

*ONE WAY OF MAKING
A LIVING*



III

MUHAMMAD SA'IDU JIMADA

ONE WAY OF MAKING A LIVING

Muhammad Sa'idu Jimada

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First Published, 1996

Published by
SADAQATU TAYYIBATUN FOUNDATION
Post Office Box 2630,
Minna, Nigeria.

www.sadtayyfoundation.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the First, the Responsive.

This is to confess that I have been encouraged to pursue the writing and production of this series by a number of positive factors which different people represent.

My very first sincere appreciation goes to Zulaihatu Lawal who personally reproduced the verses of the entire Qur'an, the foundation for the seven books writing.

Intellectually, Justice Muhammad Bashir Sambo suggested that the quotations should also appear in their original Arabic. Although he quickly appreciated not only the cost but also the risk of errors; given the wealth of the quotations involved – over half of the verses of the Qur'an.

Ambassador Nuhu Mohammed specifically indicated the need to work on the status of a woman like Rabi'at Adawiyya.

Ambassador Abdur-Rahman Mora drew attention to use of 'Messenger' to identify Muhammad (S.A.W) rather than 'Apostle'. He also advised on the preference of using 'Allah (S.W.T)' to 'God'.

Justice Na'ibi Sulayman Wali recommended that the very material he read be considered for parts or chapters to enable the reader take some breath before completing it.

Dr. Ibrahim Sulayman was the first to suggest that the materials be serialised to give them some order. He added that a work on the Hadith as a form of appreciating the Qur'an will be necessary. I indicated interest but did not promise anything.

Justice Abdul-Qadir Orire was warmly receptive of the sixth book.

Ustaz Abdul-Qadir Aliyu Ladan who was invited to dot the i's and cross the t's suggested an order for the materials as earlier advised by Ibrahim. He specifically restrained me from giving a similar status to those in the first generation of Muhammad with those after Isa (A.S) but before him.

Muhammad Turi advised on considering a material addressing the Muslim community. I noted this but with no definite promise.

Technically, all these people noted typographical errors which necessitated a re-work. I commend the efforts of the secretaries and computer men who did the typesetting. Yusuf Gambo Ibrahim and Suleiman Sani were always ready to work on the project. Nuhu Musa Muhammad always handled it as his own. He did most of the entries. Muhammad Yunusa and Muhammad Imran finished putting the materials together after Dr. Usman Bokari had gone through them.

Personally, I remain grateful and accept full responsibility for the form in which the materials are now presented.

May His guidance always determine the path we follow. AMEN.

M. S. Jimada

FOREWORD

By virtue of Qur'anic verse 51:56, Allah has only created Jinns and Men that they may serve Him. Therefore, any other activity that man indulges in on earth is secondary to the worship of his Creator and Sustainer, Allah Almighty. Nevertheless, in consonance with Revelation 64:2, He has created some as Believers and others as Unbelievers. If He had so planned, He could have made mankind one people.

“...So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah; for Allah is strict in Punishment.”

Qur'an 59:7

ONE WAY OF MAKING A LIVING is a recapitulation of Islamic studies in the Holy Qur'an and various books published by Islamic theologians regarding principles of Islam, comprising of Faith (Iman); Prophetic Traditions (Hadeeth); Jurisprudence; Ethics, etc. The author, Muhammad Sa'idu Jimada copiously quoted Qur'anic verses and Prophetic Traditions to support his points.

This being an Islamic religious publication, the author would appear to have been motivated by one of the following incentives or by all of them:-

- (i) “Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.”
Qur'an 3:104.
- (ii) “And admonish thy nearest Kinsmen.” **Qur'an 26:214**
- (iii) “None of you (truly) believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.” (Transmitted by Bukhari and Muslim).
- (iv) “Pass on information from me, even if it is only a verse of the Qur'an and relate traditions from *Bani Israil*, for there is no restriction; but let him who deliberately lies against me come to his abode in hell.”

This excellent publication which I have read from cover to cover with tremendous interest is a comprehensive work consisting of the various aspects of a Muslim's livelihood. The author vividly invites attention to what any reader should know about the mode of living called Islam.

Finally, with all sincerity, I recommend this work, which is the result of researches over a period of time, as a household book and as a mind refresher to all aspects of Islamic Religion.

Dr. Abdur-Rahman Mora
Mora Road, Tudun Wada, Zaria.

INTRODUCTION

This book you are about to go through will help you to make a living out of life, of its own right. The intention is to make living a fulfilling experience for you. It is primarily written with Muslims in mind and to make a non-Muslim understand the basic standards of a Muslim's livelihood, in an inviting manner.

Hopefully, you will find it very inspiring, irrespective of your faith and your cultural milieu that must have evolved through trials, errors and struggles between the forces of conservatism and change. In other words, because the religion, the way of life known as Islam is a universal fit for humanity, you will most certainly find the qualities of rationality, convenience, reality, natural compatibility and inspiration which combine to produce a positive fulfilment for the individual, the group and the community or society that adopts it as its chosen standard. It reveals and confirms the wisdom, wealth, simplicity and comprehensiveness of true divine guidance.

In general terms, most people find the world boring, in spite of the achievements of this century, the likelihood ahead, all, in the direction of making the world and life in general, better for everybody. Positive aggressiveness, programmes, plans, routines and ad-hoc modes of making life fulfilling have not yielded many results. The trials and even combination of various philosophies of life that historically made one form of impact or the other have not been too helpful either. The consolation therefore continued to be 'scientific.' Hence, man still has a lot to find out in order to improve upon the present which will eventually lead to the ultimate goal of fulfilment, security and abundance.

This utopian spirit is even alive BUT, the fact and reality continues to be with us (and in a growing manner, for that matter), that all is not well, all achievements have not yielded the minimum that rationally ought to have been derived. The world and humanity is deeply involved in unhealthy competition, strife, war, cunningness, deceit, waste, failures, inconsideration, enmity, hunger, disease, etc. These are in the face of actual records of achievements and resources that normally cannot be valued or rated as below the capability of adequately dealing with or avoiding the loads of problems. But, alas, the problems are not just there, have not just been there, but are taking more dangerous forms.

In short, the world is continuously asking for:

- (i) More food, despite improved production facilities and actual increased productivity.
- (ii) More health, regardless of improved and increased health facilities combined with all kinds of specialisations.
- (iii) More peace, in the face of improved and increased specialised armament along the same side with 'peace' keeping arrangements.
- (iv) More honesty and sincerity despite chains and variety of mechanisms for ensuring that people are responsible.

- (v) More love, notwithstanding our growing larger settlements and levels of interactions.
- (vi) More unity of purpose and action, while we continue to divide on the basis of tribe, race, nationality and such other trivial things.
- (vii) More and better understanding, despite improved and increased communication means.
- (viii) More and better shelter in the forms of clothing and housing even though we experience the nakedness and exposure of many against excessive possession by others.
- (ix) More friendliness and brotherhood in the face of growing selfishness, deservedness and keeping to oneself etc.

Our reality is therefore that of opposites and disturbing experience because it continues to tilt qualitatively and quantitatively in the negative direction. Advanced, improved, increased, expanded and sophisticated plans and programmes have not been justifiably helpful. No matter what investments or inputs we may now claim to have made, we are universally distant from being generally satisfied. All manners of aids to complement efforts of one another have not been helpful either.

What obviously is the problem? We will certainly proffer different responses. The option I hold is that, secularism has had a glimpse of the problem(s). It has no doubt made and continues to make efforts to attend to these problems of humanity. No one can or need to or ought to stop it from making further efforts or contributions. BUT, it has certainly failed more than it has succeeded. This is very much the case, when one considers its total, general or universal benefits vis-a-vis its effects.

In more specific sense, the religious option(s) at least from the point of what the champions of secularism are familiar with has/have also failed. This may even be qualified with woefulness or disaster. This can simply be appreciated considering its double negative distinctiveness. These include the factual experience that its sponsors, practitioners, faithful or champions have often failed in making themselves models or becoming different and not making the little and unsatisfactory level of contribution(s) made by secularism. Thus, there can be no doubt that in these comparable circumstances, the religious option is the more risky, more irrational, more foolish and worthless between the two. It does not deserve mention. If anything, it should be deliberately avoided or even fought.

But, alas, these weaknesses are not sufficient to dispose the religious option. The defences are that: first, it is variant. Secondly, champions of religion are not necessarily proper or adequate models of the principles they claim to adhere to. However, most central to the whole problem is the fact that, the basis for success or failure of secularism or religious practice squarely rests on what it makes or is capable of making a group, a community, a society, a country or the entire humanity, with the individual as its take off point.

What this little book therefore seeks to do is provide the basic guide for the goodly take off of the individual, for attaining a life of fulfilment in a social context. The second part which is an addition, in this edition, focuses on highlights of a few considerations that will be handy for a Muslim woman who aspires to marry or is already married. This piece has been informed by the central position a woman occupies, in the social beingness of humanity. Its objective is to shade light on selected aspects that will enable the consciousness of a Muslim woman to properly rest on guidance already discussed in the first part. The third part is a Postscript, stating the case of Islam regarding sincerity as the key to success. Indeed as the key to ultimate success.

Thus, as the third book in the series of this Foundation, the reader will hopefully have a glimpse of Islam for proper and relevant appreciation. I pray that if one strictly complies by the hinted provisions, the Muslim will attain self-cleansing and the non-Muslim will at least be able to see through the potentials of attaining this goal of fulfilment in the standard(s) of Islam defined as ONE WAY OF MAKING A LIVING.

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THE RULES FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL FITNESS FOR SURVIVAL

Narrated Ibn Abbas (r.a.):

The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "There are two blessings which many people lose: (the use of their) health and free time for doing good (deeds)."

Bukhari Collection

THE FOOD AND DRINK FOR YOUR HEALTH

Most of the time, we will prefer that our physical body is in sound condition. The mechanism of our body is therefore constantly serviced. This is beyond reasonable doubt, a choice-less engagement. Or, have you heard or met anyone who lives without food and drink AT ALL? The common difference is either in the type, the quantity or the relative value of the combination of these to our body system.

The provision of food and drink to service the body is not often classified as a form of treatment even though without it CURE will become a need of the body. This is how a distinction can be made between hunger and peptic ulcer. The general principle of physical health is therefore: if you properly service the body on a regular basis and meeting its minimum quality needs you will normally be able to PREVENT falling sick carelessly. Thus, the first step to good physical health is proper and sufficient servicing of the body to ordinarily prevent ill health.

The meeting point in the variations of the types of food and drinks that we take is the objective needs of our bodies (human beings). This is further defined by scientific knowledge as being a combination of:

- (i) Water
- (ii) Carbohydrates
- (iii) Protein
- (iv) Minerals
- (v) Fat and oils
- (vi) Vitamins

The ratio of intake of these combination needed for good health in respect of pregnant women, infants, children, adults or the aged can always be helped by consulting an expert, a nutritionist. An expert can therefore assist, to be sure of the balanced status of the standard meals/dishes that have become traditionally established in your community.

For some change in the form of food and drink, you may specifically request the expert to give two different sources and a combination for a (good) balanced diet, a better one and the best available. The world is now a global village. If you however don't produce sufficient varieties to meet these options you can conveniently borrow from other cultures. Indeed technological advancement has made available FOOD DRUGS that can be correctly taken to make up for what you cannot easily reach. There are thus, natural sources and artificial sources for the vitality elements – vitamins, minerals, etc.

Now, as already pointed out, the types of food and drink sources from which we may be able to keep good health certainly differ. At one level, it is the forms that differ. But we can't deviate from the quality standard or quality content and the minimum quantity of these to keep the body in good health.

The difference and therefore, the identity of a Muslim who equally has the objective need outlined above, the colour of Islam, is by submission in the following terms:

- (i) That the recommendations (sources) to be given by the expert are permissible, legal, in accordance with the guidance of Allah and His Apostle. This principle strictly applies to both foods and drinks.

Thus, in respect of foods, the guidance of Allah is that:

Forbidden to you (for food)
Are: dead meat, blood (poured forth),
The flesh of swine, and that
On which hath been invoked
The name 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 ye 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...

Qur'an: 5:3

As for drinks, Allah instructs that:

They ask thee
Concerning wine and gambling
Say; "In them is great sin,
And some profit for men;
But the sin is greater
Than the profit..."

Qur'an: 2:219

O ye who believe!
Intoxicants and gambling...
Are an abomination
Of Satan's handiwork...

Qur'an 5:90

- (ii) That, the means of sourcing the above permissible degrees of foods and drinks is similarly or itself permissible. As a result, incomes from gambling, robbery, theft, usury (that are all prohibited) have no use for the identity as well as the physical and spiritual health of a

Muslim. Submission to Allah at the same time connotes permissible foods and drinks sourced through permissible means.

- (iii) That, an individual does not live to eat or characterise his eating with gluttony or being filled like one might chose to fuel his automobile.

Narrated Al-Miqdaam (r.a): I heard the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) saying, "No human ever filled a vessel worse than the stomach. Sufficient for any son of Adam are some morels to keep his back straight. But if it must be, then one-third for his food, one-third for his drink and one-third for his breath."

Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasaa'i, Ibn Majah Collections

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a) Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said: "The food for two persons is sufficient for three, and the food of three persons is sufficient for four persons."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Ibn Umar (r.a) Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said "A believer eats in one intestine (is satisfied with little food), and a *Kafir* (unbeliever) or a hypocrite eats in seven intestines (eats too much)."

Bukhari Collection

ABOUT YOUR ILL HEALTH

What man or woman do you know or have heard of, who does not fall sick? May be, there is an exceptional one from all of us. What man or woman cannot fall sick? This is easier to answer. That man or woman who is yet to be born; simple! What man or woman will no more fall sick? This will apply to the man or woman who has died.

Who does not get sick regularly, on and off? There are many, of this kind. They easily contrast with "sicklers." Who wants to get sick? Certainly not me; and I am sure that it can't be you either. But because we can get sick, how do we respond to ill-health?

Illness or a breakdown in one's health could be as a result of one of the following:

- (i) Failure to sufficiently service the body. This could take the form of deficiency, which may ordinarily require an immediate and fast replacement of what is lost in order to recover.
- (ii) The degeneration of the state of deficiency to a sufficiently low level that makes the body very vulnerable to attack from foreign bodies having become weak or less resistant.
- (iii) The inability of an ordinarily healthy body mechanism to withstand exposure to a strong attack from or by some foreign bodies.

What we can all do or what we should all do therefore is to begin by helping ourselves when we fall sick. This is by trying to identify the cause/source of our ill-health. We can then proceed to share this with a physician. He is ordinarily in a better or certified position to confirm to us, the source or cause of our health failure. But in a case where we cannot identify the ailment, but can only share the symptoms, the physician will still be of vital assistance.

There are still cases where neither one nor the physician is in a reasonably comfortable grasp of what is particularly wrong immediately. Here, both parties might resort to the technology of detection. The sick may be advised to go for an X-ray, blood, stool, urine or culture test or whatever the doctor in his opinion considers as capable of revealing the nature of the problem. The result of such examination determines the kind of treatment the physician will employ to cure the patient.

