May I come in?) That person heard this conversation and repeated these words. The Prophet granted him the permission.<sup>1</sup> It is also a Prophetic tradition that when one enters someone's house he should say *salām* thrice with short intervals and if there is no response, one should go back. Abū Sa'īd *Khudrī* (MABPWH) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "When anyone of you seeks permission for three times and still he is not granted, he should go back."<sup>2</sup> It is also narrated by the Prophet (PBUH) that when he goes to visit someone, he would seek permission by saluting three times (before entering a house). If he did not receive any response, he should come back.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الأَدَب, chapter في الاستئذان

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الأَدَب, chapter كم مرة يسلم الرجل في الاستئذان

<sup>3</sup> *Mukhtaṣar Zādul Ma'ād*, Muḥammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb. Urdu translation by Sa'īd Aḥmad Qamruzzamān Nadwī, Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Riyādh, 1417H, P. 159

There is another tradition with regard to seeking permission or knocking the door, which the Prophet (PBUH) himself practiced and urged his companions to follow it. That is that if one reaches someone's door, he should not stand at a place from where privacy of the house is exposed, rather than he should stand little away from the door on right or left side. Hudhail (MABPWH) narrated that a person came to meet the Prophet (PBUH) and stood exactly in front of the door (and started seeking permission of entry). The Prophet asked him not to stand like this (i.e. beside the door). He also said that directive of seeking permission is promulgated for the purpose that one's eye may not see the people (inside the house).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Prophet highlighted the importance of this practice by embracing it himself as reported by 'Abdullāh bin Bisr (MABPWH) that when the Prophet (PBUH) would go to someone's house, he did not face towards the door, rather he stood either right or left of the door and said, 'السلام عليكم (peace be upon you).'<sup>2</sup>

These injunctions make an endeavor to end the practices which open doors for all sorts of moral corruption in the society, including evil glance, interfering with the private life and desecration thereof, etc.

These verses also underline that there is nothing wrong in entering an uninhabited house without permission. Interpreters of the Qur'ān have generally made an inference that the houses or accommodations mentioned here are not individual residences of any particular person or people, but rather permission to use them is not restricted, e.g. mosques, madrasas, travelers' lodges, hotels, hospitals, post offices, railway stations, airports and offices. Notwithstanding the

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book الأدب*, chapter في الاستئذان

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book الأدب*, chapter كم مرة يسلم الرجل في الاستئذان

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above, in the modern age and in the changed scenario, entry to the most of these places without permission is either not possible or does not feel convenient. Therefore, the places where one can enter without permission should be redefined.

**b) How to respond salutation:** The salutation in the light of the Qur'ān is that when someone greets someone, he must respond in a better way. Allah says:

وَإِذَا حُيِّتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا

Tr.: But when you are greeted with a greeting [of peace], answer with an even better greeting, or [at least] with the like thereof. (al-Nisā': 86)

There appeared another connotation of greeting that one should answer with a happy greeting, besides adding few words of prayers with the response. This is further elaborated in a Ḥadīth in which it has been said that as much the word will be added in the response like (السلام عليكم ورحمة الله / وبركاته/مغفرته), the reward will be greater.<sup>1</sup> The importance and virtue of greeting (even after a short interval) are evident from saying of the Prophet (PBUH) that when anyone of you meets his brother (in faith) he should offer greeting. Then, if a tree or a wall or a stone intervenes between them and he meets him again, he should greet him twice.<sup>2</sup>

**c) Manners of Meeting and Conversation:** As per the injunctions of the Qur'ān, one should meet his brother in a happy and graceful manner and he should not show any sort of arrogance and pride and he should not swell his cheek at someone in pride when he meets him:

<sup>1</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, Book الأدب, chapter كيف السلام

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book السلام, chapter في الرجل يفارق الرجل ثم يلقاه يسلم عليه

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ...

Tr.: And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men... (Luqmān: 18)

Swelling cheek is the best example of allegorical expression for showing arrogance and pride. This is against the Islamic etiquettes. Rather the belief in God and noble manner require that one should behave with devotion and love and show gracefulness while he meets a person. In fact, even meeting a person with gracefulness is an act of virtue as it is mentioned in the Prophetic tradition that 'Do not belittle any good deed, even to meet your brothers with smiling countenance'.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, one should be polite while he talks to someone and say to him only good things. Allah said:

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا...

Tr.: Speak fair to the people... (al-Baqarah: 83)

The interpreters of the Qur'ān are of the view that this verse reveals that one should not be rude and impolite while talking, rather soft tone and good words should be used in conversation. It has been elaborated further in a Ḥadīth reported on the authority of Abū Hurairah (MABPWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said, 'He who believes in Allah and the Last Day must either speak good or keep silent.'<sup>2</sup> Shouting and verbal abuse must be avoided. As Allah says:

وَأَغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

Tr.: And lower your voice; the most hideous of voices is the braying of the donkey. (Luqmān: 19)

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, book استحباب طلاقة الوجه عند اللقاء, chapter البر والصلة والأداب

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, book باب حفظ اللسان ومن كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر, chapter الرقاق, chapter فليقل خيراً أو ليصمت

In his exegetical commentary of this verse, the author of 'Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān' said: Make your voice soft and polite instead of being rude and impolite because Allah has made man the best of His creatures by blessing them with the eloquence and rhetorical expression. So, they should not abandon the art of eloquence and join the herd of donkeys.<sup>1</sup>

**d) Manners of Gathering:** The Qur'ān has set out how to take seat in a gathering. It has specifically commanded that space should be made for other people to sit and if someone feels to leave his seat to accommodate others, he should not feel offended. Rather, he should manage it happily. Allah says in the Qur'ān:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اِذَا قِيْلَ لَكُمْ تَقَسَّحُوْا فِى الْمَجْلِسِ فَاَفْسَحُوْا يَفْسَحِ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ اَنْشُرُوْا فَاَنْشُرُوْا..

Tr.: O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room: (ample) room will Allah provide for you. And when you are told to rise up, rise up (al-Mujādalah: 11)

The purpose is to reiterate that ample room should be offered to those who reach late at the gathering and if convener of the gathering asks someone to leave his seat, one should not feel embarrassed or annoyed. These Qur'ānic commandments are further elaborated in the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet (PBUH) was reported as saying, 'When a person sees his brother (in faith) coming to him, he is duty-bound to make room for him and allow him sit beside him.'<sup>2</sup> Apart from it this injunction is also of importance that it is not appropriate stand that one may get someone leave his seat against his will

<sup>1</sup> Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, Tāj Company, Delhi, 1989, 6/433

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Baihaqī*, في شعب الإيمان

so as to get that seat. It is reported from ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar (MABPWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said, ‘One of you should not remove someone from his place and sit in it, but instead, spread out and make room.’<sup>1</sup> It is also a manner of the gathering that one should sit where he finds room upon entering, and he should not jump over the people to go ahead. Jābir bin Samrah reports depicting condition of Prophet’s court, ‘When we came to the Prophet’s court, we would sit wherever we found room.’<sup>2</sup>

**e) Etiquettes and Manners of Walking on the Road:** How one should walk or what etiquettes he should adopt while he goes out to meet someone or do some work. Although it seems so simple but it is of utmost importance in day-to-day life. This too lends itself to be a barometer for a person’s behavior with his fellow man and his moral conduct. That’s why the Qur’ān has taught manners of walking. Allah said:

... وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

Tr.: ... Do not walk proudly on the earth; Allah does not love the proud and the boastful. (Luqmān: 18)

Allah again said:

وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ...

Tr.: Walk modestly ... (Luqmān: 19)

Walking with a swagger or haughty style is the sign of arrogance and pride and this verse underlined its ugliness. It was considered among the habits abhorred by Allah. Its prohibition provides that one should observe humility while

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, book الاستئذان, chapter لا يقيم الرجل الرجل من مجلسه

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, book الأدب, chapter باب في التحلق

walking and not walk in a way that boasts of pride and arrogance. Besides that, it is also to remind of the fact that he has been created from clay, which is humble, soft, and smooth. Therefore, man should recognize his origin and shun swaggering and strutting while walking because this is the way of arrogant people. He should not be too quick or too slow while walking. This is worthy to be noted here that the Qur'an has described the qualities of Allah's beloved slaves. First and foremost among such attributes, as mentioned in the Qur'an, is that when they walk, they walk modestly. Allah says:

عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا ...

Tr.: And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility... (al-Furqān: 25)

In the exegesis of this verse, the author of 'Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān' points out: "This means that Allah's beloved slaves do not do swaggering or strutting while walking; they do not try to show their might by their pace like the oppressor and corrupt people; rather their gait is that of a noble, civilized and righteous people."<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'an describes some more etiquettes and manners regarding walking on the road, and most importantly, its audience are both man and women. It is noteworthy regarding the relevant commandment of the Qur'an that it first addressed men and emphasized that they should keep their gaze low. Allah says thus:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ...

Tr.: Say to the believers they should lower their gaze... (al-Nūr: 24)

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul A'la Maudūdī, *Tafhīm-u- Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2004, 3/462

This verse draws attention of men towards the fact that it is not good for them to allow for their gaze to wander here and there upon women or fall prey to the deviation of eyes, because this opens venues for moral corruption and playing with someone's honor, modesty and chastity. One should know that if he catches a glimpse of a woman all of a sudden while walking on the street, there is nothing wrong in it. But looking at her again will not be appropriate as it is evident from the Ḥadīth in which it has been stated that Jarīr bin 'Abdullāh (MABPWH) asked the Prophet (PBUH) about catching glimpse of (a woman) all of a sudden. The Prophet advised him to turn his gaze.<sup>1</sup> It is elaborated further in another Ḥadīth in which it has been said that the Prophet ordered 'Alī (MABPWH) saying: "O 'Alī! Do not look at a woman again after your first unexpected look. The first (accidental) look is for you and the second is never for you."<sup>2</sup> This means that if one catches a glimpse of a woman all of a sudden, there is no retribution for that. But looking at her second time intentionally, will not be permissible.

On the other hand, the Qur'ān addressed women saying that they should lower their gaze while walking on the road, they should not reveal their beauty and adornment, and should veil their body properly. Allah says:

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَعْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا  
وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ...

Tr.: And say to the believing women that they lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and do not reveal their adornment

<sup>1</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, chapters الاستئذان والأدب, and نظرة الفجأة في ما جاء في *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book الأداب, chapter نظرة الفجأة

<sup>2</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, chapters الاستئذان والأدب, and نظرة الفجأة في ما جاء في

except that which is outward (face and hands); and let them draw their veils over their neck,... (al-Nūr: 24)

It is worthy to be noted that both the men and women have been ordained to lower their gaze (cast down their eyes). Notwithstanding the above, some of the interpreters of Ḥadīth have opined in al-Nūr of above-mentioned Ḥadīth about looking at a woman unexpectedly or intentionally that woman is not dutiful to veil her face while walking on the street. Instead, it is just recommended. However, men need to lower their gaze in front of women.<sup>1</sup>

Unguarded gaze and demonstration of beauty and adornment may take place both inside and outside the house. Nevertheless, it is more likely to happen when one goes out of the house. Therefore, this Qur'ānic injunction is relevant in either case. Furthermore, the adornment stands for everything one uses to look herself beautiful and appealing. This may be luxury clothes and jewelries. Women have been enjoined by this verse not to reveal their adornment, i.e. places of beauty. In order to protect their modesty and to safeguard their honor, the Qur'ān has further reiterated:

وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ...

Tr.: ... Nor let them stamp their feet, so that their hidden ornament is known... (al-Nūr: 24)

The point to be noted here is that although women are intrinsically inclined to apply makeup on their body and to reveal their beauty and adornment but the Qur'ān does not allow revealing them in front of everyone. The Qur'ān never approves that the believing women put on makeup and reveal

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<sup>1</sup> Yahyá bin Sharaf al-Nawawī, *Sh*arḥ *Ṣ*aḥīḥ Muslim, Dār-ul-Khair, Damascus, 1998, 14/315

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their beauty to every Tom, Dick, and Harry. In fact, the Qur'ān forbids women (whether inside or outside the house) to do anything that causes arousal of other people's sexual desire.

It is well-known fact that Islam never ever likes intermingling of men and women and this is to be observed even while walking on the street. In a Ḥadīth, it has been described how both men and women should walk on a street. They should walk separately and it is better for women to walk by the roadside. Both men and women have been ordained clearly that they should not walk together with each other, i.e. neither women in the middle of men nor men in the middle of women. Abū Usaid al-Anṣārī (MABPWH) narrated from his father that he, while coming out of the mosque, heard the Prophet (PBUH) saying (when the people had intermingled with women): Ladies! Give way. You should not walk in middle of the road. You should rather walk by the roadside. Following that incident, women started walking the road by the wall side so much that their clothes would sometime stick to the walls.<sup>1</sup> In accordance with another Ḥadīth (reported on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar (MABPWH), the Prophet prohibited men from walking in the middle of women.<sup>2</sup> This provides thus that same as women should not walk in the middle of men, men too should avoid walking in the middle of women.

**f) Protecting each other's honor and dignity in daily life:** How one should behave while visiting, talking and socializing with each other? No doubt, this too is related to the etiquettes and manners of social life. One of the most significant aspects of the Qur'ānic teaching to this effect is

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, book الأدب, chapter مشي النساء في الطريق

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Fārūq *Khān*, *Kalām-i-Nubuwwat*, 3/119, with reference to Abū Dāwūd

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that people should have regard for honor and dignity of each other and not look at others contemptuously, and in order to realize this, it is necessary that no one should be ridiculed. Importance of this Qur'ānic commandment is stated unequivocally by addressing both men and women separately as Allah says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا يَسْخَرُوْا قَوْمًا مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ اَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا يَسَاءَ مِنْ  
نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَرُوْا بِالْاَلْقَابِ...

Tr.: O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames... (al-Ḥujurāt: 11)

Author of 'Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān' has written in the exegesis of this verse that ridiculing or laughing at someone is not merely taking jab at someone, rather it includes mimicry, making gesture, laughing at someone's clothes, act or face or drawing attention of people towards a defect or shortcoming found in him so that they laugh at him. All of these are included in the meaning of ridicule.<sup>1</sup> In view of Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shāfi'ī, *tanābuz bil alqāb* means calling someone with bad titles which make him enraged, like calling someone with nicknames like lame, limp, blind, one-eyed etc. In a Ḥadīth, the Prophet (PBUH) said, right of one believer on another is that he should remember him with names that he likes the most.<sup>2</sup> However, ridiculing of someone or calling names is not only his contempt rather it hurts too and eventually it leads to grudge and dispute between them. Moreover, a person

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul A'la Maudūdī, *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2004, 5/85

<sup>2</sup> *Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān*, Maktaba Muṣṭafayī, Deoband, n.d., 8/117

laughing at someone purportedly thinks of himself to be very honored and respectful and thus belittles others. The Qur'an reminds such people that it is merely their misconception. He must know that all sorts of greatness is for Allah alone:

وَلَهُ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

Tr.: His has the glory in the heavens and the earth... (al-Jāthiyah: 45)

And He also says:

فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا...

Tr.: All glory belongs to Allah... (al-Nisā': 139)

In fact, only Allah knows who is truly honorable and who is contemptible in His eyes. He also has set a scale for it. Therefore, a person laughing at someone should think and realize that the person at whom he is laughing may be better than him and beloved and honored in the eyes of Allah. For that reason, such person should refrain from such disdainful act.

**g) Maintaining Hygiene and Cleanliness:** Maintaining hygiene and cleanliness is one of the required attributes of the believer. As per the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, this is required for man's own body, clothing and other things and even his residence. Its importance radiates from this Qur'anic pronouncement, which says that Allah likes those who keep clean:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ...

Tr.: For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean... (al-Baqarah: 242)

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This is very important that hygiene and cleanliness are stated as attributes of the people who are attached with the house of Allah (mosques). Allah says:

فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَّطَهَّرُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

Tr.: In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loves those who make themselves pure... (al-Taubah: 108)

**h) Obligation of cleaning body, house, adjacent areas,**

**roads, etc:** It is to be noted that cleanliness has been regarded in Ḥadīth as half of the faith. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Cleanliness is half of faith."<sup>1</sup> The point to be noted here is that in consonance with the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, maintaining hygiene and cleanliness of everything is required, including body, clothes, house, neighborhood, etc. We all know that *ṣalāh* (Prayer) is the most important form of worship in Islam. At the time of offering *ṣalāh*, particular emphasis has been laid on cleanliness. (al-Mā'idah: 6; al-Nisā': 43; al-Muddaththir: 1-5). These verses reveal the preference of this worship as well as the importance of cleanliness. Notwithstanding the above, one should also not ignore that offering *ṣalāh* keeps the believers motivated to always observe cleanliness as per the *sharī'ah*. Moreover, when a person carefully washes his hands, face and feet for at least five times daily, no one can deny that this very act will keep him clean outwardly. At least the body parts washed during performing ablution will not have any leftover dirt or dust. Likewise, the Qur'ān, in some specific conditions, enjoins believers to have bath (al-Mā'idah: 6), because without that *ṣalāh* can not be offered as the Apostle of

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, book الطهارة*, chapter فضيل الوضوء

Allah said: “Allah does not accept any prayer without purification.”<sup>1</sup> Apart from this, the Qur’ān has instructed the believers to take adornment at the time of every prayer. Allah, the Almighty, says:

يَبْنَیْ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ ...

Tr.: Children of Ādam, take your adornment at every place of prayer... (al-A’arāf: 31)

Needless to say that adornment may not be thought of without maintaining cleanliness and hygiene, particularly of body and clothes. All these provisions draw our attention to the fact that Islamic forms of worship (apart from many other advantages and blessings) are also important for the reason that they play a key role in keeping the believers clean and pure.

This is also noteworthy herein that in some of the verses all Muslims nation have been ordained unequivocally, through the Prophet, to keep their clothes free from impurity, to keep them clean, and to stay away from all sorts of impurity. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴿١﴾ قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ﴿٢﴾ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾ وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ﴿٤﴾ وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ﴿٥﴾

Tr.: O you who covers himself [with a garment]. Arise and warn. And glorify your Lord. And purify your clothing. And avoid uncleanness. (al-Muddaththir: 1-5)

Some of the interpreters of the Qur’ān have written in the exegesis of this verse that it enjoins to keep your clothes free from impurity because purity of clothes and that of the soul are essentially correlated. Secondly, keep your clothes clean (this entails negation of the monastic misconception that a person is as much pure as much his clothes are dirty). Thirdly, keep your dressing free from moral defects. This means that

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, chapters الطهارة, and لا يقبل الله صلوة إلا بطهور

clothes need to be neat and clean but it should not have any iota of pride and ostentation. The last part of the verse reminds that impurity (*rijz*) means all sorts of impurity whether related to faiths and ideas or morality and deeds, body or clothes or style of living.<sup>1</sup>

In fact it must not be imagined of a believer that he may remain impure or dirty. Both the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth have emphasized on maintaining hygiene and cleanliness of body, clothes, house, courtyards, streets and roads etc. It has been reported on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar (MABPWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said: O believers! Keep your body pure and clean, Allah will keep you pure.<sup>2</sup> In another Ḥadīth, a statement of Sa'īd bin Musayyib has been reported that Allah is Pure and likes purity and He is Clean and likes cleanliness. In fact, Islam seeks to engrave on the minds of its followers that Allah is Pure and likes purity and cleanliness, and therefore, a believer too should keep himself clean and pure. Here, it should be added that the above-mentioned Ḥadīth has been directly narrated from Sa'ad (MABPWH) by a narrator with the addition of these words: 'and clean your courtyards'.<sup>3</sup> This reveals that the Prophet (PBUH) emphasized on the cleanliness of the houses. With reference to these wordings of the Ḥadīth, a renowned religious scholar and interpreter of the Qur'ān, Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī made a very wise comment saying:

“Glory be to Allah! When there is so much emphasis on cleanliness of the courtyard adjacent to the house, what importance would have been assigned to the cleanliness of the house itself? Similarly, when so much attention has been paid to cleanliness of the house, how cleanliness of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Talkhīṣ Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*

<sup>2</sup> Sulaimān bin al-Ṭabrānī, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 12/341 (Ḥadīth no. 13620)

<sup>3</sup> *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, book النظافة والاستئذان والأدب, chapter النظافة

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clothes would have been ignored? Likewise, cleanliness of body and soul would have been treated as utmost important. A sane person can understand that when the Prophet (PBUH) had so much care for outward cleanliness, how much care he would have given for the cleanliness of inward (soul).<sup>1</sup>

There is a well-known narration about how careful the Prophet (PBUH) was for cleanliness of mosque and his house. If he ever saw filth anywhere, he would express his disgust publicly and drew attention to clean it. If he even saw spots of saliva on walls, he would remove them using tip of his stick and if anyone else did it, he would express his pleasure and give compliments. It is reported on the authority of Anas bin Mālik (MABPWH): The Prophet (PBUH) saw spittle on the wall of the *qibla* in the mosque. He was so angry that his face became red. It was noticed by a woman from the Anṣārs, who scrapped it off and applied some sort of scent on that place. “How nice it is!”, the Prophet (PBUH) admired.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, it has been reported of the Prophet (PBUH) that he extremely disliked if anyone wore dirty clothes or kept uncombed hair. Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh (MABPWH) narrated: “Prophet of Allah came to us and noticed that a person’s hair was disorderly. The Prophet said: Did that person not find anything to clean his head and keep his hair tidy. Similarly, when he saw a person in dirty clothes, he said: Did he not get something (water or detergent) to wash his clothes. Did he not have comb to arrange his hair?”<sup>3</sup> In another Ḥadīth, Abū Hurairah

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Hajj Magazine*, January 2015, P. 50, See Maulānā Aṣḥraf ‘Alī ThānAwī, Rāh-I-Najāt

