



BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF A PIOUS MUSLIM

Islam is a religion that is most widely misunderstood in spite of its clear and ever relevant message. This is because of the little knowledge people have of it. Many Muslims are also confused by the wrong information about their faith. They are, therefore, in dire need of a carefully written literature to present the fact in a simple and understandable manner.

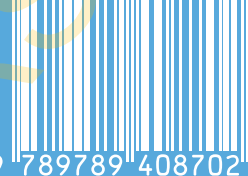
This book is a timely contribution in this regard. The authors present Beliefs and Practices of a Pious Muslim to all those who seek the truth. It is recommended to all true and sincere believers and all who want to know more about Islam.

الله أكبر



University Press Plc

ISBN-13: 978-9789408702



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Beliefs and Practices of a Pious Muslim

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Beliefs and Practices of a Pious Muslim

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University Press PLC

Ibadan

2020

University Press PLC
IBADAN ABA ABEOKUTA ABUJA AJAH AJEGUNLE AKURE BENIN IKEJA
IKORODU ILORIN IJEBU-ODE JOS KADUNA KANO MAKURDI MINNA
ONITSHA OSOGBO OWERRI PORT HARCOURT WARRI ZARIA

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First Edition 2001
Revised Edition 2020

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ISBN 978 978 940 870 2

Published by University Press PLC
Three Crowns Building, Jericho, P.M.B. 5095, Ibadan, Nigeria
E-mail: unipress@universitypressplc.com
Website: www.universitypressplc.com
1807 052 0802 ,1802 052 0802 ,1801 052 0802 ,1333 342 0802
Toll free line 0800 877 5264



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Fi Sabilil-Lahi
(The Cause of Allah)

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Preface

In the Name of Almighty God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

“Glory be to you (Almighty God), we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verify, it is you, the All-Knower; the All-Wise” (Q 2: 32).

This is an attempt to share our limited knowledge with all the living children of Adam. Although every human being is born in a state of purity and innocence, a man grows up with limited free will to do good or evil deeds. While the prophets of God encourage the doing of virtuous acts, the devil encourages evil deeds. However, the ability to learn and practise virtuous acts as well as avoiding evil deeds improves our grade in the sight of Almighty God. In fact, any human being who purifies his soul, by following God’s commandments, will truly succeed while he who corrupts his soul, by following the devil will fail woefully.

Many terminologies have been used to describe people who are involved in virtuous acts. These include good Muslims, born-again Christians, a good man to mention but a few. It must be emphasized, however, that the best of good deeds are the virtuous acts carried out in accordance with Almighty God’s commandments. When a good act is carried out ordinarily and not in accordance with God’s commandments, the best its doer should expect is a worldly gain. However, both worldly and heavenly rewards await the doers of good acts according to God’s will.

“And be steadfast in prayer and give zakat: and whatever good you send forth for your souls before you, you shall find it with Allah: for Allah sees well all that you do” (Q 2:110).

*“Nay, ‘Whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah and is a doer of good, he will get his reward with his Lord; On such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve”
(Q 2:112).*

The divine descriptions in the Qur’an are very enticing; the structure of sentences, their harmony and placement, their lucidity and sweetness in the arrangement of its verses are delightful par excellence. One experiences an extraordinary thrill when one reads or listens to it. Consequently, we shall quote these descriptions directly from the Holy Qur’an because they are stated in a beautiful and elegant manner that moves both the readers and the listeners heavily. The highest standard of eloquence and beauty shown in the Book cannot be matched by human beings. We do not want our readers to miss this rare gem. Therefore, we decided to quote extensively from the Qur’an to bring home our points and explanations clearly.

The mode of presentation of this book is done in a way to make its readers drink directly most of the time from the sources, i.e. the Qur’an and the Hadith by quoting fully from them. This is because the literary excellence of the Qur’an cum its style is so perfect, lofty, enticing, elegant, rich, comprehensive and wonderful that the like of it has not been produced since the time of its revelation when the Book itself has thrown challenges to the whole world, man and jinn to produce the like of it or ten verses that can match it in all aspects. The Qur’an says: Say, “If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they helped one another” (Q 17: 88). “Or do they say, “He (Muhammad) invented it? Say, “Then bring ten surahs (chapters) like it that have been invented and call upon (for assistance) whomsoever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful” (Q 11:13).

**Kareem Muritala K.
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March 2020**

Contents

Preface	vi
Introduction	x
1 The Life of this World	1
2 Devil's Plots	3
3 The Purpose of Creation	6
4 The Unbelievers	8
5 The Hypocrites	10
6 The Believers	13
7 The Five Pillars of Islam	16
8 The Articles of Faith	29
9 Paradise and Allah	35
10 Hell and Zaqqum	40
11 The Holy Qur'an	44
12 Nūḥ (Noah) in Allah's Sight	53
13 Ibrahim (Abraham) in Allah's Sight	55
14 Moses in Allah's Sight	58
15 Jesus in Allah's Sight and the Comprehensive Powers of Allah's Miracles	60
16 Muhammad in Allah's Sight, His Character, Honours and Ṣalātu Ala Nabiyy	68
17 Du'āu, Dhikr, Istighfār and Ṣabr: Some of the Practices of the Prophet and His Followers	88
18 Islamic Ideology and the West	97
19 A Guide to Will Writing in Islam	117
20 Preventive Medicine According to the Holy Qur'an	130
21 Conclusion	142
References	144
Index	149

Introduction

“Your God Almighty made everything He has created good, and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen of no value fluid (male and female sexual discharge). Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allah for that person) and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes) and hearts. Little is the thanks you give.”

(Q 32: 7-9).

“And indeed we created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay (water and earth). Thereafter, we made him (the offspring of Adam) as a Nut-fah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge) (and lodged it) in a safe lodging (womb of the woman). Then we made the Nut-fah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then we made the clot into a little lump of flesh, then we made flesh out of that little lump of bones, then we clothed the bones with flesh, and then we brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators.! After that, surely, you will die. Then (again), surely, you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection”

(Q 23: 12-16).

Human beings are special creatures of Almighty God. They are created from clay and water. Their creation is for an appointed time; and they are expected to be God’s representatives on earth. Although lowly in origin, human beings are blessed with God’s favours but are abased unless they believe and do deeds of righteousness. In addition to having limited free wills and being gifted with faculties

(senses), human beings are created into toils and struggles. In fact, they strive for diverse ends. Every man has his fate fastened round his neck. Apart from tasting death and resurrection, human beings are to be finally judged by Allah according to their records.

Allah has conferred nobility on man by making him His khalifah (representative/vicegerent) on land (Q 6: 165). In the sight of wise men, honour comes with monumental challenges but they are reassured that Allah has not tasked man beyond his capacity (Q 2: 286). Of particular interest is the rate at which evil is being spread by man and how Allah has been graciously overlooking or tolerating man's weakness. But occasionally, He gives out minimal sanctions so that man can turn to Him in repentance (Q 30: 41; Q 42: 30, Q 9: 125-126). For every good deed of man, Allah deservedly takes the praise, glory and honour as He is the Creator of the doer and his deeds (Q 37: 96; Q 4: 79). When man tastes the unpalatable effect of his deed in form of minimal sanctions, he should bear his sufferings and pain with responsibility in terms of repentance and hopeful patience keeping in view the fact that Allah is The only,

The eternally absolute and The ultimate Cause of every action and effect (Q 57: 22-23; Q 37: 96; Q 7: 155-156; Q 4: 78-79, Q 114: 1-4). Our world is a theatre of actions and effects established by The Almighty Creator, Allah. In the theatre of life, man is under trial with routine hypocrisy and occasional righteousness (Q 29: 64; Q 12: 53; Q 35: 45).

How can you disbelieve in Allah? Seeing that you were dead and He gave you life. Then He will give you death, then again will bring you to life (on the day of resurrection) and then unto Him you will return (Q 2: 28).

“There is none in the heavens and the earth but must come unto the Most Beneficent (Allah) as a Servant” (Q 19: 93).

The Life of this World

It is necessary to give the divine descriptions of the life of this world because such descriptions will benefit the curious souls of the children of Adam who wish to know the reality of this world.

“And the life of this world is nothing but play and amusement. But far better is the house in the hereafter for those who are Al-Muttaqūn (pious and righteous persons). Will you not then understand?” (Q 6: 32).

“And this life of the world is only amusement and play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed, i.e. the eternal life that will never end, if they but knew” (Q 29: 64).

“The life of this world is but play and pastime, but if you believe in the oneness of Allah-Islamic Monotheism, and fear Allah, and avoid evil, He will grant you your wages, and will not ask you your wealth” (Q 47: 36).

“Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual-boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children, as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tiller; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter, there is a severe torment (for the disbelievers, – evil doers and (there is) forgiveness from Allah and His Good Pleasure (for the believers, – good-doers), whereas the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment” (Q 57: 20).

“Beautified in the eyes of men is the love of desired things: women and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses

branded and cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life; but with Allah is the best of the goals to return to." Say: "Shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? For the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home; with spouses purified and the good pleasure of Allah" (Q 3:14-15).

"Verily, we have created man into toil and struggle" (Q 90: 4). The life of this world would be relatively more peaceful if human beings are tolerant of themselves and other things in their environment. Tolerance and patience are difficult to practise except the soul of man is trained to compete actively with the body in the game of life.

Human beings are different in ranks because they are tried with different gifts (Q 6:165). Their living together in peace depends on their ability to accommodate diversities. Tolerance is the quality of appreciating and accepting our differences as mercy of Allah while each of us remains steadfastly focussed on God-given uniqueness in each person peculiar race of life. Without necessarily following the bandwagon, everyone should run his or her race based on his or her capacity: natural and acquired gift or endowment. Peace is the cornerstone of Islam (Q2: 208) and there is freedom of thought in religion (Q 5:48). In Islam, no one should be forced to believe or accept a religion (Q2: 256; Q28: 56).

The Qur'an says: "To you is your religion and to me is mine – Islam" (Q 109:1-6). Man should know that diversity in humanity has been decreed by Allah" (Q 10: 99-100).

2

Devil's Plots

Oh! Children of Adam, do not deify the prophets of God. It is very true that they have suffered for us. They were constantly persecuted while teaching and demonstrating the messages of Almighty God. Their persecutions are not unexpected; reason being that the devil and its messengers will never want people to understand and practise God's commandments. Noah, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus Christ and Muhammad (PBOT) are the examples of the prophets (first-class creatures) of Almighty God.

The Devil said: "Because you have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones (i.e. they will not be dutiful to you)" (Q 7: 16-17).

Iblis said: "O my Lord! Because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them (mankind) on the earth, and I shall mislead them all except Your chosen, (guided) slaves among them" (Q 15: 39-40).

Iblis said: "My Lord! Give me then respite till the Day the dead are resurrected.

Allah said: "Verily! You are of those allowed respite till the Day of the time appointed."

Iblis said: "By Your might, then I will surely mislead them all – except Your chosen slaves among them (faithful, obedient, true believers of Islamic Monotheism)" (Q 38: 79-83).

Anytime a believer remembers the injuries inflicted on the prophets of God, his love for them increases, yet they must not be deified. Nonetheless, the best way to demonstrate our love for them is to know and follow their teachings. The act of deifying them is tantamount to submitting ourselves to the plots of the devil.

The devil will always attempt to prevent us from worshipping God, but if it fails, it will always desire to prevent us from worshipping God only. However, if these two attempts should fail, the devil will still make another attempt to prevent us from concentrating when we are worshipping God.

“Satan wants only to incite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So, will you not then abstain?” (Q 5: 91).

Every believer must always be aware of the devil’s plots. Devil deceives us into claiming all credit for actions even when in reality, our merit is so small, if any. Ultimately, all things come from Allah. We should blame ourselves for our misfortunes as they are due to some wrong in our actions and sayings. Some pains, sorrow and self-sacrifice are approved as test by Allah to purify us and turn us back from evil towards Him (Q 4: 78-79; Q 29: 1-6; Q 30: 41; Q 42: 30). Devil implants in us the idea that things we most desire such as wife, children and riches are always our friends while in reality they may be but a trial as the worldly blessings have their advantages as well as their dangers (Q 64: 14-15). People should be cautious and wise when devil is plotting. To be intelligent is to choose the best of good deeds and the least of the evils if one must choose. Hadrat Ja’far saadiq (*rahmatullahi alayh*) asked Hadrat Imām Abu Hanifah (*rahmatullah alayh*): “Who is an intelligent man?” Imaam Abu Hanifah said, “One who can distinguish between good and bad” Hadrat Ja’far said, “An animal is also able to distinguish between good and bad. An animal recognises a man who is kind and cruel to it.” Imaan Abu Hanifah then asked, “Who then is an intelligent

person?” Hadhrat Ja’far said, “A person who is able to distinguish between two acts of goodness and two acts of badness so that he could choose the greater act of goodness and lesser evil.” (The rule of choosing the lesser evil applies when confronted with two evils and there is no third option to save oneself and either of the evils has to be chosen. In such an eventuality, the lesser evil is adopted). The continuous remembrance of Allah should be maintained; and the Grace of Almighty God should always be sought as human mind and actions are naturally prone to evil inclinations. This is because of the forgetfulness of Allah which tends to close the heart of man to Allah by causing spiritual retrogression and darkness. On the other hand, however, the remembrance of Allah, which comes by his permission, is the light or energy for heart’s spiritual stimulation, transformation and progress (Q 12: 53, Q39: 22-23).

All actions including prayers should be done in submission to Allah in terms of fear and hope (Q 32: 16). If hope dominates the heart of the righteous person, it should be purified by the realization that in the sight of Allah, most good actions have managed only to neutralize some of our numerous voluntary and involuntary evil deeds (Q 11: 114-115; Q 12: 53). However, when the soul is filled with fear of the weakness of one’s action, it should be reassured by the belief that the weakness of actions comes from ignorance, and that true repentance, followed by good deeds, brings the soul close to Allah’s forgiveness and mercy (Q25: 70-71; Q 16: 119). There is no reward for good other than good (Q 55: 60-61). While evil is cursed, good deeds which are acceptable to Allah are, by deduction, tantamount to prayer (Q 11: 114-115; Q 12: 53; Q 16: 119; Q 25: 70-71; Q 32: 16; Q 39: 22-23; Q 55: 59-61).

3

The Purpose of Creation

Almighty God has created men for one purpose. This singular purpose is the worship of Almighty God. Only Almighty God is allowed to be worshipped in Islam.

“And I (Allah) created not jinns and men except they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them, i.e. provision for themselves or My creatures nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures). Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, – the Most strong” (Q 51: 56-58).

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour” (Q 17: 23).

The real worship involves continuous realisation of the oneness of Allah both spiritually and physically, continuous and regular observation of five times daily salat, giving of zakat, fasting during the month of Ramadan and pilgrimage to the Holy Lands (Mecca and Medina). However, forms of worship involve all activities done in accordance with God’s commandments, and as exemplified by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBOH).

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad SAW) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much” (Q 33: 21).

It can be inferred from Q 33: 21 that any believer who intentionally does an act, as exemplified by the Holy Prophet (PBOH) is worshipping God. The list of different forms of worship cannot, however, be

exhausted. The different forms of worship include working for means of livelihood in a Godly way, spending in a divine way, eating in a divine way, cooking in a divine way, looking in a Godly way, dressing in a righteous way, speaking in a divine way, sneezing in a Godly way, hearing in a divine way, defecating in a Godly way, bathing in a divine way, having conjugal relationship in a Godly way, driving in a divine way, sleeping in a divine way, greeting in a divine way, doing ceremonies in a Godly way, just to mention but a few. These mean we should follow the rules and regulation laid down by Allah and His Prophet as regards the doing of all acts. In fact, whatever a Muslim who has faith in the oneness of God does is regarded as Ibādah (worship) provided such an act is good.

Muslims should always read the words of God (Holy Qur'an) and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet with a view to learning how Muhammad (PBOH) performed the different forms of worship.

4

The Unbelievers

These are the children of Adam who do not have belief in the oneness of God, the angels, all the prophets, the scriptures, the destiny and the last day. Those who profess Islam are of the three categories. Some fail to follow the light given to them and thus wrong their own souls. But some have good intentions and are willing to learn to live the life of a true Muslim life and virtues. The third class of Muslim may not indeed be perfect, but their intentions and their conduct are sound and exemplary. They achieve the highest rank by the Grace of Allah. “Then We caused to inherit the Book those We have chosen of our servants; and among them is he who wrongs himself (i.e. by committing sins), and among them is he who is moderate, and among them is he who is foremost in good deeds by permission of Allah. That (inheritance) is what is the great bounty. (For them are) gardens of perpetual residence which they will enter. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments therein will be silk. And they will say, ‘Praise to Allah, who has removed from us (all) sorrow. Indeed, our lord is Forgiving and Appreciative’” (Q 35: 32-33). The best of believers are also expected to repel evil with good as contained in Q 41: 34-35; Q 28: 54; Q 23: 96; Q 13: 22, etc.

The best of the unbelievers are, still, usually involved in perpetrating many unrighteous acts. They may, however, be helpful to other human beings when they expect a worldly gain. In contrast, the worst of the unbelievers are almost always involved in vices. The most prominent of the these vices are fornication,

murder, intoxication, oppression, adultery, deceit, bribery, gambling and corruption to mention a few. Apart from loving enjoyment, they have unlimited love for power, position and wealth. Although they do not have any belief in God, when they are faced with adversity, they unconsciously say “Oh God”. This is not unexpected since every human being has the spirit of God living in him (Q 91: 8). The unbelievers are best described as living corpses because they are spiritually dead. They are unaware of the significance of the heavens, earth, sun, moon, mountains, oceans and stars let alone their Creator. They always give lie to truth and immediately turn their backs.

The holy prophet (Mohammad) (PBOH) was reported to have said: “May I not show you the sign of the wicked people?” The people said: “If you are pleased, you may tell us.” The most wicked person among you is he who keeps himself aloof, is harsh on his slave, and does not give any gifts to others. May I not tell you another person more wicked than this? The people said: “Definitely, O Messenger of Allah! If you are pleased.” He said: “He who has rancour against the people and the people have rancour against him.” Then he asked may I not tell you of a more wicked person than this? The people said: “Definitely, O Messenger of Allah? If you are pleased.” He said: “He who does not pardon the errors of others, does not accept their apologies and does not forgive their crime.” Again he asked: “May I not tell you of a more wicked person than this?” The people said: “Definitely, O Messenger of Allah! If you are pleased.” He said: “He from whom no good may be expected, and from whose wickedness there may not be security. This hadith was narrated by Ibn Abbas.

To sum it up, the unbelievers who reject faith will never believe whether one preaches to them or not. The Qur’an says: “As to those who reject Faith, it is the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will never believe” (Q 2: 6). The effects of their disbelief are stated in the next verse thus: “God has set a seal in their hearts and on their hearing; and on their eyes is a veil. Great is the penalty they (incur)” (Q 2: 7).

The Hypocrites

The Holy Qur'an describes the hypocrites as people who have deceptive belief in the oneness of God, the angels, the prophets, the scripture, the destiny and the last day. They substitute the belief in the oneness of Almighty God for the belief in two, three or more entities coming together to make one God. Consequent upon this, they worship God indirectly. Sometimes, the entities they join with God are actually first-class creatures of Almighty God. For instance, a hypocrite may be worshipping Jesus Christ instead of Almighty God who created Jesus Christ. Also, a hypocrite may seek help and forgiveness from Jesus Christ instead of Almighty God. Nonetheless, Jesus should be believed and accepted as a messenger from Allah.

The belief in the prophets of God as first-class, chosen and beloved servants of God is also substituted for the belief in the prophets as an entity that partially constitutes God Almighty. The hypocrites do not believe that they can be tried with what they dislike. Anything unpalatable is from the devil only, even if they use their hands to cause it. Their belief in destiny is very defective.

“And that it is He (Allah) who makes (whom He wills) laugh, and makes (whom He wills) weep” (Q 53: 43).

Instead of accepting that Almighty God will be the King of the Day of Judgement, some of them claim that one of the servants of God will be the King for sometimes on the Day of Judgement, before giving the throne to His creator. Also, some of them do not believe in the last day. Although the hypocrites usually give dazzling

speeches, they also enjoy making mischief. Apart from being led by arrogance, the hypocrites always refuse to fight against injustice.

They always wish to share good fortune. They are liars, deceivers and cowards. In addition to screening misdeeds with fake oaths, they usually leak the secrets of the believers to the unbelievers. They usually find repentance difficult to accomplish. They are not only too lazy to uphold virtuous acts but they are also greedy.

In point of facts, the Qur'an describes the hypocrites thus:

- “And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: ‘We believe in Allah and the Last Day’ while in fact they believe not.”
- They (think to) deceive Allah and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not.
- In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.
- And when it is said to them: “Make not mischief on the earth,” they say: ‘We are only peacemakers.’”
- Verily they are the ones who make mischief, but they perceive not.
- And when it is said to them (hypocrites) “Believe as the people (followers of Muhammad) have believed,” they say: ‘Shall we believe as the fools have believed?’” Verily, they are the fools, but they do not know.
- And when they meet those who believe, they say: “We believe,” but when they are alone with their devils (polytheists, hypocrites), they say: ‘Truly we are with you: verily, we were but mocking.’”
- God will throw back their mockery on them and give them increase in their wrongdoings to wander blindly.
- These are they who have bartered guidance for error, so their commerce was profitless. And they were not guided.

- Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire; then, when it lighted all around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness (so) they could not see.
- They are deaf, dumb and blind, so they return not (to the right path).
- Or like a rainstorm from the sky, wherein is darkness, thunder and lightning. They thrust their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder clap for fear of death. But Allah ever encompasses the disbelievers.
- The lightning almost snatches away their sight, whenever it flashes for them, they walk therein, and when darkness covers them, they stand still. And if Allah willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Certainly, Allah has power over all things” (Q 2: 8-20).

The Prophet is reported to have said that there are three signs of a hypocrite.

- (i) When he talks, he tells lies.
- (ii) When he makes a promise, he breaks it.
- (iii) When something is entrusted to him, he betrays it.

6

The Believers

These are the people who have faith in God and put other pillars of Islam into practice. They don't doubt the Qur'an. They use the Qur'an as their guide. The following points are the qualities of the believers as contained in the Qur'an:

The Qualities of the True Believers

- “Successful indeed are the believers
- Who humble themselves in their prayers
- Who avoid vain talk
- Who are active in deeds of charity
- Who abstain from sex (abuse), (perversion), except with those joined to them in marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess, for (in their case) they are free from blame
- But those whose desires exceed those limits are transgressors
- Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants
- And who (strictly) guard their prayers
- These will be the heirs
- Who will inherit paradise: they will dwell therein (forever)”
(Q 23: 1-11).

Nineteen Qualities of the Believers Derived from Q 25: 63-75

- (i) The good servants of Allah should be humble.
- (ii) They should not pick up a quarrel with the foolish but be lenient with them.

- (iii) They should try to observe Tahajjud (prayer in the night).
- (iv) They should pray against the punishment in hell.
- (v) They should neither be extravagant nor niggardly but be moderate in their spending.
- (vi) They must not associate partners with Allah (shirk).
- (vii) They should not kill a person or persons except in judicial punishment for murder or in self-preservation.
- (viii) They should not fornicate.
- (ix) They should fear Allah so that their punishments will not be doubled.
- (x) They should seek Allah's forgiveness for their past sins and determine not to commit such sins again.
- (xi) They should repent sincerely.
- (xii) They should not support falsehood.
- (xiii) They should avoid evil talk.
- (xiv) They should not turn a deaf ear to Allah's words and blind eyes to His signs.
- (xv) They should pray for good wives and children.
- (xvi) They should strive to be leaders of the *muttaqūn*.
- (xvii) They should be prayerful to Allah.
- (xviii) They should be reminded that if not because of their supplications, Allah would not have cared for them.
- (xix) They should not deny Allah and His signs.

Some Benefits of Being a Believer

- “Surely, Allah defends those who believe ...” (Q 22: 38).
- “But as for those who follow guidance, He (Allah) adds to their guidance, and bestows on them their righteousness” (Q 47: 17).
- “Then give the glad tidings to the Believers, that they shall have from Allah a very great bounty” (Q 33: 47).
- “... and He (Allah) has prepared for them a generous reward” (Q 33: 44).

- “Whoever works any act of righteousness and has faith, his endeavour will not be rejected: We shall record it in his favour” (Q 21: 94).
- “Allah is the Friend (Protector) of those who believe: He brings them out of every kind of darkness into light ...” (Q 2: 257).
- “... and it was certainly due from us to help the believers” (Q 30: 47).

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The Five Pillars of Islam

The five pillars of Islam are: ʾĪmān, Salat, Zakat, Sawm and Hajj. These are the pillars that hold the building. They are not the totality of the building. There are other things which make up the building, i.e. Islam. Practising all the above-mentioned pillars is not enough, one has to do other good deeds such as helping the poor, removing harmful objects from the road, walking humbly on the earth, showing kindness to animals, patience, endurance, refraining from unlawful food and intoxicants, doing the righteous deeds, educating one's children, tolerance (but not stupidity), avoiding backbiting and slandering, honesty in words and deeds, avoiding bribery and corruption, seeking a lawful livelihood to mention a few as contained in Q 2: 177, 188; Q 3: 103-104; Q 4: 59, 135; Q 5: 38; Q 90-91; Q 17: 32; Q 22: 30; Q 24: 2, 30-31; Q 25: 63; Q 31: 18-19; Q 49: 10; Q 53: 33, etc.

1. Īmān (Faith)

It is the belief in the oneness of Allah. He is neither two nor three. He begets not nor is He begotten. The belief should also extend to other articles of faith. The belief in oneness of God is the first and foremost important need for spiritual stability. It promotes insight to reality with positive impact on mood and mental stability. Īmān enables tangible reduction in, and protection from stress. It generates optimism, enriches interpersonal relationship and enhances quality of life.

2. Salat (Prayer)

The first aspect of salat is wuḍū' (ablution) Using a miswak (brushing the teeth) is recommended with every ablution. To motivate Muslims to use the miswak, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized that a prayer (salat) with clean teeth is seventy times better than a prayer (salat) without it (Reported by Baihaqi). Wuḍū' involves using clean water to wash hands, mouth, nostrils, face, hands, head, ear and feet. While hand washing is an efficient way of preventing the spread of germs, face washing reduces the impact of oily skin and retards the growth of pimples, wrinkles and other facial spots. Miswak (brushing teeth) is not a new invention of the last 200 years. This was stressed as part of our daily routine by Prophet Mohammad (PBOH) more than 1,400 years ago. Miswak is health promoting because it is one of the means of preventing dental caries (tooth decay). The bark of miswak contains an antibiotic which suppresses the growth of bacteria and the formation of plaque. When disease occurs (and is confirmed) after preventive measures have been adequately practised, the health promoting prescription of Qur'an is that it should be accepted as a will of Allah in form of kaffarah (purification) for our sin and ask Him to remove the affliction (Q 16: 17; Q 65: 2, 3 and 5).

(The Prophet (SAW) referred to purity as half of faith. Purity is half of faith and the praise of Allah fill the scale (Sahih Muslim). Environmental and personal purity contributes to the effective control of infectious diseases. Islam promotes practices such as washing of hands before eating, cleaning oneself after using the bathroom, washing before prayers, covering of face when sneezing and restriction of interaction with infected people or communities.

