

*THE ORIENTATION OF
A MUSLIM*



II

MUHAMMAD SA'IDU JIMADA

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Muhammad Sa'idu Jimada

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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

Muhammad Sa'idu Jimada's work is a remarkable achievement emanating from one who cannot be described as an Arabic scholar. He was simply brought up as a Muslim in an environment that is essentially Islamic in every sense of the word. He grew up with an insatiable crave for Islamic knowledge and he reads extensively Islamic literature available to him in English and in Hausa. He also seizes the opportunity to discuss the subject with anyone who shows interest in or elicits knowledge of the subject. The result of all this is revealed in the six volumes he has written dealing with the Basis of Islam, The Orientation of a Muslim, his Livelihood, his Identity, his Primary Status and the effects of man's Decision or Indecision.

This book, volume 2 of the works, deals with what the author calls the Orientation of a Muslim. The title indeed establishes the urge in every human being to respond to universal stimuli in order to find a satisfactory and responsible direction in his existence. Indeed, having realised that in the circle of existence, the lower end derives its *raison d'être* from the upper end representing the excellence of the eternity and pre-eternity of Allah, he accepts the inevitable relationship between man and his maker. In this way he responds to the stimulus of spiritual call to worship only Allah and to shun the worship of all things other than Allah.

A Muslim accepts the need for an intermediary between pre-eternity and his transient life. Thus he accepts the necessity of having Holy Prophets and has faith in their divine messages especially in the last one, *Sayyidina* Muhammad (S.A.W). This belief in the reality of Allah and His messengers shapes the thoughts and conduct of every Muslim in such a way that he submits himself to Allah and His commandments as conveyed to him by Allah's Prophets.

The book is certainly meant for believers and is radiated by the light of *Iman* that one is drawn to reach it again and again. The Qur'an and the Hadith are the basic ingredients of the book and not erudite polemics. I have no hesitation in recommending it for the education of all Muslim youths.

Ambassador Nuhu Mohammed
Durumi,
Zaria.

INTRODUCTION

Godliness in Islam simply means being with Allah by threading on His path with faithfulness, for the identity of belonging to the vanguard of Islam. To achieve the ultimate objective of meeting Him in peace, those who choose to will need to begin with the first step in that direction. Ordinarily, for anyone who desires to work, celebrate or to worship his Lord, this first step involves doing away with all that will ruin the process of reaching the ultimate objective.

For instance, the first step involved in conducting laboratory experiment is to set up the apparatus, while in the case of worship (particularly prayer), is the cleansing of one's body, clothes and place of worship. Likewise, for a mechanic, it may mean washing/cleaning, before replacing any part(s); for a barber, combing the customer's hair before employing the clipper; for a teacher, it may be cleaning the chalk-board or ensuring it is the right students, classroom and time for the course to be delivered. A warrior's first step on the battle field is to identify the enemy, his location and strength and as for a builder, it is the clearing of land, just like for a cook; he begins by cleaning/washing of utensils.

Thus for any identity, the foundation is that the person must be seen to have cleaned and prepared himself. An experimenter in an unprepared laboratory, a worshipper at a refuse site, or a warrior who has no idea and cares not for the logistics of meeting the enemy cannot be properly identified as such, will not be employed for service, and does not matter in the scheme of identification. At best the person will be considered as insane, useless to himself and requiring the help of the society to put him aright. A cook, food seller, a wife, a restaurant or hotel that does not clean utensils will lose job, husband, customers, etc. A producer of any kind avoids wastes if he cannot eliminate it altogether, for optimum results or output.

The first chapter therefore attempts to highlight the first step to godliness, righteousness or piousness in Islam by outlining a few specifics for a Muslim's identity – as an individual and as a community. Thus, for a Muslim and for Muslims the first step to belong to the vanguard of Islam is AVOIDANCE. If you keep off the DON'TS, then you can be sure to have prepared for a journey on the PATH.

But in the measurement of the minimum requirement and expectation for a Muslim's identity, this is not what makes him distinctive. Non-Muslims could share similar/the same don'ts, just as you don't have to be a chef to clean your utensils before cooking. This outline does not focus on the stem of identity. It does not define the VERY DIFFERENCE. This is only the first step, the primary, the beginning. For instance, while both Muslims and non-Muslims of the same gender will normally prepare their shared bed, the Muslim(s) will lie down in opposite direction. This is what identifies/distinguishes him.

Still, this difference is not the VERY DIFFERENCE because the preparation is limited only to the body. As a result, avoidance is the lowest standard in the path of godliness in Islam. To be found wanting at this level is therefore bad enough but is certainly does not imply being OUT OF ISLAM.

I am therefore inviting the reader to join me in the prayer that Allah aids us in our efforts to consistently KEEP OFF HIS DON'TS; that it becomes our HABIT so that we may move to the

higher steps of identification, which will make us reach our ultimate goal of meeting Allah in peace, by His Grace, Forgiveness and Mercy - Amen.

The second chapter covers the commandments or injunctions of Allah. In other words, after the cleaning up exercise follows necessary activities that need or have to be performed. For the completion of any activity, after doing away or clearing those things or elements that are not part of it, the next step involves putting in place all the things that need to be – ranging from the major(s), to the very minute ones.

The status of this kind of believer, professional or worker is that he has gone beyond preparing and has achieved something recognisable as proper, logical, basic, essential or necessary. It does not however, in itself satisfy the customer, the client or the objective. This is the state of the worshipper. The majority of worshippers can attain this status.

The essence of this level of performance is that it grants one the right of identification, to belong to believers, such professional group, etc. For this reason, he will no doubt attract customers or be identified as a Muslim and associated with as such. Indeed, the logical effect and conclusion that will be granted a mechanic that can put in place a spare part after cleaning/oiling or whatever, is that the machine will work when started.

The distinctiveness of this status is that, it is only those that belong to this group that can be compared and graded as good, better, best, bad, worse or worst. None of them will be denied such identity of belongingness. Those who have not gotten to this stage, are not aware and cannot understand the joy or difficulties of righteousness in Islam.

Thus, that a believer is able to do or commit any or all of the requirements outlined in this chapter must not be mistaken for arrival at the destination of GODLINESS as such. The satisfaction or completion of the two steps does not in themselves certify one as godly. This is a subject that will follow – by the Grace of Allah. In other words, at best, one can only say of such a practitioner or such a worshipper, that he is good enough. He is no doubt, comparatively better than the believer who merely stops at step one as this status is NOT the standard that defines piousness per excellence in Islam.

In the third chapter is a modest compilation of prayers and Praise of Allah. This is because in Islam bodily or physical efforts are to be supported by deliberately invoking or seeking the help, assistance and guidance of Allah to that effect. The totality of these is the evidence of one having submitted his being in the service of Allah.

Submission to Allah is what defines Islam. To be Islamic is to be submissive to Allah. Yet, this should be in accordance with the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad (S.A.W). In this respect, obedience could be by avoiding or by deliberate commission. It could also be by employment of one's senses or orientation. A believer may submit as an individual, in relation to another person(s) or as a member of a group – the family or the community.

The prayers, praises and supplications presented in the chapter are restricted to those revealed in the Qur'an. It is therefore most commendable that they should be recited in Arabic, being the language of Muhammad (S.A.W) and the language in which Allah (S.W.T) revealed His

Message/Guidance for our benefit and as a Mercy to all creations. It is recommended that after a fair appreciation of the sequence in which I have attempted to arrange it, the reader may consider that as an individual and as a family, it is constantly rehearsed. Considering Allah's instructions as regards remembrance, this could be repeated in the mornings and in the evenings. May our submissions be sincere, as we allow it to influence us, with the hope that we shall receive the Mercy of Allah – Amen.

The fourth chapter that follows is intended to be a single discourse with the single message that Allah is one. The reader would have achieved the objective of the effort if it brings to his consciousness the nature of the unity of reality in Islam and for a Muslim, if it uplifts his faith. Given the nature of the subject matter, as much as possible I have invoked the Qur'an, to put the message across. The chapter is therefore as good as being a commentary on the unity of all reality, the unity of Allah, from the Islamic perspective.

In Islam, the unity of Allah is what is expected to orient the beliefs and actions of a Muslim. It's meaning and required influence rests in the fact that Allah alone deserves to be submitted to and He alone guides unto the straight path which assuredly provides fulfilment in this world and success in the life after death.

The effect of a conscious reading of this piece will hopefully open up the reader's heart and thus his understanding. I pray that it makes him to know and live accordingly. It is to serve as a source of inspiration and a brush for cleansing one's heart, hence should be returned to again and again.

Thus, for a Muslim, it is the orientation of thought that this chapter attempts to convey so as to serve as the foundation for informed, correct, fulfilling, hopeful and confident livelihood in accordance with the rules of Islam. The one without the other is incomplete but this is the basis for the other, otherwise the practice of the rules will not be understood, enjoyed or effective. This is the livewire that distinguishes the quality of commitment to the rules as against practising as a robot.

I therefore hope that by this book, the reader will come to grasp the AVOIDANCES, COMMITMENTS and SUBMISSIVE orientation of a Muslim or a community of Muslims, who are propelled by the unity of Allah.

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THE FIRST STEP TO GODLINESS IN ISLAM

NOT WORSHIPPING OTHER THAN ALLAH (S.W.T) WHO IS ONE

In Islam, the unity of Allah and faith in Him absolutely prohibits any form of association with Him by a Muslim. In this respect, nothing and no one is close or sufficient by any description, attribute and whatever to be likened in the interim, for, or with Him. Even the heavenly bodies are not to be individually or collectively mistaken for Him, taken instead of Him or employed as a means to Him.

Among His Signs are
The Night and the Day,
And the Sun and the Moon.
Adore not the Sun
And the Moon, but adore
Allah, Who created them.
If it is Him ye wish
To serve.

Qur'an 41:37

Since none other than Allah is to be adored or served, then only Him is to be called upon. We adore, we serve and call upon only what will benefit us or from which we expect some benefit. When it comes to preparing for the journey to meet Allah, the believer will not call on other than Allah. That will be a mistake, it will be wrong, it will not be relevant to the preparation for godliness in Islam.

Nor call on any,
Other than Allah;
Such will neither profit thee
Nor hurt thee: if thou dost,
Behold! thou shalt certainly
Be of those who do wrong.

Qur'an 10:106

So call not on any
Other god with Allah,
Or thou wilt be among
Those under the penalty.

Qur'an 26:213

Faith and submission to Allah should not be mixed up with passion. Blood relation or kinship ought not to be a barrier against righteousness in Islam. In other words, the complexity of human social need for belongingness must not be allowed to interfere with dependence on Allah alone.

O ye who believe! Take not
For protectors your fathers
And your brothers if they love
Infidelity above faith.

If any of you do so,
They do wrong.

Qur'an 9:23

Thus, Muhammad (S.A.W) and those who willingly desire to prepare for journeying on the path of Allah are warned:

These are among the (percepts
Of) wisdom, which thy Lord
Has revealed to thee.
Take not, with Allah,
Another object of worship,
Lest thou shouldst be thrown
Into Hell, blame worthy and rejected.

Qur'an 17:39

NOT USING THE NAME OF ALLAH AS A COVER OR AN EXCUSE

With regards to faith in the unity of Allah and the need to do good to oneself and to fellow men, Allah's name must not be invoked to defend any wrong. The believer is required to accept full responsibility for all sins he commits; nevertheless, he is expected to immediately repent and follow them up with good deeds. The name of Allah should therefore not be employed to justify before or after a commission of what is wrong and harmful.

And make not
Allah's (name) an excuse
In your oaths against
Doing good, or acting rightly,
Or making peace
Between persons;
For Allah is One
Who heareth and knoweth
All things.

Qur'an 2:224

The preparation also excludes exploitation – rightfully or wrongfully – in the name of Allah so as to mislead. Traders who are fond of this dangerous practice have through time now established a culture of being related with such regardless of their oaths. But Allah is not One to be employed for mischief, with the consequence of gaining immediate prize to be followed with losing our honour and making our faith a matter of no consequence. For, one who makes his faith a subject of amusement, what can he expect to attract, in the matter of his faith? Why do you have to swear to Allah, to gain what you don't deserve? Why do you even have to, when it is not very necessary? The socio-cultural effect of such is both within the community of fellow faithfuls and without the community of faithfuls, because they see the highest point being toyed with - they don't get attracted.

This state of dirt or unpreparedness for threading the path of righteousness in Islam is responsible for the difficult experience of not being able to analyse the behavioural pattern of a people who claim to be Muslims but use the name of Allah to take life unjustly or cheat on others. Which one is which? Such culture is not part of what is required of Muslims, of believers, for godliness in Islam.

And take not your oaths,
To practice deception between yourselves,
With the result that someone's foot
May slip after it was
Firmly planted, and ye may
Have to taste the evil (consequences)
Of having hindered (men)
From the path of Allah,
And a mighty Wrath
Descend on you.

Qur'an 16:94

But traders are not the only ones in this evil of taking cover in the name of Allah to do wrong. Even preachers that spread the word of Allah are not granted the excuse of doing that.

O ye who believe! There are
Indeed many among the priests,
And anchorites, who in falsehood
Devour the substance of men
And hinder (them) from the way
Of Allah. And there are those
Who bury gold and silver
And spend it not in the way
Of Allah; announce unto them
A most grievous penalty.

Qur'an 9:34

Preparation for piousness in Islam has to (in respect of faith) be devoid of EXCHANGE. The believer is not expected to recant his words given in the name of Allah, no matter what material gain he stands to benefit. Also, it's of no importance, whether the benefit is sought for or advanced to him. For Allah, the Creator of all things is in the best position to reward and compensate him.

Nor sell the Covenant of Allah
For a miserable price:
For with Allah is (a prize)
Far better for you,
If ye only knew.

Qur'an 16:95

Nonetheless, preparation does not imply that believers should proceed in their activities without depending upon Allah – following their intention and efforts. Those who submit to Allah must not pretend to be self-sufficient, to be independent, not to be in need or assume to be in full

knowledge and control of their future.

Nor say of anything,
"I shall be sure to do
So and so tomorrow" -
Without adding, "So please Allah," ...
Qur'an 18:23 – 24

For those who wish to prepare, they have to ensure these facets of avoidance and heed the warning:

As for those who sell
The faith they owe to Allah
And their own plighted word
For a small price,
They shall have no portion
In the Hereafter:
Nor will Allah
(Deign to) speak to them
Or look at them
On the Day of Judgement,
Nor will He cleanse them
(Of sin): they shall have
A grievous penalty.

Qur'an 3:77

Avoiding (as a sanction) the use Allah's name to do what is wrong also includes identifying those who do such and not joining them in their evil.

Turnest thou not
Thy attention to those
Who turn (in friendship)
To such as have the Wrath
Of Allah upon them.
They are neither of you
Nor of them, and they
Swear to falsehood knowingly.

Allah has prepared for them
A severe Penalty; evil
Indeed are their deeds.

They have made their oaths
A screen (for their misdeeds):
Thus they obstruct (men)
From the Path of Allah:
Therefore shall they have
A humiliating Penalty.

Qur'an 58:14 – 16

NOT GIVING ATTENTION TO THOSE WHO DENY ALLAH NOR COMPELLING ANYONE TO JOIN THE PATH.

In the relationship between a believer and fellow men in general, preparation requires that he does not give attention to or join those who deny the unity of Allah. Doing this logically contradicts consistency in faith.

So hearken not
To those who
Deny (the Truth).

Their desire is that
Thou shouldst be pliant:
So would they be pliant.

Qur'an 68:8 – 9

More so, one's identity does not require that any other person(s) be forced or lured into the Faith, as it is voluntary. Willingness is what makes one's faith true and pure.

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

NOT DISCRIMINATING IN THE USE OF MOSQUE

The believers are not to design, construct and restrict the use of any mosque to the exclusion of any other believer(s)/faithful(s) in the unity of Allah. This is because a mosque is the property of Allah immediately it is completed. Generally, mosques are desirable for they encourage congregational worship and unity among believers.

Similarly, non-believers are not to be tolerated in barring believers from the use of any mosque. If this happens (without any honest justifiable reason), it is an invitation to war. Moreover, investing in the building of mosques by unbelievers with the intent that believers are denied access to and use of them is illogical and uncalled for.

It is also imperative to point out here the implication of dividing or interfering with the togetherness of the Muslim community (even if not deliberately), where a chain of mosques are

erected in a row with no reason of proximity or inconvenience considered. Those who consciously do this in order to be DIFFERENT without the intention of segregating the community and those who secretly do so to actually DIVIDE the believers, need to be discouraged. For, while they may not absolutely discriminate against fellow worshippers, they have provided opening(s) for such.

The principle and tradition of not turning believers' residences into graves by not praying in them is not a basis for the egoistic show to build a mosque in every house, in every street, across each road in chains. Muslims should note that the construction, maintenance and use of regular mosques are most preferred. The Ummah is not better by a thousand Imams in a community of forty thousand. This is worse off when we have some fifteen regular mosques with ten situated in two areas, none of which is up to five hundred metres distant from the other. To further worsen the situation, five of them are Friday congregational mosques. The logical implication of this is that unity of the Ummah through the mosque, along with the headship and guidance of a generally accepted leader as the fundamental basis for the development of consensus is defeated.

Honour and respect develop out of competition and strive; and leadership on earth is not to be attained by war, within the community. If by the expansion of population, Muslims begin to see or experience the inadequacy of a central mosque, which should motivate them to plan for expansion rather than heed to the escape route of simply increasing the number. Also, the practice of mosques being identified by names of people just because they can afford it or have sponsors; and those known by names of clubs or movements which by so doing are or intend to be “different,” should be discouraged. Since there is no maximum number of mosque capacities, the technology is there today for effective management; and the more the need for worshippers to struggle/inevitably hasten to the mosque, the BETTER. If you don't want to walk a long distance to the mosque, you will not benefit from enough preparation for it. The man who has to walk for half a kilometre every Friday will normally be more prepared mentally and physically, compared to the one who sights the mosque from his house.

And who is more unjust
Than he who forbids
That in places for the worship
Of Allah, His name should be
Celebrated? Whose zeal
Is (in fact) to ruin them?
It was not fitting that such
Should themselves enter them
Except in fear. For them
There is nothing but disgrace
In this world, and in the world
To come, an exceeding torment.

Qur'an 2:114

NOT IGNORING THE GUIDE BY MUHAMMAD (S.A.W)

For the faithful, it is all of the above that define the preliminary basis which support responding to the instructions, the saying and practices or traditions of Muhammad (S.A.W) that must not be ignored. In other words, the complementary preparatory requirement for faithfulness in

the unity of Allah is that believers must not turn deaf ears to the Apostle of Allah when he speaks, because he does not say nor does anything except with the command and guidance of Allah.

O ye who believe!
Obey Allah and His Apostle,
And turn not away from him
When ye hear (him speak).

Nor be like those who say,
"We hear," but listen not;

For the worst of beasts
In the sight of Allah
Are the deaf and the dumb,
Those who understand not.

Qur'an 8:20 – 22

All these are informed by the introductory principle and practice of avoiding what is contrary to submission to Allah and by extension, the religion of Islam.

If anyone desires
A religion other than
Islam (submission to Allah),
Never will it be accepted
Of him; and in the Hereafter
He will be in the ranks
Of those who have lost
(All spiritual good).

Qur'an 3:85

NOT TO LIVE TO EAT

It is necessary for anyone preparing for the journey on the path of righteousness in Islam to make sure that his livelihood is not characterised by eating, eating and eating, living to eat. The material benefits in life must not just be consumed or used up. That is not what needs to be done with surpluses. A believer should therefore very strongly consider investing surpluses by mixing it up with the efforts granted him by Allah. The beginning of this is commerce and merchandise.

O ye who believe!
Eat not up your property
Among yourselves in vanities;
But let there be amongst you
Traffic and trade
By mutual good-will:
Nor kill (or destroy)
Yourselves: for verily

Allah hath been to you
Most Merciful!

Qur'an 4:29

NOT TO WASTE SURPLUSES

The believer is not expected to be a spender or an extravagant – small or big. It is wrong to inculcate the attitude of spending unnecessarily the moment one acquires surpluses legally and properly. Rather, Allah has provided openings for employment of surpluses, which will definitely check unwarranted SPENDING unrelated to or beyond basic needs. It is impossible for anyone to be such a spender, if he aids his relations and the poor as instructed by Allah, with the benefits He has given him in trust.

And render to the kindred
Their due rights, as (also)
To those in want,
And to the way-farer:
But squander not (your wealth)
In the manner of spend thrift.

Verily spend-thrifts are brothers
Of the Evil Ones;
And the Evil One
Is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful.