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Nasā’ī*, book المساجد, chapter تخليق المساجد; See also: Shīblī Nu’mānī, *Sīrat-un-Nabī*, Dārul Muṣannifīn, Shīblī Academy, 2003, 2/162, Muḥammad ‘Abdul Ḥayy, *Uswa-i-Rasūl*, Maktaba Thānawī, Deoband, n.d., P. 366

<sup>3</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book اللباس; Chapter في الخلقان وفي غسل الثوب; Mishkatul Masabih, Book اللباس, Chapter الترتيل

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(MABPWH) reported as saying: "A person having hair on his head should keep it tidy."<sup>1</sup>

Apart from all that is mentioned above and in respect of sanitation and cleanliness, Islam reiterates that one should not be content with cleaning only his house and courtyard rather he is required not to discard waste or relieve oneself on the streets, roads and all such other places from where people pass or which are used for temporary relax, because this causes discomfort to the people. Prophet (PBUH) reiterated to avoid these things in an unequivocal term. Prophet (PBUH) said: "Be on your guard against three things which provoke cursing: defecating in the watering places, on the thoroughfares, and in the shades (of the tree)."<sup>2</sup> This instruction assumes particular importance because people generally tend to be careful for the cleanliness of their house and the adjacent areas but very few people pay attention to the cleanliness of the streets and roads. That said, Islam's sensitivity to this issue might be gauged to this extent that removing painful object from the way has been declared part of the belief and, to underline its importance, it has been mentioned as very beneficial work.<sup>3</sup> No one can dispute over this matter that discarding waste and rubbish on the way is very disgusting and painful for the people passing through that way and Islam never allows anyone to do anything harmful to others. Therefore, it asks its followers not to discard waste on the places used by the public, as it is asserted in the above-mentioned Ḥadīth.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الترتل, Chapter إصلاح الشعر

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الطهارة, Chapter المواضع التي نهي عن البول فيها

<sup>3</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, book الآداب, Chapter إمالة الأذى عن الطريق

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This is well known that use of perfume is also regarded as part of cleanliness. Aromatic flowers have been mentioned in the Qur'ān as great bounties. Allah says:

فِيهَا فَكِيهَةٌ وَالتَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ ﴿١١﴾ وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ﴿١٢﴾ قِيَابِ آءِ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا  
نُكَدِّبَانِ ﴿١٣﴾

Tr.: In it are fruits and date-palms with sheaths, grain with husk, and fragrant herbs. So which of your Lord's bounties will you both deny? (al-Raḥmān: 11-13)

This is also known from the Ḥadīth that the Prophet (PBUH) was fond of perfume. More often he used it and encouraged others to do it.<sup>1</sup> According to a Ḥadīth, the Prophet possessed a *sukka* (perfume pot or compound perfume) what he used.<sup>2</sup> The Prophet was so much careful about the cleanliness that when he woke up in the morning he relieved himself, then performed ablution, and sprayed perfume on his clothes.<sup>3</sup>

**i) Manners of Dressing and Clothes:** Clothe is a manifestation of man's dignity and culture. Nudity and being naked is against the human nature and Islam never allows this. Rather its teaching in this respect, like all other matters, is graceful to be followed. The Qur'ān is very vocal about dress code. The relevant Qur'ānic verses unveil two key purposes of clothing: first to cover the body and second to adorn. The following verse from the Qur'ān reveals the same fact. Allah thus says:

<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī, *Nashrut Tib fī Dhikrīl Ḥabīb*, World Islamic Publications, Delhi, 1982, PP. 122-124

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الاستحباب الطيب, Chapter الترتل, Chapter

<sup>3</sup> *Shamā'il-i-Nabawī*, Urdu Translation of *Shamā'il-i-Tirmidhī* by Maulānā Muḥammad Dhakariyā Kāndhlawī, Kutub Khān Yaḥyāwī, n.d., P. 110

يَبْنِي ۚ ءَادَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِيَأْسَا يُورِي سَوَاءَ تَيْكُمْ وَرَيْشًا ۖ وَلِيَأْسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ  
 ءَايَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Tr.: O you Children of Ādam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness,- that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that they may receive admonition! (al-A'arāf: 26)

It is also important that apart from covering the body parts by clothes, the clothing was also regarded a source of adornment, but declaration of the Qur'ān that clothing of righteousness is the best which is more important. This seeks to draw our attention to the fact that clothing is to be used for adornment but righteousness must be observed. And adornment must not be contrary to the civility and gracefulness and against the moral values. That clothing must be avoided which reveals and promotes nudity. Although this Islamic injunction is for everyone (male or female), it is very essential and mandatory for the women in particular. Earlier a verse has been quoted whose translation is "And say to the believing women that they lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and do not reveal their adornment except that which is outward (face and hands)". In this verse, women have been forbidden from showing their adornment. According to the opinion of the interpreters of the Qur'ān, both clothing and jewelries are included in the objects of adornment. Having said that, concealing of everything is neither possible nor revealing thereof is necessary. It provides that caution must be observed in the use of clothing. One should not wear a clothe which fails to meet the obligation of covering nor should put on such adornment which is revealing and thrilling. And besides that, there should not be any iota of pride and arrogance. In the exegesis of this verse, author of 'Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān' writes:

“For man, clothing is for covering the body and adornment but the virtue which they should seek in this matter is that his clothing must be the clothing of righteousness. This means it should be completely covering, not excessively fancy or ragged, not for pride or representation of such mental illness with which man becomes like female and as a result of which women start looking at him.”<sup>1</sup>

This is worthy to mention here that the Qur’ān does not forbid a person upon whom Allah bestowed plenty of wealth and riches that he wears spectacular clothes rather it is desirable as per the Qur’ān and *Sunnah* because Allah wants that the blessed one expresses the bounties he receives from Allah. However, there should not be pride and arrogance. The following Ḥadīth elaborates it further: ‘Amr bin Shu’aib from his father and his father from his grandfather reports that Allah’s Apostle (PBUH) said: “Allah loves that His bounties must be manifested by His slave.”<sup>2</sup> Verily, the manifestation of bounties is expressed through good clothing but such manifestation should not contain any element of show-off and pride. ‘Amr bin Shu’aib reports from his father and his father from his grandfather that the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Eat and drink, give charity and wear clothes, as long as that does not involve any extravagance or vanity.”<sup>3</sup> Prohibition of showing vanity from clothing has come under the saying of Prophet (PBUH) that whoever wears a garment of fame (to show it off), Allah will make him wear a garment of humiliation on the Day of Resurrection.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Abul A’lá Maudūdī, *Tafhīm-ul-Qur’ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, 2/20, Footnote no. 16

<sup>2</sup> *Jāmi’ al-Timidihi*, book الاستئذان والأطب, Chapter ما جاء أن الله يحب أن يرى أثر نعمته على عبده

<sup>3</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Book اللباس, Chapter البس ما شئت ما أخطأك إسراف أو مخلية

<sup>4</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Book اللباس, Chapter من لبس شهرة من الثياب

**j) Desirability of Covering Private Parts and Observance**

**of Dignity:** All these details reveal that the Qur'ān always asks for dignity, modesty, and no show-off in clothing. This is further elaborated in the sayings and deeds of the Prophet. Abū Hurairah (MABPWH) reported that the Prophet (PBUH) prevented from two types of clothing: First from *Ishtimāl-us-Ṣammā'*, i.e. clothes sticking to the body, and from *Iḥtibā'*, i.e. to wrap the clothe in a way that private part remains uncovered.<sup>1</sup> The clothing prohibited in these Ḥadīths are related to both men and women. Clothes used in this new age of fashion are the best example of such clothing prohibited in these Ḥadīths, and the moral corruptions and indecency caused by them are widely visible. Moreover, this underlines the wisdom of their prohibition in Islam. With specific reference to the women, attributes of a particular type of clothing has been provided while promulgating its prohibition and today's fashionable society clearly mirrors the same. It has been mentioned in the Ḥadīth that many dressed women are naked or nude as the Prophet says: "women who will be dressed but appear to be naked".<sup>2</sup> This eloquent and concise expression not only pointed to the fancy and transparent dresses, rather it amply explained the evil brought by such type of clothes.

**Etiquettes and Manners of Drinking and Eating**

**a) Prohibition of Extravagance in Food and Drink:** In the Qur'ān, there are certain rules regarding how to eat and drink. After mentioning variety of foods, the Qur'ān reminded humankind that these are blessings of Allah. They

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Book اللباس, Chapter ما نهى عنه من اللباس

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book النساء الكاسيات العاريات, Chapter اللباس

may consume them all but they ought not to forget to thank the entity who blessed them with such bounties. A way to offer thanks includes using them as instructed by Allah and His Apostle. The following verse is reminiscent of this fact:

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

Tr.: So eat of the sustenance which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good; and be grateful for the favors of Allah, if it is He Whom you worship. (al-Naḥl: 114)

The first rule found in the Holy Book to this effect that one should abstain from extravagance in eating and drinking, and thus he can obtain the the Divine benediction. The Qurʾān and Ḥadīth forbid excessive use or extravagance in everything and Allah dislikes one who does not follow this command, because such person is disgraceful to the provision of Allah. Qurʾānic guidance with regard to food and drink is very clear. Allay says:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

Tr.: Eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters. (al-Aʿrāf: 31)

It is worthy to be noted here that the word *Isrāf* (extravagance) includes both unnecessary and excessive use of an object. Apart from common ceremonies, events and happy occasions, extravagance is at its worst display in the marriage ceremonies. The worst thing about extravagance is that it causes wastage of foodstuff while poor and needy people are deprived of their rights.<sup>1</sup> The above verse also reveals that Allah does not like people who are disgraceful to His bounties and desecrate the rights of His slaves. Furthermore, the Qurʾān has declared them as brother of devil and described devil's character as saying that

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<sup>1</sup> It means if the extravagance is avoided the same would reach the the needy as charity.

he is ungrateful to his Lord (al-Isrā': 26-27). Moreover, extravagancy involves show-offs and satisfaction of one's own desire. In one of the Ḥadīths, fulfillment of this very desire has been called as extravagance. It has been related by Anas bin Mālik (MABPWH) that Allah's Apostle (PBUH) said that eating everything what one desires is extravagance.<sup>1</sup> It is a fact that wherever there are extravagance and self-acclamation, there seem pride and arrogance in one way or another. Such practice is always bad and this is forbidden in the context of food and drink too. 'Āi'sha (MABPWH) reports that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "I eat as a slave (of Allah) eats and I sit as a slave sits."<sup>2</sup> To elaborate it further, slavery is manifested when a person is filled with the thought of Allah's greatness and is grateful to His endless blessings and aware of his own weakness and failings. No doubt, such person maintains a distance from any form of pride and haughtiness. Therefore this suggests that one should be humble in his eating. Eating while leaning on one side is contrary to the notion of humility and against the manners of eating (unless there is some sort of disability). That's why it is prohibited in Ḥadīth. As Abū Juhaifa relates that the Messenger of Allah said: "I do not eat while leaning on one side."<sup>3</sup>

**b) Saying Bismillāh, Eating with Right Hand and Eating from what is near to you in the plate:** Three manners of eating and drinking are most important in Islam: (a) saying *bismillāh* before you start eating, (b) eating with your right hand and (c) eating directly from what is in front of you. In fact, saying *bismillāh* before eating is a mean to remember and offer gratitude to the Real Sustainer. It should also be noted that several verses of the Qur'ān (al-

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, book الأَطْعَمَة, Chapter من الإسراف أن تأكل ما اشتيت

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Fārūq Khān, *Kalām-i-Nubuwat*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2011, 3/285-286, Footnote no. 7

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الأَطْعَمَة, Chapter الأكل متكئاً

Isrā': 17; Ṭāha: 17; al-Aḥzāb: 52; al-Ṣāffāt: 28; al-Ḥāqqah: 19; al-Inshiqāq: 7) underline preference of right side and right hand. Furthermore, the people of Paradise have been called *Aṣḥāhab al-Yamīn* (People of the Right Hand) (al-Wāqī'ah: 27, 38, 91; al-Muddaththir: 39). Fortunately, all these three fundamental code of ethics are mentioned together in a Ḥadīth. 'Umar bin Abū Salmah narrates: "I was young while I was under the care of the Prophet (PBUH), and in this age when I eat, my hands moved here and there in the plate, he said to me once, "Mention Allah's name (i.e. say *bismillāh*), eat with your right hand and eat from what is in front of you."<sup>1</sup> In a number of Ḥadīths, emphasis has been laid on saying *bismillāh* and eating with right hand. In a widely circulated Ḥadīth narrated by 'Āi'sha (MABPWH), the Prophet (PBUH) said: "When anyone of you eats food, he should say *bismillāh*, and if he forgets to say *bismillāh* at the beginning, he should say *bismillāh fī awwalihi wa ākhirihi* (In the Name of Allah at the beginning and at the end)."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, this Ḥadīth too is widely quoted that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "When anyone of you eats food, he should eat with right hand and when he drinks anything, he should drink with right hand."<sup>3</sup>

**c) Eating while seated is preferred:** It is well-known that civilized way of eating, in view of Islam, is to eat and drink while being seated. Nothing is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān to this effect, but some interpreters of the Qur'ān tried to make inference from a verse, which is as follows:

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الأَطْعَمَة, Chapter التسمية على الطعام والأكل باليمين

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الأَطْعَمَة, Chapter التسمية على الطعام

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book الأَشْرِيَة, Chapter آداب الشراب والطعام وأحكام منها

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾

Tr.: Whereas those who disbelieve enjoy their life and eat as cattle eat and the Fire will be their abode. (Muḥammad: 12)

Interpreters of the Qurʾān have provided explanation of this verse that as the animals seek just to fill their stomach and beat their hunger from their eating, they do not think what they are eating, are permitted or not? Where their fodder is brought from? Who created them? Whether the entity providing them with sustenance is entitled to any right or not? Similarly, whatever a disbeliever gets, he eats them thoughtlessly, without any consideration for *ḥalāl* (permitted) or *ḥarām* (prohibited). They never think of what is the purpose of eating, who is provider of their sustenance, whether they have any responsibility towards him? The point to be noted in the exegesis of this verse is that after mentioning the above meaning, an interpreter has also noted that:

“This (verse) implies prohibition of eating while standing, which seems to be a general practice in today’s events and functions, because there too the same resemblance to animals is found which has been declared as an attribute of disbelievers. Explicit prohibition of drinking while standing has come at more than one place in the collection of Ḥadīths. Therefore, prohibition of drinking while standing applies with greater degree. Therefore, it is very important to avoid drinking while standing like animals.<sup>1</sup>

It is worthy to mention here that some Prophetic traditions unequivocally prohibited eating while standing, like the Ḥadīth reported by Anas (MABPWH): The Prophet (PBUH) forbade us from drinking while standing. Qatādah reported: "We asked

<sup>1</sup> *Tafsīr Aḥsan-ul-Bayān* [Urdu Translation: Muḥammad Jūnā Garhī / Tafsīr: Ṣalāḥuddīn Yūsuf], Farīd Book Depot, New Delhi, n.d., P. 1190

him: 'What about eating?'" He said: "That is even worse, (or may be he said) more detestable."<sup>1</sup> Besides that, one manner of eating, according to the Prophetic tradition, is that one should not find fault with food. If he does not like anything, he should leave it but should not find fault in it. Abū Hurairah (MABPWH) narrated: "Messenger of Allah (PBUH) never found fault with food. If he had desire to eat it, he would eat; and if he disliked it, he would leave it."<sup>2</sup>

In the foregoing pages, some vital aspects of social etiquettes and manners have been discussed at length. Some of these etiquettes are vitally important and have assumed more significance in the present scenario of our social life. May Allah bless us to know, understand, and follow these codes and etiquettes! Amin!

### **Moderate Approach towards Every Aspect of Life: Qur'ān and Sunnah**

#### **a) Linguistic and Terminological Explanation of the Word**

**'I'tidāl'**: It feels appropriate here to first explain that the root of the word 'I'tidāl' (moderation), as it is well-known, is 'adl' (justice), which implies that due rights of any person or object must be fully observed and granted. An aspect of object should not be allowed to take over another unnecessarily because this will be contrary to justice and balance. In fact, 'I'tidāl' (moderation) is an attribute, which controls many negative emotions of man or protects against their severity. By virtue of this attribute, his emotions are not abetted and thus he abstains from the acts which are eventually harmful and painful for him and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book كراهية الشرب قائمًا*, Chapter الأشرية

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Book الأظعمة*, Chapter ما عاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم طعامًا; Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book الأظعمة, Chapter النهي أن يعاب الطعام

others. Moderation in thought and action with regard to any aspect of life leads to boon while any extreme approach or immoderation causes bane. In the Qur'ān, characteristic of Muslim *ummah* has been stated by claiming that it is a moderate *ummah*, i.e. a nation which adopts moderation and temperance. In other words, it is a nation, which keeps itself away from extreme position or approach.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا...

Tr.: And like that We made you a moderate nation to be witnesses on the people, and the messenger be (a) witness on you... (al-Baqarah: 143)

It is very important that some of the interpreters of the Qur'ān have clearly stated that "*ummah wasat*" means moderate nation. Some others said 'the best nation'. Thus, it seems very appropriate here to draw both meanings as the nation, which is moderate or temperate, will surely be the best. With reference to the above verse, Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī has expressed this characteristic of Islam in the following words: "In most of the issues, Islam has avoided extremes and opted for the middle path, which is the distinguished feature of Islam. One of the reasons for which the Qur'ān granted the title of "أمة" [middle nation] to the Muslims is because their religion is in the middle of both extremes. Therefore, it has taught moderation and temperance in most of the matters. Even in the matter of worship, it has followed the very principles.<sup>1</sup> Some experts of the Qur'ān have explained with respect to the verse: (فُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ: 29/7) that the commandment of righteousness and justice as given to the entire *ummah* through Prophet (PBUH) includes opting for moderation because

<sup>1</sup> *Sīratun-Nabī*, Dār-ul-Muṣannifīn, Shīblī Academy, A'zamgarh, 2003, 6/337

moderation is among the basic requirement of justice. Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād has translated this verse as under:

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ

Tr.: Say! My Lord has commanded me to opt for the middle path (in everything).<sup>1</sup>

This means he drew meaning of moderation from 'qist'. Moderation is found in each and every aspect of Sharī'ah law and that's why it has been called 'straight path'. In view of Islam, moderation in every sphere of life (belief, worship, moral values, and dealings) is not only required rather it must be practical. This is a basic character of Islam and manifested in all of its commandments and teachings and if followed it is beneficial for all.<sup>2</sup>

When the Qur'ān was being revealed, there was imbalance in respect of belief. Some group of people worshipped myriads of gods, including the sun, the moon, the stars, trees, plants, mountains, stones and animals. On other hand, a group of people denied altogether any existence of Allah or the Creator and the Lord of this universe. While factions of people claimed godhood for themselves and catapulted themselves to the stature of gods. They forced people to prostrate before them, as it is evident from this unequivocal declaration of the Qur'ān:

وَاللَّهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

Tr.: And your Ilāh (God) is One Ilāh (God), the All-Merciful, the Ever Merciful. (al-Baqarah: 163)

Then, He commanded mankind in an unequivocal term:

<sup>1</sup> *Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān*, Sāhitya Academy, New Delhi, 1968, 2/17

<sup>2</sup> For details, see: Muḥammad Jarjīs Karīmī, *Islām Kī Imtiyāzi Kḥuṣūṣiyat* (Chapter V: Mu'tadil wa Mutawāzin Dīn), Markazī Maktaba Islāmī, Publishers, New Delhi, 2012, PP. 119-144

لَا تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Tr.: Do not prostrate to the sun and the moon, but prostrate to Allah, Who created them, if it is Him ye wish to serve. (Hā Mīm al-Sajdah: 37)

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ

Tr.: Your Lord has enjoined you to worship none but Him. (al-Isrā': 23)

**b) Balance and Moderation in Fulfillment of the Rights of Allah and that of His Slaves:** This is widely known that the enjoiments of Islamic religion may be summed up in the duties towards Allah (*Huqūqul-lāh*) and duties towards mankind (*Huqūqul-'ibād*). More often, the Qur'ān enjoins to maintain equilibrium and observe moderation with respect to these rights. At many places in the Qur'ān, we have been reminded of our duties to the mankind besides the enjoiment to observe our duties to the God. (al-Nisā': 2); al-An'ām: 14); al-Rūm: 38; al-Dhāriyāt: 19; al-M'ārij: 25). While at some other places, Allah enjoined, soon after issuing commandment for His worship, to do good and behave well with parents, relatives, neighbors and underprivileged sections of society (poor, destitute, orphans, travelers, maids and servants). As Allah said:

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ  
وَالْحَجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْحَجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجُنُبِ وَأَيْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Tr.: Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at

your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful. (al-Nisā': 36)

How Islam has emphasized on maintaining a fine balance between both types of rights makes it very clear that it intensely opposes asceticism (renunciation of all forms of family, social, economical and political relations and responsibilities and choosing isolation) (al-Ḥadīd: 27). Islam teaches mankind to spend a life in which a balance is maintained between spiritual and material demands and a struggle continues to fulfill worldly needs along with the fulfillment of the religious duties. In other words, rights of people must be observed along with offering the duties to Allah. Islam does not prevent from worldly engagements (whether they are social or economical or else). Therefore, from Islamic perspective, this world and its engagements are for preparation of the Hereafter. World is said to be farming of the Hereafter, i.e. Leveling ground for the other world while being engaged in its affairs (without being isolated). In fact, man's original trial is in this world for which he has been created. However, attention must be paid to continuing the engagements of this life in a way that does not affect the life and its success in the Hereafter. Rather, attainment of that success must be given priority. Such points may be taken home from this verse of the Qur'an. Allah said:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ

Tr.: But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. (al-Qaṣaṣ: 77)

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This verse is very significant for it teaches to maintain balance in both this life and the life Hereafter (i.e. seeking sustenance of life and success of the Hereafter). It has also been taught in this verse that goodness and success of the life in the Hereafter must however be on the mind and given precedence. The last part of the verse provides that worldly blessings must be used, apart from personal needs, to benefit others with an aim to better one's life in the Hereafter. This point was explicitly highlighted by Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī while he was addressing a gathering of traders in Gujarāt. He said:

“This world has been granted to make a deal of it while being here. Same as you populate Rander while being in Africa and Burma, you should be concerned for the life in the Hereafter by making deal in this world. If one gets Allah's knowledge and His pleasure by obeying Allah's commandments during his stay in this world, accomplishing worldly deeds in accordance with the Divine commandment and observing abstinence from worldly pleasure, this is the *mujāhadah* (striving) allocated for the children of Ādam and which is beyond the purview of angels.”<sup>1</sup>

How the believers stay preoccupied with both these thoughts and maintain a balance in building them are stated in the following verse:

رَجُلٌ لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ

Tr.: By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah, nor from regular Prayer, nor from the practice of regular Charity. (al-Nūr: 37)

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<sup>1</sup> 'Allāma Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī *key Tafsīrī Nikāt* [Compiled by: Muḥammad Farmān Nadwī], Majlis-i-Taḥqīqāt Wa Nashriyāt-i-Islām, Lucknow, 2015, 1/215

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Here, it looks appropriate to mention that there is a supplication in the Qur'ān for seeking goodness of both the worlds: "Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire." (al-Baqarah: 201). But the same Holy Scripture also emphasizes that the latter or the second one has preference or precedence over the first one. Why? Because Allah says:

تُؤْتِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿١٦﴾ وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: But you prefer the worldly life, while the Hereafter is better and more enduring. (al-A'lá: 16-17)

In fact, the worldly goodness for a believer is worthwhile only if it paves ways for the goodness of the eternal world.