Salat is the second pillar of Islam. It is the one that distinguishes a Muslim from non-Muslims. The five compulsory daily prayers are Subhi, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Ishai. It is better if they are observed in a congregation. In Islam, knowledgeable men should lead the prayers in a congregation. It must be noted that asking a man to

lead compulsory prayers does not mean he is superior to woman. It is a matter of avoiding distractions and evil thoughts that can emanate when a woman is leading. Non-observance of these five prayers daily attracts the wrath of Allah. If one is on a journey of 57 kilometres and above, one is allowed to shorten all four rakah prayers, i.e. Zuhr, Asr and Isha'i to two. There are other non-compulsory prayers which attract great rewards. They are *Salatul Ishraq*, *Salatu Duha*, *Salatul-Layl (Tahajjud)*, etc. However, non-observance of them does not attract punishments as it is the case with the five daily prayers (Q 2: 45, 144, 149, 187; 18: 21; 21: 85, 127; 33: 39; 107: 4-7).

Abdullah b. Mas'ud says that the Prophet used to consider the conditions of his followers whenever he was giving them exhortations and counsels so that they would not get tired with his lectures. Although prayer was most pleasing to him, he always used to cut it short if the cry of any child reached his ears. He said once, "When I stand up for prayers I intend to make it long, but when I hear any child crying I shorten it for fear that his mother might be distressed."

Abu Mas'ud narrates that someone said to the Prophet, "O Messenger of God, I swear by Allah that I keep away from the Morning Prayer on account of so and so who makes it too long." Ibn Mas'ud further says that he never saw the Apostle more angry than he saw him while giving an exhortation after that incident. He said, "There are some among you who scare the people away; so whoever of you leads a prayer, he ought to be brief, for there are the weak and the aged and those who have a business to attend."

The recitation of Quranic verses which is an important aspect of salat, promotes remembrance of Allah and meditation with antistress property. The movements of the body in salat, though mild and uniform, involve all muscles and joints. These motions generate caloric output desired to keep the energy balance. Energy imbalance is a risk factor for disease such as diabetes mellitus and obesity. The

movement during salat also promotes digestion, ease constipation, strengthens the muscles of the body for effective flexibility.

3. Zakat (Alms giving)

Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. This is to help the downtrodden people in the society. It prevents us from being greedy and selfish. Zakat has a fixed rate of two and a half percent (2½%) and a fixed period. It is due on agricultural products immediately they are harvested. It is also due on domestic animals, money, treasures shares, etc. The following should receive Zakat: the poor, the needy those collecting the Zakat, the new converts to Islam, debtors, captives, travellers in need and in the cause of Allah (Q 9: 60). It can also be used to build and finance schools, hospitals, orphanages, mosques etc. Sadaqah has neither a fixed rate nor a fixed time. It is not specific, you can give out anything good as alms that you yourself can take without averting your eyes.

This is the purification of legitimately earned wealth through giving of charity according to divine prescription. Zakat establishes peace of heart in the lives of believers who practise it. In fact, it eases the tasks of its beneficiaries. The utilization of zakat for feeding the poor, provision of health care, creation of jobs and establishment of orphanage among other is clearly health promoting.

4. Sawm (Fasting)

It is the fourth pillar of Islam. Nobody knows the rewards that are attached to fasting in Islam. Only Allah knows the extent of its rewards. A fasting person has to abstain from food, water, sexual intercourse and other things that can vitiate it. It is done once a year during the month of Ramadan. There are other non-obligatory fastings in Islam such as fasting in the months of Rajab, Shaban, Shawwal, on Mondays, Thursdays, 13th, 14th and 15th of every Lunar month, 10th of Muharram, Arafat day, etc. A Muslim should try to observe some of them if not all of them. Fasting levels the gap

between the rich and the poor. The pangs of hunger in fasting make the rich understand what the poor feel all the time.

A nursing mother, a menstruating person, a sick person, a traveller (long journey), etc. are allowed to suspend fasting. An aged person, a person who is permanently sick, etc. are also exempted from fasting. However, they can do *It'ām* (feeding a person for every day of fasting in lieu of fasting if they can afford it) (Q 2: 183-185; Q 97: 3). Fasting trains our mind and body in self-restraints. The self-restraints from smoking, coffee, nibbling food, anger and excessive sexual passion during the period of fast are health promoting.

5. Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. Its performance is compulsory once for every well-to-do Muslim in his life-time. Ihram (the cloth of Hajj), Tawaf (running round the Ka'bah), Say (juggling between Safa and Marwa), staying on the plain of Arafat and throwing stones to the symbols of the devil at Minna are the compulsory aspects of hajj. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“Indeed, aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwah are among the symbols set up by God. Whoever makes Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House for Pilgrimage or `Umrah, would do no wrong to walk to and fro between them. He who does good of his own accord shall find that God is most thankful, All-Knowing (Q 2: 158). In it are clear signs (such as) the standing place of Abraham; and whoever enters it finds inner peace. Pilgrimage to this House is a duty owed to God by all people who are able to undertake it. As for those who disbelieve, God does not stand in need of anything in all the worlds (Q 3: 97). Our Lord, I have settled some of my offsprings in a valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House, so that they may establish regular prayers. So, make hearts among the people incline towards them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks (Q 14: 37).

Perform to their completion both the pilgrimage and the `Umrah purely for God's sake. If you are prevented from doing so, then make whatever offering you can easily afford. Do not shave your heads until the offerings have reached their appointed destination. If any of you is ill or suffers from an ailment of the head, he shall redeem himself by fasting, or alms, or sacrifice. When you are in safety, then he who takes advantage of performing the `Umrah before the pilgrimage shall make whatever offering he can easily afford; but he who lacks the means shall fast three days during the pilgrimage and seven more days on returning home; that is, ten days in all. All this applies to those whose families are not resident in the vicinity of the Sacred Mosque. Fear God, and know well that He is severe in retribution (Q 2: 196). The pilgrimage takes place in the months appointed for it. Whoever undertakes the pilgrimage in those months shall, while on pilgrimage, abstain from lewdness, all wicked conduct and wrangling. Whatever good you do, God is well aware of it. Provide well for yourselves: the best provision of all is to be God-fearing. Fear Me, then, you who are endowed with insight (Q 2: 197). It is no sin for you to seek the bounty of your Lord. When you surge downward from `Arafāt, remember God at al-Mash`ar al-Ĥarām. Remember Him who has given you guidance. Before this you were certainly in error (Q 2: 198). Surge onward from the place where all other pilgrims surge and pray God to forgive you. He is much-Forgiving, ever Merciful (Q 2: 199). When you have fulfilled your sacred duties, remember God as you remember your fathers — nay with a yet keener remembrance. Some people say, 'Our Lord, give us abundance in this world.' They shall have no share in the rewards of the life to come (Q 2: 200), O you have believed, kill no game while you are on pilgrimage.

Whoever of you kills game by design shall make amends in cattle equivalent to what he has killed, adjudged by two persons of probity among you, to be brought as an offering to the Ka`bah; or else he may atone for his sin by feeding needy persons, or by its

equivalent in fasting, so that he may taste the evil consequences of his deeds. God has forgiven what is past; but whoever repeats his offence, God will inflict His retribution on him. God is Almighty, Lord of retribution (Q 5: 95). When We assigned to Abraham the site of the [Sacred] House, [We said]: “Do not associate anything as partner with Me. Purify My House for those who will walk around it, and those who will stand before it, and those who will bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer. Proclaim to all people the duty of pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot and on every kind of fast mount. They will come from every faraway quarter, so that they might experience much that shall be of benefit to them, and that they might extol the name of God on the days appointed [for sacrifice], over whatever heads of cattle He may have group provided for them. Eat, then, of such [sacrifice cattle] and feed the unfortunate poor” (Q 22 : 26-28).

The Prophet is reported to have said: “One who performs Hajj for the sake of Allah and therein abstains from obscene acts and words, wickedness and sins, he returns so purified from sins as he was at the time when his mother gave him birth” (Bukhari and Muslim).

When Muslims circumambulate round the Ka’bah, it symbolises the belief and worship of one God, the Lord of the House. Only one Allah is worth worshipping as He is neither two nor three. He can never be two as there is only one centre for every circle. All the attention are moved towards the centre. Hajj is the pilgrimage to Ka’bah in Makkah for the purpose of worshipping the Lord of the House. It must be noted that muslim pilgrims do not go to Ka’bah to worship the House, they worship the Lord of the Ka’bah, i.e. Allah has instructed in Suratul Quraysh (Q 106: 1-4), thus: For the accustomed security of the Quraysh, (1) their accustomed security in winter and summer (2) Let them worship the Lord of this House (3) who provided them with food against hunger, and with security against fear (4).”

Let them worship the lord of the House. This point must be noted very well. It is also to commemorate the sacrifices and trials of Prophet Ibrahim who was ready to sacrifice his only son, Ismail for Allah's sake. He had promised Him when he was praying for a child. Prophet Ibrahim's wife and Ismail's mother, Hajar supported her husband and encouraged him to fulfil the promise. It is performed in the months of Shawwal, Dhul-Qidah and Dhul-Hijjah in the Islamic calender. Hajj cannot be performed in any other months apart from the mentioned ones. In fact, the compulsory aspects of Hajj are done from 8th day of Dhul-Hijjah to 10th of the same month. The order of the activities is briefly discussed below.

Pilgrimage to the Ka'bah is not a journey for tourism or vacation or an excursion. It is a spiritual journey that starts with Ihram (wearing/putting on two pieces of unstitched white cloth). A male pilgrim uses one to cover the back and shoulders while the other one is wrapped around the waist. Female pilgrims wear simple ordinary white cloth that covers the whole body with the exception of the face and hands. This is done before or at the mīqāt, i.e. the places on the way to Makkah which are assembly points where pilgrims coming from different directions should enter Ihram. While in Ihram, hunting, killing, sexual intercourse, shaving or cutting the hair, trimming the nails, fighting, quarrelling, cutting of trees are prohibited. These cut pilgrims off from their daily affairs. They are all equal before Allah. The compulsory rites of Hajj are performed in Makkah, Mina, Arafah and Muzdalifah. After wearing Ihram, a pilgrim circumbulates the Ka'bah seven times called Tawaf announcing his coming for Hajj and praising Allah 'labbayka Allahumma labbbayka lā sharīka laka labbayka innal ḥamda wanni'mata laka wal mulk lā sharīka laka. "Here I am, O Allah here I am! Here I am bearing witness that you have no partner! Here I am! Certainly, all praise and grace belong to you, and so does kingship. You have no partner."

The first ṭawāf is Ṭawāful Qudūm. He goes around it in an anti-clockwise direction (keeping Ka'bah on his left side). The first three

rounds at a fast speed and the last four rounds at a low speed. As they are going around it, they praise Allah and pray for themselves, their parents and others. After the 7th round, they do two rak'ah prayers at the station of Ibrahim (Maqāmah Ibrahim) or near it if it is crowded.

After Ṭawāf, the pilgrims proceed to do Sa'y which is walking and running back and forth seven times between the hills of safa and marwah finishing the last one at marwah



While doing this, they are expected to be glorifying Allah saying Allah Akbar and saying personal prayers. This act commemorates the story of Hajar when she was running between the two hills, searching desperately for water for her child, Ismail. The pilgrims also drink from Zamzam water which gushed out miraculously under the feet of the infant child, 'Ismā'īl.

The pilgrims then move to Arafah on the 8th of Dhul-Hijjah spending the night at Mina. The following morning, the pilgrims move to Arafah by foot, buses or cars. The place is a wide plain bordered by hills beyond Mina. It is about 8 km from the Ka'bah. When they enter Arafah, they make intention of being present at this divinely-chosen place. They spend the rest of the day at Arafah until sunset seeking forgiveness of Allah, praising Him and offering personal special prayers for themselves and others. They combine Zuhr and Asr prayers in a congregation; and the prayers

are shortened to two rak'ahs each. This is the greatest gathering in the world. It reminds them of the Day of Resurrection when all people will stand equal before Allah for accountability and judgement. Those who do not perform Hajj are encouraged to fast on Arafah day. Arafah is the place where the Prophet delivered his farewell sermons. Some of the key issues contained in the sermon are preservation of life, kind treatment of women, prohibition of interest and equality of mankind.

After the sunset, the pilgrims move to Muzdalifah where they spend the night before leaving the place for Mina. At Muzdalifah, they collect the small stones that they will throw on the following days at the Jumrat in Mina. After morning prayer, they stay at the sacred monument (al-Mash-arul Haram at Muzdalifah) till the bright daylight before leaving for Mina. When they reach Mina, they throw seven (7) small stones at each of the three jumrat making 21 stones starting from the biggest to the lowest. It is the symbolic stoning of the devil as it was done by Prophet Ibrahim when the devil was trying to dissuade him from obeying God's order to sacrifice his son, Ismail as he had promised when he was praying for a son who would continue his mission, i.e. propagation of Islam. This is done on the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah. On this day, the pilgrims also offer a sacrifice of a sheep, goat, cow or camel in Mina. This is the day of 'īdul 'Aḍḥā, when muslims worldwide perform animal sacrifice. If they can afford it. After the sacrifice, the pilgrims should then shave or trim their hair before they leave Mina for Ka'bah where they run round the Ka'bah (Tawāf) and then run between Ṣafā and Marwah (Sa'y). They go to Mina for the ritual stoning for three days. Some people, however, stay for three days in Mina to finish stoning before going to Ka'bah in Makkah. After three days, they leave Mina for Ṭawāful Ifāḍah (Congregational ṭawāf). This is the only ṭawāf that is compulsory. After this, Sa'y is done before removing the Ihrām. Before the pilgrims leave Makkah for their destination, it is sunnah to pay a last visit to the Ka'bah by doing ṭawāful wadā' (the farewell ṭawāf).

It is voluntary but very important to pay a visit to the mosque of the Prophet in Madina, the second most important shrine in Islam. It is also desirable to pay visits to some important places such as Madinah, Jabal Rahmah, Cave Hira, etc. However, **Golden teeth, Sabaka (special caps put on by the pilgrims in the western part of Nigeria), etc. are not at all parts of Hajj.** One should not be absorbed with shopping and other activities to the extent of forgetting the spiritual purpose of one's journey.

The three ways of performing Hajj

- (i) **Ifrād:** It means the performance of Hajj alone. A pilgrim who performs Ifrad is Mufrid.
- (ii) **Tamattu':** The pilgrim puts on the Ihram (the cloth of Hajj) and performs the Umra. He then puts off the Ihram and may enjoy life till the 8th, the pilgrim puts on the Ihram again to perform the Hajj. It is compulsory for the pilgrim who performs tamattu' to sacrifice a ram for this enjoyment or to fast for three days in Mecca and seven days after his return to his or her home. The pilgrim is called Mutamattiu.
- (iii) **Qiran:** It is the combination of Hajj and Umra or Umra and Hajj without a break. Qārin is the person who observes Qirān.

Note: Umra does not involve staying at Arafat, throwing stones at the symbols of devil and sacrificing a ram (Q 3: 96; Q 14: 35-37; Q 22: 26-29).

It is expected that the pilgrims who pass through all these exercises of worship should learn to live peacefully with people. The acts should also remind them of the greatest gathering on the Day of Resurrection; they should be strengthened in terms of good deeds and faith in Allah at the end of the exercise. Humility, patience and self-control are some of the other lessons of Hajj. During Hajj, iman, salat, sadaqat and sometimes sawm are put into practice better than ever and

the health benefits of these duties are also enjoyed more than ever. In addition, physique and endurance gained during Hajj are health promoting.

The first two pillars of Islam (Iman and Salat) must be done by all Muslims irrespective of their conditions, groups, sects, etc. The other three pillars must also be done in addition to the first two by those who are financially capable and healthy. There is no issue of a saint (or a shaykh) has covered me; so, they are not compulsory for me. That is not right in Islam. In fact, all the Sharī'ah rules are more pronounced in all the turuq in Sufism (Sufi paths) and extolled in them than in any other group. One of the leaders of the sufi paths, Shaykh Ibrahim Niass Al-Kawlakhi says in one his writings as contained in his book titled Kitabul Jawahir Rasā'il (The Book of Essential Letters) to his followers thus:

Allah enjoins al adl (justice) and giving (help) to kith and kin and forbids al-fahshā' (i.e. all evil deeds such as illegal sexual intercourse, disobedience of parents, polytheism, telling lies, murder and giving false witness) and al munkar (all that is prohibited by the Sharī'ah and al baghy (i.e. all kinds of oppression). He admonishes you, that you may take heed. So woe unto those who do not accept the rule of Allah and his Messenger with complete submission. But whoever receives our letter and repents and does what he has missed, then, he will be happy in this life and the hereafter. Allah forgives what has passed. For the one who does not change, then I ask Allah to be my witness and for you to be my witnesses that I am free from that person. And I do not declare myself free from anyone until Allah and His Messenger have done so'

Shaykh Ibrahim Nias also said:

... As you have known me, let those of you who want to be with me (Shaykh Ibrahim) seek my way by words and actions by obeying the Divine

commands and abstaining from what has been prohibited outwardly and inwardly. Be thirsty and longing for reaching what satisfies Allah and His Messenger. As for those who attribute themselves to me and commit anything contrary to the honourable sharī'ah by engaging in haram and neglecting Divine commands, then Allah is my witness and you are my witnesses that I am free from such people (i.e. they are not my followers). Oh Allah, I am innocent from what those have done ...

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8

The Articles of Faith

1. Belief in Allah

Allah is one. He has no associate. Muslims should worship Him alone without associating any partner with Him. Muslims prefer using the word Allah to God. This is because the English word 'God' does not convey the actual meaning of the word, Allah. It is a proper noun par excellence. We cannot find plural or feminine, etc. of this word just as god becomes gods and goddess. It is an Arabic word without any derivation. The word, 'Allah' connotes all attributes and denotes none but only one and unique God. A sincere confession of this belief in Allah admits one into the fold of Islam (Q 59: 22-24; Q2: 21-22; Q 2: 255; Q 24: 35; Q 112: 1-4, etc.).

2. Belief in Angels

Only Allah knows the number of His angels. They were created by Allah as we were created. They were created from light, jinn from fire and man from clay. They do not eat, drink, sleep and doze. They can take different forms when they are sent to give messages to human beings. Angels cannot be seen except by the command of God. At least, a Muslim should be aware of the following 10 angels with their functions.

Jibrīl: He carries spiritual messages from God to human beings.

Mikā'il: He is in charge of provisions to God's creatures.

Isrā'il: He is the angel in charge of death.

Isrāfī'l: He is the trumpeter in charge of resurrection.

Raqīb: He is in charge of writing good deeds done by human beings.

Atīd: He is in charge of writing down bad deeds done by human beings.

Munkar and Nakīr: These two are the questioners in the grave concerning the deeds of human beings on earth.

Ridwān: He is the chief porter in charge of paradise (Al-Jannah).

Malik: He is the chief porter in charge of Hell.

The awareness of the presence of angels reminds man that he is never alone. His deeds are being recorded, and would be rewarded accordingly in the hereafter. Therefore, this increases his desire to shun evil deeds, and to always do good deeds. Angels pray for human beings, strengthen Prophets and believers in their faith and carry Allah's messages to people, etc. (Q 42: 5; Q 16: 2; Q 9: 9-10; Q 8: 50, etc.).

3. Belief in the Prophets

A Muslim should believe in all the Prophets of God. The number of the Prophets is said to be 124, 313 but 25 of them are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Some of them are Adam (Adam), Nūḥ (Noah), Hūd (Heber) Shu'ayb (Jethro) Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Lūt (Lot), Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Ishāq (Isaac), Ya'qūb (Jacob), Yūnus (Jonah), Yūsuf (Joseph), Musā (Moses), Hārūn (Aaron), Ayūb (Job), Šālīḥ (Methusela), Dawūd (David), Sulaymān (Solomon), Ilyās (Elias), Al Yasa'u (Elisha), Dhul Kifl (Ezekiel), Idrīs (Enoch), Zakariyā'u (Zachariah), Yaḥyā (John), 'Īsā (Jesus Christ), Muhammad etc (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon them). Each of them preached to his own people, e.g. Moses to the Israelites. Prophet Muhammad, the seal of the Prophets was the only one sent to the whole world. A Muslim recognises that the earlier Prophets were all Muslims and true prophets of God. They preached Islam, i.e. submission to God, the same religion preached by Prophet Muhammad. No other prophet will come after Prophet Muhammad (Q 10: 47; Q 35: 24; Q 21: 107; Q 25: 1; Q 46: 35; Q2: 38; Q 2: 285).

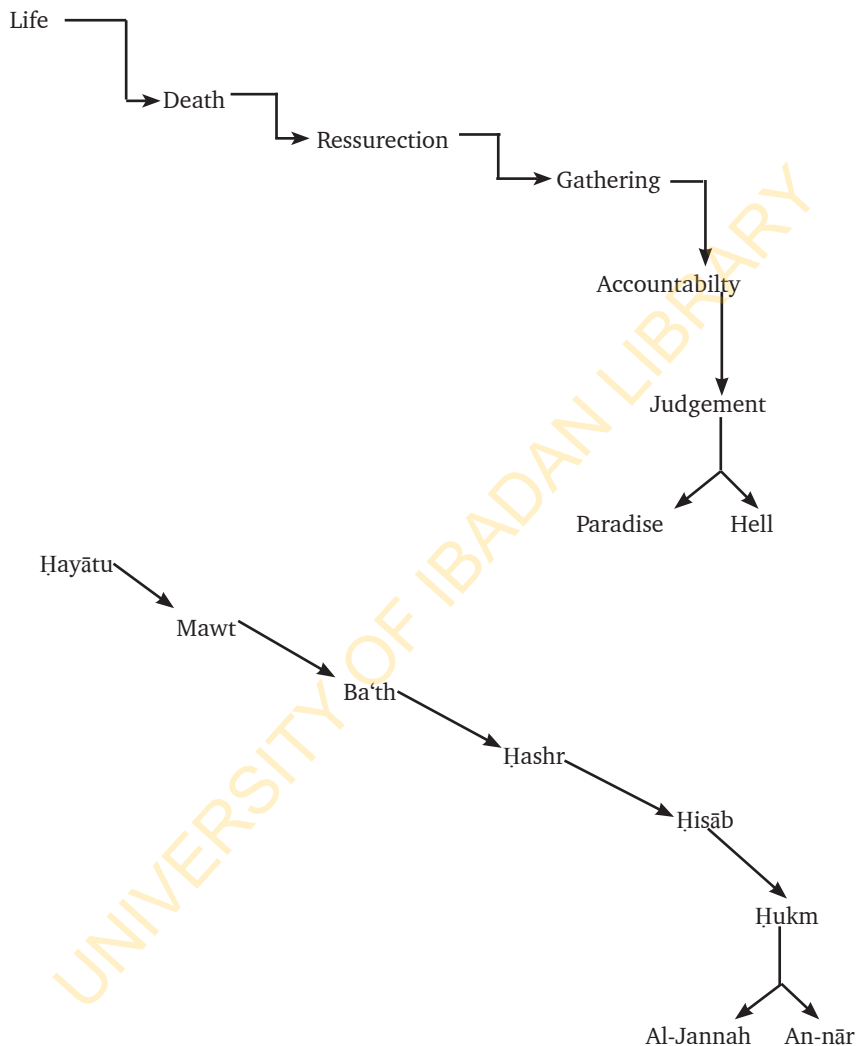
4. Belief in Revelation

A Muslim is required to believe in all the revealed books. The number of these holy books is said to be 104. They came to the world through the messengers of Allah e.g. ʿĪsā, Musā, Dāuda, Muhammad etc. Four scriptures are specifically mentioned in the Holy Qurʿan. They are At-Tawrah of Prophet Musa, Az-zabūr of Prophet Dawud, Al-Ijīl of Prophet ʿĪsā and Al-Qurʿan of Prophet Muhammad). Some other revelations are also referred to in the Qurʿan, e.g. the Ṣuḥuf of Ibrahim.

Islam teaches that all scriptures confirm one another in many respects and that the Holy Qurʿan contains all the important teachings of the previous scriptures in it. In Islam, the Qurʿan is believed to be the last scripture from Allah to the world. No other scripture will come after the Qurʿan. Its contents are enough guidance for the present and future generations. All the copies of the Qurʿan in this world are the same. This is not the same with other books. The original messages of God in each of the earlier books before the Qurʿan have been changed (Q5: 3; Q2: 2, etc.).

5. Belief in the Last Day

All men are going to die but death is not the end of life. After everything on earth has perished, people will be raised. This is called Resurrection. After the resurrection, they will all gather in one place. The deeds of man will be weighed and everyone will be judged by God. The righteous will receive their good rewards in Paradise (Al-Jannah) while the wrongdoers will be in Hell (An-Nār). This is called the Last Day. This is the pictorial description of the journey in English and transliterated Arabic.



Allah informs us in the Qur'an about what will happen to His creatures particularly man and the Jinn after death. Because He is the only One fully aware of the stages man and Jinn will pass after their death and the recompense for their deeds – good or bad.

After death, man is moved to Barzakh, the place between death and resurrection. He is questioned about his religion, prophet, etc. If he is able to answer the questions correctly, he is rewarded and lives in peace and happiness. But if he is a sham or a hypocrite or an infidel, he will not be able to answer the questions that will be thrown to him by the angels. His inability to answer the questions will make him receive dreadful punishment till the Day of Reckoning, on the day that everyone will be called to give accounts of his deeds – good or bad when on earth.

6. Belief in Pre-determination

Muslims believe that God created the universe as pre-determined by Him. Man's particular shape and development as distinguished from other animals was pre-determined. Man's life is dependent on food, drink, sleep, etc. However, it must be made clear that Allah gives man freedom of action. Therefore, he who does good, does good for his own soul; and he who does evil, does evil for his own soul. Each will be judged and rewarded by Allah. Allah is just and He will not act unjustly (Q 91: 7-9; Q 29: 2-6; Q 53: 39; Q 13: 11; Q 2: 216).

The best of the believers are the prophets of God, i.e. Holy Prophet (Muhammad), Isa (Jesus Christ), Musa (Moses), Ibrahim, Nuh (Noah) (PBOT) to mention a few. These are the first-class creatures of God. They were chosen and beloved servants of God who were perfected by Almighty God. They translated their faith, regular salat, zakat, fasting and pilgrimage into the practical forms. The practical translation of faiths include spending of one's substance, out of His love for kin, orphans, needy and the way-farers with a view to increasing one's self-purification and attaining qurb (nearness to Allah).

The practical translation of faith also includes the firmness and the patience in pain and adversity, the endurance throughout the period of panic, the steadfastness in prayers both at night and in the day, humility, the avoidance of vain talk and the acts of carrying out one's responsibilities in a just manner. The fulfilment of the contracts

or promises which one has made and the giving of freedom to the slaves and the oppressed are practical translations of faith.

The worst of the believers are those who may have faith, who may be observing salat, who may be fasting and who may go on pilgrimage but refuse to translate these pillars of Islam into righteous acts, few of which have been mentioned. Many of these righteous acts can be found in the scriptures of Almighty God. Allah's Messenger (PBOH) was reported to have said that the believers are of three kinds: "People of paradise will be of three kinds. First is that of a powerful man who was just and balanced in his dealings who popularised the practice of charity and virtue, and adopted the attitude of softness and lightness. Second will be that person who was kind and who was soft-hearted for every relative and every Muslim. Third will be that person who had a wife and children and yet he was able to save himself from the forbidden things – Reported by Muslim.