A reasonable or mentally healthy patient will avoid self-treatment/prescription/medication. After the doctor must have issued his orders, the patient should not ignore or adjust the schedule of treatment given. That is, three tablets wouldn't be taken instead of two and this will not be repeated twice or thrice instead of four times and for two or three days instead of a week. However, going through the process outlined above is not that simple for all people, especially where a confirmed ailment is similar to another, or was responsible for the death of some other patient. The result may be despair, stress, irrational response to ill-health and eventual failure in achieving the desired objective. This will lead to an avoidable occurrence, unnecessary waste, etc.

What essentially influences one's response or ability to go through the treatment process and get the best out of it depends upon one's conscious concept of ill-health. In other words, most of us can at times fall sick. But because our understanding of ill-health in general varies, it can make us meekly, courageously or desperately respond to ill-health and that of those close to us.

There can even be different forms and levels of meek, courageous or desperate responding. For a conscious and knowledgeable Muslim the Islamic concept of ill-health includes accepting all of the above and responding; informed by the following:

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The prophet (S.A.W) said, "No disease Allah created, but that He created its treatment."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "If Allah wants to do good to somebody, He inflicts him with trials."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri and Abu Hurairah: The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abdullahi bin Mas'ud: I visited Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) while he was suffering from a high fever. I touched him with my hand and said, "O Allah's Apostle! You have a high fever." Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Yes, I have so much fever as two men of you have." I said, "Is it because you will get a double reward?" Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Yes, no Muslim is afflicted with harm because of sickness or some other inconvenience, but that Allah will remove his sins for him as a tree sheds its leaves."

Bukhari Collection

As a Muslim is not exempted from the experience of ill-health (not resulting from carelessness) he should therefore confront it with the optimism of overcoming it through deliberate exerted efforts to find the correct treatment for it (which is available but has to be sought). Ill-health can be a trial, a test of one's faith, requiring the struggle to overcome it patiently and in an organised manner. It is also a source of spiritual blessing – the wiping of sins, if one believes and struggles hard.

The orientation of hopelessness does not belong to the culture of Islam even when it has to do with a negative reality like ill-health. A Muslim has no basis for such.

Hence, there is a standard for keeping a healthy body in Islam, for Muslims. Consequently, even in ill-health there is still hope. In the tradition of Islam, relating to disease, consider the following:

Narrated 'Aisha: (the wife of the Prophet) that she asked Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) about plague, and Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) informed her saying, "Plague was punishment which Allah used to send on whom He wished, but Allah made it a blessing for the believers. None (among the believers) remains patient in a land in which plague has broken out and considers that nothing will befall him except what Allah has ordained for him, but that Allah will grant him a reward similar to that of a martyr."

Bukhari Collection

Here, lies the difference in the concept of ill-health in Islam and the Muslims' response to it. There is no room for hopelessness or despair based on this tradition.

HOW NOT TO LOSE YOURSELF TO EMOTION

Who has no emotion? Everybody has. It is the stirring phenomenon or attribute of man that conveys a message with the colour of acceptability or dissociation to the fellow(s) related to. It also reveals in the conveyer the feeling of need, satisfaction or disapproval (including the intensity of this) by overt display through gestures, the tone, the choice of word, etc. It is a vehicle that is in itself neutral in its qualitative form and is therefore capable of conveying as much good as evil. But it is in itself not a foundation for correctness or failure.

Emotion is an abstract capacity comparable to labour power, which, when exerted and specially directed to the items of nature, is capable of producing things of value, of use, of exchange, for consumption, for production, for leisure etc. But, whereas labour power makes its

reality known by relating with things outside its loci i.e. man, emotion affects the man himself, to act out in conveyance of a positive or negative message and arrests the man into a state of pleasure, disappointment, need, regret, pity, hope, excitement, ecstasy or whatever.

Therefore, the objective status of emotion is that, it can aid by beautifully colouring the conveyances of a good message or the sharing of what is good. The fear however is that it can be of contrary role. What this implies is the need for a security means to check the employment of one's emotion in aid of evil.

There are a thousand and one ways of controlling or directing emotion in order to achieve maximum good for the benefit of oneself and those one relate to. But the easiest way of approaching the problem may be by illustrating with two common evils.

(i) **ANGER**

Getting angry is one common form in which emotion may make its effect that may be of positive or negative value. This means that getting angry is not in itself evil because it could aid the correction of evil. This complex nature in which emotion can appear as anger makes the control even more difficult.

What does or should a Muslim do, in a state of anger? What standard(s) distinguishes the provision in Islam for the control and direction of this attribute of man? The Qur'an enjoins:

Those who spend (freely),
Whether in prosperity,
Or in adversity;
Who restrain anger,
And pardon (all) men;
For Allah loves those
Who do good.

Qur'an 3:134

Those who avoid the greater
Crimes and shameful deeds,
And, when they are angry
Even then forgive.

Qur'an 42:37

The model of Islamic practice, Muhammad (S.A.W) provides the following tradition for guidance:

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger."

Bukhari Collection

What can be deduced from the Islamic provision in control of anger is the simple fact that the source is not unconnected with some form of denial, the only solution of which rests in giving. However, if you are of the culture of giving freely, willingly when you have surplus and when you have less than what you need, the likelihood of your emotion generating anger that will lead to evil is reasonably curtailed. You wouldn't see yourself as cheated, disgraced or disappointed to warrant violence.

But, this is only in consideration of conclusive knowledge. When you expect what you are informed to be correct to happen or to be done and the contrary becomes the case, then, anger may be stirred up. It will be 'rightly' so because you 'know' that what has happened, shouldn't.

Unfortunately, our knowledge, our conclusions can at times be fallible, in which case what we know or hold as correct may at best only be a suspicion or an assumption. This informs a further instruction by Allah:

O ye who believe!
Avoid suspicion as much
(As possible): for suspicion
In some cases is a sin:
And spy not on each other
Nor speak ill of each other
Behind their backs. Would any
Of you like to eat
The flesh of his dead brother?...

Qur'an: 49:12

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for the others' faults, and do not do spy, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another, and do not hate one another; and O Allah's worshippers! Be brothers (as Allah has ordered you)!"

Bukhari Collection

Regarding control of anger, believers have been advised to sit down then lie down or perform ablution.

Narrated Abu Dharr: The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W) said to us, "When one of you becomes angry while standing, he should sit down. If the anger leaves him, well and good; otherwise he should lie down."

Abu Dawud Collection

Narrated Atiyya as-Sa'di: ...the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W) said, "Anger comes from the devil; the devil was created of fire, and fire is extinguished only with water; so when one of you becomes angry, he should perform ablution."

Abu Dawud Collection

The relationship between anger and the requirement for the angered to forgive is beautifully systematised by the advice by a friend of Allah that the angered should consider excuses for the brother in the wrong ranging from one to forty. This will hopefully enable the angered to forgive. Thus, if the angered does not forgive even after considering forty excuses on behalf of the offender, he can be sure that at best, he is not lenient and that is immodest.

In Islamic tradition therefore, anger must necessarily be based on confirmed knowledge, which will impliedly be of positive effect or contribution. But this quality is tied to being charitable, forgiving and devoid of suspicion. Knowledge should always be the starting point for action.

(ii) **SEXUAL PASSION**

Another form in which emotion is commonly put into use – beneficially, orderly or wastefully is through the satisfaction of the sexual need of man. The focus here is not the science known as sexology but control of this passion which, like anger, is capable of being misdirected.

All people ordinarily have this need. There are a thousand and one ways of satisfying it. What distinguishes the control mechanism of Islam can be found in the following standard:

Narrated Abdullah (r.a): We were with the prophet (S.A.W) while we were young and had no wealth whatever. So Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "O young people! Whoever among you can marry, should marry, because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e. his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse etc.), and whosoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power."

Bukhari Collection

And say to the believing women
That they should lower
Their gaze and guard
Their modesty; that they
Should not display their
Beauty and ornaments except
What (must ordinarily) appear
Thereof; that they should
Draw their veils over
Their bosoms and not display
Their beauty except to their husbands...

Qur'an 24:31

But these standards of controlling and directing man's sexual passion are not empty of responsibility, thus the following tradition of Muhammad (S.A.W):

Narrated Ibn Umar (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards and the things under your care. The *Imam* (i.e. ruler) is the guardian of his subjects and is responsible for

them and a man is the guardian of his family and is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's house and is responsible for it. A servant is the guardian of his master's belongings and is responsible for them. All of you are guardians and responsible for your wards and the things under your care.”

Bukhari Collection

Thus considering man's emotion and its susceptibility to being misused or directed to achieve evil ends even unconsciously, the regret that will result has been checked in Islam. Using anger and sexual passion, one should note that except the nature of the problem is understood and reasonably confronted the results will not be very fulfilling.

THE STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL BELONGINGNESS

Narrated Sahl bin Al-Saedi (r.a): A man came to the Prophet (S.A.W) and said, “O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, (will cause) Allah to love me and people to love me.” He said: “Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what people possess and people will love you.”

Ibn Majah Collection

TO ATTRACT THE GOOD IN OTHERS

The immediate, simplest and commonest form of knowledge that all men can share, relates to what impressions our senses make of them. The care, state and use to which these senses are committed are therefore of great importance to ourselves and to others because of the resulting effects. To this end, the following are recommended for compliance or commitment.

FOR THE EYES

The sense of sight enables one to discriminate between what is familiar and what is not. This eventually leads to the measure or evaluation of what is seen and consequently the decision of liking or not liking. This can then be followed with some reasonable efforts that are considered secure to acquire or enjoy at least the continuous sight of the same or the invitation of a more relevant sense to enjoy the same or avoid it.

Of course there are always many things one can see. Those that belong to you do not always count much. This is because you are not likely to be denied them. But the most tempting are those you are not invited to see, when compared to yours and those you are invited to see, even though this will still depend upon the value you attach to such things, your expectations and previous information you have about them.

The general principle of controlling the eyes and the other senses is that: if you wish to be at peace with people, don't seek what is theirs i.e. do not look at the wife of another person, talk less of liking her and going beyond. Do not look at another person's money being counted. Do not look at ... and so on and so forth. Reference at this point is made to a look that is not innocent.

Both men and women are required to keep their gaze close to themselves. The attraction here is that people feel secure with you in their presence. They always have the room to collect themselves. A man who keeps his gaze will not be a threat to a friend, a relation or a neighbour visited and found going through documents he may not want the visitor to know about. This is an attractive force compared to a visitor, a friend, a wife, a brother, a colleague or whatever who calls on you in the office and suddenly mistakes your office for a library. The resulting behaviour of trying or actually going through official documents along with you will immediately put you off.

While you will have no fear whatsoever in lodging he that keeps his gaze in your private room as a guest, the other will better be lodged in a hotel.

The woman is a symbol of beauty, compassion, etc. and can attract the man and also be attracted likewise. Outside wedlock these are Islamically not permissible. This symbol of the world that all men crave for is therefore used as a standard for a common rule in respect of all men to keep their gaze. Not keeping the gaze could either be a threat to the gazed, make them uncomfortable (especially when he is engaged in an evil thing) or will give him a false/exaggerated sense of worth, leading to pride and arrogance.

FOR THE EARS

Don't be an eavesdropper. How will you feel if you discover that your telephone was tapped; that your private residence was bugged; or that your private meeting with your friend was filmed?

When any of these happens, even though what you might have actually done was not illegal, you will be disturbed by the intention of the other. If he is proved innocent, your future interaction with him is done cautiously. This is because he has the potential to blackmail you, expose you or whatever considering his previous act.

There are many things to hear, no doubt. But it's only those that you are not invited that matter most. It is your attitude to those that makes you attractive to the proper owners of the talk, the message etc. Therefore, the quality and level of your attractiveness is measured by how distant you keep from what you are not invited to hear. When you notice that two or more people are having some private or close discussion, you announce your presence and add that you will wait outside or call later. The worst will be not caring at all and comfortably taking your seat. Of course, this has to do with being positively attractive on universally accepted terms.

Thus, if you consider the police, who are paid, equipped, encouraged and promoted to do these things as a way of, achieving 'their' objectives it is only UNDERSTANDABLE. Interestingly, even police officers do not like being treated in 'their' way. Here again, the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) applies: If you wish to be at peace with people, do not seek for what is theirs (as quoted above, reported by Ibn Majah).

FOR THE TONGUE AND MOUTH

The restraint that is required in this case is similar to what the eyes and ears are capable of informing or doing such as slandering, lying and backbiting. Thus, if the restraint goes beyond this and does not report the evil which the eyes and the ears had actually sensed, the owner is found to be more attractive by men in general.

The logic here is the same. If you are not invited and happen to have accidentally seen or heard something, your loss of attractiveness is not yet fully certified until you betray yourself/the partner(s) by reporting it. That means an accident is not a guarantee, nor an opportunity to play. In the modern form of recording i.e. writing, you will appreciate why researchers easily have access to archives compared to data on current public policies that are considered sensitive. This is exactly why the press is worth its salt depending upon its ability and frequency to report events as and when they occur even if those who are products of those events, people or ideas made into news may actually not feel comfortable. It is this same logic that makes the radio a most effective means of influencing people followed by the television (electronic media) against the newspapers, and news magazines (the print media).

FOR THE PLEASURE AND FUNCTION OF SEXUAL ORGANS

When it comes to the woman and chastity is the issue (not in a sexually permissive society), the seemingly exaggerated response that owners/partners give to intruders can be appreciated. The

intruder, who has had carnal knowledge of a woman not his has lost his attractiveness that was tried by his sight, his hearing (how her voice sounds), exchange of words with the lady and not resisting going to bed with her – with, or without her consent.

This actually explains the weight of sanction against rape, fornication and adultery, not to talk of the risk of lynching, murder, etc. before getting to a court of law for trial.

Deflowering is this sensitive. You are therefore not to do it with or to those who are either by age, by relation or by law not fit or due for sharing sexual pleasure and reproduction of society with you. Even in the present permissive world, things have not degenerated to the level of including one's biological father or mother as sex partners, even if they find each other attractive, otherwise they run the risk of losing one another's respect. More so, if it leaks, that may not be the end of the world for them BUT, that will certainly end or seriously affect their attraction to society.

Therefore, guard your private parts. If you wish to be at peace with people, do not seek what is theirs.

FOR YOUR CLEANLINESS

If you want to be attractive, you will of necessity need to keep yourself clean. In Islam, the following forms are prescribed:

1. Ablution (washing of the hands, mouth, face, feet, cleansing of the ears, rubbing the head) before each 5 daily prayers.
2. Ritual bath on having sexual experience or wet dream.
3. Ritual bath after a woman's menstrual experience.
4. Ritual bath after post natal haemorrhage.
5. Ritual bath for the dead, before burial.
6. Weekly bath before the Friday congregational prayer.
7. Ablution before any voluntary prayer.
8. Washing of clothes at least once in a week.
9. Cutting of nails.
10. Keeping the hair clean.
11. Circumcision for males.
12. Cutting of moustache.
13. Keeping the beards clean.
14. Plucking of armpit hair.
15. Shaving of pubic hair.
16. Cleaning with water after visiting the toilet etc.

