

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BASIS AND NATURE OF A
BELIEVER'S STRUGGLES**



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INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah (SWT) the Most Compassionate the Most Merciful. Perfect Peace and Blessings be upon His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW), his household, his companions and all who sincerely follow the Straight Path of Guidance.

This booklet is the first in the number made available to a Muslim parent for interaction with the children and youths. The booklets are not meant for teaching the practice of Islam, which is more serious and for scholars.

The objective here is to provide materials for cushioning the orientation of a believer with reasonable understanding and appreciation. The ultimate contribution is to enable a believer enjoy his servitude. Although the knowledge or understanding of Arabic can very much help to provide this on-the-go, it is still not necessary that it will cover what has been attempted.

The believe is that IF value can be added to parenthood and the exposure of youths, the society can easier and better rise to climb on to the rail line of the straight path and move to prosperity with the blessings of Allah.

The Hadiths quoted are ALL from the collection of Imam Bukhari. The verses from the Qur'an are referenced.

I pray that a parent will endeavour to either add this to the compulsory knowledge of right practice of Islam the children are taught or very much ensure that the children are taught the right practice of Islam in addition to this invitation.

May Allah aid us to be as good Muslims as our opportunities permit – far beyond our present commitments.

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SATAN OR IBLIS

Iblis also known as Satan is the first and greatest leader of mislead for mischief against mankind and believers. Iblis is a creation of Allah and his success or failure in his mislead for mischief depends on the relationship between a believer and Allah (SWT).

The enmity of Iblis against mankind originated from his first relationship with Adam and Eve, in the Garden of bliss. It is a vengeance against mankind for being cursed by Allah after his disobedience to Allah.

“When We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves to Adam’, they prostrated themselves but not Iblis: he refused. Then We said: ‘O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to thee and thy wife: So let him not get you both out of the Garden, so that thou art landed in misery. There is therein (enough provision) for thee not to go hungry nor to go naked, nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun’s heat. But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, ‘O Adam! Shall I lead thee to the Tree of Eternity and to a Kingdom that never decays? In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden: thus did Adam disobey His Lord, and allow himself to be seduced. But His Lord chose him (for His Grace): He turned to him, and gave him guidance. He said: ‘Get ye down, both of you, all together, from the Garden, with enmity one to another: but if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from Me, whosoever follows My Guidance, will not lose his way, nor fall into misery’. Qur’an 20: 116 - 123.

“But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement. He will say: ‘O my Lord! Why hast thou raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)?’ (Allah) will say: ‘Thus didst thou, when Our signs came unto thee, disregard them: so wilt thou, be disregarded.’ And thus do We recompense him who transgresses

beyond bounds and believes not in the Signs of his Lord: and the Penalty of the Hereafter is far more grievous and more enduring”. Qur’an 20: 124 - 127.

From the above arises two distinct but related facts. The first is that Allah (SWT) has fulfilled His promise of sending down to mankind His Guidance. He appointed Prophets and Messengers among several nations and revealed His Guidance to them. The latter ones were Taurat, Zabur and Injil. Then He sent Muhammad (SAW) with the Qur’an which updated and completed His Message. Muhammad (SAW) is the last and seal of prophethood. Qur’an is the last Message. And Muhammad (SAW) established the livelihood of the Qur’an. The Qur’an is the best speech and Muhammad (SAW) is the best example. And three exemplary generations led by the rightly guided Companions of Muhammad (SAW), set the generous standard. Then which of the favours of Allah (SWT) shall we deny?

The second is the free will or capacity given to man, to decide between following the Guidance or betraying oneself to eventual misery and doom along with Iblis. There is no success without Allah (SWT).

It is important to note that the relationship between Iblis and mankind has with time transformed tremendously beyond the one-to-one kind of relationship he had with Adam. Adam saw and knew Iblis. Iblis knew and met Adam. Allah had warned Adam but was lured by Iblis by what is wrong or contrary to the limits set by Allah. This was in the heavens. When they were all brought down to the world, Iblis developed with followers among mankind and jinns. And intermittently, Iblis has personally appeared before men.

In relation to Guidance what really matters is not his personal appearance or that of his agents among mankind or jinn. The meeting point is the commitment of evil by men. And for practical purposes no believer needs to connect his affairs with Iblis, his agents or satans. The first justification for this is that Iblis and his

companions among the jinns are spiritual in their normal form of existence. And in Shariah, there is no accountability and judgment between mankind who normally exist in physical form and Iblis or his jinn companions, because men do not ordinarily see them. This is irrespective of a circumstance where a man is enabled to see Iblis or his jinn companions. The second justification is that a final commitment is the will of the believer. Thus even in the case of the agents or companions of Iblis among men, they normally do not physically enable the believer. They also lure, deceive or mislead – to the final mischief of contradicting the truth, the Guidance of Allah. Moreover, Shariah provides that in the circumstance where the believer is physically compelled to commit what is evil, he is not blamable for sanctions. Thus, no accusation of Iblis or his agents is admissible in court. The accused has to be seen in the court room. Even where his companions among humans are involved, the court will demand for physical evidence. This is why witchcraft is not triable in a court of law. And in the hereafter, any accuser of Iblis will be confronted by Iblis personally as to where and when it happened. This is why it is intelligently laughable to accuse Iblis as an associate or the key factor responsible for commitment of any wrongs or evil.

Therefore, for a believer, knowledge of the reality of Iblis is relevant and sufficient, to take the guidance against Iblis and his companions or agents.

The first thing to note is that Iblis or his agents are present at the point of conceiving a child. Muhammad (SAW) therefore provided guidance against the trap.

Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet said, “If anyone of you, when having sexual intercourse with his wife, says: ‘In the Name of Allah! Protect me from Satan and protect what You bestow upon us (i.e. an offspring) from Satan’ and if it is destined that they should have a child, then Satan will never be able to harm him”. This is consistent with the nature of the problem.

Iblis does not allow the opportunity of man in the state of sleep free from his enmity.