**c) Moderation in Worship:** The most significant proof of Islam's balanced attitude is that it does not allow immoderation or imbalance even in the pure religious matters or acts of worship, particularly when it impedes accomplishment of other requirements of life or observance of others' rights. There is a famous Ḥadīth narrated by Anas bin Mālik (MABPWH) that when three of the Prophet's companions asked the noble wives of the Prophet about his way of worship, thinking that there was no comparison between them and the Prophet (PBUH) as all sins of the Prophet are already forgiven. Thus, one of them expressed his desire to offer prayer (*ṣalāh*) whole night (without taking time for sleep). Other said that he would observe fast continuously, without a break. The third one resolved not to ever marry. When Allah's Prophet knew about it, he said, 'Behold, never do this. I fear Allah more than you do and I am more pious than you but I still observe fast and break it (i.e.

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sometimes, I do not observe fast), (at night) I offer prayers and sleep, and take wives. So, whosoever turns away from my *Sunnah*, does not belong to my people.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, another Prophetic tradition makes this issue more clear. ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr bin ‘Āṣ (MABPWH) was renowned for his ascetic and God-fearing life. Once he resolved that he would always observe fast in the day and keep up praying at night. When the Prophet (PBUH) came to know about it, he called him and asked: “Is this news true? Yes, he replied. The Prophet said, ‘Don’t do like this because your body has a right upon you, your eyes have a right upon you, your wife has a right upon you, your visitors have a right upon you and (according to addition in some narrations/ your family has a right upon you). It is sufficient for you to observe three days fast in a month.<sup>2</sup> This shows how comprehensive and encompassing the Islamic concept of moderation is that emphasis has been laid on to observe it fully even in the matter of worship. It is obvious that the proposed way of worship was based on immoderation or imbalance. It involved denying the right of one’s own body as well as it had disregard for the rights of others. Therefore, the Prophet (PBUH) instructed them to change their thinking.

What else can be better worship than *ṣalāh*? It appears from the topic concerned that it is very important that clear instructions have been issued to observe moderation in different acts related to *ṣalāh*. Recitation of the Qur’ān is among the duties of the *ṣalāh*. In this regard, the Qur’ān enjoins that volume of recitation should not be too high or too low, rather it should be in-between. Allah says:

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الرقاق, Chapter العمل القصد والمداومة على العمل

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الصوم, Chapter صوم الدهر

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وَلَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١١٠﴾

Tr.: And offer your Ṣalāt (prayer) neither loud nor in a low voice, but follow a moderate way. (al-Isrā': 110)

In explanation of this verse, the author of '*Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*', Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī notes down as under: "It has been ordered that your *ṣalāh* (prayers) and supplications should neither be too loud nor too feeble. Character of the moderate nation must be manifested even from your *ṣalāh* (prayers) and supplications."<sup>1</sup> An incident is very famous about Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (MABPWH) and 'Umar al-Fārūq (MABPWH) that the first one would recite the Qur'ānic verses in low voice while the latter would do it loud. When the Prophet (PBUH) asked them the reason, they both presented their explanations. Then, the Prophet asked Abū Bakr (MABPWH) to raise his voice a little bit and 'Umar (MABPWH) to lower it to some degree.<sup>2</sup> It is worthy to mention here that when the Prophet (PBUH) was complained about a companion that when he led the prayers he would recite long chapters (*sūrahs*), the Prophet expressed his dislike and publicly announced from the *mimber* of the Masjid-i-Nabawī that "Whosoever leads the prayer, he should keep it short, because there are old, sick and needy people."<sup>3</sup>

Here, this should also be clear that *Du'ā'* (supplication) has been called "essence of worship"<sup>4</sup> which should be performed in *ṣalāh* and out *ṣalāh* the both. Supplication may be made both silently and loudly but in the latter case the Qur'ān has enjoined to observe moderation. Allah says:

<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān with translation and extract from the Tafsīr *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, Compiled by: Khālīd Mas'ūd, Fārān Foundation, Lāhore, 2000, P. 460

<sup>2</sup> Mujībullāh Nadwī, *Uswa-i-Ḥasanah*, Tāj Company, Delhi, 2000, PP. 252-253

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الصلوة, Chapter إذا تحول الإمام وكان للرجل حاجة

<sup>4</sup> *Jāmi' Tirmidhī*, book الدعوات, Chapter فضل الدعاء

وَأَذْكُر رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ

Tr.: And remember [O Prophet] your Lord in your mind, with humility and fear, and without raising your voice; remember Him in the morning and evening. (al-A'rāf: 205)

Author of 'Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān', Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Deobandī interprets the expression "دون الجهر" by saying that with a voice lower than the high-pitched. This means that a person engaged in Allah's remembrance may do so with some raised voice but its way is that he should not make his voice high-pitched, rather his voice should be moderate with due regard and respect.<sup>1</sup>

**d) Moderation in Preaching and Sermons:** In this regard, it is also noteworthy that moderation is required even in preaching and sermons in accordance with one of the Ḥadīths. 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd (MABPWH) narrated that: كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يتخولنا بالموعظة في الأيام كراهية السامة. علينا.<sup>2</sup> (Allah's Messenger (PBUH) did not deliver sermon on certain days fearing that we might be bored). In explanation of this Ḥadīth, Maulānā Muḥammad Fārūq Khān has rightly said that moderation must be observed even in preaching and delivering sermons. There is strong possibility that constant preaching and sermons may make the audience feel boredom. The Prophet (PBUH) had full regard for human psychology. So he wanted that people's interest may not be harmed and that they do not feel boredom."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān*, Maktaba Muṣṭafāyī, Deoband, n.d., 4/166

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book العلم، Chapter الموعظة بالتخوليم بالموعظة، ما كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يتخولهم بالموعظة في الأيام كراهية السامة. علينا، والعلم كي لا ينفروا

<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad Fārūq Khān, *Kalām-i-Nubuwat*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2013, 5/115

**e) Moderation in Financial Issues:**

- 1. Moderation in Spending:** Infāq (spending) is a well-known term of the Qur'ān, which stands for helping poor and the needy with one's own wealth and resources or spending wealth for the righteous causes. Charity and alms are also included in this, which is rightfully called as optional worship. In many verses of the Qur'ān, its preference and importance has been asserted and many rewards have been promised for this by Allah. But in this regard also, the Qur'ān has laid down emphasis on moderation, implying that even in spending, Islam likes moderation. It does not want a wealthy person to spend away everything and eventually he may become poor and destitute and neither does it like him to hold back his hand in a way that prevents him from meeting his basic needs. (al-Isrā': 29 and al-Furqān: 67). Here, the intention is to further clarify this point with reference to a *Ḥadīth*. Sa'ad bin Waqqāṣ (MABPWH) is considered among wealthy companions of the Prophet (PBUH). Once he fell sick and the Prophet (PBUH) went to see him. He expressed his desire to give all his wealth in charity. The Prophet (PBUH) said to him: No. You cannot give in charity except one-third of your wealth. He also counseled him, 'That you leave your heirs rich is better than you leave them in a condition compelling them to beg from people.'<sup>1</sup>

All these details demonstrate that when there is so much emphasis on observing moderation and maintaining balance in the matter of worship in Islam, how important and strong its teachings will be about observing moderation in other matters. The following details will render this point clearer.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book الوصايا, Chapter ما جاء فيما يجوز للموصي

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- 2. Moderation in Spending Money for Day-to-day Needs:** It has already been explained that the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions ask for moderation in expenditure (which generally stands for charity and alms or spending money for righteous causes), because it harms the person spending immoderately, apart from jeopardizing rights of his family and relatives. In fact, the Qur'ān teaches that observing moderation in spending is wanted in other matters of daily life. One of the attributes of believers and righteous people in the Qur'ān is that they spend moderately, i.e. keep themselves away from both extravagance and misery. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾

Tr.: And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate. (al-Furqān: 67)

- 3. Extravagance/Spending Excessively and Misery are both Manifestation of Unjust Behavior:** It appears from the context that spending in this verse has been used in a broader sense. This may not be confined to just spending for the cause of Allah. Moreover, the Qur'ān has denounced extravagance, greed and misery and asked to keep away from these bad habits, because they are manifestation of unjust behavior in the matter of earning as well as spending money, which is destructive to both economy and society. It is beyond any doubt that love of wealth is an intrinsic character of human nature and when this love exceeds the limit, i.e. becomes unjust, greed and gluttony like evils are born in man. This eventually stops them from spending their money. This develops into misery like evil and reaches to the extent that such people goad others to do the same. In fact, an unjust behavior may not hold any good, whatsoever. Therefore, the Qur'ān asks to avoid greed and misery and emphasizes on

spending wealth judiciously. It asserts for the wealthy people that apart from benefit to others, their goodness and success lie therein. This verse draws our attention to the same fact:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْمِعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ

فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

Tr.: ... and listen and obey and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for your selves. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful. (al-Taghābun: 16)

It will not be out of place to mention here that the word *Shuḥḥ* (شُحّ) in Arabic is used for both greed and miserliness as it is evident from explanations of various interpreters of the Qur'ān. In fact, miserliness is inevitable product of greed. This is supported by the Ḥadīth, in which greed has been denounced and said to be cause of destruction and the miserliness arising there-from, severing of human relations and spoiling relations with the relatives. It was narrated by 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar (MABPWH) that the Apostle of Allah once preached and said:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالشُّحَّ فَإِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ بِالشُّحِّ أَمَرَهُمْ بِالْبُخْلِ فَبَخَلُوا وَأَمَرَهُمْ بِالْقَطِيعَةِ فَقَطَعُوا وَأَمَرَهُمْ بِالْفُجُورِ فَفَجَرُوا.

Tr.: Abstain from avarice, for those who had been before you were annihilated due to avarice. It (avarice) commanded them to show niggardliness; it commanded them to cut-off their relationship with their near relatives, so they cut off. It commanded them to show profligacy, so they showed it.<sup>1</sup>

How destructive this disease (avarice), in the context of spending, is or will be for man, may be guessed by the verse 180 of Āl

<sup>1</sup> *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*, al-Maṭba'a al-Maymaniya, Egypt, 1313 H, 2/159-160

'Imrān, in which Allah has unequivocally warned those who are involved in niggardliness: "And let not those who [greedily] withhold what Allah has given them of His bounty ever think that it is better for them. Rather, it is worse for them."

- 4. Unnecessary and Excessive Use or Consumption of Anything is Averse to Moderation:** In the context of prohibition of extravagance, attention is to be drawn to the fact that its most significant purpose is to keep oneself away from unjust and unnecessary consumption of food, drinks or different goods of daily life. There is no doubt that unjust and unnecessary use of anything is manifestation of the trait of immoderation. Following verse of the chapter al-A'rāf offers guidance to this respect, which has been quoted already. Allah says:

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

Tr.: Eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess. (al-A'rāf: 31)

Although extravagance or excessive spending has been explicitly prohibited under the above verse, this verse, in fact, is very comprehensive and has very broad meaning conceptually. In fact, it includes prohibition for misuse and unnecessary use of anything which is used by man in his day-to-day life. In other words, this Qur'ānic verse enjoins to observe moderation in different areas of social and economic life and to refrain from transgressing the limits, which is a typical character of extravagance. The most valuable learning from the above verse is that use of life-sustaining means as blessed by God not only allowed, rather it is desired. But, such use should be free from extravagancy, i.e. the principle of moderation should not be compromised because it is wastage of bounties, deprivation of poor people of their rights and one's own loss, and more

than anything else, it is ingratitude to the Real Provider. In interpretation of this verse, author of 'Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān', has presented some valuable points, which seem very appropriate to be quoted here. In his own words:

"All that God has created on the earth are for the sake of you. Eat, drink and use all goods of adornment and decoration, but do not exceed the limit. Because its unjust use is against the spiritual happiness. This is a revolutionary declaration of this Qur'ānic verse, which changed the religious mindset of man altogether. Those who were moving towards asceticism in search of liberation and happiness, they started looking for the same liberation and happiness in the construction and development of the world."<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, the remark of Maulānā Āzād 'Its unjust use is against the spiritual happiness' is the summary of Qur'ānic clear approach towards the worldly means and wealth and a comprehensive interpretation of its liking for moderateness.

- 5. Imbalance in Income and Expenditure is a Manifestation of Immoderation:** One should know that denunciation and prohibition of extravagance (excessive spending) are stated on multiple occasions in the Qur'ān. Upon little contemplation, it will appear that extravagance has been prohibited, apart from elimination of other evils (wastage of wealth, deprivation of poor and needy), to stop imbalance in income and expenditure, because it happens sometimes that an extravagant or overgenerous person spends away his wealth and money excessively and his economic conditions get worsen due to this immoderation. If such immoderation is committed at the level of community or government, whole community suffers and such government drowns deep into the financial crisis. This is a well-known fact that utmost

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<sup>1</sup> *Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān*, Sahityā Academy, New Delhi, 1986, 3/20

priority is accorded to maintaining balance between income and expenditure in the principles and rules of economic system. Economists of the present time want us to believe that these principles owe to the new economics for its existence. In fact, this fundamental principle was propounded first ever by the Qur'ān, which was further established and explained by the Prophetic traditions. How beautifully and effectively this principle was promulgated by the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) as he said: Moderation in spending is half of the economy.<sup>1</sup> It asserts that half of the economy depends on moderation in spending. In a similar Ḥadīth, this fact has been elaborated further that observing moderation in economy is a proof of man being wise.<sup>2</sup> The fact is that even excessive writings in explanation and interpretation of these Prophetic sayings may not be sufficient. Maulānā Muftī Fuḍailur Raḥmān Hilāl 'Uthmānī has rightly commented on the above-mentioned first Ḥadīth. He said: As the Prophet taught moderation and balance in the matter of worships and dealings, he taught how to maintain balance in the matter of economics. This may be regarded as key to the prosperity."<sup>3</sup>

It is appropriate to mention here that the renowned thinker and great reformer, Shāh Walīyullāh Dehlawī (1703-1762) addressed different sections of Muslim society through his preaching mission 'Back to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah'. Addressing the rulers and the common Muslims, he pointed out to the reasons of social backwardness and government downfall in the light of his observations and experiences and suggested measures to overcome them in accordance with the Qur'ān and

<sup>1</sup> *Mishkā-tul-Maṣābīh*, Chapter الثأني والحذر, Publications of al-Maktab al-Islāmī, Damascus, 1961, 2/627

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Fārūq Khān, *Kalām-i-Nubuwaṭ*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2011, 4/109

<sup>3</sup> Fuḍailur Raḥmān Hilāl 'Uthmānī, نبي رحمت کی تعلیم و تربیت میں حسن اعتدال, Monthly *Rāh-i-l'tidāl*, [Umarābād], l'tidāl Number, 2/6, October, 2005, P. 99

the Sunnah. Most importantly, he declared the financial crisis as one of the prominent reasons for decadence of the Muslim government and held disparity in income and expenditure of the government and rulers, artisans and professionals and common people responsible for it. Drawing their attention to this fact, he advised them to take corrective measures and he particularly drew attention of his contemporary kings to this point.<sup>1</sup>

**f) Moderation in Social Life:** Apart from the Qur'ānic teachings about observing moderation in the economic life, there are plenty of instructions and teachings on observing balance in the social life. Here, the intention is to provide explanation and interpretation of the relevant verses and Ḥadīths, particularly those related to walking, speaking, eating, drinking, socializing, expressing delight and anger, friendship and enmity, praise and criticism, etc.

**g) Moderation in Speech and Action:** In order to complete one's work, a man keeps on walking and moving since morning to night. But the question arises here that how long he would walk? has been replied in the Qur'ān as follows:

وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَأَغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ

Tr.: And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice.  
(Luqmān: 19)

In interpretation of this verse, Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī says: "Do not walk very fast because it is against gracefulness, apart from the risk of falling down. Moreover, do not stamp your foot on the earth too slowly because it is the gait of arrogant. Rather, embrace simple and moderate pace with poise and humility, which has been mentioned in another verse as "they walk on the earth in humbleness."<sup>2</sup> This reveals the fact that, in

<sup>1</sup> Shāh Walīyullāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī, *al-Tafhīmāt al-Ilāhiyah*, Majlis-i-'Ilmī, Dābhel (Gujarat), 1936, 1/216-218

<sup>2</sup> *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān*, Tāj Publishers, Delhi, n.d., PP. 806-807

view of the Qur'ān, the desired way of walking is to opt a moderate approach while walking and that excessive speed or sluggishness should be avoided. No doubt, this is the requirement of sincerity and dignity.

In second part of the verse, there is an instruction that volume of voice while speaking should be low and shouting and yelling must be avoided. This is because it exceeds the limit of moderation and causes annoyance to the listener, apart from it being at odds with the gracefulness. In interpretation of this verse, some of the interpreters have rightly pointed out that the voice should not be too low to be heard because this too is contrary to the notion of moderation.<sup>1</sup> It has been mentioned earlier with respect to the remembrance of Allah or recitation of the Qur'ān in prayer or outside prayer that moderate volume of voice is desirable and commendable.

**h) Moderation in Eating and Drinking:** Observing moderation in consumption of food and drink, in respect of both quantity and quality, is required under the teachings of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. In this regard, a verse of the Qur'ān has been quoted earlier, in which Allah says:

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا

Tr.: Eat and drink, but be not excessive. (al-A'rāf: 31)

It needs not to be mentioned that *isrāf* (extravagance) includes excessive and needless consumption of food or use of any object. In its general meaning, the verse forbids excessive consumption of food and drink and extravagance in the use of goods and means of living. With reference to this verse, some of the interpreters have included ostensibly crossing the limits in consumption of food and drink as well as consuming them less than required. Author of *Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān*, Maulānā

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<sup>1</sup> *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān*, as above, P. 807

Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' wrote after mentioning different forms of extravagance in explanation of the above verse:

“Likewise, it is also an *isrāf* (extravagance) that a person eats in excess of his hunger and need. That’s why the Islamic jurists have declared excessive eating as forbidden and unlawful. (*Aḥkām-ul-Qur’ān*). Similarly, it is also akin to *israf* if a person eats less than his need despite being able, causing him weakness and making him incapable of discharging his duties.”<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the above, in support of his argument, he quoted statement of ‘Umar Fārūq (MABPWH) that, “Avoid eating too less because this makes the body frail and causes diseases, and sluggishness in bodily functions. Rather, you should be moderate in eating and drinking because this is beneficial for health and far from extravagance.” Here, it looks appropriate to mention that ‘Allāmah Ibn al-Qayyim, after discussing at length the damage and harm inflicted on the body system due to different types of immoderation in eating and drinking, wrote with respect to the above verse of the chapter *al-A’rāf* that: “In this verse, Allah, the Almighty, has instructed his slaves that they should eat and drink only the things by which soluble in the body are substituted and their amount and quality should be such that benefit the body. Conversely, if any excess is committed with respect to these, they become extravagance and lead to injury and disease, i.e. complete abstinence from food and drink or excessive consumption thereof.”<sup>2</sup>

**i) Controlling Emotions when Angry is the Highest Manifestation in Moderation and the most Likeable Act:** Having control over emotions and feelings and being

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<sup>1</sup> *Ma’ārif-ul-Qur’ān*, Maktaba Muṣṭafāyī, Deoband, n.d., 3/545

<sup>2</sup> *Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah*, al-Ṭibb al-Nabwī, Urdu Translation: Ḥakīm ‘Azīzur Raḥmān A’zamī (entitled: Ṭibb Nabawī), al-Dār al-Salafiyyah, Bombay, 1994, P. 406

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moderate in expression thereof are very vital for the sake of daily happiness and social peace. Conversely, the damages and corruptions that seep into the society thanks to immoderation and excessiveness in this regard need not any mention herein. Human emotions are at their peak in case of anger and, more often, he loses his balance and becomes intractable in such situation. Consequently, he goes on to commit act that brings to him shame and causes harm to him and others. Story of Hābīl and Qābīl are cited as an example for immoderate behavior and its fatal result. Qābīl was so enraged over acceptance of his brother's sacrifice by Allah and rejection of his own sacrifice that he became uncontrollable, lost control over his senses, and killed his own brother. The Qur'ān has effectively taught to restrain anger or to be in control when angered by declaring that Allah has considered those who restrain anger among his righteous slaves, for whom heaven has been prepared. Allah says:

﴿ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾  
 الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَنُظُمِ الْعَظِيمِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ  
 الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Tr.: And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous people. Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good. (Āl 'Imrān: 133-134]

With reference to this verse, the commentary of Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī is very valuable. He said:

“Immoderate anger is an enormous evil. Man does myriad acts of injustice and cruelty only when he is angry and enraged, for which he often feels shame and embarrassment. Therefore, a Muslim must have control over his anger and avoid expressing it unnecessarily.”<sup>1</sup>

It also has been said in another verse in which distinguished attributes of the believers have been enlisted, that they abstain from major sins and disgraceful comments, obey Allah’s call and observe their prayers (*ṣalāt*), and forgive when angry. See the divine revelation:

فَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَّعُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ...