It will also be noted that the five daily prayers that go with cleanliness is at the same time a source of spiritual consultation with one's Creator and of benefit to one's physical health. This is because, it among many things includes standing erect, bowing, prostrating and sitting all in a single set known as *raka'at*; and the daily prayers contain a minimum of seventeen.

Who do not like a healthy person? I don't want to be dirty. It is good to keep fit.

FOR THE MIND/HEART

All the restraints and the practice of cleanliness are tied to one directing mechanism - the mind/heart. It is responsible for the control or coordination of the senses for good or for evil.

Narrated An-Nu'man bin Bashir: I heard Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) saying, "...There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart."

Bukhari Collection

Islam requires that it be engaged for the necessary restraints and practices. These are the things to do, to be attractive. Let us reflect on the following:

... And spy not on each other,
Nor speak ill of each other
Behind their backs...

Qur'an 49:12

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "Five things are in accordance with *Al Fitrah* (i.e. the tradition of Prophets): to be circumcised, to shave the pelvic region, to pull out the hair of the armpits, to cut short the moustaches and to clip the nails."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd: Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Whoever can guarantee (the chastity of) what is between his two jaw-bones and what is between his two legs, I guarantee paradise for him."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Malik: Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "... (He) who believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Burda: My father said, "I came to the Prophet (S.A.W) and saw him carrying a *Siwak* (toothbrush) in his hand and cleansing his teeth, saying, "U, U" as if he was retching while the toothbrush was in his mouth."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Hudhaifa (r.a): Whenever the Prophet (S.A.W) got up at night; he used to clean his mouth with *Siwak* (toothbrush).

Bukhari Collection

TO WHOM AND HOW TO BELONG

Man is a social being because he comes, lives and dies in society among fellow men. But it is not enough to be in society, among men. It is more important to belong i.e. feeling or establish a relationship of identity sharing. This means acceptability of one another.

To this end, if one is fine, he attracts men. But, it's not enough to attract men or for a people or any one for that matter, to develop interest in you. It's more important that you feel for them and they also feel for you. This is belongingness. I will try to identify a few of who to belong to and how to do so.

THE PARENTS

For everything one does, there is a foundation, a beginning. The take off point for the social "beingness" of man is in his relation with his parents: the mother and the father. In Islam the following define the instructions on how to belong to one's parents.

Thy Lord hath decreed
That ye worship none but Him,
And that ye be kind
To parents. Whether one
Or both of them attain
Old age in thy life,
Say not to them a word
Of contempt, nor repel them,
But address them
In terms of honour.
And, out of kindness,
Lower to them wing
Of humility, and say:
"My Lord! Bestow on them
Thy Mercy even as they
cherished me in childhood."

Qur'an 17:23 – 24

Narrated Abdullahi bin Amr (r.a): Allah's Apostle said, "It is one of the greatest sins that a man should curse his parents." It was asked (by the people), "O Allah's Apostle! How does a man curse his parents?" The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "The man abuses the father of another man and the latter abuses the father of the former and abuses his mother."

Bukhari Collection

THE NEXT OF KIN

Immediately extending from the parents are one's relations. Allah forbid that one's status of orphanage be defined by the absence of both parents and entire relations - Amen. As a result Islam enjoins kindness towards the next of kin.

Narrated Anas bin Malik (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Whoever loves that he be granted more wealth and that his lease of life be prolonged then he should keep good relations with his kith and kin."

Bukhari Collection

Then, is it
To be expected of you,
If ye were put in authority,
That ye will do mischief
In the land, and break
Your ties of kith and kin?

Qur'an 47:22

Narrated Amr bin Al-'As (r.a): I heard the Prophet (S.A.W) saying openly not secretly, "The family of so-and-so (i.e. Abu Talib) are not among my supporters. My supporter is Allah and the righteous believing people. But they (that family) have kinship with whom I will maintain good the ties of kinship (meaning visit them, help them financially, speak good words with them etc.)."

Bukhari Collection

THE NEIGHBOURS

These are all the people, who by historical accident, you have come to reside in the same area. In Islam there should be a tie of belongingness between you. How to do it? Live by the following standard...

Narrated Abu Shuraih (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! It was said, "Who is that, O Allah's Apostle?" He said, "That person whose neighbour does not feel safe from his evil."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "O Muslim ladies! None of you should look down upon the gift sent to her by her she-neighbour even if it were the trotters of the sheep (fleshless part of legs).

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Aisha (r.a): The prophet (S.A.W) said, "*Jibril* (Angel Gabriel) kept recommending treating the neighbours with kindness until I thought he would assign them a share of inheritance.

Bukhari Collection

FELLOW BELIEVERS

The need to belong to fellow brothers and sisters in Islam all over the world, regardless of any form of artificial differences is only obvious – to strengthen your identity, as an individual and as a collectivity, thus, strengthening the religion.

Narrated Abu Musa: The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "A believer to another believer is like a building which different parts enforce each other."

Bukhari Collection

Ye are the best
Of Peoples, evolved
For mankind. Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong...

Qur'an 3:110

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (r.a): The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) said, "Whoever amongst you sees anything objectionable, let him change it with his hand, if he is not able, then with his tongue, and if he is not even able to do so, then with his heart, and the latter is the weakest form of faith."

Muslim Collection

THE FAMILY

The most irresponsible thing will be not to belong to your family and your family not belonging to you at the same time. How is this to be effected?

Narrated Al-Aswad (r.a): I asked Aisha what did the Prophet (S.A.W) used to do at home? She replied, "He used to keep himself busy serving his family and when it was the time for prayer, he would get up for prayer."

Bukhari Collection

In essence, Islam teaches that men should belong and share with one another in order to maximise good among us, for us and by us. Allah, the Creator of mankind stated that:

O mankind! We created
You from a single (pair)
Of a male and a female,
And made you into
Nations and tribes, that
Ye may know each other...

Qur'an 49:13

For whoever belongs and has a belonging, the likelihood that he will not lose his senses, through frustration, boredom, etc. is certain. But, imagine what will happen to someone who belongs and has the belongingness of parents alone. What happens when the parents are no more? Or, that of the family alone; what happens after that?

What do you think will make one to be deserted by all the levels of belongingness identified above? The principles of Islam rest on goodness, its generation, its symbolism, its propagation. We therefore belong to mankind and should remain so, consciously and effectively.

SERVICING OF ATTRACTION AND BELONGINGNESS

Supposing you walk into a firm, pay for an automobile and make use of it according to the directions given by the manufacturer, it will be incomplete if it does not include how to maintain it. Indeed the duty of servicing the machine goes a long way to determine the health, life span and thus, the reliability or satisfaction to be derived from the automobile.

In the same way, it is not enough to be healthy and to belong, it's even more important to maintain this belongingness. As a social phenomenon, it has the probability of breaking down. But unlike a mechanical instrument, the question of replacing parts neatly is very rear. The assurance of rebuilding confidence, trust after betrayal or giving room for suspicion is always capable of being forgiven BUT not forgotten. Once the brain of the affected has recorded it, it comes to stand permanently and indeed comes up for reference again and again, depending on the extent the effect might have been.

GREETINGS

The cheapest but most valuable means of showing that you care is by greeting or wishing your partner peace. It is cheap because you can almost always (in prosperity or adversity) have the strength to greet. Islam therefore attaches a lot of importance to greeting. This is reflected in the scope of attention given to it by Muhammad (S.A.W).

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "The younger person should greet the older one, and the walking person should greet the sitting one, and the small number of persons should greet the large number of persons."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abdullah bin 'Amr: A man asked the Prophet (S.A.W), "What Islamic traits are the best?" The prophet (S.A.W) said, "Feed the people, and greet those whom you know and those whom you do not know".

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Ayyub (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "It is not lawful for a Muslim to desert (stop talking to) his brother Muslim for more than three nights, the one turning one way and the other turning to the other way when they meet. Lo! The better of the two is the one who starts greeting the other."

Bukhari Collection

In Islam, these standards of greeting outlined are themselves based on the general principle/tradition that when you are greeted, you should return the greeting with a better one or at least with one that is as good. It is completely unbecoming of a believer to thereby return a greeting with one that is worse off. Thus, when some Jews went to see the Prophet (S.A.W), their 'greeting' was "May death be upon you." He answered, only by saying: "Same to you," and admitted them into his house.

UTTERANCES IN GENERAL

The spoken language or utterance is probably the most pronounced and effective means of communication that affects, is always available and used in interaction between men. What to do about utterances?

Narrated Malik (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "... Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet."(i.e. abstain from dirty and evil talk, and should think before uttering).

Bukhari Collection

O ye who believe!
If a wicked person comes
To you with any news,
Ascertain the truth, lest
Ye hurt people unwittingly,
And afterwards become
Full of repentance for
What ye have done.

Qur'an 49:6

Beyond restricting oneself to uttering only what is good or is confirmed, one should always be selective of the appropriate words to use to convey a particular message, in consideration of the effect. Thus, the Prophet (S.A.W) referred to fore-tellers as nothing (meaning liars); (weak) women on camel as glass vessels. In the same vein Umm Sulaim (wife of Abu Talha) told her husband who enquired about his sick son, that "His breath has become quiet, and I hope that he is at rest," when she knew he has passed-away but did not want her husband to become emotional.

HONOURING YOUR GUEST

This is another meeting point. Islam prescribes that a believer be generous to his guest at least for three days. The host is to honour the guest to the extent that if he were observing a voluntary fast, he could break it and if he were to pray throughout the night he could do other

permissible things to please the guest. To further encourage the honouring of a guest it is the tradition of Islam that whatever you provide the guest after the first three days and nights of his stay is charity.

Narrated Abu Shuraih (r.a): Allah's Apostle said, "...The guest's reward is: To provide him with a superior type of food for a night and a day and a guest is to be entertained with food for three days, and whatever is offered beyond that, is regarded as something given in charity. And it is not lawful for a guest to stay with his host for such a long period so as to put him in a critical position."

Bukhari Collection

ON SEAT

Narrated Ibn Umar (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said" A man should not make another man get up from his (the latter's) seat (in a gathering) in order to sit there."

Bukhari Collection

RESPECT

Narrated Rafi bin Khadij and Sahl bin Abu Hathma (r.a): ...The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "Let the older (among you) speak first."...

Bukhari Collection

USE OF HANDS

The shaking of hands, embracing one another and kissing while greeting are all permissible and encouraged.

Narrated Al-Bara' (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said: "No two Muslims meet and shake hands without (their sins) being forgiven before they separate."

Abu Dawud Collection

Narrated Abu Dharr (r.a): Ayyub ibn Bushayr ibn Ka'b al-Adawi quoted a man of Anazah who said that he asked Abu Dharr when he left Syria: I wish to ask you about a tradition of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W). He said: I shall tell you except that it is something secret. Did the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W) shake hands with you when you met him? He replied: I never met him without his shaking hands with me. One day he sent for me when I was not at home. When I came I was informed that he had sent for me. I came to him and found him on a couch. He embraced me and that was better and better.

Abu Dawud Collection

Narrated Ash-Sha'bi (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) received Ja'far ibn AbuTalib, embraced him and kissed him between both of his eyes (forehead).

Abu Dawud Collection

CHARITY

The glue for cementing attraction and belongingness or the materials for servicing them are not necessarily restricted to intangible things. Material things are also inclusive, to make the whole system lubricate effectively. Thus you don't just share by giving respect, extending your hands to shake, embracing, returning or starting a beautiful greeting, you are equally required to be charitable in material things. The implication of this is that you will need to work. Hence, work is required in Islam, so that the fruits can be shared for your own benefit and that of humanity.

Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari: The Prophet (S.A.W) said. "On every Muslim there is enjoined (a compulsory) *Sadaqa* (alms)." They (the people) said, "If one has nothing?" He said, "He should work with his hands so that he may benefit himself and give in charity..."

Bukhari Collection

SYMPATHY

A Muslim should rise in respect for a bier even if of an unbeliever when it is being carried by. He should also visit the sick and thank Allah for granting him good health while he prays for the recovery of the sick.

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah (r.a): There passed a bier and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) stood up for it and we also stood up along with him. We said, "Messenger of Allah, that was a Jewess." Upon this he remarked, "Verily, death is a matter of consternation, so whenever you come across a bier stand up."

Muslim Collection

Narrated Abu Musa (r.a): The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) said, "Visit the sick, feed the hungry and set captives free."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) said, "Allah (S.W.T) will say on the Day of Rising, 'Son of Adam, I was ill and you did not visit me.' The man will say, 'O Lord! How could I visit You when You are the Lord of the Worlds?' He will say, 'Do you not know that My slave so-and-so was ill and you did not visit him? Do you not know that if you had visited him, you would have found Me with him?' ..."

Muslim Collection

SECRETS

Narrated Abdullah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "When three persons are together, then no two of them should hold secret counsel excluding the third person."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Anas bin Malik (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) confided to me a secret which I did not disclose to anybody after him. And Umm Sulaim asked me (about that secret) but I did not tell her.

Bukhari Collection

A Muslim should therefore not divulge secrets or confidential matters entrusted to him.

HOW TO BE YOURSELF

Then which of the favours
Of your Lord will ye deny?
Qur'an 55:13

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR POSSESSIONS

All men are prisoners of one kind or in one form or the other. These are essentially in, by different levels and forms. The primary ones that are inescapable or inevitable are the needs or necessities. The secondary and tertiary ones are wants and fancies respectively. On the whole, while environment and culture may shape the types or forms of any of these levels, the essences remain the same.

For example, food, drink, shelter and may be, sex, are the primary category. Knowledge could be equally classified, but can conveniently belong to the level of wants. This is because while man cannot do without the first category, including an ignorant, the latter can survive (harmfully or inconveniently) without knowledge. Beauty essentially belongs to the tertiary level. The degree of comfort that one enjoys depends on one's ability to make the second and third levels manifest in the first level. Thus one can see this reflected in a well-laid table of delicately mixed, dressed, rich, balanced and delicious foods, drinks and fruits.

Now, all life is inevitably threading the path that constantly seeks to meet and improve these, both in their material, non-material and variant forms. The concept of possession therefore relates to having actually attained a particular state or stage of the satisfaction defined above or the ability to actually satisfy it. As a result, possession is actually what is yours, in your control, at your disposal or available to you.

From the Islamic perspective, the essential capacity of man to generate and direct efforts towards the effective and successful realisation or satisfaction of any or the positive combination of these levels of possession is the gift, the endowment of Allah. This blessing is identified as forms of Allah's favours to mankind. The original source is therefore not the result of any human effort. The claim of ownership is only a trust and the details of the right use for which such capacity products should be put are deservedly finally belonging to the standards defined by Allah. Thus, the Qur'an submits that Allah is the inheritor of the Heavens and the Earth including the things in and between them.

