

**UMMAHOOD CONCERNS AND EXPLANATORY
COMMENTS**



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INTRODUCTION

The working of an ideal society in terms of leadership, followership, economy, etc. has been prescribed by Allah through His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW). When man especially believers deviate from this due to greed or perceived civilisation, they create problems for themselves and the society become chaotic. This dramatized piece aims at proffering tangible and sustainable solutions to eight critical problems of the Ummah today especially in Nigeria. These are departure of traditional rulers who are considered Muslim leaders from the ideals of Shehu Usmanu, appalling attitude of Muslims privileged to hold (political) positions of authority, unethical means of producing young ones who grow up to become tyrant leaders and avoidable poverty. Others are misinterpretation of federal character principle which makes beneficiaries believe that they are serving their states or regions instead of all, mismanagement of time and opportunities, bastardised interpersonal relationships between Muslims (spouses – before and after marriage, teachers and students, parents and children, etc.) as well as commercialisation of du'a.

Though some of the suggestions may seem radical like resignation or dethronement of ill-fitting traditional rulers and limiting courtship to two weeks, the deplorable condition of the Ummah calls for such. I am sure Shehu Usmanu will suffer a “heart melt” if perchance he comes back to discover that the unified Ummah he left behind is now having avoidable problems such as staggered commencement of Ramadan fast because inheritors of his flag have more or less become self-serving toothless bulldogs. What more of Rasul (SAW)? Therefore, each and every Muslim has a role to play in rescuing the Ummah from the present quagmire by acquiring authentic religious knowledge, practicing it and be disciplined.

As a parting gift, Muhammad Naibi Bokun felt it necessary to educate/remind his august visitors of eleven important issues. These include leadership and marriage as prescribed by God, caring for orphans, avoiding hypocrisy, strengthening mutual support by believers, restraining the desire for wealth and honours, superiority of good deeds over family and wealth after death, and so on. This is because one of the characteristics of man is that he is forgetful. For that reason, Allah instructs: “And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers” (Qur’an 51:55). Each reminder is supported by authentic Hadiths of the Prophet (SAW) culled from www.hadithoftheday.com newsletter.

Muhammad Imran Muhammad

OPENING

Muhammad Mansur, Muhammad Sulayman and Muhammad Aminu are the curious citizens who have paid a visit to Muhammad Naibi Bokun. Their common objective is to have a fair understanding of the history we are caught up in. The visit has ended up like an examination, but is worthwhile. Muhammad Naibi Bokun is neither the President nor the Governor nor a Legislator But has lived longer than them and has been fairly observant in the course of his survival. And the visitors wish to live better than Muhammad Naibi Bokun.

They will spend a semester before going on break to their respective homes. They have therefore chosen to visit once in a week. And below is the record of interaction, for the positive orientation of whoever similarly cares.

CONCERN ONE

The three arrive and greeted the host in turn. The host welcomed each of them. He offered them acacia for entertainment.

Muhammad Sulayman

Our traditional rulers are like not clearly leaders. It is like they are struggling to become relevant at the risk of humiliation because we may do without them. They are not clearly religious leaders because Islam is not principally defined by award of titles, durbar or anniversaries celebrations. It is not like a hobby of leading Friday or Eid prayer at will. And their push to be entrenched in the constitution says it all. So, when political leaders ask for their cooperation or call them fathers, it is confusing. What is the truth about this class of important people?

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

I believe that you are right. And it is most unfortunate. What I know is that, those who collected flags of allegiance arising from the Jihad of Shehu Usumanu bin

Fodio recognized, admitted and lived by three factors. The individuals that have come to succeed these people are either ignorant, nonchalant or abusive of these factors.

In the first place, the introduction of the colonial system of rule is not a sufficient excuse for the present status. Indeed the remnant integrity of these rulers is like feasting on the old genuine glory that was established and allowed to wither away. This is why even the colonialists created the concept of indirect rule. Nothing in the arrangement compelled believers to abandon their rights and duties to one another and to the leaders. The new system is claimed to provide protection for non-Muslims. But within the jurisdiction of the caliphate there were non-Muslims and even unbelievers, living freely.

The first factor was that, the flag bearing was not based on blood ties. Even the children and brothers of Usumanu were not only believers but learned. Moreover Usumanu was not himself a ruler, as emir of any place or in any palace. But today, the present successors have become so, by either biological or clan relationship. Either way, it has become enshrined as ascriptive. But Jihad is based on knowledge and discipline in Islam. The guide is in the leadership of direct communication with Allah (SWT). The most learned in Qur'an comes first. Then the person who best combines with the knowledge of the Hadith of the Prophet (SAW) and discipline. After this comes age. It is therefore unlikely in the arrangement to have either an ignorant or an irresponsible person, leading. Thus, the present situation where the ruler does not lead in Salat is not an excuse for either of them to be an ignorant or not in fact the sign of Allah in the community or society. If this has continued to be the case, the present status quo would have been different. The factor of knowledge-cum-discipline is no more, the deciding factor for leadership.

Let me also quickly add that, the concept of knowledge is not terminal qualification with a certificate issued to the graduates at the end of the curriculum studies. Learning was not only connected to discipline but the acknowledgment of learning by others was dependent upon the display of the knowledge and discipline by the product. This “others” include colleagues from the same Teacher and those from some other Teachers. And he stood the chance of respect by the teacher where he is clearly better. This is the standard till he dies. The responsibility of maintaining the recognition thus rests on his continuous livelihood. No cardboard certificate of Doctor of Philosophy qualifies one for leadership or recognition. However, today, such a ruler may have just inherited it or get installed by some fiat decision. He may have schooled but not getting learned. And he has to rule in the circumstance of not being the fitting leader. How then can one qualify as an Amir? Indeed, from rarely qualifying as Amirul Hajj we will soon start having non-scholars as Amirul Hajj.

The second factor is that, every leader or delegate knew the basis of the Jihad. It was not booties from the fights, which were really resistance to being consumed or oppressed by the evil and loose practices of the Habe rulers. This is for instance clearly defined in the works of Usumanu. The kernel is Izalatul Bid’a. The invitation is to cleanse the admixture of Islam from idolatry or traditional practices. A typical example was the evidence of a stained sheet for the virginity of a woman on consummation, for witnessing. The works define the basic tenets for Islamic orientation of believers. Those who studied under Usumanu or under his students or had the benefit of access to the materials, were the light bearers. The rule was not appointing children or relatives to be collecting taxes or similar extortions from the masses. The last one in Zaria was Jafaru. So, creations that did not directly collect the flag are even worse off, where the ruler they are answerable to is empty. Late Khadi Abubakar Mahmoud initiated the Jama’atu Nasirul Islam with the view of education forum for the revival of the principles

and focus for the rulers that had become isolated from their real purpose. It has transformed into a different creature logically. An animal cannot produce a human. The Izala as we know it today, is a complex effort to resist the complete death of the principles. However, neither Islam nor the propagation of Izala by Usumanu was a structural movement. Hence, the unfortunate inevitable trappings of institutionalization they are now faced with are foreign to Usumanu and the Jihad. It is a proof that leadership without a leader based on knowledge and discipline cannot be replaced by structural arrangements. This is why we have so many universities and products but we are not really better.

The third factor is that, Sultan Muhammadu Bello after who the Kaduna Central Mosque is named did accompany flags with his work, **Risalatil Amrad**. It is a concise refresher of the framework of rulership. It consists of seeking for the Forgiveness of Allah, constancy in congregational Salat, pursuit of knowledge, kindness and patience etc. These are the characteristics that double as tools for rulership. And those who are best should easily come up as the leaders. It requires no property qualifications. As of today, not all seats that collected the flag will deny the history. But none of them can deceive anyone that it matters to them. And the indicator is that, none of them has made reference to it, reproduced it for propagation or lives by it. It is extremely difficult if not impossible, to compete with the citizens in the accumulation of wealth and command the spirit of leadership. This is almost necessarily so because, the accumulation of material wealth is rarely free from major sins.

The benefits of a leader constantly asking for the forgiveness of Allah include at least prosperity for his people and the blessings of Allah. This will be in the forms of goodly rains for bountiful yields or harvests, blessed generation to succeed the old one and wealth in the society. Constancy in congregational prayers with the community (in our case, in the Central Mosque) will not only glue the Ummah together across the strata of the scholars, the leaders and wealthy but the

commoners will have the spirit of ummahood building in them. The youngsters will have a homely source of inspiration. The signs of Allah can easily be seen and felt in the acceptance of pleas. But even Friday congregational prayer has consequently broken down to groupings. The question of population size is nonsensical because, the leaders of the groups can comfortably attend the central one even in turns. But the Ummah is divided more by the groupings because knowledge has been weakened by separatist ambitions. The pursuit of knowledge of the same Shahada, the same Qur'an, the same Sirah of Muhammad (SAW) and Hadith would have been easier and better, rather than being competitive or the rightness or wrongness of differences. And the benefit of kindness and patience to be common folks will be positively impactful. But all of these are lost in the inordinate greed of chasing the world by those who should be the evidences of the superiority of the hereafter.