Tr.: So whatever thing you have been given - it is but [for] enjoyment of the worldly life. But what is with Allah is better and more lasting for those who have believed and upon their Lord they rely. And those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, and when they are angry, they forgive. And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer... (al-*Shu’arā’*: 36-38]

From this verse, one may drive home the sublime importance accorded to restraining anger, having control in such situation and observing balance and moderation, for they have been mentioned as the characteristics of believers and for which Allah has promised them to award paradise. Its reason is easily understood given the evils and destructive acts committed by man when being in the state of anger. Having control over oneself in such situation, i.e. observing moderate behavior,

<sup>1</sup> *Sīratun Nabī*, Dār-ul-Muṣannifīn Shiblī Academy, A’zamgarh, 2003, 6/456

and abstaining from committing any wrongdoing is not an easy task. Who can ignore the meaningfulness of this wise saying of the Prophet (PBUH): “The strong man is not one who is good at wrestling, but the strong man is one who controls himself in a fit of rage.”<sup>1</sup> It will not be out of place to mention that the Prophet (PBUH), teacher of mankind, taught us how to control and reign in negative emotions and behaviors. It is narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) saw two of his companions in the fit of rage, whose face has flushed because of this. He said there is a *kalimah* if read by anyone, his rage will cool down. The companions asked what it was. The Prophet replied: أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم. (I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the cursed one.)<sup>2</sup> Wisdom of this prayer is quite obvious that being enraged / angry is the act of Satan because he has ample chance to lead man stray. Therefore, if someone is visited by anger and his emotions start getting enraged, he must seek refuge in Allah to avoid that. The Qur’ān itself imparts the same education. Allah says:

وَإِذَا يَنْزَعَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

Tr.: And if an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, He is All-Hearing and All-Knowing. (al-A’rāf: 200)

The following Ḥadīth further explains the wisdom of the above-mentioned prayer for getting control over the rage/anger. It has been stated in this Ḥadīth that the Prophet (PBUH) said that anger comes from the devil, the devil was created of fire, and fire is extinguished only with water; so when one of you becomes angry, he should perform ablution.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book of الأدب, Chapter من كظم غيظاً

<sup>2</sup> *Jāmi’ Tirmidhī*, Book of الأدب, Chapter ما يقال عند الغضب

<sup>3</sup> *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, Book of الأدب, Chapter ما يقال عند الغضب

Besides that, the Prophet (PBUH) taught a psychological way of dealing with anger by saying: 'When one of you becomes angry while standing, he should sit down. If the anger leaves him, well and good; otherwise he should lie down.<sup>1</sup> The purpose is that the change in position will cause distraction of mind and the anger will come down.

It is well-known fact that when a person becomes angry, he suffers from one more negative mood. He wants to take revenge from his opponent or enemy (who has harmed him in anyway) or to unleash attack on him with full might. The Qur'an teaches us to have patience and control even in this boiling condition and not to exceed the limit in taking revenge. Allah says:

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

Tr.: And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient. (al-Nahl: 126)

In this verse, this point is specifically worthy to be considered that although permission has been granted to revenge atrocities of the opponent or enemy in an equal manner, it has also been impregnated in the mind of avenger that if he forgives completely, it is good for him. It is obvious that in such condition there will not be any room for revenge or committing excesses. There is a fundamental principle set out by the Qur'an in the prohibition of committing offenses or excesses in the matter of revengeful action:

فَمَنْ آغْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَآعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا آعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

Tr.: So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who fear Him. (al-Baqarah: 194)

<sup>1</sup> Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Book of الأدب, Chapter ما يقال عند الغضب

At the end of this verse, the commandment to have fear of God righteously makes the point what degree of caution is required in the revengeful action. Apart from this, Allah says at another place in Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

Tr.: And do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors. (al-Mā'idah: 87)

**j) Moderation in Friendship and Enmity:** Teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah require us to adopt moderation in the matter of friendship and enmity and not to exceed the limit when it comes to love someone and hate him/her. No doubt, exceeding the limits in discord and animosity entails heavy losses. When hatred or hostility exceeds the limit, one of the major losses appears in the form of disregard for righteousness and justice and a man ignores the natural principle of justice and righteousness. Prohibition of excesses in the matter of enmity has been stated in the Qur'ān by asking that one should keep his guard up against his emotions being too incited to commit injustice to others. Allah, the Almighty, says:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ۤأَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۖ اَعْدِلُوا هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۗ

Tr.: And do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. (al-Mā'idah: 8)

In another verse, not to commit excesses in the matter of enmity has been stated in more unequivocal term. That who can be the fiercer enemy of the believers than the people who prevent them from entering the Ka'bah? But in respect of such people too, the Qur'ān asserts:

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وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ اَنْ صَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ اَنْ تَعْتَدُوْا

Tr.: And do not let the hatred of a people for having obstructed you from al-Masjid al-Harām leads you to transgress. (al-Mā'idah: 2)

To this respect, there lies a valuable wisdom in the words of 'Alī (MABPWH) for the practical life. He said: "Love your beloved moderately, perhaps he becomes hated to you someday. And hate whom you hate moderately, perhaps he becomes your beloved someday."<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet (PBUH) treated his fiercest enemies and opponents with mercy and kindness. As Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī provided many examples of such incidents in the 'Sīratu-n-Nabī'.<sup>2</sup> His commentaries in reference thereof are very precious and quote-worthy. He writes:

"The most unusual and rarest thing in the set of moral values a man holds, is mercy and kindness with the enemies. But, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) had that in abundance. Taking revenge is the legal duty of man but it becomes an undesirable act in the ethics of the Shari'ah. All narrations unanimously agree that the Prophet (PBUH) never took revenge."<sup>3</sup>

#### **k) Moderation in Demonstration of Delight and Sorrow:**

Happy and sad occasions are also very difficult for a man to deal with. Because reigning in the emotions and feelings in such conditions and adopting moderation in their display are not an easy task. It is obvious that not maintaining

<sup>1</sup> *Jāmi' Tirmidhī*, book البر والصلة, Chapter اقتصاد في الحب والبغض

<sup>2</sup> *Sīratun Nabī*, Dār-ul-Muṣannifin Shiblī Academy, A 'zamgarh, 2003, 2/286-290, 297-299

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, 2/286

moderation in the state of delight and sorrow is defiance to the Godly commandment and Prophetic tradition. Moreover, it inflicts harm on others, and sometimes, it causes losses of life and wealth as every now and then such news makes round. There are clear instructions about observing moderation in such conditions and not to exceed the limit. In this regard, the Qur'ān has taught to keep patience and observe moderation on the ground that source of all blessings and happiness is Allah, the Almighty. Therefore, instead of being too delighted and proud and being swayed away under the influence of such condition, one should be grateful to Allah, the Real Provider. It takes the argument further that the worldly wealth, prosperity and positions are mortal and, therefore, there is no point being proud and too engrossed in them. Similarly, all hardship or suffering that befalls us or a damage inflicted on anyone, are also the will of God. Therefore, instead of grieving too much and going deep in depression, a man should keep patience and seek refuge in Allah, and be thankful to Go even in such conditions, because there is dearth of nothing in His treasure. In this respect, the following verse attains prime importance:

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

Tr.: In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you. And Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. (al-Ḥadīd: 23)

In fact, swaggering, showing arrogance and getting out of control on happy and festive occasions and similarly being too sad and disappointed when faced with distress and sorrow, both are contrary to balance and moderation and are signs of

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ungratefulness. Allah does not like it as clearly underlined in the following verse:

وَلَمَّا أَذَقْنَاهُ نِعْمَاءَ بَعْدَ ضَرَاءٍ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ ﴿١٠﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

Tr.: And if We give man a taste of mercy from Us and then We withdraw it from him, indeed, he is despairing and ungrateful. But if We give him a taste of favor after hardship has touched him, he will surely say, "Bad times have left me." Indeed, he is exultant and boastful. (Hūd: 10-11)

In fact, demonstrating pride and arrogance on being blessed and prosperous not only invokes God's displeasure but it is vehemently disliked even by His slaves. When Qārūn started bragging and boasting for his vast riches, his people expressed their dislike. Allah mentioned it the Qur'ān:

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

Tr.: Thereupon his people said to him, "Do not exult. Indeed, Allah does not like the exultant. (al-Qaṣaṣ: 76)

With reference to this verse, the viewpoint of Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī looks very appropriate that: "Things which give pleasure to man has no end. Man is delighted for plenty of things in his life, like wealth and riches, knowledge and privilege, position and rank, marriage and wedding, and festivals and fiestas, but when such delight exceeds the limit of moderation, it enters the boundaries of vaunt and vanity."<sup>1</sup> That's why the Qur'ān has repeatedly instructed that whenever there is an occasion of happiness upon getting material or moral blessing, gratitude should be offered to Allah. And in case of loss or sorrow, patience should be observed and Allah should be praised in such condition too, because this is the requirement of moderation. For the Qur'ānic teachings in respect of gratitude

<sup>1</sup> *ibid*, 6/547

and patience, the following verses may be referred: (al-Baqarah: 45, 152-153, 172, 243, al-A'rāf: 10, 87; Yūnus: 60; Hūd: 5, 11; al-Nahl: 78, 127; al-Naml: 40, Luqmān: 17; al-Ma'ārij: 5; al-Dahr: 24). The practical life of the Prophet (PBUH) further underlines the significance of this teaching. It is reported from 'Āi'sha (MABPWH): "When the Messenger of Allah saw something he liked, he would say: الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات (Praise is to Allah by Whose grace good deeds are completed).' And if he saw something that he disliked, he would say: الحمد لله على كل حال (Praise is to Allah in all circumstances)."<sup>1</sup>

In brief, the explanation and interpretation of the foregoing verses and Ḥadīths underline that Islam requires moderation in each and every aspect of human life, including forms of worship, ethics, social and economic affairs and dealings. In fact, walking the way which has been described as *ṣirāt-i-Mustaqīm* (straight path) and for which we all pray in our every *ṣalāt* (prayer), is called moderation. This is also an irrefutable truth that the Prophet (PBUH) put this into his practice throughout his life. Here it looks appropriate to quote view of Maulānā Aṣhrāf 'Alī Ṭhānawī. He said:

"Compliance with *sunnah* is another name of truthful moderation. We lack practice of moderation because we do not follow *sunnah*. *Ṣalāt* and *ṣaum* (fasting) are the extremely significant, as the Prophet (PBUH) practiced moderation in his every act-sitting and standing, eating and drinking, talking and walking etc. This is what 'Āi'sha (MABPWH) said: كان خلقه القرآن (His character was the Qur'ān). It means that his attitude embodied everything that was contained in the Qur'ān."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad Ibrāhīm 'Umarī Hanchali, al-Ḥamdu Lillāhi: Importance and Benefits, Rāh-i-l'tadāl, 9/12, February 2016, Page 8, With reference to Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīr, 3/4640

<sup>2</sup> Moderation in the teachings of Islam, Monthly Rāh-i-l'tidāl, l'tidāl no. 2/6, October 2005, P. 32

In a nutshell, adopting that right path or path of moderation in every matter of life leads to virtue and success and abdicating this practice or walking the way of immoderation causes loss and damage, and more often than not, it promotes corruption and destruction. Professor Muḥammad Sa'ūd 'Ālam Qāsmī, has rightly said in his written account that: "Immoderation is a fatal disease. Any individual or people suffering from this disease goes astray and starts sowing seeds of his own destruction. This does not affect the power of life only, rather it shortens the duration of life too."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, Islam and its characteristic of moderation (in every sphere of human life) distinguish it from all other religions. By virtue thereof, it does not allow to adopt any form of violence or to exceed the limits in any matter. This is because indulging in such practice amounts to adventuring one's life and jeopardizing the life of others, which Islam never likes and allows. As a matter of fact, the Qur'ān and Sunnah not only teach to adopt moderation and middle path, rather they reiterate that such behavior leads to virtue and success of the person who adopts it and, on the other hand, other people living around him or with him feel relaxed and comfortable.

May Allah bless us all with the opportunity to reveal this fact to the world with our action instead of words! Amin!

### **Prevention of Social Evils and the Qur'ānic Remedies**

**a) The Qur'ānic Remedies have been proved Effective in Eradication of the Social Evils:** It is a self-evident truth that guidance of the Qur'ān comprises every sphere of human activities and it is intrinsically comprehensive and all-inclusive for all domains of life. In fact, its ultimate goal

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<sup>1</sup> I'tidāl: Approach of Islamic Shariah, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2006, P. 10

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is to achieve welfare and success for humanity. It guides to acts and deeds, which strengthen man's bond with Allah, the Most Glorified, and helps in observance of rights of his fellow man. Eventually, it guarantees happiness and success of both the worldly life and the life Hereafter. In view of the Qur'ān, man's success lies in the promotion of virtues and righteousness and elimination of evils and vices. In order to achieve this very purpose, the Qur'ān has declared 'Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil' as an individual and collective duty of Muslim nation, rather it called it as their distinctive quality. Given the topic under study, it is important to know how to discharge this duty, which was in fact taught by the Qur'ān too. In other words, the Qur'ānic remedies may be very useful and effective in respect of how to make people hate the evils and keep distance from them, provided that efforts are made to understand and comply with them sincerely. To promote virtues in the society and prevent evils from spreading, the Qur'ān has a complete system, in which all of the basic tenets, moral teachings, commandments (dos and don'ts), incentives and warnings have their respective roles and this entire system of commands, teachings and incentives are connected to each other. From the Qur'ānic point of view, relying on just anyone of them will not be that much useful and effective. Every domain of Islamic life system (whether it be tenets, forms of worship, commands or ethics) has a primary purpose of strengthening the relation of man with his Creator and Lord and, on the other hand, keeping this relation smooth and friendly with his fellow man. In fact, friendliness of man's bilateral relation depends on observance of each other's rights. This requires that every person should

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adopt virtues and shuns evils, and should not involve in anything depriving others of their right or jeopardizing social peace and harmony.

**b) Qur'ān has a Complete and Integrated System for Prevention of Evils:** The Qur'ān first instills greatness and majesty of Allah, the Lord of Honor, by explaining the set of tenets and beliefs. It reminds of God's omnipresence and omniscience. It imprints on the mind importance and value of His commandments and orders; it informs of the rewards for complying therewith and consequences of non-compliance. It reminds of the moments when man will appear before Allah and will be asked questions. It repeatedly reminds of the fact that success of the life Hereafter is the real success:

وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: While the Hereafter is better and more enduring. (al-'Alá: 17)

Apart from this, the Qur'ān offers its viewpoint about the evils surfacing or spreading in the society. It identifies effects of wrongdoings on entire society and the consequential evils, and then it issues prohibitive commandments in respect thereof. Therefore, for prevention of social evils, the Qur'ān first works on stirring up mind against such evils. The Qur'ān does not stop here, rather it inspires people to refrain from them through its ethical teachings and makes the impression that refraining from them is good for them and for the entire society. Furthermore, the Qur'ān forbids from things or acts which lead or open doors to such evils. This measure, in the well-known term of jurisprudence, is called 'prohibition of what may lead to committing sins'. For example, mixing of men and women, meeting a non-mahram in seclusion, staring

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at a strange woman intentionally, looking at someone else's private parts, entering someone else's house without permission, peeping into someone else's house, intervening in someone else's private life or spying, wearing too narrow or too tight clothes, seeing or showing nude or semi-nude pictures, singing or hearing emotionally arousing music.

**c) Islam's Fundamental Beliefs play a Key Role in Improvement of Human Life:** Islam's fundamental beliefs play a key role in the development and improvement of human life. That's why the Qur'an has called to accept these beliefs expressing their importance and effects on man's daily life. This is a fact that a person recognizing greatness and supremacy of Allah as a Creator, Sustainer and Lord of the universe, and who is afraid of Him, will not dare to violate His rules and disobey His commandments, rather he will always try to excel in obeying His rules. Belief in One God is, in fact, such a powerful tool that influences and rules over all sphere of human life (whether religious, social, economic, or political). It makes the believer so much obedient of God that he always wishes to remain His slave and he thinks of this total submission as mean of his real success. On the other hand, those who disbelieve Allah, deny his greatness and supremacy, or admit to associate with Him, they make devils their ally and guardian, become slave of their sensual desires, and then they plunge themselves in the sins and wrongdoings. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ

Tr.: And those who disbelieve-their allies are Tāghūt. They take them out of the light into darkneses (al-Baqarah: 257)

Firm belief in Allah is, in fact, a mean of the promotion of virtue and dislike of vices, because a believer will never like to do anything that invokes displeasure of Allah. It is well-known that Allah does not like evils and evildoers as it has been expressed in multiple verses of the Qur'ān. Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: Indeed, Allah loves not one who is a habitually sinful deceiver. (al-Nisā': 107)

#### d) The Qur'ān lays Special Emphasis on Inculcating Abhorrence for Vices:

##### 1. The Qur'ān repeatedly reminds that Allah is Omnipresent and Omniscient and man's every deed is in His knowledge:

It is highly important in the fundamental beliefs of Islam that Allah is Omnipresent and Omniscient. Allah sees every action and movement of man no matter wherever and whoever he is. In other words it may be said that nothing may be concealed from him. Allah thus asserts:

عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرِ الْمُتَعَالَى ﴿٩﴾ سَوَاءٌ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَسْرَأَ الْقَوْلَ وَمَنْ جَهَرَ بِهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِاللَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌ بِالنَّهَارِ ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: [He is] Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Grand, the Exalted. It is the same [to Him] concerning you whether one conceals [his] speech or one publicizes it and whether one is hidden by night or conspicuous [among others] by day. (al-R'ad: 9-10)

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا آدْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

Tr.: Have you not considered that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is on the earth? There is in no private conversation three but that He is the fourth of them, nor are there five but that He is the sixth of them - and no less than that and no more except that He is with them [in knowledge] wherever they are. Then He will inform them of what they did, on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is, of all things, Knowing. (al-Mujādalah: 7)

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٨﴾

Tr.: Did they not know that Allah knows their secrets and their private conversations and that Allah is the Knower of the unseen? (al-Taubah: 78)

Sins are committed either publicly or in private but, as the matter of fact, most of the sins are committed behind the closed doors. Satan has ample chance to lead a man astray when he is in seclusion or invisible to others. Satan urges him to fulfill whatever desire (good or bad) he has because there is no one to see and catch him. In such situation, if a person firmly believes that although there is no one to see him but Allah is watching him and he recalls the fact stressed by the Qur'ān equivocally that Allah is Omnipresent and Omniscient, such person will not dare to commit any crime or sin either in seclusion or in the darkness of night. The Qur'ān takes the discourse even farther and seeks to assert that not only the outward actions, Allah knows even the secrets of the heart. He is aware of what man thinks, intends and all thoughts that come to his heart and mind. He knows treachery of the eyes and relates excesses. As Allah firmly asserts:

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

Tr.: And indeed, your Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they declare. (al-Naml: 74)

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ﴿١٦﴾

Tr.: And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein. (Qāf: 16)

The wisdom behind drawing man's attention towards such things (Allah knows the heart's secrets; Allah knows even the thoughts that strike one's heart and mind) may be understood by reflecting on the fact that thought of sin first comes to the heart, mind is filled with bad and corrupt ideas, or bad desire develops in the soul and then, in the second phase, these are translated into action and steps are taken to commit them. It provides that, in fact, bad thoughts and ideas are responsible for perpetration of sins or bad deeds. That's why the Qur'ān first comes up with the remedies to prevent such thoughts and ideas.