9

Paradise and Allah

The believers and good doers will enjoy in paradise, the likes of enjoyment that no creature has ever experienced in the world. They will enjoy gardens with rivers flowing beneath them (Q 3: 15); fruits will be there for them and they shall have whatever they call for (Q 36: 55-57); there will be there all that man could desire (Q 43: 71); rivers with incorruptible water, rivers of wine, milk and honey (Q 47: 15).

In paradise, there will not be the faintest trace of pain, sorrow or distress. The Prophet is reported to have said: “For my faithful servants, I have got ready (in heaven) things no eyes has seen, no ear has heard of, nor the thought of which has ever crossed the human heart.” Those who believed in Allah and worshipped Him and did righteous deeds will be taken to paradise (Al-Jannah) to receive their rewards free from anxiety, the like of which nobody has ever enjoyed in the world. While on earth, the believers have been promised a sense of complete satisfaction, contentment and active pleasure. However, paradise, a real and eternal home, awaits the believer after the final judgement by Almighty God. It is also very important to mention that the Grace of Almighty God has a very significant role to play in the supreme achievement of the believers. The divine descriptions of paradise are very enticing; consequently, we shall quote these descriptions directly from the Holy Qur’an.

“... For the righteous – there are gardens (paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal home and pure wives (i.e. they will have no menses, urine or stool, etc.).

And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) slaves” (Q 3: 15).

“But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, we shall admit them to gardens under which rivers flow (paradise), abiding therein forever. Therein they shall have pure wives (having no menses, stool, urine, etc.). And we shall admit them to shades wide and ever deeping (paradise)” (Q4: 57).

Allah will say: “This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth. Theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in paradise) – they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success (Paradise) (Q 5: 119).

But those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism), and worked righteousness – We tax not any person beyond his scope, such are the dwellers of paradise. They will abide therein. And we shall remove from their breasts any mutual hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all in the life of this world); rivers flowing under them, and they will say: “All the praises and thanks be to Allah, who has guided us to this, never could we have found – guidance, were it not that Allah had guided us! Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth? And it will be cried out to them. “This is the paradise which you have inherited from what you used to do.” And that dwellers of paradise will call out to the dwellers of the fire (saying): “We have indeed found true what our Lord had promised us; have you also found true, what your Lord promised (warnings, etc)?” They shall say: “Yes.” Then a crier will proclaim between them: The curse of Allah is on the *Zālimūn* (Polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) (Q 7: 42-44).

“Truly! The *Muttaqūn* (pious and righteous persons) will be amidst gardens and watersprings (paradise). ‘It will be said to them, ‘Enter therein (paradise), peace and security.’ And we shall remove from their breasts any sense of injury (that they may have (so they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones. No

sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it” (Q 15: 45-48).

And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salaamun Alaykum (Peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein.” And they will say: “All the praises and thanks be to Allah who has fulfilled His promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in paradise where we will; how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!” And you will see the angels surrounding the (Throne of Allah) from all round, glorifying the praises of their Lord (Allah). And they (all the creatures) will be judged with truth, and it will be said: All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the Ālamīn (mankind, jinns and all that exists)” (Q 39 : 73-75).

“But for him who (the true believer of Islamic Monotheism who performs all the duties ordained by Allah and His Messenger) fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two gardens (i.e. in Paradise)...? With spreading branches; ...?

In them (both) will be every kind of fruit in pairs ...? Reclining upon the couches lined with silk brocade, and the fruits of the two gardens will be near at hand ...? Wherein both will be those (maidens) restraining their glances upon their husbands, whom no man or jinn yatmith-hunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them ...? In beauty they are like rubies and coral ...? Is there any reward for good other than good? ...? And besides these two, there are two other gardens (i.e. in Paradise) ...? Dark green (in colour) ...? In them (both) will be two springs gushing forth water ...? In them (both) will be fruits, and date – palms and pomegranates ...? Therein (gardens) will be fair (wives) good and beautiful ...? Hours (beautiful, fair females) restrained in pavilions; ...? whom no man or jinn yatmith-hunna (has opened their hymens with sexual intercourse) before them ...? Reclining on green cushions and rich beautiful

mattresses ...? Blessed be the Name of your Lord (Allah the owner of Majesty and Honour). Q 55 : 46-78.

“And you (all) will be in three kinds (i.e. separate groups) (Foremost in faith, the companions of the right hand and companions of the left hand)” Q 56: 7.

And those foremost (in Islamic faith of Monotheism and in performing righteous deeds of obedience to Allah and His Messenger, Muhammad in the life of this world on the very first call to embrace Islam) will be foremost (in paradise). These will be those nearest to Allah in the gardens of delight (paradise). A multitude of those (foremost) will be from the first generations who embraced Islam. And a few of those (foremost) will be from the later time (generations). They will be on thrones woven with gold and precious stones, reclining thereon, face to face. They will be served by immortal boys with cups, and jugs and a glass from the flowing wine, wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication. And fruit; that they may choose. And the flesh of fowls that they desire. And (there will be) Hourasis (fair females) with wide, lovely eyes (as wives for the pious) like unto preserved pearls. A reward for what they used to do. No Laghw (dirty, false, evil, vain talk) will they hear therein, nor any sinful speech like backbiting, etc.) But only the saying of: Salām! Salām! (Greetings with peace)! (Q 56 :10-26).

And those on the right hand – who will be those on the right hand? They will be among thornless lote-trees, among Talh (banana trees) with fruits piled one above another, in shade, long-extended, by water flowing constantly, and fruit in plenty, whose season is not limited, and their supply will not be cut off, and on couches or thrones, raised high. Verily, we have created them (maidens) of special creation. And made them virgins. Loving their husbands (only) equal in age. For those on the right hand. A multitude of those (on the right hand) will be from the later times (generations) (Q 56: 27-40).

And give glad tidings to those who believe and do good works, that for them are gardens beneath which flow streams. Whenever they are given a portion of fruit, therefrom, they will say: "This is what was given to us before; and gifts mutually resembling shall be brought to them. And they will have therein mates perfectly pure and therein will they abide" (Q 2:25).

Nay! but the record of the virtuous is surely in Illiyin. And what should make you know what Illiyun is? It is a Book written comprehensively. The chosen ones of God will witness it. Surely the virtuous will be in bliss, seated on couches, gazing. You will find in their faces the freshness of bliss. They will be given to drink of a pure sealed beverage. The sealing of it will be with musk ..." (Q 83: 18-26).

As regards Paradise, the Prophet is reported to have said: "As the dwellers will enter Heaven, a heavenly herald will proclaim, 'Stay healthy; disease is not going to touch you here. Live forever; death for you exists no more. Remain young; you shall not grow old in Heaven. Be happy always; for you, now, there is neither pain nor sorrow.'"

He also said: "When the dwellers of Paradise have entered the home of celestial bliss, God will enquire from them thus: 'Do you want that I may bestow a favour upon you over and above the blessings you enjoy?' The people of Heaven will answer Our Lord! 'You have illumined our faces, saved us from Hell and granted us Paradise. (What more can we want?)' The veil will, then, be lifted and they shall see their Lord unhindered. All the endless joys and blessings of Paradise will fade away before the glorious spectacle of the Almighty (Kidwai, 1979:109)."

10

Hell and Zaqqūm

Those who did not believe in Allah, and also did not worship Him as He should be worshipped in line with the teachings of Islam would be made to enter hell. They would be there forever and permanently receiving their punishments. The descriptions of the journeys are stated in the Qur'an as contained in Q 81; Q 82; Q 84; Q 78: 7; Q 29: 57; Q 3: 185; Q 22: 1-2; Q 78: 14; 18, Q 80: 33-41; Q 69: 18; Q 18: 47-49; Q 21: 47; Q 36: 65, etc.) and Hadith as contained in Sahih Muslim, Sahih Bukhari, etc. The day of judgement will be full of awe. The agonies of the day can never be imagined for the unbelievers. The infidels and polytheists will live in Hell permanently. They will be punished in the Hell, the likes of punishment that no creature has ever experienced in the world. In the Hell, there will be pain, sorrow and distress.

While on earth, the unbelievers have been promised pangs of tortured conscience, secret sorrow and misfortunes. All these will be experienced for, at least, a brief moment before their death. In addition, they will inherit hell after the final judgement by Almighty God. The divine descriptions of hell are quoted directly from the Holy Qur'an, the last scripture of Almighty God to the whole universe.

“Surely! Those who disbelieved in our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). We shall burn them in fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, we shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever-Most Powerful, All-Wise” (Q 4 : 56).

In front of him (every obstinate, arrogant dictator) is Hell, and he will be made to drink boiling, festering water. He will sip it unwillingly, and he will find great difficulty to swallow it down his throat, and death will come to him from every side, yet he will not die and in front of him, will be a great torment (Q 14 : 16-17).

And you will see the Mujrimūn (criminals, disbelievers in the oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism, polytheist, disobedient to Allah, etc.) that Day bound together in fetters (Muqarranum in fetters; means:- with their hands and feet tied to their necks with chains). Their garments will be of pitch, and fire will cover their faces (Q14: 49-50).

Verily, the tree of zaqqūm will be the food of the sinners, like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies, like the boiling of scalding water. (It will be said) “Seize him and drag him into the midst of blazing fire, then pour over his head the torment of boiling water, taste you (this)! Verily, you were (pretending to be) the mighty, the generous! Verily! This is that whereof you used to doubt!” (Q 44: 43-50).

This is so! And for the Taghīn (transgressors, disobedient to Allah and His Messenger) – will be an evil final return (fire), – hell! Where they will burn, and worst (indeed) is that place to rest! This is so! Then let them taste it, – a boiling fluid and dirty wound discharges (i.e. pus) and other torment of similar kind, – altogether (Q 38: 55-58).

“And those on the left hand – who will be those on the left hand? In fierce hot wind and boiling water, and shadow of blacksmoke; neither cool nor good” (Q 56: 41-44).

And for those who disbelieve in their Lord (Allah) is the torment of Hell, and worst indeed is that destination; when they are cast therein, they will hear the terrible drawing in of its breath as it blazes forth. It almost bursts up with fury. Every time a group is cast therein, its keeper will ask: Did no warner come to you?” (Q 67: 6-8).

“And we shall drive the Mujrimum (polytheists, sinners, criminals, etc.) to hell, in a thirsty state (like a thirsty herd driven down to water), – None shall have power of intercession, but such a one as has received permission (or promise) from the Most Beneficent (Allah)” (Q19: 86-87).

“And as for those who are *fasiqūn* (disbeliever and disobedient to Allah), their abode will be the fire, every time they wish to get away therefrom, they will be put back thereto, and it will be said to them: Taste you the torment of the fire which you used to deny” (Q 32 : 20).

“Verily, whoever comes to his Lord as a Mujrim (criminal, polytheist, disbeliever, etc.) then surely, for him is Hell, therein he will neither die nor live” (Q 20: 74).

“And surely, Hell is the promised place for them (evil-doers, polytheists) all. It (Hell) has seven gates, for each of those gates is a (special) class (of sinners) assigned” (Q15; 43, 44).

“As for those who are wretched, they will be in the fire, sighing in a high and low tone. They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord will. Verily, your Lord is the doer of what He will” (Q11: 106-107).

For those who respond to their Lord is eternal good; and as for those who respond not to Him, if they had all that is in the earth and the like of it added thereto, they would readily ransom themselves therewith. It is these that shall have an evil reckoning, and their abode is Hell. What a wretched place of rest! (Q 13:18)

They shall enter a burning fire; and will be made to drink from a boiling spring. They will have no food save that of dry, bitter and thorny herbage, which will neither fatten, nor satisfy hunger (Q 88:4-7).

As regards pus and *Zaqqūm*, the Prophet is reported to have said: “The stinking pus people will be made to drink in Hell is such that if a bucket of it was thrown into the world the whole world would be filled with its infernal stench. If a drop of Zaqqum were to fall on the earth, it would be enough to pollute all the articles of food and drink that are found here (Kidwai, 1979:110).”

“On the Day of Judgement, a person will be brought who will have lived in greatest pomp and luxury in the world but will be condemned to Hell because of his evil deeds. He will be dipped once into the fire of Hell and then taken out of it immediately and asked, “Have you ever known comfort?” The man will reply, “No, our Lord. I swear by Your Name, I have never known what comfort is.” Afterwards, another person will be brought who will have led a life of rank misery and misfortune on earth but will be found worthy of Paradise owing to his faithfulness to God and piety. He will be taken to Heaven and then led out of it immediately and asked, “Have you ever known pain or misery?” “No, our Lord!” he will reply, “I swear by Your Name, I have never known what pain or misery is?” (Kidwai, 1979: 109-110).

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The Holy Qur'an

A. As God's Revelation

The Holy Qur'an is the Truth from God which was taught by God; and it is a message to all the worlds. "The revelation of the book is from Allah – The Exalted in power, full of wisdom" (Q 45:2).

"Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah; they would surely have found therein much contradictions" (Q 4: 82).

"And verily, you (O Muhammad PBOH) are receiving the Qur'an from the One, All-wise, All-knowing" (Q 27: 6).

"The revelation of the Book (the Qur'an) is from the Lord of the Ālamīn (mankind, jinns and all that exist) in which there is no doubt. Or say they; He (Muhammad PBOH) has fabricated it? Nay, it is the truth from your Lord that you may warn a people to whom no warner has come before you (O Muhammad PBOH) in order that they may be guided" (Q 32: 2-3).

"The Most Gracious! It is He who has taught the Qur'an"! (Q 55: 1-2).

"Verily, this (Qur'an) is no less than a Reminder to (all) Ālamīn (mankind and jinns); to whosoever among you who wills to walk straight" (Q 81: 27-28).

"Say (O Muhammad PBOH) "Ruhul-Qudus (Gabriel) has brought it (the Qur'an) down from your Lord with truth, that it may make firm and strengthen the faith of those who believe and as a guidance and glad tidings to those who have submitted to (Allah as Muslims)" (Q 16: 102).

B. Its Mode of Revelation

The Holy Qur'an is an inspired message which was revealed in stages, by Almighty God through His beloved servant (Angel Jubril or Gabriel – Holy Spirit) to His beloved servant Prophet Muhammad. Although it is a weighty message, it shall not be forgotten. As such, it was revealed in stages.

“It is a Qur'an which we have divided (into parts from time to time), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And we have revealed it by stages (in about 23 years)” (Q17: 106).

“And those who disbelieve say: “Why was the Qur'an not revealed to him all at once?” Thus it was sent down in parts that we may strengthen your heart thereby. And we have revealed it to you gradually in stages (it was revealed to the Prophet (PBOH) in 23 years). And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'an), but we reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof” (Q 25: 32-33).

“Say: whoever is an enemy to Gabriel for he (Gabriel) brings down the (revelation) thy (Muhammad) heart by Allah's Will, a confirmation of what went before, and guidance and glad tidings for those who believe ...” (Q 2 : 97).

“Verily! It is We who have sent down the Qur'an to you (O Muhammad PBOH) by stages therefore, be patient (O Muhammad PBOH) and submit to the command of your Lord Allah by doing your duty to Him and by conveying His Message to mankind), and obey neither a sinner nor a disbeliever among them” (Q 76 : 23-24).

“We shall make you to recite (the Qur'an), so you (O Muhammad PBOH) shall not forget (it), except what Allah, may will, He knows what is apparent and what is hidden” (Q 87: 6-7).

C. Its Language of Revelation

Its language of revelation is Arabic.

“Alf-Lam-Ra (These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings). These are the

verses of the clear Book (The Qur'an) that makes clear the legal and illegal things, legal laws, a guidance and a blessing). Verily, we have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may understand" (Q12:1-2).

"And if we had sent this as a Qur'an in a foreign language other than Arabic, they would have said: "Why are not its verses explained in detail (in our language)? What (a Book) not in Arabic and (the messenger) an Arab?" "Say: It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing. And as for those who disbelieve, there is heaviness (deafness) in their ears, and it (the Qur'an) is blindness for them. They are those who are called from a place far away (so that they neither listen nor understand) (Q 41:44).

D. Its Purposes

It is a weighty message which can conveniently take the children of Adam from the depth of darkness into light.

(i) *Its teachings:*

"He has made it (Qur'an) straight to give warning (to the disbelievers) of a severe punishment from Him, and to give glad tidings to the believers (in the Oneness of Allah), who work righteous deeds, that they shall have a fair reward (i.e. Paradise); they shall abide therein forever. And to warn those (Jews, Christians and pagans) who say, 'Allah has begotten a son (or offspring or children).' No knowledge have they of such a thing, nor had their father. Mighty is the word that comes out of their mouths. They utter nothing but a lie" (Q18: 2-5).

"So we have made this (the Qur'an) easy in your own tongue (O Muhammad PBOH), only that you may give glad tidings to the Muttaqūn: (i.e. pious and righteous persons who fear Allah much), and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained), and warn with it the Ludda (most quarrelsome) people" (Q19: 97).

“We have not sent down the Qur'an unto you (O Muhammad PBOH) to cause you distress, but only as a reminder to those who fear (Allah)” (Q 20: 2-3).

(ii) *It is a healing, a guide and a mercy.*

“And we send down from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism and act on it) and it increases the Zalimūn (Polytheists and wrongdoers) nothing but loss” (Q 17: 82).

“Alif-Lām-Mīm, these are verses of the Wise Book (the Qur'an), a guide and a mercy for Muhsinūn (good doers), those who offer prayers perfectly (Iqamatus-Salat) and give zakat and they have faith in the Hereafter with certainty; such are on guidance from their Lord, and such are the successful” (Q 31: 1-5).

“... Say: It is a guide and a healing to those who believe ...” (Q 41: 44).

(iii) *It gives wisdom*

“Alif-Lam-Ra, these are the verses of the book of Wisdom” (Q 10: 1).

“Alif-Lam-Mim, these are verses of the Wise book” (Q 31: 1-2).

“Ya-sin, by the Qur'an, full of Wisdom” (Q 36: 1-2).

E. How It Should be Read/Studied

- (a) “That this is indeed a Qur'an most honourable in a Book well-guarded which none shall touch but those who are clean” (Q 56: 77-79).
- (b) “.... And recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tone” (Q 73: 4).
- (c) “When the Qur'an is read, listen to it with attention and hold your peace: that you may receive mercy” (Q 7: 204).
- (d) Say: “Call upon Allah or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him (it is well): For to Him belong the most Beautiful Names. Neither speak your prayer aloud

nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a MIDDLE COURSE BETWEEN,” say: “Praise to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in His dominion” (Q17: 110-111).

F. Its Preservation

The Holy Qur’an is a Book of honour and dignity which is preserved by Almighty God. Consequently, no falsehood can approach it. It is a beautiful message that is consistent with itself and there is no crookedness in it.

“Verily, it is we who have sent down the Dhikr (the Qur’an) and surely, we will guard it (from corruption)” (Q15: 9).

“Falsehood cannot come to it from before it or behind it, (it is) sent down by the All-wise, worthy of all praise (Allah)” (Q 41: 42).

“Allah has revealed from time to time the most beautiful message in form of a Book consistent with itself (yet) repeating its teaching in various aspects ...” (Q 39: 23).

“So whoever wills, let him pay attention to it. It is in records held (greatly) in honour, exalted (in dignity), kept pure and holy, in the hands of scribes (angels), honourable and obedient” (Q 80: 12-16).

“All the praises and thanks be to Allah who has sent down to His slave (Muhammad PBOH) the Book (the Qur’an), and has not placed therein any crookedness” (Q 18: 1).

The preservation of the Qur’an passed through three stages. The first was done during the time of the Prophet. During his time, the Qur’an was memorised by the Prophet himself and many of his companions. Furthermore, it was written down on shoulder bones of animals, palm leaf stalks, pieces of leather, etc. by his scribes such as Zayd b. Thabit. The materials were kept in his house.

The second stage was done during the time of Abubakr’s caliphate. Many memorizers of the Qur’an lost their lives during the battle of Yamama. Abubakr, therefore, charged Zayd b. Thabit and others to compile the Qur’an into a book form from the materials on which it was written, and from the memory of the memorizers. The copy was kept in Abubakr’s house.

After Abubakr's death, there were variations over the correct recitation of the Qur'an because of the spread of Islam to non-Arab countries. Uthman, the third caliph charged Zayd b. Thabit, the Prophet's Chief Scribe and others to make many copies from the existing copy of the Qur'an compiled during the time of the Prophet. The copies were distributed to the Muslim provinces. It is pertinent to mention that the Qur'an text of today is the same as the one compiled during the time of Prophet Muhammad.

G. The Message of the Qur'an

The importance of the Qur'an to Muslims is too obvious to be mentioned. In fact, it is his life for it gives guidance on how he should live his life spiritually, socially, politically, morally and economically. It is the tissue out of which his life is woven. It is his guide from the cradle to the grave, and from the grave to Paradise. He says his prayers with the Qur'an and does everything with portions recited from it. The word Qur'an is an infinitive noun formed from the verb 'qara'a' meaning 'he read' or 'he recited' meaning he collected things together and he recited." The Book is so called because it is the collection of the best religious teachings and it is a book that should be read. Its recitation is a means of concentration upon the truth contained in it.

The Qur'an has a number of other names by which its importance is shown. It bears names such as Al-Ḥukm (the Judgement) (Q 13: 37), al-Furqān (the Criterion, Q 25: 1), Ummul Kitāb (the mother of the book), Al-Kitābu (the Book, Q 2: 2), Adh-dhikr (the Reminder, Q 15: 9), Al-Huda (the Guidance, Q 72: 13) and Al-Tanzīl (The Revelation, Q 26: 197). All these names indicate its nature, essence, significance, constitution and value.

The Qur'an contains metaphysics about the nature of the Godhead. It is the main source of Islam. Its main teaching is that there is only one God as stated in Q 112: 1-5. The Quran states unequivocally that the power to create belongs to Allah alone (Q

16: 20) and mentions categorically that the only unpardonable sin before Allah is the association of a partner with Him (Q4: 48). It rejects totally the idea of trinity (fatherhood, having a son and Holy Spirit) (Q 5: 72-78).

On devotional duties, the purpose of creation (Q 51: 56), the Quran does not leave man and jinn alone in this regard. They are guided on the ways to do Ibaadaat such as Salat (Prayer), Zakah (Charity), Zawm (Fasting) and Hajj (Pilgrimage). It specifies a fixed time for salat (Q 103: 4 and Q 20: 130) and states its benefits (such as prevention of immorality and wrongdoing) (Q 29: 45). It mentions the prerequisites of prayers such as water ablution and sand ablution and their purpose (“God desires to make you clean and to complete His favours on you”) (Q 5: 6). God placed Zakat next to Salah in the Qur’an and its purpose is mentioned in the Book (Q 9: 60, 103, etc.). Ramadan fast is prescribed in the Qur’an for people to attain God – Consciousness (Q 2: 183-186). It enjoins anyone who is able and capable financially and has sound health to undertake a pilgrimage to Makkah for the purpose of Ibādah (Q 22: 27, Q 3: 96). These are some of the ways Ibādāt (modes of worship) are stated in the Qur’an so as to attain success and salvation in this world and the hereafter.

As regards legislation, social and economic matters, the Qur’an contains a set of moral and juridical injunctions in every detail. Injunctions stated in the Qur’an are many. There are legislations on food and drinks. The Qur’an enjoins the eating and drinking of good things such as fish and water and forbids eating and drinking of unlawful things such as dead animals, blood and intoxicants (Q 2: 172-173 and Q 5: 90). Some economic activities such as interest-based loans, selling pork and cheating in commercial dealings are forbidden (Q 2: 275- 279). Socially, the Qur’an gives injunction on marital relationships. It talks on the rules of marriage, divorce and inheritance (Q 4: 4; Q 4: 35; Q 4: 11, 12, 177). It narrates the stories of prophets and their people, tribes and kings with a view to learning lessons from their affairs.

The principle of Allah's sovereignty (Q 12: 40; Q17: 22-23) and obedience to the Messenger as the only authoritative representative of the political and legal sovereignty of Allah on earth are clearly stated (Q 4: 59). The legislature can codify the verdicts of the Qur'an into sections, provisions and rules while the executive is to enforce the law as contained in the Qur'an. The Judiciary should also operate within the limits prescribed by the Qur'an (Q 5: 47-50). Justice should be administered with the utmost fairness and impartiality, without distinction between friend, foe or relative as contained in Q4: 58-59. This will make administration very efficient and effective. Both Muslims and non-Muslims are given fundamental rights. Some of the rights given to them in the Quran are right to life (Q 6: 51), right to safety of life (Q 5: 32), right to basic standard of life (Q 5: 12), freedom of religion (Q 2: 256) and justice (Q 5: 3).

The Prophets of Allah

The word 'Muslims' which means those who believe in Allah and submit totally to His wills is not limited to prophet Muhammad and his followers. All the prophets and those who sincerely followed them such as followers of Prophet Musa (Moses), Abraham and Isa (Jesus Christ) were all Muslims. They believed in Allah and surrendered themselves totally to the will of Allah. Every Muslim believes in all the prophets such as Musa, Isa, Abraham and Salih without an exception (Q 2: 285-286). All the prophets came with the same message of monotheism.

In point of fact, before this physical existence, human beings had received the message of monotheism from the spirit world prior to human existence in this physical world. When God created humankind and gathered all the souls of Adam's descendants informing them of their duties to worship none but Allah, right from that life of no physical existence, human beings have accepted the message of monotheism; and this has been imprinted on their

souls. When they came into existence, the testimony on their soul become manifest when they faced a calamity, even the atheists. They would not know when they would utter O God! Calling on Allah for help. “What has thought man what is good and what is bad?” (Q 2: 172; Q 117: 15; Q 41: 53).

Islam is the only divine religion that bears a name which is neither named after its founder nor affiliated to that of any mortal being, i.e. it is not named after its founder like other religions such as Buddhism which is named after its founder, Gautama Budha, Zoroastrianism which is named after its founder called Zoroaster and Christianity that took its name from its Prophet, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

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12

Nūḥ (Noah) in Allah’s Sight

Noah is one of the five distinguished prophets of Allah. He called his people day and night and admonished them in public and in private for 950 years (Q 29: 14). Only a few people accepted Islam through him. Some scholars said only 18 people accepted Islam through him. During the period, he poured out the agony of his heart before Allah in words full of extreme pathos. All his preaching, warning and sympathy met ridicule, opposition and abuse till they met their destruction (Q 10: 12; 11: 52). Here are the sayings of Allah directly from the Qur’an on Noah.

Servant of God

The people of Noah denied (their messenger) before them; they rejected our servant, and said: “A madman!” and he was insolently rebuked and threatened. Then he invoked his Lord (saying): “I have been overcome, so help (me)!” So we opened the gates of heaven with water pouring forth and we caused the earth to gush forth with springs. So the waters met for matter predestined. And we carried him on a (ship) made of planks and nails, floating under our eyes, a reward for him who had been rejected! And indeed, we left this as a sign, then is there any that will remember (or receive admonition)” (Q 54: 9-15).

Verily, he (Noah) was one of our believing servants (Q 37: 81).