The present status and roles of these people is therefore a stage in the collapse of the foundation upon which they have come up. The identity of traditional rulers that should be shameful because it is more appropriate for what is to be cleansed is suitable because that is what they are regressing into. And the struggles they are making only succeeds for themselves and less for the society. The position has become a victim of self-evolved adultery.

But the situation is not totally hopeless. It is however very, very, very difficult, to adjust or correct. At least, it requires two radical steps. One is psychological and the other is intellectual-cum-spiritual before the socio-political action that will be necessary. The ruler that sincerely knows that he is not the best or among the best in his domain, will voluntarily step out and down, along with all his appointees. The best or one from among the best, in the course that Usumanu charted will be invited to lead. This does not have to be the Imam of the Central Mosque. And the government will give teeth to its recognition by amending or creating necessary laws that will make the leadership a private, family or clan

property for inheritance. Then the Ummah will be on the path of revival. The complexity can be appreciated, given the characteristics of groupings of believers and some being led by families etc.

A first step will invite the blessings of Allah. As difficult as it may appear, the leader can start with the constant seeking of forgiveness and make any other things secondary and personal attendance of central congregational prayers. A trial will open up the windows of the favours of Allah. But not even the town Imam gives the daily congregational Salat. When the Ummah abandons Allah or pushes His affairs to the backbench, we cannot but be left with our tricks and the favours that cover all of His creations as He pleases.

Muhammad Mansur

May these leaders turn towards Allah and attract the sympathy and support of the scholars in the society. If this is the nature of the burden they bear, no intelligent person will remain because accounting for the followers will be miserable. I pity them, their lieutenants and families.

Muhammad Aminu

Amen.

CONCERN TWO

The three arrive, this time, along with Muhammad Abubakar. Muhammad Naibi Bokun joins them. They exchanged Salam. They were served Zam-Zam water. It was obvious that the three had shared the first interaction with the brother. He looked at the faces of his brothers, as if taking permission, for which they showed no objections.

Muhammad Abubakar

My brothers educated me on your explanation to the concern of our so called traditional rulers. I was enlightened and touched by the grave misfortune we are living in. I can now understand why they are more into ceremonies and protocols; why no materially poor person can be preferred without being sponsored by a powerful leader and why on assumption of office, material acquisition dictates his primary orientation. My father had told me of an incidence in one of the palaces in direct receipt of the flag of allegiance. A top official of Jama'atu visited and was honoured with leading Asr prayer. He recited the verses of the Qur'an aloud. He shared money to the attendants after and left. Then a scholar in the palace pronounced that: after the prayer for money, it is now obligatory to pray properly as prescribed by Allah and Muhammad (SAW). We laughed over the narration. But now, I can appreciate why the scholar did not do the correction in the course of the prayer as provided for. Not even the ruler who was in the first rank did so. At the end, the error of the leader was not corrected. He may have left with the terrible impression of his righteousness, haven led people who are largely learned, with their ruler. The ruler may have even known that he was not fit for such but traded the special role for money. His own followers could not have been impressed, knowing that it was a trash. But more seriously, the integrity of the ruler had dropped in the eyes of the righteous. And the blessings of Allah will be strangled if it were to descend in the palace. If that was the best

the scholar could do, in our times, in a community known for knowledge and discipline of many, we are really in a deep shit.

I gave another thought to the whole matter and said, it may not be a bad idea if the royal families make it mandatory for themselves, to be taught, to learn and live the works of the jihadists of Usumanu. And, there will be no need for a palatial space or lifestyle for the leader. They should be leaders and not rulers. The present one may retain the palace and eventually live with ghosts, because all the infrastructure are not required.

But, why do elected or appointed Muslims to political offices also largely fail to deliver dividends of democracy? Why or how can we lose with Allah and lose with ourselves?

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

The incidence you just narrated is a clean eye opener. There are lots of dirty eye openers that have been ignored. The struggle to even become a ruler is characterized by factors like the money you pointed out, outside political force spiritual power that can be in the form of cultism and thuggery. We have had an experience where a ruler was installed with the solid support of military fire-power. The provisions of recommendations required to be forwarded to a governor to select from or approve, has bastardized the role of the ulama, even where the kingmakers are learned people. But the kingmakers have either become inheritable positions or rulers have adjusted them according to personal usefulness. Therefore, the matters or factors for eye opening are numerous.

As believers, the requirements of leadership are not different, with those who get elected or appointed to positions of responsibility. And it is important to start by pointing out that, the constitution of Nigeria does not require or prefer you to drop your faith or religious identity, to succeed. What it positively provides for is that,

you must not impose your faith or calling upon others. Therefore, the problem of non-performance in the case of Muslims in formal political leadership positions is rooted in two levels.

The first level is what applies to present traditional rulers. And the failure that has infected the traditional rulers is what the elected or appointed political leaders have not escaped from. It is the weakening of the Ummah and ulama.

In Islam, no believer is exempted from seeking for religious knowledge and discipline of what is right. No believer is excluded from regular Salat in congregation. In this respect, the root of this congregation is the Central Mosque of the ruler, the town or community. This connection has been lost. The ulama have no identity. Hence, the point of unity is no more real. A mosque will be erected or established within the domain of the ruler without his knowledge. He will only hear of it by chance. And who is he to be consulted for approval? And the eventual Imam of the Mosque will be an appointee of an Ummah from within the Ummah of the ruler or its Committee of leaders or the leader. This will attract members from across the community or town to the mosque – bypassing the central mosque. This may even have branches within the town. What a shame? Thus, other than the root of the ruler, there are several other roots. The leader of each is an Imam and each mosque and its chain are operated by Imams. This is unlike the ruler who is rarely an Imam. Only the Central Mosque is led on Friday by the Imam. And all are Muslims. This is why in sokoto there is an Ahmadiyya Mosque for Muslim Ahmadis who believe in their leader with two grades. He is the one after Prophet Muhammad and is recognized by the indication of the Qur'an. This is in the former seat of the Sokoto caliphate. In Zaria, the seat of knowledge, the Shi'a has evolved. These two are radical departures from the teachings of the jihadists and Usumanu. And there are Orders or Sects that have evolved in the Ummah.

It is most unlikely to have a ruler who has or can and has attracted such new or strange leaders to seek for recognition. This is because the platform is knowledge and the ruler is empty in the command of knowledge and discipline of the people under him. The securing of a plot of land is the much that is required to establish a movement. This is why as much as the Izala movement strives goodly, it will find itself to be really competing. Indeed, internal struggles has on a few occasions busted its unity. But that is not all with the breakage. Those with means feel fulfilled and helpful by establishing mosques attached to their houses or shops or stations. Work places have mosques.

There is no prohibition in having more than the Central Mosque as a mosque for congregational prayers and even the Friday prayer. However, they need to be connected to the leadership of the ruler, who is now separate from the Imam and does not lead in knowledge. This failed connection is the challenge of the Ummah. And the ulama are no more of only the Qur'an and Hadith but of different ummahs. It is so real that some members of certain ummahs hesitate to follow any Imam in Salat other than their own. Accordingly, from celebrating different Eids, different days of commencement of fasting have evolved. The Ummah is therefore now by clubbing.

The Muslims who are elected or appointed come from a cross section of these divisions or breakages, before non-Muslims and unbelievers, which are additional identities. Their first identity and drive is **not** as believers or Muslims. Those presenting them do not see them as such. I mean, the electorate, the parties and the godfathers. This means that, it is not Allah and Muhammad (SAW) that are the focus and guide. It is not knowledge and discipline arising from this that is the singular rallying point or truth for both the contestants or leaders and the electorate. This means that basic knowledge and discipline of the truth is not a clear condition. The ulamas have neither say nor recognized for evaluation. What is sufficient is that, the person is a member of one of the Ummahs. In

consequence, where he is a real believer of the mainstream Ummah, the Izala will ordinarily strive for identifying with it. Logically, if he is not one of the distinct groups, then he belongs to the Izala in principle. So, what has replaced the knowledge and discipline of what is right?

Human or personal choices based on best beliefs and understanding **for satisfying human and personal needs, wants and fancies**. These include roads, electricity, clean water, hospitals, schools, boosting agricultural products, build industries, security, peace, promotion of cultural activities, employment, empowerment, etc.

The matrix of this rack is that, every such seeking or appointed leader offers the same things directly or indirectly because the human self is the centre of focus. Unfortunately, although not zero failures can be apportioned but the consistent performance have been growingly questionable. The resources of monies, minerals, authority are more than satisfactorily always provided but they miss the target. It is in this country, the benchmark for planning expenditure will be overshoot by revenue but the citizens will not get close to fifty percent of the plans realized. The excuse of non-availability of resources will be slammed on the citizens. And the key leaders are Muslims. Indeed other targets growingly evolve. In a state where an orator, a senior administrator, a doctor of philosophy and a successor of a governor with suspended court case, who is a Muslim, was opportune to be a governor, motor cyclists bid him farewell with stones for falling below their intelligence. That was not enough, it became revealed that the resources to cushion the pains of flood victims were mismanaged. This is what has informed even non-Muslims and unbelievers to ask that the health conditions of prospective leaders be medically certified, before admission. Human inclination can be diezanic or shemanic. A Muslim leader whose child took a selfie, relaxing on a molehill of currency became more fitting to govern in his state than another Muslim that was primitively corrupt.