The principle of the use to which all possessions need therefore be put, in the interest of man materially and spiritually is characterised by taking what is one's due and giving to Allah, what is His due. However, giving to Allah, what is His due is not in isolation of society in this world and for the reserved Grace of Allah in the Hereafter. Thus, the entire standards of Islam, the exemplary way of life of Muhammad (S.A.W) and the prescription of Allah as provided for in the Qur'an addresses believers as follows:

This is the Book;
In it is guidance sure, without doubt,
To those who fear Allah;
Who believe in the unseen,
Are steadfast in prayer,
AND SPEND OUT OF WHAT
WE HAVE PROVIDED FOR THEM
Qur'an 2:2 – 3

This singular principle relating to the content and definition of the mode in which possessions (Allah's favours) should be put is what complementarily informs the popular saying that: what belongs to a man is what he is able to utilise while he is alive; meaning that whatever he leaves behind, upon death is logically not his, because it's left to be inherited according to the will of Allah by whomever. These may be proper heirs or not or a combination of them. More so, upon one's death his relations and his deeds while alive accompany him to the graveyard. The material things he accumulates don't even do this. The relations, friends and neighbours return to continue having a feel of life, while the deceased is left to lie in his grave with only his deeds.

It is these deeds that ultimately describe what Islamically constitute the possessions that matter. A vital aspect of this one way of making a living therefore connotes what to do with your possessions (i.e. what seemingly belong to you while alive) in order to actually possess what will ultimately be yours, for your benefit in this world and in the hereafter.

In this context, the favours of Allah, which are the things that man can possess, are numerous. However, I will simply highlight on what to do with a very select few of these.

HEALTH

This is probably the commonest resource that majority of men have the capacity and are successfully able to keep. I am particularly referring to those who attain the age of maturity and beyond. This general, very basic and encompassing possession should be used in the commission and direction of maximising all good deeds and avoiding evil deeds.

Narrated Amr bin Muymun (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "Take advantage of five things before five others overtake you: your youth before you grow old; your health before you fall sick; your money before you become poor; your leisure before you become busy; and your life before you die."

Tirmidhi Collection

So, health is a very big resource. Having life and good health at the same time is an opportunity and a capital in one's immediate favour and that of the future. What a Muslim needs to do with this possession is to maximise its investment.

Thus, in Islam, it will be appreciated that, to keep healthy is to one's personal benefit, a duty to Allah and to the benefit of those among whom your presence will consequently not endanger their own health. The commitment of this to the doing of good deeds is both to one's benefit (in the context of social relation) and a duty to Allah – which in reality is for the future benefit of the healthy believer, by the grace of Allah.

WEALTH

Material wealth (in a higher level) or riches (in a lower level) is another type and form of possession. A believer is enjoined to concentrate the use of this to his needs and to a lesser degree,

the satisfaction of wants and fancies. This is because all will normally remain within the scope of personal benefit in this world; thus, the institution of obligatory charity in Islam.

This is a percentage of what is wholly or totally owned and has remained in one's possession for a year. Certainly, what one is able to keep for up to a year without using, is beyond the need or necessity for the owner. A believer should then commit this to charity and must be given to those who are less fortunate. These are identified in the Qur'an to include the needy, the poor, the traveller, those in debt etc. To strengthen this direction of the use to which wealth should be put, Islam does not limit charity offerings to only that percentage that one is obliged to give out. There is also the non-obligatory charity that is highly recommended. To further ensure that the acquisition or accumulation of wealth is modest, the tradition of Islam strongly prohibits the giving and the taking of usury.

Thus, to emphasise this form of deed with one's possession that will be of benefit to one in this world (considering its social effects or implications) and especially in the hereafter the, Qur'an says:

Who is he
That will loan to Allah
A beautiful loan, which Allah
Will double unto his credit
And multiply many times?
It is Allah that giveth (you)
Want or plenty,
And to Him shall be
Your return.

Qur'an 2:245

POWER

This connotes the ability to get a thing done, arising from authority invested in one or the capability of forcing a thing. Power is most pronounced in respect of those who are in leadership, those in position of responsibility, whether by accident, design or the combination of these.

The possession of power or the ability to influence ordinarily places one in a position of opportunity of reasonable choice, to oppress, to forgive, to mislead, to dictate, to guide or whatever. Like the use to which the possession of good health or wealth or a combination of the two can be put, power can equally be usefully or destructively employed. In the same vein, it has personal, social and spiritual forms or levels of effect or consequences.

The following provisions are definitive and instructive enough.

Allah doth command you
To render back your Trusts
To those to whom they are due;
And when ye judge
Between people,

That ye judge with justice:
Verily how excellent
Is the teaching which He giveth you!
For Allah is He Who heareth
And seeth all things.

Qur'an 4:58

O ye who believe!
Stand out firmly
For justice, as witnesses
To Allah, even as against
Yourselves, or your parents,
Or your kin, and whether
It be (against) rich or poor:
For Allah can best protect both.
Follow not the lusts
(Of your hearts), lest ye
Swerve, and if ye
Distort (justice) or decline
To do justice, Verily
Allah is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

Qur'an 4:135

Allah commands justice, the doing

Of good, and liberality to kith
And kin, and He forbids
All shameful deeds, and
Injustice and rebellion: He instructs you,
That ye may receive admonition.

Qur'an 16:90

KNOWLEDGE

All actions are actions. The criteria for discriminating between actions or types and forms of deeds can only depend upon the knowledge that is related to it. So, in Islam both men and women are enjoined to seek for knowledge; but the knowledge of the religion (guidance) is made compulsory. This is because the worship of a knowledgeable believer is rated higher than that of the person who is not. Hence, believers are enjoined to search for and teach or spread knowledge; yet the transmission of incorrect knowledge attributed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) attracts the curse of Allah and His Apostle. Furthermore, the knowledgeable are identified as the true heirs of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). Indeed, in the Qur'an we find that Allah taught Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) the prayer: O my Lord! Increase my knowledge (Qur'an 20:114).

Narrated Abu Darda': I heard the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W) say: If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.

Abu Dawud Collection

Knowledge is one possession that is in-itself rewarding and when it gets combined with any other or a collection of possessions, such power, health, wealth, etc. increases the value and beauty of the deed that can result positively or negatively. Consequently, one of the traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W) indicates the grades of faith by requiring the best – to change evil by hand (symbolising the use to which power/influence can be put), followed by advice (which can only be permissible and acceptable if based on correct knowledge) and then by dissociation, which is the weakest level of faith.

In this connection, it will be appreciated that knowledge is the only thing that will inform correct correction, correct advice and correct identification of risks which leads to dissociation.

INTENTION

Either before knowledge or between knowledge and action the proper or final qualification of a deed to be good or evil rests on the intention of the doer. In Islam, all actions are supposed to be preceded by good intention. The effect of this is that, there is always the probability of producing or ending up with a good deed. Where a goodly intended deed ends up in an evil result, it is humanly understandable, condonable and Allah forgives it.

In addition, supporting actions with intention has the positive effects of consciousness and responsibility. The strength of this resource and the emphasis for its use combines with the blessing/favour of Allah as revealed in the following tradition:

Narrated Ibn Abbas (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) narrating about his Lord (Allah) said, "Allah ordered (the appointed angels over you) that the good and the bad deeds be written, and He then showed (the way) how (to write). If somebody intends to do a good deed and he does not do it, then Allah will write for him a full good deed (in his account with Him); and if he intends to do a good deed and actually did it, then Allah will write for him (in his account) with Him (its reward equal) from ten to seven hundred times to many more times: and if somebody intended to do a bad deed and he does not do it, then Allah will write a full good deed (in his account) with Him, and if he intended to do it (a bad deed) and actually did it, then Allah will write one bad deed (in his account).

Bukhari Collection

Therefore, in this one way of making a living, it is instructive to note that possessions need be rightly committed for the benefit of oneself, one's social environment (in this world) and as a beneficial investment for the hereafter, by the grace of Allah. This informs the Islamic concept of actions in-themselves not being neutral but a combination of good and evil ones. Likewise, the access or opportunity of both ways being open is only a trial, but those who out of discipline keep to the right deeds by perseverance and patience, will succeed.

THE ULTIMATE ORIENTATION

They fall down on their faces
In tears, and it increases
Their (earnest) humility.
Qur'an 17:109

YOU AND THE ULTIMATE GOAL

The concept of life in Islam goes beyond the present world. Being ONE WAY OF MAKING A LIVING, Islam combines the individual, the group, the society, humanity in this world and an experience beyond. The experience beyond or hereafter is either bliss or punishment for the individual, subject to how he prepares for it. As such, it is not enough to outline the ways in which the individual will fit into the group and the world, without dealing with his own personality. So far, the assumption has been that we are not dealing with one of an unsound or imbalanced mind. In the same way, we will now need to consider how the ultimate goal links the individual up, with the HOW'S for a fulfilling present world experience.

The Islamic concept of the individual Muslim is not that of a robot. A Muslim needs to be with himself, conscious, so as to effectively be with others and more importantly; to be responsible for whatever he does. This makes him accountable, deserving the benefits of his actions as well as the pains that may arise from his actions.

This factor is crucial because a low level of consciousness or effective accidental achievements is not most commendable. The difference between either of these states and that of an ignorant/blank individual is that the latter is immediately identified with incapacity or inability to make any positive impact whereas those in the former states will be seen with the ability to make positive effect but would constantly disappoint. Both experiences are demoralising because they rarely achieve any fulfilment. All the glitter will therefore be of no value whatsoever. What then is the key to this problem? In other words it is not impossible to find a Muslim who prays, washes, belongs, in good health, etc. but remains dull in life, lives only as a matter of routine. He may not be fit for de-classification or being denied the status of a Muslim, but that is not the kind of Muslim we have been talking about. The focus is one/type that models outwardly and inwardly after the best model – Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

Thus, in Islam, the canonical prayers are not in the same group with physical exercises, its fasting is not the same as mere restraint from food, drink and sex (since it helps improve your physical health), its charity is not the same as the declaration of surplus, its pilgrimage is not a tour etc. All of these combine physical and spiritual essences. The following are a few ways of being with yourself which also implies being with your Creator.

IN PRAYER

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) was one day sitting outside among the people when a man came to him and asked, "What is goodness?" He [the Prophet (S.A.W)] said, "That thou worship Allah as if thou see Him. If you see Him not, surely He sees thee."

Bukhari Collection

ON THE SEARCH FOR RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "If Allah (S.W.T) wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion and of course knowledge is attained by learning."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Musa (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "The example of guidance and knowledge with which Allah has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. (And) another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and Allah benefited the people with it and they utilised it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. (And) a portion of it was barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land did not give any benefits). The first is the example of the person who comprehends Allah's religion and gets benefit (from the knowledge) which Allah (S.W.T) has revealed through me (the Prophet) and learns and then teaches others. The last example is that of a person who does not care for it and does not take Allah's guidance revealed through me."

Bukhari Collection

Religious knowledge is therefore compulsory, as a foundation for any other form of secular knowledge. It should inform the type and development of secular knowledge and activities.

CELEBRATING ALLAH'S PRAISES

This consists basically of the remembrance of Allah. A Muslim should not fail to remember/praise Allah at the end of each obligatory prayer.

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a) The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "Shall I not tell you a thing upon which if you act... nobody would overtake you and you would be better than the people amongst whom you live except those who would do the same. Say "*Subhanal-lah*", *Alhamdu-li-llah*" and "*Allahu Akbar*" thirty three times each after every (compulsory) prayer."

Bukhari Collection

Celebrating Allah's praises should not to be limited to the formula above and not to after the five daily (compulsory) prayers. Any commendable extra engagement is very rewarding, fulfilling and draws a servant close to Allah i.e. gives him the Allah-consciousness that is the relevant personality of Islam which is the ultimate goal. This informs the report of the prophet (S.A.W) as relating that for any servant who in addition to fulfilling his obligatory duties commits non-obligatory ones, he continues to draw near Allah and eventually his submission results into Allah becoming his hearing (with which he hears) his seeing (with which he sees), his hand (with which he grasps) etc.

Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "He who remembers his Lord and he who does not are different from each other as the living and the dead."

Muslim Collection

AWARENESS

All of the aforementioned activities will only make sense if the worshipper is aware of the very things he is doing, saying, etc. and relating them to the unity of Allah. For instance, when a believer stands erect in prayer, with full knowledge of what to do, how to do it and commences with the recitation of the following, he will be in total submission.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
Praise be to Allah, The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds;
Most Gracious, Most Merciful;
Master of the Day of Judgment.
Thee do we worship and Thine aid we seek.
Show us the right way,
The way of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Grace,
Those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.

Qur'an 1:1 – 7

It is most preferred that the servant is aware of the importance of what he is saying before Allah (in good behaviour) and his senses submit accordingly. Then he will be with Allah, with himself. Allah-consciousness is therefore defined by the combination of duty, willingness, knowledge, awareness and good behaviour. This is what makes the life of Islam livable and fulfilling for the Muslim. This is how to be yourself. Thus the statement of Yahya bin al-Mu'adh al-Razi: whosoever knoweth himself knoweth his Lord. This is in agreement with a Prophetic tradition reported by Tirmidhi: Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you; be mindful of Allah and you will find him in front of you.

This kind of personality is the one in reference, when the Qur'an says:

...Are those who know equal to those who know not?

Qur'an 39:9

It is this kind of personality that can effectively ponder over the creation of Allah and be open to a positive effect on himself, like where the Qur'an says:

Behold! In the creation
Of the heavens and the earth
And in the alternation of the Night and the Day
There are indeed Signs
For men of understanding.

Men who celebrate the Praises of Allah
Standing, sitting
And lying on their sides,
And contemplate the (wonders of)
Creation of the heavens and the earth,
(With the thought): Our Lord!

Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this;
Glory to thee, give us salvation
From the penalty of the Fire.

Qur'an 3:190 – 191

THE FEAR OF ALLAH

Up to the last chapter, the one way of making a living out of life would appear to have been reasonably set out. However, for a Muslim, the shortcoming of the entire framework and the danger for the believer will be the absence of a definite understanding and grasp of the basis that inform the standard so outlined. Without this basis, the standard will simply look like Islam. Its completion cannot be without the fear of Allah. This fear which combines with love of Allah as a foundation for striving for the good in this world and success in the hereafter is characterised by the following for the remembrance of the believer at all times. This will save the believer from the misleading fantasy that once you are a Muslim that is the end of the road, the attainment of bliss, here and in the hereafter. That kind of conception does not define the realism of Islam, physically and spiritually.

Thus, the personality will rather have his modest livelihood or life style according to the following tradition, contrary to breeding pride, arrogance, self-sufficiency.

Narrated Mujahid: Abdullah bin Umar (r.a) said, Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) "Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveller." "If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take from your health (i.e do good deeds) for (as an insurance) your sickness and (take) from your life for your death (i.e. before you die)".

Bukhari Collection

Why you have to fear? Allah Himself warns:

And fear trial and oppression,
Which affecteth not in particular
(Only) those of you who do wrong;
And know that Allah
Is strict in punishment.