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): Allah's Messenger said, "During your sleep, Satan knots three knots at the back of the head of each of you, and he breathes the following words at each knot, 'The night is long, so keep on sleeping'. If that person wakes up and celebrates the praises of Allah, then one knot is undone, and when he performs ablution the second knot is undone, and when he prays, all the knots are undone, and he gets up in the morning lively and gay, otherwise he gets up dull and gloomy".

While in sleep, Satan does not take rest in his enmity against the believers, just in case he may succeed. This is by appearing in the dreams of men. But against confusion, Muhammad (SAW) gives a guidance. Narrated Abu Qatada: I heard the Prophet (SAW) saying, "A good dream is from Allah (SWT), and a bad dream is from Satan. So if anyone of you sees (in a dream) something he dislikes, when he gets up he should blow thrice (on his left side) and seek refuge with Allah from its evil, for then it will not harm him".

The believer must know and take precaution against Satan, while awake, in his thoughts. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created so-and-so?' Till he says, 'Who has created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah (SWT) and give up such thoughts". Is it not foolish and wasteful to contempt over what is right and known? Who debates over who his father is? Satan will never lure, inspire you to contemplate on the great power from the suspense of the heavens from collapsing, the inevitability of answering His call by death.

In the relationship between men, Satan does not ignore making attempts. Narrated Safiya bint Huyai: The wife of the Prophet said that, she went to Allah's Messenger while he was in I'tikaf (staying in the mosque) during the last ten

nights of the month of Ramadan. She spoke to him for an hour (a while) at night and then she got up to return home. The Prophet got up to accompany her, and when they reached the gate of the mosque opposite the dwelling place of Um Salama, the wife of the Prophet, two Ansari men passed by, and greeting Allah's Messenger, they quickly went ahead. Allah's Messenger said to them, "Do not be in a hurry, she is Safiya, the daughter of Huyai". They said, 'Subhana Lah! O Allah's Messenger (how dare we suspect you)'. That was a great thing for both of them. The Prophet then said, "Satan runs in the body of Adam's son (i.e. man) as his blood circulates in it, and I was afraid that he (Satan) might insert an evil thought in your hearts". Is it not common with the companions of Iblis among men to influence or urge or obstruct a leader against entrusting an established good man to assist him in governance? Do they not ask: will you consider it safe to entrust the man, who is not your kin, not from the same locality, the same state, of the same mother tongue or of no marital relationship with you? This is even if he is a fellow believer. And if he is not of the same faith, though the trust has nothing to do with faith, they will question the appropriateness, in order to sow mischief. An ignorant leader, one who distances himself from Allah and sincere believers will easily give in. But this will not excuse him from the burden of bad governance. It is not different with evil associates in families or at work, in neighbourhoods or in groups.

The house of Allah or the congregation of believers are not excused by Iblis. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger said, "When the Adhan is pronounced Satan takes to his heels and passes wind with noise during his flight in order not to hear the Adhan. When the Adhan is completed he comes back and again takes to his heels when the Iqama is pronounced and after its completion he returns again till he whispers into the heart of the person (to divert his attention from the prayer) and makes him remember things which he does not recall to his mind before the prayer and that causes him to forget how much he has prayed".

It is noteworthy that Salat is the best means for believers to communicate with Allah. This is why *khushoo* is enjoined. And Salat has ten parts. The reward of a believer is proportional to the quality of his submission in the prayer. Satan will therefore not ignore this platform in his mischief. Narrated Aisha (RA): I asked Allah's Messenger about looking hither and thither in prayer. He replied, "It is a way of stealing by which Satan takes away (a portion) from the prayer of a person".

But, that is not all about the closeness of Satan and his enmity, for believers to beware. For instance in the recitation of the Qur'an, a believer is enjoined to seek refuge with Allah against Satan.

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, "Yawning is from Satan and if anyone of you yawns, he should check his yawning as much as possible, for if anyone of you (during the act of yawning) should say: 'Ha', Satan will laugh at him".

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): The Prophet said, "If anyone of you rises from sleep and performs ablution, he should wash his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out thrice, because Satan has stayed in the upper part of his nose all night".

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah: Allah's Messenger said, "When night falls (or when it is evening), stop your children from going out, for the devils spread out at that time. But when an hour of the night has passed, release them and close the doors and mention Allah's Name, for Satan does not open a closed door".

To be sure, Iblis or his companions will NEVER mean good to man. The objective is evil, against the prosperity of man. A believer will be wallowing in self-deceit to give Satan or his handwork any chance. There is the story of a believer who took offense at the worship of a tree in his neighbourhood. He took an axe and

set out to cut down the tree. Iblis approached him in the form of an old man. He dissuaded the believer since the worship is harmless to him and a promise to drop coins of money under his headrest daily. The believer gave in for the ‘truth’ and benefit offered. He saw the coins the first day and second. On the third he did not see anything. He got angry and took his axe to cut down the tree again. He then met Satan again. Satan dissuaded him again. This time around, he refused to cooperate. Satan then told him that he cannot because he is not a sincere believer. He is really angry because he did not get the coins. The hypocrite moved to cut down the tree but met with the wrath of Allah (SWT). He was swallowed by the earth.

The experience of the best companion of Muhammad (SAW) was not different, although the package was different. Abu Huraira (RA) was given the custody of a grains store. He then noted that part of it was missing and wondered. He reported to the Messenger of Allah. Then he caught the old man. The man (Satan) pleaded not to be arrested because he was in desperate need and feared the sanctions. Abu Huraira reported to the Messenger of Allah and that he pitied the old man. Then he caught him again and the old man made the same plea. Abu Huraira was not satisfied. Satan avoided being exposed again by making a wonderful offer. He advised Abu Huraira that if he recites the Verse of the Throne (Qur’an 2: 255) before going to bed Allah will provide him with an angel to guard him against Satan throughout the night. Abu Huraira let him go and reported to the Messenger of Allah. Muhammad (SAW) then informed Abu Huraira that, the liar told the truth. He is Iblis. This means that the objective of Iblis was to open a window for the discredit of Abu Huraira. Satan is therefore more interested in Sincere believers.

All praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent the Merciful. And perfect Peace and Blessings be upon Muhammad (SAW) for two special gifts and guidance. Aisha (RA) reported that it is the habit of Rasul to recite the chapters

of refuge seeking every night, blowing the same into his hands and rubbing as much of his body as his hands can reach. What will stop a believer from doing this more often?

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

Qur'an 113: 1 - 5.

Say: I seek refuge
With the Lord
And Cherisher of Mankind;
The King (or Ruler)
Of Mankind;
The God (or Judge)
Of Mankind;
From the mischief
Of the Whisperer
(Of Evil), who withdraws
(After his whisper);
(The same) who whispers

Into the hearts of Mankind;
Among Jinns
And among Men.

Qur'an 114: 1 - 6.

The only tool against Satan, his agents and companions is knowledge and discipline in what is right. The Prophet (SAW) had a recorded interesting experience. He was in the mosque and he observed Satan entered and was by a praying believer but abandoned his mission. The Prophet (SAW) then asked him why he decided to leave. He confirmed that beside the praying person was a learned believer sleeping. He was afraid that after succeeding to spoil the prayer of the person praying, the learned believer may wake up to correct the person. The Prophet (SAW) then noted that a sleeping learned believer is superior to an ignorant prayerful one. It is obvious. Thus in Islam, knowledge and discipline of religious practices is compulsory on each believer. What misfortune can therefore have befallen a family, group or society led by an ignorant in the guidance of Allah and Muhammad (SAW)? And what can be the limit of the crises in a family, group or society where some of the members are ignorant and insist on assisting the leaders?

THE NATURE OF MAN

Neither Adam nor his decedents, men and women, are inherently or totally evil. However negative tendencies or inclinations are possible with him. This is what Adam revealed in his relationship with Satan. Unlike the angels who have no will of their own to exercise either good or evil, man has. He can therefore be 'angelic' if he sticks to the good that he is capable of, if he follows guidance like Allah (SWT) warned Adam. However, if he turns away from guidance, he will betray himself like the experience of nakedness by Adam and suffer the anger of Allah, like Adam was expelled from the Garden to live and toil in the world. And the

grace of Allah will be with those who stray and ask for forgiveness like Adam and got.

We have indeed created man in the best of moulds. Then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low. Except such as believe and do righteous deeds: for they shall have a reward unailing. Qur'an 95: 4 - 6.

The greatest mistake that man can inflict on himself, is to believe or act on the belief or assumption that he knows the truth or what is right without guidance. The consequence will be double, against self – in this world and in the hereafter.

Nay, but man doth transgress all bounds. In that he looketh upon himself as self-sufficient. Qur'an 96: 6 - 7.

Did Satan not lure Adam to the bliss of eternity and a kingdom, to which he fell victim? Verily, (the ends) he strive for are diverse. Qur'an 92: 4. Adam had all the food and cover he needed including shelter against the scorching sun. And he fell for more, that the false giver neither knew nor had.

The multitude of men and women with reproduction makes the inclination or tendencies expansive. The mutual rivalry for piling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from the more serious things), until ye visit the graves. Qur'an 102: 1 - 2.

Narrated Anas bin Malik: Allah's Messenger said, "If Adam's son had a valley full of gold, he would like to have two valleys, for nothing fills his mouth except dust (when he dies and is buried). And Allah forgives him who repents to Him".

In this course of inordinate greed, it is common for man to create a path to his own difficulties or harm. For instance, in the pursuit of wealth, the ignorant prays for his own prosperity and works accordingly in disregard of others. Indeed he may even choose to start by disruption of the prospect of others. But in the end

he is faced with the challenge of security against the envy of the other. In Nigeria today, the class of thieves who did not work for their massive wealth, are the most fearful of re-order in the creation of prosperity for all Nigerians. This is why an individual who has questionably been drawing the benefits of an oil well collectively owned by all Nigerians, for over two decades, will fight against adjustments. It is like less than fifty individuals against one hundred million wretched citizens and another forty seven million poor citizens – at best. The prayer that man should make for good, he maketh for evil; for man is given to hasty (deeds). Qur'an 17: 11.

This inclination, these tendencies of man is best reflected in his impatience. Truly man was created very impatient; fretful when evil touches them; and niggardly when good reaches them". Qur'an 70: 19 - 21.

The Will of man or the capacity for discretion or choice is what stands him out, with the grace of forgiveness available to him by Allah (SWT). He can consider to do what is wrong even after he has been advised, guided, instructed or warned. He can as well choose to take it and act accordingly. Therefore, Muhammad (SAW) was severally reminded that he is only to convey the Message. He was a Messenger. His was to give glad tidings to those who submit in declaration and compliance. He was to warn those who turn away and deny. He must not worry over the choice of any man. The power of guidance rests solely with Allah (SWT).

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.

QADR OR FINAL DESTINATION OF ONE'S FATE

In Islam, reality is neither mechanical nor fixed. Therefore a non-believer can become a believer. A believer who is a hypocrite can repent and become sincere.

A believer can also commit apostasy. The foundation for all is that men and women are born innocent, plain and as believers until the parents mould them into something else. And it does not make it impossible for them to revert to believing. In essence, no child is inherently meant for Satan. This gives weight to the free will of man. This is why the status or stance of Satan against man, permitted by Allah (SWT) is critical. As painful and risky as it is, the challenge to man is the Subtle evidence of the Power of Allah to achieve as He pleases.

(Allah) said: “O Iblis! What prevents thee from prostrating thyself to one whom I have created with My hands? Art thou haughty? Or art thou one of the high (and mighty) ones?” (Iblis) said: “I am better than he; Thou createdst me from fire, and him Thou createdst from clay”. (Allah) said: “Then get thee out from here: for thou art rejected, accursed. And My curse shall be on thee till the Day of Judgement”. (Iblis) said: “O my Lord! Give me then respite till the Day the (dead) are raised”. (Allah) said: “Respite then is granted thee, till the Day of the Time Appointed”. (Iblis) said: “Then by Thy Power, I will put them all in the wrong. Except Thy Servants amongst them, sincere and purified (by Thy grace)”. (Allah) said: “Then it is just and fitting, and I say what is just and fitting. That I will certainly fill Hell with **thee** and **those** that follow thee, **everyone**”. Qur’an 38: 75 - 85.