The secret of the failure of believers is attributable to two related factors. The first is that, all creations belong to Allah (SWT), including man. He is the One who gives as He pleases by allowing or enabling. The behaviour or orientation of self-sufficiency in knowledge and ability is not only false, contradictory to the standard set by Allah, but abuses the declaration of faith of believers. The heavens, the earth and all that are between belong and submit to Allah. This is why the believers who take or swear to oath are in reality, a bundle of contradictions. Where there is Allah, your reality is right only if and when it is in reflection of Him, by utmost submission. The difference between our Muslim leaders and Qaroon is the difference between verbal expression and the action of a deaf and dumb. The same attribute of denying the unity of Allah applies to them. While Qaroon was pompous and proud about his acquisitions, our leaders are commonly arrogant. Even those who keep straight face express the audacity by real carelessness. This takes the form of not taking advice or taking hopeless time to do what may be right.

For a believer, the only orientation that will connect him to the real owner and controller of all affairs include, knowledge of Allah and His Messenger, constant remembrance of Allah by Salat in congregation and submission by asking for forgiveness and making pleas. It is when you keep in goodly touch that you know, you get recognized and can expect encouragement, commendation and support. In our ordinary human setting, do we not have registers of attendance? Is there no minimum attendance level that determines continuous acceptance or relief from work? Do we not have incremental appreciation for routine orderliness? Do we not promote or demote? Do we not keep records? But what Allah has asked for, is our mind to turn to Him. This is the benefit of submission. This is why the Prophet said if the Salat of a believer does not dissuade him from doing evil, it is of no benefit to him. Is it not contradictory to have a true relationship between a leader and a scholar and the leader does not get good advice or ignores good

advice or puts aside good advice? In which state of Nigeria can the governor not at least attend a Friday Salat in the Central Mosque of the ruler who inherited the flag? Can the Governor of Niger state, if he is a Muslim, not attend Jumu'at at Bida? But the one of Kaduna has tried it to Zaria – for worship and not political display. Of what value is the proximity advantage of the governor of Sokoto or Kwara? Does it require a war, for the President to attend some Jumu'at at Suleja? Now we have a National Mosque. Is the Imam a National Imam? But there is a Mosque in the State House. Who appoints the Imam? The political leaders who are believers are therefore clearly disconnected or **more disconnected** than connected with Allah, in the way **He has preferred**. And they are inevitably disconnected from the Ummah. Remember that, this is in a setting where the Amir is severally claimed or actually exist because we have many ummahs.

The reality of our existence, survival and prosperity or otherwise, is like sheltering in a building. When it rains or is night, we shut down. But we do not remember that we rarely remember **not** to shut out light and air. But these are more critical than all the cares or keeps. And they are never over or under supplied. Once they become, we do not need any specialist to get out. But we will appreciate the architect, the builder and others **leaving Allah out**. A believer who has seen or heard of finding a nation of healthy ants in the cracked stone will appreciate the necessity of constantly glorifying Allah. And more than this can be known from reading the Qur'an. How often do we read, contemplate to understand the Qur'an? Indeed how often do we even relate our understanding of affairs to the guidance of the Qur'an? Our beliefs are like hobbies, the Muslim leaders are the champions and the political leaders who are believers are the stars.

A companion of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) spent years to learn and lived Suratul Baqarah. When many hear this, they are too daft to be moved. But they will smile and wish to have Baqarah as a companion in the grave or on the Day of Resurrection. What a dreamful ambition! But if we read in the Qur'an that,

Allah cometh between a man and his heart, we will appreciate that the excesses of man, by inclination, can be subtly checked by Allah. Did not Pharaoh bring up Musa (AS) in his palace when his law of executing every male child born, was in force? Accordingly, we will more and better understand that the effective and efficient management of resources and authority entrusted to us will not depend on only best plans, best experts and best intentions. Thus, how do believers expect to symbolize the best among mankind, when we neither know nor are we driven by forbidding what is wrong and enforcement of what is right? How can believers attract the belief and trust of non-Muslims and unbelievers? They are not fools. We will be stupid to think and except so.

Muhammad Mansur

This is a grave pity. Garbage in garbage out. It is neither the supposed rulers nor the electorate nor the leaders. And we have millions of the same copies of the Qur'an with us. Many of us are conversant with Arabic language. Many of us are conversant with English language, and can understand the message contained in the Qur'an and Hadith. We pray and are even tagged as a prayerful Ummah. Our record of pilgrimage attendance is spectacular. Our leader has even received special reception by the custodian of the two holy mosques. Everything to show but no proof to convince.

Muhammad Aminu

Our percentage of literacy is no excuse. How many of us read? What do we care to read? Do we even care to understand? But we cannot help living by relating to one another and this must be informed by conscious or unconscious admission of terms that are believed or expected to be right.

CONCERN THREE

The four brothers return together and found Muhammad Naibi Bokun already reclining on the wall and four saucers containing three date fruits each. Each of them greeted and was welcomingly answered. This time around, Muhammad Naibi pointed at Muhammad Mansur and Muhammad Aminu. This was easily understandable because even though each of them had spoken, they have not posed any questions, comments or concerns, for explanatory comment.

Muhammad Mansur

Every Amir, every ruler, every leader, every believer is a member of a family. If it is getting too late or actually late for the rulers and the political leaders and even grownups, it shouldn't be for the younger ones brought into the world by the parents. This is both logical and sensible. But unfortunately, it appears also helpless or hopeless. The world will definitely come to an end and it is inevitable to cruise to it, but the speed is too fast to understand and to bear.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

What is logical and sensible is two-faced. The face you have pointed out is the one that is normally expected. It is abstract or theoretical. But the same applies to the status quo. Weak rulers, questionable leaders and confused or merry making followers of these leaders and rulers cannot easily produce or train younger ones of different orientation. There is the exceptional chance of achieving such in cases of determined change by parents. And fortunately, the rulers and leaders are not excluded. This is part of the Compassion and Mercy of Allah, which covers not only the believers, but include the non-Muslims and unbelievers. This is how Allah generates the living from the corrupt or dead. Our experience of the Jihad of Usumanu and the cleansing of Hausa rulership is a pointer. The death of that

life is evident in our rulers and leaders today. And it is not hopeless for Allah to enable reliving out of this death.

This can take off from the rulers of today, as I suggested earlier. It appears difficult on the surface. But the truth is that, the possibility rests on the strength of the Iman of the ruler. The very same applies to the believers elected or appointed to political offices. The common citizens are not exempted. We experienced the overwhelming rejection of the Peoples Democratic Party and the admission of the All Progressives Congress in two consecutive elections of deciding the President. It was not only Muslims or even believers that determined it. It was a combination of believers and unbelievers. In the same way, a non-Muslim can convert to Islam. The doors of the Compassion and Mercy of Allah are not closed yet.

The route, the door or the means, is not magical. It is simple, free and equally available to everyone that cares. It is embodied in the knowledge and discipline of what is right and true. This is to be learned for discovery and then lived by whoever submits, after voluntary acceptance. The Qur'an and Hadith are not restricted for learning to those born as Muslims. Allah enjoins that we seek to know Him. And the entire creation and ourselves are available to reflect on, from His Message and the Guidance of His Messenger. Indeed, Allah puts a challenge to the sincere finder. As for the uniqueness of the Qur'an that He protects, no single or collection of the intelligent efforts of creations, can produce its like. And has anyone tried by practicing Islam and not found fulfilment? Allah guides to admission whosoever He pleases.

The challenge here, for those who individually or collectively choose to adjust, is **RIGHT KNOWLEDGE AND DISCIPLINE OF WHAT IS RIGHT**. All the ummahs have the Qur'an and Hadith and the homes of the Prophet (SAW) to adopt for reference. This why what is outstanding for us who use the clarifications

of Imam Malik have a unique character. Imam Malik was not only learned, pious and a teacher, his orientation was influenced by what the people of Madina were doing. The Prophet (SAW) lived there, led there and was most supported by the Ansar. And with all these, Imam Malik cautioned against being accepted or admitted or used, **wherever he contradicts the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet.** In a situation where even the family members of the Prophet (SAW) will be castigated or a trickster will assume a special status for the global Ummah or overwhelming scholarship admission of collected Hadith of Imam Bukhari will be mocked, there is a Kilimanjaro task. This is because, the ideal would have been that the ruler checks this. But he is consumed by the attire for festival ceremonies and his outing, like a prostitute, rather than knowledge.

This is why the conscious efforts made in this direction is very scaring. Each of these ummahs has not only Mosques and members and leadership structure, but **SCHOLARS, SCHOOLS AND LITERATURE** to support, promote and sustain the deliberate efforts. The individuals or parents and families, dangerously or risk fully connect to these. So, it is not like no one is conscious of the problem or problems or that no conscious effort is being made, to deal with it.