**2. The Qur'ān draws attention of man towards the fact that one day he will be made accountable in front of his Lord for his actions:** In the fundamental beliefs of Islam, firm belief in the Hereafter or the Day of Judgment is very essential for adopting the virtuous path and refraining from the vices. The Qur'ān reminds man of this fundamental belief again and again that a day will come after his worldly life when he will be brought before the Almighty, and held accountable for his deeds. Ears, eyes, heart and other body parts (which he would have used) will be questioned. All deeds, either good or bad, big or small, which he would have done, will surface. This universe has not been made in vain. It has a grand purpose, which will not be achieved without reckoning. Man should not assume that he would be spared, no matter what his actions are. Allah thus says:

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قُلِ اللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Tr.: Say, Allah gives you life then He gives you death then after He will gather you to the Resurrection Day in whose arrival there is no doubt, but most of the people do not know. (al-Jāthiyah: 26)

إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Tr.: Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned. (al-Isrā': 36)

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾

Tr.: So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. (al-Zilzāl: 7)

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾

Tr.: Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned? (al-Mu'minūn: 115)

إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

Tr.: To Allah is your return all together; then He will inform you of what you used to do. (al-Mā'idah: 105)

Moreover, the Qur'ān categorically explained to man while narrating the accounts of the Hereafter that the body parts over which he had control in the worldly life and used them freely, the same would be witness on the Day of Resurrection to the deeds for which they would have been used. At that moment, man will be helpless as his body parts themselves will testify against him, i.e. will be evidence for his wrongdoings. The following verse asserts the same facts:

يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمُ أَلْسِنُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

Tr.: On a Day when their tongues, their hands and their feet will bear witness against them as to what they used to do. (al-Nūr: 24)

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

Tr.: That Day, We will seal over their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will testify about what they used to earn. (Yā-Sīn: 65)

**3. The Qur'ān foretells about pleasant reward for good deeds and bad consequences of the evil deeds:** The Qur'ān invites man to reflect on this aspect also that it is not that the reckoning will take place but every person will receive its result and, accordingly, he will have thrill of success or anguish of failure. Whether he will be lucky enough to get peaceful and pleasant life forever or the days of sufferings and afflictions which will never end. It looks appropriate to indicate here that the Qur'ān has adopted many ways to inculcate abhorrence for sins, including foretelling about the bad consequences of wrongdoers in both this world and the Hereafter and warning that they cannot escape their bad ends. Allay says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾

Tr.: Whoever does righteousness-it is for his [own] soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants. (Hā Mīm al-Sajdah: 46)

**4. One who digs a pit for other falls into it himself:** The Qur'ān also reminds mankind that if a conspiracy is hatched to harm someone or to perpetrate a sinful act, either individually or collectively, it will surely meet the

dire consequences and the conspirator himself will be trapped into it. Their schemes will eventually fall apart and, additionally, they will be subjected to severe punishment in the life hereafter. This has been vindicated in the divine revelation as:

وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُأُؤْتِكُمْ هُوَ يَبُورُ ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: But they who plot evil deeds will have a severe punishment, and the plotting of those-it will perish. (Fāṭir: 10)

وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ

Tr.: But the evil plot does not encompass except its own people. (Fāṭir: 43)

5. **Righteous and sinful people may not be same as far as their end-result is concerned:** Furthermore, the Qur'ān invites man to contemplate from the angle that whether righteous and sinful people can be equal. One should also reflect whether equal treatment to both harbinger of righteousness and those spreading evils and corruption would not be against the principle of justice. The following verses seek to draw the attention to the same. Allah, the Almighty, says:

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

Tr.: Or should we treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like corrupters in the land? Or should We treat those who fear Allah like the wicked? (Şād: 28)

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ نَجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَوَاءً فَعْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَانُهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

Tr.: Or even do the ones who keep indulging in odious deeds reckon that We will make them as the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, (and) equal (will be) their living and their dying? How odious is (the way) they judge! (al-Jāthiyah: 21)

**6. Righteous people will be rewarded and honored while the sinners will undergo harrowing punishment:** Apart from the foregoing, the Qur'ān has stated in many verses that those who adopt the right path in this world, call others to the same path, and protect themselves from the evils, Allah will reward them generously in the life hereafter. On the contrary, evildoers, promoters of evils, and behaving badly with those who promote righteousness, Allah will subject them to severe punishment. Allah says:

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَالٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾ وَقَوَائِكَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

Tr.: Indeed, the righteous will be among shades and springs. And fruits from whatever they desire. [Being told], "Eat and drink in satisfaction for what you used to do." Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good. (al-Mursalāt: 41/44)

وَفِيهَا مَا نَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَلَكَهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

Tr.: And therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes, and you will abide therein eternally. And that is Paradise which you are made to inherit for what you used to do. For you therein is much fruit from which you will eat. (al-Zukhruf: 71-73)

It is obvious that nothing can be more pleasant and satisfactory to man than getting what he desires without any hardship. In fact, this is a great blessing bestowed on the people of paradise. Likewise, many verses of the Qur'ān depict severity of the hellfire, its festering foods and extremely tormenting conditions. Allah says:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ ۖ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئَةِ ۖ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّؤَصَّدَةٌ ۗ فِي عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ ۖ

Tr.: It is the fire of Allah, [eternally] fueled, Which mounts directed at the hearts. Indeed, Hellfire will be closed down upon them. In extended columns. (al-Humazah: 6-9)

لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ ۖ لَا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ۖ

Tr.: For them there will be no food except from a poisonous, thorny plant, which neither nourishes nor avails against hunger. (al-Ghāshiyah: 6-7)

Nothing can be more agonizing for the hell-dwellers than the fact that they would not have any way out to exit from there. They will neither die to get rid of their afflictions nor will they have life, which offers some respite. The same extremely painful condition has been stated in this verse:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ۖ

Tr.: Indeed, whoever comes to his Lord as a criminal-indeed, for him is Hell; he will neither die therein nor live. (Tāha: 74)

**7. The Qur'ānic rules for protection of life, wealth and honor are very strong and stringent:** Now it is indisputable fact that the Qur'ānic provisions or do's and don'ts are very important to promote virtues in the society, prevent spread of evils, and build a righteous and upright society. There are some do's and don'ts of the Qur'ān, which, in fact, form a

complete system of the Qur'ānic commandments and prohibitions in respect of all spheres of social, moral, communal and economic life. The Qur'ān wants people to comply with them in their daily life so that they could be happy with their life, peace and security prevail, no one's life and dignity are outraged, causing strife and corruption and eventually leading to inexistence of peace and calmness. In this respect, some most significant commandments are: Say good words to the people, respect their honor and dignity, and treat them fairly and justly. To enhance effects of these commandments further, the Qur'ān has set some restrictive provisions or prohibitions. The provisions appertaining to the social evils among them are more important as they are for protection of life, wealth, honor and dignity.

The evils spread in the current society and because of which there are insecurity and dissatisfaction prevailing everywhere, one most serious evil among them is the desecration of life. Looking for life of each other and taking it for trivial issues have become a routine, because of which the affected people face so much problems that many families reach to the point of destruction and the parties lose their peace and calmness. Declaring prohibition of unjustified homicide of man, the Qur'ān has drawn attention of man to its fatal consequences in very powerful and eloquent manner. Allah says:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَلَّيْتُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

Tr.: Indeed, whoever comes to his Lord as a criminal-indeed, for him is Hell; he will neither die therein nor live. (Tāha: 74) And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed] except by [legal] right. This has He instructed you that you may use reason. (al-An'ām: 151)

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا  
أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

Tr.: Indeed, whoever comes to his Lord as a criminal-indeed, for him is Hell; he will neither die therein nor live. (Tāha: 74)Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. (al-Mā'idah: 32)

The crimes which are widely spreading in today's society and which have put a big question mark on the "development of mankind" include offences against women and terrible assault on their dignity and honor. Hardly a day passes when some headlines of such heinous incidents do not find their way in the newspapers. A long time ago, the Qur'an commanded to keep away from this heinous crime very eloquently and asked even not to approach it, let alone being culprit thereof. In other words, it asked to keep away from the things leading or prompting thereto. Allah says:

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزِّنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾

Tr.: And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way. (al-Isrā': 32)

This is also noteworthy here that Allah has underlined distinguished attributes of his beloved slaves at the end of chapter *al-Furqān* of the Qur'an, which includes, apart from many other things, an attribute that says that do not kill anybody unjustly nor do they indulge in adultery. By way of explanation, they fully observe inviolability of soul and respect dignity and honor of women. The verse reads:

وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٥١﴾

Tr.: Who do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever do that will meet a penalty. (al-Furqān: 68)

The point for contemplation is that the Qur'ān, on one hand, declared adultery or desecrating the dignity and honor of a woman an extremely shameful act and a way of destruction and devastation and vehemently forbade it. On other hand, it laid down stringent punishment for those who violate this provision. In this way, it disseminated the message that everyone in the Muslim community should consider protection of women's dignity and honor as his duty and should understand it clearly that desecrating anyone's dignity is such an immoral act that leads its perpetrators to destruction, apart from being harmful for ethical standing of the community. In respect of woman's dignity and honor, the Qur'ān is so sensitive that it does not like anyone to even level false allegations of rape against women and try to desecrate their chastity and honor. In view of the Qur'ān, such people are curse-worthy in this world and the Hereafter. Moreover, they will be subjected to a tormenting punishment. Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ لَعُنُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

Tr.: Indeed, those who [falsely] accuse chaste, unaware and believing women are cursed in this world and the Hereafter; and they will have a great punishment. (al-Nūr: 23)

**8. Protecting oneself from harmful things and making others protected from them are essential qualities of the believers:**

This should also be taken into account that the attributes of a believer have been described by saying that they do not

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harm anyone with their words and action and people are safe from their tongue and hands. This is obvious that harm, either using tongue or hand, affects life, wealth, honor and dignity. It affects both men and women. In 'Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī', under the chapter of al-ʿĪmān, it has been reported on the authority of 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr (MABPWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده" (A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe.)<sup>1</sup> There are some additions in the narration of 'Jāmi' Tirmidhī': المؤمن من أمنه الناس على دماءهم وأموالهم. (Tr.: The believer is the one with whom the people trust their blood and their wealth.)<sup>2</sup> It appears from the foregoing that attributes of the believer include observing inviolability of life and wealth for all and they hold protection of people's honor and dignity as their duty, let alone breaching thereof. It is also appropriate to mention here that in the beginning of the chapter al-Mu'minūn, qualities of the believers have been enlisted, who will realize the real success. Their fourth quality has been mentioned as they will be among those who safeguard their private parts, i.e. do not fulfill their sexual desire unlawfully or they are not unbridled in the use of their sexual prowess. Allah says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ...

Tr.: Certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive; And they who

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book, الإيمان, Chapter المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده

<sup>2</sup> *Jāmi' Tirmidhī*, Book, الإيمان, Chapter المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده

turn away from ill speech; And they who are observant of zakah; And they who guard their private parts; Except from their wives or those their right hands possess... (al-Mu'minūn: 1-6)

- 9. The Qur'ān forbids amassing wealth through unlawful means and from financial corruption:** Apart from desecration of life and honor, another social evil that is eating into the vitals of entire society is financial dishonesty or corruption. Hardly any section of society would be free from this evil, whether they are general public, rulers, traders, professionals, laborers or proprietors, owners of factories or employees, or mechanics or industrialist. What is noteworthy is that this is such a serious evil that it cedes grounds to many other evils. To address this epidemic, there are two provisions in the Qur'ān, which are primarily important: First, prohibition of amassing wealth illegally or dishonestly and, the second, abstinence from breach of trust. Allah, the Most High, says:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَطْلِ وَتُدُلُّوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

Tr.: And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]. (al-Baqarah: 188)

Here it should be clear that prohibition of unlawful consumption of wealth includes all the means through which wealth of other people are usurped or used in an unlawful manner, including breach of trust, burglary, robbery, gambling, interest, telling lies, false witnessing, fraud and cheating etc. The Qur'ān has mentioned these evils separately too and warned of their bad consequences and emphasized

on keeping away from them.<sup>1</sup> No doubt, there are many illicit sources of earning money or wealth. However, upon mulling over them, it appears that dishonesty or breach of trust is in the root cause for most of them. Through its guidance and instructions, the Qur'ān has struck a heavy blow to such practice and enjoined to keep away from it completely, and listed it in the deeds which are disliked by Allah altogether. Allah, the Almighty, says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَخُوْنُوْا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ وَتَخُوْنُوْا اٰمَنَاتِكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

Tr.: O you who have believed, do not betray Allah and the Messenger or betray your trusts while you know [the consequence]. (al-Anfāl: 27)

**10.** Breach of trust or dishonesty gives birth to many social evils: It is obvious that breach of trust with Allah and His Prophet mean disobeying their commandments and working against their will. In the verse, there is prohibition for breach of trust too. It is well known that breach of trust is opposite of trust. Generally, embezzlement of wealth or funds or complete usurp thereof by the person entrusted with the same is expressed as breach of trust but, in fact, its nuances are much more expanded. While working in employment or for wages, not observing the scheduled times or doing personal work in the duty hours or leniency or complacency in performance of entrusted task, are the examples of the breach of trust. Similarly, paying wage of an employee or laborer less than what is specified is also a breach of trust. The widespread loot and bribery of this age are culmination of this very social and economic evil. In two

<sup>1</sup> For details, see: Zafarul Islām Islāhī, The Qur'ānic Requirements in the Financial Matters [Editorial], 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān, 28, 1 January –June 2013, PP. 8-12

verses of the Qur'ān (al-Nisā': 107, al-Ḥajj: 38), it has been stated clearly that Allah does not like those who are indulged in breach of trust and perpetrate sins: Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: Indeed, Allah loves not one who is a habitually sinful deceiver. (al-Nisā': 107)

How abhorred the deceivers and dishonest people are in the eyes of Allah may gauged from the statement of the Qur'ān that they do not deserve to be supported or defended. In respect of such people, Allah declares:

وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٥﴾

Tr.: And do not be for the deceitful an advocate. (al-Nisā': 105)

In fact, there are many forms of breach of trust and dishonesty and this is ever growing like an epidemic. Its deep abhorrence is overtly stated in the foregoing verses.

**11. The Qur'ān describes human rights and emphasizes on their protection:** For the prevention of social evils, this is also noteworthy in the Qur'ānic scheme of things that the Qur'ān prepares mind against the evils on the ground of the protection of human rights. This needs not to be mentioned that all the evils prevailing in the society currently violate the human rights in one way or another, because they often result in destruction of life and wealth and desecration of honor and dignity. Obviously, all such evils are committed when there are disrespect and disregard for the human rights. The Qur'ān educates man for eradication of social evils even by reminding them of the human rights and seeks to inculcate that inflicting harm on anyone, usurping someone's wealth or playing

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with someone else's honor and dignity, in fact, militate against the provision of human rights. On the other hand, its harm is not limited to that person only, rather it adversely impacts the entire society. To this effect, this Book of Guidance first teaches mankind that peace and security will prevail in the society only if the human rights are respected and everyone guards his duty towards protection of others' rights. In fact, the Qur'ān seeks to ingrain deeply that essence and importance of human rights which may be understood only if the greatness and preference of man are taken into view and inviolability of his soul, wealth and honor is acknowledged.

In view of the Qur'ān, the first right of a man on his fellow man is that he thinks of him a man like him. In other words, they must have regard for the honor and preference accorded to man in respect of each other because it forms a fundamental right. Here, this needs to be emphasized that notwithstanding the declaration of man's greatness and dignity and imparting lessons for respect of humanity (al-Isrā': 70; al-Tīn: 4), the Qur'ān has reminded mankind again and again that he has been created of clay and eventually has to go into the soil, i.e. neither his life is eternal nor his wealth and resources or ranks and positions. Below verses reiterate the same facts:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى ﴿٥٥﴾

Tr.: From the soil We created you, and into it We will return you, and from it We will extract you another time. (Tāha: 55)

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿١٠٩﴾

Tr.: To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And to Allah will [all] matters be returned. (Āl 'Imrān: 109)

By drawing attention to these things, the Qur'ān wants man not to be arrogant and intransigent, not to treat any poor and underprivileged disdainfully, not to be aggressive and unjust towards any weak, and also not to offend anyone else's honor and dignity by abusing his power and position.

With respect to human rights, the lesson of inviolability of soul and wealth and protection of honor and dignity as taught by the Qur'ān stands out for not making any discrimination to this respect. It specifically reiterates that the human rights (whether related to the inviolability of life, wealth and honor or protection of personal life, or to the social relationships and financial matters) must be observed without any regard for wealthy and poor, potent and impotent, Muslim and non-Muslim, patron and opponent, and citizen and expatriate. In fact, this equal and just practice is essential for cordial mutual relations and prevalence of peace and harmony in the society. This may be completely understood from the verses in which Allah, the Almighty, has instructed in general to safeguard people's soul, wealth and honor, to treat them fairly and respectfully and to offer them their rights. Wherever in the Qur'ān the prohibition has been made for killing, offense, sexual assault, contempt and disrespect, backbiting and disparaging, it is addressed to the general people and the type of provision is also general. For example, do not kill anyone without any justification, do not usurp wealth of anyone unlawfully, no one should ridicule of another, do not approach to evil-doing, do not call names, do not look for the secrets of someone else's private life. Addressee of such Qur'ānic injunctions are all people and they must be observed by all with no discrimination.

**12. The Qur'ān reminds of others' rights and emphasizes on their respect:** In respect of safeguarding the human rights and for prevention of social evils, the Qur'ān comes up with another important deliberation and reminds people

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of their own rights. It prepares them to respect rights of other people and observe their rights without them asking for the same. The Qur'ān enjoins mankind again and again to observe inviolability of human soul, to have regard for others' honor and dignity, to offer respect to the women, to treat them in respectful and dignified manner, to take care of the widows, to grant poor and destitute their rights, to accept right of deprived people in your wealth, to safeguard rights of orphans and other backward sections of the society and not to exploit them, be watchful to the dignity of the people in need, accept right to privacy for others and keep in mind that to get justice is also a fundamental right of man, and therefore, treat everyone with equality and justice, with no distinction.

- 13. The Qur'ān lays special emphasis on prevalence of justice and fairness for prevention of social evil:** In fact, prevalence of justice and fairness in the society plays an important role in the prevention of social evils. There are value and regard for justice and fairness at every step of domestic and social life, particularly the matters related to the downtrodden sections of the society. The Qur'ān has emphasized on implementing its rules in the society and strengthening its system at every level, both individual and social. If this system is weak or its requirements are not fulfilled, evils will spread in the society, incidents of injustice and offenses will increase, criminals will get emboldened, particularly the weaker sections of the society will be subjected to injustice and atrocity. The Qur'ān has laid maximal emphasis for observance of their social and financial rights and its guidelines are very clear in respect thereof. It is important that the Qur'ān has directed to observe righteousness and justice in all stages of the problems. For example, when you
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speak, speak truth; be fair when you are assigned to prepare any document or record; when there is need for witnessing in a matter, just witnesses should be appointed; when you mediate settlement between two parties, it should be according to the principles of justice; when you marry more than one wife, observe justice among the wives; when you assume guardianship of orphans, observe justice while making deals with them; when you are to decide a matter, do it justly. Same guidance has been provided in the following verses. Allah says:

وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۗ

Tr.: And when you testify, be just, even if [it concerns] a near relative. (al-An'ām: 152)

وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ

Tr.: And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice. (al-Baqarah: 282)

وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوْيَ عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ

Tr.: And bring to witness two just men from among you and establish the testimony for [the acceptance of] Allah . (al-Ṭalāq: 65/02)

فَإِن فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾

Tr.: And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. (al-Hujurāt: 09)

فَإِن خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

Tr.: But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hand possesses. (al-Nisā': 03)

وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ بِالْقِسْطِ

Tr.: ...and that you maintain for orphans [their rights] in justice (An-Nisa: 127)

وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

Tr.: ...and when you judge between people judge with justice. (al-Nisā': 58)

It is a fact that downtrodden sections of the society may easily be subjected to injustice, hostility and inequality, and orphans are the most vulnerable people of the society. The Qur'ān has specifically directed to give them just and fair treatment.

On the basis of these verses, it may be concluded that Allah, the Most Glorified, has directed to observe righteousness and justice in different matters of day-to-day life and has specifically emphasized to observe this guidance in respect of distressed, helpless and poor people. No one can dispute that in compliance to this instruction leads to or develops many social evils and problems which eventually make this life miserable.

**14. The Qur'ān forbids cooperation in wrongdoings:** One should know that the Qur'ān not only directs to cooperate with each other in the virtuous and righteous deeds, it has also been ordained clearly that one should not cooperate and support with each other in the evildoing, injustice and sinful acts as it transpires from this verse:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

Tr.: And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty. (al-Mā'idah: 02)

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In the last section of this verse, there is a firm warning that it is a sin to do bad deeds but cooperating or being accomplice with anyone in his bad deed is a greater sin, and that such people should know that Allah is severe in handing penalty to the sinners. In the Ḥadīth, a person involved in promoting the interest business by preparing its record or being a witness thereto has been declared condemnable and curse-worthy.<sup>1</sup>

In explanation of this Ḥadīth, Imām Nawawī, the commentator of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, has said that this evidences that cooperation in a forbidden or unlawful act is a major sin.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the Qurʾān and the Prophetic traditions seek to build a society in which sinners get no support or no one dares to involve in a conspiracy to harm anyone. The last instruction of the foregoing verse (not to cooperate anyone in the sinful act, aggression and hostility), is more significant and meaningful in the backdrop of current scenario. It is because the organized crimes these days are on the rise, particularly the numbers of incidents of sexual assault on women include significant number of gang rapes as reported by the media.

Points may be driven home from the foregoing facts that the guidelines and instructions provided by the Qurʾān for the prevention of social evils are very clear and whatever rules and regulations it has set forth are very comprehensive and firm. Any plan developed in the light of these guidelines will surely be a huge success and effective in elimination of these evils. The only thing needed is that the man of this age fully understands the belief system of the Qurʾān, its ethics and laws, and then complies with them sincerely as required under the following verse:

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<sup>1</sup> See details: Ṣafrul Islām Iṣlāḥī, *Qurʾānī Muṭālaʾāt*, Islamic Book Foundation, New Delhi, 2014, PP. 70-77

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book المساقاة والمزارعة, Chapter الربوا

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يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اَدْخُلُوا فِي السَّلْمِ كَافَّةً

Tr.: O the people who believe, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly]. (al-Baqarah: 208)

In the interpretation of this verse, Maulānā Sayyid Abul A'alā Maudūdī writes: "It means bring your entire life under the purview of Islam without any exception and reservation. Your thoughts, ideas, sciences, practice, dealings and all forms of your effort and actions must be subjected to Islam. You should not divide life into different parts to follow Islam in some and exempt it in some others."<sup>1</sup>

In a nutshell, the human mind must be prepared to accept the fact described by the Qur'ān that social evils are not destructive only to the individual life rather to the entire society. Nothing can prevent it except the Qur'ānic teachings. May Allah bless us to understand it ourselves and explain it to others.