To be sure, He said: “Because Thou hast thrown me out of the Way, lo! I will lie in wait for them on Thy Straight Way: Then will I assault them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left: nor wilt Thou find, in most of them, gratitude (for Thy mercies)”. Qur’an 7: 16 - 17.

To be definitely sure – No authority has he over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. Qur’an 16: 99. And verily, Hell is the promised abode for them all! To it are seven **Gates**: for each of those Gates is a (special) class (of sinners) assigned. Qur’an 15: 43 - 44.

And the meeting point for the struggle by all of mankind is just, without discrimination, between those appointed by Allah and those not appointed. 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: so leave them and their inventions alone. Qur'an 6: 112.

Therefore, the destiny of man is open to design by the believer. And does not inhibit the intervention of Allah as He pleases. And the ultimate end is fully and clearly known to Allah. While this is unknown and unknowable by anyone, except by His leave. The reasonable and sensible or intelligent thing to do in this circumstance, is to strive to one's utmost TO BE SAFE FROM SATAN AND HELL. In Islam this is most critical. And how will you know when you will die, where and how, to do as you please before then?

Narrated Ali: We were in the company of the Prophet in a funeral procession at Baqi Al-Gharaqad. He said, "There is none of you but has his place written for him in Paradise or in the Hell-Fire". They said, "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we depend (on this fact and give up work)?" He said, "Carry on doing (good deeds), for everybody will find it easy to do (what will lead him to his destined place)". Then he recited: As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah, and believes in the best reward from Allah (i.e. Allah will compensate him for what he will spend in Allah's way). So, We will make smooth for him the Path of ease. But he who is a greedy miser . . . for him, the Path for evil. Qur'an 92: 5 - 10.

Narrated Sa'ad bin Sahl As-Sa'id: The Prophet looked at a man fighting against the pagans and he was one of the most competent persons fighting on behalf of the Muslims. The Prophet said, "Let him who wants to look at a man from the dwellers of the Hell Fire, look at this (man)". Another man followed him and kept

on following him till he (the fighter) was injured and seeking to die quickly, he placed the blade tip of his sword between his breasts and leaned over it till it passed through his shoulders (i.e. committed suicide)". The Prophet added, "A person may do deeds that seem to the people as the deeds of the people of Paradise while in fact, he is from the dwellers of the Hell Fire; and similarly a person may do the deeds that seem to the people as the deeds of the people of the Hell Fire while in fact, he is from the dwellers of Paradise. Verily, the (results of) deeds done, depend upon the last actions".

And when one considers that Paradise is in grades according to the status of admitted admission to Allah by right knowledge and discipline against the certainty that those with greater sins than rewards will EVENTUALLY gain Paradise by intervention, after visiting Hell Fire, IT CANNOT BE ATTRACTIVE TO SIMPLY END WELL. It will be credible to end well, that is well-enough NOT TO VISIT HELL FIRE AT ALL.

TRIALS

This world and the life in it must not be mistaken as neither a resting point nor a final one. The best model for believers, Muhammad (SAW) rose from his bed with marks on his cheek. Sayyidina Umar then remarked: "O Messenger of Allah! The leaders in Persia live in comfort, why will you not permit us to provide you with something convenient?" He responded to the effect that, should they prefer this world to the provisions of the hereafter? He is like a traveller who takes rest under the shade of a tree and leaves, until he reaches his destination. It was the same Umar who had given half of his possessions in contribution to preparing for a Jihad called upon by the Messenger of Allah, with the view of competing with Abubakar who appeared to be constantly commended. And when Abubakar arrived with a few things wrapped in a blanket, the Messenger of Allah asked him: "What did you reserve for the benefit of your family?" He replied: "Allah

and His Messenger”. That was when Umar exclaimed: Indeed Abubakar is superior to all of us in faith.

This is not to prohibit good living. But what is right is in focusing on the truth, the hereafter.

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 Apostle 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.

Allah (SWT) is therefore not unaware of this, nor is it a trap. It is a test of our mettle. Verily We have created man into toil and struggle. Qur’an 90: 4. O thou man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord, painfully toiling, but thou shalt meet Him. Qur’an 84: 6.

Indeed toiling or coping with trials is not to attract pity but admiration and competition.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “The example of a believer is that of a fresh tender plant; from whatever direction the wind comes, it bends it, but when the wind becomes quiet, it becomes straight again. Similarly, a believer is afflicted with calamities (but he remains patient till Allah removes his difficulties). And an impious wicked person is like a pine tree which keeps hard and straight till Allah cuts (breaks) it down when He wishes”.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “If Allah wants to do good to somebody, He afflicts him with trials”.

And trial must not be mistaken or mixed up with an evil that is self-inflicted. For instance, it will be inconsistent to go for the service of a prostitute, get infected

and interpret that as trial. However it can be two-faced. A husband or wife gets infected from adultery, which is self-inflicted but because a trial for the partner it is transmitted to. This is the logic of martyrdom on the part of a believer who remains in an area with a plague and dies. It is in this context we will understand the hadith – Narrated Anas bin Malik: I heard Allah’s Messenger saying, “Allah said, ‘If I deprive My slave of his two beloved things (i.e. his eyes) and he remains patient, I will let him enter Paradise in compensation’ ”.

And the Messenger of Allah (SAW) is the best example.

Narrated Abdullah: I visited Allah’s Messenger while he was suffering from high fever. I said, ‘O Allah’s Messenger! You have high fever’. He said, “Yes, I have as much fever as two men of you”. I said, ‘Is it because you will have a double reward?’ He said, “Yes, it is so. No Muslim is afflicted with any harm, even if it were the prick of a thorn, but that Allah expiate his sins because of that, as a tree sheds its leaves”. This is with his physical body, his health.