Indeed, there is an aught spectacular attempt that is on the platform of neutrality. And it relates to Du'a. This beautiful idea and practice has unfortunately fallen into the kind of mining pit the Izala movement is struggling in. The challenge of formalization and institutionalization. The **NASFAT** has experienced leadership crisis and genuinely too. The spiritual leader expected to be the final authority over material leaders. Only the non-regular Office leaders have remained above board. The development of structures, Management and resources or businesses to support it look fine, but Allah is not in desperate need. The windows for leadership and activities have inevitably opened windows for socializing. The prayer forum is a new evolvement. So, if you are to manage NASFAT, IZALA and TARIQA, you have more than enough.

Therefore, the market or targets or victims are the common believers, including the rulers and political leaders who are either ignorant, carefree or gaming by admitting everything that sounds or appears pleasant – along with their families. But this is more applicable to the children. The grown up members can differ openly or secretly. This is how a family head suddenly finds his member becoming or joining another ummah. And rather than knowledge, to resolve it, it may hit cursing. Where the leader is hopeless, he either follows the member or encourages him to what he does not know.

To be sure, knowledge of what is right in Islam is not scholasticism. And it is not for institutionalization. For example, you do not require to be Arabist in knowing and understanding what is right for practice. You are not required to have memorized the Qur'an and some thousands of authentic Hadith, to be a Muslim of the discipline to attain Jannah or to guide your family aright. In practice, you do not have to be extreme. The rule is constancy.

The most critical foundation is, keeping away from whatever is prohibited or doubtful. The next layer is optimal commitment to what is commanded or enjoined. The first level certifies proper engagement with Satan and the second is submission to Allah. And Allah rewards both. With these and Istikhara along with association with sincere believers, any believer can become a friend of Allah. To be a Qadi or a Mu'alim are serious different things with their burden or risks. It is like, not everyone needs to know how to pray for the dead. Even a reserved and miser neighbour knows this. The story of such a believer was reported in Kaduna. The man never cared about others. He was not even seen in the Mosque. Then he lost his wife. He parked her and took the corpse to the Imam in the Mosque. They hesitated to pray for her. He had to plead and plead. But they were both wrong. It is the late woman's right to be prayed over. The attitude of the husband should not be applied to her. And that alone may have made a

positive impact on the husband. Two wrongs do not make a right. But this is our orientation as believers.

The family is for that reason truly the first, right and best foundation for producing and making good citizens. But how goodly are believers fairing in the knowledge and discipline of what is right and true for Marriage and the Family in Islam? The rulers and political leaders are commonly known to even trade their daughters for beneficial fixes. The commoners popularly insist on who will pay more. Money has become such a critical yardstick that, the attention for a religious woman as the best, is mentioned only in lectures. The shame of fornication is being wiped out by the factors of animalistic orientation for reproduction, the clinging to the world by preferring one gender over the other and putting aside the guidance of Allah. If sexual activity and pregnancy preceding marriage is stabilizing, abuse of the rule of divorce after the third by returning to live in Zina is growing. And it is this calibre of believers that are to bear the responsibility of first education of the young ones. Over and above this, most of the best among these believers, spend most of their time and life, struggling to make money and contract the children to schools. In the end, the young ones grow up more like puppies. They can be brilliant but empty in manners. It is very disheartening because I have seen a cat trained to share toilet use by humans and shaking hands and playing a game.

Muhammad Sulayman

It is like we are already approaching the end of the road of sanity and morality or decency. Money and Power are the things that matter.

Muhammad Mansur

This is for those that venture into marriage, before acculturation into adultery and fornication.

Muhammad Abubakar

Poverty and the greed for worldly goodies go to sharpen and expand the practices.

CONCERN FOUR

Muhammad Naibi Bokun sighted an additional brother coming along with them. But it is not any problem. He soliloquized: “I pray that that I will not end up with a class. Anyway, if youths can begin to genuinely worry about our history and how they can connect with it positively, there is hope for the future.” They arrived at the living room of Muhammad Naibi Bokun. As usual, they greeted him in turns and he responded accordingly. He went inside and returned with tangerine oranges for each of them. He then asked after the name of the new brother. He is Muhammad Tijjani.

Muhammad Aminu

This is a country of different faithfuls. And we have an overriding constitution that guides our nationhood. Whether one believes or not, in addition to the failure of the believers in connecting with Allah, we are all in a state of avoidable poverty, which is in regression to wretchedness. If Muslims have failed to help out, what of the non-Muslims and non-believers? The failure of the public sector was considered as escapable by tilting to the private sector. Unfortunately, it is not a real solution.

The experience of electricity supply is an embarrassing example. Citizens continue to pay, profits are regularly recorded and there is no refusal in the payment of public taxes. But we have not been able to provide regular power for home use, less to enable development of industries. And fools think that the exploitation and use of gas will be better and cheaper. The provision of clean water is not different. No state can boast of regular service. And private efforts like bottled water have severally been exposed to the risk of fake competitors and short supplies or unbearable costs. The option of sachets called pure water has not safely helped out.

But in other countries where the same secular binds hold different faithfuls together, these services are approaching perfection, with tolerable challenges. The Compassion and Mercy of Allah that is free for all, is eluding us. So, even where sins do not matter, we are not making a headway. What is the problem with all of us?

Muhammad Tijjani

Lack of patriotism. Shortage of sacrifice. Overriding selfishness.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

Yes. Truly. Indeed.

In the Qur'an, believers are taught that Allah is All-Surrounding. Wheresoever one turns, the Face of Allah is present. And all creations submit to Allah willingly (consciously) or otherwise. From the definition above, I will comment on the two sides of focus and orientation.

The element that is required in both or either the public arrangement or the private sector to perform, that cannot be disputed in both experiences is competence or expertise. This was what enabled National Electric Power Authority to give all the service that will be admitted as good, when it lasted. This is the same factor that is enabling the present private companies to give the same service. There is no difference with the former Nigeria Telecommunications against the Network service companies now in operation. The same will be found to apply between General Hospitals and private hospitals. There is no difference with air transport service. The capacities, abilities, intelligence, operational and management skills etc. that enable any of these, is a gift by permission of Allah to all men, irrespective of faith. And the records cover, Muslims, non-Muslims and unbelievers. It will therefore appear right to posit that there is nothing religious, Christian or Islamic about qualifying as a certified engineer, chatter accountant,

licensed medical practitioner or administrator. In other words, those who believe, in which there is no compulsion, will recognize Allah in their capabilities. This is because the person was non-existent and was made to become from a liquid, from water, from a drop of sperm. And the best of efforts have been seen and recorded to fail, in conception. Indeed conceptions have taken place, when all explanations will not suggest it. Hence, it does not matter, the amount of times or how, this is denied. One does not have to accept, appreciate and submit that, not having a choice in eating, drinking, enjoying love, feeling pained by an insult or defecating are indications of what his maker has pre decided. This is because one can be reasonable or otherwise. One can be intelligent or a fool. Do we not sit as a class or group for the same examination, even after being taught by the same teacher, the same curriculum content, the same time, but some will excel, some will pass and some will fail abysmally? But we will stop at the explanation that those who failed did not make effort. Fine. But a believer does not lose his mind since Allah has revealed that, He apportions His favours as He pleases.

This is clearly not the problem. Believers, non-Muslims and unbelievers are gifted, can be successful in competencies, expertises and skills. And they have displayed it. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

With focus and orientation which have dynamic relationship, this is where both believers, non-Muslims and unbelievers in our country are ingrates, unappreciative, non-recognizing and are consequently self-destructive. The extreme opposite of non-belief in Allah is submission to Satan in the form of idol worship. Brilliant people can be found in both classes. However, there is a pretentious status. It is also claimed to be neutral. This is encapsulated as love for the company, for the nation for all men and women **in serving**. This is often strengthened by the word **non-discrimination**. In effect, what is expected is that, no fellow human being is expected or required to be at risk, in the hands of the people to be served. The government will call them citizens. The private sector

will call them customers. In return for right service, right commitment, the **worker** is rewarded and appreciated. This can take the forms of salaries, promotions, awards etc. And there is the contrary, where abuses attract demotion, suspension or lay off. The focus and orientation is meant to make the workers give optimal service to the clients, to enable payments that will be classified as income or revenue and profits. This is where the problem arises. In our case or history, the services are given, but far far below the input of resources. In other countries the experience is different. The question is **WHY?**

We are all inclined to agree that corruptive practices are responsible. But fair minded observers never fail to point out that other countries are not completely free from corruption. However, after instituting everything that obtains in other countries, we still fall down behind. Our books, oaths and expertises are the same.