### **Blessing and Benediction of Being Generous to God's Creature**

**with reference to the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth**

**a) Islam is the religion of mercy, the last Prophet (PBUH) is a mercy to the worlds and the Qur'ān is the book of guidance and mercy:** Allah is the Most Merciful and His chosen religion Islam is the religion of human nature and is merciful. Allah sent down His last Messenger Muḥammad (PBUH) as a prophet of mercy for all the worlds as well as the book revealed to him by Allah is the book of mercy for all. It requires from the people

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<sup>1</sup> *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2017, 01/160

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embracing this religion of mercy to be merciful and kind to all, to be generous and helpful to each one in the society as well as be useful for others with their word and action. This is the teaching of the Qur'ān and the path shown by the Prophet (PBUH).

- b) Generosity is among the distinctive characteristics of the people of Islam:** In the Qur'ān, a good word has been exemplified a tree whose roots are firmly fixed underground and branches are spread high in the sky, which produces fruits all the time under permission of its Lord. Allah thus says:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٢٤﴾  
تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ

Tr.: Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, [making] a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches [high] in the sky? It produces its fruit all the time, by permission of its Lord. (Ibrāhīm: 24-25)

No doubt, the believers are like the palm-tree who become ultimate source of virtue and beneficence. They demonstrate good moral values providing relief and solace for others. In fact, followers of the ethical teachings and observant of the human values safeguard the rights of family, relatives, neighbors, friends, poor, laborers and needy. They spent their life in a way that makes them a source of relief and mercy instead of discomfort and pain. They put their body parts and organs, wealth and resources, knowledge and skill, thought and ideas, speech and writing and all that they have in their possession into the service of people. In fact, a person afflicting sufferings and pain on others is neither liked by Allah

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nor can he be liked by His creature. It will not be out of place to quote here that once the Prophet (PBUH) likened believer with a palm tree which never sheds its leaves.<sup>1</sup> Some of the modern interpreters of Ḥadīth have noted in its explanation that “Same as the palm tree which is always green and does not witness any autumn, Muslims possess the same quality due to Islam. They are always beneficent to the people and nothing emanates from them except what is good and virtuous.”<sup>2</sup> Verily, the entire life of a believer is like a shadowy and fruitful tree. He is busy in earning virtues and offering the same to others till the time he reaches his Lord and is rewarded for his deeds. This is further illuminated by a Ḥadīth in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

لن يشبع مؤمن من خير حتى يكون منتهاه الجنة.<sup>3</sup>

Tr.: A believer never satisfies doing good until he reaches Jannah.

It provides that he does not feel comfort without listening and doing righteous things.

**c) Multiple forms of beneficence:** There may be multiple forms of offering beneficence to others like supporting a weak and frail person unable to walk on his own, carrying his load and helping him meet his daily needs, offering financial support to a needy or poor, offering meal and drink to a hungry and thirsty man, quenching thirst of a person for knowledge and science, or fulfilling any other needs. Currently all such works are covered under ‘social service’. In view of the Qur’ān, people engaged in this

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book صفات المنافقين وأحكامها*, Chapter مثل المؤمن مثل النخلة

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Fārūq Khān, *Kalām-i-Nubuwwat*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2014, 1/353

<sup>3</sup> *Jāmi’ Tirmidhī*, Book العلم, Chapter ما جاء في فضيل الفقه على العبادة

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service are righteous and beloved slaves of Allah, who will be rewarded with diverse and endless blessings in the Paradise. Their qualities have been mentioned by saying that during their stay in this world, they are dutiful, God-fearing and provider of meal to poor, orphans and prisoners for the sake of Allah. Allay says:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴿٥﴾ عَيْنًا يُشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا  
تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٦﴾ يُوفُونَ بِاللَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا ﴿٧﴾ وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى  
حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

Tr.: But the virtuous drink of a cup, tempered with camphor, A spring wherefrom the servants of Allah drink. They make it gush forth- a forceful gushing forth, hey fulfill *their* vow, and fear a day the evil of which is widespread. And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive. (al-Dahr: 5-8)

- d) Provision of financial assistance to the poor is an important way of being beneficent:** There are different ways of providing beneficent to mankind as explained earlier, including spending one's own wealth for the needy or providing financial assistance to someone. Notwithstanding, love of wealth is an intrinsic characteristic of man and he feels pain in keeping it away or spending it on anyone, and he has to force himself for that. But strength of belief and sense of accountability in the Hereafter make the task easier. This very quality of believers has been described above and this is further elaborated by another verse (al-Baqarah: 177) , whereby the highest rank of righteousness has been accorded to spending money on relatives, poor and orphans for the love of Allah. In fact, no one can reach the highest rank of righteousness unless his love for Allah supersedes all his beloved things and unless he spends his

money which he holds very dear to himself, i.e. unless he sacrifices his beloved things in the way of Allah. This holy verse underlines this point:

لَنْ تَتَّالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ

Tr.: Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. (Āli ‘Imrān: 92)

In fact, spending one’s treasured wealth on any needy and destitute person is very difficult and may not be overcome except by those who believe in the Day of Judgment, hold wealth and affluence as the trust of real Provider of Sustenance, and who have firm belief that spending the same for righteous causes or benefit of common man in accordance with Allah’s injunction is the source of blessing and benediction for himself. How beautifully the Qur’ān has drawn attention of mankind to this fact. In the beginning verses of chapter *al-Balad*, blessing of man with wealth, affluence and other bounties have been mentioned, followed by his obstinate attitude, and then Allah, the Lord of Honor, says:

فَلَا أَقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾ فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾ أَوْ إِطْعَمٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾  
بَيْتًا دَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ أَوْ مِسْكِينًا دَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

Tr.: But he has not broken through the difficult pass. And what can make you know what is [breaking through] the difficult pass? It is the freeing of a slave. Or feeding on a day of severe hunger. An orphan of near relationship. Or a needy person in misery. (al-Balad: 11-16)

The above point is further elaborated under the verses in which it has been stated that those who deny and disbelieve the true religion they neither spend their wealth on poor and needy nor do they motivate others to do the same, i.e. they

are so disheartened that they do not ever think to spend the wealth given by Allah on His poor and needy slaves and be beneficial to them. Rather, they treat them disdainfully and drive them away. In the following, portrayal of such mean and niggard people have been given:

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحِضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾

Tr.: Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense? For that is the one who drives away the orphan. And does not encourage the feeding of the poor. (al-Mā'ūn: 1-3)

It is declaration of the Qur'ān that such person avoids offering financial assistance to the needy himself and does not encourage others for the same. This is a great source of learning that when the hell-dwellers in the Hereafter will be asked how come they met such terrible fate, they will state the reasons as described in the Qur'ān:

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمِ الْمِسْكِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَكُنَّا نَحْوُ مَعَ الْخَاطِبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

Tr.: What drove you to Hell? They will answer: We were not among those who observed Prayer, and we did not feed the poor, and we indulged in vain talk with those who indulged in vain talk. (al-Muddaththir: 42-45)

This verse clearly shows how important spending on poor and offering them meals are.

**e) Allah loves those who do good:** One should know that it has been stated in several verses that Allah likes those who perform good deeds:

وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

Tr.: And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good. (al-Baqarah: 195)

The Arabic word 'Ihsān' has several meanings and connotations, including doing good deed, behaving well, being engaged in righteous deed for the pleasure of Allah, performing a task in an appropriate manner etc. It needs to be reflected that wherever the word 'Muhisneen' has appeared in the Qur'ān, it appears from the context that at most of the places it is preceded by mention of the people who did good to Allah's creature or did something to save them from harm. It looks relevant in this context to mention that some of the experts of the Qur'ānic sciences have mentioned in their explanation of chapter *al-Nahl*, Verse 90 (إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ) (وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ) that 'ihsan' suggests the good deeds done to benefit others.<sup>1</sup>

In the Qur'ān, people who confer benefit to others by their deed have been regarded as the beloved slaves of Allah. In chapter *al-Furqān*, Verse 63, the foremost trait of Allah's righteous and beloved slaves has been mentioned stating that they walk upon the earth easily, i.e. they do not walk swaggeringly like the arrogant and intransigent people. And, if the ignorant people address them they leave from there saying good words.

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ﴿٦٣﴾

Tr.: And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.

No doubt, the arrogant and intransigent people cause pain to others. Apart from this, the Qur'ān calls 'Muhsin' (righteous or

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid 'Abdul Kabīr 'Umarī, *Nūr-i-Hidāyat*, Jāmia Dārus-salām, 'Umarābād, 2014, P. 289

good doer) to those who restrain anger and pardon (the abusers). Allah says:

الَّذِينَ يَنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَنُظِيِّينَ وَالْغَيْظِ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Tr.: ...And who spend in easiness and hardship, who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good. (Āli 'Imrān: 134)

This is a well-known fact that when a person is angry, he loses control of his senses and becomes intractable. In such condition, he has regard neither for the rights of Allah nor for the rights of slaves. And thus his behavior or action proves to be harmful and destructive for himself and for others.

**f) Supplication is also a form of being beneficial:** It is well-established that there are different forms of doing good to someone (mental and psychological and scientific and practical) and anyone of them may be adopted. Allah, the Most Dignified, has declared every good deed as mean of success and happiness (al-Ḥajj: 77). It has no scope of doubt that every work related to someone's success and well-being is beneficial for him. These beneficial works include supplication, which is the source of blessing and benediction not only for the supplicant but for others too. It is enough to quote a Ḥadīth for preference of supplication in which it has been said to be essence of worship (الدعاء مخ<sup>1</sup> العبادة). Supplication should be done for oneself and for others. Every believer wants good of both religion and the world and we have been taught a beautiful supplication for that (al-Baqarah: 102; al-A'arāf: 56). In a Ḥadīth, believers' have been identified as the people who like for others what they like for themselves. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

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<sup>1</sup> *Jām'i Tirmidhī*, Book الدعوات, Chapter الدعاء مخ العبادة

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه ما يحب لنفسه.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: No one of you can be a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.

Who among us does not like good for himself. No doubt, a well-known and effective form of conferring benefit on others is to like good for them and supplication is made for their good. In this respect, the saying of the Prophet signifies the benefit and preference of supplication that it is beneficial to ward off the woes that have struck already and for the ones which have still not. So hold fast, O worshippers of Allah, to supplication. The Ḥadīth reads as under:

إِنَّ الدُّعَاءَ يَنْفَعُ مِمَّا نَزَلَ وَمِمَّا لَمْ يَنْزَلْ فَعَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِالدُّعَاءِ.<sup>2</sup>

Tr.: The supplication benefits against that which strikes and that which does not strike, so hold fast, O worshippers of Allah, to supplication.

Moreover, supplication has been called believer's weapon: الدعاء سلاح المؤمن<sup>3</sup>. Undoubtedly, he can protect himself against woes and plights and may use it for benefit of others as well.

**g) Scope of good deed is very wide:** The Qur'an ideologically educates its follower by inculcating that righteous deeds are not confined to the acts of worship only, rather its scope is very wide. The religion and religiosity require us to do good deeds in addition to

<sup>1</sup> الدليل على أن من خصال الإيمان أن يحب لأخيه ما يحب لنفسه. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book الإيمان*, Chapter يحب لنفسه من الخير

<sup>2</sup> ما جاء في فضل التوبة والاستغفار وما ذكر من الدعوات. *Jām'i Tirmidhī, Book الدعوات*, Chapter رحمة الله لعباده

<sup>3</sup> *Mustadrak al-Ḥākim, Dā'iratul Ma'ārif al-Nizāmia, Hyderābād, 1334 H, 1/492*

observing the acts of worship. The following verse seeks to reaffirm the same:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَأَفْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Tr.: O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed. (al-Ḥajj: 77)

This verse is proving the message that apart from observing the acts of worship, one should undertake all such deeds which bring blessing for himself and for others. It is a well-known fact that the religion of Islam stands for observance of both the rights of Allah and the rights of His slaves. Therefore, Islam asks its followers to actively observe rights of both Allah and His slaves as set out in the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth. No doubt, observing rights of Allah's slaves brings him a lot of benefit. In fact, the people of Islam are required to live their daily life in a way that their every word and action (speaking, standing and sitting, walking and moving, doing labor and hard work, reading and writing, and so on and so forth) are mean of blessing for others and so that they prove to be beneficial for the creature of Allah. There is a well-known Ḥadīth:

خير الناس من ينفع الناس.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: The best people are those who do good to others.

If one reflects on the provisions regarding social and economic life in the Qurʾān (like greeting when visiting each other, being courteous, calling by good names, talking softly, humility and modesty, truthfulness, telling clearly, honesty, neat dealings, showing moderation and self-control), he will notice the fact that acting on any of these is blissful for himself and beneficial and comforting for others.

<sup>1</sup> 'Ali bin Ḥusāmuddīn al-Muttaqī, *منتخب كتزل العمال في سنن الأقوال والأفعال*, Dār Iḥyā'ut Turāth al-'Arabī, Beirut, 1990, 6/305

**h) Providing benefit to others using the bounties blessed by Allah is being grateful to Him:** The Qur'ān motivates to benefit others also from the view that Allah, the Lord of Glory, has granted mankind with many different bounties and blessed him with plenty of physical, mental, academic and artistic expertise, from which he benefits since morning to evening. So gratitude must be expressed to the Gracious God for His abounding blessings. Apart from offering verbal thanks, this is also a form of being gratitude to the Real Sustainer that one should benefit others with the blessings and expertise granted to him. The following verse seeks to deliver the same message:

وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ<sup>ط</sup>

Tr.: And do good as Allah has done good to you. (al-Qaṣaṣ: 77)

A verse of chapter *al-Baqarah* (called *Āyatud-Dain*) provides exhaustive explanations on this point. In this verse, Allah, the Almighty, instructed to keep written record of debt contract and enjoined people capable of writing that they should not refuse if they are called to record a deal in writing, rather they should do this happily and remember that Allah has blessed them with the skill of writing out of His grace. Therefore, it is incumbent on them to remember Allah and be grateful to Him for this blessing and use it to benefit others. This will be a good service to Allah's slaves and best use of His blessed skill. Now, look into the relevant verse hereunder:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ

Tr.: O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down. And let a scribe write [it]

between you in justice. Let no scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him. So let him write... (al-Baqarah: 282)

It is noteworthy in this context that Allah, the Almighty, has repeatedly reminded mankind of His bounties sometimes addressing the believers in particular and sometimes all people in general. Its main purpose is to draw attention towards remembering the real Provider, using the provision for His pleasure and being grateful to Him. As Allah says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ هَلْ مِنْ خَلْقٍ غَيْرِ اللّٰهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ  
وَالْاَرْضِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ فَآَنۢى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ﴿٢٨٢﴾

Tr.: O mankind, remember the favor of Allah upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded? (Fāṭir: 03)

Look into the other verses of this kind which remind of Allah's bounties and provisions, see: al-Baqarah: 40, Āli 'Imrān: 103; al-Mā'idah: 7, 11, al-Naḥl: 8; al-Aḥzāb: 09)

In some of the verses, Allah, the Lord of Glory, has clearly instructed to be grateful for divine provision. Allah says:

وَأَشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ إِن كُنْتُمْ اِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾

Tr.: And be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is [indeed] Him that you worship. (al-Naḥl: 114)

It has already been mentioned that proper use of the bounties is also a form of being grateful. This needs no explanation that proper use of Allah's bounties is beneficial for self and for others. Explaining importance of being grateful to Allah's favor, a renowned scholar of the Qur'ān has rightly noted that:

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“People generally think that somehow uttering ‘*al-Ḥamdu Lillāh*’ is enough to express gratitude. Appreciating any favor of Allah and rightful use thereof is ‘gratefulness ‘to Allah even if the word ‘*al-Ḥamdu Lillāh*’ is not uttered. On the contrary, failure to appreciate divine favor and abuse thereof is indeed ingratitude even if ‘*al-Ḥamdu Lillāh*’ is uttered thousand times.”<sup>1</sup>

i) **Promoting righteousness is conferring benefit to the people:** Evolution of a righteous society or happiness and wellbeing in social life depend on the increase of virtuous deed and righteousness. Therefore, cooperating in this mission is not benefiting just a person rather to the entire society because promotion of righteousness in the society is essential for its reform, peace and security, which is beneficial for every individual of the society. That’s why the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth emphasized on cooperation with each other in the righteous deeds and forbade from assisting in the baneful deeds. Allah says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Tr.: And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. (al-Mā'idah: 02)

This verse makes it known that the Qur’ān wants a person to do righteous deeds or extend helping hand to someone working for the righteous cause and not cooperate with the aggressors or those who involved in the sinful acts. It will be a great service to the humanity and a boon to the society that good-doers should be assisted and evil-doers should be avoided to be associated with.

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<sup>1</sup> *Nūr-i-Hidāyat*, Ibid, P. 91

j) **Guidance to righteousness is also a favor:** As per the Qur'ān, it is also a favor to teach and remind someone of the righteous things. No doubt, the benefit received through this mean is worthier and far greater than the materialistic gain because it betters his life and guides to the righteous path, which ultimately brings him to success. Allah says:

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

Tr.: And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers. (al-Dhāriyāt: 55)

How advantageous and blessing are counseling, educating and guiding someone to the righteousness may be gauged from the Ḥadīth in which the Prophet (PBUH) said:

من دلّ على خير فله مثل أجر فاعله<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Whoever guides someone to virtue will be rewarded equivalent to him who practices that good action.

Here it looks appropriate to draw attention to the fact that there may be many types of virtuous deed or act but nothing can be better than the saying or deed intended to call people towards Allah or towards His preferred religion. The following verse seeks to convey the same in an unequivocal term:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Tr.: And who could be better of speech than he who calls [his fellow-men] unto God, and does what is just and right, and says, "Verily, I am of those who have surrendered themselves to God"? (Ḥa-Mīm al-Sajdah: 33)

<sup>1</sup> فضل إعانة الغازي في سبيل الله بمركوب وغيره الإمامة، Chapter 1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

This provides that nothing can be better than a speech or word which establishes relation of a slave with his Creator or Lord or guides to Him.

Different type of books may be referred for counseling, conveying righteous message, and reminding but the best and most reliable source for this is the Qur'ān. It is squarely proved by the words used for this great book in the Qur'ān itself like '*dhikr*, '*dhikrá*, and '*mau'izah*, which mean that it is sheer advice and reminding and Allah has reminded mankind again and again that He made Qur'ān easy for taking advice/lessons. He says:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

Tr.: And We have certainly made the Qur'ān easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember? (al-Qamar: 17)

Furthermore, Allah has instructed mankind to advice or remind through His book:

فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنْ يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ﴿٤٥﴾

Tr.: But remind by the Qur'ān whoever fears My threat. (Qāf: 45)

**k) Protecting others from harm is a virtuous act:** From the details provided above, it appears that there are many form of conferring benefit to others as described in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. It will not be out of place to quote here that protecting someone from harm or damage is somehow an act of favor and same as there are many sources of conferring benefit or doing favor, there are different forms of inflicting harms also, e.g. verbal abuse, taking a jibe, ridiculing, sarcastic comment, distrust, slandering, backbiting, fault-finding, cursing, indulging in extravagance, breach of faith, fraud, dishonesty, burglary,

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robbery, usurp and vandalism. Avoiding all of these and keeping others secured are another aspect of doing favor, which is not less important than the former. In the following, some description will be provided for this another aspect of doing favor.

It transpires from the Qur'ānic verses that Islam asks its followers, whether man or woman, to spend their daily life in such a manner that none of his/her words or actions inflicts harm on others. Inflicting harm on anyone, whether mental, physical or psychological, is a grave sin and keeping oneself away from the same is an act of virtue. Inflicting harm has been declared a manifest sin in the Qur'ān. Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بغيرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٨﴾

Tr.: And those who harm believing men and believing women for [something] other than what they have earned have certainly born upon themselves a slander and manifest sin. (al-Aḥzāb: 58)

It is very common to harm others with verbal abuse or wordings. People tend to use words which cause harm or mental torture to others. It has reached an extent that sometimes they do not even think that what they are saying may harm or offend someone. Verbal abuse is so common that a section of people does not even regard it as evil. It is strictly forbidden by the Qur'ān. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءٍ يَتَأْتِيهِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْنَ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِاللُّغَابِ ۗ

Tr.: O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be

better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. (al-Ḥujurāt: 11)

The mean of harming forbidden in the above verse is appertaining to the tongue and speech. In this verse, ridiculing someone, revealing secrets of anyone or calling by offensive name/ nickname have been strictly forbidden. Likewise, backbiting or maliciously talking about someone who is not present and talebearing are also very disgusting act in the view of the Qurʾān and it forbids them very emphatically (al-Ḥujurāt: 11-12). The former is a shameful effort of defaming someone and the later is an evil act of harming somebody, which is intended to spoil public relations by arousing sentiments of enmity and hostility. The Qurʾān is very much articulate about the backbiting and its view about it is so harsh that to express its disgust it has equated involvement in this evil with eating flesh of dead body of own brother (al-Ḥujurāt: 12). It is obvious that purpose of using such expression is to show its sinfulness and create abhorrence so that one could avoid it completely. Similarly, there is strict prohibition for some other acts which cause mental agony (al-Ḥujurāt: 11, al-Qalam: 10-11).

In the Ḥadīth, character of a Muslim has been described as a person from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are secure. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are secure.

In explanation of this Ḥadīth, it has been stated that tongue and hand have specifically been mentioned because these two are the primary tools to harm anyone, otherwise Islam never does

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Book الإيمان, Chapter المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده

allow to harm anyone through any mean. In fact, it is the characteristic of a believer that he may not harm anyone by his word or action. In another Ḥadīth, the Prophet (PBUH) said:

المسلم أخو المسلم لا يخنونه ولا يكذبه ولا يخذله.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: A Muslim is a brother to another Muslim. He should neither deceive him, nor lie to him, nor leave him without assistance.