Qur'an: 8:25

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "The (Hell) Fire is surrounded by all kinds of desires and passions, while Paradise is surrounded by all kinds of disliked undesirable things."

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said (that Allah said), "Vowing does not bring to the son of Adam, anything I have not already written in his fate, but vowing is imposed on him by way of foreordination. Through vowing I make a miser spend of his wealth."

Bukhari Collection

...But no one can feel
Secure from the Plan
Of Allah, except those
(Doomed) to ruin!

Qur'an 7:99

Why you must not be hopeless? Listen to Allah:

...And never
Give up hope of Allah's
Soothing Mercy: truly
No one despairs of Allah's
Soothing Mercy except
Those who have no faith.

Qur'an 12:87

As for the Righteous,
They will be in Bliss;
And the Wicked,
They will be in the Fire.

Qur'an 82:13 – 14

...Thy Lord is quick in retribution, but
He is also Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 7:167

Then, he whose
Balance (of good deeds)
Will be (found) heavy,
Will be in a life
Of good pleasure and satisfaction.
But he whose
Balance (of good deeds)
Will be (found) light,
Will have his home
In a (bottomless) Pit.
And what will explain
To thee what this is?
(It is) a Fire Blazing fiercely!

Qur'an 101:6 – 11

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): I heard Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) saying, "Allah divided Mercy into one-hundred parts and He kept its ninety-nine parts with Him and sent down its one part on the earth, and because of that its one

single part, His creations are merciful to each other, so that even the mare lifts up its hoofs away from its baby animal, lest it should trample on it."

Bukhari Collection

So, where are we? The balance is what in Islam is known as modesty, and this can be defined by the following two traditions:

Narrated Ibn Bashir (r.a) I heard Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) saying; "Verily what is lawful is clear and what is prohibited is clear, and between them there are ambiguous matters which are unknown to most mankind. He who avoids ambiguities protects his religion and his fame. And he who falls in ambiguities may fall in what is prohibited, like a shepherd draws near to a reserve and is about to enter it, with his cattle. Verily every king has his own reserve, and Allah's Reserve is His prohibitions.

Bukhari Collection

Narrated Aisha (r.a): Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said, "Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately and know that your deeds will not make you enter paradise, and that the most beloved deed to Allah is the most regular and constant even though it were little."

Bukhari Collection

THE WOMAN IN ISLAM

Ordinarily, a woman is the opposite of a man. She is one companion that mankind has to live with in this worldly life, with different faces and meanings. A woman is one form and type of creation that could add beauty to the world, to living, in the collection of things. But, this is the aspect that is of least relevance.

A woman is one of those blessings of Allah in the world that is a source of immeasurable trials same as power, knowledge, wealth and children. She could be the foundation or support or both, for enhancing goodness or evil. She could be loyal and dependable as a source of peace, solace, encouragement and inspiration for her husband. She could also be the only or strongest weak point or soft spot of her husband in the name of love, with the probable implication of lawlessness or being careless for any consequences, or immodesty.

A woman is therefore the only source of companionship for a man, where he will find both sides of probable good and probable evil fundamentally provided or embodied. The woman is able to satisfy passion or emotion and is also able to satisfy the reason or responsibility needs of a man. Of course this is only from the prejudiced perspective of a man. For a woman, man is also or equally a source of trial for her being good or evil. This is the simple basis of appreciating the fact that whoever plunges into a seriously defined relationship with a woman by marriage should be considered as having gone half way in readiness for struggle to succeed or fail. To live fully, a man needs a woman just as a woman needs a man. For those who are very scared, they are free to totally keep to themselves. But this must be with the right consciousness. After this, the logically easy way of non-committal relationship and intimacy is not permissible in Islam. The avoidance of trials and struggles that are automatically conditioned by a tie of a serious relationship is completely out of Islam.

This means that two levels or phases of relationship can be identified in the course of living in this world, for those who opt to plunge into such serious relationship. These are: before marriage and what follows after the contract has taken place. In the two phases, both man and woman are involved. But, it will appear that the woman stands in a more disadvantaged position based on what can be read from the responses of the society. For instance, most people tend to forget and even forgive the laxity of men even though it is absolutely not possible for such physical experience without the company of the opposite sex. But, for the woman she stands to be doubly checked, examined or tested for having clearly jumped two hurdles, to be honourably accepted and respected. Indeed, even though both of such participants may have the right to expect the same of either party, all men and all married women absolutely keep their eagle eyes on the woman yet to or about to get married. They advise the man to ensure that the expectation is fully satisfied. In addition the women yet to get married (excluding the particular one in proposal) expect the same. The expectation(s) is defined by jumping the first huddle of total innocence in sexual experience. The second is defined by the empirical non-experience of pregnancy. The former defined by virginity is purely private; the second is highly in view for measurement. Indeed the freedom from or absence of the second is not sufficient. This is because women are easily open to being suspected, without proofs. The cover for this includes the allegation or actual confirmation of the use of contraceptives and abortion.

Thus, in the interest of both parties, modern society has come up with solutions. These are what are colourfully but in a veiled form referred to as sex education. But the demarcation between sex education and pornography is either very slim and not humanly easy to control or really non-existent. It will appear that the experts in these assume they will be helping society by explaining the TECHNIQUES/SCIENCES involved in the more difficult aspect of emotion or passion which is responsible for the problem. The logic is that, sex is a need for the majority of men and women. So, if their skill can be sharpened, informed by knowledge and tested practice, men and women are rational and responsible enough to take care of themselves anytime and whenever the need arises be it before or after marriage, within or outside marriage.

Thus, different types of specialists have emerged in order to help society. There are the technicians who commit their whole life to advancing how to derive maximum pleasure from sex - simply between a man and a woman who care. Their morality is opposition to rape. They begin from the harmless foundation of the physiological set up of a woman and that of a man. They then narrow down to specifics: types/forms of vagina, sizes of penis and effect, whether circumcised or not, erotic zones of man, smell of the body, probable responses of handling these and the correct reading of the same. They do not ignore the guidance for the intellect through necessary fantasies. Different styles of sexual relation, the ideal furniture form for each of these. They also advise on how to prolong it. Thus from stimulation to orgasm is carefully and fully covered to the best of their ability. The education also covers the physiological process of pregnancy. Thereafter, other “dottings” like breast feeding and coping with sex are incorporated. This is because, they are desirous of helping married men and women to remain and advance in love after the interruption by a baby. They have observed that the mother is usually tempted to shift her love for the baby while the father and rightful companion for her love is at least temporarily ignored.

The specifics or details of what these technicians care for include everything, anything that will give pleasure. As a result, they do not exclude masturbation, homosexuality, oral sex or sex with a menstruating woman. Thus we can find a woman could comfortably train and live a sexual relation with a dog in the world. In free societies like Nigeria, United States or France, there are numerous BOOKS, FILMS, AUDIO and VIDEO materials spreading the knowledge. Indeed modern world has advanced to the point of caring for men so well that, there are places one will find licensed prostitutes. They satisfy the need of whoever cares and provide revenue for the state. The beneficiary is protected, because they are regularly medically checked. For these experts, the books, the music, practical films and houses are great contributions in the way of saving mankind and society from embarrassing pregnancies as well as satisfying sexual curiosity and needed experience. May be thanks to sexologists.

Those who support this category of specialists are the ‘mechanics.’ What they do is to repair service or build men and women, to control or check any development that is unwanted, not the choice of a man, a woman or both. This could be married or unmarried person(s) or party(ies).

These are the manufacturers of contraceptives, be it oral, injection, loop, spray, and so on – for men or women. Surgical supports in the form of abortion, change of sex, clinical conception, delivery, sterilisation, etc. are also available.

Although all of these categories are or engage in researches (applied) to help society, there are others who focus their attention on the medicine and equipment for the mechanics. These manufacturers come up with drugs and cosmetics by using anything that nature provides. There is no restriction as to what to use. Hence, they pay heavily for foetus not older than three or four months in order to produce creams that enhance the appearance of old men and women who develop wrinkles. The creams also aid to change the complexion of skin and the hair. They have in another aspect developed artificial buttocks for the use of women.

Their association and influence on other ordinary specialists like dress and shoe makers is revealed in the production of what can fit into sexy under wears, night gowns, shoes and clothes. Society gets introduced into this through advertisements, what people call fashion, beauty pageants, and the career now established known as modelling.

The most dangerous form in which they may attack society is as marriage counsellors, at social welfare centres, as doctors or in schools.

Thus for a Muslim woman and for parents of young girls, the problem is real. There is need for guidance and it becomes serious, because sex is one of the very few subjects that even the specialists find difficult to or are able to discuss neutrally, free of emotion. The reason is that, that is what it embodies and its main meaning. Most of us shy away from it and is in my opinion, what makes it socially attractive; and when physical maturity combines with this, the matter becomes explosive. The logical question therefore is how can or how does Islam handle it? And if no deliberate attempt is made to deal or at least begin to handle it, the inevitable vulnerability of our girls to FREE EDUCATION, TRAINING and EXPERIENCE given by these expert helpers of society will amount to our carelessness about the foundation for building future Muslim community.

This in my opinion is not difficult to understand due to various means or avenues that appear to be the origin of a woman's sexual experience. With the exception of rape, a woman can easily be lured into developing or having a rising passion for wanting to experience it through exposure to literature. These could be seemingly harmless and realistic magazines, novels, specialist journals, research reports, albums, adverts, concerts, films, stories, etc. Where and when this is responsible, observers and commentators assume that the victim was foolish or intentionally chose to go into it. Although I will not defend and cannot justify any involvement largely influenced by this type of exposure or background, the point is that, it is a catalyst to what can lead to things that are contrary to the standard of Islam.

Sex could also be informed by some form of 'conditioning.' This seems to be the point or excuse given by those not catered for in school. Those without some form of scholarship. Those who are ashamed of living a modest life style while in company of affluent friends. Everybody wants to eat thrice daily, to change dress daily, change shoes weekly, and use some expensive toilet soap, creams, perfumes; to improve on the quality of these and to even waste a little. Any girl with such small mind and orientation will easily fall prey to any loose grown up man whose wife has lost control of his passion; or one who has the misfortune to have less intelligence than his wealth requires, for control and proper use or an intelligent, responsible and wealthy man on temporary trial or an outright devil who does not see himself as taking advantage to exploit such a girl. Furthermore, sexual experience could result if a girl thinks that only a particular employer can offer

her a job she desperately needs. He simply states the condition as sharing a bed. A variant of this is a student who is bent on passing, without putting in the required effort to study. The teacher simply assures that it is possible, if only they can share their privacy.

I do not consider the circumstance where the relationship is initiated by a threat to be difficult to handle. This is because, in such cases, the imposing party can easily be dealt with. Where it is rape, the law exists. Should a teacher start it, the student can only get into trouble if other teachers are equally loose and the authority is immature. Indeed if the girl is very brilliant, it will be too risky for a teacher, except he is too foolish. For the wealthy and the employer, there are others. I will not dispute that majority of even these are becoming inconsiderate of innocent fellow human beings, but we still have a few that are good. This is the more reason why parents must take seriously the growth, development and support of their children. If they abandon them, 'others' will take 'care' of them on their behalf ANY HOW.

The point here is that, a scenario where a girl simply gives in or even proposes sex in exchange for what she thinks is the only meaning for her life at that point in time, can be guarded against. The case of INNOCENT CURIOSITY, VICTIM OF A DEVIL IN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION or FRUSTRATION hopefully will be reasonably controlled if one appreciates a few basics about the woman in Islam.

This outline is as a result not intended and does not set out to give SEX EDUCATION. Its focus is not sex. It is only part of it. The objective is not to teach HOW but highlight a few things that will provide a woman with an orientation which does not contradict the unity of Allah and submission by compliance to the same. It has nothing to do with rules and it is not to be compared with laudable books that focus on the status of women in Islam. This is intended to be only an impetus, the beginning or the foundation for playing the proper role(s).

So, I pray that the reader will find at least one thing useful for coping with the weak form in which Allah has created men – the reason for struggling to gain the promised bliss by Allah's mercy or ignoring and getting lost by descending to the lowest of the low - from the view point of the relationship between man and woman, before and after getting married.

SELF PRESENTATION

Allah enjoins cleanliness; and beautification is not unIslamic. In respect of women, it should specifically be for the attraction and satisfaction of the husband. To be sure, beautification is completely out of place for either men or women if the intent is to outwit one another or for the world to see. This becomes obvious where it is out of the ordinary convenience or regular mode of one's outfit. Indeed, modesty is the best. Reference here is made to the keeping and disposition of the body by use of dress and makeup.

For women, there is no wrong in the pencilling of the eye brow and even the beautification of the lower eye lids. The hair need be kept clean and could be combed constantly or weaved. This permission does not and must not be extended to include the addition of artificial or foreign hair either of horses or dead people. No woman also needs to fry her hair. That is not natural. For the

hands, up to the elbow and the feet, up to the knee, women are free to give preference to the use of henna. This makes them easier to identify.

The use of perfumes is also enjoined. But, the source or ingredients need to be known or at least, what they are made from need be enquired and confirmed as permissible in Islam. Generally, bleaching which is to deliberately change one's whole complexion is not advisable even for mad people. For the waist, there is nothing wrong in the wearing of beads. In addition, rings for the ears, the nose, the fingers, toes and bangles for the hands and feet are not out of place. The neck can also do with a wear like a lace or chain or beads.

As for the mode of dressing, it may be thick, loose, rhyming and fitting in terms of colour(s) but with no living thing as part of the design - preferably. A head tie, a veil and normal and just fitting shoes will complete a presentable woman. The use of undersized or high-heeled shoes, painting of the lips or upper eye lids will be out of modesty. Very bright colours like red should be avoided. The use of materials mentioned made of pure gold, silver, glass, diamond or silk are all permissible for women.

Similarly, to keep nails like a beast that uses them for protective purposes is not for humans and not for Muslims - men or women. For the purposes of practice, a bath, ablution and complete preparation/self-beautification culminating in the worship of Allah, the praise of Allah and withdrawing to bed to take rest in the blessed cover of sleep is recommended daily. This could be once, twice or three times daily. Intervening factors will be learning, work, good cooking, feeding, etc. This is the Muslim woman for a Muslim man.

And say to the believing women
That they should lower
Their gaze and guard
Their modesty; that they
Should not display their
Beauty and ornaments except
What (must ordinarily) appear
Thereof; that they should
Draw their veils over
Their bosoms and not display
Their beauty except
To their husbands, their fathers,
Their husbands' fathers, their sons,
Their husbands' sons,
Their brothers or their brothers' sons,
Or their sisters' sons,
Or their women or the slaves
Whom their right hands
Possess or male servants
Free of physical needs,
Or small children who
Have no sense of the shame

Of sex; and that they
Should not strike their feet
In order to draw attention
To their hidden ornaments...

Qur'an 24:31

Narrated Abdullah (r.a): Allah has cursed those women who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those who remove their face hairs, and those who create a space between their teeth artificiality to look beautiful, and such women as change the features created by Allah (S.W.T)...