Noah's Teachings/Messages

“Verily, we sent Noah to his people (saying): “Warn your people before there comes to them a painful torment.” He said: “O my people! Verily, I am a plain warner to you: that you should worship Allah (Alone), be dutiful to Him and obey me, He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins and respite you to an appointed term ...” (Q 71: 1-4)

Indeed, we sent Noah to his people and he said: O my people! Worship Allah! you have no other Allah (God) but Him (Allah). Certainly, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day! (Q 7: 59)

And indeed we sent Noah to his people (and he said): “I have come to you as a plain warner”: that you worship none but Allah, surely, I fear for you the torment of a painful Day (Q 11: 25-26)

“The people of Noah denied the messengers; when their brother Noah said to them: “Will you not fear Allah and obey Him? I am a trustworthy messenger to you. “So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him, and obey me” (Q 26:105-108)

God Saved Noah and the Believers

And indeed we sent Noah to his people, and he stayed among them a thousand years less fifty years, and deluge overtook them while they were zālimūm (wrongdoers, disbelievers); then we saved him and those with him in the ship and made it (the ship) as an Ayah (a lesson) for the Ālāmin (mankind, jinns and all that exist) (Q 29: 14-15).

In summary, Noah is a human being, a warner, a believing servant of Allah, a Messenger of Allah and a light from Allah.

13

Ibrahim (Abraham) in Allah's Sight

A Model

Verily, Abraham was an Ummah (community, a leader having all the good righteous qualities), Obedient to Allah, Hanīfan (i.e. to worship none but Allah) and he was not one of those who were Al-Mushrikūn (polytheists). He was thankful for His (Allah's) graces. He (Allah) chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to a straight path (Q 16: 126-121).

A Preacher

And of Abraham who fulfilled (or conveyed) all that (what Allah ordered him to do), that no burdened person (with sins) shall bear the burden (sins) of another; and that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad) and that his deeds will be seen, then he will be recompensed in full and the best; and with that your Lord (Allah) is the end (return of everything). And that it is He (Allah) who causes death and gives life; and that He (Allah) makes (whom He wills) laugh, and makes (whom He wills) weep; and that it is He (Allah) who causes death and gives life; and that He (Allah) creates the pairs, male and female (Q 53: 37-45).

Raised Foundation of Ka'bah (House of God in Mecca)

And (remember) when Abraham and (his son) Ishmael were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah), (saying), Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower (Q 2: 127).

“Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah) full of blessing, and a guidance for Al-Ālamīn (mankind and jins). In it there are manifest signs whosoever enters it, attains security. And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka‘bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses; and whoever (i.e. denies Hajj, then he is a disbeliever of Allah), then Allah stands not in need of any of the Ālamīn (mankind and jinns)” (Q 3: 96-97).

A Sane in Faith (Hanīfan)

“Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim (Hanīfan) (worship none but Allah Alone) and he was not of the polytheists (i.e. he joined none in worship with Allah)” (Q 3: 67)

“Say (O Muhammad PBOH): Allah has spoken the truth. Follow the religion of Abraham Hanīfan (he used to worship Allah Alone) and he was not of the polytheists” (Q 3: 95).

And who turns away from the religion of Abraham except him who befools Himself? Truly, we chose him (Abraham) in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him “submit”. He said “I have submitted myself to the Lord of the Ālamīn (mankind, jinns and all that exist) (Q 2: 130 -131).

And they say: “Be Jews or Christians then you will be guided.” Say (to them, O Muhammad PBOH), “Nay; we follow only the religion of Abraham, Hanīfan (i.e. he worships none but Allah). Say (O Muslims) “We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, son of Jacob, and that which has been given to Moses and Jesus and that which has been given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted in Islam (Q 2: 135-136).

Signs of Allah Demonstrated by Abraham

And (remember) when Abraham said, My Lord! show me how you give life to the dead” He (Allah) said: “Do you not believe?” He (Abraham) said: “Yes (I believe) but to be stronger in faith.” He (Allah) said: “Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you (then slaughter them, cut them into pieces), and then put a portion of them on every hill, and call them, they will come to you in haste. And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise” (Q 2: 260).

We (Allah) said: “O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Abraham!” (Q21: 69). In summary, Abraham is a human being, a servant of Allah, a prophet of Allah, a messenger of Allah, a friend of Allah, a model, a sane in faith, a chosen one and a light from Allah.

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Moses in Allah's Sight

His Childhood

When we inspired your mother (Moses' Mother) with that which we inspired; saying: put him (the child) into the Tābūt (a box or case) put it into the river (Nile), then the river shall cast it up on the bank and there, an enemy of mine and an enemy of his shall take him." And I bestowed upon you with love from Me in order that you may be brought up under my eye. When your sister went and said: Shall I show you one who will nurse him? So, we restored you to your mother that she might cool her eyes and she should not grieve. Then you did kill a man, but we saved you from great distress and tried you with a heavy trial. Then you stayed a number of years with the people of Madyan (Midian). Then you came here according to the fixed term which I ordained (for you), O Moses? And I have chosen you for inspiration (message) for Myself. Go you and your brother with My *Ayat* (signs and revelations) and do not you both slacken and become weak in My Remembrances (Q 20: 38-42).

His Call

And mention in the Book (the Qur'an) Moses. Verily, He was chosen and he was a messenger (and) a prophet. And we called him from the right side of the Mount and made him draw near to Us for a talk with him. And We bestowed on him his brother Aaron (also a prophet), out of our mercy (Q 19: 51-53).

His Early Prayer

Moses said: “O my Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self confidence) and ease my task for me; and make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue (speech), that they may understand my speech; and appoint for me a helper from my family, Aaron, my brother; increase my strength with him and let him share my task, that we may glorify you much, and remember you much, verily, You are of us ever a Well Seer. (Allah) said, You have been granted your request, O Moses” (Q 20: 25-36).

Moses Was Given a Scripture (Tawrah)

And indeed we gave Moses, after we had destroyed the generations of old, the scripture (the Torah) as an enlightenment for mankind and a guidance and a mercy, which they might remember (Q 28: 43).

A Believing Servant

“And, indeed we gave our Grace to Moses and Aaron. And we saved them and their people from the great distress; helped them, so that they became the victors; and we gave them the clear scripture; and guided them to the right path; and we left for them (a goodly remembrance) among generations in later times; peace be upon Moses and Aaron! Verily, thus do we reward the good-doers. Verily, they were two of our believing servants” (Q 37: 114-122).

In summary, Moses is a human being, a believing servant, a chosen one, a messenger of Allah, a prophet of Allah and a light from Allah.

Jesus in Allah's Sight and the Comprehensive Powers of Allah's Miracles

*(i.e. Jesus Christ (Peace be upon Him) According to the Holy
Qur'an)*

1. His Birth: A Mercy from Allah

And mention in the Book (the Qur'an O Muhammad PBOH) the story of Mary, when she withdrew into seclusion from her family to a place facing east. She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then we sent to her Our Rūh (angel Gabriel), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. She said: "Verily! I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allah) from you, if you do fear Allah." (The angel) said: I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son." She said: "How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" He said: "So (it will be), your Lord said: That is easy for me (Allah): And (We wish) to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from us (Allah), and it is a matter (already) decreed, by Allah."

So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place (i.e. Bethlehem valley about 4-6 miles from Jerusalem). And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!" Then (a voice) cried unto her from below her, saying: Grieve not! Your Lord has provided a water stream under you; it will let fall fresh ripe – dates upon you." "So eat and drink and be

glad, and if you see any human being, say verily! I have vowed to fast unto the Most Beneficent (Allah) so I shall not speak to any human being this day.” Then she brought him (the baby) to her people, carrying him. They said: “O Mary! indeed you have brought a thing *fariyya* (an unheard mighty thing). “O Sister (i.e. the like) of Aaron (not the brother of Moses but he was another pious man at the time of Mary)! Your father was not a man who used to commit adultery, nor your mother was an unchaste woman.” Then she pointed to him (Jesus). They said: How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?” He (Jesus) said: “Verily! I am a slave of Allah, He has given me the scripture and made me a prophet.” And He has made me blessed wherever I be, and has enjoined on me prayer, and zakat, as long as I live”. And dutiful to my mother, and made me not arrogant. And salām (peace) be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive! such is Jesus, son of Mary, (it is) a statement of truth, about which they doubt (or dispute) (Q 19: 16-35).

Verily, the similitude (the likeness) of Jesus in Allah's sight is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, He said to him, “Be” and he was (Q 3: 59).

2. The Worth of Jesus in the Sight of Almighty God

(i) *A Righteous Prophet*

“And Zakariyā’ and John and Jesus and Elias, all in the ranks of the righteous” (Q6: 85).

(ii) *He is not God*

“Surely, in disbelief are they who say that, Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary. Say (O Muhammad): “Who then has the least power against Allah, if He were to destroy the Messiah, Son of Mary, his mother, and all those who are on the earth together? And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allah is able to do all things” (Q 5: 17).

3. Jesus (Pboh) is Not a Son of God

And the Jews say: Ezra is the Son of Allah, and the Christians say Messiah is the Son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouths. They imitate the saying of the disbeliever of old. Allah's curse be on them, how they are deluded away from the truth (Q 9: 30).

The Messiah (Jesus), Son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him. His mother (Mary) was a *siddiqah* (i.e. she believed in the words of Allah and His Books). They both used to eat food as any other human being. Look how we make the *Ayat* (proofs, evidences, verses, etc.) clear to them, yet look how they are deluded away (from the truth) (Q 5: 75).

A Servant of God

He (Jesus) was no more than a servant: We granted our favour to him and made him an example to the children of Israel" (Q 43: 59).

4. Messages of Jesus (Pboh)

(i) Confirmation of Tawrah (Old Testaments)

(ii) Announcement of more mercies of Almighty God.

She (Mary) said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me." He (Gabriel) said: "So (it will be) for Allah creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He (Allah) says to it only: 'Be' – and it is. And He (Allah) will teach him (Jesus) the Book and Al-Hikmah (i.e. the sunnah, the faultless speech of the prophets), wisdom and the Tawrah and the Gospel. And will make him (Jesus) a Messenger to the children of Israel saying:

"I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave; and I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave, And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your house. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe. And I have

come confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord. So fear Allah and obey me. Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (alone). This is the straight path" (Q 3: 47-51).

5. The Departure of Jesus

And they (Jews) said (in boast) "We killed Messiah Jesus, Son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah – but they (Jews) killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Jesus was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not (i.e. Jesus, Son of Mary) but Allah raised him (Jesus) up (with his body and soul). And Allah is Ever All-powerful, All-wise" (Q 4: 156-158).

6. The Second Coming of Jesus

And he (Jesus, Son of Mary) shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour (Day of Resurrection), i.e. (Jesus's descent on the earth). Therefore, have no doubt concerning it (i.e. the Day of Resurrection). And follow me (Allah) (i.e. be obedient to Allah and do what He orders you to do, O mankind)! This is the straight path (of Islamic monotheism, leading to Allah and to His paradise). And let not satan hinder you from the right religion, i.e. Islamic Monotheism). Verily, he (satan) to you is a plain enemy (Q 43: 61-62).

7. The Expectation on the Day of Judgement of Those who Falsify the Teachings of Jesus

"And (remember) when Allah will say (on the Day of Resurrection): O Jesus, Son of Mary! Did you say unto men: Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allah?" He will say: "Glory be to you! It was not for me to say what I had no right to say. Had I said such a thing, you would surely have known it. You know what is in my

inner-self though I do not know what is in yours, truly, You, only are the All-knower of all that is hidden and unseen.” “Never did I say to them aught except what you (Allah) did command me to say: *‘Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord, and I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when you took me up, you were the watcher over them, and you are a witness to all things. (This is a great admonition and warning to the Christians of the world). If you punish them, they are your slaves, and if you forgive them, verily You, only are the All-mighty, the All-wise’* (Q 5: 116-118).

8. Qur’anic Pieces of Advice to the People of the Book (Scriptures) (i.e. Jews and Christians)

O People of the scripture (Jews and Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah Jesus, Son of Mary, was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His word (“Be!” – and he was) which He bestowed on Mary and a spirit (Ruh) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers say not: Three (trinity)!” Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only one Allah (God), Glory be to Him (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All-sufficient as a Disposer of affairs” (Q 4: 171).

9. A Challenge to the Jews and Christians

“Verily, the likeness of Jesus in Allah’s sight is the likeness of Adam. He created, him from dust, then He said to him: “Be!” and he was. This is the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.

“Then whoever disputes with you concerning him (Jesus) after (all this) knowledge that has come to you, i.e. Jesus being a slave of Allah, and having no share in Divinity say:

(O Muhammad PBOH). “Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves – then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the curse of Allah upon those who lie.”

Verily, this is the true narrative (about the story of Jesus.), and *Lā ilāha illā Allah* (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, the one and the Only True God, who has neither a wife nor a son). And indeed, Allah is the Mighty, the All-Wise. And if they turn away (and do not accept these true proofs and evidences) then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do Mischief” (Q 3: 59-63).

10. In summary, Jesus (PBOH) is a human being, a servant of Allah, a righteous prophet of Allah, an example to the children of Israel, a healer and a bird-maker by Allah's permission, a Christ (Messiah or anointed), a messenger of Allah, a word and a spirit created by Allah, a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, a chosen (beloved) one, a light and a mercy from Allah. Jesus performed miracles as quoted earlier in this section but miracles are not limited to his personality and his deeds as we shall see in the following sections.

Miracles

It is God that performed miracles through His prophets. He performed it whenever He wills. It was usually done to dispel grave doubts people might have concerning them and to get people convinced of the authenticity of Allah's messages to them. It is also to help the faithful in difficult situations. Prophet Muhammad also performed miracles. Imam Al-Ghazali listed 26 of his miracles in his book titled *Ihyau Ulumud-Diin Vol. 2* Pages 252-255. Some of them are:

“When the Quraysh of Makkah told the Prophet to divide the moon into two parts, the Prophet invoked God who split the moon into two portions which was clearly visible to the people present” (Q 54).

“Once water began to gush forth from the fingers of the Prophet, so much that his soldiers drank to their hearts' content and also made ablution therewith.”

The prophet used to deliver sermons standing on the tree trunk of a palm tree. When it was replaced by another, the trunk started to emit mild sound which was heard by all his companions.


Once the Prophet was given food mixed with poison to eat. He who ate it first expired, but the Prophet lived for four years even after taking that food. That food told the Prophet: “There is poison in me.”

A certain camel had no milk in its udder. As soon as the Prophet touched its udder, it began to give milk. Abdullah-b-Masud embraced Islam on seeing this miracle of Prophet Muhammad.

His nocturnal journey which he did before leaving Makkah to Madinah is another miracle performed by Allah through him. He travelled from Makkah to Jerusalem, from there to the heavens and then back to Makkah within one night (Q 17). During the journey, he was shown many things such as hell, paradise, many prophets and other signs of Allah. It was when he was coming that he was given the five daily prayers.

Prophet Muhammad’s greatest miracle is the Qur’an. While other miracles performed by other prophets such as turning a rod into a snake by Prophet Musa (Q 20: 19-21) and the coming of the she camel and her calf done through prophet Şālih (Q11:61-68) were no more in existence for the present and future generations to see them; the greatest miracle of the prophet which is the Qur’an is available for people of any age to check and verify. He gave the whole world the Qur’an which the literally well-developed could not imitate it, despite he was unlettered. Despite the richness of the Qur’an, he never claimed it for himself. As we know people like to claim whatever they created. The greatest miracle of the Prophet, the Qur’an itself, challenges people to produce the like of it or a chapter like it or a verse like it. Nobody has been successful to produce a book or a chapter like it up till this time. This shows the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) is a true messenger of Allah. The Qur’an says: Say, if Jinn and Mankind gather together to produce a book like this Qur’an, they won’t be able to bring the like of it even though they help one another.

The Comprehensive Powers of Allah (Miracles and Creation)

Adam: **No father**

 No mother

The birth of Jesus is just ONE of the FOUR MIRACLES of Allah regarding the creation of human beings. The first miracle which may even be counted as the greatest of miracles is the creation of Adam. Adam was created without a father and a mother (3: 59). It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he might dwell in security with her. And when he (i.e. the man) covers (an allusion to sexual intercourse) her, she carries a light burden (i.e. pregnancy) and continues therein. And when it becomes heavy, they both invoke Allah, their Lord, "If you should give us a good (child), we will surely be among the grateful" (Q7: 189).

Hawa (Eve): **father**

 No mother

Hawa, Adam's wife (Eve) was created from Adam's left rib according to some accounts. Therefore, Eve has a father but no mother (Q 4: 1). "O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord who created you from a single person (Adam). And from him created his wife (Hawa/Eve), and from them both he created many men and women. And fear Allah through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kingship). Surely, Allah is ever an all watcher over you" (Q 4: 1).

JESUS ('Isa): **No father**

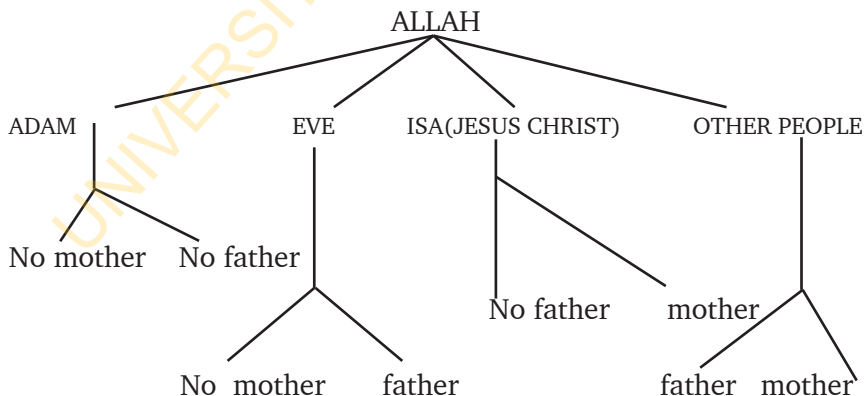


Maryam gave birth to Jesus without a father (Q 19: 16-35). Verily, the similitude (the likeness) of Jesus in Allah’s sight is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, He said to him “Be” and he was (Q 3: 59).

Other Human Beings: **father**



Other human beings are created from both man and woman through sexual intercourse and through sperm. Creating human beings from fluid is also equally another miracle of the same degree. Human beings are children of both male and female (Q 4: 1) Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging, i.e. the womb ... (Q 23: 12-14).



Which aspect of creation is left after these four? There is none. Inna llāha ‘ala kulli shay-in Qadīr (Q 2: 284; Q 3: 26; Q 3: 165; Q 5: 17, etc.). He is all powerful to do all things.

Muhammad in Allah’s Sight, His Character, Honours and Ṣalātu Ala Nabiyy

A Messenger and a Prophet

“Muhammad is no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him. If he died or was slain, will you then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, but Allah (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who serve Him with gratitude” (Q 3 : 144).

Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last (end) of the prophets. And Allah is ever All-Aware of everything. (Q 33: 40).

His Duty

“I (Muhammad) have been commanded only to worship the Lord of this city (Makkah), Him who has sanctified it and His is everything. And I am commanded to be from among the Muslims (those who submit to Allah in Islam). And to recite the Qur’an, so whosoever receives guidance, receives it for the good of his ownself, and whosoever goes astray, say (to him): I am only one of the warners. And say (O Muhammad): All the praises and thanks be to Allah. He will show you His Ayat (signs, in yourselves and in the universe or punishments, etc.), and you shall recognise them. And your Lord is not unaware of what you do” (Q 27: 91-93).

Exalted Standard of Character

And verily, for you (O Muhammad PBOH) will be an endless reward. And verily, you (O Muhammad PBOH) are on an exalted standard of character (Q 68: 3-4).

Foretold by Jesus

And (remember) when Jesus, son of Mary, said: “O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad (One who praises Allah more than others. This is another name of Prophet Muhammad). But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said: “This is plain magic” (Q 61: 6).

A Witness, Warner, Lamp Spreading Light

O Prophet (Muhammad PBOH) verily, We have sent you as a witness, and a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner, And as one who invites to Allah by His leave, and as a lamp spreading light (Q 33: 45-46).

An Excellent Example

You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for him who hopes in Allah and the final Day and who remembers Allah much (Q 33: 21).

A Mercy from God

“And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the Ālamīn (mankind, jinns and all that exists)” (Q 21: 107).

Indeed Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses (the Qur’an) and purifying them (from sin), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur’an) and Al-Hikmah (the Wisdom) while before that they had been in manifest error (Q 3 :164). Verily, there has come unto you

a Messenger (Muhammad PBOH) from amongst yourselves (i.e. whom you know well). It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you, for the believers, he is full of pity, kind and merciful (Q 9: 128).

Grace of Allah unto Muhammad

Had not the Grace of Allah and His Mercy been upon you (O Muhammad PBOH), a party of them would certainly have made a decision to mislead you, but (in fact) they mislead none except themselves, no harm can they do to you in the least. Allah has sent down to you the Book (The Qur'an and Al-Hikmah) (Islamic law, knowledge of legal and illegal things) and taught you that which you knew not. And Ever Great is the Grace of Allah unto you (O Muhammad) (Q 4: 113).

In summary, Muhammad (PBOH) is a human being, a servant of Allah, a holy prophet of Allah (The Seal of prophets), a messenger of Allah, a Witness, a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, one who invites others to Allah's Grace by Allah's leave, a lamp spreading light, one who praises Allah more than others, an excellent example to all mankind, a chosen (beloved) one and a mercy from God (Allah).

Allah discourages a believer from making any distinction between one and another of His messengers because they are all men of honour; however, Allah, the All-knowing, has sent them with different kinds of mission and given them different degrees of rank.

“The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith, each one (of them) believes in Allah, His angels, His books, and His Messengers. (They say): “We make no distinction between one and another of his Messengers.” And they say: We hear, and we obey; (we seek) Your forgiveness, our Lord and to you is the return (of all)” (Q2: 285).

“Glory to thy Lord, The Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they attribute unto Him. And peace be on all the

Messengers! And all the praise and thanks be to Allah, Lord of the Ālamīn (mankind, jinns and all that exists) (Q 37: 180-182)

He (Allah) has established for you (believers) same religion (Islam) which He ordained for Noah and that which we have inspired in you (O Muhammad). And that which We ordained for Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Isa); saying: you should establish religion (i.e. to do what He orders you to do practically), and make no divisions in it (religion). To those who worship other things than Allah (Almighty God), Hard is the way to which you (O Muhammad), called them. Allah chooses for Himself who He wills and guides unto Himself those who turn to Him” (Q 42: 13).

Prophet Muhammad’s Outstanding Qualities and Character

Innaka la-‘alaa khuluqin ‘Aziim (And verily, you (O Muhammad PBUH) are on an exalted standard of character (Q 68: 3-4).

In this section, we intended to present the outstanding qualities and conduct of Prophet Muhammad with a view to guiding Muslims in their daily interactions with people irrespective of their religions, race and language. Prophet Muhammad was at once a son, a husband, a father, a neighbour, a friend, a host, a guest, a trader, commander, guide, etc. In the above-quoted verse, Allah has described his character in its vividness and intensity. With that description, He has said it all. However, we shall enumerate some of his outstanding characters.

Truthfulness

Prophet was honest and truthful. When he was not yet given the mantle of prophethood and messengership, he earned himself the title, al-Amīn (the trustworthy). Whenever the people in Makkah kept their belongings and valuables with him, he would return exactly the same belongings and valuables as and when requested without any form of substitution. This noble and exemplary character earned him the title; and it also made him popular to the extent that when there was a problem of placing a cornerstone

stone Hajaratul Aswad (the Black Stone) on the wall of Ka'abah, he was chosen to settle the dispute. He did it in a way that all the families were satisfied. How did he do it? He asked them to bring a piece of white cloth. He placed the black stone on it and asked the representative of each family, i.e. all the tribal chiefs to hold the edge of the cloth and moved it near the wall and raised it to the height before he used his blessed hands to pick it and placed it on the walls of the Ka'abah. That also shows his intelligence. When he joined Khadijah's firm, he displayed uncommon honesty by declaring both normal and abnormal profits to Khadijah. He did not have conflict of interest by hiding abnormal profit for himself. He did not also conduct related business for himself or any other person along with Khadijah's business. This rare behaviour made Khadijah to propose to Muhammad in marriage which the latter accepted after he had consulted his uncle Abu Talib. He was so honest that people took him serious even when joking.

Generosity

The Prophet was generous to a fault. His generosity knew no bounds. Whenever he was asked, he would give if he had at that time. If he did not have, he would promise the person to give him when he would have something. He considered himself as the treasurer and distributor; and Allah is the giver as far as he was concerned. In addition to material bestowals, he was also generous with his behaviour. He forgave his enemies, Abu Sufyan and other Makkans during the conquest of Makkah when he had the power to humiliate, beat and kill those who made life so difficult for him and his followers to the extent of seeking asylum in Madinah when their persecution became unbearable. When he had the opportunity to revenge, he said to them, "Go, you are free." This act of generosity touched the hearts of people like Abu Sufyan and some Makkans and thus, they accepted Islam. That is what Muslims stand for and that is what Muslims should practise.

Abu Dharr reports the Apostle telling him on an occasion, "I would have to possess as much gold as Mount Uhad and then to allow three days to pass with single dinar on me except that which I may hold back for the cause of religion; rather, I would give it away to God's servants this way and that, on my right and left and in the back". Jabir b. Abdullah says that it never happened that the God's Messenger was requested to give anything and he said 'No' in reply. 'Ibn Abbas testifies that in generosity and bountifulness, the Apostle of God was swifter than the wings of the wind (Sahih Bukhari). There was a time 10000 dirhams were given to the Prophet and distributed among his companions. A man then came to him and begged him to give him something. He said he did not have anything again. But he quickly promised the person that he would give him whenever he had. He was kind to a friend and a foe. This is depicted when the dead body of Abdullah b. Ubayy, the leader of hypocrites had been placed in his grave, the Prophet came at this point and asked them to take out his body. He then put him on his knees and blew some of his saliva on him. He then used his shirt to clothe him. It should be recalled the evil roles that this man played during the battle Uhud and in other occasions and how his revengeful attitude made life difficult for the Prophet and his followers. Despite that, he was still kind to him.

Humour

He was not the type of person who put on frowning faces all the time. He had a good sense of humour. He joked with his friends, wives and anybody who came in contact with him. But when he joked, he never told lies. For instance, when an old woman told him to pray to Allah to admit her into paradise. Prophet Muhammad with a good sense of humour told her that, "Old women will not enter paradise." Seeing the bad countenance of the woman he hurriedly and jokingly explained that Allah will reform old women in a way that they will enter paradise young, i.e. with youthful age.

Chivalry

He was kind and showed sense of honour towards women. The case of his marriage to Umm Habiba, the daughter of his staunch enemy in Makkah showed his chivalry. Umm Habiba accepted Islam when her father, Abu Sufyan was not yet a Muslim. Her husband with whom she travelled to Abyssinia got converted to Christianity. She was divorced and left alone with a child in a land where there was nobody to take care of her and her child. She could not also go back to her parents Abu Sufyan and Hind. Both were enemies of Islam. It could be recalled that Hind, her mother planned against Hamzah during the battle of Uhud and ate his heart after he was killed. This is to show the terrible situation of Umm Habibah. Prophet Muhammad came to rescue her and brought succour to her by marrying her. The king of the country Najashi was so pleased that he performed the matrimonial ceremony. Therefore, Umm Habibah married the best of all the creatures. Her father was moved when he heard the action of the Prophet. He said, "he (Muhammad) is the noble one that cannot be put to blush."