In his family relationship, he was not excused. Narrated Umar: The wives of the Prophet out of their jealousy, backed each other against the Prophet (SAW), so I said to them, “It may be, if he divorced you all, that Allah will give him, instead of you, wives better than you”. And Allah revealed that verse –

It may be, if he
Divorced you (all)
That Allah will give him
In exchange Consorts
Better than you,
Who submit (their wills),
Who believe, who are devout,
Who turn to Allah in repentance,
Who worship (in humility),

Who travel (for faith) and fast,
Previously married or virgins.

Qur'an 66: 5.

It was not different in ordered war. Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet, while in a tent (on the day of the battle of Badr) said, "O Allah! I ask you the fulfilment of Your covenant and Promise. O Allah! If You wish (to destroy the believers) You will never be worshipped after today". Abubakar caught him by the hand and said, 'This is sufficient, O Allah's Messenger! You have asked Allah pressingly'.

TIMELINESS

In Islam the discipline of right knowledge is necessarily contextual. It is not in isolation of the right time. The marriage of a minor must therefore not be consummated until the party attains puberty. A wet dream or a flow are the respective signals for a male and female. An infant is appropriately breast fed while alive and not after death. And it is not done to an unborn child. It will therefore be irresponsible of a leader to believe to care by a comfortable pronouncement in the dinner party. This applies to the worship of a believer.

Narrated Abdullah: I asked the Prophet, 'Which deed is the dearest to Allah?' He replied, "To offer the prayers at their early stated fixed times". This was what earned a prostitute Forgiveness, by quenching the thirst of a dog.

It is not different in respect of the right knowledge and discipline of personal purity in Islam. Narrated Aisha (RA): The Prophet said to me: "Give up the prayer when your menses begin and when it has finished, wash the blood off your body (take a bath) and start praying".

When it relates to the right of another or others or duties, like paying a labourer, it is enjoined to be concluded before his sweat dries up. A believer in every

position and circumstance, is required to be timely. To be careless is to be less. And Allah is never untimely.

But to no soul
Will Allah grant respite
When the time appointed
(For it) has come; and Allah
Is well acquainted
With (all) that ye do.

Qur'an 63: 11.

If no man will be spared, how evil is the leader who delays required attention? And how worse is the leader who denies? The toleration of three days avoidance between two believers or a couple is therefore a worst scenario. The superior between them is the first to break the avoidance.

Accordingly, weights are given to activities. Narrated Ibn Umar: Allah's Messenger said, "Whoever misses the Asr prayer (intentionally) then it is as if he lost his family and property". If the value of this timeliness is not appreciated by a fool, consider this: Narrated Ali: On the day of Al-Khandaq (the battle of the Trench) the Messenger of Allah said, "They (i.e. pagans) prevented us from offering the middle (the best) prayer till the sun had set. May Allah fill their graves and their houses (or their bodies) with fire".

It is no less in the measure of protecting a praying believer. Abu Juhaim reported: Allah's Messenger said, "If a person who passes in front of another person knows the magnitude of his sin he would prefer to wait for forty (days, months or years) rather than to pass in front of him".

It is therefore not enough to have a goodly mind or intention, as an individual, a partner or a leader **IF** you are a believer. You are required to oppose the path of

Satan and **DO the right thing at the RIGHT TIME**. Anything less is lesser. It is therefore satanic by men to support such an individual, partner or leader without enabling him adjust to the best.

ON THE HYPOCRITE AND HYPOCRISY

A hypocrite is a human being or jinn like any other one. Among men, he or she may be a believer in Allah (SWT) and Muhammad (SAW). He or she may be a Christian or a Jew. These are clear followers of the revelations of Allah that were revealed to His true Messengers. Every believer accepts all the Prophets and Messengers along with the revelations sent to them as truly from Allah.

Allah who knows all has perfected His revelations for guidance with the Qur'an and the best example of the life of Muhammad (SAW). And this is for the knowledge and guidance of all the worlds, including mankind of the entire world, irrespective of previous true revelations.

With Allah (SWT) who created all things and has a right of worship over all things, He has not excluded anyone, anybody or nation from the consequences of denying, rejecting or tampering with His guidance.

Those who deny Allah and His Messengers, and (those who) wish to separate Allah from His Messengers, saying: 'we believe in some but reject others', and (those who) wish to take a course midway, they are in truth (equally) unbelievers; and We have prepared for unbelievers a humiliating Punishment. Qur'an: 4: 150 - 151.

Narrated Abdullah bin Amr : Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "Whoever has (the following) four characteristics will be a pure hypocrite: If he speaks, he tells a lie; if he gives a promise, he breaks it; if he makes a covenant he proves treacherous; and if he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent evil insulting manner (unjust).

And whoever has one of these characteristics, has one characteristic of a hypocrite, unless he gives it up”.

One key and leading character of a hypocrite is that he or she will lie when he or she speaks. This can be to oneself. For instance, you say to yourself silently or pronounce in the presence of someone that you will repair your car as soon as your salary is paid, to avoid getting to work late. If you are able to do it, you are being truthful to yourself. If you fail, you have become untruthful to yourself. As a believer, if you are sane and an adult, you have undertaken to fast in the month of Ramadan and perform five compulsory prayers daily, as examples. This follows automatically with the declaration of faith. Therefore, not fasting or praying as prescribed amounts to telling a lie in your submission to Allah and His Messenger. This means that not fasting at all, fasting differently from self-denials between dawn and sunset, appearing to fast to people or traveling out to where one is not known in order to avoid fasting or claiming to be sick to avoid fasting are lies telling and hypocritical. The same with not praying as prescribed or at will. Such a believer is hypocritical to Allah and His Messenger, by submission. This applies similarly between a believer and any fellow believer and humans. If one serves as a witness on what is unknown, he or she is a hypocrite, regardless of his relationship with any of the parties. And if a senior or leader pronounces that he will assist with the execution of a legal project, to an individual, a group or community and turns his back, he is a liar.