Qur'an 17:26 – 27

NOT TO EMPLOY RESOURCES IN A WAY THAT WILL ENABLE ONE USURP OTHERS'

The prohibition of using all that one earns, for those that are blessed with more than their needs (which implies permission to trade), will logically lead to further expansion of resources. But, while the means of trade, commerce or merchandise are allowed, it must not be mistaken for ANY MEANS. Thus, no person in authority ought to be 'PAID'; dispose others of their rights; or gain anything by manipulating those entrusted with resources or rights for sharing according to justice, in order to increase one's resources.

And do not eat up
Your property among yourselves
For vanities, nor use it
As bait for the judges,
With intent that ye may
Eat up wrongfully and knowingly
A little of (other) people's property.

Qur'an 2:188

NOT TO ALLOW BENEFITS GET INTO ONE'S HEAD AND DESTROY HIS HUMBLeness.

It is most improper for a believer to allow himself to get enslaved by any benefit Allah endows him with; be it riches, children, knowledge or power/influence. If any or a combination of these are positively enjoyed according to the rules of Allah, the trustee will not lose his sense of humility. Such loss is contrary to the requirements for threading the path of godliness in Islam.

O ye who believe!
Let not your riches
Or your children divert you
From the remembrance of Allah.
If any act thus,
The loss is their own.

Qur'an 63:9

In more specific sense, a believer will for example, not ordinarily resolve or by the support of an oath, deny or withhold the surpluses prescribed for spending, from any of the parties identified for sharing in the benefits granted him by Allah. This may be the poor, needy; one's family and relations being denied material benefits or support; the ignorant refused enlightenment or the weak prevented from getting access to justice and forgiveness. The logic of this lies in the fact that the benefits are of universal or common need by men, thus even those who offend us are granted the benefit of enjoying fundamental support through social relations. Like the generosity of Allah cuts across beliefs, Muslims are enjoined in the same spirit, not to discriminate against offending fellow faithfuls.

Let not those among you
Who are endued with grace
And amplitude of means
Resolve by oath against helping
Their kinsmen, those in want,
And those who have left
Their homes in Allah's cause:
Let them forgive and overlook.
Do you not wish
That Allah should forgive you?
For Allah is Oft-Forgiving
Most Merciful.

Qur'an 24:22

By ensuring that one does not withhold what Allah has made the right or due of others from what he has been entrusted with, a believer will be doing justice and not become a spendthrift. The consequences of not abiding by this rule of compulsory and voluntary charity are too obvious – economic, political, cultural, and so on.

And withhold not things
Justly due to men,
Nor do evil in the land,
Working mischief.

Qur'an 26:183

NOT TO BE ENVIOUS OF THE BLESSINGS OF ALLAH ON OTHERS

Part of the preparation is that a believer is not required to look upon the blessings of others with malice. This is because no one is totally wretched. We are only blessed differently or in different grades. And since it is part of faith to understand and accept that the source is Allah, then rather than to be envious, we should ask Allah whose resources are inexhaustible for similar or better blessings.

And in no wise covet
Those things in which Allah
Hath bestowed His gifts
More freely on some of you
Than on others: to men
Is allotted what they earn,
And to women what they earn:
But ask Allah of His bounty.
For Allah hath full knowledge
Of all things.

Qur'an 4:32

NOT TO PARTAKE IN AN UNFAIR TRANSACTION FOR THE EXPANSION OF WEALTH

Any form of economic transaction that will lead to the expansion of wealth that has no regard for a fair share of the profit among the parties involved based on their contributions is forbidden. Also, a transaction in which a party is freed from any risk that may arise is prohibited. Rather, all parties need to share the risk or gain of such relationship, in accordance with the contributions to the activity. In simple terms wealth must not be employed in one's relation to a party, for the expansion of wealth being guaranteed on a predetermined term or level even before the economic activity. In this respect, a believer is neither to be the giver nor the beneficiary in such an arrangement.

It is this essence that distinguishes usury and not the form or the name, from one generation to another. It is like barter in a simple economy and counter-trade in modern economy. Allah does not need and does not desire for faithful, the expansion of wealth by means of mere conditional agreement(s).

O ye who believe!
Devour not usury,
Doubled and multiplied;
But fear Allah; that
Ye may (really) prosper.

Qur'an 3:130

Allah will deprive
Usury of all blessing,
But will give increase

For deeds of charity;
For He loveth not
Creatures ungrateful
And wicked.

Qur'an 2:276

Those who devour usury
Will not stand except
As stands one whom
The Evil One by his touch
Hath driven to madness.
That is because they say:
"Trade is like usury,"
But Allah hath permitted trade
And forbidden usury...

Qur'an 2:275

NOT TO BETRAY MATERIAL TRUST BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A PARTY'S WEAKNESS

A believer must not exploit the immediate weakness of a party regarding an economic transaction or wealth entrusted in him for personal benefit. This is applicable in the case of minors, uninformed people or orphans. The requirement is that, the trustee must neither keep the trust when it is due for delivery nor deliver less. What is however permissible is that more than was initially given in trust may be delivered as a duty, in the circumstance where it was employed for expansion.

To orphans restore their property
(When they reach their age),
Nor substitute (your) worthless things
For (their) good ones; and devour not
Their substance (by mixing it up)
With your own. For this is
Indeed a great sin.

Qur'an 4:2

And come not nigh
To the orphan's property,
Except to improve it,
Until he attains the age
Of full strength; give measure
And weight with (full) justice...

Qur'an 6:152

Come not nigh
To the orphans property
Except to improve it,
Until he attains the age

Of full strength; and fulfil
(Every) engagement,
For (every) engagement
Will be enquired into
(On the Day of reckoning).

Qur'an 17:34

Those who unjustly
Eat up the property
Of orphans, eat up
A fire into their own
Bodies: they will soon
Be enduring a blazing fire!

Qur'an 4:10

NOT REVERTING THE LAW OF ALLAH NOR ADOPTING THE EXTREME POSITION

It is wrong for a believer to change or modify the law of Allah in any sense. It is not the rule also for a Muslim to adopt the extreme position of what is permissible. Thus, what is made legal by Allah is good in itself by virtue of His commanding as such. As for whatever He commands, the requirement of a faithful is not to comply beyond what is defined. For example, when Allah commands charity out of what is beyond one's needs, while it is not illegal to keep only what is of necessity (less than convenient need), yet that is not the rule.

O ye who believe!
Make not unlawful
The good things which Allah
Has made lawful for you,
But commit no excess:
For Allah loveth not
Those given to excess.

Qur'an 5:87

NOT TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE BEFORE MARRIAGE

A believer preparing to journey on the path of righteousness in Islam should not involve himself in this form of togetherness before marriage. This includes restraining himself before he is married; not involving another party that is not married or engaging a married person by an unmarried person. This restraint is the basis for the purity of the Muslim community and respect for fellow human beings who are not Muslims. If this discipline is maintained before marriage, the first phase of having a vanguard of Islam is fulfilled.

...nor commit
Fornication, and any that does
This (not only) meets punishment
(But) the penalty on the Day

Of Judgement will be doubled
To him, and he will dwell
Therein in ignominy.

Qur'an 25:68 – 69

NOT TO CHOOSE A NON-BELIEVER AS A PARTNER

For the preparation of a believer to belong and contribute to the vanguard of Islam, he or she must not marry a non-believer until and unless the proposed partner accepts and submits to Allah and in addition struggles in the path of righteousness as required in Islam. The definition of non-believer here is *Mushrik* i.e. idolater.

Do not marry
Unbelieving women (idolaters),
Until they believe:
A slave woman who believes
Is better than an unbelieving woman,
Even though she allure you.
Nor marry (your girls)
To unbelievers until
They believe:
A man slave who believes
Is better than an unbeliever,
Even though he allure you.
Unbeliever(s) do (but)
Beckon you to the Fire...

Qur'an 2:221

NOT TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A NON-PARTNER IN MARRIAGE

A believer who has married in accordance with the tradition of Muhammad (S.A.W) ought not to serve as a garment to a party that is not his/her partner for godliness in Islam. A faithful will neither propose nor accept the proposal to sleep with any person outside his or her own wedlock.

Nor come nigh to adultery:
For it is a shameful (deed)
And an evil, opening the road
(To other evils).

Qur'an 17:32

NOT TO CHECK THE EXPANSION OF THE VANGUARD OF ISLAM

It is wrong for a Muslim to inhibit the growth of the community of Muslims since it is the foundation of development. He shall not do this personally, support anyone to do it, or as a trained technician/butcher simply do it for a fee or in the name of service. The latter may apply independent of a proposal informed by an objective to enjoy some comfort that is considered to be

in the state of running away or escaping.

In the circumstance where Muslims find themselves logically placed to justify an opening to what Allah has prohibited, they must check their entire livelihood for correction; otherwise, they will find themselves threading the wrong path. Allah has not designed an economic system for His vanguard, which will establish impoverishment or difficulty, beyond bearing.

Kill not your children
For fear of want: We shall
Provide sustenance for them
As well as for you.
Verily the killing of them
Is a great sin.

Qur'an 17:31

NOT TO BE INTIMATE WITH THOSE WHO DENY ALLAH AND HIS APOSTLE

It is wrong and contrary to the required preparation, to have intimate relationship with those who deny Allah and His Apostle. The admission of such people into confidence will open a room for mixing up the requirements for preparing for godliness in the path of Islam with things one does not know, things of doubtful acceptance to Allah and His Apostle or things out-rightly contrary to what is permissible.

Thou wilt not find
Any people who believe
In Allah and the Last Day,
Loving those who resist
Allah and His Apostle,
Even though they were
Their fathers and their sons,
Or their brothers, or
Their kindred...

Qur'an 58:22

NOT TO INTERFERE WITH ALLAH'S STANDARD BY ASKING ALLAH TO FORGIVE THOSE WHO DENY HIM

A believer is obliged, not by virtue of any secondary relation (because a Faithfull's submission to Allah is primary) to seek for Allah's forgiveness on behalf of unbelievers, dead or alive. This is permissible in respect of fellow faithful only with whom he forms a single community. In ordinary life, it is most embarrassing for a son to ask for the hand of his mother in marriage from his father - the intimacy between the parties notwithstanding.

It is not fitting,
For the prophet and those
Who believe, that they should
Pray for forgiveness

For Pagans, even thou
They be of kin, after it is
Clear to them that they
Are companions of the Fire.

Qur'an 9:113

NOT TO HEED THE INVITATIONS AND TEMPTATIONS OF THOSE WHO HAVE NO FAITH

Consistency in the believer's preparation for righteousness in the path of Islam requires that neither obviously major nor seemingly minor subjects nor matters of relationship be sacrificed for whatever reason. A faithful should therefore not accept to be lured or threatened into committing the traditions of the unfaithful or omitting the traditions of submission to Allah and His Apostle. There is neither a back door nor a side door nor any other door to the path of submission that is not defined, that is not clear, that is not straight, that is not contrary to the essence of what the non-believers do, that is not against Allah and His Apostle. Anyone who as a result opts for other than the Way of Allah takes the risk of joining the enemies of Allah and His Apostle.

And incline not to those
Who do wrong, or the Fire
Will seize you; and ye have
No protectors other than Allah,
Nor shall ye be helped.

Qur'an 11:113

TO NEITHER EXPECT NOR ASK FOR THE HELP OF NON-BELIEVERS

At the social realm, it is wrong of a believer preparing for godliness in the path of Islam to join hands with non-believers in friendship. Just like blood relationship must not excuse interfering with the standard of submission to Allah, it is not to be tolerated either, on the level of mutual relationship between men. It has to be noted that, there is no excuse in claiming, intending or making efforts to associate (warranting ordinary support) NEUTRALLY. Allah knows better and has disallowed it.

Let not the Believers
Take for friends or helpers
Unbelievers rather than
Believers: if any do that,
In nothing will there be help
From Allah; except by way
Of precaution, that ye may
Guard yourselves from them.
But Allah cautions you
(To remember) Himself;
For the final goal
Is to Allah.

Qur'an 3:28

The room for asking for the help of unbelievers in friendship is meant to be very exceptional, to achieve the goal of believers. More so, the goal will normally not go beyond immediate protection, where no better option that is permissible by Allah is available. In that case, it must be temporary, in the immediate interest of Muslims and necessary in the circumstance. The rule is not the exception.

O ye who believe!
Take not for friends
Unbelievers rather than
Believers: do ye wish
To offer Allah an open
Proof against yourselves?

Qur'an 4:144

NOT TO ADOPT ANY IMPLICATIVE MEANS TO ALLAH WITH THE NON-BELIEVERS IN PARTNERSHIP

Every believer is required not to forget that all things return to Allah at the end of the day. It is therefore inconsistent to establish any permanent tie with an enemy of one's master. You can imagine what will happen, when a father receives a proposal from a man to be given his son in wedlock with a homosexual.

O ye who believe!
Turn not (for friendship)
To people on whom
Is the Wrath of Allah.
Of the Hereafter they are
Already in despair; just as
The Unbelievers are
In despair about those
(Buried) in graves.

Qur'an 60:13

NOT TO TELL ANY LIE BY COVERING, CONCEALING OR WHATEVER

It is wrong of a faithful to submit anything that is not true, whether as a witness, a referee, an advertiser, a reporter, an assessor, an arbiter, a consultant, a lawyer, a professional or whatever. Lie is defined as covering a known truth with a known untrue or being neutral/silent when the truth is known.

And cover not Truth
With falsehood, nor conceal
The truth when ye know (what it is).

Qur'an 2:42

NOT TO TELL ANY LIE REGARDING ONESELF

It is wrong of a believer to assume 'modesty' by claiming to do what he does not in order to spy on others or become acceptable. Just as it ought not to be done in favour or against any other person, it should not be done in respect of oneself.

O ye who believe!
Why say ye that
Which ye do not?

Grievously odious is it
In the sight of Allah
That ye say that
Which ye do not.

Qur'an 61:2 – 3

NOT TO BLACKMAIL AND NOT TO COVER EVIL

It is improper for a Muslim to spread the wrong deed of a fellow Muslim. By so doing, the Ummah will have taken the path of self-destruction. But, this must not be the case when and if it will serve for justice and fair play.

Allah loveth not that evil
Should be noised abroad
In public speech, except
Where injustice hath been
Done; for Allah
Is He who heareth
And knoweth all things.

Qur'an 4:148

Of all such things
The evil is hateful
In the sight of thy Lord.

Qur'an 17:38

NOT TO PRESUME AND SUSPECT ANYBODY, SPY OR BACKBITE

It is erroneous for a faithful, to assume things and on that basis hold any one responsible for any fault. It is also wrong to keep a fellow believer under watch with the object of discrediting him or employing what is discovered to his disadvantage. These elements break the Muslim community.

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

NOT TO PURSUE WHAT ONE CANNOT CONFIRM

In the preparation for piousness in the path of Islam, a believer has to ensure that his sayings/claims and activities are consistently confirmed and ascertained by his senses. One should not just hear and proceed when illogic is noted; or just seem to see without any basis.

And pursue not that
Of which thou hast
No knowledge; for
Every act of hearing,
Or of seeing
Or of (feeling in) the heart
Will be enquired into
(On the Day of Reckoning).

Qur'an 17:36

NOT TO EMBARRASS OR RIDICULE OTHERS

A believer must not treat a fellow faithful in a manner he will not like to be treated. All members of the community should be free from embarrassment or ridicule arising from a fellow brother or sister. In this way faithfuls will feel safe with one another.

O ye who believe!
Let not some men
Among you laugh at others:
It may be that
The (latter) are better
Than the (former):
Nor let some women
Laugh at others:
It may be that
The (latter) are better
Than the (former):
Nor defame nor be
Sarcastic to each other,
Nor call each other
By (offensive) nick names:
Ill-seeming is a name

Connoting wickedness,
(To be used of one)
After he has believed:
And those who
Do not desist are
(Indeed) doing wrong.

Qur'an 49:11

NOT TO BE OF ARROGANT DISPOSITION

A believer ought to conduct himself in a humble manner rather than with the air of arrogance. A faithful is required to always remember that he is an infinitesimal part of creation in size and but for the Grace of Allah, his being is of no account.

And swell not thy cheek
(For pride) at men,
Nor walk in insolence
Through the earth;
For Allah loveth not
Any arrogant boaster.

Qur'an 31:18

Nor walk on the earth
With insolence for thou
Canst not rend the earth
Asunder, nor reach
The mountains in height.

Qur'an 17:37

NOT TO TAKE INTOXICANTS, GAMBLE OR PARTAKE IN GAME OF CHANCE

Any believer preparing in the path of Islam for godliness, must keep away from any kind of intoxicant. This means that he has to avoid it by not inhaling any, drinking any, chewing any, sucking any, swallowing any, smoking any, rubbing any or by injection. The Muslim should equally not gamble, participate or aid any form or kind of game of chance.

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 games of chance

And idolatrous practices
And the divining of the future
Are but a loathsome evil
Of Satan's handiwork:
Eschew such (abomination),
That ye may prosper.

Satan's plan is (but)
To excite enmity and hatred
Between you, with intoxicants
And gambling, and hinder you
From the remembrance
Of Allah, and from prayer:
Will ye not then abstain?

Qur'an 5:90 – 91

BEWARE OF SATAN

The faithful ought not to allow himself to thread the path that is contrary to what Allah has defined and His Apostle (S.A.W) has lived by, for believers to follow. To allow one to be lured, tempted or threatened by a whisperer, an enemy of Allah or any factor that leads to that, will destroy the preparation for godliness on the path of Islam. This destruction takes many forms. One of which is making what is prohibited by Allah legal and what is permissible illegal.

O ye people!
Eat of what is on earth,
Lawful and good;
And do not follow
The footsteps of the Evil One,
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

For he commands you
What is evil
And shameful,
And that ye should say
Of Allah that of which
Ye have no knowledge.

Qur'an 2:168 – 169

Of the cattle are some
For burden and some for meat:
Eat what Allah hath provided
For you, and follow not
The footsteps of Satan
For he is to you

An avowed enemy.

Qur'an 6:142

Another misleading form could be that of doing things “halfway.” After avoiding eating swine for instance, a believer must not take a fowl that is killed or slaughtered in the name of other than Allah.

Eat not of (meats)
On which Allah's name
Hath not been pronounced:
That would be impiety.
But the evil ones
Ever inspire their friends
To contend with you
If ye were to obey them,
Ye would indeed be pagans.

Qur'an 6:121

Satan's path is devoid of correctness and dignity. It is contrary to the path of Allah and will lead one to disgrace before Allah.

O ye who believe!
Follow not Satan's footsteps:
If any will follow the footsteps
Of Satan, he will (but) command
What is shameful and wrong ...

Qur'an 24:21

NOT TO BE MISCHIEVOUS

A faithful should not by preparation lead in the missing of the defined path of Islam as that will make one a chief in missing. For the believer, Allah the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is contained in between, following His path is what will FIT into this order of creation(s). Therefore, whenever one finds himself in some difficulty, he must humble himself and turn to Allah instead of acting out to revenge or doing anything of such.

Do no mischief on the earth,
After it hath been
Set in order, but call
On Him with fear
And longing (in your hearts):
For the Mercy of Allah
Is (always) near
To those who do good.

Qur'an 7:56

Who doth more wrong
Than such as forge a lie
Against Allah, or deny
His Signs? But never
Will prosper those who sin.

Qur'an 10:17

With Allah, the rules of the path have been the same and will not be changed in favour of anybody. The terms of submission had since been drawn up and conveyed to us in perfection. There is no need for amendments. Thus, when Prophet Noah (A.S) prayed to Allah, to save his unbelieving son from flood, He responded:

"O Noah!
He is not of thy family:
For his conduct is unrighteous.
So ask not of Me
That of which thou
Hast no knowledge!
I give thee counsel, lest
Thou act like the ignorant."

Qur'an 11:46

NOT TO BE DIVIDED IN THE FACE OF CERTAINTY OR JOIN HANDS IN THE DETERMINATION TO DESTROY THE VANGUARD OF ISLAM

The faithful(s) should beware of contributing to the weakening of the Muslim community or destroying it by breaking the things it stands for. Neither are survivals of previous revelations and guidance of Allah nor the boastful/arrogant unbelieving Meccans who set out to destroy the Faith (its leader and followers) good examples to follow.

Be not like those
Who are divided
Amongst themselves
And fall into disputations
After receiving
Clear signs: for them
Is a dreadful penalty.

Qur'an 3:105

And be not like those
Who started from their homes
Insolently and to be seen by men,
And to hinder (men)
From the path of Allah:
For Allah compasseth round about
All that they do.

Qur'an 8:47

WE HAVE BEEN WARNED

Invent not similitudes
For Allah: for Allah knoweth,
And ye know not.

Qur'an 16:74

Woe to every
(Kind of) scandal-monger
And backbiter.