Forgiveness

The Prophet was the most forgiving person among his people. He demonstrated this when he had the power to retaliate. For instance, during the conquest of Makkah, he forgave all his enemies particularly those who persecuted him and his followers and the persecution made him leave Makkah for Madinah. Abu Sufyan who was accompanied by two Quraysh chiefs went at night to observe the strength of the Muslims who had come to perform hajj. They were arrested by some Muslims and brought before prophet Muhammad. The Umayyad chief, i.e. the respected head of the Umayyad family and leader of the Quraysh who was the bitterest enemy of the prophet and two chiefs were at the mercy of the prophet. They had lost hope of being treated well. In fact, they were expecting retaliation when the Prophet pronounced words of forgiveness towards them and asked them to go back to Makkah

unhurt. The act of forgiveness made him (Abu Sufyan) accept Islam instantly. The Prophet announced to the Makkans that whoever among them that enters Abu Sufyan's house would be safe. The recognition given to Abu Sufyan, the Quraysh leader at that time made many people to accept Islam.

The Prophet forgave Abu Jahl who killed Sumayah, a slave woman and the first martyr in Islam. During the conquest of Makkah, he also forgave the person who killed his uncle, Hamzah during the battle of Uhud. Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan employed Wahshi, the great marksman to kill Hamzah who was the one that killed her father Utba (another arch-enemy of Islam during the battle of Badr). When Wahshi killed Hamzah, Hind cut out his chest and took out his heart and chewed it as she swore to do. Unfortunately, she put Hamzah's liver in her mouth but could not swallow it. She had to pour it out. Despite all these acts, when Wahshi presented himself before the Prophet, he forgave him despite the pain he felt for Hamzah's death. He also forgave Hind who was masterminded the killing of Hamzah. Hind was so impressed by his forgiveness that she said, 'O Apostle of Allah! No tent was more hateful to me than your tent. But today (when she was forgiven), no tent is more dearer to me than yours'. He also forgave Ikrimah, Abu Jahl's son who was one of the commanders during the battle of Uhud fighting on behalf of the Makkans.

Abdullah b. Umar says that once a nomadic Arab came and asked the Prophet, "How many times should I pardon my servant in a day?" The Prophet replied, "Seventy times," During the battle of Uhud, the unbelievers broke two of his teeth. Despite that he was badly wounded and bled profusely, he did not curse his people. He prayed for them and asked Allah's forgiveness for them. He said: "My lord! Forgive my people, they do not know what they do" (Zurqami & Hisham).

Selflessness

In facing risk, the Prophet would put forward himself and his relatives. However, when it came to distributing returns or rewards, he and his relatives would take the least. During the fierce battle of Badr, he asked three people from Banu Hashim, his clan to step forward and challenge the Makkans. Ali, Hamzah and 'Ubaydah who were from his clan were asked to step forward which they did. The three defeated the three well-known swordsmen of Quraysh: Utba' b Rabi'a, Shayba b. Rabi'a and Walid b. Utba respectively. When he cancelled interest on loan, he cancelled interest to be received by Abbas b. Abdul Muttalib who was from his family. That is Prophet Muhammad whose character was the Qur'an according to Aishah's description of the best creature (PBOH).

Humility/Modesty

Prophet Muhammad was so humble that he hated being conspicuous on any gathering. He was very humble. Umar reported that the Prophet said to some people who were praising him: "Do not exalt me as the Christians have exalted Jesus, Son of Mary. I am just His servant, so call me God's servant and Messenger." During the treaty of Hudaibiyyah between the Muslims and the Makkans, the Makkans wanted Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah to be changed to Muhammad, son of Abdullah. When the writer (Aliyy) started the writing of the agreement between the Prophet and the Makans thus: "This is the agreement between Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah and the Makkans." The Makkans rejected the statement and asked the writer to replace it with Muhammad, the son of Abdullah saying they did not recognise his Messengership; and that if he was recognised as the Apostle of Allah, they would not have been fighting him since the beginning of his mission. The prophet agreed to their demand out of humility.

Kind treatment

Anas cited certain instances of the time when he was a young lad under Prophet Muhammad. He says, "I served the Prophet of God for ten years but he never blamed me for doing or not doing anything."

Some of the Qualities of the Prophet Deciphered from the Accounts of Hind b. Abi Hala and Ali b. Abi Talib

- He remained engrossed in the thought of the hereafter.
- He was kind-hearted and soft-spoken
- He was never harsh or cool in his behaviour.
- He never humiliated anyone.
- He did not speak needlessly.
- He never showed anger about anything of the world.
- His laughter was but a smile.
- He never did anything improper.
- He never raised his voice against people shouting at them.
- He never returned evil for evil.
- He was given to forgive and forget.
- He never fought except for the sake of Allah.
- He never struck a servant nor a woman with his hand.
- He would choose the easier one if he had a choice between courses.
- He behaved like commoners at home.
- He performed the household chores by cleaning his garments, milking the sheep, etc.
- He never involved in idle talk.
- He honoured people of rank or nobility.
- He commended what was good and deprecated what was bad or vile.
- He was never found wanting in doing what was right.
- He would stand up with the name of God and sit down with it.
- He had a listening ear.
- He would listen to his followers patiently.
- He would give heed to a person talking until he had finished his talk.
- He held elders in his meetings in reverence.
- He treated the youngers kindly.
- He was not stingy or miserly.

- He kept aloof from squabble, arrogance and futile task.
- He smiled on the remarks which made others laugh.
- He accommodated the rudeness of strangers.
- If a person saw him for the first time, he would be overawed.
- If one kept his company, one became attached to him like an inseparable companion (Nadwi, 1979: pp. 411-415).

The description of the Prophet's character by Syed Sulaiman Nadwi in *Muhammad, the Ideal Prophet* (pp. 89-90) is very appropriate to conclude this part as Allah has described him as the best example for whoever really hopes to meet Allah.

“A model which can serve for every class of the people acting under different circumstances and states of human emotions will be found in the life of Muhammad (peace be upon him). If you are rich, there is an example of the tradesman of Mecca and the master of Bahrain's treasure; if you are poor, you can follow the internees of Sh'eb Abi Talib and the emigree of Medina; if you are a king, watch the actions of the Ruler of Arabia; if you are a vassal, take a look at the man enduring hardships imposed by the Quraysh of Mecca; if you are a conqueror, lay your eyes on the victor of Badr and Hunayn; if you have suffered a defeat, take a lesson from the one discomfited at Uhad; if you are a teacher, learn from the holy mentor of the school of Suffah, if you are a student, look at the learner who sat before Gabriel; if you are a sermoner, direct your eyes to the discourser delivering lectures in the mosque of Medina; if you are charged to preach the gospel of truth and mercy to the prosecutors, observe the helpless preacher explaining the message of God to the pagans of Mecca; if you have brought your enemy to his knees, look at the conqueror of Mecca; if you want to administer your lands and properties, discover how the lands and groves of Bani an-Nadir, Khaybar and Fadak were managed; if you are an orphan, do not forget the child of Amina and 'Abdullah left to the tender mercy of Halima; if you are young, see the character of Mecca's shepherd; if you have a travelling business, cast a glance

at the leader of the caravan under way to Busra; if you are a judge or arbiter, look at the umpire entering the holy sanctuary before the peep of dawn and installing Hajr Aswad in Ka'bah, or the justice of peace in whose eyes the poor and the rich were alike; if you are a husband, study the behaviour of the husband of Khadijah and Aishah; if you are a father, go through the biography of Fatima's father and the grandfather of Hasan and Husain; in short, whoever and whatever you may be, you would find a shining example in the life of the Prophet to illuminate your behaviour. If you have the life of the Prophet before you, you can find the examples of all the prophets, Noah and Abraham, John and Jonah and Moses and Jesus. If the life and character of each prophet of God were deemed to be a shop selling the wares of one commodity, that of Muhammad (peace be upon him) would verily be a variety store where goods of every description can be had to suit the tastes and needs of all (PBOH)."

Some of the Honours Granted to Prophet Muhammad

Before the coming of Prophet Muhammad, whenever the people of any prophets misbehaved or committed a sin, Allah would destroy them. Here are some examples recorded in the Qur'an. The people of Lūt committed the sin of sodomy (gay, lesbianism). Allah destroyed them by turning their city upside down and raining down on them brimstones as hard as baked clay which were marked by Allah (Q 11: 77-83).

People of 'Ad whose prophet was Prophet Hud (Heber) were destroyed with a screaming wind sent upon them for denying the truth and worshipping idols (Q 54: 18- 21; Q11: 15).

People of Thamud whose prophet was Prophet Šāliḥ (Methuselah) were destroyed for hamstringing the she-camel sent them by Allah and He destroyed them with a single mighty blast (Q 11: 62-67) and they became like the dry twig fragments of an animal pen (Q 54: 23-31). The people of Nuh (Noah) were destroyed because of

their disbelief (Q 7: 59-64. Q11:36-49). Prophet Musa was sent to Pharaoh to save Bani Israil. Pharaoh misbehaved and Allah drowned him and the people with him (Q 26: 10-60. Q 17: 101-104).

However, Allah promised Prophet Muhammad that he would not destroy his Ummah (followers or people) irrespective of the sins they may commit (Q 8: 33). This is a great honour given to him. In this contemporary world, virtually all sins committed by the people of earlier prophets as enumerated above are being committed today in virtually all the towns, cities and countries of the world. It is not only one sin that is being committed, all the sins mentioned and others that were not mentioned are being committed. Yet, Allah honours the Prophet by giving them the opportunity to repent before they die. Allah says in the Qur'an in respect of this promise and honour given to him thus: "But Allah would not punish them while you (O Muhammad) are among them and Allah would not punish them while they seek forgiveness" (Q 8: 33).

Allah also has forgiven the Prophet all the sins he has committed and those that he would commit in future. He has also completed his favour on him and given him His favour, guidance and help. "Indeed, we have given you (O Muhammad), a clear conquest. That Allah may forgive you for what preceded of your sin and what will follow and complete His favour upon you and guide you to a straight path. And that Allah may aid you with a mighty victory" (Q48: 1-3). Al- Mughirah b. Sh'uba reported that the Prophet once got up at night and stood praying for such a long time that his feet became swollen. On being asked why he did this when all of his former and later sins had been forgiven, he replied, "What! Should I not be a grateful servant of God" (Bukhari & Tirmidhi).

When the Quraysh of Makkah told the Prophet to divide the moon into two parts, the Prophet invoked God who split the moon into two portions which was clearly visible to the people present (Q 54: 1-5). Prophet Ibrahim was inspiring that Allah would forgive him his sins on the Day of Recompense. "And who I aspire that He

will forgive me my sin on the Day of Recompense” (Q 26: 82). But Prophet Muhammad was already forgiven all his past and future sins when the Qur’an says: “Indeed, we have given you (O Muhammad), a clear conquest. That Allah may forgive you for what preceded of your sin and what will follow...” (Q 48: 1-2). Prophet Ibrahim prayed that Allah should not disgrace him on the Day of Resurrection. “And do not disgrace me on the Day they are (all) resurrected’ (Q 26: 87). Allah has already assured the Prophet that He would not disgrace him on the Day. “... the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed him ...(Q 66:8). Prophet Ibrahim prayed that Allah should keep him and his sons away from worshipping idols. “And when Abraham said, ‘My Lord make this city (Makkah) secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols (Q 14: 35). Without praying or asking for protection against worshipping idols, Allah in His infinite power has assured prophet Muhammad and his sons that they would not worship idols. “... Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity (of sin) O people of the (Prophet’s) household, and to purify you with (extensive) purification’ (Q 33: 33). When Prophet Ibrahim prayed that Allah should be with Him. “... Say, Sufficient for me is Allah; upon Him (alone) rely the (wise) reliers” (Q 39: 38). Allah assured Prophet Muhammad without asking that He was fully with him. “O Prophet, sufficient for you is Allah and for whoever follows you of the believers” (Q 8: 64). Prophet Ibrahim prayed Allah that He should guide him. “And (then) he said, “Indeed, I will go to (where I am ordered by) my Lord; He would guide me” (Q 37:99). Allah took Prophet Muhammad to His presence. “Exalted is He who took His servant (i.e. Prophet Muhammad) by night from Al-Masjid al-Aqsa whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing” (Q 17: 1).

Prophet Musa walked by himself to where Allah talked to him and gave him His messages. “And when Moses arrived at our appointed time and his lord spoke to him, he said, ‘My Lord show me Yourself that I may look at you.’” (Allah) said, “You will not see

Me (Allah), but look at the mountain; if it should remain in place, then you will see Me.” But when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He rendered it level, and Moses fell unconscious. And when he awoke, he said, Exalted are You! I have repented to you and I am the first of the believers” (Q 7: 143). However, Allah Himself took His prophet Muhammad to His presence and he did not swerve. “Then he approached and descended. And was at a distance of two bow lengths or nearer. And he revealed to His servant (Muhammad) what He revealed. The heart did not lie about what he saw... The sight of the Prophet did not swerve, nor did it transgress (its limit) (Q 53: 8-11, 17).

Prophet was the only one sent to the whole world. “And We have not sent you, (O Muhammad), except as a mercy to the worlds (Q 21: 107).

He is the only one whose name is attached to Allah's names during Tashahhud, Shahādah, Adhan, Iqāmah, etc. “And We raised high for you your repute” (Q 94: 4).

The honours given to the Prophet can be inferred from the following:

- “He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah; ... (Q 4: 80).
- “Indeed, those who pledge allegiance to you, (O Muhammad) – they are actually pledging allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is over their hands ...” (Q 48: 10).
- “And to Allah belongs (all) honour, and to His Messenger ...” (Q 63: 8).
- “They swear by Allah to you (Muslims) to satisfy you. But Allah and His Messenger are more worthy for them to satisfy, if they were to be believers” (Q 9: 62).

“O you who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life ...” (Q 8: 24). The honours given to prophet Muhammad can never be exhausted in a book let alone a section in a book as we have done in this book. To

read more about the honours of the Prophet, we advise our reader to read a book written by Shaykhul Islam, Shaykh Al-Hajji Ibrahim Niyas AL Kawlakhii Ibn Shaykh al-Hajj Abdullahi Niyas (May Allah be pleased with them) titled *Nujumul Huda fi Kawni Nabiyina* from whose book we have benefited heavily in this section.

Influential Persons in History and Non-Muslim Scholars on the Outstanding Character of Prophet Muhammad

The writings of non-Muslim scholars testify to the outstanding character of Prophet Muhammad. Here, we quoted some of them in this book.

Hart asserted in his book titled *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History* that Muhammad (Prophet Muhammad) was supremely successful in both the religious and secular realms. He ranked Prophet Muhammad the first (the best) of them. Hart believed that Jesus' collaboration in the development of Christianity was more significantly escalated by St Paul who played a pivotal role in its dissemination.

The top 10 human or the world best 10 human by Hart

Rank	Name	Time Frame	Occupation
1	Muhammad	570-632	Political and religious leader
2	Isaac Newton	1642-1727	Scientist
3	Jesus Christ	6 B.C-30 A.D	Spiritual Leader
4	Buddha	563 B.C-483B.C	Philosopher
5	Confuscus	551 B.C-479 B.C	Philosopher
6	St Paul	4 A.D-6 A.D	Christian Apostle
7	Ts'ai Lun	105 A.D	Inventor
8	Johannes Gutenberg	1398-1468	Inventor
9	Christopher Columbus	1451-1506	Explorer
10	Albert Einstein	1879-1955	Scientist

Source: Michael H. Hart (1995), *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, 2nd Edition, New York: Hart Publishing Company.

Lamartine, a French historian, writes in his book, *History of Turkey*: “Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is, Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may ask, is there any man greater than he (Prophet Muhammad)?”

If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and outstanding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms and empires only. They founded, if any at all, no more than material power which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man merged not only armies, legislation, empires, peoples and dynasties but millions of men in one third of the inhabited world, and more than that, moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls on the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law. He created a spiritual nationality of every tongue and of every race” (*Historie de la Turqu*, Vol. 2, pp. 76-77).

“If ever any man on this earth has found God; if ever any man has devoted his life for the sake of God with a pure and holy zeal then, without doubt, and most certainly that man was the Holy Prophet of Arabia (Prophet Muhammad)” (Major A. Leonard).

“His military triumphs awakened no pride, nor vain glory, as they would have done had they been effected for selfish purposes. In the time of his greatest power, he maintained the same simplicity of manner and appearance as in the days of his adversity. So far from affecting regal state, he was displeased if, on entering a room, any unusual testimonial of respect was shown to him” (Washington Irving, in his book, *Life of Muhammad*).

Şalātu Ala Nabiyy

We must pray for prophet Muhammad as commanded by Allah in the Qur’an. Allah and His angels shower blessings on him and

commands all believers to do the same in the form of *ṣalātu ala nabiyy'*. The Qur'an says: "Indeed, Allah confers blessings upon the Prophet and His angels. O You who have believed, ask (Allah to confer) blessings upon him and ask (Allah to grant him) peace" (Q 33: 56). Praying for him is very important in the sense that he bore great hardship and passed through many persecutions in order to convey the Revelations of the Qur'an to us and establish Allah's words. He took us out of darkness and gave us faith in Allah. He removed hypocrisy, apostasy and infidelity from our minds. Therefore, he is entitled to our gratefulness in form of *salatu* called *durud* among some Muslims in some parts of the world particularly the Asian countries.

Prophet Muhammad informed his followers of the benefits of doing *salat* for him. "He who sends blessings on me once, Allah will confer ten favours on him." "Closest to me on the day of requital will be he who sends blessings on me often." "There are many angels of God whose special duty is that they keep on moving in the world and whichever follower of mine sends blessing on me they carry it to me at once." "A person is a big miser whose my name is mentioned and the person could not offer *salatu* for me." Therefore, we should endeavour to say *Salla llāhu alayhi wasalam*, whenever and wherever his name is mentioned. We can use *Salatu ala Nabiyy* to get our requests granted by Allah. A muslim can do any form of *salatu ala Nabiyy* such as *Allahuma ṣalli ala Muhammad wasallim* say, 100 times, 1,000 times, 12,000 times or 124, 000 times, etc. for spiritual developments and mundane affairs. One may also choose *Allahuma salli ala sayyidinā Muhammadi wasallim* as many times as one can for all needs. The Qur'an and the books of Hadith can be contacted to get relevant other forms of *salatu ala Nabiyyi*. If one wants to know more about other forms of *ṣalātu ala Nabiyy* and their uses, one can get a book titled *Sa'datul Darayni fiṣ-ṣalātu*

ala sayyidil kawnayni ṣallā llāhu alayhi wasallama by Yusuf Ismail Nabahanī. All the prayers cited in this book can be done for spiritual development and needs in this world.

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Du‘āu, Dhikr, Istighfār and Ṣabr: Some of the Practices of the Prophet and His Followers

Du‘āu (Supplication)

Du‘āu is so important in Islam that the Prophet said nothing can change destiny except it. Allah has promised us in the Qur’an that he would answer our prayers. If a person doing a prayer wants his du‘āu to be answered, he should also answer the call of Allah by doing all His dos and avoiding all his don’ts. He should also have firm belief in Him, i.e. he should not associate partner with Him. Allah promises to answer our supplication when He says in the Qur’an: “And your Lord says, ‘Call upon Me; I will respond to you. “Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell rendered contemptible” (Q 40: 60). Allah would not care for His creatures if not for their supplication. The Qur’an says: “Say, “Would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication ...?” (Q 25: 77).

It is the practice of the Prophet to address his request to Allah in form of prayer. To supplicate for our need is also an act of Ibādah. Therefore, believers should also call on Allah through du‘āu as he promised in the Qur’an to answer prayers. But if we call on Allah and our exact request is not granted, we should not despair or feel bad because it is never wasted. There are many forms of prayer a Muslim can do to address his request to Allah. He can make an invocation to God to bestow blessings on the Prophet called Ṣalātu ‘alā Nabiyy. Allah instructs us to do that in the Qur’an (Q 33: 56). He can use some Quranic verses to pray for his needs.

For instance, he can chant *Hasbuna llahu Wani'mal Wakīl* as many times as possible. He may choose a number say 450, 4,500 or 19, 000, 202,500 (450 x 450) and do it regularly as many times as he can. The Qur'an says: "Those to whom people (i.e. hypocrites) said, 'Indeed, the people have gathered against you, so fear them. But it (merely) increased them in faith and they said, *Hasbuna llahu wani'mal wakil* (sufficient for us is Allah and He is the best disposer of affairs.'" 'So they returned with favour from Allah and bounty, no harm touched them). And they pursued the pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty (Q 3: 173-174).'" If he does that, Allah promises to give the person four things based on the verse that follows the Ayah of *Hasbuna llahu wani'mal Wakīl*: favour from Allah, Allah's bounty, protection against harm and the pleasure of Allah. A Muslim may also choose any of the Names of Allah that is relevant to his request. For instance, if he wants Divine favour, he may recite *Yaa Latif*, say, 129 times, 1, 000 times, 1,111 times, 16,641 times (129 x 129) daily for as many days as he can. The person who does it will see great wonders in the provision of sustenance, empowerment, etc. Allah says with regards to this name, "Allah is very Gracious and Kind to His slaves. He gives provisions to whom He wills. And He is the All-Strong, the All-Mighty (Q 42: 19). A Muslim may also combine two or more names of Allah together and recite them to win Allah's favour and to get his needs granted by Allah. For instance, he may recite *Yaa Qawiyu Yaa Aziz* say, 210, 92, 111, 313, 1,000, 1,111, etc.

The Quranic verses that allude to the efficacy and power of these names of Allah are Q 11: 66; Q 22: 40; Q 22: 74; Q 42: 19; Q 57: 25; Q 58: 21; Q33: 25, etc. One may write all the cited references from the Qur'an and read them at the end of one's chosen number. A Muslim can recite *Lā ilāha illā llāhu* say, 1000 times, 10,000 times, 70,000 times or 100,000 times, etc. for all forms of needs without an exception. He is capable of answering our prayers and grant our needs. If one chooses to recite *Lā ilāha illā llāhu* 100,000 times and one cannot finish it at

a sitting, one may divide it into three thus: day one (34,000), day two (33,000) and day three (3,300). If one chooses to recite *Lā ilāha illā llāhu* 70,000 times and one cannot finish it at a sitting, one may divide it into three thus: day one (24,000), day two (23,000) and day three (2,300). One may also recite this verse (Q 21: 69) as many times as one can in Arabic for seeking healing to a serious sickness or solving a serious problem. We (Allah) said: “O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Abraham!” (Q 21: 69). For knowledge and other needs, one may also recite these verses (Q 20: 25-36) say, 66 times, 92 times daily as many times as one can. Moses said: “O my Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self-confidence) and ease my task for me; and make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue (speech), that they may understand my speech; and appoint for me a helper from my family, Aaron, my brother; increase my strength with him and let him share my task, that we may glorify you much, and remember you much, verily, You are of us ever a Well Seer. (Allah) said, “You have been granted your request, O Moses” (Q 20: 25-36). For increase in knowledge, one may also recite *Wa qul Rabbi zidnī ‘ilman* (And say: O Lord increase me in knowledge Q20:114) or *Sanuqriuka falā tansā* (We will make you recite, and you will not forget Q 87: 6) say, 313 times, 111times or any odd number. All these prayers are well tested prayers; and the people that have done them are smiling and happy for wonderful and good results.

The Prophet said: “Du‘āu is never wasted but the forms of its acceptance vary. Sometimes, a person gets what he begs for. Sometimes, God does not think it best for him that the thing he prays for should be granted. So, he does not give it to him but, in its place, a greater favour is bestowed on him or an impending calamity is averted or the prayer is made an atonement for sins. (Since the supplicant does not know it, he imagines that his entreaties and supplications have come to nothing). Sometimes, the prayer is turned into the harvest of the Hereafter. The object for which a

person prays is not granted to him in this life but a greater reward is reserved for him in the life to come as compensation thereof.”

He also said: “Some people, many of whose prayers had not been granted in this world, when they will see in the Hereafter the glorious rewards and blessings that had been set aside for them as a recompense for the unfulfilled prayers, will exclaim mournfully how great would it have been had none of their prayers been granted in the world so that they could get the compensation for them all in the Hereafter”.

Dhikr (God-remembrance)

Dhikr (God-remembrance) is not limited to the five daily prayers. Muslims are urged to remember Allah much. This can be done by keeping their tongues with the chanting of Allah’s names, Subhana llahi wal hamdu lillahi wa Lā ilāha illā llāhu wallahu akbar, etc. Although the tongue may not be used to repeat them, they can be done in a person’s mind. Dhikr should spring from the heart; and it may be uttered by mouth or it may be done in the heart.

The Prophet said the best dhikr is Lā ilāha illā llāhu. When a person recites it sincerely, the gates of the heavens open for Lā ilāha illā llāhu till it reaches the seventh heaven if the reciter avoids the major sins. Muslims should not allow their children and their property to divert their attention from dhikr (Q 33: 41-42, Q 4: 103).

Allah in the Qur’an extols the importance of dhikr (plural adh-kār) and its benefit thus: “Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah-Islamic Monotheism), and work righteousness, tūbā (it means all kinds of happiness or name of a tree in Paradise) is for them and a beautiful place of (final) returns” (Q 13: 28). “O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) force, take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allah much (both with tongue and mind), so that you may be successful” (Q 8: 45). There are other means of doing dhikr and they are equally very good ones too. It is not advisable for a Muslim to limit himself to the five daily

prayers. He should increase his ibādah through chanting other Adh-kār. He should occupy himself with the thought of God and never be unmindful of Him. This is the way of the prophets before Prophet Muhammad. During the early mission of Prophet Muhammad, the five daily prayers were not parts of his ibādah and that of his followers. They had sound Iman (belief) in the oneness and doing Adh-kār using the Qur'an. It was in the second year of Hijrah about 13 years later that he received Allah's injunctions to include salat. What were they doing before the second year of Hijrah? Surely, they were involved in many forms of dhikr and the study of the revelations. The reading of the Qur'an is also a form of ibādah and dhikr.

Based on the account of Abu Hurayrah, another Adh-kār that is dearer to the Prophet than the entire world is subhanallahi wal hamdu lillahi wa Lā ilāha illā llāhu wallahu akbar wa la hawla walā quwuwata illa billahi. When Fatimah also needed a domestic servant to assist her at home and she asked her father, Prophet Muhammad to assist her in getting one, the latter refused. The Prophet gave her the following Adh-kār and asked her to be doing them after every salat and before going to bed after domestic works. Subhana llahi 33 times, Alhamdu lillahi 33 times, Allahu akbar 34 times. At the end of the three, she should recite Lā ilāha illā llāhu wahdahu la sharīka lahu, la hul mulku walahul hamdu wahuwa ala qul shay-in qadīr once. He told her that adhkār is better for her than getting a domestic servant.

Istighfār (Seeking Allah 's Forgiveness)

It is not only when a person slips or has slipped into folly that he has committed a sin or has transgressed the limit which would necessitate seeking Allah's forgiveness but it is also done to win pleasure of Allah and to get His favours in this world and the hereafter as can be deduced from the Qur'an. When a person commits a sin, the person must feel very sorry, He must feel shame in his heart and resolve not to repeat the sin. Indeed, those who

have believed then disbelieved then believed then disbelieved, and then increased in disbelief – never will Allah forgive them, nor will He guide them to a way (Q 4: 137). If a person does that, it may be tantamount to making jest of Allah. If a person does Istighfār, he will be dearer to Allah than he was before doing it (Q 66: 8, Q 6: 54). This is contained in the Qur'an thus: I (Noah) said (to them): "Ask forgiveness from your Lord; verily, He is all-forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance; And give you increase in wealth and children and bestow on you gardens and bestow on you rivers (Q 71: 10-12). If one is fond of doing *Astaghfirullah* or *Astaghfirullah aziim* or *Astaghfirullah aziima lladhi Lā ilāha illā huwal hayyul qayyum* as many times as possible. He may choose a number say, 100, 313, 1,000, 1,111, 11,111, etc. and do any form of istighfar in that number.