The secret is that, love or commitment to the company or parastatal needs to be connected to the nation in the form of all citizens, in the services and dividends. And most importantly, it's not the workers alone that must display or act out this focus and orientation. The Management and the Board in the case of private sector and the government in the case of the public sector are required to do the same. And in the end, all parties must be fair beneficiaries. If we take the provision of electricity, it will be a good example. The customers must pay their bills regularly. If anyone tampers with the company facilities, he is liable to sanctions. This can take the form of fines or even prosecution. But the customers will require regular supply and quality facilities. Poles, Cables, Meters, Transformers etc. all need to be sufficient and in perfect state. If the Boards will not gradually provide for this, light will continue to be provided but with no respect or appreciation for protecting the facilities. Indeed, it will be difficult to take sanctions seriously or apply them, if personnel of the company help customers to oblige less or avoid their obligations. If the customers are not fully and continuously served and catered for, their loyalty or commitment will be less. And the commitment to this

is for the Board that makes provisions for its operational, services and management needs. The government that regulates it has the responsibility of not just taxing the profits for commitment to projects that will benefit all citizens but of making sure that the facilities and services are developed. The Management is to ensure that the technical personnel have comfortable and quality tools and welfare provisions, to inspire and boost optimal commitment. It is illogical to expect the best results, where there is a disconnect between these parties – the government, the board, the management, the staff and customers. It is consequently not enough to just give light, employ and pay staff, pay tax, generate revenue. But this is what we are getting against what we should. The gap between is differently filled up with corruption. The staff collaborate with customers to abuse the love. The Board and Management collaborate with government to abuse the love. The Board collaborates with the Management to abuse the love. Every party is really a shameless beneficiary in this process. And because we are untruthful, we cry and complain over what is actually self-imposed or self-created. But this is not explanatory enough.

The love really has two faces. One is of all citizens. And this is the bus stop for determining the other face. The second face, is the trustee in both the private and public sectors. The workers, Management, the Board, the taxation operatives and the ministry of power. There are invisible ones like the legislative committees for power. The final definition of the first face closes with installing, maintaining and upgrading of quality facilities or equipment and giving regular service. But it is the second face that is required to do this, including serving and catering for itself. This is where the problem lies. The history of the National Assembly in determining for itself, appropriate benefits is a good pointer. The summary of it is that, it has been excessive, senseless and irresponsible. Some have compared the details to what applies to legislatures in model democracies. But this **EXACTLY** what the government and Boards of the electricity companies

have failed and continued to fail or refuse in doing **fairly, sensibly and responsibly**. Why are the leaders, the Management to the workers, the workers to the customers, the board to the Management and Government to the citizens failed to serve and cater for the customers or citizens? Why have they served themselves more and more declared profits, impressive conditions for the management staff and regular impressive gestures to government officials?

The trustees have common needs to survive and prosper. The workers are the only category that suffers most as against the Board that benefits most. The Management and Government officials are in the middle because the government officials get gestures for which they will never account for whereas the management applies skills and relationships to get and maintain its cut. All of them are over rewarded. But they are the ones that have to determine the levels of their rewards.

What do they need these differential abuses for? Food, drink, clothing, transport, housing, health, education etc. **and the continuation of these**. The difference of the workers is that they are subject to whatever is decided for them. But they know for sure that after discharge from work, they will be faced with living with the miserable package given to them. This in real value may be regardless of the size. The reason is that they at best become useless to society because of frustration. This arises out of the disconnection from institutionalized comforts. The top management of a fine company like Shell Petroleum often experience this. In fact they could just collapse and die, in spite of the more than life provisions while in service. The difference with the top management of what in Nigeria will be classified as ‘A’ organizations is not different. This is even after they may have ‘helped’ themselves. The related reason is that they make like **.0000000001%** impact on the society. They get easily ‘consumed’ by the larger society. It is a price for being too different. The bosses either lose their companies, the companies collapse or they breathe out their last. On the part of

the workers, they divide their time and loyalty with another business. This is the standard for both public and private sector employees. The inevitable response of the general society is with whatever poverty and crime will offer. It is the bedrock of insecurity. It is difficult and growingly impossible to survive denial and non-commitment to Allah, to Satan, to the collective Self (the nation or society) and enjoy peace and prosperity. You cannot be false to Allah, to Satan and to Self and expect to thrive. It is irrational, senseless, destructive and evil. This is not a standard upon which normal history can be built. An abnormal history will inevitably be generated.

Such situation is akin to apostasy. This is worse than oppression. The other countries often brought in reference, ensure that the cots, the parasites of the society do not suck away more blood than health will withstand or more violence is put in place to check the evolvement of the course of abnormal history. There is no middle position between these. This Compassion and Mercy of Allah cannot be effectively, continuously and safely blocked by no matter the will and power of men. But, here we are, with believers being part of this unholy making of abnormal history. The necessary knowledge and discipline required must be consistent in serving all, to survival level and with commitment across the board. This is the definition of the history where men are left to their wits. The composition of what makes man is not physique or physical in exclusion of psych or emotions and spirit or metaphysical. Although imbalance is possible by the spirit not ruling, an upside down situation is not sustainable. The summary of it is that justice or fairness is in the long run as inalienable as the right to life. While the taking of life makes immediate impact, injustice builds up to explosion.

In our case, the by products of poverty and insecurity have assumed the front bench position for attention and we are so senseless and daft to attend to education and Reorientation. The Muslims are not doing it. The Christians are not doing it.

In fact they are fighting each other. And the unbelievers have nothing to offer. Why will we not be in crisis? Why will achievements not be a matter of chance?

As far the attributes of leadership required for dealing with this situation is concerned, not even genuine asceticism is of any value, not to talk of a false one, where against commitment to the society at large, commitment to self is really equally principal. The required arrangement is the direction to what is commonly right by **knowledge and transparent commitment to it across the society**. The inside and outside have to be consistently, goodly, rightly and transparently committed. Leadership is not magic and secrecy cannot add value to it.

Muhammad Abubakar

Enlightenment is sweet to taste.

Muhammad Sulayman

Power and wealth without knowledge is self-destructive.

CONCERN FIVE

Muhammad Naibi Bokun exclaimed: I have no plan of opening a school. With this growth, I can no more predict the number. He actually sighted GogoFati, NnaRabi and Hadiza behind the brothers. They were patient to see and hear how things will commence. Muhammad Mansur introduced them after greeting Muhammad Naibi Bokun. They are their sisters. He added that, they always shared what they learned with them, on getting back home. Yesterday, they indicated the need to join us. Others followed in the greeting and the sisters closed the process. Muhammad Naibi Bokun went in and returned with two trays. One contained five small cups of honey for the brothers and the other contained three cups for the sisters.

Muhammad Tijjani

I now understand why and how our crisis-ridden history is self-inflicted. And well-intended policies either get rubbished or is not given the chance to grow and develop. I have given some thoughts to the federal character principle and practices since the Nigerian nation came into being. The position today is both embarrassing and not excusable. We are still fighting for ‘representation’ even though we all have representatives in the legislature. Indeed some fellow citizens consider it intelligent to either return to the pre independence arrangement, start a new discussion on our arrangement for unity or break up. And in the forefront are highly schooled persons or seniors with background in regimental discipline. In their claims, there are Muslims, non-Muslims and unbelievers.

Muhammad Aminu

It grips people with fear, the threat of the unknown.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

The answer is the same. Ignorance is the foundation. Insincerity is the impetus. Distrust is the display.

The objective of the principle and practice is to belong and to be attended to. The proponents call it unity in diversity.

But why have we failed so much that, secession is even contemplated? We call for representation as if there are no representatives. And we may even suggest that, it is the only way to have stability, to build confidence. All the evidences of the price we have paid in the form of rogues from across the board has not been educative. The annoying thing is that we crave for productivity, for prosperity, for peace etc.

But, how can we attain unity without a common commitment to the welfare of all and our leaders and operators catered for? I have even heard some block heads positing that our obstacle is religion or the people of a region. This is far from the truth.

If you take appointments into the services, merit is rarely compromised. In more than seventy percent of cases, merit ruled in the past two decades. Then it changed. The Commission that was provided for in the constitution was more committed to the colour of differences and evolving servants of national orientation. It degenerated so much that, the growing idea became that, every state has competent people to fill all positions. The service is not the focus. In the end, at the federal level, each state strives to corner the federal organizations in its jurisdiction for its people. Indeed persons from other states can be under threats and petitions or mischievous competition. Unfortunately, even when parochialism succeeds it rarely fares better than the damages incurred by the non-

state persons. Either way it is rottenness. Indeed either section fails in the continuity of institutional building. But why?

The security, peace and prosperity of Nigeria that rests with unified focus and actions is not achievable by the colour of differences. It is the spirit and orientation of the people that can make it. The services and duties are all well-defined. But the operation or management goes through abuses. When the coloration was introduced as the take-off point, the realization of the spirit and orientation of unity would have been pursued by giving a target period for compliance, after which the commission will withdraw from coloration insurance to unity certification. Then, it would not matter, the origin of the Chief Executive and the Management. They may be coloured by persons originating from different geographical areas but every Nigerian will be safe. And a government can reasonably achieve this in a two terms tenure, if it has the will. All that is required is external evaluation in addition to free movement in the form of transfers. Unfortunately, these methods or practices are in our system but have failed to help. With all the consumption of the Federal Character Commission in the mess of covering abuses, it does show interest by evaluation reports of degree of non-compliance, to guide future actions. If the employers commit the right thing, the commission will have less headaches. But not even evaluation and transfers in the mainstream civil service is driven by patriotism, unity etc. This is because the workers are humans, with needs to require to be secured, while in service and after retirement. The same culture of corruption that evolves in the private sector is applicable to the public sector. It is worse in the public sector because the owner of the resources, the collectivity of Nigerians, is faceless. If a worker of Kaduna Electric is reported to have connived with cable thieves or customers to adjust meters, it takes shorter time to lay him off because the face of the owners of the company is real and close. The same does not apply to the extraction of crude oil. The trustees can connive to be extracting barrels of crude

and report three hundred for every thousand. The unity, spirit and orientation required is of one rascal outside Government who influenced the appointment of the expert trustee and his supervisor. For decades, the unity and prosperity of Nigeria will be raped, until Allah exposes them. But after the exposure, it is not impossible to now report seven hundred for every thousand. This can effectively be done by replacing the team and logistics with another one.