Qur'an 104:1

Heed not the type
Of despicable man,
Ready with oaths;

A slanderer, going about
With calumnies,

(Habitually) hindering (all) good,
Transgressing beyond bounds,
Deep in sin,

Violent (and cruel)
With all that, base-born,

Because he possesses
Wealth and (numerous) sons.

Qur'an 68:10 – 14

THE SECOND STEP TO GODLINESS IN ISLAM

TO BELIEVE AND OBEY ALLAH AND HIS APOSTLE

A Muslim who believes must after that obey the commandments of Allah and comply with the examples of Muhammad (S.A.W).

And obey Allah
And the Apostle;
That ye may obtain mercy.

Qur'an 3:132

The only means of practising this or realising this requirement is by taking all that is offered and keeping away from all that is prohibited. This is because, that is the way of success.

O ye who believe!
Give your response to Allah
And His Apostle, when He
Calleth upon you to that which
Will give you life;
And know that Allah
Commeth between a man
And his heart, and that
It is He to whom
Ye shall (all) be gathered.

Qur'an 8:24

Those who follow the Apostle,
The unlettered Prophet ... believe
In him, honour him,
Help him, and follow the light
Which is sent down with him...

Qur'an 7:157

By this means, a Muslim will be able to give honour to whom it is due as the Prophet (S.A.W) himself honours Allah.

In order that ye
(O men) may believe
In Allah and His Apostle,
That ye may assist
And honour Him,
And celebrate His praises
Morning and evening.

Qur'an 48:9

A believer sends a lot of blessings on the Apostle, because Allah Himself does so.

Allah and His Angels
Send blessings on the prophet:
O ye that believe!
Send ye blessings on him,
And salute him
With all respect.

Those who annoy
Allah and His Apostle,
Allah has cursed them
In this world and
In the Hereafter,
And has prepared for them
A humiliating punishment.

Qur'an 33:56 – 57

TO SUBMIT BY WORSHIPPING ALLAH ALONE

A Muslim has to obey in all ways, the laws of Allah and worship Him; to confirm his declaration that none deserves to be worshipped but Allah.

O My servants who believe!
Truly spacious is My Earth.
Therefore serve ye Me.
(And Me alone)!

Qur'an 29:56

A believer is to continue in such worship, throughout his life span, that is, till death do them part.

And serve thy Lord
Until there come unto thee
The Hour that is certain.

Qur'an 15:99

Those who are near
To thy Lord, disdain not
To do Him worship:
They celebrate His praises,
And bow down before Him.

Qur'an 7:206

The way in which a Muslim does this outstandingly, is by regular resort to Allah, His remembrance at the specified times and more.

And establish regular prayers
At the two ends of the day
And at the approaches of the night:
For those things that are good
Remove those things that are evil:
Be that the word of remembrance
To those who remember (their Lord):
Qur'an 11:114

So establish regular Prayer
And give regular Charity;
And obey the Apostle;
That ye may receive mercy.
Qur'an 24:56

Establish regular prayers
At the sun's decline
Till the darkness of the night,
And the Morning Prayer
And reading: for the prayer
And reading in the morning
Carry their testimony.
Qur'an 17:78

Stand (for prayer) by night,
But not all night.

Half of it,
Or a little less,

Or a little more;
And recite the Qur'an
In slow, measured rhythmic tones.
Qur'an 73:2 – 4

Truly the rising by night
Is most potent for governing
(The soul), and most suitable
For (framing) the Word
(Of Prayer and Praise).
Qur'an 73:6

And pray in the small watches
Of the morning: (it would be)
An additional prayer
(Or spiritual profit)

For thee: ...

Qur'an 17:79

... And celebrate the praises
Of thy Lord, before
The rising of the sun
And before (its) setting.

Qur'an 50:39

And during part
Of the night (also)
Celebrate His praises,
And (so likewise)
After the postures
Of adoration.

Qur'an 50:40

And part of the night
Prostrate thyself to Him;
And glorify Him
A long night through.

Qur'an 76:26

This ought not to be always or strictly be done privately. A Muslim is required to do so in company, for example, with family members. Also, a way of showing gratitude is by sacrifice.

But celebrate the praises
Of thy Lord, and be of those
Who prostrate themselves
In adoration.

Qur'an 15:98

Therefore to thy Lord
Turn in prayer
And sacrifice.

Qur'an 108:2

O ye who believe!
Do your duty to Allah,
Seek the means
Of approach unto Him,
And strive with might
And main in His cause:
That ye may prosper.

Qur'an 5:35

In doing this, every Muslim must unite with a universal sense of identity and direction.

From whencesoever
Thou startest forth, turn
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred Mosque;
That is indeed the truth
From thy Lord. And Allah
Is not unmindful
Of what ye do.

Qur'an 2:149

TO FAST FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

A believer is required, as part of his submission to Allah or compliance by His commandments to fast.

O ye who believe!
Fasting is prescribed to you
As it was prescribed
To those before you,
That ye may (learn)
Self-restraint.

Qur'an 2:183

It is necessary that in addition to optional fasts, a Muslim fasts for the sake of Allah, throughout whole month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is the (month)
In which was sent down
The Qur'an as a guide
To mankind, also clear (signs)
For guidance and judgement
(Between right and wrong).
So every one of you
Who is present (at his home)
During that month
Should spend it in fasting...

Qur'an 2:185

A believer fasts by not committing any form of eating, drinking or having legal sexual relation between dawn and sunset. Illegal sexual intercourse is out of question.

... And eat and drink,
Until the white thread
Of dawn appear to you

Distinct from its black thread;
Then complete your fast
Till the night appears;
But do not associate
With your wives
While ye are in retreat
In the mosques...

Qur'an 2:187

TO PERFORM PILGRIMAGE FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH

A Muslim is enjoined to make every effort in performing Holy Pilgrimage to the House of Allah and in a land where he will witness some of the Signs of Allah in the perfection and completion of the principles and practices of submitting to Him.

For Hajj
Are the months well known.
If anyone undertakes
That duty therein,
Let there be no obscenity,
Nor wickedness
Nor wrangling
In the Hajj...

Qur'an 2:197

Also, a believer must perform this as a duty only if he will be able to afford it. It is one way of making use of the fruits of one's labour acquired by the Grace of Allah. Like Zakat or compulsory charity is Allah's due to fellow men and amenities of social-economic use or that will eventually lead to it, Hajj is reaching Allah by travel.

... Pilgrimage thereto is a duty
Men owe to Allah,
Those who can afford
The journey...

Qur'an 3:97

TO CONSTANTLY READ THE QUR'AN

A Muslim is required to constantly read the Qur'an because it is the word of Allah, contains guidance and has spiritual value in itself. This explains the rote reading by non-Arabs who have to learn the meaning of the content. The reading should be preceded by the asking for Allah's protection against the intervention of Satan just like in any other activity.

When thou dost read
The Qur'an, seek Allah's protection
From Satan the Rejected One.

Qur'an 16:98

A believer does not just read but enjoins others to share in the joy and benefit of reading, the study and whatever that results. This could be as an individual or collectively.

And recite (and teach)
What has been revealed
To thee of the Book
Of thy Lord: none
Can change His Words,
And none wilt thou find
As a refuge other than Him.

Qur'an 18:27

In the reading, a Muslim is required to maintain a moderate level when it is aloud. It should be done with respect, because it is not an ordinary book, it is not like any book, it is the only book that is all-true, all-guidance, all-explanatory.

And do thou (O reader!)
Bring thy Lord to remembrance
In thy (very) soul,
With humility and in reverence,
Without loudness in words,
In the mornings and evenings;
And be not thou
Of those who are unheedful.

Qur'an 7:205

WHEN TALKING, THEY ARE MODERATE

Believers must ensure that their speech is always within acceptable degree. It should neither be in form of whispering/murmuring nor be so loud like those in a war front. The rule is moderation.

And be moderate
In thy pace, and lower
Thy voice; for the harshest
Of sounds without doubt
Is the braying of the ass."

Qur'an 31:19

Like any other human being, it is not absolutely impossible for a Muslim to forget the need for his avoidance, immediately he gets in contact with those engaged in such talk. But the moment he becomes conscious of it, he is required to leave. That will be his difference, his identity.

When thou seest men
Engaged in vain discourse

About Our signs, turn
Away from them unless
They turn to a different
Theme. If Satan ever
Makes thee forget, then
After recollection, sit not
Thou in the company
Of those who do wrong.

Qur'an 6:68

Muslims must therefore avoid any form or level of vain talk. That they are not directly involved in it is not enough. They should not share or sit with those who do, because it is against the principle of keeping to the rule of righteousness in Islam. Believers keep off vain talk by not "enjoying" it along with unbelievers or hypocrites.

Already has He sent you
Word in the Book, that when
Ye hear the signs of Allah
Held in defiance and ridicule,
Ye are not to sit with them
Unless they turn to a different
Theme: if ye did, ye would be
Like them. For Allah will
Collect the Hypocrites and those
Who defy faith - all in Hell.

Qur'an 4:140

And when they hear vain talk
They turn away therefrom
And say: "To us our deeds,
And to you yours;
Peace be to you: we
Seek not the ignorant."

Qur'an 28:55

THE CONTENT AND ESSENCE OF THEIR SPEECH IS TRUE

The primary standard for what a believer utters is that it must be the truth, that is weighed and is found to be the most preferred, the best. This has the implication of avoiding any means that will serve as a basis for what will please Satan. Muslims are therefore commanded to speak in maturity and control, informed by truth, by what is best.

Say to My servants
That they should (only) say
Those things that are best:
For Satan doth sow

Dissensions among them:
For Satan is to man
An avowed enemy.

Qur'an 17:53

The specific nature of what is considered as best is defined by what is in agreement, what does not contradict, what is part of Islam – inviting to submission to Allah – the Almighty.

Who is better in speech
Than one who calls (men)
To Allah, works righteousness,
And says "I am of those
Who bow in Islam?"

Qur'an 41:33

A Muslim does not as a result commit himself to what is wrong and speaks what is right. Believers are required to be consistent.

AS REGARDS VAIN TALK, THEY AVOID

A Muslim does not just live in an odd world of his own. He cannot since he is inevitably a social being. Thus, he cannot only hear but will come across those who on regular or ad-hoc basis are engaged in vain talk. But a believer avoids it (Qur'an 28:55 and 6:68).

TO BE COURTEOUS IN RELATION TO OTHERS

It is required of a Muslim that he reciprocates with as good as of what is given to him of good or even better. A believer must therefore distant himself from being the initiator or a party to doing evil to any individual or group. And this includes ignoring a fellow human being. A Muslim shouldn't be indifferent. This rule applies in all matters and respects – whether major or minor. Thus for example:

When a (courteous) greeting
Is offered you, meet it
With a greeting still more
Courteous, or (at least)
Of equal courtesy.
Allah takes careful account
Of all things.

Qur'an 4:86

TO ACT BASED ON CERTAINTY

A Muslim ought to avoid acting foolishly i.e. taking action without necessary confirmation or being certain. This is the rule in all cases and circumstances, especially in response to some information from one who is known to be either completely faithless or hypocritical.

O ye who believe!
If a wicked person comes

To you with any news,
Ascertain the truth, lest
Ye harm people unwittingly,
And after-wards become
Full of repentance for
What ye have done.

Qur'an 49:6

Thus, claims of sycophants, quick to please, uncritical or unsympathetic people need to be checked and ascertained before one allows them to inform his action. Being a favourite is not a qualification in Islam for accepting things on their face value. The essence of all these all is that the person responsible to act must fear Allah even if and when the bringer of news is not. That is the burden of leadership, for those who are sensible.

TO KEEP THE BROTHERHOOD BY RECONCILIATION AND JUSTICE

A believer is required to deal with frictions within the community with the ultimate objective of keeping the brotherhood intact - by means of peaceful or forceful amendment. But, the first step must be that of peace and understanding by appealing to the parties involved. In other words, the arbiter is expected to be rational and fear Allah.

The Believers are but
A single Brotherhood:
So make peace and
Reconciliation between your
Two (contending) brothers;
And fear Allah, that ye
May receive Mercy.

Qur'an 49:10

When justice becomes inevitable as the means of reconciliation, it should not be with disdain. It will be in the spirit of help and correction similar to what in civil police operation is understood to define NECESSARY FORCE (if not abused). The parties shall immediately embrace each other, on achievement of understanding and reconciliation between them.

If two parties among
The Believers fall into
A quarrel, make ye peace
Between them: but if
One of them transgresses
Beyond bounds against the other,
Then fight ye (all) against
The one that transgresses
Until it complies then
Make peace between them
With justice, and be fair:

For Allah loves those
Who are fair (and just).

Qur'an 49:9

This standard for togetherness is informed by the primary criterion of righteousness, peaceful reconciliation, justice, etc. It is based on keeping away from annoying, offending or causing disaffection between believers.

And those who annoy
Believing men and women
Undeservedly, bear (on themselves)
A calumny and a glaring sin.

Qur'an 33:58

TO BE GOOD TO PARENTS, RELATIONS AND THE WEAK

A believer is required to be considerate, good and kind to fellow members of the Muslim community especially his parents, relations and the weak who constitute the bulk of those that need to be cared for. This implies that, the burden or responsibility of fairness is primarily the duty of those placed in positions of authority.

Serve Allah, and join not
Any partners with Him;
And do good –
To parents, kinsfolk,
Orphans, those in need,
Neighbours who are near,
Neighbours who are strangers,
The companion by your side,
The way-farer (ye meet),
And what your right hands possess;
For Allah loveth not
The arrogant, the vainglorious.

Qur'an 4:36

Narrated Abu Abdullah 'Amr bin Al-'As (r.a): I heard Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) saying openly not secretly, "The family of so-and-so (i.e. Abu Talib) are not 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".

Bukhari and Muslim Collections

In the special case of parents, believers are required to be extra-considerate. This is most required when they become infirm.

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.

Qur'an 17:23

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS WITHOUT DISOBEYING ALLAH

A believer has to submit to his parents especially the mother who bore him in pain throughout the period of pregnancy and for the upbringing and care he enjoyed from birth. But the said submission does not imply when it involves disobedience to Allah and His Apostle.

We have enjoined on man
Kindness to parents: but if
They (either of them) strive
(To force) thee to join
With Me (in worship)
Anything of which thou hast
No knowledge, obey them not.
Ye have (all) to return
To Me, and I will
Tell you (the truth)
Of all that ye did.

Qur'an 29:8

Narrated Abu Hurairah (r.a): A person said: Allah's Messenger, who amongst the people is most deserving of my good treatment? He said: Your mother, then your mother, then your mother, then your father, then your nearest relatives according to the order (of nearness).

Muslim Collection

TO GIVE A PROPOSED AND CONSENTING WOMAN HER RIGHT

A Muslim is expected to marry in this life. When he does, he is required to give the woman a free gift, as a matter of right and rule. But the woman could decide to excuse part of it if she wishes. This is very applicable in the case of material gift that can be exhausted and even taken away by force – a ring, a car, money etc. In a situation whereby it is agreed that teaching of the Qur'an or Hadith should be the free gift, excusing or remitting part of it will be most inconsiderate.

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

MODEST FORM OF SELF DISPOSITION BY BELIEVING WOMEN

In belief, the spinster and the married are not differentiated by their mode of dressing because it is part of faith. Believing women are identified by use of henna, loose/free fitting thick dress and a covering or veil that are neither transparent nor for show due to their shortness or tightness.

Narrated Aisha (r.a): Asma' daughter of Abu Bakr (i.e. Aisha's sister), entered upon the Apostle of God (S.A.W) wearing thin clothes. The Apostle of God turned his attention from her and said, "O Asma', when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it does not suit her except that she displays parts of her body except this and this," and he pointed to her face and hands.

Abu Dawud Collection

Narrated Aisha (r.a): A woman made a sign from behind a curtain to indicate that she had a letter for the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W). The Prophet (S.A.W) closed his hand, saying: I do not know if this is a man's or a woman's hand. She said: No, a woman. He said: If you were a woman, you would make a difference to your nails, meaning with henna.

Abu Dawud Collection

O Prophet! Tell
Thy wives and daughters,
And the believing women,
That they should cast
Their outer garments over
Their persons (when abroad);
That is most convenient,
That they should be known
(As such) and not molested.
And Allah is Oft-Forgiving,
Most Merciful.

Qur'an 33:59

TO TOLERATE FAMILY MEMBERS

A Muslim must understand that blood relation; even the familial one is not a guarantee for modelling after Muhammad (S.A.W), who is the guide for compliance with the rules of Allah

(S.W.T). Like other members of the community of Muslims, they could also fall short of the rational requirements for threading the path of godliness in Islam. When any or a group of them do, one is required to forgive. Believers that look forward to forgiveness of Allah who is Oft-Forgiving, are required to practice forgiveness even to family relations whose offence may be most touching and painful.

O ye who believe!
Truly, among your wives
And your children are (some
That are) enemies to
Yourselves; so beware
Of them! But if ye
Forgive and overlook,
And cover up (their faults),
Verily Allah is
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 64:14

TO SEEK THE HELP OF ALLAH WHEN TEMPTED TO DO EVIL

For the fact that a believer is not absolutely free from doing evil, offending others, or breaking the law(s) of Allah, he should persistently struggle against evil by resorting to Allah whenever the temptation arises.

And if (at any time)
An incitement to discord
Is made to thee
By the Evil One,
Seek refuge in Allah.
He is the One
Who hears and knows
All things.

Qur'an 41:36

TO RESPOND TO EVIL WITH GOOD AT ALL TIMES

A believer should note that two wrongs do not make a right and the opportunity to do good is always open to be initiated. When offended, he should forgive and follow it up with guidance. This is because Allah is Merciful and loves those who do good.

Nor can Goodness and Evil
Be equal. Repel (Evil)
With what is better:
Then will he between whom
And thee was hatred
Become as it were
Thy friend and intimate!

Qur'an 41:34

The consequence of doing good in response to evil should not be understood as cowardice, foolishness or weakness. It is only the ignorant who thinks so. This is for the reason that, Allah knows better and has not set His standard(s) according to the opinions of those who seek to worsen relationships.

Repel evil with that
Which is best: We are
Well acquainted with
The things they say.

Qur'an 23:96

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

Qur'an 42:37

TO TAKE REVENGE IN SELF-DEFENCE

In a circumstance where forgiveness will be harmful, it is the duty of a believer to stand on his feet to defend himself against being cheated, being disgraced, humiliated, etc.

And those who, when
An oppressive wrong is inflicted
On them (are not cowed
But) help and defend themselves.

Qur'an 42:39

But indeed if any do help
And defend themselves
After a wrong (done)
To them, against such
There is no cause
Of blame.

Qur'an 42:41

TO BE JUST

A Muslim placed in position of advantage must ensure that in meting out punishment to a deserving party, justice is done. This means that, it is part of good to do good in itself, to forgive, to be generous, to be considerate to all members of the Muslim community. But, where and when justice is necessitated, a believer should ensure that JUST what is equal, exact, equivalent to the scope, weight and quality of offence is met with sanction. It needs to be neither less nor more.

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

TO BE STRAIGHT AND CONSISTENT IN JUSTICE

A believer must not discriminate in administering justice regardless of who is involved – the poor or the rich, the weak or the strong, the beautiful or the ugly, man or woman, an indigene or a non-indigene, a stranger, a relation or whoever.

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...

Qur'an 4:135

Narrated Aisha (r.a): The people of *Quraish* were worried about the lady from Bani Makhzum who had committed theft. They asked, "Who will intercede for her with Allah's Apostle?" Some said, "No one dares to do so except Usama bin Zaid the beloved one to Allah's Apostle." When Usama spoke about that to Allah's Apostle, he replied, "Do you try to intercede for somebody in a case connected with Allah's prescribed punishments?" Then he got up and delivered a sermon saying, "What destroyed the nations preceding you, was that if a noble amongst them stole, they would forgive him, and if a poor person amongst them stole, they would inflict Allah's Legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad stole, I would cut off her hand."

Bukhari Collection

A Muslim must not allow any form of personal prejudice to colour his administration of justice. Thus, the parties involved or one's perception of them ought not to be allowed to interfere with what is just.

O ye who believe!
Stand out firmly
For Allah, as witnesses
To fair dealing, and let not
The hatred of others
To you make you swerve
To wrong and depart from
Justice. Be just: that is

Next to piety; and fear Allah,
For Allah is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

Qur'an 5:8

Thus, excepting a situation where forgiveness is simply not an option, a Muslim is expected to forgive. But if he must retaliate, then, sanction should be equal to the offence.

The recompense for an injury
Is an injury equal thereto
(In degree): but if a person
Forgives and makes reconciliation,
His reward is due
From Allah: for (Allah)
Loveth not those who
Do wrong.

Qur'an 42:40

Whenever with the help of Allah the believer(s) overcome their enemies, justice entails that they should not punish them for more than the offence committed. Believers ought to be guided by patience.