Prophet Noah shows the importance of Istighfār (seeking forgiveness) as contained in the Qur'anic verse stated above. After receiving Allah's forgiveness they will be given five things: abundant rain, abundant wealth, many children, growing gardens and flowing river. One should not succumb to the temptations of the devil, his own whims and caprices to commit a sin that can make him despair of the Lord and lose all hope of salvation. One should seek forgiveness when one is hale and hearty. It is not good to wait till the time when death is near before repenting. It can strike anytime (Q 4: 17-18). The possibility of meeting one's death in a state of piety is there if one avoids sins and fears Allah often.

Irrespective of our conditions, our status as a saint or innocent of sin, our level as noble and virtuous persons, ordinary people and sinners, Allah hears the prayer and the dhikr of all His servants. But effort must be made to do Allah's will and avoid sins for our prayers to be answered.

Sayyidul Istighfār

Allahumma anta rabbi Lā ilāha illā anta khalaqtanī wa anā abduka wa anā alā 'a-hdika wa wa'dika ma'stata' atu, a'ūdhu bika min

sharri mā ṣana‘atu abū‘u laka bini‘matika alayya wa abū‘u bidhambī fa’agfirli fa’innahu lā ya yaghfiru dhunūba illa anta.

The leader of all the prayer formula of repentance according to prophet Muhamad is: “O God! You are my lord. There is no god except you. You created me and I am your servant. I abide by your covenant and promise as best as I can. I seek refuge in You from the mischief of what I have wrought. I acknowledge unto You Your favour which You have bestowed upon me. I also confess my inequity; so forgive me for none forgives sins except You.”

Another way of seeking Allah’s forgiveness is “I seek Allah’s forgiveness whom there is no God except Him, the Living, the Eternal unto Him I turn penitent.”

Many adh-kār, du‘āu and many forms of istighfār are contained in the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet. The interested people should obtain them from the two sources. They may also move close to ahlul-Adh-Dhikr (muslim spiritual mentors) based on the Quranic verse “... Fas’alū ‘ahladh-dhikri in kuntum lā ta’lamūn (Q 16: 43). “... so ask of those who know the Scripture (the people of adh-dhikr) if you do not know.”

Ṣabr (Patience)

Patience is extolled in Islam and it is the practice of Prophet Muhammad. It is not only the practice of Prophet Muhammad and his companions but also it is the practice of other prophets too. If a person is able to accept all the calamities that come his way with fortitude, bear all the hardships and challenges of life and remain the same without losing his temper, he is patient. Prophet Muhammad and his followers demonstrated a high level of perseverance. For instance, when the Prophet was calling people to Islam, he and his followers were persecuted. Prophet Muhammad was physically assaulted and stoned at Taif through persecution. Despite that, he prayed to Allah to forgive them and also guide them to the right path of Islam. He was stoned by his people and thrown out of Makkah.

A big stone was placed on Bilal's chest and he was dragged on the scorching sand because of his acceptance of Islam. Summayah was killed because of her faith. The Prophet was patient in the face of difficulties particularly when he lost one tooth during the battle of Uhud. He never abused or cursed people no matter what their level of persecution against him and his followers. He was patient when he and his followers were not allowed to enter Makkah.

Patience is so important that the prophet is reported to have said: "Patience is half of faith." "... And Allah is with the patient" (Q 2: 249). 'You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the scripture before (Jesus and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners with Allah, but if you persevere patiently and become pious – then verily that will be a determining factor in all affairs and that is of the matters (worthy) of resolve (which you must hold on with all your efforts) (Q 3: 186). 'And if you punish (your enemy, O you believers in the oneness of Allah), then punish them with the like of that which you were afflicted! But if you endure patiently, verily it is better for the patient. And endure you patiently (O Muhammad), your patience is not but from Allah ... and grieve not over them (polytheists and pagans, etc.) and be not distressed because of what they plot" (Q 16: 122-123).

"And be patient (O Muhammad) with what they say, and keep away from them in a good way" (Q 7: 10). "And certainly, we shall test you with something of hunger, fear, loss of wealth, lives and fruits. But give glad tidings to the patient (Q 2: 155). Patience is necessary in doing compulsory things ordained by Allah such as Salat, Zakat, Sawm and Hajj, etc. in keeping oneself away from the prohibited things such as Zina (Adultery and Fornication), theft, worshipping other deities beside Allah and telling lies. It is also needed in bearing dangers, difficulties, calamities, loss of loved ones, works and properties to mention but a few. If Muslims can be

patient in all situations, Allah is pleasant with the patient people (Q 2: 153 177, 249; Q 3: 17,146; Q 8: 46, 66; Q 6: 34; Q 12: 90; Q 16: 96; Q 2: 45, etc.).

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Islamic Ideology and the West

Islam is a verbal noun derived from an Arabic word, “*aslama*” which means peace and total submission to the will of Almighty Allah. In the same vein, Muslim is *ismu al-fā’il* (a doer of an action) and is also derived from the Arabic word “*aslama*” meaning one who relates to others in peace and submits totally to the will of Allah. The name was first pronounced by Prophet Ibrahim (Q 22: 78). A Muslim is he who believes in Allah and submits totally to His will (Q 2: 112).

Ideology means a closely organized system of beliefs, values and ideas that forms the basis of a social, economic, or political philosophy or programme. It is also a set of beliefs, values, and opinions that shape the way a person or a group such as a social class thinks, acts and understands the world (Encarta 2009). Some beliefs and practices in Islam are in conflict with the ideology of the West. Some areas of disagreement between Islam and the West are discussed in the following sections one after the other. Relevant quotations were cited for further reading.

Prophet Muhammad encouraged every Muslim to seek a lawful livelihood for himself and his family. A Muslim must not refuse any lawful occupation in as much as it is Shari’ah-compliant. In Islam, it is honourable to work to earn a living and ignoble to depend on begging for a living. The Prophet is reported to have promoted the dignity of labour in some of his sayings with a view to alleviating poverty and discouraging begging unless a person is one of the three people that could beg as mentioned by the Prophet in his

Hadith. The Prophet said “begging is only for three people: one who is in grinding poverty, one who is seriously in debt, or one who is responsible for compensation and finds it difficult to pay” (Al-Hafiz, 1996). In Islam, there are some jobs which a Muslim must not do. A Muslim should not work in brewery. He should not sell it and be an agent in the firms dealing with non Shari‘ah-compliant products and services such as pork and liquor unless it is through darūr (necessity). In the West, all the above-mentioned jobs and the likes are not only allowed but they have legal backing. For instance, prostitution is legally allowed. The prostitutes are even given licences to practise prostitution in some countries such as Germany, i.e. it is legalised. Prostitution is condemned in its totality in Islam as contained in the Qur’ān (Q 23:17) and the Sunnah. It is zinā (adultery or fornication). People can say with pride: this is my husband or my wife. No one will be proud of saying it loud at least in Islam and Africa: this is my prostitute.

Conventional Banking and Islamic Banking

The main differences between the conventional financial system and Islamic finance are the charging of interest and engaging in non-Shari‘ah compliant products and services. They are prohibited by Allah in Islam. Both are allowed in as much as they are viable, profitable and in line with the constitution and other statutes of a country.

Mode of Dressing in Islam and the West

Both males and females are enjoined to dress modestly and decently in Islam. In Islam, as regards women, all parts of their body must be covered except their face and hands based on the Hadith of the Prophet: “Aisah reported that Asmaa’ daughter of Abubakr, came to see the Prophet with a thin cloth over her. The Prophet turned aside from her saying: “O Asmaa’ when a woman reaches puberty, it is not good that any part of her (body) should be seen except this and

this” (pointing to his face and hands) (Al-Hafiz, 1996). Allah says: *Tell the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will be most conducive to their purity ... (and) verily Allah is aware of all that they do.*

And tell the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty and not display their charms (in public) beyond what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; hence, let them draw their head coverings over their bosoms. And let them not display (more of) their charms to any but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband’s fathers, or their sons, their husband’s sons, or their brothers, or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their womenfolk, or those whom they rightfully possess, or such male attendants as are beyond all sexual desire, or children that are as yet unaware of women’s nakedness; and let them not swing their legs (in walking) so as to draw attention to their hidden charms. And (always), O you who believe – all of you – turn unto Allah in repentance, so that you might attain to a happy state (Q 24: 30- 31).

Islam recommends modest dressing habit as well as chastity for both males and females. Dressing well reduces the temptation of staring at the opposite sex or using the eyes for seduction, and this in turn will reduce unlawful sexual relations. The adoption of modest dressing preserves the dignity of woman and man. Women must avoid putting on back-less, ‘body-hugs’ ‘hot pants’ ‘mini skirt’ ‘transparent clothes’ and ‘top-less’ dresses outside their bedrooms. Avoiding these forms of dressing outside may prevent ‘the area-boys’, the rapists and their likes from approaching them. Some non-Muslims also appreciate Islamic modes of dressing. Whenever a Muslim woman in her hijab is in a car or a bus, she is appreciated. In fact, some females who dress in an un-Islamic way also appreciate Islamic mode of dressing. If a woman is not beautiful, hijāb will make her attractive. If she is beautiful, her hijāb will make her more beautiful. In relation to this statement, Alfred Hitchcock, the famous movie producer said, “The Eastern woman (Muslim women) was

very attractive by herself and this attraction gave her tremendous power. But by taking great steps in bringing herself on a par with her Western sister, the Eastern woman has gradually abandoned the hijāb; and this has gradually decreased her attractiveness [and hence her power].” In the West, there is full freedom to put on any forms of dress.

Choosing a Partner

Muslims are to consider their religion, Islam when choosing their partners. In the West, no instruction is given on this issue. Muslims should not abort their pregnancy without genuine reason (Q17: 31; Q6: 151). Abortion is the style of life of many people that imitate the life style of the West.

Rights of a Female Child During Childhood

Female children are mentioned first in the Qur’an when Allah is calling our attention to His blessings with regard to giving birth to children. He states: “To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female children to whomever He wills and bestows male children to whomever He wills” (Q 42: 49). The Prophet is reported to have said: “He who trains a boy trains one person but he who trains a girl has trained the whole world.” No such words of encouragement are in the West

Marriage in Islam and the West

Islam allows marriage between man and woman only. In fact, there are also some restrictions/prohibitions on marriage between man and woman let alone marriage between the same sex. A Muslim cannot just marry any man or woman. Allah lists about fourteen women a Muslim man should not marry and the equivalent prohibitions exist for females towards their male relatives as contained in Q4: 22-24.

And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way.

Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who gave suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in – but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them (to marry their daughters), the wives of your sons who spring from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has passed; verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Also (forbidden are) women already married except those (captives and slaves) whom your right hands possess. Thus has Allah ordained for you. All others are lawful, provided you seek (them in marriage) with *mahr* (bridal gift given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) from your property, desiring chastity, not committing illegal sexual intercourse, so with those of whom you have enjoyed sexual relations, give them their *mahr* as prescribed; but if after a *mahr* is prescribed, you agree mutually (to give more), there is no sin on you. Surely, Allah is Ever-All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Q 4: 22-24)

And do not marry *al-mushrikāt* (idolatresses, etc.) till they believe (worship Allah alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) *Mushrikah* (idolatress, etc.), even though she pleases you. And give

not (your daughters) in marriage to *al-mushrikūn* till they believe (in Allah alone) and verily, a believing slave is better than a (free) mushrik (idolater), etc., even though he pleases you. Those (*al-mushrikūn*) invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave, and makes His *Ayāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelation etc) clear to mankind that they may remember” (Q 2: 221).

In the West, the case is not like that. Virtually all forms of marriage such as marriage between man and woman, gay, lesbianism, marriage with dogs and other animals exist and have legal backings. In Islam, homosexual acts are not only sinful but also punishable. Allah describes in the Qur’an how He punished the people of Lot for being the first generation to practise homosexuality. “What! Of all creatures, do you approach males and leave the spouses whom your Lord has created for you? Indeed, you are people transgressing (all limits)!” (Ash Shu`ara’- Q 26: 165-166) “And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved on their account and did not know how to protect them. He said, ‘This is a day of distress.’ And his people, who had long since been practising abominations, came rushing towards him. He said, ‘O my people, here are my daughters. They are purer for you, so fear Allah and do not disgrace me in front of my guests. Is there not a single upright man among you?’ They said, ‘You know well that we have no right to your daughters, and certainly you know what we want.’ He said, ‘If only I had strength to resist you or had some powerful support!’ Said (the angels) ‘O Lot, truly, we are messengers of your Lord; they shall not reach you...’” (Hud: 77-81). Allah rained on them a shower of brimstone; and Lūt and his followers were safe from the punishment.

It is the practice of Muslims to get married. In Islam, nikāh (marriage) is an institution that has certain rules and regulations which guide both males and females who want to engage each other in marriage. It gives each other companionship, each showing

affection, care, understanding, tolerance towards the other. Through marriage, they get sexual satisfaction, reduction of tension and rewards. It makes the continuance of the human race possible. The first condition for the validity of marriage in Islam is taradī (mutual consent of the couple – offer and acceptance).

The second is mahr (marriage gift) which can be in cash or in kind. It is mainly for the bride and not for her family. For instance, the Prophet gave about 500 dirhams or less as mahr; a piece of gold that has the weight of a date-stone was given by Abdur-Rahman b. Awf as mahr; Another companion of prophet Muhammad gave a pair of shoes as mahr. The conversion of Abu Talhah into Islam was used as Mahr for a Muslim woman called Umm Sulaym. This occurred when Abu Talhah proposed marriage to Umm Sulaym and the latter was interested but could not accept because a Muslim woman should not marry a non-Muslim. She told him: “By Allah, someone like you would not be refused, but you are a kāfir (an unbeliever) and I am a Muslim, and it is not lawful for me to marry you. If you should accept Islam, that would be my mahr, and I would not ask of you anything else.” So he became a Muslim and that was her mahr.” After his conversion, he joined the Prophet in the spread of Islam. Teaching the Qur’ān to a wife-to-be was also used as mahr during the time of the Prophet to mention a few. The corollary of these different forms of mahr is that mahr should be simple and affordable. Waliyy (Marriage Guardianship – “Marry them with the permission of their people” -Q 4: 25), at least two very reliable male witnesses and Walimah (wedding meal-not obligatory but strongly recommended)) are other conditions.

A wife must be obedient to her husband in all that is fair and does not involve disobedience to Allah and His messenger. The husband must provide good and lawful food, clothing, housing, etc. for his wife and children. It is praiseworthy and commendable before Allah if a woman who is financially capable assists her husband at home.

There are some women who do not consider their husbands to be in waterloo by marrying them and do not make life difficult for them. A few women are so good to the extent that their husbands would leave the affairs of home for them and they would manage them efficiently, effectively, religiously and without arrogance to their husbands. History has shown that children of such women are always great. The corollary of these statements is that women who do not claim all the rights by making life difficult for their husbands would have their names and those of their children written in gold. Marriage is commanded in the Qur'an and it is the practice of the Prophet, i.e. it is his Sunnah. So Muslims who are able to should get married.

A man may marry one wife. He may also choose to marry more than one. If a person chooses the latter then he is practising polygyny. It must be mentioned that the book of Islam, the Qur'an is the only religious that instructs men to have one wife or marry more than one, i.e. two, three or four. The limit for polygyny is four. In other cultures and religions, men could marry scores of wives; some could marry hundreds. In all the religions, no one gives the option. Religious scriptures such as the Vedas, the Ramayan, the Gita, the Talmud or the Bible do not have the option (marrying only one). The Christian church and the Hindu priests were the ones who restricted the number of wives a man can have to one. It must also be stated that many religious personalities married more than one wife such as Abraham (3 wives), Solomon (hundreds of wives), Krishna and King da shrat, the father of Rama married more than one wife. Marriage acts such as 1954 Hindu Marriage Act were passed or being passed to restrict man to one wife. For many unmarried women, they can either marry married men or become public property if they could not get men who have married. Getting married to married men protects the modesty of women (Zakir Naik: 7-9).

It is also allowed to practise monogamy and polygyny (marrying more than one wife at a time) in Islam. However, Allah puts a limit

to the issue of polygamy because many past societies have practised it limitlessly. A man cannot marry more than four wives at a time. A pious Muslim woman cannot practise polyandry (i.e. having more than one husband at the same time) because of identification of both parents and other reasons best known to Allah. "And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry many other women of your choice, two, three, or four but if you fear you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then marry one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice" (Q 4: 3). Islam frowns at concubinage (regular sexual connection with a female who do not hold the legal status of a wife), adultery and prostitution. In other words, keeping a woman in the position of a wife without marrying her is un-Islamic. It must be mentioned that some people frowns at polygyny because many people misuse it. The misuse of polygamy can be corrected. It is not peculiar to polygamy. Other aspects of law are also being misused. If there is a misuse, we should find solutions to the problems. It is not the right solution to cancel what Allah allows. Many women consider it barbaric. They believe that it robs women in a polygamous family the enjoyment of marriage. Women in a polygamous can enjoy better than women in monogamous family if they put the following guideline into consideration.

Guidelines for Enjoying Polygamous Home

- ❖ Accept Allah's injunctions and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad without an exemption. Be a complete Muslim (Q 2: 112; Q 2: 208)
- ❖ Consider your relationship with your husband as a single entity. Do not nurse grudge against his other marriage.
- ❖ Make yourself happy. Take the other wife as your friend.
- ❖ Consider his other wife as part of you because all human beings have the same origin. If you hate the other wife you hate

yourself. In the same vein, if you like and love the other wife, you like and love yourself (Q 4: 1).

- ❖ Avoid using abusive words. Do not curse your husband and his other wife.
- ❖ All the parties (husband and wives) should fear Allah who knows their *sirru* (secret known to a person alone), *najwā* (private conversations known to those people in that group) and *gayb* (knowledge of the unseen known to Allah alone) (Q 9: 78)
- ❖ If one lacks understanding, there will be a problem in one's marriage (monogamy or polygamy). Understanding is key.
- ❖ Many people believe husbands benefit from polygamy to the detriment of the wives. The reality on ground is opposite. It is definitely very, very difficult for them. They must fulfil the rights of their wives. They must provide for them and support them financially and emotionally. They have to share their time between them. If there is a dispute, they must settle it. They must be just and fair to them. Doing all these attract rewards.
- ❖ They should remember that if they fail to treat them equally, they will be raised on the Day of Judgement with half of their bodies paralysed (Prophet Muhammad said it).
- ❖ If a person has one wife and he is not fair and just to her, he will be punished. In the same vein, if a wife is not fair to her husband, she will be punished. Wives should remember that prophet Muhammad said a large number of women were in hell when he was shown hell during his ascension. Therefore, they must work towards gaining Al-Jannah by accepting Allah's injunctions.
- ❖ Polygamy gives wives less work than in monogamy. The wives help each other or one another.
- ❖ When a man takes second wife, it does not mean he does not love the first wife. It is like when a mother gives birth to her second child, she still loves and like the first child. When a good

Muslim marries more than one wife, he truly and sincerely wants to love, protect and provide for his wives. Love is infinite and cannot be shared. Therefore, the man loves them individually without sharing the love. If he does not want to love them, it is easy financially and emotionally for him to divorce one before marrying another.

- ❖ As a wife, you need time for yourself. On the day or the period your husband is not with you, consider the period as a chance to do other forms of *Ibādāt* and *adh-kār* (other modes of worship and remembrance of Allah). You can read about Rabiah Al Adawiyah's devotion to Allah. You can read about the lives of the prophets and saints how they used their times. Emulate them. If you are a good writer, take the opportunity to write books that will be *ṣadaqatun jaariyah* for you after your death. You should use the period to enjoy things which married women find them difficult to make time for. If you engage yourself, you will realise the time of missing him has vanished. Your free period is almost zero. During your time with your husband, make him and yourself happy. Avoid asking about his relationship with other wife.
- ❖ Do not consider the other wife as your rival. She is your friend.
- ❖ Do not feel threatened as a result of the presence of the other wife.
- ❖ If your husband is not around, interact with the other wife. If he is around, the wives should do what a monogamous couple do
- ❖ Avoid jealousy. If you do not have something and the other wife has the thing, find a lawful way of having it if you really want it. This world is ephemeral. Think of death. It reduces your wants. Focus on your needs.
- ❖ If you feel he is not showing you enough love and does not give you enough time, talk to him. Do not fight the other wife.

It is not her problem. That can never eliminate or solve the perceived problem. If you are giving some hints on why enough love is not being shown to you, adjust, my sister. It is better for you. The husband also should adjust.

- ❖ Polygamy should not be blamed for the failure of marriage. A large number of monogamous families have been failing. Many polygamous families are happier and more successful than monogamous ones. Many monogamous are nothing to write home about. Polygamy does not need to be feared if the parties follow the Quran and the Sunnah.
- ❖ Do not be arrogant. Say sorry sincerely if you have made a mistake. Only Allah is perfect.
- ❖ Please, appreciate whatever you have been given by your husband and other people, i.e. say ‘Thank you’ if you have received a benefit from your husband and others.

In conclusion, only excelling in virtue, piety, spiritual and ethical qualities can make people, males or females stand out from one another (Q 49: 13). It is left to men and women to strive and achieve that kind of excellence.

Adoption of Marriage Names in Islam and the Western Society

In Islam, a woman still bears her father’s name or maiden name after marriage. Islam ordains that every child must be called by his real father’s name. If a person’s father is not known, he must be called a brother in faith (Q 33: 45). Some early Muslim women who maintained their fathers’ names are Khadijah bint Khuwaylid (wife of Prophet Muhammad), Fatimah bint Rasulullahi (wife of Aliyy bn Abi Talib) and Aishah bint Abubakr (wife of Prophet Muhammad). In the Western society, a woman has to drop her father’s name and adopt her husband’s family name. Many of them publish their change of names in newspapers.

Codes of Conduct for Eating in Islam and the West

Hands must be washed before and after eating and drinking, as well as after using the toilet according to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Muslims should say Bismillah before he starts eating. If he forgets, he should say it at the end or before he finishes his food. He should also thank Allah at the end. Prophet Muhammad never criticized food at all. If he liked it, he would eat it, and if he did not like it, he would leave it. He would not say anything (Hadith narrated by al-Bukhaari, number 3,370 and Muslim number 2,064). Sometimes he would praise food, saying, "What a good food is vinegar" (Hadith narrated by Muslim, number 2,052). Muslim should eat from that which is in front of him in the dish and should urge their guest to eat as generous hosts do. Muslims should divide his stomach into three: one for food, one for drinks and the last for air, i.e. breathing. They should eat with their right hands and not with their left hands. Prophet said, "The Shaytaan eats with his left hand and drinks with his left hand." (Hadith narrated by Muslim, number 2,020). This implies that eating with the left hand is haram because it is the imitation of Shaytaan. Prohibited foods in the Qur'an are stated in the Quran. Allah says, "Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which hath been invoked the name of other than Allah, that which hath been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by being gored to death, that which hath been (partly) eaten by a wild animal unless you are able to slaughter it (in due form), that which is sacrificed on stone (altars); (forbidden) also is the division (of meat) by raffling with arrows: that is impiety. This day have those who reject faith given up all hope of your religion: yet fear them not but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But if any is forced by hunger, with no inclination to transgression, Allah is indeed Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (Q 5: 3) "... But (even so),

if a person is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, your Lord is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” (Q6:145). Therefore, sausage rolls consisting of un-slaughtered meats and pork are unlawful. Muslims are required to be vigilant and careful when using any of the packed foods. Ingredients and preservatives from animals that are unlawful Islamically are also unlawful. In the West, all these types are allowed.

Drinks in Islam and the West

Allah says, “Allah has accursed alcohol, its growers, those who squeeze it (from the grapes), its drinkers, its servers, its buyers, its sellers, those who live on its income, its transporter, and the one to whom it is being transported.” It is a booming business in the West.

Sleeping Habit in Islam and the West

Sleep is one of the signs of Allah. Allah says, “And among His Signs is your sleep by night and by day, and your seeking of His Bounty. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who listen” (Q 30: 23]. “And it is He Who makes the night a covering for you, and the sleep (as) a repose, and makes the day”(Q 25: 47). “See they not that We have made the night for them to rest therein, and the day sight-giving? Verily, in this are Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) for the people who believe” (Q 27: 86). “And We have made your sleep as a thing for rest. And We have made the night as a covering (through its darkness). And We have made the day for livelihood”(Q 78: 9-11). It is undesirable to sleep between dawn (when the time for Fajr salat sets in) and sunrise, between Maghrib and Isha, and after Asr prayer. In fact, it is narrated from Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) that sleeping during the morning hours is inauspicious and lessens livelihood. However, it is recommended to have a short nap before Dhuhur prayers during summer. In the West, no such instructions are available.

Greeting in Islam and the West

Greeting in Islam is *Salāmu alaykum* (peace be unto you). The response should be “*Wa Alaykumus-salaam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*” (And peace and mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you). Abu Hurairah said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say, “The rights a Muslim has over another Muslim are five.” He was asked, “What are they?” He replied, “When he meets him, he should greet him. When he gives him an invitation, he should accept. When he asks him for advice, he should give him good counsel. When he sneezes and praises Allah, he should wish him mercy. When he is ill, he should visit him. When he dies, he should accompany him” (Bukhari). ‘Aisha reported, “The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Aishah! This is Jibril who sends you greetings.” I said, “And peace be upon him and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. You see what I do not see.” By that she meant the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. (Bukhari). Allah says in the Qur’an (4: 86) “When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allāh is Ever a Careful Account Taker of all things.” Abu Hurayra said, “The most miserly of people is the person who is miserly with the greeting. The one who is cheated of good is the one who does not return it.” Al-Bara’ ibn ‘Azib said, “Part of the full greeting is to shake your brother’s hand” (Bukhari).

According to ‘Abdu’r-Rahman ibn Shibl, the Prophet is reported to have said, “The person riding should greet the person on foot. The person on foot should greet the person who is seated. The smaller group should greet the large. Whoever answers the greeting that is for him. Whoever does not answer it, has nothing.” (Bukhari).

Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “The young person greets the old person, the person walking greets the person sitting down, and the small group greets the large group.”(Bukhari). The Prophet is

reported to have said ... When there are two people walking, the better of them is the one who gives the greeting first.” (Bukhari). Ibn ‘Umar said that al-Agharr (who was a man from Muzayna and had been a Companion of the Prophet) was owed some measures of dates by a man from the Banu ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf who came to him many times. He said, “I went to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and he sent Abu Bakr as-Siddiq with me.” He continues, “Everyone we met greeted us. Abu Bakr said, ‘Don’t you know that when people give the greeting before us, they have the reward? Give the greeting before them and you will have the reward’”(Bukhari).