Bukhari Collection

The Hadith emphasises that tattooing or any artificial transformation of one's nature is outside the boundaries of Islam for women as well as men. A woman may therefore preserve herself in this totality of form in her home at all times. As for any business outside, the clothing and shoes minus every other thing will be sufficient.

Thus, if she can afford or be provided with a set of materials to enable her presentation as described above, it is sufficient. Two sets will make her richly and three will make her exceptional. Less than a complete set is not unIslamic. Self-presentation will be complete if a woman is soft-spoken truthful and diplomatic to her husband.

BASIC EDUCATION

Same with men, a Muslim woman is required to be taught and to learn. What is primary and compulsory is religious knowledge, rules, standards, rites, rituals and practices. The absolute importance of this lies in the fact that she is expected to grow and be able to give children basic education and serve as a model. Such an embodiment makes the home safe for the young, protected from socialisation that is not of Islam.

...Allah will
Raise up, to (suitable) ranks
(And degrees), those of you
Who believe and who have
Been granted (mystic) Knowledge...

Qur'an 58:11

Muhammad (S.A.W) was taught and prayed...

..."O my Lord! Advance me
In knowledge."

Qur'an 20:114

Also, Musa (A.S) pleaded with Khidr (r.a)...

"May I follow thee,
On the footing that
Thou teach me something
Of the (Higher) Truth
Which thou has been taught?"

Qur'an 18:66

Narrated Mu'awiya (r.a): I heard Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) saying: "If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion..."

Bukhari Collection

For basic education, the Qur'an comes first. Its reading, proper recitation, memorisation, translation, rendering into mother tongue and commentary. The writing of the same needs to be part of the process. As few as twenty-one thousand authentic reported sayings and deeds of Muhammad (S.A.W) cutting across various subjects of livelihood will not be too bad. These must be on a pure tract of conservatism, what is GENERALLY AGREED UPON. This means that controversies should be OUT.

As an approach and for intellectual and cultural impact, or effect, all children may be given discourses on the grounds upon which the way of life known as Islam is built, for awareness and appreciation. This should be strictly speaking, not intended or directed as meaning teaching of rules.

This is what informed the modest attempt in the few publications of SADAQATU TAYYIBATUN FOUNDATION which can be expanded by the Community of Muslims.

This approach could go along with the teaching of the guiding rules of practice which is an area that the Community is self-sufficient. In this part of the world, Imam Malik and numerous prominent scholars that have evolved on the background of his school provide more than enough in all aspects of livelihood. But care should be taken to avoid mere display of the richness, in providing for all categories of mankind. In reference here is for instance the mode of praying in a war front or at the time of danger, by the sick, the virtually permanently bleeding woman as against in the state of peace, the healthy and normal person.

For the purpose of practice and in the actual practice that children will regularly see to model after, emphasis need be given to the best options. In other words alternatives in the forms of adjustments or amendments should be SECONDARY. For instance, in prayer or ablution, the possibility of omissions or additions, the weight of this and the rules of corrections should not be the emphasis. This may however be of need where a family is having a member with a peculiarity that can be best served by such emphasis. But this may be applicable, where there is a member that is very, very, forgetful or regularly sick etc. More so, both the mother and father should complement each other's efforts in the education of children.

Narrated by Ibn Mas'ud (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) used to take care of us in preaching by selecting a suitable time, so we might not get bored.

Bukhari Collection

It is on this foundation that any formal contract may be built. This is meant by the sending of children to schools which have specifically designed and limited curriculum for exposure. The only guarantee in such contract is that the teachers may have been certified as having passed the exams they were given. It is distant from the assessment of their manners. Schools can therefore be relied upon for the reproduction of such quality. It will then be too ambitious or even unfortunate for a Muslim family to pay school fees, buy uniforms, books, participate actively in Parents Teachers' Association and expect that it is sufficient for the cultural development of their children. This is dangerously so in the case of secular schools. Even with Islamic schools, it must be noted that, they are finally governed by secular rules. Hence, parents that fail or refuse to educate their children will have abandoned their wards for active belongingness in the melting process of producing secular or convenient cultural members in the society.

To enable children constantly reflect on the tenets of Islam, the parents should make efforts in aiding them relate all matters of life to the Islamic perspective. Their comments, observations, analysis and criticisms or curiosity need to be built on the guides given by the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W). In reference here are the identification and activities of people, historical events and ideas. This should attract the children in the immediate and larger family including the peer groups that one's children belong to; and children of neighbours.

TIME FOR MARRIAGE

A Muslim woman needs to know that in Islam, marriage is the standard. The only permissible exceptions are those who cannot or can and actually keep to themselves, by choice.

Narrated Abdullah (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said: "O young people! Whoever among you can marry should marry and whoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power."

Bukhari Collection

By time is meant, when a woman becomes suitable and ready for marriage. The measurable part of it is the physical age. The modest take off point is from the experience of her first menstrual period. If it comes before, there is no harm, but places more responsibility on the husband. If it is after, on the parents lie the risk of her exposure and participating in the sophisticated, complex and expanding world of tests, tastes, and practice in the theatre of 'helpers' of society. Those who opt for the time defined by after or the after of after are definitely only contributing unnecessary complexity for the Muslim community even if they keep to themselves. The necessity that may justify such special consideration for belongingness will include health problem like insanity, lowly rate of physical and mental growth or repetitive failure in getting a husband.

The qualitative aspect of 'time' is mental maturity and orientation in at least the most basic terms or forms or levels. These are education in general and on marriage and the family in particular. It also covers a sufficient display of required manners and attitudes learnt from or by modelling after the mother, in relation to the father and children. More specifically these include loyalty, by submission to the leadership of the husband; intelligence in relation to resolving disagreeable matters with the husband; firmness in relation to decisions taken; consistency reflected

in constant reference to the explicit injunctions of the Qur'an or the practice of Muhammad (S.A.W); modesty in respect of tastes and methods of acquisition; hard-work in relation to earning livelihood; and faith in the forms of striving to the best along with prayer and contentment with whatever results that may come out of this.

Thus, for the majority of mankind, the physical age will be for those within the same age bracket or range. The young with the young, the old with the old.

For Muslim women, the definition of time by the completion of school, the securing of a job or getting married to a man that is single or one that has 'settled' are redefinitions. None of these is directly relevant to physical and mental preparedness for marriage. To be sure, schooling can continue for all life and is not a license for ensuring a better material that is eventually produced. Indeed, what is certain is that the product can be potentially more dangerous - innocently or deliberately. This is easily the case, when one considers a professional properly registered for practice who is a dishonest person. Moreover living is more fluid than skill application. The acquisition of a job is properly a response to the fear of neglect or irresponsibility in marriage life that is squarely built on distrust. The actual implicative meaning is that, one will be prepared to abandon the institution. But, that is not how to solve problems. At least not the lasting way and the proof is that all the tricks of record keeping have not succeeded in perfectly making men accountable for what they do with institutions or organisations. A settled man is from the perspective of the present world ONLY a dead person. All living men need to continue struggling until death. Furthermore, single marital status is not a necessary standard for a smooth experience. The probability is at best fifty-fifty.

Thus, it is the orientation of self-discipline supported by honesty, sincerity, patience, patience defining faith and reasonably measured by witnesses from within and without the family that is required of readiness for marriage when it combines with physical maturity. This is defined by the Qur'an as eschewing sins openly and secretly, by oneself, in company of or along with others.

Islam is built on practice by obedience and not on choicelessness or mere knowledge. It is not enough to know, no matter how much.

WHO TO MARRY

In marriage, the man normally joins or is joined to a woman. The nature is heterogeneous. The first identity of the partner is that he or she must be a Muslim or at least a believer in the unity of Allah, where the woman is at least belonging to the inheritors of a revealed message of Allah. The background of the person does not have to be that of the same language, nation, race or geography. Rather, what is required is that the person needs to share in the belief, knowledge and practice in compliance with the unity of Allah.

Do not marry
Unbelieving women (idolaters)
Until they believe...
Nor marry your (girls)
To unbelievers until

They believe...

Qur'an 2:221

Men are the protectors
And maintainers of women,
Because Allah has given
The one more (strength)
Than the other, and because
They support them
From their means.
Therefore the righteous women
Are devoutly obedient, and guard
In (the husband's) absence
What Allah would have them
guard...

Qur'an 4:34

And give the women
(On marriage) their dower
As a free gift; but if they,
Of their own good pleasure,
Remit any part of it to you,
Take it and enjoy it
With right good cheer.

Qur'an 4:4

As for the distinguishing status in the relationship of the two coming together, the man normally and in most cases proposes and asks for the hand of the woman in marriage. This is sealed with a token gift that is instituted as the right of the woman. But nothing in this context or by this provision makes it prohibitive for the woman to be the first to propose it or for the woman to provide the token gift for herself on behalf of the proposed man. Also, the active initiators may be representatives/trustees/guardians. Nevertheless, the rule in the last case is that, they must belong to the first level of generation recognised by (Islamic) law. Thus, the father comes before the uncle, the man before woman and the brother (who is mature) before the grandparent.

As regards the latitude or scope of those one can get married to, it stretches from the narrow endogamous plane to the extensive exogamous plane, provided it does not include those expressly defined or identified by the Qur'an as within the prohibitive degree.

Prohibited to you
(For marriage) are:
Your mothers, daughters,
Sisters; father's sisters,
Mother's sisters; brother's daughters,
Sister's daughters; foster mothers
(Who gave you suck), foster sisters;

Your wives' mothers;
Your step daughters under your
Guardianship, born of your wives
To whom you have gone in,
No prohibition if ye have not gone in;
(Those who have been)
Wives of your sons proceeding
From your loins; and two sisters in wedlock
At one and the same time...

Qur'an 4:23

More so, the factors of attraction for either men or women but especially in the case of women (because they are the ones whose hand is normally sought) include physical and natural build or beauty, the amount of wealth they own, political or social position, that is of useful relevance for the advancement of the course of Islam or knowledge combined with piety. But preference is to be given to the combined qualities of knowledge and piety. That is the standard of Islam, the tradition that Muslims should strive to establish and entrench. The logic of this is not far and difficult to grasp. Of all the factors these are the only ones that can properly belong to one and do not diminish, no matter how it is shared. In addition, they cannot be taken away by use of brute force. The others shift with time or are at least open to the great risk of being lost. For beauty, it fades with age. Wealth can be stolen or seized. The same applies to power. An additional distinction of the combination of knowledge and piety is that it guides to Allah better, thus an invaluable asset for life hereafter.

Thus the independent choice or recommended choice of a partner needs to give priority to the weight of knowledge and piety already established. Although physical fitness, political and economic security must not be ignored, where the weight can be identified, preference is to be given to knowledge and piety. Where it is yet to be reasonably established, the potentials may not be enough. This means that the degree of probability application needs to be as low as possible in the identification of the partner. This also means that a blank ignorant is completely out of consideration.

Thus, for the purpose of compatibility, two disabilities or deficient people need not be encouraged. But one with knowledge and piety can beautifully and positively join any of the others. The principle is that this world, this life, the present, here and now are temporary and will pass away. Investment should be for the hereafter. Islam is built on belief, piety and submission or obedience to the commandments of Allah. It is not built on aesthetics, rubbish or arrogance. This is because the heavens and the earth, their content, fashioning and order by implication, all belong to Allah. Marriage as a holistic but micro means of reaching Allah should preferably not be built on other than what belongs to Allah. For mankind, what rightly belongs to them (if they know) is servitude, submission, obedience.

SEXUAL RELATION

In Islam, two basic conditions define the parties and terms of sexual relationship. The parties must be of opposite sex and married. By implication, homosexuality is out-rightly prohibited. Also

the opposite sexes must be human beings, an admixture of married and unmarried persons or parties that are both not husband and wife are all out of question. It is therefore wrong for two differently married persons.

But this does not mean that a man could not have more than one sexual partner, provided they are married and the parties do not exceed four at any one time the wives are counted. As for the women, they must not have more than one husband. Polyandry is not Islamic.

...Marry women of your choice,
Two, or three, or four;
But if ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly (with them),
Then only one...

Qur'an 4:3

Where a man has more than one wife, the relevant principle of sexual relation, as a matter of responsibility is to relate in turns. This standard is without prejudice to seven days or three days of reception to be accorded a new wife who had previously never been married or one who has had a marriage experience respectively or when one forfeits hers for another.

The state of the wife must be that of cleanliness which is freedom from menstrual flow or bleeding resulting from child birth for instance.

They ask thee
Concerning women's courses.
Say: They are
A hurt and a pollution,
So keep away from women
In their courses, and do not
Approach them until
They are clean...

Qur'an 2:222

Narrated Jabir said: Allah's Apostle (S.A.W) said: Why didn't you marry a young girl so that you might play with her and she with you?"

Bukhari Collection

...But when they have
Purified themselves,
Ye may approach them
In any manner, time or place
Ordained for you by Allah.

Your wives are
As a tilth unto you;

So approach your tilth
When or how ye will;
But do some good act
For your souls beforehand...

Qur'an 2:222 – 223

Sexual relation also need be private, strictly by the two specifically married persons. This implies that the place must exclude any third party. It must not be for show, for sale, for pay, as a hobby or a profession or part of any of these.

So, in Islam the provision for a mutual union through mankind's beingness in order to strive in the course of submitting to Allah is completed. The husband and wife can work, share joys, sorrows, struggle, play and cohabit in the name of Allah. The comfort that can be attained in this relationship rests on the spirit of men that is often in a state of flux, fluctuating between the permissible and prohibitive degrees - the control of which is submission or compliance, in accordance with what Allah has allowed or enjoined. Hence, there is no restriction as to the time and method or style to be employed, provided it does not contradict what is explicitly commanded. As for the turbulence of human spirit, an ordinarily seeming party of suitability will be for those that belong to the same class or category of age, social, economic and political identity. Where they differ one should be superior to the other. This enables the superior carry along, the other. The point here is that the immediate and potential(s) or probability of coming to belong to a given class is the issue. It is not one, in isolation of the other.

It is in this total sense that the husband and the wife become a garment for one another; the wife described as the farm, while the husband is the farmer and tilling being the meeting point. Thus, the fruits or harvest may or may not include children. In marriage, righteousness comes first. That is a promise of Allah, for those who strive in the doing of good and Allah blesses as he chooses.

In the event of a family getting blessed with a child or children, Allah has freely provided the mother's breast milk for its/their up-keep. The parents have to gradually adjust to the delicate needs of the new member. Allah has prescribed a period of two years as the duration of breast feeding. But, this provision is not an obligation in two senses. The husband and wife could both decide not to complete the two years granted. Also, in the event of a problem in getting the breast milk, the parents will not be falling short of the commandments of Allah or a failure in righteousness. The breasts primarily belong to the husband and breast feeding is not menstruation.

The mothers shall give suck
To their offspring
For two whole years,
If the father desires
To complete the term...