And if ye do catch them out,
Catch them out no worse
Than they catch you out:
But if ye show patience,
That is indeed the best (course)
For those who are patient.

Qur'an 16:126

But indeed if any
Show patience and forgive,
That would truly be
An exercise of courageous will
And resolution in the conduct
Of affairs.

Qur'an 42:43

Thus, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and by extension, all Muslims have being urged and commanded by Allah to be consistently patient especially with the unbelievers. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) exemplified this by forgiving the people of Mecca, the day the city was conquered. Also, the Jew that used to dump garbage in Abubakar's house later embraced Islam due to the latter's unflinching patience.

Therefore be patient
With constancy to the Command
Of thy Lord, and hearken not
To the sinner or the ingrate

Among them.

Qur'an 76:24

And do thou be patient,
For thy patience is but
From Allah; nor grieve over them:
And distress not thyself
Because of their plots.

Qur'an 16:127

TO GO INTO EXILE FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY

Believers must protect their faith by all means. At a time, in a circumstance and a place where they face persecution, they could leave as the entire world belongs to Allah and is free to be used for worship. When exile or migration is necessitated, it becomes praiseworthy.

He who forsakes his home
In the cause of Allah,
Finds in the earth
Many a refuge,
Wide and spacious;
Should he die
As a refugee from home
For Allah and His Apostle,
His reward becomes due
And sure with Allah;
And Allah is Oft-Forgiving,
Most Merciful.

Qur'an 4:100

Indeed in the spirit of struggle, that defines the path of Islam, Allah in His Mercy grades such believers, in His cause higher.

Not equal are those
Believers who sit (at home)
And receive no hurt,
And those who strive
And fight in the cause
Of Allah with their goods
And their persons.
Allah hath granted
A grade higher to those
Who strive and fight
With their goods and persons
Than to those who sit (at home).
Unto all (in faith)

Hath Allah promised good:
But those who strive and fight
Hath He distinguished
Above those who sit (at home)
By a special reward.

Ranks specially bestowed
By Him and Forgiveness
And Mercy. For Allah is
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 4:95 – 96

Those who believe, and suffer
Exile and strive with might
And main, in Allah's cause,
With their goods and persons
Have the highest rank
In the sight of Allah:
They are the people
Who will achieve (salvation).

Qur'an 9:20

TO RECEIVE AND SUPPORT THOSE IN EXILE

In the event one is living peacefully in his home country and is opportune to see fellow believers who have come to take refuge, for the sake of Allah, he has the duty of assisting them to the best of his ability. The success of exile partly depends on the help rendered by the host community of believers.

Those who believe,
And adopt exile,
And fight for the faith,
In the cause of Allah,
As well as those
Who give (them) asylum
And aid, these are (all)
In very truth the Believers.
For them is the forgiveness
Of sins and a provision
Most generous.

Qur'an 8:74

TO KEEP ONE'S WORD

A believer must not be a man of changing words. Once he has given his word, he keeps it. That makes him a reliable witness because he does not tell lies. Believers do this to Allah and to fellow men, by the Grace of Allah.

Those who fulfil the Covenant
Of Allah and fail not
In their plighted word.

Qur'an 13:20

Fulfil the covenant of Allah
When ye have entered into it,
And break not your oaths
After ye have confirmed them;
Indeed ye have made
Allah your surety; for Allah
Knoweth all that ye do.

Qur'an 16:91

TO BE DUTIFUL

A Muslim does not merely keep his words, but when fellow believers require some support physically, materially or otherwise, he is not reluctant in giving it if he has the means. This also applies to his duties to Allah. Thus, he does not lag in doing whatever is expected or required of him.

O ye who believe!
Fulfil (all) obligations...

Qur'an 5:1

Being dutiful means that a Muslim must always be contented with what is permissible and keep away from prohibited degrees. This is the definition of his life style. To submit totally to the will of Allah.

Those who join together
Those things which Allah
Hath commanded to be joined,
Hold their Lord in awe,
And fear the terrible reckoning.

Qur'an 13:21

TO KEEP UNTO THE GUIDANCE BY ALLAH

A Muslim should not veer away from the path defined for mankind, if he should succeed in his affairs in the world and attain bliss in the life to follow. It is this that will keep the community of believers together.

And hold fast,
All together, by the rope
Which Allah (stretches out
For you), and be not divided
Among yourselves...

Qur'an 3:103

TO OBEY ALLAH, HIS APOSTLE AND THOSE IN AUTHORITY

Members of the community of Muslims are obliged to comply with the rules set out by Allah, the example(s) of Muhammad (S.A.W) and fellow brothers in authority that model after these rules. But the ultimate reference for the certainty of being on the path is by its conformity to the rules of Allah and the example(s) of His Apostle. Anything contrary to this does not deserve obedience!

O ye who believe!
Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle,
And those charged
With authority among you.
If ye differ in anything
Among yourselves, refer it
To Allah and His Apostle,
If ye do believe in Allah
And the Last Day:
That is best and most suitable
For the final determination.

Qur'an 4:59

It is consistent with the brotherhood and dutifulness or responsibility that believers shall be considerate of each other or answer the call to serve at/in any capacity for the sake of Allah.

O ye who believe!
When ye are told
To make room
In the assemblies,
(Spread out and) make room:
(Ample) room will Allah provide
For you. And when
You are told to rise up,
Rise up: Allah will
Raise up, to (suitable) ranks
(And degrees), those of you
Who believe and who have
Been granted (mystic) knowledge.
And Allah is well acquainted
With all ye do.

Qur'an 58:11

TO ENJOIN AND TO JOIN BELIEVERS AND MEN IN GENERAL IN THE WAY OF ALLAH

Believers are the chosen ones among the creation of Allah and their distinction is by what they do and enjoin others to do. They keep away and do things in accordance with the standard(s) of Allah and His Apostle.

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

Ye are the best
Of peoples, evolved
For mankind,
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong
And believing in Allah...

Qur'an 3:110

TO BELONG TO THE COMMUNITY BY THE DOING OF RIGHT

The believers, men
And women, are protectors,
One of another: they enjoin
What is just, and forbid
What is evil: they observe
Regular prayers, practice
Regular charity, and obey
Allah and His Apostle.
On them will Allah pour
His mercy: for Allah
Is exalted in Power, Wise.

Qur'an 9:71

Those that turn (to Allah)
In repentance: that serve Him,
And praise Him: that wander
In devotion to the cause of Allah:
That bow down and prostrate themselves
In prayer: that enjoin good
And forbid evil; and observe
The limits set by Allah;
(These do rejoice)...

Qur'an 9:112

To each is a goal
To which Allah turns him;
Then strive together (as a race)
Towards all that is good.
Wherever ye are,
Allah will bring you

Together. For Allah
Hath power over all things.

Qur'an 2:148

ASKING FOR ALLAH'S FORGIVENESS

A believer must not forget to ask for Allah's forgiveness as regards his past, current and future faults; those mistakenly or deliberately committed and those unknown to him. And he should try as much as possible not to return to them again.

Be ye foremost (in seeking)
Forgiveness from your Lord...

Qur'an 57:21

The fear of Allah is not demonstrated by committing evil deliberately and constantly only to ask for forgiveness. Even in human relation a wife or husband or an employee or employer who offends the other party on a regular basis only to turn around and say SORRY stands to lose trust and intimacy. The rule should be NO EXCUSES. When it does occur, it shall then be considered on its merit if liberality is the option, otherwise, the offending party has given every justification for parting ways or some punishment. Before Allah, it breeds or allows for the evolvement of a rioting colour of culture that is inconsistent, unserious and unworthy.

Turn ye back in repentance
To Him, and fear Him:
Establish regular prayers,
And be not ye among those
Who join gods with Allah.

Those who split up
Their Religion, and become
(Mere) sects; each party
Rejoicing in that which
Is with itself!

Qur'an 30:31 – 32

Believers do not deliberately do wrong and when they do, they ask for Allah's forgiveness and never return to it.

And those who
Having done something
To be ashamed of,
Or wronged their own souls,
Earnestly bring Allah to mind,
And ask for forgiveness
For their sins,
And who can forgive
Sins except Allah?

And are never obstinate
In persisting knowingly
In (the wrong) they have done.

Qur'an 3:135

This requirement is to be on regular basis because the circumstances that we go through unconsciously, half-conscious, or ignorantly present themselves, again and again. But Allah can be met, as He is Oft-Returning.

Celebrate the praises
Of thy Lord, and pray
For His forgiveness;
For He is Oft-Returning
(In Grace and Mercy).

Qur'an 110:3

The Muslim has to impliedly be very sincere and honest to himself in asking for forgiveness of Allah. It is only then that he deserves and can expect the acceptance of his plea.

O ye who believe!
Turn to Allah
With sincere repentance:
In the hope that
Your Lord will remove
From you your ills...

Qur'an 66:8

Hence, a believer is to hasten in seeking for Allah's forgiveness, not merely as a matter of routine, but with remorse. That is an element in the orientation for reaching Allah in His Mercy.

Be quick in the race
For forgiveness from your Lord,
And for a Garden whose width
Is that (of the whole)
Of the heavens
And of the earth,
Prepared for the righteous.

Qur'an 3:133

TO FEAR ALLAH

A believer must fear Allah. It is he who is in need. It is he who knows nothing. It is he who is unsafe and needs protection. It is only fear that gives meaning to his knowledge. The ignorant has no fear to fear.

Say: "O ye
My servants who believe!
Fear your Lord.
Good is (the reward)
For those who do good
In this world...

Qur'an 39:10

And fear Him who created
You and (Who created)
The generations before (you).

Qur'an 26:184

A Muslim who fears Allah does not do so in the empty space but is stimulated, reminded and therefore responds, which increases his faith. The fear is NOT despair.

Those who fear their Lord
In their most secret thought,
And who hold the Hour
(Of Judgement) in awe.

Qur'an 21:49

And when they listen
To the revelation received
By the Apostle, thou wilt
See their eyes overflowing
With tears, for they
Recognise the truth...

Qur'an 5:83

For, Believers are those
Who, when Allah is mentioned,
Feel a tremor in their hearts,
And when they hear
His Signs rehearsed, find
Their faith strengthened,
And put (all) their trust
In their Lord.

Qur'an 8:2

To those whose hearts,
When Allah is mentioned,
Are filled with fear,
Who show patient perseverance
Over their afflictions, keep up
Regular prayer, and spend

(In charity) out of what
We have bestowed upon them.
Qur'an 22:35

TO WORK HARD, AND CONSISTENTLY TOO

A Muslim is required to always work hard, to the best of his ability. Therefore, parents and relations ought not to, out of 'care' or 'fear' restrain him from working hard. He should neither depend on inherited wealth, nor give up to frustration, disappointment(s) or commit suicide.

Therefore when thou art
Free (from thine immediate task),
Still labour hard.

Qur'an 94:7

In working hard, he is expected to complete circles. If he is engaged in trade, measures and weighs have to be fair and equal to the monetary value received. Generally, a Muslim is not a cheat.

Give full measure when ye
Measure, and weigh
With a balance that is straight:
That is most fitting
And the most advantageous
In the final determination.

Qur'an 17:35

Give just measure
And cause no loss
(To others by fraud).

And weigh with scales
True and upright.

Qur'an 26:181 – 182

As the production of wealth arises from exchange relation, a Muslim must strictly ensure that the other party is not 'out-witted'. The result of proper exchange is what is legal, what is permissible, what is right and what Allah has made his due. Anything different is not for godliness in Islam.

Woe to those
That deal in fraud,

Those who, when they
Have to receive by measure
From men, exact full measure,

But when they have

To give by measure
Or weight to men,
Give less than due.

Qur'an 83:1 – 3

So establish weight with justice
And fall not short
In the balance.

Qur'an 55:9

TO EAT OR MAKE USE OF THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOUR THAT IS ALL-THROUGH LEGAL

A believer does not just have a right but has the duty to enjoy the good that results from his hard work.

So eat of the sustenance
Which Allah has provided
For you, lawful and good;
And be grateful for the favours
Of Allah, if it is He
Whom ye serve.

Qur'an 16:114

It is mandatory on a Muslim to discriminate by appreciating only those things that fall within the scope of permissible and not to move out of it. One's body or passion should not determine what is to be enjoyed. But just as enjoyment needs to result from hard work, the work should be that which is permissible and in a manner and to the degree that is acceptable.

O ye people!
Eat of what is on earth,
Lawful and good;
And do not follow
The footsteps of the Evil One,
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

Qur'an 2:168

Eat of the things which
Allah hath provided for you,
Lawful and good, but fear
Allah, in whom ye believe.

Qur'an 5:88

TO GIVE CHARITY OUT OF THE FRUITS OF LABOUR

A believer ought to as a matter of practical duty not solely enjoy all what he has earned because by the Mercy of Allah, men normally get more than they have put in, in the reproduction of

their lives.

Believe in Allah
And His Apostle,
And spend (in charity)
Out of the (substance)
Whereof He has made you
Heirs. For, those of you
Who believe and spend
(In charity), for them
Is a great Reward.

Qur'an 57:7

A believer is required to continue giving in charity, throughout the period of his life in this world. This will save him from the regret of not having done so when he finds with Allah, the benefits of charity to those who have done it.

Narrated 'Adi bin Hatim (r.a): The Prophet (S.A.W) said, "Save yourself from Hell-Fire even by giving half a date-fruit in charity."

Bukhari Collection

And spend something (in charity)
Out of the substance
Which We have bestowed
On you, before death
Should come to any of you
And he should say,
"O my Lord! Why didst
Thou not give me
Respite for a little while?
I should then have given
(Largely) in charity, and I
Should have been one
Of the doers of good."

Qur'an 63:10

A Muslim is therefore required to avoid being niggardly, being reluctant in assisting others, in sharing with fellow believers and mankind in general. If one does not, considering that Allah in His Mercy granted the believer with the capacity and ability to earn whatever he does as a result of interaction with creations of Allah, what excuse shall one have?

Behold, ye are those
Invited to spend
(Of your substance)
In the Way of Allah:
But among you are some
That are niggardly. Not any
Who are niggardly are so

At the expense of
Their own souls.
But Allah is free
Of all wants,
And it is ye that are needy...

Qur'an 47:38

And what cause have ye
Why ye should not spend
In the cause of Allah?
For to Allah belongs
The heritage of the heavens
And the earth...

Qur'an 57:10

Given the fact that a believer has no justification to mishandle resources given to him even though he is allowed to benefit from them, he will still make himself vulnerable to destruction (if he does not give), since when he gives in charity it is still to his benefit.

And spend of your substance
In the cause of Allah,
And make not your own hands
Contribute to (your) destruction;
But do good
For Allah loveth those
Who do good.

Qur'an 2:195

A Muslim, who gives charity, has made provision for the Day of Resurrection, when he shall stand before Allah and account for his deeds.

O ye who believe!
Spend out of (the bounties)
We have provided for you,
Before the Day comes
When no bargaining
(Will avail), nor friendship
Nor intercession.
Those who reject faith - they
Are the wrong doers.

Qur'an 2:254

Speak to my servants
Who have believed,
That they may establish
Regular prayers, and spend

(In charity) out of the sustenance
We have given them,
Secretly and openly, before
The coming of a Day
In which there will be
Neither mutual bargaining
Nor befriending.

Qur'an 14:31

A Muslim ought to give only from what he loves, what he likes, not what he wants to dispose of or get rid of. That is what is right in the preparation for godliness in Islam.

By no means shall ye
Attain righteousness unless
Ye give (freely) of that
Which ye love. And whatever
Ye give, of a truth
Allah knoweth it well.

Qur'an 3:92

There is no rule regarding what the believer must have before giving out something in charity. But this is in reference to voluntary charity.

They ask thee
What they should spend
(In charity). Say: "Whatever,
Ye spend that is good,
Is for parents and kindred
And orphans
And those in want
And for way-farers.
And whatever ye do
That is good, Allah
Knoweth it well.

Qur'an 2:215

...They ask thee how much
They are to spend;
Say: "What is beyond
Your needs,"...

Qur'an 2:219

A Muslim is not encouraged to give out what is not his as charity. Rather, it must have been honourably earned.

O ye who believe!
Give of the good things

Which ye have (honourably) earned,
And of the fruits of the earth
Which We have produced
For you, and do not even aim
At getting anything
Which is bad, in order that
Out of it ye may give away
Something, when ye yourselves
Would not receive it
Except with closed eyes.
And know that Allah
Is free of all wants,
And worthy of all praise.

Qur'an 2:267

It is necessary that charity is only given to those Allah has specified. Doing otherwise is a laudable act in futility.

(Charity is) for those
In need, who, in Allah's cause
Are restricted (from travel),
And cannot move about
In the land, seeking
(For trade or work):
The ignorant man thinks,
Because of their modesty,
That they are free from want.
Thou shalt know them
By their (unfailing) mark:
They beg not importunately
From all and sundry.
And whatever of good
Ye give, be assured
Allah knoweth it all.

Qur'an 2:273

A Muslim does this, in trust that Allah who has commanded such is aware of what he is doing. It is not an act of fancy.

And whatever ye spend
In charity or devotion,
Be sure Allah knows it all.
But the wrong-doers
Have no helpers.

Qur'an 2:270

The giving believer is confident that Allah does not only know, but will reward him justly,

in multifold.

...Whatever of good ye give
Benefits your own souls,
And ye shall only do so
Seeking the "Face"
Of Allah. Whatever good
Ye give, shall be
Rendered back to you,
And ye shall not
Be dealt with unjustly.

Qur'an 2:272

The parable of those
Who spend their substance
In the way of Allah is that
Of a grain of corn: it groweth
Seven ears, and each ear
Hath a hundred grains.
Allah giveth manifold increase
To whom He pleaseth:
And Allah careth for all
And He knoweth all things.

Qur'an 2:261

And the likeness of those
Who spend their substance,
Seeking to please Allah
And to strengthen their souls,
Is as a garden, high
And fertile: heavy rain
Falls on it but makes it yield
A double increase
Of harvest, and if it receives not
Heavy rain, light moisture
Sufficeth it. Allah seeth well
Whatever ye do.

Qur'an 2:265

There is no special time for the believer to give out of charity; he simply does so at any given opportunity and at his convenience.

Those who (in charity)
Spend of their goods
By night and by day,
In secret and in public,
Have their reward

With their Lord:
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

Qur'an 2:274

A Muslim gives out charity FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH, without putting the receiver in view. He is not doing the receiver a favour. He considers it as a loan to Allah, to be repaid in plenty when he will need it most, on the Day of Account.

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

Who is he that will
Loan to Allah a beautiful
Loan? For (Allah) will
Increase it manifold
To his credit,
And he will have (besides)
A liberal reward.

Qur'an 57:11

For those who give
In charity, men and women,
And loan to Allah
A beautiful loan,
It shall be increased manifold
(To their credit),
And they shall have (besides)
A liberal reward.

Qur'an 57:18

If ye loan to Allah
A beautiful loan, He
Will double it to
Your (credit), and He
Will grant you Forgiveness:
For Allah is most Ready
To appreciate (service),

Most Forbearing.

Qur'an 64:17

A Muslim does not therefore make such investment with Allah and then turns to concern himself with the mundane receiver. When and if he does so, he would have adulterated the value of the investment.

Those who spend
Their substance in the cause
Of Allah, and follow not up
Their gifts with reminders
Of their generosity
Or with injury – for them
Their reward is with their Lord:
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

Kind words
And the covering of faults
Are better than charity
Followed by injury.
Allah is free of all wants,
And He is most fore-bearing.

O ye who believe!
Cancel not your charity
By reminders of your generosity,
Or by injury, like those
Who spend their substance
To be seen of men,
But believe neither
In Allah nor in the Last Day.
They are in parable like a hard,
Barren rock, on which
Falls heavy rain,
Which leaves it
(Just) a bare stone.
They will be able to do nothing
With aught they have earned.
And Allah guideth not
Those who reject Faith.

Qur'an 2:262 – 264

A Muslim is required to give charity principally for the purpose of seeking the pleasure of Allah rather than just doing it to get the satisfaction of having helped mankind. Also, he is expected to conceal it if he is sure disclosing it will give him a sense of pride.

If ye disclose (acts
Of) charity, even so
It is well,
But if ye conceal them,
And make them reach
Those (really) in need,
That is best for you:
It will remove from you
Some of your (stains
Of) evil. And Allah
Is well acquainted
With what ye do.

Qur'an 2:271

The believers keep on doing it in the best form, conscious of the minimal or even negligible yield, in following up charity with injury.

Does any of you wish
That he should have a garden
With date-palms and vines
And streams flowing
Underneath, and all kinds
Of fruit, while he is stricken
With old age, and his children
Are not strong (enough
To look after themselves).
That it should be caught
In a whirlwind,
With fire therein,
And be burnt?
Thus doth Allah make clear
To you (His) signs;
That ye may consider.