Similarly, being dishonest in dealing, telling lie to someone, and causing embarrassment to somebody are acts hurting others, particularly they cause mental distress.

**l) Protecting people from mental and physical distress is a virtuous and rewarding act:** The point to be noted here is that the Qurʾān has laid particular emphasis on keeping oneself away from what creates mental distress. Apparently, its reason is that the word or action causing mental distress does not only impact just heart and mind rather it adversely affect entire body. Apart from what has been mentioned above, other acts causing mental distress and which have been forbidden by the Qurʾān include distrust, accusation, taking a jab, fault finding, boasting of favors conferred and disrespect. How harshly this verse has threatened the fault- finders and mockers:

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾

Tr.: Woe to every scorn and mocker. (al-Humazah: 1)

How much grave is the crime of causing mental distress to anybody in view of the Qurʾān may be guessed by the fact that spending in the way of Allah, offering financial assistance to poor and fulfilling need of a needy person with one's own

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<sup>1</sup> *Jām'i Tirmidhī*, Book البر, Chapter المسلم على المسلم ما جاء في شفقة المسلم على المسلم

wealth are act of great virtue and will be rewarded generously as it appears from many verses. Conversely, boasting a favor conferred on a poor, treating him scornfully or exploiting the help done to him are such a grave sin (which causes mental agony in any case) that Qur'ān has forbidden it and pointed out that a kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity and alms followed by a word or action which causes mental agony. Allah, the Lord of Honor, says:

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَىٰ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَىٰ

Tr.: Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury. And Allah is Free of need and Forbearing. O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders or injury (al-Baqarah: 263-264)

Who can deny this fact that fault-finding, framing charges, taking a jab and treating someone scornfully and derisively are such obvious social evils which, apart from spoiling relations, cause mental distress and psychological disorder to those who are targeted.

The Qur'ān has expressed its strong views on all these things so that man may keep himself away and protects Allah's slaves from them to please his God. Allah strongly dislikes that his slaves are hurt, troubled or tormented. It is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān that Allah does not like aggressors and those who commit excesses, strife-mongers and those who spread corruption, as well as those who are arrogant and intransigents. (al-Nisā': 36, al-Mā'idah: 64, 87, al-Nahl: 23, al-Qaṣaṣ: 77, al-Shu'arā': 40, al-Ḥadīd: 23). In fact, nothing can be more offensive than inflicting mental harm to someone and nothing can be more corruptive than taking interest in things or deeds causing rift among people and spoiling their harmonious

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relations. If one ponders over the causes of above-mentioned evils which cause mental distress, it will appear that most of them are linked with arrogance and intransigence or with thinking high of oneself and low of others. It looks appropriate to mention here that Maulānā Sayyid Abul A'alā Maudūdī noted in the explication of the second verse of chapter al-Humazah ' *وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَّةٍ / وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَّةٍ* / Woe to every scorner and mocker' is self-evident in proving that a person commits acts of ridicule and derision because of taking pride in his wealth.<sup>1</sup>

In the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, apart from causing mental distress, all other acts of physical harm have also been forbidden, whether they be fighting, beating, killing, or assaulting. Similarly, works which protect people from physical harms have been declared virtuous and rewarding. They include removing a harmful object from a path, e.g. bricks, stones, thorn, waste or anything lying on a path which might harm somebody. Sometimes, such acts are ignored considering them worthless whereas they are act of great virtue as established in several AḤadīth. Over seventy branches of Iman have been mentioned and removal of harmful object from the road is one of them.<sup>2</sup> It has been reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah (MABPWH) that *sadaqah* is incumbent for each joint of man and it has different forms. Removing something harmful from the road is *sadaqa* is one of them.<sup>3</sup> Its importance and preference are further elaborated in another Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurairah (MABPWH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

<sup>1</sup> *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2000, 6/459, Footnote no. 2

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book الإيمان*, Chapter شعب الإيمان

<sup>3</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book الزكوة*, Chapter بيان أن اسم الصدقة على كل نوع من المعروف

يُنْتَمَا رَجُلٌ يَمْسِي بِطَرِيقٍ، وَجَدَ عُصْنًا شَوْكٍ فَأَخَذَهُ، فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، فَغَفَرَ لَهُ.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: While a man was on the way, he found a thorny branch of a tree there on the way and removed it. Allah thanked him for that deed and forgave him.

This Ḥadīth unveils the truth that removing a harmful object from the road, which is considered a worthless act, earns great reward from God. Urdu translator and interpreter of Riyāḍus Ṣāliḥīn has provided a tremendous commentary while explaining this Ḥadīth. It would read in English as: Allah likes to protect people from harm and getting injured and, therefore, removing harmful objects from the road is also very dear to Allah. On the contrary, narrowing the road or creating obstruction, which creates nuisance to the public, for example on the occasion of marriage, people do such shameful acts in a very shameful manner, or some shopkeepers and landlords make encroachment and cause harm to the public, is an act of Allah's displeasure and invokes His anger. But moral degeneracy of our people has reached to such an extent that they indulge in such practices shamelessly and in a boastful manner. *إننا لله وأنا إليه راجعون*.<sup>2</sup> (We belong to God and to Him we shall return).<sup>2</sup>

#### m) Protecting Allah's slaves from any harm is a virtual

**act:** In fact, harming Allah's slaves with any mean is forbidden in Islam and protecting them from harm and distress has been described as *ṣadaqah*, which provides that it is a virtuous act and deserves a lot of reward. This has been pointed out in another Ḥadīth: Abū Dhar Jundub bin Junādah (MABPWH):

عن أبي ذر جندب بن جنادة رضي الله عنها قال: قلت يا رسول الله، أي الأعمال أفضل؟ قال: "الإيمان بالله، والجهاد في سبيله". قلت: أي الرقاب أفضل؟ قال:

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book البر والصلة والأداب, Chapter فضل إزالة الأذى عن الطريق*

<sup>2</sup> *Riyāḍus Ṣāliḥīn, 1/153*

"أنفسها عند أهلها، وأكثرها ثمنًا" قلت: فإن لم أفعل؟ قال: "تعين صانعًا أو تصنع لأخرق" قلت: يا رسول الله أرأيت إن ضعفت عن بعض العمل؟ قال: تكف شرك عن الناس فإنها صدقة منك على نفسك".<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Abu Dhar Jundub bin Junadah narrated: I asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Which action is the best?" He (ﷺ) said, "Faith in Allah and Jihad in the way of Allah." I asked: "Which neck (slave) is best (for emancipation)?" He said, "That which is dearest of them in price and most valuable of them to its masters". I asked: "If I cannot afford (it)?" He said, "Then help a labourer or work for one who is disabled". I asked: "If I cannot do (it)?" He said, "You should restrain yourself from doing wrong to people, because it (serves as) charity which you bestow upon yourself."<sup>2</sup>

In view of Islam, how grave doing wrong to anybody, causing discomfort and / or inflicting any damage are and how bankrupt will be perpetrators of such act on the Day of Resurrection as far as the virtuous deeds are concerned that their virtues will be transferred to those whom they would have subjected to their atrocities. It is further explained in another Ḥadīth, in which it has been stated that once Messenger of Allah (PBUH) asked his companions: "Do you know who is the bankrupt?" They said: "The bankrupt among us is one who has neither money with him nor any property". He said, "The real bankrupt of my Ummah would be he who would come on the Day of Resurrection with Salat, Saum and Sadaqah (charity), (but he will find himself bankrupt on that day as he will have exhausted the good deeds) because he reviled others, brought calumny against others, unlawfully devoured the wealth of others, shed the blood of others and beat others; so his good deeds would be credited to the

<sup>1</sup> *Riyāḍus Ṣāliḥīn*, 1/146

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book الإيمان بالله تعالى أفضل الأعمال, Chapter كون الإيمان بالله تعالى أفضل الأعمال

account of those (who suffered at his hand). If his good deeds fall short to clear the account, their sins would be entered in his account and he would be thrown in the (Hell) Fire"<sup>1</sup>

**n) Protecting non-Muslims against harm is also a virtue:**

At the end, it feels obligatory to explain that in the above verses and Ḥadīths doing wrong to a believer or Muslim has been forbidden. It does not mean that such misbehavior is permitted with the followers of other religions. In fact, Islam does not allow misbehavior or wrong to anybody (whether Muslim or non-Muslim). Rulings of the Qur'ān and sunnah have been promulgated mostly keeping in view the Muslim community, therefore words of believer or Muslim have been used. One should know that the Qur'ān has repeatedly and in very general term instructed to observe justice and fairness, to avoid injustice and atrocity, and to keep away from immorality and bad conduct. These instructions are for all, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. In this regard, the following verse is very prominent:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْمُبْغَىٰ  
يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

Tr.: Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded. (al-Naḥl: 90)

This needs not to be stated that doing injustice, treating someone in disgraceful manner or doing wrong to anyone lead to enormous distress. In this verse, all disgraceful acts have been forbidden in general, which undoubtedly mean to protect

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book البر, Chapter تحريم الظلم (Riyāḍus Ṣāliḥīn, 1/231)*

others against harm (no matter who he is). In the first part of the verse, commandment has been given to do justice, behave well or do good to everyone. It is obvious that followers of this commandment will not subject others to their injustice and atrocities, rather the sincere followers thereof will try to keep themselves away from such speeches/actions which cause distress and pain to others. It is also noteworthy here that in another verse, Allah, the Almighty, enjoined the believers saying: "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness." (al-Mā'idah: 8). What draws our attention in this verse is that it has been asserted to do justice even with the enemies. In the Qur'ān, preference of those believers have been mentioned who do not follow suit in response to the harmful and hurting words and actions, rather they observe patience and protect Allah's slaves from harm out of the fear of God. Allah says thus:

وَلْتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصِيرُوا  
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

Tr.: And you will surely hear from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allah much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allah - indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination. (Āli 'Imrān: 186)

Furthermore, this should be kept in view that in a Ḥadīth (quoted above), Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in general (without making any discrimination between Muslim and non-Muslim) that keeping people safe from one's own evil is *ṣadaqah*, i.e. virtuous act, and this will be rewarded. In fact, the biographical account of the Prophet (PBUH) (which is a

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practical presentation of Qur'ān) is witness that he would always keep himself away from anything harmful to others and instructed his holy companions to do the same. He treated graciously even his fiercest enemies and opponents. Even upon use of disgraceful wordings for the Prophet by the side of enemies and opponents, someone from among his companions responded harshly or wanted to take any retaliatory action, the Prophet (PBUH) stopped them and emphatically asked them not to indulge in verbal abuse and behave courteously even with such people.<sup>1</sup>

To sum up, uttering any harmful outrageous word is an act of major sin under the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and, therefore, we should avoid them anyhow. Likewise, protecting others from outrageous words or harmful acts is a great virtue.<sup>2</sup>

### **Development of Virtues in the Society and their Benefits**

#### **In the Light of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth**

- a) Calling to virtues is among the essential duties of believers:** There are many responsibilities of believers in their daily life. One of these prominent responsibilities is calling to virtues and promote the same in the society through his word and action. The Qur'ān and Ḥadīth have repeatedly drew attention to this great responsibility and asserted to discharge it. In fact, every believer is preacher of the religion and caller to the virtues, and everyone of them is required to discharge this duty according to their

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see: *Shiblī Nu'mānī, Sīratun Nabī, Dār-ul-Muṣannifīn, Shiblī Academy, A'zamgarh, 2003, 2/286-294*

<sup>2</sup> For details, see: *Zafrul Islām Islāhī, Protecting others against harm is an act of virtue, Tadḥkīr (Ghāzīpūr), Series no. -107, October 2017, PP. 15-22*

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knowledge and capacity. It is not enough for a believer to correct himself, comply with the Qur'ān and sunnah and be steadfast in obeying the provisions of *sharī'a* in his daily life, rather the true religion requires him to convey to the people the good word and strive for promotion of virtues in the society and eradication of evils. No doubt, calling to the religion and virtues is a prominent characteristic of believers. In fact, what can be more virtuous than calling someone to the religion and strengthening his bond with the Creator, Owner and Lord of the Worlds? What can be more righteous than informing someone with those precious guidance and teachings which are source of happiness in his worldly life and mean of success in his life Hereafter? The Qur'ān has delivered this message in explicit terms and repeatedly drew attention of believers to the same. Allah says:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Tr.: And who could be better of speech than he who calls [his fellow-men] unto God, and does what is just and right, and says, "Verily, I am of those who have surrendered themselves to God. (Ḥa Mīm al-Sajdah: 33)

**b) Preaching true religion is collective duty of entire *ummah*:** No doubt, the well-being and success of mankind depend on their walking on the right path and spending efforts for others to join him on the same path. It is well-known that Allah, the Almighty, on several occasions in the Qur'ān, enjoined His beloved Prophet to preach true religion to the people and call them unto the righteous path of his Lord. It is obvious that in all such instances, entire *ummah* has been enjoined through the Prophet

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(PBUH) as described by the interpreters, in which attention has been drawn that after demise of the Prophet (PBUH), entire *ummah* shall be responsible for it collectively. Allah says:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۗ

Tr.: Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction... (al-Nahl: 125)

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ

Tr.: O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord. (al-Mā'idah: 67)

To be more precise, discharge of this duty (delivering Allah's message to His slaves) is specific duty of the *ummah* of the last Prophet (PBUH) and the same is its distinguishing characteristic. Allah says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

Tr.: You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. (Āli 'Imrān: 110)

In many verses of the Qur'ān, the distinguishing characteristics of believers have been defined. One of such characteristic is that they enjoin to do righteous deed, promote righteousness and call people unto the true religion. Allah says:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

Tr.: The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His

Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (al-Taubah: 71)

التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْرَّاكِعُونَ السَّابِقُونَ السَّالِفُونَ الْمَصْرِفُونَ الْمَعْرِفُونَ وَالْمُتَّقُونَ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَفِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

Tr.: [Such believers are] the repentant, the worshippers, the praisers [of Allah], the travelers [for His cause], those who bow and prostrate [in prayer], those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and those who observe the limits [set by] Allah . And give good tidings to the believers. (al-Taubah: 112)

**c) Beside individual reform, making endeavor for well-being of social life is required:** The above referred verse 33 of the chapter *Ha Mīm al-Sajdah*, how effectively motivates for preaching the religion and calling to the virtues that nothing can be better than culling someone unto Allah and himself being steadfast in following the right path. Therefore, this is the path which will take him to the target or real success. Similarly, the character of believers transpires from the verses of *amr bil m'arūf* and *Nahyi 'anil munkar* they keep up discharging their duty of preaching the righteousness while being engaged in their different activities involving word and action, writing and speech, and morals and conduct. Given the chance, they do not hesitate doing this good work even in the opposing environment. In fact, they are the lucky slaves entitled as the "best nation". It will not be out of place to mention that in chapter *al-'Aşr, tawāsī bil Ḥaq* (enjoining each other with truth) has been mentioned among the four attributes of the people who succeed. This seeks to provide that that effort must be spent for the well-being of social life together with the individual reform. Because society is formed of individuals, every member

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should worry and make effort for its reform so that people are secure from adverse effects. In other words, apart from embracing belief and righteous deed oneself, it is incumbent to carry the benefit to others and this is possible only when *tawasi bil haq*, i.e. duty of inviting and preaching is fulfilled, aspect of *tazkeer* (reminding of God) is adopted, and people are taught virtues. It looks very appropriate to mention here that the important point noted by Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' with reference to "tawāsī bil ḥaq" at the end of the interpretation of chapter al-'Aṣr. He says:

"This surah provided Muslims with an essential guidance that as much as compliance with the teachings of the Qur'ān and *sunnah* is important and vital for them, they are equally required to strive for inviting other Muslims to the belief and righteous deed. Otherwise, only own deeds will not be enough to attain salvation, particularly overlooking the bad deeds of one's own family, friends and relatives is like closing the path of his own salvation, no matter how pious he is. That's why the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* have made incumbent on every Muslim to perform duty of *amr bil m'arūf and nahyi 'anil munkar*, each according to his respective capacity. In this matter, ordinary Muslims, rather many elites, are involved in negligence for they think their own deeds to be enough. They do not care for the deeds and actions of children and family. May Allah bless us all to comply with the guidance of this verse."<sup>1</sup>

**d) Guiding to the righteous deeds is real welfare of mankind:** No doubt, guiding mankind to the right path and making efforts to make them steady are real good to them. In respect thereof, it looks appropriate to quote a *Ḥadīth* narrated by Tamīm bin 'Aus al-Dārī (MABPWH) that once the Prophet (PBUH) told a congregation of his holy

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<sup>1</sup> *M'ārif-ul-Qur'ān*, Maktaba Muṣṭafāyī, Deoband, n.d., 8/814

companions: Religion is conduct; religion consists in sincere conduct. The people asked; to whom should it be directed, Messenger of Allah? He replied: To Allah, his book, his Apostle, the leaders (public authorities) of the believers and all the believers, and the leaders (public authorities) of Muslim and the Muslims and the Muslims in general.<sup>1</sup> In the exegesis of this *Ḥadīth*, some of the scholars have mentioned that *naṣīḥah* is that the Muslims are guided to the righteous deeds of this world and the Hereafter, they are commanded to do virtues and prohibited from vices.<sup>2</sup> In another *Ḥadīth*, Allah's Prophet explained different ways of earning virtues and one of such ways, he said, is to say good things to the people or guide them to the righteousness.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, guiding to the righteousness effectively or motivating to tell the right thing, the Prophet (PBUH) said: Whoever guides someone to virtue will be rewarded equivalent to him who practices that good action.<sup>4</sup> In a similar *Ḥadīth*, there is an addition of just: without their reward being diminished in any respect on that account.<sup>5</sup>

With reference to the above mentioned verses and *Ḥadīths* and in order to spread virtues and promote righteousness, it needs to be emphasized that among many rights that a man owes his fellow man are telling right things, motivating for righteousness and warning from the bad consequences of wrongdoings. It is incumbent on all to seek knowledge of righteousness or to

<sup>1</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book الإيمان*, Baat النصيحة

<sup>2</sup> *Riyāḍus-Ṣāliḥīn*, 1/198-199

<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, al-Maṭba'ah al-Salafīyyah, Cairo, 1375 H, 1/316-317, 404-405, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Katab الزكوة,

Chapter إن اسم الصدقة يقع على كل نوع من المعروف

<sup>4</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Katab الإمارة, Chapter فضل إعانة الغازي في سبيل الله بمركوب وغيره

<sup>5</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Katab العلم, Chapter من سنّ حسنة أو سيئة ومن دعا إلى الهدى أو ضلالة

gather knowledge of good things and getting benefit of this knowledge is right of those people who do not have it. This is collective duty of entire society, particularly of those who are aware. In other words, those who have knowledge of good things or those who are aware of the rules and norms of earning virtues must inform other people of such righteous things of which they are unaware or ignorant.

**e) Earning and promoting virtues are in the center of**

**what the believers do:** Inspiration is sought for promotion of righteousness in the society from those Qur'ānic verses too, in which the believers have been enjoined to make earning virtues mission of their daily life, to utilize their expertise in the righteous deeds, to cooperate with each other for promotion of virtues and not to help anyone in aggression, assault and injustice, or any evil deed. No doubt, performing virtuous deeds, observing good conduct, sobriety of character and willingness for righteous deeds are fruits of belief. The Qur'ān repeatedly reminds the believers that they should not only engage in earning virtues, rather they should dedicate themselves for promotion of righteousness and compete with each other in this field. It is a very well-known saying that human life stands for consistent struggle, movement is at its heart and stagnation is opposite to him. This is also a fact that every man has decided a field of his activity, in which he keeps up spending his physical energies, mental capacities and other resources. In other words, everyone has a target for which he looks ready to sacrifice everything, whether it be time, wealth, peace and comfort. Education, agriculture, industry, handicraft, employment, wealth, ranks, possessing rein of power and ruling etc have been known spheres of human struggle and have been ever existing with some differences. In the view of the Qur'ān, struggling for betterment of life and progress in this worldly

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life are not faulty, rather it incentivizes for that. But, the Qur'an declares earning virtues or competing in righteousness as the main sphere of believers' struggle and activism because their good, as well as the good of others and the social life, depends on them. The Qur'an reminds them that secret of their success in this stressful life lies in the fact that they strive and compete for righteousness.

وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيٰهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ

Tr.: For each [religious following] is a direction toward which it faces. So race to [all that is] good. (al-Baqarah: 148)

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى

اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

Tr.: Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ. (al-Mā'idah: 48)

In the Qur'an, the believers have clearly been asked to compete in righteousness.

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Tr.: And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous people. (Āli-'Imrān: 133)

Seeking forgiveness of Allah is not only a mean of erasure of sins, rather it is in itself an independent virtue and among the deeds liked by Allah (al-Baqarah: 222). Nonetheless, the Qur'an also tells us that virtues wipe off vices, i.e. this too is a mean of liberation from sins (Hūd: 114). However, the above-quoted verse of surah Āli-'Imrān incentivized to struggle in the way of righteous deeds. It is obvious that competing to enter Paradise

means making you addicted of virtues, exploiting your capacities for the sake of righteous deeds and keeping oneself busy in all such work which pleases Allah and offers benefits to His slaves. It is important to note that when we mull over the verses, in which motivation has been provided for good deeds or their preferences and good consequences have been mentioned, it appears that every good deed is related either to the rights of Allah or of His slaves, in one way or another. Being honest in observing both these rights brings prosperity and happiness in the socio-economic life in this world and guarantees success of the life Hereafter, which eventually makes one eligible to enter the Paradise. In many verses of the Qur'ān, by mentioning many different types and varieties of bounties in the Paradise (the eternal abode) and a peaceful life, free from any sort of sorrow and grief, motivation has been provided to struggle for it and attention has been drawn that, in fact, this (Paradise) is the main goal for which one should race and compete with each other. After giving account of eternal bounties of the Paradise in chapter al-Muṭaffifīn, Allah said:

وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

Tr.: So for this let the competitors compete. (al-Muṭaffifīn: 26)

In another verse, believers' characteristic has been mentioned by saying that they like to be engaged in the righteous deeds and try to march ahead in this sphere by taking competitive route. Allah revealed about them:

أُولَئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْحَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

Tr.: It is those who hasten to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein. (al-Mu'minūn: 61)

Apart from motivation and inspiration for the Paradise in this verse, there is an admonition for the people striving round the

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clock for obtaining minuscule and mortal pleasures, while they do not have any care and craving for the original destination which ought to be desired and competed for. Obviously, it is an attitude of those who do not believe in God or who are oblivious to Him or oblivious to themselves.