A liar to oneself, to another person, to Allah and His Messenger or to a community or society is a bearing one sign of a hypocrite.

What of giving a promise? It really has no qualitative difference. The only difference between speaking and promising is the form. In a promise, you are undertaking to be challenged if what you have spoken is not undertaken or done. The meeting point is the same – action. It is when the individual fails to repair his

car that he becomes a hypocrite. It is when a believer fails to submit as ordained by Allah and His Messenger that he qualifies as a hypocrite. It is when he serves as a false witness he becomes a hypocrite. The same with the leader who makes a pronouncement.

What of a covenant? It is still basically the same. The end, the action, is the meeting point that gives it meaning. In other words, once the end or the action is expressed by a believer, in relation to oneself, to Allah, to another person, group or community, it is **REQUIRED TO BE CONSISTENTLY REALIZED**. A believer is required to be of his own words and commitment. This will make a believer predictable and reliable because of his or her discipline.

In the end, telling lies is a great sin. A sin is harmful to self, to others and a self-betrayal with Allah which will be accounted for. One who speaks, gives a promise or makes a covenant and abuses the logical action to fulfil it is a clear hypocrite. It is therefore bad to be self-destructive materially in this world, spiritually in the hereafter and destructive of fellow believers or humans and the community or society, to be a hypocrite. The difference between the three levels is that the one that concerns self is **BAD**. Who will want to be living an inconsistent livelihood? It will be unfulfilling. Imagine an individual who decides to be a Muslim among Muslims and a Christian among Christians. It is **WORSE** in relation to another person especially when a promise is given. The **WORST** that can happen to a believer is to be in leadership position and be a betrayer. The most hopeless and unfortunate believer will be a leader with traces of hypocrisy in his position of responsibility, in his personal relationship with any citizen and to himself.

In the lifetime of the Prophet (SAW), a sincere person came to him, who is a murderer, a thief and an adulterer. He asked the Prophet to give him one command only. He was instructed not to tell lies. He left. But for each of his routine evils, he discovered that if he is caught and questioned, he will have to admit, except

he will tell a lie. He abandoned all the evils and pronounced the wisdom of Rasul (SAW). This is why telling lies can be said to be the worst characteristic of a believer. And conversely, upholding what is spoken, promised or undertaken is the best foundation for a disciplined individual and society or godliness.

And like an individual or society or the leader can become better than they start or used to be, the same with hypocrisy and hypocrites.

Narrated Abi Waih: Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman said, “The hypocrites of today are worse than those of the lifetime of the Prophet (SAW), because in those days they used to do evil deeds secretly but today they do such deeds openly”.

This is clearly not disputable. Is the breaking of the laws of Allah by believers not rampant today? Examples are the careless practice of Salat by individuals; the abuse of the rules of getting married and upholding the rights and duties to sustain it; and the manners of handling public contracts. We are complaining of the misbehaviour of youths or their impossibility without reference to how they are brought into the world. We complain of over invoicing or corruption without reference to the sincerity of discipline of those given trusts to manage.

What we witness and complain against is not the most frightening or the worst form Hypocrites act out today. I personally know of a leader who made a strong promise to fulfil what is good, to his own benefit and wilfully ignored to do it. Then he met with the same witness and reaffirmed his commitment but failed to do it. On his own, he submitted that after failing on two occasions, he will qualify for a hypocrite. He then reassured but did not. This relates to what is personally his choice, showing gratitude to Allah for His favours upon him, by constructing a road to a rural area and supporting the children with scholarship for Islamic studies. This amounts to making a goodly promise to Allah and abandoning it. This is between him and Allah. Then he engaged leaders of the community in canvassing for voting him, with the strongest undertaking to sink boreholes in the

houses of the two leaders. He won and did not oblige. After his tenure, he wrote a letter of appreciation to the two leaders. He got re-elected to office. He then sent emissaries to the two leaders requesting that, they address the press on the need for the electorate to be patient, obedient and supportive of a leader, as required by Islam, for prosperity. The leaders told the emissaries: **INFORM HIM THAT WE SUPPORTED HIM AND HE GOT ELECTED BUT FAILED IN HIS PROMISE TO US. WE ARE STILL WAITING BUT WILL DO NO MORE. AND IF HE FAILS WE SHALL COMMIT IT TO ALLAH.** The leader was sleeping well and turned to another leader to complain, without sharing the whole story of his commitment to them. And he went on **CONTRACTING** different leaders to serve his needs, as if Allah is not true. What impact do you expect from the pronouncements, the promises and covenant from such a leader? The leaders in the community will develop distrust in public oath and leaders, the electorate will become disillusioned and not care about the credibility of a leader, since the plain and trusted one has betrayed. And the culture will thicken because the very leader is seen to increase in worldly prosperity, the common need of all.

Because leaders and leadership make up the most critical pivot for the development of a society, the oath system is put specifically in place for them. The rascals among them misbelieve that if a Muslim does not swear with the Qur'an or the Christian with a Bible, it is inconsequential. But they forget that their bearing of the faith is sufficient for accounting for all their commitments, with Allah. The semi-rascals swear with the scripture – incomplete. This is because the extremists who confront Allah by swearing on the Qur'an for lies quickly meet their doom. But there is no difference between them.

They have made their oaths a screen (for their misdeeds); thus they obstruct (men) from the Path of Allah: truly evil are their deeds. Qur'an 63: 2.

Therefore, you can have one characteristic by the level of application to self. But majority of mankind who sanely relate with one another or others, are prone to commit hypocrisy at two levels. The more it is the practice of members of a family, group or society, the greater the burdens of the lies and betrayals, in the forms of stress, frustrations and opening of wrong options in livelihood. And the more a society is led by hypocrites the less the experiencing of the blessings of Allah that are bonuses. Indeed even universal ones like rains and breast milk, peace and prosperity will dwindle.