Qur'an 2:266

To this end, a Muslim is not expected to be a miser. Allah warns:

(Woe to everyone)
Who pileth up wealth
And layeth it by;

Thinking that his wealth
Would make him last
Forever!

Qur'an 104:2 – 3

TO GIVE CHARITY IN THE SPIRIT OF SELFLESSNESS

In the giving of charity, a believer is required to ensure that when sharing to all those specified as entitled to it, he does so with the object of cleansing himself by reducing his sins – including that of the particles of impurity that may be attached to the word, the item, the money, the work or whatever one might earn for himself.

In the path of piousness to reach Allah, a Muslim is also obliged to disregard the seeming favour that may be the outcome of the charity but rather hope for the reward of Allah. Furthermore, he is to be modest.

Or the giving of food
In a day of privation,

To the orphan
With claims of relationship.

Qur'an 90:14 – 15

Those who spend their wealth
For increase in self-purification.

And have in their minds
No favour from anyone,

For which a reward
Is expected in return
But only the desire
To seek for the countenance
Of their Lord Most High:

Qur'an 92:18 – 20

Those who, when they spend,
Are not extravagant and not
Niggardly, but hold a just (balance)
Between those (extremes):

Qur'an 25:67

TO RESPOND TO CALL TO PRAYER ON FRIDAY

A believer must at least on Fridays ensure that he enjoins the prescribed assembly. This is because righteousness in Islam is both an individual and social matter. The Friday prayer has the distinctive additional value of including a necessary sermon preceding the prayer. This is normally conveyed in Arabic or the commonest spoken language in the community or both. It is a reoccurring opportunity for spiritual communion, social, political and cultural interaction that is at the same time educational.

A Muslim will feel compelled to attend, as it is a rare opportunity, where the guidance that the community needs is given. Members will not rush to leave except if it has started or has already lost its relevance. That will be most unfortunate because, it will mean that the community has lost its leadership or is divided. But, no creature is created with two hearts.

Thus, where the leadership is in pieces, with some in the mosque(s), some in the market and some in prison, the community will be at the verge of losing its sense of identity. It will become an ad-hoc activity, like what are today known as community development associations or Non-Governmental Organisations. It is these bodies that are gradually undertaking the serious responsibilities of organised and serious responsibilities of government.

O ye who believe!
When the call is proclaimed
To prayer on Friday
(The Day of Assembly)
Hasten earnestly to the Remembrance
Of Allah, and leave off
Business (and traffic):
That is best for you
If ye but knew!

Qur'an 62:9

It is the level and shades of guidance and the currency, from the leader of the community - to godliness, that indeed justifies abandoning/risking the gains that might accrue to one in earnings, for the very brief period of the Assembly. It would rarely last for more than two hours, from the time of commencing the sermon. A Muslim should therefore, immediately after, return to struggling for his livelihood in the Way of Allah.

And when the prayer
Is finished, then may ye
Disperse through the land,
And seek of the Bounty
Of Allah; and celebrate
The Praises of Allah
Often (and without stint):
That ye may prosper.

Qur'an 62:10

When ye pass
(Congregational) Prayers,
Celebrate Allah's Praises,
Standing, sitting down,
Or lying down on your side;
But when ye are free
From danger, set up
Regular Prayers;
For such Prayers

Are enjoined on Believers
At stated times.

Qur'an 4:103

TO BE CONSIDERATE OF FOLLOWERS

Leaders who are Muslims, who believe, who fear Allah and are on the path of His Apostle are accordingly required to be considerate of believers who follow them in prayers and the guidance they give in the mosque(s) and outside. They are to do this by consultation, because they have no monopoly of knowledge and insight – a means of identifying future suitable leaders by consensus, rather than inheritance.

Those who hasten
To their Lord, and establish
Regular prayers; who conduct
Their affairs by mutual consultation;
Who spend out of what
We bestow on them
For sustenance.

Qur'an 42:38

To do this, leaders are expected to be good listeners not arrogant fellows.

And lower thy wing
To the Believers who
Follow thee.

Qur'an 26:215

TO BE CONTENTED WITH THE FATE OF THE COMMUNITY

A believer in followership of the right leadership is required to keep within and be satisfied with what by His Grace, He makes of the community, holding unto the rope of Allah, the example(s) of Muhammad (S.A.W) and the leadership of fellow believers who become so placed.

And keep thy soul content
With those who call
On their Lord morning
And evening, seeking
His Face; and let not
Thine eyes pass beyond them,
Seeking the pomp and glitter
Of this life; nor obey
Any whose heart We
Have permitted to neglect
The remembrance of Us,
Or who follows his own
Desires, whose case has

Gone beyond all bounds.

Qur'an 18:28

TO BE SINCERE

A Muslim must on his own and as a member of a collectivity, be sincere. That is, he needs to believe, accept his belief as true, be satisfied with it and act out accordingly.

And those who believe
In Allah and His Apostle;
They are the sincere
(Lovers of Truth) and
The Witnesses (who testify)
In the eyes of their Lord:
They shall have their Reward
And their light...

Qur'an 57:19

TO CONSTANTLY REMEMBER AND PRAISE ALLAH, THE GLORIOUS

A Muslim ought to, on a regular basis remember the attributes of Allah and Praise Him for the reason that they are all worthy of mention in themselves and also, they are reflected in His creations, according to one's understanding. This is in spite of the recognition that he is to be engaged in work, work and work.

True, there is for thee
By day prolonged occupation
With ordinary duties:

But keeping in remembrance
The name of thy Lord
And devote thyself
To Him whole heartedly.

Qur'an 73:7 – 8

A Muslim should be conscious of Allah, since whatever concept one might make out of what creation reflects of His attributes, He is beyond that.

... Yea, magnify Him
For His greatness and glory!

Qur'an 17:111

Men who celebrate
The praise of Allah,
Standing, sitting,
And lying down on their sides,

And contemplate
The (wonders of) creation
In the heavens and the earth...

Qur'an 3:191

Glorify the name
Of thy Guardian Lord
Most High.

Qur'an 87:1

A Muslim must not forget, in addition to all the things he will be asking for, to pray for His forgiveness, along with praising Him.

Celebrate the praises
Of thy Lord, and pray
For His forgiveness:
For He is Oft-Returning
(In Grace and Mercy).

Qur'an 110:3

A believer will do this by calling upon Allah. It is important to note here that calling Allah is not like the conceptual appreciation of phenomena which can be done devoid of belief in Allah. Thus, a Muslim's reflection is only different, with Allah in focus, the ultimate point of reference.

He is the living (One):
There is no god but He:
Call upon Him, giving Him
Sincere devotion. Praise be
To Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

Qur'an 40:65

Call ye, then upon Allah
With sincere devotion to Him,
Even though the Unbelievers
May detest it.

Qur'an 40:14

A believer constantly engages in this even when he is alone. This is relevant because for a good time, especially when we are walking, sitting or lying down and not engaged in doing anything exactly, we often remain just silent. Fools engage in evil thoughts, when they 'relax'.

Call on your Lord
With humility and in private:
For Allah loveth not
Those who trespass beyond bounds.

Qur'an 7:55

And a Muslim does this by the names/attributes of Allah, which the entire creations in the heavens and the earth, including men separately and collectively reflect.

Say: "Call upon Allah, or
Call upon *Rahman*:
By whatever name ye call
Upon Him, (it is well):
For to Him belong
The Most Beautiful Names.
Neither speak thy prayer aloud,
Nor speak it in a low tone,
But speak in middle course
Between."

Qur'an 17:110

The most beautiful names
Belong to Allah:
So call on Him by them:
But shun such men as
Use profanity in His names:
For what they do, they will
Soon be requited.

Qur'an 7:180

For a believer, all available opportunity is used to praise Allah. This means that, no specific time is reserved for this purpose as if sometimes are less proper.

And celebrate (constantly)
The praises of thy Lord,
Before the rising of the sun,
And before its setting;
Yea, celebrate them
For part of the hours
Of the night, and at the sides
Of the day: that thou
Mayest have (spiritual) joy.

Qur'an 20:130

So (give) glory to Allah,
When ye reach eventide
And when ye rise
In the morning;

Yea, to Him be praise,
In the heavens and on the earth;

And in the late afternoon
And when the day
Begins to decline.

Qur'an 30:17 – 18

And for part of the night
Also praise thou Him,
And at the retreat
Of the stars!

Qur'an 52:49

A Muslim is required to join fellow believers in praising Allah, such as when responding to the servant who calls to prayer and success. Also, praising Allah could be by every family before setting out for business and before members retire to bed.

And celebrate the name
Of thy Lord morning
And evening.

Qur'an 76:25

O ye who believe!
Celebrate the praises of Allah,
And do this often;

And glorify Him
Morning and evening.

Qur'an 33:41 – 42

TO BE ALWAYS CONSCIOUS OF ALLAH'S PRESENCE

A believer ought to feel the presence of Allah, for any reason at any place. In the circumstance he fails, he seeks for Allah's protection from the interference of Satan.

Those who fear Allah,
When a thought of evil
From Satan assaults them,
Bring Allah to remembrance,
When lo! They see (aright).

Qur'an 7:201

TO TRUST ALLAH

A believer should not rely on or depend on or expect anything from any other than Allah. His faith dictates that whatever Allah makes of his immediate fate, is eventually not going to serve as a means against his good. This is because it is Allah that he calls upon, praises and He appreciates service.

And put thy trust
In Him who lives
And dies not; and celebrate
His praise; and enough is He
To be acquainted with
The faults of His servants.

Qur'an 25:58

And put thy trust
On the Exalted in Might,
The Merciful.

Who seeth thee standing
Forth (in prayer)

And thy movements among
Those who prostrate themselves.

For it is He
Who heareth and knoweth
All things.

Qur'an 26:217 – 220

TO REMAIN PERMANENTLY IN THE FOLD OF ISLAM

A believer on the path of godliness in Islam must not make it an ad-hoc or partly affair. He must be in it fully. Islam is neither for part-time practitioners, for leisure, past time nor is it for temporary belongingness.

O ye who believe!
Enter into Islam
Whole - heartedly;
And follow not
The footsteps
Of the Evil One;
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

Qur'an 2:208

Once a Muslim, one is required to remain a Muslim till death. This means that apostasy is not tolerated in the fold of Islam. Submission to Allah is not for visitors and must therefore not be merely visited.

O ye who believe!
Fear Allah as He should be
Feared, and die not
Except in a state

Of Islam.

Qur'an 3:102

Who can be better
In religion than one
Who submits his whole self
To Allah, does good
And follows the way
Of Abraham (A.S) the true in faith? ...

Qur'an 4:125

Such submission would make one belong to, identifying with the One Way of submitting to the unity of Allah – a universal religion since the creation of the world.

The same religion has He
Established for you as that
Which He enjoined on Noah.
The which We have sent
By inspiration to thee.
And that which We enjoined
On Abraham, Moses and Jesus...

Qur'an 42:13

Who doth greater wrong
Than one who invents
Falsehood against Allah,
Even as he is being invited
To Islam? And Allah
Guides not those
Who do wrong.

Qur'an 61:7

But, it is not enough to identify with Islam. It is necessary that a Muslim keeps his duties to Allah by compliance to His rules. This means that he should be orderly by remaining within the boundary of what is permissible and keep away from those things forbidden.

So set thou thy face
Steadily and truly to the faith:
(Establish) Allah's handiwork according
To the pattern on which
He has made mankind:
No change (let there be)
In the work (wrought)
By Allah: that is
The standard Religion:
But most among mankind
Understand not.

Qur'an 30:30

After belonging by affirmation and activities in a Muslim's submission to the Unity of Allah, he is required to invite those outside the fold, but with every sense of maturity. This should be by words and by his actions.

Invite (all) to the Way
Of thy Lord with wisdom
And beautiful preaching;
And argue with them
In ways that are best
And most gracious:
For thy Lord knoweth best,
Who have strayed from His path,
And who receive guidance.

Qur'an 16:125

In setting out to invite the entire mankind into the fold of Islam, he needs to start from or at least, not exclude his relations.

And admonish thy nearest
Kinsmen.

Qur'an 26:214

(Therefore) set thou thy face
To the right Religion,
Before there come from Allah
The Day which there is
No chance of averting:
On that Day shall men
Be divided (into two).

Qur'an 30:43

Therefore stand firm (in the straight
Path) as thou are commanded,
Thou and those who with thee
Turn (unto Allah):
And transgress not
(From the path): for He seeth
Well all that ye do.

Qur'an 11:112

TO BE PATIENT AND PERSEVERE IN THE COURSE OF SUBMISSION TO ALLAH

A believer must note that submission to Allah in principle and practice is very distant from passing time or game of chance. Submission requires that a Muslim should persist, insist and not

give up, when faced with difficulties or immediate disappointments. A Muslim must always turn to Allah for help.

O ye who believe! Seek help
With patient perseverance
And prayer: for Allah is with those
Who patiently persevere.

Qur'an 2:153

O ye who believe!
Persevere in patience
And constancy; vie
In such perseverance;
Strengthen each other;
And fear Allah;
That ye may prosper.

Qur'an 3:200

A believer has to adopt the culture of patience and perseverance in complying with the commandments of Allah, with the promises of Allah for obedient servants in view.

Patiently, then, persevere:
For the Promise of Allah
Is true: and ask for forgiveness
For thy fault, and celebrate
The Praises of thy Lord
In the evening
And in the morning.

Qur'an 40:55

So patiently persevere: for
Verily the promise of Allah
Is true: nor let those
Shake thy firmness, who have
(Themselves) no certainty of faith.

Qur'an 30:60

Recite what is sent
Of the Book by inspiration
To thee, and establish
Regular Prayers: for Prayer
Restrains from shameful
And unjust deeds;
And remembrance of Allah
Is the greatest (thing in life)
Without doubt. And Allah knows
The (deeds) that ye do.

Qur'an 29:45

Is one who worships devoutly
During the hours of the night
Prostrating himself or standing
(In adoration), who takes heed
Of the Hereafter, and who
Places his hope in the Mercy
Of his Lord (like one
Who does not)? Say:
“Are those equal, those who know
And those who do not know?
It is those who are
Endowed with understanding
That receive admonition.

Qur'an 39:9

Nay, seek (Allah's) help
With patient perseverance
And prayer:
It is indeed hard, except
To those who bring a lowly spirit;

Who bear in mind the certainty
That they are to meet their Lord,
And that they are to return to Him.

Qur'an 2:45 – 46

SUBMISSION ACCORDING TO ALLAH'S GUIDE

SUBMISSION BY GIVING IN TO ALLAH FOR HIS GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION WHOLLY

Based on the essence of the unity of Allah as the definition of a Muslim's faith, he is not only taught, he, by following in recitation, declares the intention of the truth of this unity; bears witness to the same, serves as an undertaking or oath (implying that it is without prejudice), and it's at the same time an appeal. When it is in a private activity like eating, by pronouncement, recollects himself fully, in relation to others it announces sincerity and firmness, and in relation to Allah, it is a renewal of faith. It is all of these often. This is because in private activity, Allah is the second and when it is in the presence of, or opens to access by others, the circle is completed. Thus, the revelation, the guidance and the tradition of preceding our activities with the assurance of our stance:

In the name of Allah, Most
Gracious, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 1:1

This verse serves as the guided opening to the activities of believers and to the OPENING chapter of the QUR'AN and is also known as the seven OFT-REPEATED VERSES because the verses 1-7 are numerous found across the chapters of the Qur'an and are to be compulsorily recited in all canonical prayers whether obligatory or voluntary. It is a declaration-cum-submission that the pronouncer has given up and sincerely, to proceed as it may please Allah (S.W.T).

This is immediately followed by giving gratitude, recognition and praise of the One Allah, that the believer submits, accepts and bears witness, to the truth that He is the One Creator who is ultimately responsible for evolvment and maintenance of all creations:

Praise be to Allah
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.

Qur'an 1:2

By this testimony, the believer affirms and thus, announces that Allah in His greatness surrounds everything. A Muslim is for emphasis and clarity taught (by his declaration bears witness) that His attribute of surrounding everything as an entity for existence and in relation to all for their survival is by His mercy, that all creations enjoy through numerous and variant benefits. This is for all creations, regardless of their belief or unbelief. For instance, He has subjected animals to men, for food, their labour, work and for their leisure. This can be appreciated in the use to which cattle and horses are put. Men and animals enjoy the breast milk of their female parent, rain and sunlight, oxygen and carbon dioxide, the canopy of the sky, wealth, power, knowledge, children, beauty, revelation, messenger(s), skills, etc. None of these is restricted to believers or non-believers. In addition to the reminders on these attributes of Allah across the entire Qur'an, there is a specific chapter titled THE BENEFICENT, which highlights these.

Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 1:3

To the same Allah, a believer is made to certify, as responsible for the end of things. These include the immediate and ultimate end or fate of everything. This reconfirms the belief and believers' witnessing that Allah encompasses all things. Thus, the highlight of His surrounding attribute is that as He is the only cherisher and sustainer, He is at the same time responsible for the end of any and all processes. These processes in the form of activity – isolated or in wholesomeness are defined to have meaning at a point but perceivable within the locus of time frame. It therefore includes before, the present, now, tomorrow, future, in this world, at judgement after death and beyond that. Allah is the controller of all these.

Master of the Day of Judgement.

Qur'an 1:4

The believer, in consequence is taught, follows and submits by confirming his position in relation to Allah. The believer is none other than a servant and has no relationship with Allah except to worship Him. Thus it reminds the believer of himself and expresses by certifying his status and his summary need from and before His Lord. With faith, the praise of Allah and bearing witness to the greatness, beneficial, merciful and absolute control and responsibility of Allah for all creations, the believer(s)' need cannot be other than that of help, assistance and support. Thus, the teaching:

Thee do we worship,
And Thine aid we seek.

Qur'an 1:5

The help and support that a servant can ask of his Lord and Master cannot be and must not be contrary to His rules, His standards, and His instructions. Given the nature of the status of both, the relationship must be defined by what is consistent with the Master. The general and details of this are found in the Qur'an, and the Tradition of His Messenger, Muhammad(S.A.W) and the consensus of his heirs i.e. scholars and jurists. In addition, because the Way of Allah is not strictly a personal affair, a believer is taught to go social in seeking for Allah's guidance in accordance with His Commandments.

Show us the straightway.

Qur'an 1:6

Noting that Allah who is the Creator of all creations in their number and variety, He has sent His Message and Messenger to show the way that He has desired to be of success. The Muslim ought not ignore or pretend that since Allah created all things, whatever way one follows, is that of Allah. While it is possible, that is not the desire or Commandment of Allah. In other words, the Message and Messenger were not sent for fun. Thus, in the teaching of the specification of what help Allah should give a Muslim (the straight Way) a further distinctive identity of the way is prayed or pleaded for. This is done by clearly differentiating between the object of either and the fate of either in relation to Allah.

The way of those on whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,

Those whose (portion)
Is not wrath
And who go not astray.

Qur'an 1:7

In practice, this is to be immediately followed by the outstanding tradition of the Messenger, Muhammad (S.A.W) of saying AMEN! This means: so be the plea for the acceptance of Allah.

SUMMARY PLEAS FOR ALLAH'S PROTECTION

Allah, All-Knowing, having placed man in the historical circumstance of numerous and variety of means to serve Him in a specified way, He has taught believers to seek for protection from the problems that he will logically need to constantly struggle against, with the help of Allah.

In this context, it is fellow men that have been generally benefitted with capacities and abilities to do good according to His commandments or evil, contrary to His desired way. Thus, we were taught to seek for protection against evil men and Jinns to whom the Message and guidance is directed. This is done without losing sight of the singular and unique attributes of Allah.

...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

Given the avenues that are open to men and Jinns from within the creational circumstances Allah has provided, the believer is taught to check such evils. This teaching by Allah corresponds with His knowledge of the means that He has made available as a source of trial for those who choose to do evil. Thus, by this prayer, the believer not only reconfirms the all-surrounding attribute and control of all creations by Allah, but it amounts to his gaining knowledge and

consciousness of the mercy of Allah and the need for His support and guide.

...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

RE-BEARING WITNESS TO THE ABSOLUTE UNITY OF ALLAH BY PRAISES

The Qur'an teaches the believer the absolute unity of Allah in a precise and succinct form that will unmistakably convey the message. The form, the coupling permits by convenience, the recitation and repetition of this by a Muslim as an opening to His praises because it has come as a complete chapter of the Qur'an. By its recitation, the believer does not just reconfirm the truth but further strengthens his faith in submission, between himself and Allah or between himself as a witness, in the presence of fellow believers, mankind, all creations and consequently before Allah, who is Omnipresent.