Building Approval by Neighbours and Town Planning Authorities (Local, State and Federal) in Islam

In Islam, a person needs to get building approval from his neighbour first before seeking approval of his building plan from Town Planning Authority based on the Hadith of the Prophet on the rights of the neighbours as stated below:

- Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) on the rights of the neighbour, said: “It is to help him if he asks your help, to lend him if he asks to borrow from you, to satisfy his needs if he becomes poor, to console him if he is visited by an affliction, to congratulate him if he is met with good fortune, to visit him if he becomes ill, to attend his funeral if he dies, not to make your house higher than his without his consent lest you deny him the breeze, to offer him fruit when you buy some or to take it to your home secretly if you do not do that, nor to send out your children with it so as not to upset his children, nor to bother him by the tempting smell of your food unless you send him some.”
- Muslims should be good to their neighbours. Who are their neighbours? The Prophet defined neighbourhood thus: A Muslim must be good to his neighbours, no matter their religion. But the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

said a “neighbour” is not just the one next door but includes all those up to forty houses in all directions. An Ansar (emigrant) came to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and said that he has recently purchased a house in a particular area and that his nearest person was such that he had no hope of any goodness from him and that he felt unsafe from his mischief. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) told Imam Ali (as), Salman Al-Farsi, Abu Dhar Ghaffari and Miqdad ibn Aswad to go to the Mosque and announce: “He is not a believer whose neighbour is unsafe from his mischief.” They announced it three times and then Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) pointed towards forty doors to his right and forty to the left indicating that forty houses in every direction constitute ones neighbourhood. One is obliged to observe their rights. ‘Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, Al-Masākin (the poor), the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess...’ (Q 4: 36). Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) once said, “Jibril (Gabriel) kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until I thought he would assign a share of inheritance (to them).”

In the West, the moment a person has secured building approval from Town Planning Authorities (local, state and federal), he can start erecting whatever he likes without considering the interest of his neighbours.

Islam and the West on a Dying Person and after his Death

“Every person is going to taste death, and you shall only be paid fully your reward on the resurrection day; then whoever is removed far away from the fire and is made to enter the garden, he indeed has attained the object; and the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities.” (Q 3: 185).

It's a matter of obligatory precaution that one should move the dying person in the direction of the qiblah during the last moments of his life. This is to be done by placing him on his back with his feet pointing towards the qiblah as though if he sits up, his face would be facing in that direction. It is recommended to read and ask the dying person to repeat the testament of belief (shahādah) concerning the Oneness of God and the faith in Prophet Muhammad (PBOH).

It is recommended to close the eyes of the dead person, their mouth, stretch their arms along their sides, straighten their legs, cover the body with a sheet of cloth, recite the Qur'an, and light up the room in which they lived. It is disliked to leave the corpse alone.

The person washing the corpse must be of the same gender as the dead person. So, a male should wash a male corpse, and a female should wash a female corpse. However, husband and wife are allowed to perform ablution to one another; it is better that the washing be done with the body covered with a sheet of cloth.

If a person of the same gender is not available, then, based on obligatory precaution, those of the opposite gender who are mahram to the deceased can perform it. Mahram means those relations with whom marriage is forbidden because of blood relationship or nursing (suckling) relationship or marriage, like brother and sister (or son-in-law and mother-in-law).

The body should be placed on its right side with the face towards the qiblah. It has been narrated from the Prophet (s.a.w.) that he said, "No time comes upon the dead person more difficult than the first night (of burial). Therefore, have mercy on your dead ones by giving charity (on their behalf). If one does not have anything (to give in charity), one should pray two rak'ah for them: in the first rak'ah, after al-Hamd, recite Ayatu 'l-kursi; and in the second rak'ah, after al-Hamd, recite surah al-Qadr ten times. After salam, say: "Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammadin wa 'āli Muhammadin wasallam, wab'ath thawābahā ilā qabri ... (name the deceased person)."

In the Western society, there are no provisions for all these noble acts in Islam. If the pain is too much for a person, some of them may even give the suffering person some drugs that would terminate his life. This is not acceptable in Islam. In fact, a suffering person or a dying person must be taken care of as if he would survive it. Muslims should continue taking care of the person medically and with prayers until Allah takes his life. Most of the time, their dead ones are taken to mortuary and they may be there for many days or months or even a year. This act is not acceptable in Islam. Many of them do not believe in the life after death let alone prepare for it. The West should not be copied in this regard. Muslims should make their opinions, feelings and inclinations subservient to whatever Allah and his Messenger have decided because “It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Apostle, to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path” (Q 33: 36). A Muslim should not say “I have my own opinion, and I know what is good for me. So, I can do whatever I like” This attitude is befitting for unbelievers (kāfirūn) and hypocrites (munāfiqūn). Remembering the dead whose deeds have come to an end and are unable to wipe out their bad deeds or do more good deeds will make us follow Allah’s injunctions in all our affairs.

Inheritance and Will in Islam and the West

There are variations in the rights of inheritance between man and woman due to the differences which exist between the financial responsibilities of man and those of women. Man receives two shares while woman gets one only. There are many reasons for the variations. Man is responsible financially for the complete maintenance of the whole family, wife, children and other dependants. A person can only share 1/3 of his property. The remaining parts can only be given to the heir according to the sharing formula stated in the Qur’an (Q 4: 6-14, 176; Q 5: 105-108, etc.). Allah who is the ultimate owner

of everything has assigned how the wealth He puts in the custody of a person after his death be shared. Man or his heir is not permitted to dispose of his estate according to his wishes and desires. With his death, his ownership ceases. The ownership moves to his heirs automatically. Their divinely-fixed shares should not be tampered with. The consequence of changing the Shari'ah laws of inheritance or tampering with them is hell on the Day of Reckoning. It is a pity some men and women would share all their property before they die. This is a great sin. The Real Owner, Allah (Q 20: 6) has given the heirs their shares in the Qur'an. If one dies without giving the other living partner any share, one will face the consequence on the Day of Judgement.

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A Guide to Will Writing in Islam

The Last Will and Testament of

Declaration: I,, do hereby make, publish and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament.

I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah (Lā ilāha illā llāhu), the One, the Merciful, Creator of the Heavens and the Earth and all therein, God of all the prophets (Nuh, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, etc.; peace be upon them). He is One God and He has no partner. And I bear witness that Prophet Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger and the last of all the Prophets, peace be upon them all. I bear witness that Paradise is true, and Hell is true. And I bear witness that the coming of the Day of Judgement is true; there is no doubt about it. Allah, Who is exalted above all deficiency and imperfection, will surely resurrect the dead of all the generations of mankind. My assets shall be divided as instructed in the Holy Qur'an (such as Q 4:11, 12).

Practice of the Prophet's Companion on the Writing of a Will

There is no specific format of writing will in Islam. What is important is that the will must speak for itself, i.e. it must be clear and not ambiguous. It is the practice of the Prophet's companions to start their will thus:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is the instruction of X (name of the person writing the will) the son of Y (name of his father) that he testified that nobody

deserved worship but Allah. He is alone and He has no associate. He also testified that Muhammad was His servant and apostle. He testified that the appointed time shall no doubt come to pass and that God will cause the dead to resurrect. The testator instructed his people who survived him to fear Allah and keep alive the bonds of brotherhood among themselves. They should obey Allah and follow the footsteps of His apostle if they are faithful. The words he left behind for them are the same as those left behind by Prophet Ibrahim and Ya'qub for their children. God has chosen religion for you and ensure that death overtakes you only as Muslims. He then states his will.

Conditions of Testator

I am hale and hearty while writing this will. I am physically sound and emotionally stable when I was writing this will. I am not under coercion and or duress from the time of writing this will till the end of the time I finished writing it.

Words of Advice

I want to advise the people mentioned below that they should heed the pieces of advice I want to give here because whatever they hear during that period is likely to have impact on them forever.

To my wife/wives

I want to thank my wife,..... (say, Muneebah), for the support she rendered particularly in the areas such as paying school fees of our children, building of mosque, taking care of my aged mother and my sick sister/brother/friend/any other person, etc. I pray Allah will accept all your deeds as ibaadat and grant you success here and the hereafter. I also urge you to maintain your behaviours and good deeds, and let them be for Allah's sake. Continue enduring the misbehaviour of my relatives and other wives. Allah will reward you abundantly.

I also want to thank my wife, (say, Mujeebah), for taking care of our children. However, Mujeebah, you need to change your behaviour. Please, control your anger and stop abusing and cursing whenever you have an issue with another person.

To all my children, Let Prophet Muhammad be your model. Inherit not only my wealth but also my deeds and behaviours. Be generous and do everything for Allah's sake. Be prayerful. Do adhkar heavily.

To all my relatives,

Emulate Prophet Muhammad in your deeds and behaviours. Let your deeds and behaviours be for Allah's sake.

Tell(say, Muneeb) to stop telling lies and be of good behaviours.

Tell(say, Lateef) to increase his ibaadat, etc.

To all Muslims, submit totally to the will of our Creator and prepare for the final return to Him. Do not preoccupy yourselves with my death. Pray for me and other dead Muslims. Do not consume other people's property or get to a position wrongly by using your smartness. Your smartness will become madness on the Last Hour. Allah says: "O mankind, fear your Lord. Indeed, the convulsion of the (final) Hour is a terrible thing. On the Day you see it every nursing mother will be distracted from that (child) she was nursing, and every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people (appearing) intoxicated while they are not intoxicated; but the punishment of Allah is severe" (Q 22: 2). A Muslim widow is required to observe 'iddatul wafat (period of waiting) for a period of four months 10 days. Other relatives are to mourn for only three days. Wailing and excessive lamentation is forbidden in Islam. My biodata will guide the distribution of my assets and the payment of my debts.

Biodata

Name of the Testator:.....

Address of the Testator:

Home Address:.....

Office address:.....

Local Government:..... State.....

Nationality..... Sex

Marital Status:..... Mobile No..... Email.....

Father and Mother

Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	Email	Relationship
					Father
					Mother

Wife/Wives

Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	Email	Relationship

Husband

Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	Email	Relationship

Sons

Serial	Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone number	Email	Relationship
1						Son
2						Son
3						Son

You can add more rows if they are more than the ones drawn.

Daughters

Serial	Name/s of beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	Email	Relationship
1						Daughter
2						Daughter
3						Daughter
4						Daughter

You can add more rows if they are more than the ones drawn.

Brothers/ Sisters/Son/Daughter /Grandfather/Grandmother, etc.

Serial	Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone Number	Email	Relationship
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

You can add more rows if they are more than the ones drawn.

My Appointed Trustees and Administrators (who will distribute my wealth in an Islamic way to the specified beneficiaries)

Serial	Name/s of beneficiaries	Date of Birth	Address	Phone number	Email	Relationship
1						
2						
3						
4						

They should serve without bond in line with the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

You can add more rows if they are more than the ones in the table.

1/3 of my Wealth

Note: My will should not include sharing my asset to those that have been given divinely share in the Qur'an because Allah has given each heir his share in the Qur'an. Please, follow Allah's sharing in the Qur'an. To my heirs, whatever is your share, I pray Allah to put abundant blessings on them and assist you to use them to serve Allah. However, before sharing, set aside maximum of 1/3 of my wealth for the following who have not been given any share in the Qur'an. I have the authority of the Prophet to share 1/3 of my property to those that are not entitled to inherit my wealth. If the property is small, it is better to ignore the will of 1/3. Here are the details of those that should benefit from the share. The following are to be included while considering the beneficiaries: names, addresses, relationship and descriptions of beneficiaries of 1/3.

Brothers/Sisters/Son/Daughter/Grandmother/Muslim Organisations, Muslim Charity Organisations, My Mosque, etc.

Name/s of Beneficiaries	Date of Birth (if it is known)	Address	Phone Number (if it known)	Email (if it is known)	Relationship	Amount/ Property

You can add more rows if they are more than the rows in the table.

Validity of Altering Will if it contains Injustice

“But if one fears from the bequeather (some) error or sin and corrects that which is between them (i.e. the concerned parties), there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is forgiving and merciful” (Q 2: 182). On the whole, we should not allow our sentiments to affect our relationship with our heirs. Allah’s general command to the believers is to be fair even towards those whom they hate. Allah says: “O you who believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a person prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is (fully) Aware of what you do” (Q 5: 8).

List of a Person’s Assets and Liabilities

Both known and unknown assets and liabilities to the heirs should be listed here by the testator. After the burial expenses (which are limited to the cost of digging the grave, washing the dead body, the cloth to wrap the body and carrying the dead body to the grave), the liabilities are paid before honouring the will (sharing of 1/3) in Islam. The fourth stage is to share the assets based on the stated sharing formula in the Qur’an to the specified heirs as contained in the Qur’an. It should be noted that flamboyant burial ceremony using the deceased’s funds to finance is not in line with the Sharī’ah. Extravagant expenses must be avoided. Personal funds to finance such flamboyant burial ceremony as it is done in some parts of the world, e.g. Southwest Nigeria, Southeast Nigeria, South-south Nigeria, etc. can be used to finance beneficial projects such as digging boreholes, feeding the poor, creating jobs for the poor, sponsoring the poor’s education, building mosques, schools and hospitals.

My Assets

Nature	S/No.	Description	Location/ Address	Remarks	Percentage of Ownership of the Testator	Market Value (If it is known)
Land, e.g.	1	2 acres	Imoba, Okeho, Oyo State, Nigeria	Jointly owned with Alhaji Jadeed	50% (1 acre)	₦ 4million
Houses	2	3 plots	Bola, Ojoo, Ibadan	Fully owned	100% (3plots)	₦12 million
Vehicles						
Furniture & fittings						
Business enterprises						
Instrument equipment						
Shares						
Trust (testator's property with another person)						
Credits (goods sold or services provided on credits)						
Bank accounts						
Cash						
Others						

My Liabilities / Debts

Nature	Serial No.	Amount	Owner	Address of the Owner/ Tel.
Money, e.g.	1	₦ 3 Thousand	Alhaji Kareem	Onimoba Compound, Okeho, Oyo State , Nigeria 080.....
Materials				

Trusts

Allah says in the Qur'an: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and seeing" (Q 4: 58).

Properties entrusted to me should be returned fully to the rightful owners

Nature	Serial/ No.	Description	Owner/ Tel.	Location/ Address
Land, e.g.	1	1 plot	Mr Jameel 080...	Onimoba compound Okeho, Oyo state, Nigeria
Houses				
Vehicles				
Furniture & fittings				
Business enterprises				

Instrument equipment				
Shares				
Jewellery				
Credits (goods sold or services provided on credits)				
Bank accounts				
Cash				
Others				

Special requests

..... (say for example, Shaykh Ahmad of (Address and phone number) should observe salatu janazah on me before burying me.

Use part of my property to dig a well for people to serve as sadaqatun jariyah for me after my death.

I have made this will in line with the Shar’ah. Immediately after my death, all subsequent affairs from my burial to the sharing of my properties and their uses must be strictly in line with the injunctions in the Qur’an and Sunnah.

An autopsy should not be performed on my body. But if it becomes a legal requirement, I would wish it is done through an MRI scan if my trustees deem it appropriate. I would also like to be buried in (say, my compound at(address), the Muslim Cemetery closest to the place of my death, etc.).

My dead body should never be taken to any mortuary.

Other matters ascribed to me after my death which I did not mention here in this will must be investigated and my administrators should take appropriate steps in line with the Shar’ah.

We, the Testator (name) and the witnesses (names), whose names are signed to the foregoing instrument, being first duly sworn, do hereby declare to the undersigned authority that the Testator signed and executed the instrument as his Last Will and Testament

and that he had signed willingly, and that he/she executed it as his free and voluntary act for the purposes therein expressed, and that each of the witnesses, in the presence of the Testator has reached the age of maturity (balāghah) or was at the time eighteen (18) or more years of age, of sound mind and under no coercion, constraint or undue influence.

SIGNED this _____ day of _____ (month), _____ (year), in _____ (place).

Testator’s Signature and Date

Witnesses.....

According to the Qur’an, at least two just Muslims should serve as witnesses to the authenticity of the verbal or written will. If they are not available non-Muslims may be asked to be witnesses.

“O you who believe, testimony (should be taken) among you when death approaches one of you at the time of bequest (that of) two just men from among you or among others outside your circle. If you are travelling through the land and the disaster of death should strike you. Detain them after the prayer and let them both swear by Allah if you doubt (their testimony saying), “We will not exchange it (i.e. our oath) for a price (i.e. worldly gain), even if he should be a near relative, and we will not withhold the testimony of (i.e. ordained by) Allah. Indeed, we would then be of the sinful. But if it is found that those two were guilty of sin (i.e. perjury) let two others send in their place (who are) foremost (in claim) from those who have and lawful right. And let them swear by Allah, “Our testimony is truer than their testimony, and we have not transgressed indeed, we would then be of the wrongdoers. That is more likely that they will give testimony according to its (true) objective, or (at least) they would fear that (other) oaths might be taken after their oaths. And fear Allah and listen (i.e. obey Him)

and Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people” (Q 5: 106-108).

Therefore, my witnesses are:

Serial No.	Name	Address	Signature	Date
1				
2				
3				
4				

This will which consists of pages was signed by the Testator on the above-written date in our presence as the witnesses and also signed by all of us.

In the West, a person can share his wealth in his will according to his will. In fact, dogs can be given a largest part of some people's wealth.

Preventive Medicine According to the Holy Qur'an

The Qur'an is not a book of medicine or of health sciences but in it there are hints which lead to guidelines in health and diseases. Health is a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity. Preventive medicine focuses on the health of individuals, communities and defined populations. Its goal is to protect, promote and maintain health and well-being and to prevent disease, disability and death. Disease is any departure from health. It is an illness or sickness with specific, well-defined symptoms that affects a person, plant or animal. The famous pathologist, William Boyd, defined disease as physiology (natural state) that has gone wrong. This implies that it is our tampering with the natural process that leads to unnatural outcomes (Q 30: 41). In Islam, we believe that all Quranic statements are true; science has confirmed some of them in the past and will confirm the rest in the future depending on its dynamism, depth and seriousness. The Holy Qur'an forbids oppression, injustice, gambling, criminal abortion, rape, suicide, consumption of swine flesh, consumption of alcohol, sexual infidelity to mention a few. It, however, encourages the use of honey and breast milk. The importance of these Qur'anic injunctions in the maintenance of good health cannot be overlooked.

A. Justice

“Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to

those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you? Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seeing" (Q 4: 58).

"O you who believe! stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better protector to both (than you) so follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you may avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do" (Q 4:135).

"O you who believe! stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. Allah has promised those who believe (in the oneness of Allah) and do deeds of righteousness, that for them there is forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. paradise)" (Q 4: 135)

"Verily, Allah enjoins *Al-Adl* (justice and worshipping none but Allah alone) and *al-Ihsān* (i.e. to be patient in performing your duties to Allah in accordance with the sunnah (legal ways). He (Allah) admonishes you, that you may take heed" (Q16 :90)

If the commandments which enjoin justice are disobeyed in a particular society, oppression would persist in such a society. Oppression, however, has many medical effects.

1. Psychiatric (Mental) effects of oppression

The oppressed people are usually stressed. Stress is any stimulus or change in the external or internal environment which disturbs homeostasis which under certain conditions can result in illness. Stress may have a mild effect on emotions leading, sometimes, to minor mental problems like anxiety, neurosis, and it may also have a severe effect on emotions leading, sometimes, to a major mental problem like schizophrenia, a psychosis. People who suffer major mental problems (psychosis) do not have insight

to their sickness. If the constitutional and genetic environments are favourably disposed to having psychiatric problems, stress would find it very easy to play a significant role in the genesis of psychiatric diseases.

The component of emotion which can be affected by stress includes affective (feeling) aspect, cognitive (knowing) aspect, behaviour and bodily concomitants. The bodily concomitants include facial expression, posture, mobility changes in neurohormonal functions and autonomic activities. In the light of the above consequences of oppression, it is advisable that the individuals and government should strive to be just, so that everybody can be hale and hearty.

2. Food-related effects of oppression

Consequent upon the refusal or non-availability of necessary food substances, the oppressed people may have protein calorie malnutrition, vitamins and mineral deficiency, and peptic ulcer disease.

- 3.** The oppressed people are also susceptible to cardiovascular problems like hypertension, heart failure, heart attack (Ischaemic heart diseases), just to mention a few. The environment of the oppressed people is usually not conducive to maintaining good health. Therefore, diseases related to overcrowding and poor sanitation are not uncommon among the oppressed. Examples of such diseases are pulmonary tuberculosis, malaria, cholera, and typhoid fever just to mention a few.

B. Consumption of Good and Lawful Foods

“O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and follow not the footsteps of satan. Verily, he is to you an open enemy” (Q 2:168).

“O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allah)! Eat of the lawful things that we have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if

it is indeed He whom you worship. He has forbidden you only the *maytatah* (dead animals), and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for other than Allah (or has been slaughtered for idols, etc. on which Allah's name has not been mentioned while slaughtering). But if one is forced by necessity without wilful disobedience nor transgressing due limits, then there is no sin on him. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (Q 2: 172 -173).

(i) Diseases associated with consumption of swine-flesh.

(a) Trichinosis

This is a skeletal muscle disease which may result when inadequately cooked pork is ingested.

(b) Cysticercosis (bladder worm).

This is secondary to infection by the larval stage of *Taenia solium* which is acquired by ingestion of undercooked swine flesh.

(ii) Diseases associated with smoking.

Islamic teachings on the avoidance of tobacco

One of the leading causes of diseases and deaths worldwide is the use of tobacco particularly cigarette smoking. Smoking exists in almost all societies in one form or another and its act is the same though the core substance and technique might be different. Smoking is not only harmful and dangerous to the smokers, it is equally harmful and dangerous to the people around the smokers. People affected by second hand smoke through no fault of their own suffer from cardiovascular diseases, lung cancer, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), etc. When people smoke, the smoke affects the ecosystem negatively, the smokers themselves and the non-smokers in the smoking area. People should remember that they do not own their own lives. Being Allah's vicegerents, they themselves and their belongings are Allah's property. It means people's life and their belongings are trusts. Being trustees, they are supposed

to take care of their life and property and also preserve them. Considering the evil effects of smoking such as wasting resources and time, emitting bad odour, harming innocent bystanders, it behoves a reasonable person who does not only want to enjoy sound health but also want people around him to live a life of well-being to do away with it.

Although tobacco smoking is controversial with regard to its legality or otherwise, i.e. whether it is haram (unlawful) or *makrūh* (dislike), it is divinely and indirectly discouraged for people's well-being. Cigarette smoking can lead to diseases of lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, coronary artery, emphysema, lip cancer, etc. "Do not kill yourselves, for verily Allah has been most merciful to you" (Q 4: 29). "And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw (yourselves) with your (own) hands into destruction. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good" (Q 2: 195). The holy Prophet is reported to have said, "Whoever kills himself with a weapon, will be brought on the Day of Judgement with the said weapon in his hands and will be thrown into the fire wherein he will abide. And whosoever kills himself with a poison, will be thrown into the fire with that poison in his hands where he will continue to take it." This statement was made by Kathir as cited in the holy Qur'an with English translation and commentary, vol. 2 (Ahmad, 1988: 516), "And do not spend wastefully in spendthrift manners. Verily, spendthrifts are brothers of shayateen" (Q17: 26, 27). In these verses, there is an interdiction of suicide when Allah instructs people not to kill themselves.

Although smoking is not specifically mentioned to be forbidden, it is, however, not qualified to be called a good and lawful food. It has the following medical effects.

- (i) *Respiratory system*: Cigarette smoking is an important factor in the induction of lung cancer. It may also cause abnormal and permanent expansion of distal lung tissues as in emphysema (distal airspace disease).

- (ii) *Gastrointestinal system*: Cancer of the lip, tongue and buccal cavity occur principally in tobacco users. Smoking and alcohol play synergistic roles in the induction of cancer of the esophagus. Cigarette smoking delays the healing of ulcers (peptic ulcer). Pancreatic and bladder malignancies are also related to cigarette smoking.
- (iii) *Cardiovascular system*: Smoking is a major independent risk factor for myocardial infarction (heart attack). It also plays synergistic roles in hypertension (high blood pressure), hypercholesterolemia (high blood cholesterol).
- (iv) *Smoking and women*: It can cause early menopause and foetal tobacco syndrome in pregnancy. The incidence of abruptio placentae (premature placental separation), placental praevia (wrongly located placenta), premature rupture of membranes and uterine bleeding are all on the increase among cigarette smokers.

C. Alcohol Consumption and Gambling

They ask you (O Muhammad PBOH) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin and (some) benefits for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they ought to spend, Say: "That which is beyond your needs." Thus Allah makes clear to you His laws in order that you may give thought (The order of this verse concerning alcoholic drinks and gambling has been cancelled (abrogated) by Chapter 5 verse 90-91 and Q 2: 219.

O you who believe! intoxication (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful, Satan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxication (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer, So, will you not then abstain? (Q 5: 90-91)

If we disobey God's commandments which enjoin us to abstain from the consumption of intoxicants and gambling, we should be prepared to experience some of the medical problems that are related to such vices.

Medical Disadvantages of Alcohol

- (i) Intoxication:** This is the term that is used to describe the loss of self-control as a result of taking alcoholic drinks.
- (ii) Dependence:** This refers to the perpetual reliance on alcoholic drinks not minding the economic implication.
- (iii)** Nutritional problems, i.e. vitamin deficiency especially vitamin B which may result in neuropathy and psychosis.
- (iv)** Alcohol can damage some organs in the human body:
 - (a) Hepatitis – irritation of liver cells
 - (b) Cirrhosis – structural damage to the liver cells.
 - (c) Myopathy – muscle weakness
 - (d) Gastrointestinal disorders.
 - i. *Reflux oesophagitis (irritation of oesophagus)*
 - ii. *Tearing of oesophago-gastric junction.*
 - (e) Blood – megaloblastic anaemia (big red blood cells)
 - Reduction in immunity to infection.
 - (f) Heart – cardiomyopathy (heart muscle disease)
 - (g) Pancreas – Calcify pancreatitis (Solidification the irritated pancreatic tissues)
 - (h) Brain and spinal cord
 - i. *Dementia*
 - ii. *Wernickes encephalopathy*
 - iii. *Korsakoff's psychosis*
 - iv. *Central pontine myelinolysis*
 - (i) Foetal alcoholic syndrome effect of alcohol on foetus
 - (j) Withdrawal syndrome

Difficulties encountered by an alcoholic when he is withdrawn from alcohol. Alcohol has the following possible medical advantages.

- (i) Alcohol could be used as an antiseptic, i.e. propyl and isonronyl alcohols.
- (ii) Butyl and pentyl alcohol are used as solvents for industrial processes.

Gambling

A gambler oppresses himself. Both his soul and body suffer self-inflicted oppression. It is, therefore, not unexpected of a gambler to experience some of the medical effects of oppression. A gambler and his family may suffer food-related medical problems, mental problems, and cardiovascular problems just to mention a few.

Intoxication and gambling are preventable diseases. Obeying God's commandments is the best way of preventing them. If this is done because of God, there is a fantastic reward for such a person who abandons gambling, alcohol and injustice.

D. Sexual Infidelity

Premarital Pregnancy and Illegal Abortions

Islam wants both male and female to lower their gaze. In Islam as well as in many cultures, premarital chastity is encouraged. For instance, in many African cultures, premarital virginity is honoured. In Yoruba society, if the virginity (A girl whose hymen is not broken is considered a virgin) of a bride was confirmed after her first sexual encounter following the wedding, the groom and his family would send some gifts to the bride's family to appreciate the chastity of their daughter. The bride also would feel happy. An attempt to protect the virginity of a female may partly explain why Islam supports to an extent early marriage if a girl has attained maturity; and she has what it takes to live a successful marriage life such as wisdom, empowerment and means of livelihood. Some people in some cultures still view female virginity at marriage as a virtue. Many men also appreciate female virginity at marriage. Therefore, Muslim youths both males and females should be encouraged to

live by the Islamic norms of not having premarital sex until after the wedding so as to prevent its evil effects. Married couples should also confine their sexual activities within marriage in line with the injunctions of Allah in the Qur'an.