Qur'an 2:233

FAMILY SIZE

For the benefit of doubt, there is no rule in Islam stating *inter alia* that monogamy is the rule and that polygamy is the exception. Any intellectualism that impresses such is informed by the cultural trappings of the fellow. Indeed because monogamy does not compel or guarantee obliging responsibilities in the relation between husband and wife it stands out clear that the central basis upon which treatment should be meted out to one's partner is JUSTICE and fairness. Moreover, justice has nothing to do with rigid mechanics. In other words the man with two wives will not be satisfying the required standard by drugging the two of them when only one is sick. Men must as a result not grow up with the orientation or expectation that there is any inherent qualitative difference in the practice of monogamy against polygamy. In the same manner women must not grow up with the misbelief that there is such difference. What there is in marriage is that each woman gets independently married to a man. Thus the contract or nullity of marriage in respect of one woman does not affect another.

The other directly related rule is that no Muslim man is permitted more than four wives, all in all. This could be in the same day, hour, and time or at intervals. By implication no woman must enter into marriage relationship with a man with four wives already. Temporary marriage is no more permissible. Concubines are not directly justifiable in the present generation, in Nigeria, at the time of this writing.

To be sure, pets are not part of an Islamic family. Thus, the aspiration or dream of one wife, one car, one dog and a palace are not the components of a family in Islam. Furthermore, there is no given number of children that a family is mandated to have. Indeed, the more, the higher the probability that the family will contribute to the size of believers that belong to the generation of Muhammad (S.A.W). But that contribution is intended to be of quality identity defined by faithfulness.

Consequently, the distinctive difference between monogamy and polygamy is the probability of a restricted against an expansive or variant exposure to trials requiring struggle for sustenance and building of righteousness – the only basis for maximizing spiritual upliftment. The matter is entirely that of probability because the spiritual or religious disposition of women is not the same, is not equal. In other words, as far as marital problems are concerned, one wife does not guarantee more peace than more. The same applies to children that will be born to a family. That is to say, realistically, numbers do not in any sense have the meaning of all parties or things as equal. Family members are not economic variables. Women must therefore note that the more and tougher the trials one is faced with, the higher the probability of rising higher on the ladder of spiritualism. This is what the status of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) informs. He was the most tried, the one that struggled most; and the most successful, with the help of Allah, in whom he placed all his faith and trust, fear and hope.

When a woman therefore proposes to join an already married man or a man proposes to have another wife, what must be uppermost is not the faith and understanding or abilities of a party but both. The same rule applies in the case of a spinster and a bachelor. A sane party may not propose joining an insane. The guiding rule is probability. There is no absolute assurance or license.

The concept of a family in Islam is not that of isolated or alienated spouses. It includes their parental generations, the community, at the local level and beyond, cutting across language, race, nation(s) previous generations and those that may succeed them. Faith is the root of such identity.

THE BIRTH OF A FEMALE CHILD

Muslim parents must recognise that from the view point of the Creator of mankind, the bearing and birth of a female child is neither unfortunate nor fortunate. It is particularly wrong to nurse any idea to the effect of miscalculation, regret, disgrace or ridicule. A child is simply one of the blessings of Allah, for those He wills it to be, when, where and how. The child is also an innocent party. As a result, what becomes of the child as a matter of foundation or background building is what the parents make of it.

The first responsibility of the parents is giving the daughter a good name. Thereafter, parents need to lead all others to call her by her name. This is most proper. The Muslim woman is not expected and must not hide the good name of her daughter, no matter who has a similar name. The mothers of the faithful (wives of Muhammad S.A.W) were greater and better and are called by their names. All others must therefore be encouraged to call her by her goodly chosen name.

Thus, in the process of supporting this potentially good contributor to the community, parents must constantly ensure that what is objectively good for her is not jeopardised by mixing her interest up with any form of temporary misunderstanding that may come up between them. Neither the father nor the mother needs to be blamed for the state of the child. Both are squarely responsible. They are to do their best and leave the rest to Allah.

In Islam, it is part of faith to Glorify Allah for blessing an individual with an offspring or a number of this. The secondary desire for a particular sex must not be built on the orientation of preference. The employment of the services of mechanics to have a particular sex is not necessary. A Muslim woman does not need to do this. Any woman who submits herself for use as a laboratory specimen must note that she has at least turned her privacy into a workshop. That will be at best, a thing for achieving some fancy. Since Islam is built on modesty, this reduction of oneself into workshop is not necessary even for mere curiosity such as to know the probable sex of the child one is bearing in advance. It is one thing that leads to another. The principle here is the protection of a woman's privacy. Unlike the man's privacy, hers is total, excepting the feet, the hands to the wrists and face. This is the law. Muslim women must ensure that they do not go beyond the bounds on the grounds of fancy. The men of law have agreed that only absolute and circumstantial NECESSITY will temporarily allow for a brief breaking of the law.

Allah bestowed His blessings on women in different measures, some with, some without any measure. A woman is not a lesser Muslim if she is healthy for the performance of her religious obligations and bears no child. Having one or not having any does not enhance or reduce (in itself) her standing before Allah. Indeed, while those who have are faced with the trial of building a good member of the community; if not for the mercy of Allah, the one who does not have would logically be at an advantage. She will be more disposed for worship - what all Jinns and men are created for. It is against Islamic principles for a woman to give her parents any grandchildren as a matter of

duty. Before Allah, that is not an obligation. Muslim women must therefore not go out scouting for any.

My dear, neither sex preference nor is scouting one of the things that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) left behind for us to pursue for guidance. Thus, when marriage is contracted no list or number of children is attached or stated as a condition. Praying for it, trusting in Allah and contentment with fate is Islamic faith.

FOR THE PREVIOUSLY MARRIED

These are those who have had proper marriage experience but for some cause gotten out of it. Their number logically reflects the experience of the community. For instance, their status might have resulted from the loss of their husbands in a justifiable war, in the course of submitting to Allah. It could also be a reflection of the level of mistakes committed in contracting marriages, informed by ignorance. Low importance attached to the institution of marriage is another factor. All these lead to rampant, seasonal experiences of divorce or the engineering of same in order to keep some local trend of things or tradition to remain together. Unlike where a husband becomes insane or dies, most of the factors leading to dissolution of marriage are avoidable. Knowledge and perseverance should reduce temptations that courts of law are made to face.

The plea to this class of women is that they should get married. Although they are to be sympathised with, for losing grip of half of the religion, they pose additional danger to the health of the community since they can easily mislead a lot of people in the community. For example, they can be innocently copied by the younger ones who may develop a crooked ideology that if a single woman could live well, it is an option for livelihood. They could also lure both married men and women into secondary livelihood by responsibility for men and contentment for fellow women.

They should be rarely or exceptionally seen or heard and should make re-marriage their priority as a practical way of contributing to developing the proper culture of sustaining the community. Falling out of the union of marriage should be exceptional and a thing of regret. That is the standard tradition. The community can assist them by material support and offering them opportunity for leadership, prominent appearance or hearing **ONLY AFTER RE-MARRIAGE**.

PRIVACY FOR THE FAMILY

The Muslim woman is required to strictly guard and allow privacy. This is what defines her integrity, rather than being a show piece for other than to her husband. Thus, when she is out of her husband's house or a cause that is in accordance with Shari'ah, she is required to conceal her beauty.

O Prophet! Tell
Thy wives and daughters,
And the believing women,
That they should cast
Their outer garments over
Their persons (when abroad)...

Qur'an 33:59

When they return or are in their domain, their freedom, their privacy must be strictly respected and not be interfered with by other than their husbands. Indeed for the husbands and the wives, they are required to pay this respect when either is outside and just about to get into the house. For the none-member, he or she should honourably turn back in the absence of any response or when specifically asked to do so.

O ye who believe!
Enter not houses other than
Your own, until ye have
Asked permission and saluted
Those in them...

If ye find no one
In the house, enter not
Until permission is given
To you if ye are asked
To go back, go back...

Qur'an 24:27 – 28

Accordingly, not even children are permitted to intrude into the privacy of their parents when they are likely to be taking rest. This is especially relevant for those of us who live in the tropics. Impliedly neither parents nor in-laws have the right to simply break this provision. Those who fail to respect this will logically find the institution of marriage as upheld by them often vulnerable to break down or indeed taking a form that is not in conformity with Islam, even though they may claim to be Muslims.

In the same vein, and in full consideration of the imperfection of man and especially the man or husband who is to be initially looked upon as the leader of the family, Islam has provided a standard procedure for reconciliation in the event of communication breakdown. This is especially or easily alleageable in a polygamous set up. The standard procedure informs or instructs that the trials that are conditioned to be faced in marriage life, be it in a monogamous or polygamous set up are capable of being attended to. The background must not be mistaken, other than that of providing the family with some identity of or by independent personality development. Thus:

Ye are never able
To be fair and just
As between women,
Even if it is
Your ardent desire:
But turn not away
(From a woman) altogether,
So as to leave her (as it were)
Hanging (in the air).
If ye come to a friendly
Understanding, and practice

Self-restraint, Allah is
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 4:129

...As to those women
On whose part ye fear
Disloyalty and ill-conduct
Admonish them (first),
(Next), refuse to share their beds,
(And last) beat them (lightly):
But if they return to obedience,
Seek not against them
Means (of annoyance)...

If ye fear a breach
Between twain,
Appoint (two) arbiters,
One from his family,
And the other from hers;
If they wish for peace,
Allah will cause
Their reconciliation...

Qur'an 4:34 – 35

The family is therefore, in respect of women encouraged to invite the wife and the daughters by relaying the stories and modelling after righteous examples like Nana Asiya who lived with circumstances of unbelief; Nana Maryam, the hand work of Allah; Nana Khadija and Nana Aisha, mothers of the faithful; and Nana Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad (S.A.W). Muslims must as a matter of rule and practice distance themselves from whatever may lead to mixing up freely - between men and women.

POSTSCRIPT:

SINCERITY THE KEY TO SUCCESS: THE CASE OF ISLAM

Without assuming the correctness or appropriateness of Islam as an outlook, as a religion, as a way of life, it may be asked, and rightly too, the justification for accepting and submitting as a Muslim. This will be right, for every one and especially for one not born into Islam. It will not be out of place for one who is born into Islam, to further convince and satisfy himself. Islam does not expect and does not admire blind followership by men like a flock of sheep. The question may be rooted in not being justified for Islam presenting itself or merely claiming to be right, appropriate or fitting. Thus the standard for testing this and whatever is not complex, difficult. It must be tied to sincerity.

While this test is universally applicable to every enterprise, any call, any activity in history, for success; and while not only one can be claimed, the case of Islam is one. Art can claim sincerity for its success. Science can claim sincerity for its success. Fashion can claim sincerity for its success. Politics and Law can make equal claims. Indeed magic can claim sincerity. But the objective is not to dispute, compete or struggle with others directly. The objective here is to state or present the case of Islam.

As a result, the invitation is to look at the argument of Islam in order to be doubly sure, for those who have already made up their minds and to share with those who may come to or still have some doubt, about it.

YOU CAN'T BE JUST SINCERE

At this point, it must be made clear and emphasised that you CAN'T BE JUST SINCERE. This is because sincerity in-itself has no meaning, has no relevance, is of no use. Sincerity is beyond understanding and you can't just understand anything. Sincerity involves belonging to, ahead of the head and frame of mind or impression. In other words, it means orderly belongingness to a definite, a specific, and a particular totality. If science is total, then one can have a sincere scientist. If democracy is total, one can expect to have a sincere democrat. If secularism is total, then one can talk of a sincere secularist; and the totality must be primary.

Sincerity is, to one's best, informed by knowledge, in practical submission or the basis for required practical submission. With the attribute of sincerity, the backup idea for a given practice deserves consideration for expected positive or beneficial result or outcome. That is, a sincere behaviour expects a definite positive response to follow it. Two parties must necessarily be involved. Even if it is just an individual, the effect of his bodily activity must be positive or expected to be positive on his spirit, mind or psych. A yogi is therefore sincere in his practice of yoga. A Muslim whose prayer does not have the effect of curbing him from the doing of evils and his spiritual upliftment is engaged in a valueless devotion. Thus in the event of mistake(s), the failure to attain or achieve the objective result, can be tolerated or overlooked – because there has been a mistake. This does not mean that the back-up idea and the practice is not capable of being instrumental to the objective. The popularity of adultery or the high level of avoidable divorce cases attended to by civil courts in largely Muslim settlements is not sufficient to dismiss the sincerity of

Islam. The essence of sincerity is that it is and can be found or discovered to be right in itself. It does not require any fighting, struggle, competition, comparison, defence against another whatever, to be right, to be capable of enabling the practitioner attain the positive and definite result. It can also be shared by another person just as it can be practiced by another person. It cannot be separated from positive and definite result(s) informed by an idea, words of submission, confession, declaration, information or knowledge but must be part of a totality.

However, sincerity does not have to be the effect of a truth or set of this that is all and all or absolute. The truth that is momentary can produce or give effect to sincerity. Thus, in the development of scientific knowledge, at a stage it was undisputed that the world or earth was flat only to be later discovered to be spherical. As with knowledge, it can be in respect of an experience, an event or a person, that is observed or sensed.

The only test for sincerity is CONSISTENCY, FREEDOM FROM DELIBERATE CARE, GUARD, PROTECTION or CAUTION in order to conceal and still achieve the claimed positive results. The most critical is that, sincerity is not the attribute of an idea or practice but of the person, being or beingness that voluntarily or otherwise is affected by an idea (consciously or unconsciously) and is practically involved.

Consequently, the dangerous implication of sincerity is that, IT MAY NOT IN-ITSELF BE ENOUGH. In other words, a sincere person can be rightly jailed or punished. The rightness or consistency of sincerity does not amount to correctness in terms of value or acceptability. It is therefore too bad to be insincere and bad enough to be sincere for what is unacceptable. This is precisely the basis and justification of efforts to establish sincerity by testing the elements that are believed, understood or expected to define the consistency or rightness of the related ideas and actions against those that contradict it. This is what lawyers specialise in doing by cross examination, while the courts rule based on the evidence before them. If you are sincere it does not guarantee safety or correctness in itself. An accused who easily confesses is liable to be punished.

In Islam, what define its sincerity include the following:

- (i) There is no compulsion in the affair of the message of warning and good news for those who all are free to volunteer a choice.

Let there be no compulsion
In religion: Truth stands out
Clear from Error: whoever
Rejects Evil and believes
In Allah hath grasped
The most trustworthy
Hand-hold, that never breaks
And Allah heareth
And knoweth all things.

Qur'an 2:256

(ii) In addition to the exclusion of LURING as a method of inviting men into its fold, it must be free of charge i.e. without any FEE.

Or is it that thou
Asketh them for some
Recompense? But the recompense
Of thy Lord is best:
He is the best of those
Who give sustenance.