...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

His Oneness is in Independence, not requiring any form or kind of support for Himself and for all times and beyond the concept and phenomenon of time, because He created time.

Allah! There is no god
But He; the Living.

The self-subsisting, Eternal.

Qur'an 3:2

His Independence not being in isolation but in control of all things and is logically the ultimate and intrinsically most honourable Lord to face and to look up to as the only objective.

...Allah,
The King, the Reality:
There is no god but He,
The Lord of the Throne
Of Honour!

Qur'an 23:116

He is incomparable to anything, anyone and the collectivity of all does not amount to nearing Him because of His Highness in all attributes.

There is no god but He,
The Exalted in Power,
The Wise.

Qur'an 3:18

He is as a result, All-Surrounding, All-Encompassing, in all respects and in all details, in His Unity, Oneness, and Supremacy.

Allah! There is no god
But He, the living,
The Self-subsisting, Eternal,
No slumber can seize Him
Nor sleep. His are all things
In the heavens and on earth.
Who is there can intercede
In His presence except
As He permitteth? He knoweth
What (appeareth to His creatures
As) Before or After
Or Behind them.
Nor shall they compass
Aught of His knowledge
Except as He willeth.
His Throne doth extend
Over the heavens
And the earth, and He feeleth
No fatigue in guarding
And preserving them
For He is the Most High,
The Supreme (in Glory).

Qur'an 2:255

He is responsible for all processes by causation or allowance and the consequences of these in their main and in their details meet (in the ultimate) only what He pleases, what He decides, what He chooses. The OPPOSITES are therefore of contradictory relevance only to us and not to Him.

Thou causest the Night
To gain on the Day,
And thou causest the Day
To gain on the Night;
Thou bringest the living
Out of the Dead,
And thou bringest the Dead
Out of the living;
And thou givest sustenance
To whom Thou pleasest,
Without measure.

Qur'an 3:27

His control of all creations and encompassing them as well as surrounding them is out of detail knowledge, because He is all-comprehending, across all creations.

He knows all that goes
Into the earth, and all that
Comes out thereof; and all that
Comes down from the sky
And all that ascends thereto
And He is Most Merciful,
The Oft-Forgiving.

Qur'an 34:2

His doings or actions are all in equilibrium, none is inappropriate in itself or in relation to others. He does any and all of these without effort, in the manner that it applies to any or all creations. More so, beyond what is now perceivable and conceivable in our historical experience it is also true of His control and responsibility of what will be of the hereafter after our death, after passing away from this world.

It is He who created
The heavens and the earth
In true (proportions):
The day He saith, "Be"
Behold! It is. His word
Is the truth. His will be
The dominion the day
The trumpet will be blown.
He knoweth the unseen

As well as that which is
Open. For He
Is the Wise, well-acquainted
(With all things).

Qur'an 6:73

In the experience of the hereafter, there shall be no change as to who has power, who is in control, who is to determine things, as all and more will still remain to be of Allah, thus, deserving praise.

Praise be to Allah
To whom belong all things
In the heavens and on earth:
To Him be praise
In the Hereafter
And He is full of Wisdom
Acquainted with all things.

Qur'an 34:1

Allah is the only One who has promised, is able to and will accordingly revive and gather mankind on the Day of Judgement.

Our Lord! Thou art He
That will gather mankind
Together against a Day about which
There is no doubt: for Allah
Never fails in His promise.

Qur'an 3:9

He alone is acquainted with what is now within the reach of our knowledge and what is without it, that will fulfill it and as part of that, further fulfill His promise of re-ascertaining His unity by settling the difference between those that have now submitted to Him out of faith and those that have refused, out of doubt.

... O Allah!
Creator of the heavens
And the earth;
Knower of all that is
Hidden and open;
It is Thou that wilt
Judge between Thy servants
In those matters about which
They have differed.

Qur'an 39:46

This is not only true between believers and unbelievers, but also true, in respect of variations between believers. His attribute of being the All-Powerful consequently enables Him to conclude or

chart the fate of any of His creations, in the way that He desires, that pleases Him.

... O Allah!
Lord of Power (and Rule),
Thou giveth Power
To whom Thou pleaseth,
And Thou strippest off Power
From whom Thou pleaseth:
Thou enduest with honour
Whom Thou pleasest,
And Thou bringest low
Whom Thou pleasest
In Thy hand is all Good.
Verily, over all things
Thou hast power.

Qur'an 3:26

In the Face of Allah, the believer is absolutely helpless against the fate that Allah has designed as the ultimate end of those who comply with His commandments and those who choose to reject or abuse. The design is Allah's, following is that of the servant, and the ultimate end is for Allah to decide.

He is the Irresistible, (watching)
From above over His worshippers;
And He is the Wise,
Acquainted with all things.

Qur'an 6:18

Hence, the believer gives up wholly to Allah who deserves submission in recognition and faith that his origin is from Him and cannot by any means get anywhere that will be other than to Him.

... To Allah
We belong and to Him
Is our return.

Qur'an 2:156

PRAYING FOR THE SELF

With responsibility of account giving to be on individual basis and with the logic that the many proceeds from the single, the believer is guided to always pray and ask for Allah's support.

... O my Lord!
Let my entry be
By the Gate of Truth
And Honour, and likewise
My exit by the Gate
Of Truth and Honour;

And grant me
From Thy presence
An authority to aid (me).

Qur'an 17:80

The thoroughfare in question, which is of Allah, the symbol of Truth and Honour is not other than worshipping Him by complying with His commandments. Likewise the Gate of entry and exit symbolise living in this world and departing for the hereafter after death.

O my Lord! Make me
One who establishes regular prayer.
And also (raise such)
Among my offspring
O our Lord!
And accept Thou my prayer.

Qur'an 14:40

The believer then proceeds to thank Allah for the favours bestowed on him and his parents.

... O my Lord! So order me
That I may be grateful
For thy favours, which Thou
Hast bestowed on me and
On my parents, and that
I may work righteousness
That will please Thee.
And admit me, by Thy Grace,
To the ranks of Thy
Righteous Servants.

Qur'an 27:19

In contrast to the possible intervening variables, forces, factors, in this large social setting that has economic, political and cultural implications, the believer is taught to pray for protection against any form in which, what is contrary to Allah's way may tempt him away.

... O my Lord!
I seek refuge with Thee
From the suggestions
Of the Evil Ones.

Qur'an 23:97

The protection is not limited to the level of those that a believer may be tried with i.e. those that are allowed or will succeed in getting in touch with him. It includes protection against others which by mere prayer and faith can be kept completely away.

And I seek refuge with Thee
O my Lord! Lest they
Should come near me.

Qur'an 23:98

Due to the lapses that may result from the struggle, considering the imperfection of the believer and those he has involved in praying for, he is taught to ask for Allah's forgiveness, because He is All-Aware, All-Seeing, All-Knowing.

Our Lord! Cover (us)
With thy Forgiveness, me,
My parents, and (all) Believers;
On the Day that Reckoning
Will be established!

Qur'an 14:41

This prayer is not just unselfishly or generously extended to cover all fellow believers, but a Muslim is taught compassion, recognition and respect for his parents by specially praying for them.

... My Lord! Bestow on them
Thy mercy even as they
Cherished me in childhood.

Qur'an 17:24

It is then followed by a covering for all and sundry, that believe, that have been identified, the self, his immediate family, his family tree, his parents and the entire community/generations of believers.

... O my Lord!
Grant thou forgiveness and mercy;
For Thou art the Best
Of those who show mercy!

Qur'an 23:118

The believer is then educated to return to Allah in submission, in the plea that Allah calls upon him while he is in submission, in order that he may be revived in company of those who truly submit.

... O Thou
Creator of the Heavens
And the Earth! Thou art
My Protector in this World
And in the Hereafter
Take Thou my soul (at death)
As one submitting to Thy will
(As a Muslim), and unite me
With the righteous.

Qur'an 12:101

The critical relevance of man's death and arising in the hereafter for accountability makes the state in which a believer dies of profound importance. A Muslim is therefore taught to emphasise the prayer...

... Take Thou my soul (at death)
As one submitting to Thy Will
(As a Muslim), and unite me
With the righteous.

Qur'an 12:101

A Muslim is taught to be positive and specifically express in prayer his hope and expectation from Allah.

... I do hope
That my Lord will show me
The smooth and straight path.

Qur'an 28:22

... O my Lord!
Truly am I
In (desperate) need
Of any good
That Thou dost send me!

Qur'an 28:24

SUBMITTING AS A MEMBER OF A GENERATION THAT IS ONLY A PART OF THOSE WHO HAD SUBMITTED AND HAVE BEEN ADJUDGED RIGHT

The believer is trained to submit as one belonging to a generation of the many generations that have believed and whose cases Allah has narrated and certified as right and successful. This amounts to witnessing that Islam is not only a religion completed and perfected but as the essence of all previous Message(s) revealed to Apostles of old.

... We believe
In Allah and the revelation
Given to us, and to Abraham,
Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob,
And the Tribes, and that given
To Moses and Jesus, and that given
To (all) Prophets from their Lord:
We make no difference
Between one and another of them:
And we bow to Allah (in Islam).

Qur'an 2:136

This submission, without differentiation includes not just the Message, but the bearers and the Books. These include, unity of Allah as the essential message; the Prophets, Apostles or Messengers (including those mentioned in the Qur'an and those not) and the revelations they received and conveyed to their respective communities.

... We believe
In Allah, and in what
Has been revealed to us
And what was revealed
To Abraham, *Isma'il*,
Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes,
And in (the Books)
Given to Moses, Jesus,
And the Prophets,
From their Lord:
We make no distinction
Between one and another
Among them, and to Allah do we
Bow our will (in Islam).

Qur'an 3:84

A Muslim is taught to submit by certifying that, to Allah is the due of belief and worship. And that anything to the contrary is not just wrong, but the measure of wrongfulness is not measurable.

... Our Lord is
The Lord of the Heavens
And of the Earth, never
Shall we call upon any god
Other than Him; if we
Did, we should indeed
Have uttered an enormity!

Qur'an 18:14

This guidance and correct submission would not have been possible for any believer independently. Thus, like with the Angels who submit (except Iblis), the believer confirms the benefit of this knowledge and guidance.

... Glory to Thee: of knowledge
We have none, save what Thou
Hast taught us: in truth it is Thou
Who art perfect in knowledge and wisdom.

Qur'an 2:32

This knowledge is not unconnected with the absolute and embracing knowledge of Allah, the heavens and the earth and all that are between them.

Our Lord! Truly Thou
Dost know what we conceal
And what we reveal:
For nothing whatever is hidden
From Allah, whether on Earth
Or in Heaven.

Qur'an 14:38

A Muslim is then instructed to dissociate himself from any excuses, as part of a generation that is following the footsteps of those that have been adjudged aright. He is unlike those who ask questions after all explanations have being made or those who claim one excuse or the other against the Truth.

What cause can we have
Not to believe in Allah
And the truth which has
Come to us, seeing that
We long for our Lord
To admit us to the company
Of the righteous?

Qur'an 5:84

As a party to the collectivity that the Muslim has joined in submission, he is educated to submit to the unity of Allah in a form that certifies that if Allah does not accept the plea, the believers would have been lost, with nothing and no one to depend upon.

... Our Lord!
We have wronged our own souls:
If Thou forgive us not
And bestow not upon us
Thy Mercy, we shall
Certainly be lost.

Qur'an 7:23

This is specifically acknowledged in recognition of the dangerous consequence of not getting Allah's Mercy. In other words, the wrath of Allah is accepted by affirmation, and that is the worst thing that can happen to a creature.

Our Lord! Any whom Thou
Dost admit to the fire,
Truly Thou coverest with shame,
And never will wrongdoers
Find any helpers!

Qur'an 3:192

With these submissions, a believer is taught further to declare, as a matter of collective trust in Allah. This is informed by the acceptance of self-imperfection and the belief in life after death, a means to returning to Allah, his Creator.

... Our Lord!
In Thee do we trust,
And to Thee do we turn
In repentance: to Thee
Is (our) final Goal.

Qur'an 60:4

And to our Lord, surely,
Must we turn back!

Qur'an 43:14

PLEAS FOR ALL GENERATIONS OF BELIEVERS

We are to learn that all believers are brothers of one another, across any form or kind of secondary difference that may appear to make us different. This is because differences are to and indeed make it easy for us to recognise each other. And in faith, the generations of the past, ours and the meeting in the hereafter are not sufficient enough to divide us. We are therefore not just a community limited to the one that we live in. It extends across tribes, nations, races and our own century, our own generation. Hence, we are taught to identify with our immediate generation, as the starting point.

Our Lord! We believe
In what Thou has revealed,
And we follow the Messenger;
Then write us down
Among those who bear witness.

Qur'an 3:53

This is followed by the guidance that we should pray that Allah should make us those who submit in practice, because He is the One to aid us to meet His Will - after our initial submission coupled with efforts to comply with His commandments.

Our Lord! Make of us
Muslims, bowing to Thy (will),
And of our progeny a people
Muslims, bowing to Thy (will);
And show us our places for
The celebration of (due) rites;
And turn unto us (in mercy);
For Thou art the Oft-Returning,
Most Merciful.

Qur'an 2:128

This prayer which will have effect on all descending generations to the end of this world completes the circle of humanity. Thus, the bearers of the message of Allah to mankind, to all creations, cover those that have the benefit of receiving the message sent to Muhammad (S.A.W) to the end of history on earth. Thus, the plea that Allah should accept the submission of past, present and future believers.

... Our Lord!
Accept (this service) from us:
For Thou art the All-Hearing
The All-Knowing.

Qur'an 2:127

Allah should aid our immediate generation by strengthening our faith and enable us enhance our practices for His acceptance. This is only logical after submitting, receiving guidance – by the Grace of Allah as a mercy to all the Worlds.

Our Lord!
Let not our hearts deviate.
Not after Thou has guided us,
But grant us mercy
From Thine own presence;
For Thou art the Grantor
Of bounties without measure.

Qur'an 3:8

The generation is specifically identified with the essence of all the Messages of Allah and the prayer that Allah forgives the generation of believers.

Our Lord! We have heard
The call of one calling
(Us) to faith, 'Believe ye
In the Lord,' and we
Have believed. Our Lord!
Forgive us our sins,
Blot out from us
Our iniquities, and take
To Thyself our souls
In the company of the righteous.

Qur'an 3:193

The specifications of this prayer full of forgiveness then follow. The reciter is by this means educated that Allah alone can grant such prayer; and the implication of the prayer is that believers be recorded as such.

... Our Lord!
Perfect our Light for us,
And grant us forgiveness:
For Thou hast power

Over all things.

Qur'an 66:8

... Our Lord!
We believe; write us
Down among the witnesses.

Qur'an 5:83

Following this, the believer is taught to (at this stage) bring into the fold of the prayer for Allah's Mercies, all generations of believers especially those of the past.

... Our Lord!
Forgive us, and our brethren
Who came before us
Into the faith,
And leave not,
In our hearts
Rancour (or sense of injury)
Against those who have believed.
Our Lord! Thou art
Indeed full of kindness,
Most Merciful.

Qur'an 59:10

Allah is then pleaded with, to mercifully attend to our own generation. He had already drawn our attention to the past generation of believers that He has adjudged as righteous.

... Our Lord! Bestow on us
Mercy from Thyself,
And dispose of our affair
For us in the right way!

Qur'an 18:10

Like Allah had aided the believers who struggled, in the generations of the past, Allah has educated the Muslim(s) the prayer to help our own generation against similar plots, the sayings and activities of unbelievers and hypocrites.

... Our Lord! Forgive us
Our sins and anything
We may have done
That transgressed our duty:
Establish our feet firmly,
And help us against
Those that resist
Faith.

Qur'an 3:147

The teaching is graciously and mercifully followed by the specified and detail outline of praying for His compassion and benefit.

Our Lord!
Condemn us not
If we forget or fall
Into error; our Lord!
Lay not on us a burden
Like that which Thou
Didst lay on those before us;
Our Lord! Lay not on us
A burden greater than we
Have strength to bear.
Blot out our sins,
And grant us forgiveness.
Have mercy on us.
Thou art our Protector;
Help us against those
Who stand against Faith.

Qur'an 2:286

With the greatest obstacle before believers being enemies of Allah who reject the Message of the Messenger(s) and the guidance that is exemplified, Allah's mercy is sought for, for emphasis.

And deliver us by Thy Mercy
From those who reject (Thee).

Qur'an 10:86

A believer is then taught to hit the objective, having his pleas, his submission and prayers accepted – for all believers, of all generations and the repetition of this.

... Our Lord! We have indeed
Believed: forgive us, then,
Our sins, and save us
From the agony of the fire.

Qur'an 3:16

Our Lord! Grant us
What Thou didst promise
Unto us through Thy Messengers,
And save us from shame
On the Day of Judgement:
For Thou never breakest
Thy promise.

Qur'an 3:194

... Our Lord! Give us
Good in this world
And good in the Hereafter,
And defend us
From the torment
Of the fire.

Qur'an 2:201

... Glory to Thee! Give us
Salvation from the penalty
Of the Fire.

Qur'an 3:191

... Our Lord!
Avert from us the Wrath
Of Hell, for its Wrath
Is indeed an affliction grievous.

Evil indeed is it
As an abode, and as
A place to rest in.

Qur'an 25:65 – 66

This is followed with hope, for a believer must not be hopeless of Allah's mercy. Since it is only Allah that can grant prayer, the believer is advised to rest the matter with Allah.

... In Allah
Do we put our trust.
Our Lord! Make us not
A trial for those
Who practice oppression.

Qur'an 10:85

**RE-AFFIRMATION OF THE FAITH OF ONESELF, ALONG WITH THOSE WHO SUBMIT
AND DISTINCT FROM THOSE WHO REJECT**

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was taught to re-affirm his Faith by saying: **TO YOU BE YOUR WAY, AND TO ME MINE** (Qur'an 109:6) in response to unbelievers' rejection of the Message of Allah. Likewise, a Muslim is taught to submit:

For me, I have set
My face, firmly and truly,
Towards Him who created
The Heavens and the Earth,
And never shall I give
Partners to Allah.

Qur'an 6:79

This mode of distinctive affirmation is meant to bring belongingness to a universal community of believers. This further re-affirms that the message brought by Muhammad (S.A.W) is not new but the same and has been the only Message of Allah to previous generations that have been certified as righteous.

Verily my Lord
Hath guided me to
A way that is straight.
A religion of right;
The path (trod) by Abraham
The true in faith,
And he (certainly)
Joined not gods with Allah.

Qur'an 6:161

The believer re-specifies the essence of his faith, requiring him to believe and to submit by complying with Allah's commandments. This brings out the uniqueness between the openings that by provision He has desired some for the faithful and forbidden them some.

No partner hath He:
This am I commanded,
And I am the first
Of those who bow
To His will.

Qur'an 6:163

For one who consistently complies by the commandments of Allah, he does so, only for the sake of Allah. The Muslim therefore presents all that he does to Allah who is properly entitled to it. He created the Worlds and to Him will all return.

Truly, my prayer
And my service of sacrifice,
My life and my death,
Are (all) for Allah,
The Cherisher of the Worlds.

Qur'an 6:162

A believer can then learn by submitting, that he needs nothing other than Allah. He is everything for him.

... Allah sufficeth me:
There is no god but He:
On Him is my trust;
He the Lord of the Throne
(Of Glory) Supreme!

Qur'an 9:129

... He is my Lord!
There is no god but He;
On Him is my trust,
And to Him do I turn!

Qur'an 13:30

This is followed by emphasis of the logic of submission which serves as a reminder to the reciter, as it sinks into him.

... Lord and Cherisher
Of the Worlds:

Who created me, and
It is He who guides me;

Who gives me food and drink;

And when I am ill
It is He who cures me;

Who will cause me to die,
And then to live (again);

And who, I hope,
Will forgive me my faults
On the Day of Judgement.

O my Lord! Bestow wisdom
On me, and join me
With the righteous;

Grant me honourable mention
On the tongue of truth
Among the latest (generations);

Make me one of the inheritors
Of the Garden of Bliss;

Qur'an 26:77 – 85

And let me not be
In disgrace on the Day
When (men) will be raised up;

The Day whereon neither
Wealth nor sons will avail;

But only he (will prosper)
That brings to Allah
A sound heart.

Qur'an 26:87 – 89

A Muslim is then educated to re-clarify the difference between submission and rejection, in relation to the message revealed by Allah to His chosen Messenger to all the Worlds, to all creations. The reciter does this by bearing witness that...

Truth has (now)
Arrived, and Falsehood perished:
For falsehood is (by its nature)
Bound to perish.

Qur'an 17:81

Since the truth belongs to Allah, with His aid, believers in His unity are bound to succeed against the desire and efforts of unbelievers, who strive to destroy it.