“And come not near to the unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is a fāhishah (i.e. anything that transgresses its limits [a great sin], and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him) (Q 17: 32).

“The woman and the man guilty of illegal sexual intercourse, flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of the believers witness their punishment. The adulterer marries not but an adulteress or a Mushrikah and the adulteress marries none except an adulterer or a Mushrik (polytheist, pagan or idolater, etc.). Such a thing is forbidden to the believers (of Islamic Monotheism)” (Q 24: 2-3).

The adulterers and the fornicators are more susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The examples of STDs are gonorrhoea, syphilis, trichomona vaginitis, candidia infection Chancroid, Lymphogranulema Venereum, Gardnerella Vaginalis vaginitis, granuloma inguinale, condylomata acuminata, candidiasis, Herpes simplex type 2 virus, Hepatitis B virus, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, etc.

When sexual infidelity is complicated by unwanted pregnancies, criminal abortions are usually attempted. The complications of criminal abortion include haemorrhage (bleeding), incomplete evacuation of the product of conception, incompetence (weakness of uterine opening, uterine perforation, uterine synechiae (adhesion). But some parents, sometimes, attempt the killing or dumping of the unwanted babies in the rivers, or pit-latrines etc. Both the infanticide and criminal abortions are forbidden by Almighty God. “And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We (Allah) provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of your children is a great sin” (Q 17: 31).

The Qur'an and the Sunnah stress the importance of keeping one's virginity and being chaste until marriage. The Qur'an states (Q 23: 5) that extramarital sexual relationships should not be practised by conscious Muslims. Keeping 'sugar daddies', 'sugar mummies', 'concubines', 'sweet sixteens', mistresses, male and female prostitutes or whatever name or terms by which extramarital sexual relations are known in different places in the world is not Shar'ah-compliant. In Islam, chastity is encouraged and rewarded. Therefore, young girls and boys should keep their chastity till marriage.

E. Breastfeeding

"The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do" (Q 2: 233).

The advantages of human milk and colostrum include the following.

- (i) It is easily digested and absorbed by the baby because it has more Lactalbumin and less casein when compared with cow's milk
- (ii) Breast milk contains antibodies which protect the child against infections.
- (iii) Breast-feeding helps mother's womb return the normal position after birth.
- (iv) Breast-feeding does not require elaborate preparation.
- (v) Breast-feeding fosters a good mother-baby relationship.

Contents of Breast Milk
(Units are weight per deciliter)

	Human colostrum	Human milk	Cow's milk
Water, g	—	88	88
Lactose g	5.3	6.8	5.0
Protein, g	2.7	1.2	3.3
Casein: Lactalbumin ratio	—	1:2	3:1
Fat, g	2.9	3.8	3.7
Linoleic Acid	—	8.3 of Fat	1.6 of Fat
Sodium, mg	92	15	58
Potassium, mg	55	55	138
Chloride, mg	117	43	103
Iron, mg	+0.09	+0.15	+0.10
Vit A, mcg	89	53	34
Vit D, mcg	—	+0.03	0.06
Thiamine, mcg	15	16	42
Riboflavin mcg	35	43	157
Nicotinic Acid mcg	75	172	8
Ascorbic Acid mg	+4.4	+4.3	+1.6

+ = Poor source

Review of Medical Physiology by Ganong.

F. Consumption of Honey

Modern medicine has confirmed the significant role of honey in protecting human beings from modern diseases. Honey can also cure any hidden disease especially with the permission of Almighty God. It is very rich in carbohydrate, vitamin, minerals, protein, fat and oil. It is also used in the treatment of wounds, ulcers and gastroenteritis. The carbohydrate contents of honey are less diabetogenic. The following verses from the Qur'an confirm the healing phenomenon of honey: "And your Lord inspired the bee saying: "Take your habitations in the mountains and in the trees

and in what they erect. "Then, eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you)." THERE COMES FORTH FROM THEIR BELLIES, A DRINK OF VARYING COLOUR WHEREIN IS HEALING FOR MEN. Verily, in this is indeed a sign for people who think" (Q 16: 68-69).

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21

Conclusion

We wish the believers the best of luck to live and die as believers. The hypocrites and the unbeliever can repent; Almighty God is ever merciful and forgiving. “Say to the unbeliever, if (now) they desist from unbelief, their past would be forgiven; but if they persist, the punishment of those before them is already a matter of warning for them” (Q 8: 38). “Tell my servants that I am indeed the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (Q 15: 49). Oh! children of Adam, let us worship only One God who creates, among other things, Prophet Adam, Ibrahim, Jesus Christ, Moses, Muhammad (PBOT), the writers and the readers. A Muslim is not a Muslim unless he or she believes in Jesus, Prophet Muhammad and all other Prophets of Allah.

This Almighty God is the Most Beneficent, the Merciful, the sovereign Lord, the Holy, the source of Peace, the Guardian of faith, the Protector, the Compeller, the Majestic, the Bestower, the Provider, the Opener, the All-knowing, the Constrictor, the Expander, the Abaser, the Exalter, the Honourer, the Dishonourer, the All-hearing, the All-seeing, the Judge, the Just, the Sublime, the Aware, the Forbearing One, the Great One, the Appreciative, the Most High, the Preserver, the Maintainer, the Reckoner, the Sublime One, the Generous One, the Watchful, the Responsive, the All-Embracing, the Wise, the Loving, the Most Glorious One, the Resurrector, the Witness, the Truth, the Trustee, the Most Strong, the Firm One, the Praise worthy, the Originator, the Restorer, the Giver of Life, the Creator of Death, the Alive, the Self-subsisting, the Finder, the

Noble, the Unique, the One, the Eternal, the Able, the Powerful, the Expediter, the Delayer, the First, the Last, the Manifest, the Hidden, the Governor, the Source of All Goodness, Acceptor of Repentance, the Avenger, the Pardoner, the Compassionate, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty, the Equitable, the Gatherer, the Self-sufficient, the Enricher, the Preventer, the Distresser, the Propitious, the Light, the Guide, the Incomparable, the Everlasting, the Supreme Inheritor, the Patient, and the Guide to the Right Path.

It is astonishing that some of us accept the title, CIVIL SERVANT, yet we reject a more honourable title, GOD'S SERVANT. "There is none in the heavens and the earth but must come unto the Most Beneficent (Allah) as a Servant" (Q19: 93).

Abbreviations

- Q = Qur'an
? = Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?
 PBOT = Peace be on them
 P. B.O.H. = Peace be on him (Prophet Muhammad)
 Holy Spirit = Title of Angel Gabriel.

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Index

- Ablution 17, 65, 114
Abnormal profits 73
Abomination 135
Abraham 20, 22, 30, 51, 55–57, 72, 80, 82, 90, 104
Abu Bakr 112
Abu Sufyan 73, 75–76
Abu Talhah 103
Acts 4–7, 15, 26, 33, 47, 73, 76, 88, 97, 115, 133
Adam 1, 3, 8, 30, 46, 61, 64, 67–68, 142
Adawiyah's devotion to Allah 107
Adh-kār 92, 94, 107
Adulterers 138
Adultery 9, 61, 95, 98, 105
Aged person 20
Agreement 77
Ālamīn 37, 44, 54, 56, 70, 72
Ala Nabīyy, ṣalātu 85–86
Alcohol 130, 135–37
Alcoholic drink 4, 135–146
Allah 1–8, 10–15, 17–20, 22–31, 35–42, 44–57, 59–74, 76–83, 85–86, 88–106, 108–11, 115–19, 124, 131–35, 138–39
Allah Akbar, saying 24
Allah commands 126, 130
Allah forgives 27, 93, 138
Allah honours 81
Allah-Islamic Monotheism 1, 91
Allah's curse 62
Allah's favour 89
Allah's forgiveness 5, 14, 76, 92–94
Allah's injunctions 92, 106, 115
Allah's names 83, 91, 133
Allah's permission 65
Allah's sovereignty 51
Allah's vicegerents 133
Allah's words 14, 86
Allahu akbar 92
Allahuma ṣalli ala Muhammad 86
Allahumma salli 114
All-wise 40, 44, 48, 57, 63–65, 101
Almighty Allah 97
Almighty God 3, 5–6, 10, 33–35, 40, 45, 48, 61–62, 72, 138, 140, 142
Alms 19, 21
Angels 8, 10, 29, 33, 37, 48, 60, 71, 86, 102
An-nār 31–32
Apostle 18, 74, 85, 115, 118
Arabic Qur'an 46
Arabic word 29, 97
Arafah 23–25
Aslama 97
Asmaa 98
Asr 17–18
Assets 117, 119, 122, 124–25
Ayat 40, 58, 62, 69
Babies 61, 138–39
Badr 76–77, 79
Battle 48, 76–77
Battle of Uhud 75–76, 95
Bearer of good tidings 65, 70–71
Begging, 97–98
Behaviours 73, 78, 80, 118–19, 132
Belief 5, 8–10, 16, 22, 29–31, 33, 85, 88, 92, 97, 114
Believers 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13–15, 30, 33–35, 70–72, 82–83, 86, 88, 113, 115, 142
Believing servant 53–54, 59
Birth 22, 60, 67–68, 106, 120–23, 139

- Black stone 73
 Blessings 30, 39, 46, 56, 86, 91,
 100, 111–13, 122
 Body 2, 18–20, 23, 63, 74, 98, 106,
 114, 124, 127, 137
 Bride 103, 137
 Brothers 36, 58–59, 61, 90, 99,
 108, 114, 118, 121, 123, 134
 Building 16, 118
 Bukhari 22, 111–12
 Burdened person 55
 Business enterprises 125–26

 Calamities 52, 94–95
 Cancer 135
 Care 75, 88, 103, 115, 118–19, 134
 Character 69–73, 75, 77, 79–81,
 83, 85
 Chastity 99, 137, 139
 Children 1, 3–4, 14, 16, 46, 62, 68,
 70, 91, 93, 99–100, 103–4, 112,
 118–19, 138–39
 Chivalry 75
 Christ, Jesus 3, 10, 30, 33, 51–52,
 60, 68, 84, 142
 Christians 46, 56, 62, 64, 77, 95
 Cigarette smoking 133–135
 Commandments 3, 6, 131, 136–37
 Companions 38, 48, 65, 74, 94,
 103, 112–13
 Compensation 91, 98
 Complete muslims 105
 Concomitants, bodily 132
 Conqueror 79, 85
 Conquest, clear 81–82
 Conquest of Makkah 73, 75–76
 Creation, 6–7, 19, 50, 67–68
 Creator 9–10, 117, 119
 Creatures 6, 29, 32, 35, 37, 40, 75,
 88, 102
 Criminal abortions 130, 138
 Criminals 41–42

 Daily prayers, five 18, 66, 91–92
 Darkness 5, 12, 15, 46, 86, 110
 Dead Muslim 119
 Death 12, 29, 31–33, 39–41, 55, 93,
 107, 109, 113, 115–16, 118–19,
 127–28, 130, 133, 142
 Dead body 74, 124, 127
 Deeds 13, 16, 22, 30–33, 55, 65,
 115, 118–19
 Destiny 8, 10
 Devil 3–4, 10–11, 20, 25–26, 93
 Dhikr 48, 87–89, 91–93, 95
 Dhul-Hijjah 23, 25
 Disbelievers 1, 12, 41–42, 45–46,
 54, 56, 62
 Diseases 11, 17–18, 39, 130, 132–
 34, 137
 Doers 42, 97, 134
 Domestic servant 92
 Dressing 7, 98–99
 Drinks 24, 29, 33, 39, 42, 50, 60,
 109–10
 Du‘āu 87–91, 93–95
 Duties 20, 22, 27, 37, 45, 51, 54,
 56, 69, 131
 Dwellers of paradise 36, 39
 Dying Person 113

 Early Muslim women 108
 Earth 3, 9, 16, 30–31, 33, 35, 40,
 42–43, 51, 53, 61, 63–64, 85,
 100, 117
 Eastern woman 99–100
 Eating 7, 17, 50, 109
 Effects, medical 131, 134, 137
 Emotions 131–32
 Emphysema 134
 Enemies 45, 58, 73, 75, 79, 91, 95
 Enticing 35
 Error 3, 9, 11, 21, 124
 Eternal home 2, 35
 Eve 67–68

- Evil 1, 4–5, 14, 33, 38, 41, 78
 Evil deeds 27, 43
 Exalted standard of character 70, 72
 Existence, physical 51

 Faith 7, 13, 15–17, 26, 29–30, 33–34, 38, 44, 47, 56–57, 86, 89, 95, 108, 114
 Falsehood 48
 Family 21, 59–60, 73, 77, 90, 97, 103, 115, 137
 Fasting 6, 19–22, 33–34, 50
 Fear Allah 1, 14, 46, 54, 60, 63, 67, 102, 106, 118, 124, 128, 131, 139
 Feeding 19–20, 124
 Feeding needy persons 21
 Female children 100
 Females 55, 68, 98–100, 102, 105, 108, 114, 137
 Female virginity 137
 Flamboyant burial ceremony 124
 Followers 11, 18, 27–28, 51, 73–75, 78, 81, 86, 88, 92, 94–95, 102
 Food 19, 22, 33, 41–42, 50, 62, 66, 109, 112
 Forgiveness 1, 10, 24, 71, 75–76, 81, 92–93, 102, 131
 Forgiving person, most 75
 Fornication 8, 95, 98
 Freedom 2, 33–34, 51, 100

 Gabriel 44–45, 62, 79, 113
 Gambling 4, 9, 130, 135–37
 Generations 31, 38, 59, 66, 117
 Generosity 73–74
 Glad tidings 2, 14, 39, 44–46, 95
 God 6–7, 9–11, 20–22, 29–31, 33, 43–44, 49–55, 61–62, 64–65, 70–71, 74, 79–81, 85–86, 94, 117–18
 Good deeds 4–5, 8, 16, 26, 30, 46, 115, 118
 Grace 5, 8, 35, 59, 71
 Greatest miracles 66
 Grave 30, 49, 74, 124
 Greeting 7, 38, 111–12
 Grieve 58, 60, 71, 95
 Groups 22, 27, 37–38, 41, 97, 106, 111
 Guard 13, 48, 99
 Guidance 14, 21, 31, 36, 44–47, 49, 56, 59, 69, 81
 Hadith 7, 40, 86, 94, 98, 109, 112, 144
 Hadrat Ja'far 4
 Al-Hafiz, 98–99 144
 Hajar 23–24
 Hajj 16, 20, 22–23, 25–27, 50, 56, 95
 Hamzah 75–77
 Hanifan 55–56
 Hawa 67
 Healing 46–47, 90, 135, 141
 Heavens 9, 35, 39, 42–43, 53, 61, 64, 66, 91, 100, 117, 143
 Heirs 13, 115–16, 122, 124, 139
 Hell 14, 30–32, 39–43, 66, 88, 106, 116–17, 138
 Hijab 99–100
 Hijrah 92
 Al-Hikmah 62, 70–71
 Holy Prophet 6–7, 9, 33, 71, 134
 Holy Prophet Muhammad 6, 66
 Holy Qur'an 7, 10, 30–31, 35, 40, 44–45, 47–49, 51, 60, 130–31, 133–35, 137, 139, 144, 146
 Holy Qur'an and Allah 129
 Home 1, 39, 78, 92, 103–4, 108, 112
 Human beings 2–3, 8, 29–30, 51, 67–68, 105
 Humility 26, 33, 77

- Humour 74
- Husband 23, 37–38, 72, 75, 80, 98–99, 101, 103–8, 114
- Hypocrites 10–12, 33, 74, 89, 115, 142
- Ibādah 7, 50, 88, 92
- Iblis 3
- Ibrahim 3, 24, 31, 33, 55, 57, 117, 142
- Ideal Prophet 79, 146
- Idolatresses 101
- Ihram 20, 23, 26
- illā llāhu wallahu akbar 91
- Illness 130–31
- Īmān 16
- Infidelity, sexual 130, 137–38
- Inheritance 8, 50, 113, 115–16
- Injunctions 50, 127, 138
- Intoxication 9, 38, 135–37
- Irritation 136
- Īsā 30–31
- Ishai 17–18
- Ishmael 30, 55–56
- Islam 2, 16–17, 19, 25–27, 31, 75–76, 94–95, 97–100, 102–4, 108–13, 115, 117, 123–25, 137, 144–45
- Islamic faith of Monotheism 38
- Islamic Ideology 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115
- Islamic modes of dressing 99
- Islamic Monotheism 3, 36–37, 41, 47, 63, 138
- Islamic norms 138
- Islamic teachings 133
- Ismail 23–25
- Israel 62, 65, 70
- Istighfār 92–94
- Istighfār and Ṣabr 87–89, 91, 93, 95
- Jacob 30, 56
- Al-Jamiu li-Ahkam Qur'an 146
- Al-Jannah 30–32, 35, 106
- Jesus 10, 56, 60–65, 67–68, 70, 72, 80, 84, 95, 117, 142
- Jews 46, 56, 62–64
- Jinns 6, 29, 32, 37, 44, 50, 54, 56, 66, 70, 72
- Jinn yatmith-hunna 37
- Judgement 10, 25, 32, 40, 43, 49, 63, 106, 116–17, 134
- Justice 27, 51, 80, 124, 126, 130–31
- Ka'bah 21–25, 55–56, 73, 80
- Khadijah 73, 80
- Kidwai 39, 42–43, 145
- Killing 23, 76, 138
- King 10, 50, 75, 79, 104
- Knowledge 46, 63–64, 71, 90, 106
- Lactalbumin, 139–40
- Lā ilāha illā llāhu 89, 91, 117
- Leaders 14, 27, 55, 74–75, 80, 94
- Legislations 50, 85
- Lesser evil 5
- Liabilities 124, 126
- Life 1–2, 6, 8, 25–27, 31–33, 49, 51, 55, 73–74, 79–80, 85, 91, 104, 113–15, 134
- Livelihood 7, 110, 137
- Lord 8, 23, 76, 82, 94
- Love 1, 4, 33, 58, 106–8
- Love Allah 46
- Lung cancer 133–134
- Madinah 26, 66, 73, 75
- Mahr 101, 103
- Mahram 114
- Makkah 22–23, 25, 50, 55–56, 66, 69, 72, 75, 82, 94–95
- Marriage 50, 73, 75, 100–106, 108, 114, 137–39
- Marriage life 137

- Marrying 75, 104–5, 107
 Marwah 24–25
 Mary 60–64, 70, 77
 Mecca 6, 26, 79
 Medina 6, 79
 Menses 35–36
 Menstruating person 20
 Mental problems 131, 137
 Mercy 5, 47, 58–60, 62, 65, 70–71, 75, 79, 83, 111, 114
 Mercy of Allah 2, 11
 Messengers 3, 10, 31, 36, 46, 53–54, 58, 62, 64, 69, 71–72, 102–3
 Messiah 61–62, 65
 Miracles 45, 65–68
 Mischief 11, 65, 94, 113
 Misery 43
 Modesty 77, 99, 104
 Monogamy 104, 106
 Monogamous family 105, 108
 Monotheism 38, 51
 Moon 9, 65, 81
 Morning prayers 18, 25
 Moses 3, 30, 33, 51, 56, 58–59, 61, 72, 80, 82–83, 90, 117, 142
 Mosque 19, 26, 79, 113, 118, 123
 Most wicked person 9
 Mother 18, 22, 49, 58, 61–63, 67–68, 75, 101, 106, 120, 139
 Muhammad 3, 7, 11, 30–31, 33, 38, 45, 69–73, 75, 77, 79–85, 95, 117–18, 142, 146–47
 Mujeebah 119
 Musā 30–31
 Ml-mushrikūn 55, 102
 Muslim provinces 49
 Muslims 25, 86, 94
 Muslims circumambulate 22
 Muslim pilgrims 22
 Muslim widow 119
 Muslim woman 99, 103
 Muslim women 99
 Muslim youths 137
 Muzdalifah 23, 25
 Names of Allah 89, 91
 Names of Allah 89
 Neighbours 72, 112–13
 Noah 3, 30, 33, 53–54, 72, 80, 93
 Non-Muslims 17, 51, 99, 103, 128
 Non-observance 18
 Oaths 128
 Obligatory precaution 114
 Oft-forgiving 101, 109–10, 133, 142
 Oneness of Allah 36, 46, 132
 Oneness of God 1–8, 10, 16
 Oppression 9, 27, 130–32, 137
 Orphanages 19
 Paradise 13, 30–32, 34–39, 43, 46, 49, 63, 66, 74, 91, 102, 117, 131
 Parents 6, 24, 27, 105, 113, 131, 138–39
 Parties 71, 106, 108, 124, 138
 Partner 14, 22–23, 29, 48, 50, 88, 100, 117
 Path, straight 3, 55, 63, 81
 Patience 2, 16, 26, 33, 94–95
 Peace 2, 19, 30, 33, 36–38, 47, 59–61, 66, 71, 79–80, 86, 97, 110–13, 117, 142–43
 Persecutions 3, 73, 75, 86, 94–95
 Person 5, 14, 20–21, 26–27, 34, 43, 73–74, 78–79, 86, 88–94, 97, 106, 110–19, 124–25, 129–30
 Personal prayers, saying 24
 Personal purity 17
 Person's mind 91
 Person washing 114
 Pharaoh 81
 Philosopher 84–85, 120–22, 127
 Pilgrimage 6, 20–23, 33–34, 50, 56

- Pilgrims 23–26
 Pious Muslim woman 105
 Polygamy 105–6, 108
 Polygyny 104–5
 Polygamous family 105, 108
 Polytheists 11, 36, 40–42, 47, 55–56, 95, 138
 Prayers 4–5, 13–14, 17–18, 22, 24, 33, 47, 49–50, 61, 87–93, 115, 128, 135
 Praying 23, 25, 81–82, 86
 Preservation 25, 48
 Properties 79, 91, 95, 101, 115–16, 122–23, 125–27, 134
 Prophet Adam 142
 Prophet Hud 80
 Prophet Ibrahim 23, 25, 81–82, 97, 118
 Prophet Ibrahim's wife and Ismail's mother 23
 Prophet Muhammad 30–31, 49, 51, 66, 72, 74–75, 77, 80, 82–86, 92, 94, 105–6, 108–9, 112–14, 142–43
 Prophet Musa 51, 66, 81–82
 Prophet Noah 93
 Prophets of God 3–4, 10, 33, 77
 Prophets 8, 10, 12, 30, 50–51, 53, 56, 58, 61–62, 65–66, 69, 75, 80–81, 94–95, 117
 Prophet Ṣāliḥ 66, 80
 Prophet's character 79
 Prostitutes 98
 Prostitution 98, 105
 Provisions 6, 19, 29, 51, 89, 113, 115
 Punishments 14, 18, 40, 46, 69, 102, 119, 138, 142
 Pure wives 35–36
 Purity 17, 99
 Purpose of Creation 6–7
 Qiblah 114
 Qur'an 13, 31–32, 44–51, 66, 69–71, 80–82, 85–86, 88–89, 92–94, 104, 114–16, 122, 124, 126–28, 138–40
 Qur'anic injunctions 130
 Qur'an Karim 146
 Quraysh 22, 75, 77
 Rak'ahs 25, 114
 Rancour 9
 Reject Faith 9, 109
 Relationship 105, 107, 114, 120–22, 124
 Relatives 77, 118–19
 Religion 2, 30, 33, 51–52, 56, 64, 72, 74, 85, 100, 104, 109, 112, 118
 Religion of Islam 145
 Religious personalities 104
 Remembrance 58–59
 Repentance 11, 94, 99, 143
 Request 59, 88–90
 Resurrection 25–26, 29, 31, 33, 63, 82
 Retribution 21–22
 Revelations 31, 40, 44–45, 49, 58, 86, 92, 102, 110
 Rewards 5, 18–19, 21, 35, 37–38, 53, 59, 69–70, 77, 91, 103, 106, 112–13, 118, 131
 Righteousness 14–15, 36, 124
 Righteous act 34
 Righteous persons 1, 5, 36, 46
 Righteous Prophets 61, 65
 Sacrifice 21–23, 25–26, 133
 Ṣafā 24–25
 Ṣalām 38, 61
 Salat 16–19, 26–27, 50, 86, 92, 95
 Sa'y 24–25

- Scriptures 8, 10, 31, 34, 40, 59, 61, 64, 94–95
 Seal of prophets 71
 Security, accustomed 22
 Self-restraints 20
 Servant 8, 10, 35, 53, 62, 74, 76–78, 81–83, 93–94, 117–18, 142–43
 Servant of Allah 57, 65, 71
 Sexual intercourse 19, 23, 37, 67–68
 Sharī'ah 27, 124, 127
 Shaykhul Islam 84
 Shaytaan 109
 Sickness 90, 130, 132
 Sick person 20
 Signs 9, 12, 14, 40, 53, 58, 60, 62, 69, 82, 102, 110, 141
 Sinners 41–42, 45, 93
 Sins 14, 17, 21–22, 54–55, 70, 80–82, 90–93, 101, 116, 124, 128, 133, 135, 138–39
 Slaves 3, 9, 34, 36, 48, 64, 89, 101, 105, 113
 Smokers 133
 Smoking 20, 133–35
 Spiritual developments 86–87
 Stones 25, 95, 109
 Sufi paths 27
 Sunnah 25, 62, 98, 104, 108–9, 122, 127, 131, 145–46
 Sunset 24–25
 Supplications 14, 88, 90

 Tawrah 59, 62
 Testament 117, 127
 Testator 118, 120, 124–25, 127–29
 Testimony 52, 128
 Thabit 48–49
 Thrones 10, 36, 38
 Tolerance 2, 16, 103
 Translations, practical 33–34

 Travellers 19–20
 True Muslim 56
 True Muslim life 8
 Trusts 13, 125–26, 130, 133
 True Prophet 30
 Truth 9, 36–37, 44–45, 49, 56, 61–62, 64, 79–80, 142

 Uhud 75–76, 95
 Umar 76–77, 112
 Umm Sulaym 103
 Umrah 20–21
 Unbelievers 8–9, 11, 40, 76, 103, 115, 142
 Unlettered Prophet 147
 Urine 35–36

 Virginity 137, 139
 Virtuous acts 11
 Virus 138

 Wahshi 76
 Warner 41, 44, 54, 69–71
 Washing 17, 114, 124
 Water 19, 24, 37–38, 42, 50, 53, 65, 140
 Weakness 5, 138
 Wealth 1, 9, 19, 93, 95, 116, 119, 122, 129
 Weapon 134
 Wedding 137–38
 Well-being 130, 134
 Well-to-do Muslim 20
 Western Society 108, 115
 Wicked person 9
 Wife 4, 34, 65, 67, 76, 98, 101, 103–8, 114–15, 118–20
 Wills 10, 44, 48, 51, 55, 61–62, 65, 72, 89, 100
 Witnesses 23, 27–28, 39, 64–65, 70–71, 117, 124, 127–29, 131, 142

- Wives 37–38, 74, 101, 104–7, 118, 120
Women 1, 25, 64, 67, 74–75, 98–101, 104–6, 108, 115–16, 135
Worship 6–7, 22–23, 26, 29, 40, 51, 54–56, 63, 69, 72, 88, 113, 117, 133, 142
Worship Allah 54, 56, 64, 101, 113
Worshipping God 4, 6
Worshipping idols 80, 82
Worshipping Jesus Christ 10
Wuḍū 17
Young person, greet 111
Zakat 6, 16, 19, 33, 47, 61, 95
Zaqqūm 40–43
Zayd, charged 48–49
Zuhr 17–18

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