It is very clear from the above that hypocrisy is not good, even to the hypocrite because it will make him worse by making what can be right, negative. For instance, quarrel can be right, to correct what is wrong. It is not wrong for a parent to quarrel a child against wasting food or preferring the food of a neighbour over theirs. A teacher can rightly quarrel a student who is not attentive to a lesson. A leader should quarrel over careless abuse of traffic regulations because of the consequences. This is very logical because, no individual enjoys being confronted with his own failure.

The hypocrites therefore thrive in association with one another by their characteristics. Indeed, a hypocritical leader is often aided by fellow hypocrites either to themselves, to Allah, to others, to society or all.

The Hypocrites, men and women (have an understanding) with each other: They enjoin evil and forbid what is just, and are close with their hands. They have forgotten Allah; so He hath forgotten them. Verily the Hypocrites are rebellious and perverse. Qur'an 9: 67.

There was the unfortunate real experience of a close relative of a leader who agreed with some goodly persons, that he will serve as a medium for goodly advice and guidance to the leader. But he moved to live with the leader and cut off relationship with the persons. He busied himself to abuses for the leader, with

the leader and along with the leader. Unfortunately, this is not an excuse for the failures and misdeeds of the leader. This is a hypocrite. This kind of cot and virus.

It is in specific relevance to leadership responsibility to society, where they will normally pronounce good things for society and do other things with the Satans in their support by encouragement that believers are warned.

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (SAW) said, “The worst people in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection will be the double faced people who appear to some people with one face and to other people with another face”. Why will they not be worst, when they hold undertaking with the people in the open and commit the contrary that is only consistent with their associates?

Allah sets forth, for an example to the unbelievers, the wife of Noah and the wife of Lut: they were (respectively) under two of Our righteous servants, but they were false to their (husbands). And they profited nothing before Allah on their account, but were told: “Enter ye the Fire along with (others) that enter!” Qur’an 66: 10.

The promises of Allah (SWT) to the hypocrites

Narrated Abu Sa’id: I heard the Prophet (SAW) saying: “Allah will bring forth the severest Hour, and then all the Believers, men and women, prostrate themselves before Him, but there will remain those who used to prostrate in the world for showing off and for gaining good reputation. Such people will try to prostrate (on the Day of Judgement) but their backs will be as stiff as if it is one bone (a single vertebrae)”.

One Day will the Hypocrites – men and women – say to the Believers: “Wait for us! Let us borrow (a Light) from your Light!” It will be said: “Turn ye back to your rear! Then seek a Light (where ye can)!” So a wall will be put up betwixt

them, with a gate therein. Within it will be Mercy throughout, and without it, all alongside, will be (wrath and) Punishment!” Qur’an 57: 13.

Narrated Abu Wail: The people asked Usama: ‘What have you heard him (the Messenger of Allah) saying?’ He said: I have heard him saying, “A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the (Hell) Fire, so that his intestines will come out, and he will go around like a donkey goes around a millstone. The people of (Hell) Fire will gather around him and say: ‘O So-and-so! What is wrong with you? Didn’t you used to order us to do good deeds and forbid us to do bad deeds?’ He will reply: ‘Yes, I used to order you to do good deeds, but I did not do them myself, and I used to forbid you to do bad deeds, but I used to do them myself’ ”.

Verily the Hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire. Qur’an 4: 145.

It will thus appear that hypocrisy is not absolutely avoidable. But that is not discouraging. Deliberate hypocrisy is always avoidable. This is possible by resisting abuse of what is right, what is promised or undertaken. He who helps himself or herself as such will be at war with untruth and will attract those who are truthful and sincere. For believers, living must be based on right knowledge and discipline. For leadership of a people, it is not different but more so. These will attract the help of Allah (SWT) in the building of good. And this would serve as fifty percent solution in the least. Those activities that can be unknowingly or mistakenly committed will be largely helped or reduced by the assistance of those who will help him and whatever Allah wills. The help with reminders when the doors of access are open always help a personally willing leader who genuinely fights evil. It therefore amount to rascality to be surrounded and protecting hypocrites and expect to attract believers in the truth. Indeed if they even volunteer to assist, they will be blocked. No leader living in the prison of

hypocrites can smell the perfume of bearers of the truth, even if they serve the leader in his daily routines.

The very same applies to the individual and in his relationship with others. Knowledge of what is right and discipline in the same must be the common plain basis for living. The rule for being with Allah and His Messenger is making it the determinant of whatever will be admitted and committed. It must not have a competitor. Freedom will be everywhere it has not decided or guided on. And the absolute justification for this is very understandable, welcome and not far to fetch:

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.

WARNING GUIDANCE

From the outline above, it is very clear that Satan is evil and is not subject to judicial conviction or sanctions, in his roles or relationship with men. The very same applies to his agents or companions. Man, by his nature, is in need of fulfilling numerous desires and these serve as the platform for either submitting to guidance for both physical and spiritual fulfilment or falling in for misguidance by Satan and losing both. This is because the immediate appearance of physical fulfilment will be coloured with the things prohibited and do not last. The credibility of a believer therefore rests squarely on his right knowledge and discipline of the truth.

For that reason, the first thing to take note of is that, Islam or Faith or Submission to Allah as the absolute truth that is right is NOT NEGOTIABLE. No creation is exempted from this. And it is the platform for all discipline.

Narrated Al-Musaiyab: When Abu Talib was on his death bed, Allah's Messenger came to him and found with him, Abu Jahl and Abdullah bin Abi Umaiya bin Al-Mughira. Allah's Messenger said, "O uncle! Say: None has the right to be worshipped except Allah, a sentence with which I will defend you before Allah". On that Abu Jahl and Abdullah bin Abi Umaiya said to Abu Talib, 'Will you now leave the religion of Abdul Muttalib?' Allah's Messenger kept on inviting him to say that sentence while the other two kept on repeating their sentence before him till Abu Talib said as the last thing he said to them, 'I am on the religion of Abdul Muttalib', and refused to say: None has the right to be worshipped except Allah. On that Allah's Messenger said, "By Allah, I will keep on asking Allah's forgiveness for you unless I am forbidden (by Allah) to do so". So Allah revealed: It is not fitting for the Prophet and those who believe that they should invoke (Allah) for forgiveness for pagans even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the Fire. Qur'an 9: 113. And then Allah revealed especially about Abu Talib: Verily! You (O, Muhammad) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He will. Qur'an 28: 56.