And Allah by His words
Doth prove and establish
His Truth, however much
The sinners may hate it!

Qur'an 10:82

To, or in respect of those who reject faith, the Muslim, the believer, the reciter asserts that he is undoubtedly on the right course, for the reason that he has submitted to Allah.

... Allah's guidance
Is the (only) guidance,
And we have been directed
To submit ourselves
To the Lord of the worlds.

Qur'an 6:71

This guidance and submission is re-confirmed to involve a consciousness that needs to be constant and bowing by giving in with his limbs.

To establish regular prayers
And to fear Allah:
For it is to Him
That we shall be
Gathered together.

Qur'an 6:72

Hence, the believer is sure that, contrary and unlike those who reject faith, he will reach and arrive at a desirable goal.

It is those who believe
And confuse not their beliefs
With wrong that are
(Truly) in security, for they
Are on (right) guidance.

Qur'an 6:82

The Muslim follows this up with praying for the consistency of all those who believe with the aid of Allah, as they struggle to do their best in His path.

Our Lord! Make us not
A (test and) trial
For the Unbelievers,
But forgive us, our Lord!
For Thou art the Exalted
In Might, the Wise.

Qur'an 60:5

Believers are taught that, Allah is enough for them; they are in submission and in hope that as promised by Allah, they will return to Him and receive the right judgement.

... Sufficient unto us is Allah!
Allah and His Messenger will soon
Give us of His bounty:
To Allah do we turn our hopes
(That, being the right course).

Qur'an 9:59

The believer chooses his submission with lips, by prayer, by self-reassurance, by distinguishing himself from those who reject and in companionship of all creations that believe, in all the worlds, with the plea that cover all believers and their relations, against the helplessness of failing on the Day of Judgement.

... Our Lord! Thy Reach
Is over all things,
In mercy and knowledge.
Forgive, then, those who
Turn in repentance, and follow
Thy path; and preserve them
From the penalty
Of the Blazing fire!

And grant, our Lord!
That they enter
The Gardens of Eternity,
Which Thou hast promised
To them, and to the righteous

Among their fathers,
Their wives, and their posterity!
For Thou art (He)
The Exalted in Might,
Full of Wisdom.

And preserve them
From (all) ills;
And any who Thou
Dost preserve from ills
That Day, on them
Wilt Thou have bestowed
Mercy indeed: and that
Will be truly (for them)
The highest Achievement.

Qur'an 40:7 – 9

I personally bear witness, accept and pray for acceptance – Amen! Amen!! Amen!!!

It will then be noted that the reading of the entire Qur'an by recitation gives one, among many, the benefit of these few submissions I have highlighted – in the words of Allah. Allah is the One who accepts the prayers of His servants. Then, what more of one who recites the Qur'an from cover to cover regularly? Allah is Greatest. Allah is Most Compassionate. Allah is Most Merciful.

Then which of the favours of
Your Lord will ye deny?

Qur'an 55:13

Truly, for each believer and for me:

... Unless my Lord
Guide me, I shall surely
Be among those
Who go astray.

Qur'an 6:77

**THE UNITY OF ALLAH AS THE BASIS FOR
A MUSLIM'S POSITIVE ORIENTATION**

ALLAH IS THE LIGHT
OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.
THE PARABLE OF HIS LIGHT
IS AS IF THERE WERE A NICHE
AND WITHIN IT A LAMP
THE LAMP ENCLOSED IN GLASS:
THE GLASS AS IT WERE
A BRILLIANT STAR:
LIT FROM A BLESSED TREE
AN OLIVE, NEITHER OF THE EAST
NOR OF THE WEST,
WHOSE OIL IS WELL-NIGH
LUMINOUS,
THOUGH FIRE SCARCE TOUCHED IT
LIGHT UPON LIGHT! ...

QUR'AN 24:35

THE ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF UNITY AS SUBMISSION FOR A MUSLIM'S ORIENTATION

Islam means submission to Allah. It contains rites and rituals. It is a way of living, which means that it covers standards in respect of all aspects of living, which makes it all-embracing. Its ethics, morals, etiquettes, rites, rituals, and cultural relationships are largely, explicitly provided for. Even where deductions are permissible, these must not deviate from the explicitly set out standards. The standard(s) of Islam are so detail that, it gives the Muslims a basis for total understanding and control of living.

It has the distinctive attributes of being complete, not open to fault and being a divine guidance for the good of living in this world and for the bliss promised in the hereafter, by the Mercy of Allah. The guidance is exhaustively available in the incorruptible Qur'an, the recorded authentic traditions of Muhammad (S.A.W), and perfectly exemplified by him based strictly on the guidance of Allah.

This is why and how in Islam, reality, truth and submission are tied to the UNITY OF ALLAH. It is the essence that all things arise from and return to. In other words, everything is from Allah, of Allah, and to Allah. In consequence, whatever cannot ultimately be tied to the Unity of Allah is either not fully or properly understood, or is wrong.

WHO IS ALLAH?

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

To Allah belong the East
And the West: whithersoever
Ye turn, there is Allah's presence
For Allah is All-Embracing,
All-knowing.

Qur'an 2:115

To Him is due
The primal origin
Of the Heavens and the Earth;
When He decreeth a matter;
He saith to it: "Be,"

And it is.

Qur'an 2:117

Allah! There is no god
But He, the Living,
The Self-subsisting, Eternal.
No slumber can seize Him
Nor sleep. His are all things
In the Heavens and on Earth.
Who is there can intercede
In His presence except
As He permitteth? He knoweth
What appeareth to His Creatures
As) before or after
Or behind them.
Nor shall they compass
Aught of His knowledge
Except as He willeth.
His Throne doth extend
Over the Heavens
And the Earth, and He feeleth
No fatigue in guarding
And preserving them
For He is the Most High,
The Supreme (in Glory).

Qur'an 2:255

The absoluteness of the unity of Allah as a concept is the root of the warning:

Allah forgiveth not
That partners should be set up
With Him; but He forgiveth
Anything else, to whom
He pleaseth; to set up
Partners with Allah
Is to devise a sin
Most heinous indeed.

Qur'an 4:48

To avoid any mix up between the unity of Allah and the status of Muhammad (S.A.W) a Muslim must note that:

Muhammad is no more
Than a Messenger; many
Were the Messengers that passed away
Before him. If he died

Or were slain, will ye then
Turn back on your heels? ...

Qur'an 3:144

Thus, Muhammad (S.A.W) was himself taught to make clear to believers the distinction between himself and the Message of Allah he is conveying.

... Say: "It is not for me,
Of my own accord,
To change it, I follow
Naught but what is revealed
Unto me," ...

Qur'an 10:15

The Qur'an, the primary source of guidance, was revealed to Muhammad (S.A.W), but it is the Message of Allah and not that of the Messenger.

Say: "If Allah had so willed,
I should not have rehearsed it
To you, or would He
Have made it known to you.
A whole life time before this
Have I tarried amongst you.
Will ye not then understand?"

Qur'an 10:16

Or do they say,
"He had forged it?"
Say: "Had I forged it,
Then can ye obtain
No single (blessing) for me
From Allah. He knows best
Of that whereof ye talk
(So glibly)! Enough is He
For a witness between me
And you; And He is
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful".

Qur'an 46:8

Thus, submission to Allah is the essence of Islam. Muhammad (S.A.W) was only a practical model by way of the message and guidance he had. Following his footsteps is therefore the way to Allah.

He who obeys
The Messenger, obeys Allah;
But if any turn away,

We have not sent thee
To watch over
Their (evil deeds).

Qur'an 4:80

ALLAH AND HISTORY:

"If Allah touch thee
With affliction, none
Can remove it but He;
If He touch thee with happiness,
He hath power over all things.

Qur'an 6:17

If Allah helps you,
None can overcome you:
If He forsakes you,
Who is there, after that,
That can help you?
In Allah then,
Let Believers put their trust.

Qur'an 3:160

Thus, regarding what happened on the Day of *Badr*, Muhammad (S.A.W), his followers and by extension, all believers are to note (in consistence with the unity of Allah) ...

It is not ye who
Slew them; it was Allah:
When thou threwest (a handful
Of dust), it was not
Thy act, but Allah's ...

Qur'an 8:17

Also, in the very trying case of the Battle of *Hunayn* where the believers numerically outnumbered the unbelievers (10,000 and 4,000 respectively), the Power of Allah was shown, without which the believers would have lost.

Assuredly Allah did help you
In many battle fields
And on the day of *Hunayn*:
Behold your great numbers
Elated you, but they availed
You naught: the land,
For all that it is wide,
Did constrain you, and ye
Turned back in retreat.

But Allah did pour His calm
On the Messenger and on the Believers,
And sent down forces which ye
Saw not: He punished
The Unbelievers: thus doth He
Reward those without Faith.

Qur'an 9:25 - 26

WHATEVER IS
IN THE HEAVENS AND
ON EARTH, DOTH DECLARE
THE PRAISES AND GLORY
OF ALLAH – THE SOVEREIGN,
THE HOLY ONE, THE EXALTED
IN MIGHT, THE WISE.

Qur'an 62:1

ALLAH'S WILL AS WHAT WILL ULTIMATELY COME TO PASS

The oneness or unity of Allah is the standard of Islamic faith. The knowledge and the understanding of this is primarily a matter of belief. The illustrations that point at or reveal the unity of Allah as the essence of Islamic faith is at one level the orientation of a Muslim's mind. The absolute attributes and unity of Allah characterised by His being All-Seeing, All-Hearing, All-Powerful, All-Comprehending, All-Aware, etc. is revealed in His standards that negate those that men inevitably find themselves in. For instance, when Allah wills a thing, He say to it 'BE' and it becomes – which encompasses the rule of processes or procedure(s) in history and beyond, at the same time. Thus His comprehension is all-comprehending. This can be further contrasted with the case of a man when he stands, facing the east. In that position, he is largely or completely ignorant and unaware of what is in the west, the north and the south. This could also extend to what is above, and below him.

On another level we are all sure that one day, we shall be no more. We are never definitely and precisely sure of the future, we simply deal with as much of the past as we believe there was and for the present we only do our best. In essence, we are incapable of handling two or more things at the same time. Even at the level of knowledge although we acknowledge that there is or should be unity in knowledge, we have not yet been able (and will never be able) to unify knowledge/code of communication, such that when we are handling economics, we will equally be handling politics, culture, science, etc.

The unity of Allah negates all these compartmentalisations that we inevitably live by. Allah is therefore before the present, with the present and after the present. He created time. He comprehends all time, before it and after it. This additional can be illustrated with the logic of a man who constructs a box of pigeon holes for his birds to have a resting place. It is illogical to begin to associate the convenience of the pigeon holes with that of the man. How can it make sense that the man goes into one of the holes to take rest? Thus, such is the case with Allah and every other creation, for He created all things – the heaven and the earth and all that they contain.

Now, Allah is living, He wills, but the nature of His will does not in any way negate His absolute unity. For example the absoluteness, the unity and consistency of the unity or oneness of Allah reveals the limitation or imperfection of man in all of the attributes of Allah. This means that although man has been blessed to share, it does not make man perfect. Consider this illustration:

The lightning all but snatches away
Their sight, every time the light
(Helps) them, they walk therein,
And when the darkness grows on them,
They stand still,
And if Allah willed, He could take away
Their faculty of hearing and seeing
For Allah hath power over all things.

Qur'an 2:20

Hence, the concept of Allah's will is consistent with His unity. Those who project their inconsistency and imperfection to apply to Allah fail to grasp the all-encompassing nature of the attributes of Allah in His unity, which cover both the control of our contextual reality and beyond. Thus, when Allah commanded Muhammad (S.A.W) and the believers to turn from facing Jerusalem to the Ka'abah, those who did not understand or did not believe and those who now succeed them are appropriately addressed by Allah:

The fools among the people
Will say: "What hath turned
Them from the *Qiblah* to which
They were used?" Say:
"To Allah belong East and West;
He guideth whom He will
To a way that is straight."

Qur'an 2:142

By way of summary, the above verses of the Qur'an reveal the comprehensive scope of Allah's controls, with specific reference to historical experiences i.e. beyond what man is capable of doing. But the aspect that is within the reach and understanding of man is equally not left out of the comprehensive control of Allah. In this regard, the reason for differentiation and agreement which define our ordinary consistency is in His control because He fashioned it. The logic of history can then not be said to be independent or in negation of the will of Allah.

From the land that is clean
And good, by the Will
Of its Cherisher (Allah), springs
Produce, (rich) after its kind:
But from the land that is
Bad, springs up nothing
But that which is niggardly:
Thus do We explain the signs
By various (symbols) to those
Who are grateful.

Qur'an 7: 58

The Unity of Allah and its constant reflection in His will amounts to His being always correct. In other words, the choice is absolutely His, with respect to all objectives and the processes or means of achieving them. Thus, even though in our imperfect context of understanding, different message bearers were sent to different nations with seemingly variant standards but generally, they were consistent.

We sent not a Messenger,
But to be obeyed, in accordance
With the Will of Allah...

Qur'an 4:64

Thus, in consequence:

Those who reject our (Allah's) Signs
Are deaf and dumb,
In the midst of darkness
Profound: Whom Allah willeth,
He leaveth to wander;
Whom He willeth, He placeth
On the way that is straight.

Qur'an 6:39

The unity and consistency of this with His will, the absoluteness of this is at the same time regular with Allah's scope of ability. The choice is always His, had always been His and will ever continue to be His.

Thy Lord is Self-Sufficient,
Full of Mercy. If it were
His will, He could destroy
You, and in your place
Appoint whom He will
As your successors, even as
He raised you up
From the posterity
Of other people.

Qur'an 6:133

If it had been thy Lord's will,
They would all have believed,
All who are on Earth:
Wilt thou then compel mankind,
Against their will, to believe?

Qur'an 10:99

By implication, the will of Allah precedes and covers the will of man and beyond. Thus, the will of Allah is superior and the ultimate thing to come and pass, within which the will of man is accommodated. The relationship between the two as it affects the end of man, positively or negatively, is the determination of Allah, because of the scope of His will. This absolute and all-encompassing nature of the unity of Allah and its consistency with His will and ability logically serves the believer with the following cautions:

... If anyone's trial
Is intended by Allah, thou hast
No authority in the least
For him against Allah...

Qur'an 5:41

If their (unbelievers') spurning is hard
On thy mind, yet if
Thou wert able to seek
A tunnel in the ground
Or a ladder to the skies
And bring them a sign -
(What good?) If it were
Allah's will, He could
Gather them together
Unto true guidance.
So be not thou
Amongst those who are swayed,
By ignorance (and impatience)!

Qur'an 6:35

If it had been Allah's plan,
They would not have taken
False gods ...

Qur'an 6:107

Even if we did send
Unto them Angels,
And the dead did speak
Unto them, and We gathered
Together all things before
Their very eyes, they are not
The ones to believe,
Unless it is in Allah's plan...

Qur'an 6:111

Thus, as for the standard of Allah's will, there is no rule. He does as He pleases. On the contrary, it is in the interest of man to simply obey if he believes and understands. This standard or non-standard of the will of Allah explains the consistency and variance in the following comparable laws:

All food was lawful
To the Children of Israel,
Except what Israel
Made unlawful for itself,
Before the Law (of Moses)
Was revealed...

Qur'an 3:93

This was different from the command to Muhammad (S.A.W) and his followers:

... Lawful unto you (for food)
Are all four-footed animals

With the exceptions named:
But animals of the chase
Are forbidden while ye
Are in Sacred Precincts
Or in pilgrim garb;
For Allah doth command
According to His Will and Plan.

Qur'an 5:1

Given the conceptual nature of Allah's will defined above, it is consequently of no wonder, that the following examples of the fulfilment of His will in history can only be said to be consistent, because they range from within the context of human historical reality or logic to what is beyond man but within the total comprehension and control of Allah. In favour of Moses and his people:

And remember we divided
The Sea for you and saved you
And drowned Pharaoh's people
Within your very sight.

Qur'an 2:50

In the case of *Zakariya*:

He said: "Oh my Lord!
How shall I have a son,
Seeing I am very old,
And my wife is barren?"
"Thus," was the answer,
"Doth Allah accomplish
What He Willeth."

Qur'an 3:40

For Virgin Mary:

She said: "O my Lord!
How shall I have a son
When no man hath touched me?"
He said: "Even so,
Allah createth
What He Willeth:
When He hath decreed
A plan, He but saith
To it, 'BE' and it is!"

Qur'an 3:47

After one of the sons of Adam murdered the other, Allah fulfilled His will by teaching the murderer how to bury his brother:

Then Allah sent a raven,
Who scratched the ground,
To show him how to hide
The shame of his brother...

Qur'an 5:31

In the case of Pharaoh's magicians when Allah willed to guide them, to believe in Him:

“And behold! I inspired
The Disciples to have faith
In Me and Mine Messenger.”
They said, “We have Faith
And do thou bear witness
That we bow to Allah
As Muslims.”

Qur'an 5:111

After the Battle of *Badr*, Muhammad (S.A.W) was informed:

Remember in thy dream
Allah showed them (enemies) to thee
As few: If He had shown
Them to thee as many,
Ye would surely have been
Discouraged, and ye would
Surely have disputed
In (your) decision: but Allah
Saved (you) for He knoweth
Well the (secrets) of (all) hearts.

And remember when ye met,
He showed them to you
As few in your eyes,
And He made you appear
As contemptible in their eyes;
That Allah might accomplish
A matter already enacted
For to Allah do all questions
Go back (for decision).

Qur'an 8:43 – 44

The above are a few examples of how Allah's will may manifest, within the context of man's historical reality and beyond, because of the all-comprehensive scope of His Will and the consistency of this with His Unity, Power, Knowledge, Ability, etc. all at the same time. The model of Islamic practice and faith Muhammad (S.A.W), was therefore instructed:

Say: "I have no power
Over any good or harm
To myself except as Allah
Willeth. If I had knowledge
Of the unseen, I should have
Multiplied all good, and no evil
Should have touched me:
I am but a Warner,
And a bringer of glad tidings
To those who have Faith."

Qur'an 7:188

BY (THE TOKEN OF)
TIME (THROUGH THE AGES).
VERILY MAN IS IN LOSS,
EXCEPT SUCH AS HAVE FAITH,
AND DO RIGHTEOUS DEEDS,
AND (JOIN TOGETHER)
IN THE MUTUAL TEACHING
OF TRUTH, AND OF
PATIENCE AND CONSTANCY

Qur'an 103: 1 – 3

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIS PERFECT WILL AND WHAT HE WILLS FOR MAN

Following the understanding of the nature of Allah's will, its superiority to that of man in a form that defines the will and understanding of man only as the essential recognition of the will of Allah (inevitably conforming with the Unity of Allah), it logically raises the question: What is the nature of the relationship? Does it begin and end with the simple subordination of one to the other? Is the nature of that of man such that it is totally of no relevance?

The simple and complete answer to these questions is YES. This is because; Allah's will is what will always ultimately come to pass. In other words, the end of whatever matter, is in the total and final control of what Allah desires.

With Him are the keys
Of the unseen, the treasures
That none knoweth but He.
He knoweth whatever there is
On the Earth and in the Sea.
Not a leaf doth fall
But with His knowledge,
There is not a grain
In the darkness (or depths)
Of the earth, nor anything
Fresh or dry (green or withered)
But is (inscribed) in a record
Clear (to those who can read).

Qur'an 6:59

But this does not imply that the ultimate consciousness of His will has no standard defined for man. The difference between Allah and man, between the total reality of man as against the total reality of Allah, logically means that nature, direction and details of the limited or imperfect reality of man (within historical context) may not at the same time mean the convenience, right, safety or absoluteness for man – except if Allah wills so. In other words, it is inconsistent with the unity of Allah to deduce or conclude such absoluteness for man. Thus the only conclusion in respect of the will of man will have to be in agreement with the rules that Allah lays down as He is always correct and all affairs belong to Him. In this way the obedience to His rules define His Will in the sense of what pleases Him, whereas disobedience does not totally negate His will, for the fact that the primary reality of man is rooted in His will and the ultimate reality is at His disposal to determine according to His will. It is in regard to this clarity that the Qur'an evidently distinguishes the mix up from what is correct for those who fail to grasp this relationship:

Those who give partners
(To Allah) will say:
“If Allah had wished,
We should not have
Given partners to Him,

Nor would our fathers
Nor should we have had
Any taboos.” So did
Their ancestors argue
Falsely, until they tasted
Of our wrath. Say:
“Have ye any (certain)
Knowledge? If so, produce
It before us. Ye follow
Nothing but conjecture:
Ye do nothing but lie.”