This cyclical trap is best appreciated when connected with the ultimate use of the resources stolen. Take housing or accommodation. A government employee corners extra resources to build a house. His first challenge is where to build the house. And it will be his rack. If he is not from the area of employment, he has two ordinary choices. To build it in his location of work or back home. He may never realize the cost of this, until he discovers that he may stop developing if he is to return home to stay till he dies. If he chooses the town of his employment, he may experience discrimination and difficulty over where he wants to build. In the end, in reality, either way, he has to start living anew. If he returns home, he will really need reabsorption. If in his town of work he will need admission in the area. Either of these can rarely start before he disengages. And it is understandable because the money is stolen or needs to be stolen. The real meaning of this trap is the price of abusing the unity of Nigeria. If every Nigerian will have his housing catered for, there should be less imprisonments for the sake of housing. Is it not known that employees will steal to have a house in Abuja, in the town of employment and in their birth place? Is it not part of our notorious housing culture that many houses remain vacant for transitory use only during visits? How many lives has any of these Nigerians? Is this the definition of prosperity? Is our unity to be unable to live in any place? What is the meaning of retirement to the roots? Is it a standard or necessary for every worker? But this is the price. If this is to be checked, the amount of accommodations that other Nigerians should benefit from will be more than the budgets and loans for housing

in the tenure of a government. Consider a single residential property costing two billion Naira for one man, one wife, one dog in Abuja by an owner that has a duplex in his hometown. Some even have Estate. Certainly not from their emoluments and gratuity. And everyone who cares can operate a side business. Where or what then will be the position of the service?

In the end, the top cream of Management in work places that should be the most innovative or creative for the development of Nigeria are really always least productive. They go to work only to harvest. They are excellent at budgeting and expenditure with nothing to show for it. In the most patriotic circumstances, white elephant projects will be littered around.

The auditors or inspectors, the legislators and the boards do not help out because the members are also suffering from the abuse of the unity. A society and culture of co-operators therefore evolves. This is why all the cases that burst and receive legal correction are not close to giving real relief to the corruption menace. It is like applying blue seal petroleum jelly for treating psoriasis. No medical personnel or alternative medicine will understand how the inflammation will disappear with this. It will be a useless and hopeless effort.

This is the constant resort by different means, that initially appear to be useful and valuable but easily gets eaten up and the situation returns to square one. The culture of unionism is more characterized by agitation for wage increases, because they have failed or refuse to understand and deal with the real problem. This is why pipeline vandalism, militancy and secession are inferior strategies to enforcing peace, security and plugging prosperity. This is why restructuring is poor thinking. This is why agitations for more regional members in political offices has never helped and will not solve the problem. This is why the painful removal of petroleum subsidy gave an initial false feeling of relief. And people are taken aback with the suggestion to remove more or all of the subsidy

remaining. A more horrifying truth is that the restraints that generated the Treasury Single Account will have to ‘disappear’ only less, into serving the real needs of the managers that are not being catered for, **IF THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY COMMITTED TO BIG PROJECTS.** If it goes into the general pool of federal ministries, departments, agencies or state governments, the value will drop to a lowly appearance. And a historical pointer is the amount of resources committed by law to oil producing states against what are available to serve the people. The poor states that depend largely on oil revenue shares have produced clear thieves in most cases. Indeed whoever will suggest that asceticism is the culture of the presidency will need help. The first reason is that asceticism is not the constitutional requirement of its workers or services. The second is that they are as human as the other workers in terms of needs, wants and fancies; while in employment and especially after discharge. And thirdly, which is the real loss by such observer, they are entrusted with a lot of power or authority of **final enabling of the biggest projects or expenditure.** This connecting cable can be as valuable as barrels of crude oil for those who care. And because it is known, smelt and not often or reasonably felt, the teaming staff of the state house either protest subtly or indirectly, like in the voting patterns in 2015 and 2019. No sitting or ruling government got a pass. The marginal difference in 2019 is still shameful.

The status is therefore not different. If as a believer, you do not know and submit all affairs to Allah, you will not make a decent and effective worker, manager or political leader. Of course, it logically implies that if you have such orientation that will necessarily benefit the employer and the nation while most of the others are of the contrary, you will bear scars. This is because one sincere believer cannot produce security and prosperity for the company or organization, less the nation. In the case of a Christian, he has not different terms of God, to guide him. And for the non-believers the nation or collective will be his focus, spirit and orientation. Thus, it is in this course that both workers and the generality of

citizens will be catered for. Accordingly, if the traditional rulers, the political leaders, the chief executives, the workers, Christians, Muslims or unbelievers will have the orientation of serving all, without wicked discrimination, Nigerians will be served. Security, Peace and Prosperity will be available. The believers will be happy. The non-Muslims will be happy. The unbelievers will be happy. But it is stupid to consider being out of Christianity to become a Muslim before it works. It will be wrong to suspend Islam and become a Christian before it works. It will be irresponsible of these believers to abandon God for replacement with only the National Anthem. But instead of the believers leading the course in the making of policies, operations, management and leadership that build peace, security and prosperity, we are part or even leading in the destruction. The believers have all that is required in respect of knowledge and discipline for national peace, security and prosperity, but we have submitted to worse than Satan to assume the referee of our destruction.

CONCERN SIX

Muhammad Naibi Bokun is no more to be surprised. He did not even bother to check when he heard footsteps and low voices approaching. But he thought that, there is usually a day gap between the stability of the number and any increase. If there will be change, it will be when they meet again. He appeared to be right. The full house turned up. And they exchanged greetings. As expected, he served them with something different. This time it is a take-away because it will not be convenient to consume. It is contained in small cups. It is black seed oil. In fact the youths did not envisage that anyone will be raising any concern or asking a question. But the brothers were the ones who were wrong.

GogoFati Muhammad

I do not want to draw us back. I also do not want to be gender bias even though it will not be out of place. I wonder if Time can be addressed for understanding this marrow challenge of saving man and mankind from self-destruction. The fact is clear that knowledge, recognition and submission to Allah is voluntary, but we have to live with non-Muslims and unbelievers. And we can be of much benefits to one another, even though believers get on each other's throats.

Muhammad Aminu

This is inviting. Everybody talks about time management. But hastiness is the nature of man and can be a handiwork of Satan.

Hadiza Saidu Muhammad

Everywhere there is the believer, there will be Satan.

Yes, I am part of Muhammad too. I noticed the surprise of giving three names.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

Not to bother, my sister in Islam. I expect that if others are to give three names like me and you, Muhammad may not double or triple.

It is often referred to as Time Management. Believers have or are abandoning the Islamic provisions that will instil the right orientation. There is a Hadith Qudsi in which Abu Huraira reported the Prophet (SAW) to have said: Allah said, “Sons of Adam inveigh Time, and He is Time because whatever is contained in the Day and Night is by His permit.”

What this means in the life of a believer is to act rightly at due times, in order to be with Allah. For instance, it is totally against submission to Allah to be filthy, just as it is not godly to move from an area of epidemic or to move into it from a free or safe area. In the first case, if a believer gets infected, he is clearly careless. It is rule in Islam to be clean always. In addition a believer should assume a state of purity in communicating with Allah. In the second case, it is prohibited to possibly spread evil. If you are caught up, you are rightly with Allah. It is a war to make mankind safe by submitting to rule. In consequence, all affairs are of Allah, whether pleasant or otherwise, as for believers, their portion is to comply.

This requires knowledge and discipline or guidance. The deduction from this is that non-compliance and the consequences are the making and full responsibility of man. This is why the Qur’an warns that Allah does not do evil. It is man that invites or imposes it upon himself. For example, an innocent patient wrongly infected with HIV is not the same with one who acquired it from extra marital relationship. Allah is good. Believers are accordingly granted. The best are those who perform the prescribed prayers in their earliest times. The responsibility of paying a labourer who completes his assignment should be before his sweat dries up. A woman must perform the purification bath immediately her monthly flow ceases. The dead must be prepared and buried early to meet his welfare or relieve

the world of his evil. Contracts or covenants are to be strictly kept. A woman becomes one upon experience of flow. Where a flow exceeds fifteen days, prayer must be resumed. Timeliness is therefore part of the orientation of a believer.