A believer, after declaration of faith is logically necessarily required to be of discipline or compliance with all that are enjoined and keeping off all that are prohibited or of doubtful status. However, constancy must be the standard. It is not enough to do what is right and good, it is more important to be regular or constant in doing so. This requirement is not limited to praying at the right times.

Narrated Abu Musa: The Prophet (SAW) said, "Keep on reciting the Qur'an, for, by Him in Whose Hand my life is, Qur'an runs away (is forgotten) faster than camels that are released from their tying ropes". By implication, it is not the

amount of good deeds that is necessarily commendable. It is superior to perform two raka'ats voluntary night prayer regularly than performing one thousand once in a year.

The religion of Islam is the affair of Allah and will be protected by Him, no matter the machinations of the evil ones. Narrated Anas: There was a Christian who embraced Islam and read Surat-al-Baqara and Al-Imran, and he used to write (the revelations) for the Prophet (SAW). Later on he returned to Christianity again and he used to say: "Muhammad knows nothing but what I have written for him". Then Allah caused him to die, and the people buried him, but in the morning they saw that the earth had thrown his body out. They said, "This is the act of Muhammad and his companions. They dug the grave of our companion and took his body out of it because he had run away from them". They again dug the grave deeply for him, but in the morning they again saw that the earth had thrown his body out. They said, "This is an act of Muhammad and his companions. They dug the grave of our companion and threw his body outside it, for he had run away from them". They dug the grave for him as deep as they could, but in the morning they again saw that the earth had thrown his body out. So they believed that what had befallen him was not done by human beings and had to leave him thrown out (on the ground).

It is clear that every man has a primary background. Every believer belongs to a family. Narrated Abu Dhar: The Prophet (SAW) said, "If somebody claims to be the son of any other than his real father knowingly, he but disbelieves in Allah and if somebody claims to belong to some folk to whom he does not belong, let such a person take his place in the Hell Fire". Why should one be ashamed of his or her background or why should anyone be rubbed of his or her identity by anyone for whatever reason or circumstance? This corruption is the window for greater evils because of the cover-up. For example those who are properly

suitable for joining in marriage can be obstructed and prohibited partners may get joined.

As one grows up a personality builds up. The identity of a believer must remain plain and modest and humble. Allah the All-Knowing gave him his best form and provisions. Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet (SAW) cursed the effeminate men and those women who assume the similitude (manners) of men. He also said, “Turn them out of your houses”.

Narrated Abdullah: Allah has cursed those women who practice tattooing and those who get themselves tattooed, and those who create a space between their teeth to look beautiful, and such women as change the features created by Allah. And this is a pointer to the gravity of constructing a living thing, like the sculpture of men.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “The part of an *Izar* which hangs below the ankles is in the Fire”. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “While a man was walking clad in a two-piece garment and proud of himself with his hair well combed, suddenly Allah made him sink into the earth and he will go on sinking into it till the Day of Resurrection”.

While worldly riches that are permissible can be rightly enjoyed, a believer must take cautionary guidance. Narrated Ibn Abi Laila: Allah’s Messenger said, “Gold, silver, silk, are for them (unbelievers) in this world and for you (Muslims) in the hereafter”.

Narrated Abu Dhar: Once I went to him (the Prophet) and he said, “By Allah in Whose Hand is my life, whoever had camels or cows or sheep and did not pay their Zakat, those animals will be brought on the Day of Resurrection far bigger and fatter and they will tread him under their hooves, and will butt him with their horns and (those animals will come in circle): when the last does its turn, the first

will start again, and this punishment will go on till Allah has finished the judgements amongst the people”.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “The *kanz* (money, the Zakat of which is not paid) of anyone of you will appear in the form of a bald-headed poisonous male snake on the Day of Resurrection”.

Long life is therefore not necessarily good. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “Allah will not accept the excuse of any person whose instant or death is delayed till he is sixty years of age”. Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah’s Messenger saying, “The heart of an old man remains young in two respects, i.e. his love for the world (its wealth, amusements and luxuries) and his incessant hope”.

And affairs will not get better with time, for believers. Indeed fair observers can certify this. Narrated Abu Sa’id: The Prophet (SAW) said, “You will follow the wrong ways, of your predecessors so completely and literally that if they should go into the hole of a mastigure, you too will go there”. We said, ‘O Allah’s Messenger! Do you mean the Jews and the Christians?’ He replied, “Whom else?”

And take warning, Narrated An-Nu’man bin Bashir: I heard the Prophet saying, “The least punished person among the people of the Hell Fire on the Day of Resurrection will be a man under whose arch of the feet two smoldering embers will be placed, because of which his brain will boil just like copper vessel or a narrow-necked vessel is boiling with water”.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “Your (ordinary) fire is one of seventy parts of the Hell fire”. Someone asked, ‘O Allah’s Messenger, this (ordinary) fire would have been sufficient (to torture the unbelievers)’. Allah’s Messenger said, “The Hell Fire has sixty nine parts more than the ordinary

(worldly) fire, each part is as hot as this (worldly) fire”. Only a fool will be contemplating between fire from firewood for cooking food and factory furnace because both and more are the same, belonging to this world.

Narrated Anas: The Prophet (SAW) said, “The people will be thrown into Hell Fire and it will keep saying, ‘Are there any more?’ till the Lord of the worlds puts His Foot over it, whereupon its different sides will come close to each other (for just accommodation of all the inhabitants), and it will say, ‘Enough! Enough! By Your Honour and Power and Generosity!’ Paradise will remain spacious enough to accommodate more people until Allah will create some more people and let them dwell in the superfluous space of Paradise”.

The ball is in the court of a believer. The path of Satan is free and wide open and easy to flow through. The Path of Guidance can be Sought and complied with, with utmost effort, with patience and perseverance.