**f) Desire for good and incentives of its promotion:**

**1. Belief in the Day of Judgment and sense of standing in front of Allah and being accountable to Him:** As regards the question what motivates believers to earn and promote virtues or what are the factors which offer inspiration for earning virtues and promoting them in the society, the following looks obvious:

First, the belief that whatever virtue a man does or whatever effort he spends for welfare of the people, Allah, the Lord of Universe, knows about that and it is adding to the record of his good deeds. Second, any of his efforts will not go in vain. Allah will reward him. One who struggles, will not be deprived of rewards, i.e. for sure, he will be rewarded for his righteous and good deeds. Third, Allah, the Lord of Honor, is very Kind and Generous, He will not reward only for the righteous deeds, rather He will reward excessively. Fourth, a day will surely come what he will appear before his Creator and Lord and be accountable for his every deed. Fifth, virtues and righteous deeds are the most valuable treasure, which will be useful in the Hereafter. The same righteous deeds guarantee happiness of this worldly life and on the same the life in the Hereafter depends. The following verses underline these facts:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ لِسَعْيِهِ وَإِنَّا لَهُ كَاتِبُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

Tr.: So whoever does righteous deeds while he is a believer - no denial will there be for his effort, and indeed We, of it, are recorders. (al-Ambiyā':94)

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وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا ﴿١٩﴾

Tr.: But whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated [by Allah]. (al-Isrā': 19)

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ

Tr.: And as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards and grant them extra from His bounty. (al-Nisā': 123)

وَيَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ

Tr.: And He answers [the supplication of] those who have believed and done righteous deeds and increases [for] them from His bounty. (al-Shūrā: 26)

وَمَنْ يَفْعَرْفِ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

Tr.: And whoever commits a good deed - We will increase for him good therein. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Appreciative. (al-Shūrā: 23)

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۗ

Tr.: For them who have done good is the best [reward] and extra. (Yūnus: 26)

وَلتَسْأَلَنَّ عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

Tr.: And you will surely be questioned about what you used to do. (al-Naḥl: 93)

ثُمَّ لَتَسْأَلَنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾

Tr.: Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure. (al-Takāthur: 8)

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا وَمِمَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ.

Tr.: The Day every soul will find what it has done of good present [before it] and what it has done of evil. (Āli-‘Imrān: 30)

وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ مَرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

Tr.: And the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for recourse. (Maryam: 76)

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنَّىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةًۭ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Tr.: (Whosoever does a good deed, will have (reward) ten times like it and I add more; and whosoever does an evil, will have the punishment like it or I will forgive (him)).Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do. (al-Nahl: 97)

There is a Ḥadīth Qudsī, very famous about generosity of Allah (excessive reward and grand recompense), which reads:

من جاء بالحسنة، فله عشر أمثالها أو أزيد، ومن جاء بالسيئة، فجزاء سيئة سيئة مثلها أو غفر.<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: (Whosoever does a good deed, will have (reward) ten times like it and I add more; and whosoever does an evil, will have the punishment like it or I will forgive (him)).

In fact, firm belief in the Day of Judgment and sense of standing in front of the Creator and being accountable to Him is something that drives a man to do virtues and motivates him to perform deeds which are pleasing to Allah and benefitting to His slaves and prevents him from such words and deeds which hurt His creature and invokes His

<sup>1</sup> فضل الذكر والدعاء والتقرب إلى الله تعالى، Chapter الذكر والدعاء، *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

displeasure. Here it is important to note that the verse has already been quoted earlier in which believers' characteristic has been described by saying that they hasten to good deeds (يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْحَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ). Most importantly, incentives of this virtuous conduct have been mentioned prior to this verse, which are: fear of Allah and sense of being present in front of Him. Please read the complete verse is as follows:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ  
بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجَلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ  
يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْحَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

Tr.: Indeed, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord. And they who believe in the signs of their Lord. And they who do not associate anything with their Lord. And they who give what they give while their hearts are fearful because they will be returning to their Lord. It is those who hasten to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein. (al-Mu'minūn: 57-61)

These verses reveal the facts that firm belief in Allah, fear of Allah, and sense of being present in front of God and being accountable for his deeds, makes a man craving for righteousness and instills in him the passion to march ahead of others in this sphere. This fact is further elaborated by this Qur'ānic narrative it is only the belief in standing in front of Allah that makes observance of *ṣalāh* (prayer) easier. Allah says:

وَأَسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ  
وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

Tr.: And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah]. Who are certain that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him. (al-Baqarah: 45-46)

It is beyond any doubt that it is nothing but sense of being present and accountable before God, the Lord of Honor, that keeps a man ever willing to perform worships and other righteous deeds, makes all difficulties of this way easier, and keeps him steadfast in patience and perseverance at the most difficult times.

**2. The Qur'ānic perception of the righteous deeds/ enduring good deeds/virtues:** Here it looks appropriate to mention that in the above-quoted verses, the believers have been repeatedly asked to perform righteous deeds, emphasis has been laid on amassing treasure of the enduring good deeds, and they have been motivated to compete with each other and march ahead. Thus, the question arises what do the righteous deeds/enduring good deeds/virtues stand for in these verses? Upon contemplating on the relevant verses in their respective context, it appears that concept of righteous deed is very wide and inclusive from the Qur'ānic perspective. They may be largely divided into three parts: worships, ethics and dealings. From the Qur'ānic perspective, the righteous deed is related to all these three, but now a days, it is generally confined to the first part only (observance of Allah's rights) and very little focus is shed on the remaining two. It is self-evident that ethical values and conducts are related to the rights of slaves and it is in everybody's knowledge that the Qur'ān has emphasized on the rights of slaves besides the rights of Allah. Mankind has been addressed and reminded not only of rights of each other, rather their attention has been drawn to the fact that observance of these rights is the important way of earning virtues and growing treasures and eventually a mean of salvation in the life Hereafter. It is simple that if these acts (which are related

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to the rights of slaves) were not included in the class of righteous deeds, why the believers would have been given the glad tiding of success on their accomplishment. The above-mentioned facts are clearly evident from these verses: al-Mu'minūn: 1-11, al-Furqān: 64-76, al-Aḥzāb: 35, al-Ma'ārij: 22-35. These verses enlist basic characteristics of believers like good conduct, good speech, gentleness, truthfulness, honesty, fulfillment of promise and being true in speech and action, humbleness and humility, keeping away from arrogance and pride, being moderate and judicious, observance of human rights, avoidance of injustice and hostility, escaping bad habits, helping poor and needy, caring and sponsoring orphans. The bearers of these characteristics have been given glad tiding of ultimate success and Paradise and that they would get pleasure of Allah. These verses not only illustrate importance and preference of performing these virtues and righteous deeds without any delay and promoting them in the society, rather motivation to help each other in such righteous deed have also been offered. Most importantly, these Qur'ānic instructions and guidelines are related to both the rights of Allah and that of His slaves. In fact, what the Qur'ān has enjoined like hastening in doing good deeds or earning "virtues" ( فاستبقوا الخيرات / سارعوا إلى ) (مغفرة من ربكم وجنة) and what has been described their characteristics like they are hastening in the way of righteousness and reaching thereto ( يسارعون في الخيرات وهم لها ) (سابقون) as well as the special emphasis laid on doing good deeds or virtues, it is noteworthy about them that doing righteous deeds or competing in the way of virtues stand not only for performing worships, rather they also include performance of other good deeds.

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Simply put, upon looking deeply at the verses about virtue/s and good deed, it appears that virtue/s involves every act that pleases Allah, the Most Glorified. Likewise, the righteous deed involves every act that observes any right of Allah or His slaves. No doubt, the concept of virtue or righteous deed includes all hard work and activism intended to benefit others.<sup>1</sup> This fact is more evident from contemplating on the verses stating the acts of man liked by Allah and the acts which invoke Allah's pleasure, as well as the acts which invoke His anger and become cause of his ruining and annihilation. The verses are: al-Baqarah: 195, 222, Āli 'Imrān: 76, 134, 146, 159; al-Mā'idah: 42, al-Taubah: 108, al-Şaff: 4; For those disliked: al-Baqarah: 190, 276; Āli 'Imrān: 23, 57; al-Nisā: 36, 107; al-Mā'idah: 64; al-An'ām: 141; al-Anfāl: 158; al-Naḥl: 23; al-Ḥajj: 38; al-Qaşaş: 76.

**3. Racing towards every virtue and distancing from every evil are required:** This is to be noted here that upon contemplating on the holy verses and noble traditions, in which instruction and motivation have been provided to earn virtues or compete in righteous deeds, it appears that one should utilize every opportunity of doing virtues. A virtue is a virtue either big or small. Same is the case with sin or evil either big or small. In explanation of the famous verses of surah al-Zalzalah (Whosoever has done even an atom's weight of good shall see it; And whosoever has done even an atom's weight of evil shall see it), Maulānā Sayyid Abul A'alā Maudūdī has underlined that: "This verse cautions mankind regarding an important fact that even the smallest good has its own weight and value and same is the case with the smallest evil as it will also be reckoned, and therefore, it is not to be ignored."<sup>2</sup> Statement of the author of *Nūr-i-Hidāyat*, Ḥāfiẓ Sayyid 'Abdul

<sup>1</sup> For more details on the concept of 'righteous deed' in the view of the Qur'ān, see: Alṭāf Aḥmad A'ẓmī, *The Qur'ānic Concept of Belief and Action*, Idārah Taḥqīq wa Taṣnīf-i-Islāmī, 'Alīgarh, 1986, PP. 196-204

<sup>2</sup> *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2000, 6/624

Kabīr ‘Umarī’ is very meaningful: “Every virtue is to be embraced and every evil is to be shunned.”<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, the small virtues keep on adding to the treasure of virtues and their real value will be gauged on the Day of Judgment when man will earnestly need his treasure to be full and scale of goods deeds to be heavier for better and peaceful eternal life. The Qur’ān has generally motivated again and again to earn virtues and do righteous deeds. In fact they stand for every good deed no matter to which domain of life they belong (worships and ethics, social and economics, politics and governance) and whatever be their types (big or small). The following verse is well-known regarding earning virtues:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اَرْكَعُوْا وَّاسْجُدُوْا وَّاعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمْ وَاَفْعَلُوْا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Tr.: O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed. (al-Hajj: 77)

Similarly, in (فاستبقوا الخيرات), instruction has been given to compete in the way of good deeds. This underlines two important points: First -There are righteous deeds other than the worships, which the believers are required to do. Second- One should readily perform every good deed without differentiating between small and big. The following *Hadīth* reported on the authority of Abū Dhar (MABPWH) reminds us of this valuable lesson. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

لا تحقرن من المعروف شيئاً ولو أن تلقى أخاك بوجه طليق.

Tr.: Do not belittle any good deed, even meeting your brother (Muslim) with a cheerful face.<sup>2</sup>

In another *Hadīth*, reported by Abū Dhar (MABPWH) himself that the Prophet (PBUH) said, ‘I was presented good and evil

<sup>1</sup> *Nūr-i-Hidāyat*, as above, P. 309

<sup>2</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Katab البر والصلة والأدب، Chapter استحباب الوجه عند اللقاء

deeds of my *ummah*. I found that removal of harmful object from the road was also enlisted in the good deeds.<sup>1</sup>

It looks appropriate here to draw attention towards the point that same as no virtue, whether small or big, should be belittled, and effort should be made to get it, no evil should be committed on the pretext of being small. Because same as the promotion of virtues, whether small or big, brings happiness in social life, spread of an evil, either small or big, causes corruption in the society. In fact, mistake either small or big, sin either minor or major, both are harmful and fatal for us. Sometimes, we belittle small mistakes and minor wrongdoings and ignore them without any remorse. Upright approach is to avoid every small and big sin and if it is perpetrated, Allah's forgiveness should be asked with sincere remorse as the prophetic saying goes. Allah's Prophet (PBUH) said addressing 'Āi'sha (MABPWH):

إياك ومحقرات الذنوبِ فإن لها طالبًا من الله.

Tr.: Keep guard against the small sins because Allah will ask about them.<sup>2</sup>

**4. In case of dispute, reconciliation effort is good for the society:** Surfacing of disagreements and appearance of conflicts while living together in daily life are not strange, rather it is quite natural. In such case, the most valuable good or cooperation that can do with the conflicting parties is to make sincere endeavor for reconciliation and restoration of cordial relations among the people. In it lies their welfare and success of the society. The Qur'ān has accorded paramount importance to this righteous deed (mutual compromise and conciliation) and while emphasizing thereon for the believers, it has mentioned

<sup>1</sup> *Riyāḍus Ṣāliḥīn*, as above, 1/147

<sup>2</sup> *Sunan Dārmī*, Book الرقاق, Chapter المحقرات; *Kalām-i-Nubuwwat*, composed by Muḥammad Fārūq Khān, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī Publishers, New Delhi, 2012, 2/131-132

the significant point that it is a prerequisite of brotherhood and cordial relation and Allah's blessing is obtained upon its fulfillment. Allah revealed thus:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا

Tr.: And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. (al-Ḥujurāt: 09)

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Tr.: The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy. (al-Ḥujurāt: 10)

In his commentary and explication of the meaning and concept of the second verse, author of 'Qur'ānī Ta'līmāt', Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Iṣlāḥī, wrote:

"It provides that Islamic brotherhood has made Muslims brother of each other. There should be among them love and compassion, gentleness and kindness, and cooperation and treatment like two brothers. No Muslims should have strained relations with other Muslims and if any dispute surfaces between two brothers, effort should be made to make compromise between them."<sup>1</sup>

**5. Cooperation in good deeds is the source of promotion of virtues:** Towards the end, this point is noteworthy that for promotion of good in the society and to make the social life prosperous, ethos of cooperation must be promoted. By his nature, man is social and cannot live isolated or alone. In fact, society is formed of individuals and society's wellbeing and prosperity depend on the individual's personal conditions and circumstances. For formation of righteous society or for wellbeing and prosperity of the

<sup>1</sup> *Qur'ānī Ta'līmāt*, Maktaba Dhikrā, New Delhi, 2003, P. 336

social life, reform of the whole society is required in general, rather it is also required that this is done under mutual cooperation because work of social interest are done properly with the cooperation of each other. That's why there is too much emphasis on mutual cooperation for welfare and success of social life, and cooperation for good has been particularly emphasized, and helping each other in evil doings is forbidden. Allah says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Tr.: And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. (al-Mā'idah: 02)

No doubt, it will be an invaluable service to the mankind and in it lies the wellbeing of the human society that cooperation is made with each other in performing good deeds and projects of public welfare are executed with mutual cooperation. On the other hand, people involved in injustice and aggression or acts harmful to others must not be patronized because it will be akin to cooperating in the promotion of evil, which will ultimately cause corruption in the society. In fact, this is that invaluable message drawn from the above verse.

It will not be out of place to mention here that in the above verse/ 71 of chapter al-Taubah it has been stated: The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give zakāh and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.

This underlines that foremost quality of believers is (whether male or female) that they are allies to each other and secondly they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. In fact, by mentioning this explanation, attention is drawn to the fact that the believers by doing this (enjoining good and forbidding

evil) are observing one of the most significant right of friendship and alliance. It is obvious that mutual brotherhood and alliance too are required and this is the real benevolence that good things are shared with each other and caution is made against evils and wrongdoings. Overall conclusion of the entire verse is that the believers perform good deeds themselves and cooperate each other in the spread of righteousness. Likewise, they spend joint efforts to prevent spread of evils in the society. Undoubtedly the observance of divine commandment (cooperate in righteousness) offers this benefit and thereby confer benefit on the entire society.

In a nutshell, the foregoing discourse underlines that a believer is required, apart from offering daily worships, earning virtues and engaging in righteous deeds, to share righteous things with others and try to motivate them to do good deeds. In this regards, this concept needs to be enhanced and propagated that righteous deeds / virtues are not limited to the worships as they undoubtedly include all such works related to the observance of the rights of Allah and that of His slaves. All works of human welfare are significant parts of the righteous deeds. Moreover, the foregoing details also makes the point that apart from the efforts for betterment of one's own life, it is mandatory to spread virtues and eliminate evils for betterment of the social life. In fact, prosperity of man's own private or individual life is completely interlinked with the betterment and prosperity of the social life. It requires that he is not only active in the works associated with the social welfare and social life, rather he cooperates with those who are active in this field according to his capacity and competence. The Qur'anic verse appertaining cooperation in the righteous deeds and piety offers us this very invaluable lesson. May Allah bless us to read, understand and follow its commandments and teachings. Allah is the Bestower! Amin!

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**Book-review:**

**Religion and Science,  
The Reality of Life,  
Calling People To God**

Written by: Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān

Translated by: Dr. Farīda Khānam

Published by: Goodword, New Delhi

Reviewed by: **Purba Banerjee**<sup>1</sup>

*Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān is an Islamic spiritual scholar who has adopted peace as the mission of his life. Known for his Gāndhian views, he considers non-violence as the only method to achieve success. Keeping this ideal consistently before him, he has written over 200 books on Islam and a commentary on the Qur'ān. His most important publications are 'The Prophet of Peace: The Teachings of the Prophet Muḥammad', 'God Arises' and 'Religion and Science'. He is internationally recognized for his contributions to the world peace, he has received, among others, the Demiurgus Peace International Award, the Padma Bhushan, and the Rājiv Gāndhī National Sadhbhavna Award. In 2001, he founded CPS International – Centre for Peace and Spirituality. CPS is a non-profit and non-political organization that promotes the culture of peace through spirituality and inter-faith dialogue.*

The texts 'Religion and Science', 'The Reality of Life' and 'Calling People to God' are shorter texts by the author, in comparison to the other longer and more detailed texts. 'Religion and Science'

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<sup>1</sup> Vice-Chairperson, Review Committee, The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

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concerns itself with the complicated relationship that human civilization has always found itself, particularly after the European Renaissance, in the face of balancing faith and scientific empiricism. According to the author, as the teachings of religion do not pertain with empty abstractions but with the eternal truths of the universe, the only way towards salvation of human existence lies in our acceptance of the universal truths and unconditional submission to them. We neither have the choice of denying them nor can we be indifferent to them. It is this knowledge of the universe that can also reconcile the wedge between religion and science.

The Maulānā stresses that there are primarily two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge of things, which display no attribute which cannot be elucidated by direct argument; but in the case of knowledge of truth, it is only indirect argument which can throw any light upon them. Consequently, this is where the debate between religion and science become complicated. To begin with, the claims of the metaphysicians that the absolute truth is not subject evolution and progress, might be considered as a matter of faith, but their process of argument shows that it's only a statement, subject to further scientific observation and verification. The author argues that, as in the case of scientific truths, the validity of indirect, or inferential argument is a matter of general acceptance, in the case of religious truths, they can be proved by the logic of similar inferential argument. Consequently, according to the author, it can be legitimately argued that they fall into the same intellectual bracket as scientific truths.

Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān has explained that the modern science-oriented system of argumentation in every aspect of human life can be based on certain criterions, like observation and empiricism, logical conclusions to every experience, denial

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of the domain of belief, etc. Thus, according to the scientists and the anti-religionists, the domain of religion can only be a cluster of beliefs and not inferential/observed truths. The author has countered this argument by exemplifying that even in the domain of science, historically, there have been developments, primarily based on beliefs, which were later found to be true. For example, the existence of electrons is generally accepted by the scientists, but an electron cannot be physically observed even by the most sophisticated scientific equipments! If one applies the criteria of direct observation then electrons do not exist. But the collateral experience indicates the existence of it. Similarly, the author argues that the scientific argument against religious faith cannot be accepted just because they are not directly observed truths. They can be believed as lived experiences.

The author has concluded this text by saying that the debate between the observed science and the domain of religion and spirituality will continue, as they both serve the two facets of human mind, that is of curiosity and faith – a more holistic approach towards the universal truths can, perhaps, be achieved, through both.

Keeping in perspective the above-mentioned arguments, in '*The Reality of Life*', the author emphasizes that though man is born with unlimited potential, he finds himself in constant struggle to balance between his desires and the realistic fulfillment of them. In this text the author explains that this anomaly is caused by the denial of the Creation Plan of the universe by the majority of human beings. Trials and hardships are integral parts of human life, as much as success and happiness. It is this process which keeps humans grounded to reality, and yet curious and ambitious towards the different

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phases of life. If one human life can be considered as the fulfillment of love and desire, recognition of success and banishment of failure – above everything, according to the author, this life is bound by time and eventual death.

Thus, in the third and the final text, '*Calling People to God*', the author calls for the unconditional submission to the plan of the Creator, as the final point of atonement and salvation for the human life. He emphasizes that it is the duty of every human being in any society to serve towards the goal of bringing or helping to bring more and more people closer to the Creator and the Sustainer, so that every individual is capable of finding himself in direct relationship with the universal truths that he/she is a part of – a direct part of the Creator!