Qur'an 23:72

These were the standards set for and lived by the model practitioner of Islam, Muhammad (S.A.W). Physical war was not commenced without the specific commandment of Allah. As a rule or standard, Muslims are only justified to fight, to protect or defend themselves, and by implication, their faith. This was dramatically revealed in the displeasure of Muhammad (S.A.W) on being informed that one of his companions executed an unbeliever who submitted in order to save his life. Muhammad (S.A.W) confronted the companion with the loaded question, if the faith belongs to him or to Allah? Thus, non-Muslims can safely live under the dominion of Islam. Today, we experience Islam's absolute sincerity, because we all do what we like the way we like, with or without lip service to the standards of Islam. The proof is that, we are largely ignorant and careless of our religion. We are divided, not aiding one another in the doing of good, competing in the doing of good, in inviting others to the doing of good. We have nothing to dissuade us from these. We abundantly have unbelievers and misbelievers `aiding' us to make us `better' Muslims. We therefore follow their ways and dress it with the name of Islam. Haven't you heard of Islamic Democracy? Islamic Socialism? We are taught that they are secular and then we give it the label. Allah is great!

But, you can't be just sincere. It is not enough to claim sincerity. Whether your consistency leads to correctness or not that is only one element, for the decision of acceptability does not in itself just matter. It must constitute of TRUTHFULNESS, whether complete, absolute or momentary. The facts that are in reference are distinct from those that are value laden, the cults of facts. They must be undisputable, sure, certain, cannot be excluded, ignored, omitted, undeniable and can be shared, not particular or peculiar to the person submitting. It must be universal, transferable/shareable, as far as getting the message or impression is concerned. It basically has nothing to do with interpretation as opinion is secondary.

The test for truthfulness is CONFIRMATION by the actor or the participant and this confirmation must not be limited to one or a particular person, it must be capable of being shared. So, for Islam that claims universal relevance, it must not be restricted to any scope of any people over others. Whatever it claims must be applicable, for results, to all men across the globe, irrespective of race, nationality, language, level of civilisation or barbarism - once they decide to join. In the case of Islam, we will need to confirm conclusively, the following:

(i) If Muhammad (S.A.W) was true.

He was a human being born to Abdullah and Aminah in Mecca, of the Quraish clan. He was married to Khadija and then to Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr. He fought wars, died and was buried.

No reward do I ask
Of you for this (Qur'an)
Nor am I a pretender.

Qur'an 38:86

We did send Apostles
Before thee, and appointed
For them wives and children...

Qur'an 13:38

(ii) If the Qur'an was revealed to him for the benefit of all creations.

He was not literate. He had no previous knowledge of the Qur'an before it was revealed to him. He was cautioned against being in a hurry – but to only convey as it was revealed because no messenger says or instructs, of his will.

And this is a Book
Which We have sent down,
Bringing blessings, and confirming
(The revelations) which came
Before it; that thou
Mayest warn the Mother
Of Cities and all around her...

Qur'an 6:92

And thou wast not (able)
To recite a Book before
This (Book came) nor art thou
(Able to transcribe it)
With thy right hand...

Qur'an 29:48

Move not thy tongue
Concerning the (Qur'an)
To make haste therewith.
It is for Us to collect it
And to promulgate it.

Qur'an 75:16 – 17

...It was not (possible)
For any Apostle
To bring a Sign except
By the leave of Allah...

Qur'an 40:78

...It is not
For us to bring you
An authority except as Allah
Permits...

Qur'an 14:11

(iii) If he was strangely sent.

He was in the company of previous known and recorded Apostles like Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa.

We have sent thee
Inspiration, as We sent it
To Noah and the Messengers
After him: We sent
Inspiration to Abraham,
Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob
And the Tribes, to Jesus,
Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon,
And to David We gave
The Psalms.

Qur'an 4:163

(iv) If we can confirm, share and understand the Quran.

We were not living, we have come to live and will irresistibly die before arising alive again. We largely come to life through the processes of sperm, blood clot, and flesh formation. All that is within space and time is transitory or must change and actually changes. Water is instrumental for life - for men, animals and vegetation. Pharoah, *Safa*, *Marwa*, *Ka'aba*, *Badr* are not untrue.

And We have indeed
Made the Qur'an easy
To understand and remember:
Then is there any that
Will receive admonition?

Qur'an 54:17

Man We did create
From a quintessence (of clay).

Qur'an 23:12

After that (life), at length
Ye will die.
Again, on the Day
Of Judgement, will ye be
Raised up.

Qur'an 23:15 – 16

Then We made the sperm
Into a clot of congealed blood;
Then of that clot We made
A (foetus) lump; then We
Made out of that lump
Bones and Clothed the bones
With flesh; then We developed
Out of it another creature,
So blessed be Allah,
The best to create!

Qur'an 23:14

Set forth to them
The similitude of the life
Of this world: it is like
The rain which We send
Down from the skies;
The earth's vegetation absorbs it,
But soon it becomes
Dry stubble which the winds
Do scatter: it is (only) Allah
Who prevails over all things.

Qur'an 18:45

It is He Who has
Created man from water...

Qur'an 25:54

It is He who sendeth down
Rain from the skies
With it We produce
Vegetation of all kinds...

Qur'an 6:99

And cattle He has created
For you (men)...
And ye have a sense
Of pride and beauty in them
As ye drive them home
In the evening, and as ye
Lead them forth to pasture
In the morning.

Qur'an 16:5 – 6

(v) If Allah (S.W.T) is true and that all affairs are His.

His Lord is the same Lord of previous Apostles. The same Lord spoke to Musa directly. The same Lord blessed Sulaiman with the convenient command of men, Jinns and wind. By the will of the same Lord, Isa healed the sick and raised the dead. He neither ate nor shook hands with or was he related to Allah. He was a servant. The forgiveness or punishment of believers and unbelievers is not his business.

Then leave Me alone
With such as reject
This Message: by degrees
Shall We punish them
From directions they perceive not.

Qur'an 68:44

Whether We shall show thee
(Within thy life-time)
Part of what We promised them
Or take to Ourselves thy soul
(Before it is all accomplished).
Thy duty is to make
(The message) reach them:
It is Our part
To call them to account.

Qur'an 13:40

But for sincerity, the consistency or agreeability of the facts, the evidence or truth(s) are not sufficient for relevance to men. This is especially so in respect of a mode of life that recommends itself or is recommended for membership or following. The truth will require that the caller is found or seen to be faithful to it. Sincerity completely negates the principle of DO AS I SAY AND NOT AS I DO. Imperialism is completely in negation of sincerity as a basis of relationship.

Faithfulness involves giving up to, totally, completely, free of prejudice, without association, colouration, modification, amendment, adjustment or reform. The submission or commitment must be pure and simple; without reservation, without addition. Just as informed by the truth(s); innocently, abidingly. Anything short of this, the person, the personality, the personification, the model, the truth(s) and the consistency will all become questionable or at best accept our scepticism. Hence, for sincerity, we must be able to understand the truth(s) and we must be able to share the consistency in this and in the submission or commitment of the example or locus of display. Faithfulness is therefore the proper or empirical test for the truth(s) of livelihood which we should be able to appreciate to be able to accept the rightness of sincerity as correct - whether momentary or permanent.

For Islam that claims universal relevance as a body of truth(s) and the model being Muhammad (S.A.W), we will need to establish not only the universality of the truth, the understandability of this, the consistency in these but the faithfulness of Muhammad (S.A.W).

In the case of Islam, the truth(s) boil down to the declaration, witness to and submission to the absolute and consistent unity of Allah and the Apostleship of Muhammad (S.A.W) who is or as the model. We can certify the faithfulness of Muhammad (S.A.W) by just taking the following as compelling pointers.

(i) He was taught, he declared as a definition and as the specific response to those who reject thus, in principle and the history he made. This is what we find in the chapters of unity and unbelievers respectively.

Say: He is Allah,
The One and Only;
Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;
He begetteth not,
Nor is He begotten;
And there is none
Like unto Him.

Qur'an 112:1 – 4

Say: O ye
That reject faith!
I worship not that
Which ye worship,
Nor will ye worship
That which I worship.
And I will not worship
That which ye have been
Wont to worship,
Nor will ye worship
That which I worship.
To you be your Way,
And to me mine.

Qur'an 109:1 – 6

(ii) He turned towards Jerusalem as previous Apostles of Allah and immediately changed towards *Ka'aba* as directed by Allah, in disregard of what unbelievers might say and actually said. Allah made this compliance a form of trial for those who declared their faith.

...And We appointed the *Qibla*
To which thou wast used,
Only to test those who followed
The Apostle from those
Who would turn on their heels
(From the faith)...

Qur'an 2:143

The Fools among the people
Will say: "What hath turned

Them from the *Qibla* to which
They were used?” Say:
“To Allah belong both East and
West...”

Qur'an 2:142

(iii) He was taught and believers are to follow the same step of asking for only Allah protection as Muhammad (S.A.W) himself actually did when he fell sick. This is what we find in the chapters of Mankind and Daybreak

Say: I seek refuge
With the Lord
And Cherisher of Mankind,
The king (or Ruler)
Of mankind,
The God (or Judge)
Of mankind,
From the mischief
Of the Whisperer
(Of Evil), who withdraws
(After his whisper),
(The same) who whispers
Into the hearts of Mankind
Among Jinns
And among Men

Qur'an: 114:1 – 6

Say: I seek refuge
With the Lord of the Dawn,
From the mischief
Of created things;
From the mischief
Of darkness as it overspreads;
From the mischief
Of those who practice
Secret Arts;
And from the mischief
Of the envious one
As he practices envy.

Qur'an: 113:1 – 5

(iv) He suspended taking honey, unaware that the remark on the ‘odour’ of his mouth was informed by selfish and destructive jealousy. But Allah commanded him and he returned to what Allah had made legal, whether it will offend his consents or not. It is Allah that matters

O Prophet! Why
Holdest thou to be forbidden
That which Allah has
Made lawful to thee?
Thou seekest to please
Thy consorts. But Allah
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 66:1

(v) He continued to encourage his freed slave to accommodate his cousin in marriage even after they found themselves incompatible. He was afraid of what will become of the faith from the impressions that men may get. But Allah guided the affair because it is His and Muhammad (S.A.W) submitted. The husband formally divorced the wife and Muhammad (S.A.W) got married to her. Honour belongs to Allah, to submission to His commandments.

Behold! Thou didst say
To one who had received
The Grace of Allah
And thy favour: "Retain thou
(In wedlock) thy wife,
And fear Allah." But thou
Didst hide in thy heart
That which Allah was about
To make manifest, thou didst
Fear the people, but it is
More fitting that thou shouldst
Fear Allah. Then when Zaid
Had dissolved (his marriage)
With her, with the necessary
(Formality), We joined her
In marriage to thee.
In order that (in future)
There may be no difficulty
To the Believers in (the matter
Of) marriage with the wives
Of their adopted sons, when
The latter have dissolved
With the necessary (formality
Their marriage) with them.
And Allah's command must be fulfilled.

Qur'an 33:37

As a result, we can bear witness to the fact and effect that Muhammad (S.A.W) conveyed the truth and was himself faithful to the truth. This confirms his sincerity. In other words he is trustworthy. This is because honesty is an orientation informed by truthfulness and faithfulness. His sincerity is the effect, result and reflection of these attributes.

That sincerity leads to success is only logical. It means that sincerity enables one on his own, in relation to others and necessarily in the recognition of oneself and others to achieve, to attain, to reach a goal that is consciously set out for. Sincerity enables a court to comfortably pass a judgement, to pass a verdict -whether correct in the judgement or assessment of the plaintiff and the accused or not. In other words, it may be and it may not. The point is that it provides the foundation and guts, the morale, justification and understanding of the ultimate act of the court. It enables lawyers to proceed on the belief that they will certainly arrive at acceptability once the parties in dispute and witnesses are placed on the agreement that they will submit all the truth, nothing but the truth in the course of their being cross-examined.

The test for the relationship between sincerity and success is trial. If you therefore try democracy you will get results. If you try military rule, it will give you results. If you try colonialism, it will give you results. If you try monarchy, it will give you results. If you try magic, it will give you results. If you try imperialism, it will give you results. If you try press license it will give you results. If you try unionism it will give you results. If you try secularism, it will give you results. In the same vein, mechanised agriculture, subsistence agriculture, monetary economy, free enterprise will all give you results.

In the case of Islam, was it successful? Is it succeeding? Will it succeed?

(i) Muhammad (S.A.W) as an individual succeeded and tremendously too. He lived, struggled and died a fulfilling life. History has not recorded any individual comparable with him.

(ii) As a system, Islam was instrumental in overthrowing *Jahiliyya* system and extensive expansion beyond the immediate home country of Muhammad (S.A.W).

(iii) The system is still inspiring men and nations across the globe after over one thousand and four hundred years.

(iv) Unlike socialism, it has no basis for its own crumbling.

(v) It is not being sustained by wars\sanctions like in the case of democracy.

(vi) In spite of the corrupt practice of Islam by Muslims all over the world for centuries now, it is the real threat to and fear of increasingly violent democracy.

(vii) It sourced systematic development of science, arts, education etc.

(viii) It promises to succeed in the life after death.

The distinctive relation between the sincerity of Islam and success is its status of completion, perfection, totality and finality of truth(s). It requires not and cannot be improved upon. It is for that reason an outlook and a mode that is not evolving or to be developed. This justifies its confirmation of the principle that no man, no believer, no Muslim can be sincere in the perspective of Islam and at the same time be sincere in any perspective other than Islam.

The implication of this is that any admixture of the Islamic standard with another type or form of sincerity will place the practitioner on the continuum of distance or variation from the goal of success. And the end of the continuum is apostasy. This also implies that before apostasy, the practitioner may not be said to be totally out of Islam, but will certainly not be said to practice/represent Islam nor its pure goal of success. However, the inevitable consequence of any admixture is that the practitioner(s) will be faced with unjustified, unnecessary, avoidable crises on the path to success.

For example, a Muslim cannot be sincere and at the same time be secular. Such admixture makes the Muslim unpredictable - not knowing when he will be a Muslim and when he will be secular. The result or effect of such is that the success (if that is what it will be called) will neither be here nor there. For, what can you say of a hearing person that decides to take rest on the approach of gunshots, or a deaf man who keeps a collection of audio instructional materials strictly for his own use, or a blind man that spends a lot of his time and resources on watching slides?

Allah has not made for
Any man two hearts
In his (one) body...

Qur'an 33:4

This explains the crises of a Muslim or Muslims who has/have certain level of sincerity joined to Islamic sincerity. Thus, a Muslim who is also a secular democrat will bribe and rig elections. He will declare himself a winner even before he is declared. When he is invited to accept loss as the will of Allah, he will be shocked and will invite the enemies of Allah as his witnesses. He will in fact ask them to help him. Also, a Muslim scholar will call for the social ex-communication of a fellow Muslim, to establish democracy that is secular. Such a Muslim-cum-secularist will pay or evade state tax, not care about *Sadaqat* and *Zakkat* and will make kick-backs, deals, over invoicing as his means of economic livelihood. He will take loans for a purpose and use them for another.

In Islam, sincerity is the key to success which must be based or built on knowledge and experience that does not deviate from submission to the unity of Allah consistently. It is not a hobby. It is not an affair of special or excessive intellectualism.