At the family level for example, if the wife prepares meals late, it is not for believers. If the children help the parents they save rewards with Allah and the pleasure of the parents. It is value investment whether it is money the child gives to the parents or materials or employment of a house help. The factor of time must be alive, by being timely. As a result, if the child of a materially poor parents gathers loads of parental pleasure and rewards with Allah, that qualitative connection **through timeliness** attracts the blessings of Allah in many forms and circumstances for the child and parents. Imam Ghazzali was taught honesty by his mother. He was traveling for studies and encountered robbers. They did not detect the money hidden on him by his mother. He confessed it to the head and it was discovered. That was why the head of the robbers converted to good deeds and Ghazzali opted for memorizing whatever he learned. But today, the time for dressing is so critical and attendance of occasions preferred to be late. A child may not stay away studying. A parent may rarely be at home throughout the week continuously. What kind of arrangement is this that will not allow connection with the development of the younger ones? And the leaders and parents are believers. What a shame. This is service to money instituted by Satan. Is it not evident that disconnection from the family produces puppies? Is it not evident that disconnection from Allah opens up windows for Zina and games? Are war games and violent films not popular? What amount of laws can check these? The authorities are shouting moral controls. The producers are asking for stringent sanctions for copyright abuses and are giving awards to themselves. How can the next generation be safe?

So, in governance, unfortunately, it has been experienced under governors that are believers, to have salaries of workers unpaid for more than a month. It is not

uncommon to have a believer as Chief Executive of an organization where a contract for works or services is given, when no funds are available for payment. Experts of procurement will say it is unwarranted. It will be irresponsible of a believer.

Time is the factor that we relate within, to establish efficiency, which means making the right effect at the right time. This is why refusal or failure to pay pensions as it falls due is most irrelevant and inhuman. Payment as it falls due is not praise worthy because it is just right. The same applies more to public budgets. No believer is expected to have a hand either in late budget preparation or submission, budget padding, non-funding or poor performance. But all the culprits are believers, either Muslims or Christians. It is a shame.

It is therefore not funny to have a legislature, executive or contractor, taking 'his' time to serve. It is a misfortune that would have befallen a society. And if the leaders are the creators of misfortune, it is worse than bad. This is why all rational actions are evaluated in time context. When auditors check records, it is within a given time. When students are examined it is within a given time. When workers are paid or promoted, it is in relation to a given time. No believer knows or has the time of his death. Thus, he cannot intelligently afford to take time for anything before his death. He is to continue doing his best to his last time.

While this consciously must not be lost sight of by all believers, it is more so for the leaders. A leader has the very same twenty four hours for night and day or a calendar day like every other citizen. However, he has no excuse whatsoever to claim to be too busy. This is why he has the liberty of building up the quality of his own time for the benefit of the general society. For example, if a Governor has a speech to deliver at a university graduation ceremony, he will have at least a month notice. During this month he may pencil down two or three subjects and how he will present them. But he may get a draft from the university. His aides

will prepare one by evaluating the draft. For him, he has the benefit of asking for a brief and making remarks to guide the final material. Indeed if he feels strongly about it, he will write it himself. The society then stands the chance of a quality leadership speech, policy or whatever. But in our case, the leader may not have even read it before the presentation. That is why in governance people talk of handlers today. The leader can be aloof of the reality of his pronouncements.

The relationship with hastiness is the challenge or responsibility of deliberate orderliness or organization by every believer or human being. If at family level the head must be concerned about hunger, it is more so for the leader, for all the members of the society. For that reason, it is not logical, sensible or normal for a leader to show his face in the public if a member of the society dies. Therefore, with the structure of the applicability of the President, a Governor, a Chairman, Senator, a Representative, a House Member, a Traditional ruler to **every citizen**, it is a shame to have these people happy across a calendar year or two, with a single citizen in avoidable difficulty.

It may be argued that, but these leaders cannot be everywhere. That is absolutely for Allah. But that is the trust they are bearing, and in our case, they have worn a war of choice to bear the mandate. In a worse self-imposed state are the traditional rulers who inherited it. There will be understanding only if the dying visibly sees that survival is in sight and has failed by arm's length. For example, in Niger State there was a personally good governor who was afraid of lieutenants stealing the funds and kept pulling them. He is honest but leadership required using the funds **rightly at the right time**. He failed. He did not last. His supervisor entrusted the governance to another one who was a squanderer of values, money, integrity of men and ladies. And both were Muslims. So, where relief is only heard of and not seen to be confronting the dying, feeling it will be hopeless. But this is the trademark of leadership today.

NnaRabi Muhammad

This challenge is a matter of orientation. It will appear to be approachable or subject to overcoming, but certainly not without Allah. Every party has fallen and needs to rise up or be aided, in addition to some miracle.

CONCERN SEVEN

The youths walked in to the now homely presence of Muhammad Naibi Bokun. The routine of Salam between them and him followed cheerfully. He had not bothered to check their number before reaching him but there was no surprise. This time around, similar trays servings were already there. He just signalled that the brothers take theirs and the sisters take the one with three cups. The turn oil oils is not over. This time it is olive.

Hadiza Saidu Muhammad

I do not know how to put the subject or aspect of the problem I will like to be addressed. The issue of inter relationships between Muslims. It appears to be very weak. In consequence, we are worse off.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

Fine. We are together. We are the only two with three names. For example, brothers who claim or appear to be believers may be betrayers. He promises to marry a sister and switches to another without notice. The same can apply to a sister in relation to a brother. It is not uncommon or impossible. But it is not for believers. What makes it possible is ignorance and the indiscipline that it generates. In such relationships, the parents of both parties are required to be in commitment. And it can be decided in two weeks. Anything more is unnecessary and can be unserious. This is why another party interested in the same marriage with one of the parties does not need to wait forever. Because, with a commitment by both parties, it is wrong of another believer to make similar proposals, either from the parties in commitment or outside. But this is only possible if the parties are knowledgeable in what is right and true and live by it. If they are ignorant or careless or carefree, anything can happen. The sister can be put in a family way, another brother can equally be welcomed or even introduced. This can be with

the cooperation of the sister or not. But even if the parents are not very knowledgeable, are there no knowledgeable believers around them? What of the Imam? What of the ruler?

Seeking for knowledge and guidance is supposed to be easier now, regardless of the probable risks. A book is not only an embodiment of knowledge but what has been acquired over a time. For example, if you take an approved dissertation for a degree of doctor of philosophy, it may have taken an author, the supervisors and institution three years to conclude. But a reader will attain the same qualitative level of knowledge in say, a week of reading the material. This is a wonderful openly available line of relationship with records. The history of Imam Bukhari for instance and the production of his Hadith collection is an excellent example. Those of us who read it today for guidance are adding all the qualitative build-up to our time. And what can we add to our value more or better than the Qur'an? But this relationship for knowledge and guidance is very poor with believers. Neither the leaders, the parents nor the children bother to read **for learning**. Indeed when we make efforts, we 'corrupt' relationship. We read books without teachers. We may even relate with teachers but not with personal humility. This may be on the Internet or in formal settings for examination and certification. Today, when believers meet and discuss, it not in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. But when they watch or play or discuss football, **it will not make sense, devoid of the rules**.

Between believers who are not of the same family, clan, locality, mother tongue etc. the requirement of being blocks of a wall strengthening one another is extremely weak, where it exists. For instance if an Ibo Muslim approaches an emir who is claiming to be a Muslim ruler, for support with Islamic books, he is most likely going to be asked to turn to book stores or a rich Muslim who is similarly empty. It will be more dramatic if he is to ask for the hand of his daughter in marriage. It may not be different with a Senator or Governor who is

a believer. Indeed, he may even promise to support but will betray. The real explanation is that, they do not know, believe less have committed to raising the name of Allah. Those who decide to do so, will be if their children, clan members, locality members are the ones. But the Allah that all of them prostrate to is One. Allah has not asked to be worshipped by families or locality or mother tongue or race. When the Prophet (SAW) heard footsteps of Bilal during his visit to paradise, he is a believer, though black and a freed slave. The Prophet said a learned Ethiopian who is a slave is more appropriate to lead in Salat if and where Arabs are less. The situation is therefore truly bad and worrisome.

Neither is family relationships safe nor our learning reassuring nor the relationship of leaders to fellow believers ruled by the love of Allah. This is why Hypocrisy is the order of the day. The parents do not or cannot care to protect the rights of Allah and the children. The children grow to be free from their duties to the parents. The youths have no guidance over the learnings and teachings that are right. They grow like wild plants and weed on the surface of the earth. The leaders and rulers have neither respect nor love for the society. Indeed, the respect and love for their families can drop, for only themselves.