Qur'an 6:148

Therefore, this means that within the context of the inevitable reality that Allah's will has provided for man to “will his will”, there is a set standard that man may pursue to be able to realise or meet the will of Allah that is approved. It consequently means that man has the option to will other than the standard approved of, even though it will necessarily still remain within the context of Allah's will. This standard that may be opted for is what informs the provision and distinction between those who may will in accordance with Allah's rules, will or otherwise.

Some He hath guided:
Others have (by their choice)
Deserved the loss of their way;
In that they took
The Evil Ones, in preference
To Allah, for their friends,
And protectors, and think
That they receive guidance.

Qur'an 7:30

Thus, within the context and given the nature of the relationship between the will of Allah's provision for man and the will of choice open to man, within the framework of the will of Allah, we can understand when He says:

To such as Allah rejects
From His guidance, there can be
No guide: He will
Leave them in their trespasses,
Wandering in distraction

Qur'an 7:186

... Truly Allah leaveth,
To stray, whom He will;
But He guideth to Himself
Those who turn to Him
In penitence.

Qur'an 13:27

As a result, when it comes to the question of the ability of man, the definition is clear. The primary basis of all affair and the finality of all affair is Allah's. Within the perspective of man's inevitable reality and the choice that is open to him, where he chooses other than the standard and path of Allah, what is there that we can do to one another? The answer is: nothing. The religion of Islam is not compulsory. We will have no cause or reason to compel nor can we hope to be able to compel. Muhammad (S.A.W) was therefore cautioned:

Among them are some who
(Pretend to) listen to thee:
But canst thou make the deaf
To hear, even though
They are without
understanding?

And among them are some
Who look at thee:
But canst thou guide
The blind, even though
They will not see?
Verily Allah will not deal
Unjustly with man in aught:
It is man that wrongs
His own soul.

Qur'an 10:42 – 44

But those who believe
And work righteousness
And humble themselves
Before their Lord
They will be Companions
Of the Garden, to dwell
Therein for aye!

Qur'an 11:23

With reference to cases in history, there is the example of Noah and his people:

They rejected him,
But we delivered him,
And those with him,
In the Ark, and We made
Them inherit (the earth),
While We overwhelmed
In the flood those
Who rejected Our Signs...

Qur'an 10:73

In similar manner, whose will, will be blamed, in the case of Pharaoh? When Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh with the Signs of Allah Pharaoh and his people said:

"This is indeed evident sorcery!"

Qur'an 10:76

This was the contradiction of the will of Allah and the logical basis for Allah's overwhelming them with the flood and getting them drowned. The same principle and logic applied to the people of *Lut* who were homosexuals. Recall his invitation.

"O my people! Here are
My daughters: they are purer
For you (if ye marry)! ...

Qur'an 11:78

The unbelievers responded:

"Well dost thou
Know we have no need
Of thy daughters: indeed
Thou knowest quite well
What we want!"

Qur'an 11:79

What they wanted was to practice their abomination with the guests that were with *Lut* – unknown to them that they were not real men but angels in human form. Thus, as a result of their rejection, Allah punished them...

When Our decree issued,
We turned (the cities)
Upside down, and rained down
On them brimstones
Hard as baked clay,
Spread, layer on layer.

Qur'an 11:82

To the People of *Madyan*, Allah sent Shu'aib with the message of the Oneness of Allah and that they should give full measure or weight in their commercial transactions. But...

They said, "O Shu'aib!
Does thy (religion of) prayer
Command thee that we
Leave off the worship which
Our fathers practised, or

That we leave off doing
What we like with our property?
Truly, thou art the one
That forbearth with faults,
And is right minded!

Qur'an 11:87

In return, they were justly recompensed. The ultimate will of Allah which encompasses all sides took its course:

When Our decree issued,
We saved Shu'aib and those
Who believed with him,
By (special) Mercy from Ourselves:
But the (mighty) Blast did seize
The wrongdoers, and they
Lay prostrate in their homes
By the morning,

As if they had never
Dwelt and flourished there...

Qur'an 11:94 – 95

In the end, Allah says:

It was not We that wronged them:
They wronged their own souls:
The deities, other than Allah,
Whom they invoked, profited them
No whit when there issued
The decree of thy Lord:
Nor did they add aught
(To their lot) but perdition!

Qur'an 11:101

Allah is Great! His Unity is consistent!

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

THE NATURE OF ALLAH'S PROVISION FOR THE REALISATION OF HIS WILL FOR MAN

We have already settled the fact that the ultimate will is that of Allah. It cannot be changed. That this will covers the final ability of what man can do (whether in accordance with Allah's chosen will to Himself or not) and what he cannot envisage doing. That he from the point of what man can do, Allah's will is realisable through His chosen path. And that, although man may opt for the path not chosen by Allah, by rejecting His Message, it is still within the framework of Allah's ultimate will. The difference lies with the promise of what Allah has made by His will, His choice, His pleasure, to recompense either. Allah could have made all humanity thread on the path of His choice, but He chose not to do so. He did not choose to punish all humanity (though it is easy for Him) because He is Most Merciful.

With the path of Allah as the only one for the safety and protection of man, what is the nature of Allah's provision for threading His chosen Path? For if man may choose other than the path of Allah the nature of the path of Allah may need understanding – since He has provided both.

With the provision of good and evil (in accordance with the choice of Allah), the belief in the Unity of Allah and the effort to pursue the understanding of the chosen path of Allah is not an affair of ONCE and FOR ALL. It is not like naming a child or giving one a tribal mark(s). hence, the choice of Allah's path does not take one outside the context of the availability of the good and the evil at one's disposal. Thus, He says:

Be sure we shall test you
With something of fear
And hunger, some loss
In goods or lives or the fruits
(Of your toil), but give
Glad tidings to those
Who patiently persevere.

Qur'an 2:155

Ye shall certainly
Be tried and tested
In your possessions
And in your personal selves;
And ye shall certainly
Hear much that will grieve you
From those who received
The Book before you
And from those who
Worship many gods.
But if ye persevere
Patiently, and guard
Against evil, then
That will be

A determining factor
In all affairs.

Qur'an 3:186

Or do ye think
That ye shall enter
The Garden (of Bliss)
Without such (trials)
As came to those
Who passed away
Before you?
They encountered
Suffering and adversity,
And were so shaken in spirit
That even the Messenger
And those of faith
Who were with him
Cried: "When (will come)
The help of Allah?"
Ah! Verily, the help of Allah
Is (always) near!

Qur'an 2:214

Thus, the Islamic concept of the proper chosen reality that should be pursued, i.e. the straight path, is not ahistorical. It is located within the same context of inevitable reality of good(s) and evil(s) that all men live in. The difference is in the path of pursuit and, that of Allah is hereby confirmed to be selective, since all belong to Him and He is the only One not obliged with the rule of restriction between what is good and what is evil. In consequence, if man takes all provisions to be good or to be evil, its correctness will depend on what Allah chooses to make good or evil. The limits of Allah therefore consist of what He permits. But, since (by His mercy) even those things He does not permit are possibly achievable (temporarily), man is constantly faced with the seeming task of SELF-RESTRAIN, SELF-DENIAL and SELF-RISK. These seem because, the whole concept is mirrored from the point of view of man himself and on the ignorant or unconscious assumption that he matters in the realm of reality. But if it is noted that Allah is the only reality, then, what is correct, what is pleasant cannot contradict what He commands. If it does, it is in contradiction of the reality of Allah, the ultimate will of Allah and is as a result, wrong. Believers are constantly exposed to trying situations because of the option (on their part) to choose what is in accordance with the standard of Allah for realising His will or what is out of it. Thus, if they are to keep to the chosen path towards Allah, they will naturally feel some sense of restrain or denial. Men would have preferred living without any rule. But that is the reserve of Allah.

In this regard of denial and sacrifice for Allah, the highest is one's life – if we are to look at it apparently (as earlier identified). It does not matter and it is not a loss provided it is in the Way of Allah. He says:

And say not of those
Who are slain in the way

Of Allah: "They are dead."
Nay, they are living,
Though ye perceive (it) not.

Qur'an 2:154

This explains why the setting out of believers for a cause like Jihad is from the beginning a set out for success, as the path of Allah is all-success without failure, all-gain without loss. Thus with faith as the principal force, fighting in the cause of Allah is only to be supplemented with what is materially at the best disposal of men, when Allah commands. For instance Allah commanded Muhammad (S.A.W) and early followers:

Go ye forth, (whether equipped)
Lightly or heavily, and strive
And struggle, with your goods
And your persons, in the cause
Of Allah. That is best
For you, if ye (but) knew.

Qur'an 9:41

This culminates into the guidance of believers and teaching of Allah to say:

"Can you expect for us
(Any fate) other than one
Of two glorious things
(Martyrdom or victory)?
But we can expect for you
(i.e. unbelievers)
Either that Allah will send
His punishment from Himself
Or by our hands. So wait
(Expectant); we too
Will wait with you.

Qur'an 9:52

The concept of the correct reality that is in the interest of man from the Islamic perspective therefore needs to always note the following warnings:

Before thee We sent
(Messengers) to many nations,
And We afflicted the nations
With suffering and adversity,
That they might learn humility

Qur'an 6:42

Whenever we sent a Prophet
To a town, We took up

Its people in suffering
And adversity, in order
That they might learn humility.

Qur'an 7:94

Generations before you
We destroyed when they
Did wrong: their Messengers
Came to them with clear Signs,
But they would not believe!
Thus do We requite
Those who sin!

Then we made you heirs
In the land after them,
To see how ye would behave!

Qur'an 10:13 – 14

It is He who hath made
You (His) agents, inheritors
Of the earth: He hath raised
You in ranks, some above
Others, that He may try you
In the gifts He hath given you...

Qur'an 6:165

In history, what examples do we have to reflect on? The Children of Israel were given hard tasks by Pharaoh and his people. Their sons were being slaughtered, etc. before Allah drowned Pharaoh, his Chiefs and his people, and then He made the Children of Israel to inherit the land. For Yaqub, his children took his beloved Yusuf away and returned without him. He responded with patience, which he identified as most fitting for the circumstance. And Yusuf by the will of Allah, was imprisoned for some time, to turn away the snare of women from him. Allah did not make exceptions in this regard, even in the case of Muhammad (S.A.W).

Likewise did We make
For every Messenger
An enemy – evil ones
Among men and Jinns,
Inspiring each other
With flowery discourses
By way of deception
If thy Lord had so planned,
They would not have
Done it...

Qur'an 6:112

In summary therefore:

Allah hath purchased of the Believers
Their persons and their goods;
For theirs (in return)
Is the Garden (of Paradise):
They fight in His Cause,
And slay and are slain...

Qur'an 9:111

THE BASIS OF DISTRACTIVE TENDENCIES

The inability of man or his imperfection, which has been shown to get protection only by living according to the set standard of Allah within the context of his historical reality, by facing up to trials, risks, self-denial, self-restraint, etc., has its roots. The root or basis that reveals Allah's guidance as a benefit can be found in the special sense of his temptation to live a life of false reality, contrary to the will of Allah. This false reality is defined by ignoring or not being conscious of the fact that the reality of non-rule, the freedom from any form of rule properly belongs to Allah. In other words it is improper and unbecoming of man to assume the false and impossible status or role of being self-sufficient. Only Allah is self-sufficient and is thus always correct.

This leads to the subject of the root or the nature of that temptation, that weakness of man, which is safe-guarded only if he lives by the will of Allah, whose will is the ultimate reality. It is logically and inevitably located in man's relationship to the world – the sensual material world, since his correct or false and both realities are tied to history.

Allah, whose knowledge encompasses everything, (given His unity against the imperfection of man), out of Mercy, warns us against the falsity of the reality of the total world we live in i.e. if we fail to differentiate our correct reality(living according to His will) from our false reality(living contrary to His unity), for our benefit, by committed pursuit.

Let not the unbelievers
Think that our respite
To them is good for themselves:
We grant them respite
That they may grow
In their iniquity,
But they will have
A shameful punishment.

Qur'an 3:178

And let not those
Who covetously withheld
Of the gifts which Allah
Hath given them of His Grace,

Think that it is good for them:
Nay, it will be the worse
For them, soon shall the things
Which they covetously withheld
Be tied to their necks
Like a twisted collar,
On the Day of Judgement...

Qur'an 3:180

... For the life of this world
Is but goods and chattels
Of deception.

Qur'an 3:185

The evidence for the weakness of man in being left alone without guidance in his historical background of reality is revealed in what he is likely to do, what he actually does outside the realm of guidance i.e. how he could contradict the unity of Allah or abuse the will of Allah, which is not in his least interest. Consider what results from his ignorance or unconsciousness of his correct reality, in a state of temptation or his absolutely free or guideless relation to the world. Allah again reminds us, for knowledge:

It is He who doth take
Your souls by night,
And hath knowledge of all
That ye have done by day;
By day doth He raise
You up again; that a term
Appointed be fulfilled;
In the end unto Him
Will be your return,
Then will He show you
The truth of all
That ye did.

Qur'an 6:60

When it comes to the matter of Faith, man on his own cannot do without guidance. This is because; his behaviour will only depict that of those who do not believe.

The life of this world
Is alluring to those
Who reject Faith,
And they scoff at those
Who believe...

Qur'an 2:212

In the case of ability, the falsity of self-sufficiency or independence is also reflected in the man who is heedless of Allah's guidance. For instance:

The lightening all but snatches away
Their sight; every time the light
(Helps) them, they walk therein,
And when the darkness grows on them
They stand still...

Qur'an 2:20

If we delay the penalty
For them for a definite term,
They are sure to say,
"What keeps it back?" ...

If we give man a taste
Of Mercy from Ourselves,
And then withdraw it from him
Behold! He is in despair
And (falls into) blasphemy.

But if We give him a taste
Of (Our) favours after
Adversity hath touched him,
He is sure to say,
"All evil has departed from me,"
Behold! He falls into exultation
And pride.

Qur'an 11:8 – 10

Man? He could be so taken away by passion:

When trouble toucheth a man,
He crieth unto Us
(In all postures) – lying down
On his side, or sitting,
Or standing. But when We
Have solved his trouble,
He passeth on his way as if
He had never cried to Us
For a trouble that touched him! ...

Qur'an 10:12

Fair in the eyes of men
Is the love of things they covet:
Women and sons;
Heaped-up hoards
Of gold and silver; horses

Branded (for blood and excellence);
And (wealth of) cattle
And well-tilled land...

Qur'an 3:14

Thus his living by false reality can also lead him to arrogance and ingratitude...

When we make mankind
Taste of some mercy after
Adversity hath touched them,
Behold! They take to plotting
Against Our Signs! ...

Qur'an 10:21

In a different circumstance, they will submit to Allah...

... "If Thou dost deliver us
From this, we shall truly
Show our gratitude!"

But when He delivereth them,
Behold! They transgress
Insolently through the earth
In defiance of right ...

Qur'an 10:22 – 23

The falsity of the reality of man's independence in his relation to the world is beautifully defined by means of a similitude by Allah:

The likeness of the life
Of the present is
As the rain which We
Send down from the skies:
By its mingling arises
The produce of the earth
Which provides food
For men and animals:
(It grows) till the earth
Is clad with its golden
Ornaments and is decked out
(In beauty): the people to whom
It belongs think they have
All powers of disposal over it:
There reaches it our command
By night or by day,
And We make it

Like a harvest clean mown,
As if it had not flourished
Only the day before!
Thus do We explain
The Signs in detail
For those who reflect.

Qur'an 10:24

PROVISION FOR GUIDANCE TOWARDS THE WILL OF ALLAH

The necessity for guidance by Allah is the reasonable safeguard against the tendency of man's pursuit of false reality if left alone as self-sufficient. In other words, since the ultimate reality is the will of Allah who encompasses everything, the correct reality of man is defined by obedience to the will of Allah, by committing oneself to the standards or chosen path of Allah for men. In the same vein, provided Allah is always correct and free from any rule; and considering the weaknesses of man in his relation to the world which serves as the source of his correct and false realities, the next question will be: WHAT GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE FOR THE GUIDANCE OF MAN TOWARDS HIS CORRECT REALITY?

The objective here is not to set out the details of each form or even outline the forms of guidance but to simply indicate the sources or basis of/for the guidance.

RELIGION

Allah says:

... This day have I
Perfected your religion
For you, completed
My favour upon you,
And have chosen for you
Islam as your religion...

Qur'an 5:3

MUHAMMAD (S.A.W)

Allah says:

Ye have indeed
In the Messenger of Allah
A beautiful pattern (of conduct)
For any one whose hope is
In Allah and the Final Day,
And who engages much
In the Praise of Allah.

Qur'an 33:21

QUR'AN

Allah says:

Allah has revealed
(From time to time)
The most beautiful Message
In the form of a Book,
Consistent with itself,
(Yet) repeating (its teaching
In various aspects):
The skins of those who
Fear their Lord tremble
Thereat: then their skins
And their hearts do soften
To the celebration of
Allah's praises. Such is
The guidance of Allah ...

Qur'an 39:23

ISLAM/BELIEVERS

Allah says:

Ye are the best
Of peoples, evolved
For mankind,
Enjoining what is right,
Forbidding what is wrong,
And believing in Allah ...

Qur'an 3:110

RESPONSIBILITY

Although it may not sound rational to enjoin duties without rights or rights without obligations, it is still fair to be sure. This is very much the case in Islam because Allah prohibits compulsion in the matter of religion. In addition, given the rules of practices in Islam, there are levels of obligations in a good number or parts of them. For example, although ablution must precede prayer, some components of this rite have being categorised as obligatory, some commendable and others encouraged, with each grouping carrying a variant weight which consequently serves as the standard for measuring the quality or appropriateness of the rite or applicable practice in question. It may therefore not be totally foolish to ask the question: IS THE STRICT COMPLIANCE TO THE WILL OF ALLAH BY MEANS OF THE CORRECT REALITY OF MAN OBLIGATORY/NECESSARY OR JUST COMMENDABLE OR ENCOURAGED?

To be sure, this is what Allah provides:

Leave alone those
Who take their religion
To be mere play
And amusement,

And are deceived
By the life of this world.
But proclaim (to them)
This (truth): that every soul
Delivers itself to ruin
By its own acts;
It will find for itself
No protector or intercessor
Except Allah...

Qur'an 6:70

Now, if religion is not to be a thing of play, what degree of seriousness or choice is acceptable?

If anyone contends with
The messenger even after
Guidance has been plainly
Conveyed to him, and follows
A path other than that
Becoming to men of Faith,
We shall leave him
In the path he has chosen
And land him in Hell;
What an evil refuge!

Qur'an 4:115

Now have come to you,
From your lord, proofs
(To open your eyes):
If any will see,
It will be for (the good
Of) his soul;
If any will be blind,
It will be to his own
(Harm)...

Qur'an 6:104

Eschew all sin,
Open or secret.
Those who earn sin
Will get due recompense
For their earnings.

Qur'an 6:120

Given highlights of the package of the level to which man will be held responsible, the following warnings may be of help.

Whatever good, (O man!)
Happens to thee, is from Allah;
But whatever evil happens
To thee, is from thy (own) soul...

Qur'an 4:79

To Allah belongeth all
That is in the Heavens
And on Earth. Whether
Ye show what is in your minds
Or conceal it, Allah
Calleth you to account for it.
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth.
And punisheth whom He pleaseth...

Qur'an 2:284

THE MEETING POINT

The ultimate goal, the end of the road, for ALL CREATIONS (because the will of Allah that is the ultimate, will come to overtake the restrictive reality that is the experience of man in history) is provided for in Islam by the following promises by Allah:

Wherever ye are,
Death will find you out,
Even if ye are in towers
Built up strong and high! ...

Qur'an 4:78

Every soul shall have
A taste of death:
And only on the Day
Of Judgement shall you
Be paid your full recompense.
Only he who is saved
Far from the Fire
And admitted to the Garden
Will have attained
The object (of Life):
For the life of this world
Is but goods and chattels
Of deception.

Qur'an 3:185

Then shall anyone who
Has done an atom's weight
Of good, see it!
And anyone who

Has done an atom's weight
Of evil, shall see it!

Qur'an 99:7 – 8

In conclusion, I invite the reader to be in good company as defined below:

All who obey Allah
And the Messenger
Are in the company
Of those on whom
Is the Grace of Allah,
Of the Prophets (who teach),
The Sincere (lovers of Truth),
The Witnesses (who testify),
And the Righteous (who do good);
Ah! What a beautiful fellowship!

Qur'an 4:69

Those who Allah (in His plan)
Willeth to guide, He openeth
Their breast to Islam;
Those whom He willeth
To leave straying, He maketh
Their breast close and constricted
As if they had to climb
Up to the Skies: thus
Doth Allah (heap) the penalty
On those who refuse to believe.

Qur'an 6:125

MAY ALLAH GRANT US PEACE. AMEN.