In consequence, we are always in foolish waste of our times, for investment with Allah and achieving any reasonable and useful things in this world for ourselves. We are characterized by all kinds of secret investigations, to ensure having the truth in hand, when our children, relatives or tribesmen are not involved. The distrust and self-deceit or hypocrisy can get as thick as clotted blood and bitter like bile. The youths are engaged in this and are in courtship for years. They want to be sure that they know the partner. Where is Allah? The blessing of His Guidance is thrown away and lost. The parents are in this and lose wonderful opportunities for their children. The leaders are in this and spend forever in admitting the good people they meet. In the end we are all losers. Indeed, the application of the same backward principle to remain 'within' by the royals, the

rich and powerful or between themselves have not helped the Ummah or the society better. This is because the foolishness and blindness they ride on is that, their preferred children, relatives, tribesmen are safer. Their checks with private detectives, Mu'alims, Reverends and Sorcerers will neither satisfy nor serve them. Only believers who adopt the ways of the **IGNORANT** in pre-Islamic traditions are into such. The standard of Allah is right knowledge and discipline of what is right, by **whoever**. In such cases, success does not last, the marriage is not happy, the children don't achieve close to what the protective parents have attained and the leaders become a laughing stock because they get betrayed and the society suffers, even where good intentions exist. The serpent of hypocrisy cannot help itself. This is why Allah has appropriately assigned the bottom of Hell Fire for such believers.

Relationships are therefore truly critical for the sustenance and building of the Ummah. But ignorant, arrogant, hypocritical believers cannot serve this objective. They will also either have substitute principles of Satan or self-serving ones or they will be failures even with secular arrangements. This is exactly our unfortunate experience in Nigeria. In consequence, non-Muslims will say Islam cannot provide a solution. Non-believers will say the same of Muslims and Christians. Indeed some believers will share the same stand.

GogoFati Muhammad

The situation appears impossible or too problematic for attraction to deal with. No wonder many citizens either leave Nigeria not to return or decide to stay back after living outside. This is even on religious grounds because the air in other secular societies is cleaner to breath. Religious practices appear safer than here.

Muhammad Sulayman

Certainly. Even in phone text interaction, people rarely respond to texts, whereas with Salam, a response is required. It is almost certainly the case, when there is a favour by one person to another. The giver will rarely respond more than once with twenty texts. This enables pride to sneak in, between the parties because the needy turns into a beggar.

CONCERN EIGHT

The same number and mixture of youths arrived to find out about their concerns with Muhammad Naibi Bokun. But there is a difference in the turn up. Each person was holding something. Only the youths know, until they make it known. The host responded to the greetings as usual and left. He returned with jugs. And they smelled the mixture of milk and honey. But they will resist even a sip before the end of their meeting. Muhammad Naibi Bokun kept his cool. He knew that something was in the offing to be revealed soon. His offer was inviting, unlike the oils one will rather take home before use.

NnaRabi Muhammad

Mine is really very simple and straightforward. What is the position of Du'a in helping believers out of this quagmires?

Muhammad Tijjani

In addition, what possible specific Du'a will be appropriate?

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

I must admit that I have no technical or scientific response to this. As you know, Islam is a way of life. The question of a specific way or tablet that will definitely switch the light on, for anyone, is not applicable. Consequently getting the same results from the same Du'a is not applicable. The affair is much easier than available to only certified trainees or experts.

But even here, there can be or there are problems. What is clearly known is that the Qur'an guides that Allah, the Owner and Master of all heavens, earths, what contained in them and between them are liable to submit to Allah willingly or unwillingly. And because He does as He pleases, he has given a guide for meeting or getting His pleasure. Thus, His Messenger has taught the how. Ask the real

owner of you and all affairs of whatever and all your needs, without exception, even though He gives without your asking. The second is to persist in asking. And the justification for this is that you cannot force Him to oblige you. Indeed for believers, He may give, give more, give less, give another or not give immediately or at all.

In the Qur'an He has enjoined believers to praise Him, glorify Him, call upon Him and to ask from Him. And He gave examples with His names or attributes. Whichever a believer decides to use, is acceptable. In the Hadith it is recorded that Allah has ninety nine or one hundred less one names and attributes. Some of these can be gotten directly from the Qur'an. However, attributes or names of Allah are numberless because all beautiful names are His. And if the oceans and more were ink for writing; the trees and more were pens, the words of Allah will not be exhausted after all would have been used up. For example, many Prophets among the children of Israel of the past called upon Him but we have no idea of what words or names they called. Muhammad (SAW) was reported to have answered an enemy that it is Allah that will save him. He pronounced it thrice.

What is indisputable is that Salat is a principal means for Du'a.

What is also deductible from the emphasis that Allah is pure and only clean things reach Him, living **clear of all that He has forbidden** is the foundation for Du'a. The required building on this foundation is commitment of good deeds. And the first layer is defined by all obligatory injunctions to be followed by voluntary or commendable goodly deeds. For example, Salat are defined to be five. There are non-obligatory relatives and there is night prayer.

The fact that a believer may not be ice-clear or clean of sins, regular asking for forgiveness is a commendable top up. Indeed, the Qur'an contains the direct connection between asking for forgiveness and bounties like goodly children, rains and wealth. What else does man crave for that is not connected to these?

It is then clear that every believer has a personal duty to make Du'a. One can request a fellow believer who submits to the same terms to support. It is not prohibitive for a family or group or nation to do it. However, the base is the individual. It will be strange to institutionalize it. Formalization of matters of orientation can water down the spirit of personal connection with Allah.

The problem however is that believers pray and ask constantly. So, why are the problems building up? And we cannot deny not regularly witnessing His acceptance of our prayers and obliging us. This may be why a tablet is tempting.

What is fairly known is that, we often and largely ask for evil instead of good. When Allah obliges us we go back to him. For example, a believer who gets his jewellery stolen will rarely ask that the thief returns it or keep it and never steals again. The common inclination is that **whoever stole it, keeps it, buys it, sells it, uses it etc., should die violently**. And if his house gets burnt with his family because the thief is a member of his family, he loses his mind. He screams that his enemies are after him.

Some other times believers just do not have a stable faith in Allah. A leader who is a believer can invest resources in or for Muslims, Christians and idol worshippers to pray for him. While it is not prohibited for another believer to pray for you, it must not be anyone who associates anyone or anything with Allah.

We have also evolved a notorious culture of trading with this critical tool of livelihood. It is not uncommon for commoner believers, leaders and rulers to engage the learned, teachers and scholars to pray for success in specific projects. On the face of it, it is most proper, because we can share from the closeness of one another to Allah. After the death of Rasul, the leader of the faithful asked the uncle to pray for rain. Allah obliged. The Prophet (SAW) personally prayed for the Ansar because of their collective vow to support him and as they did. The

prayer of a parent over a child is blessed. The same with that of a husband on a wife.

However in our case it is a trade. Payment is either made for it without bargain given the tacit understanding that it is the standard or, it is demanded for. This is why it is logical for non-Muslims to approach Muslims for such spiritual support. And it has evolved as a business of its own. But it is wrong, especially as it is almost always for worldly private interests. Even when a leader asked for his followers, there is underneath personal interest. While it may not be prohibitive he may deny it because of hypocrisy. And for the reason that they do not fail to achieve their aims, the prayer enterprise flourishes.

Nonetheless, the matter is not as plain and straight as it appears. The growing belief and under is that they or some of them have the appropriate tablets of invoking Allah for acceptance of prayer. This is leading to the evolvement of 'idols' among them and the relationship of belief in the person short of worship. This is a negative cultural development in the Ummah. And because the seekers or clients are desperate for whatever and whoever will enable them get results, they may colour it with entrepreneurs who engage in non-comments or evil practices. In the end what belongs to Allah is confused or mixed up with what is not His. This is the root of senior idol worshippers or priests sometimes honoured with being traditionalists, expressing their wonders. They are aware that some Christian and Muslim learned consult them to succeed, so, why will the followers look down upon them? The lifestyle is that they meet behind the sun, like robbers and adulterers. The hypocrites do not reveal or admit their having such associates. But for believers, you have no justification for doing whatever you are not shameful of identifying with.

The challenge of cleansing or orderliness and Reorientation equally applies to our commitment to Du'a that has not escaped corruption. But it is undoubtedly the tool we can resort to along with changing from our evil or corruptive ways.

NnaRabi Muhammad

I believe that we have understood you fairly well. But we are sincerely not satisfied without something like a tablet. We have been hearing of a secret one. The greatest name of Allah. Since you may know, help us. We will, by the grace of Allah, not abuse or misuse it.

Muhammad Tijjani

That is exactly the point.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

Let me say a few things. I hope that you will find it helpful. As I indicated earlier, the base for Du'a is the individual. If the individual is cleansed, it will make a good society, a good ruler or leader.

And the foundation is to seek to know and keep off at least major sins. For instance Zina today has taken different forms and types in our times. Find out from scholars, the content, the trend and the hows of safety. The roles of the sources, the practices, the leaders and rulers will be defined and all parties get committed to the same objectives. The same will apply to the handiworks of Satan in the process of making doubtful things legal or non-major sins. Music is one. Qira'a is gradually queuing on the row of music. It is not uncommon to hear the recitation of Qur'an being blasted on a moving vehicle or in a business shop as advertorial. Sports is another.

This is to be followed by knowledge as well as regular and optimal practices of what are most enjoined along with commendable commandments, as the Prophet (SAW) lived.

And the leading is **knowing how Rasul used to perform Salat and doing accordingly to the best of one's abilities.** This is most critical because it is available to all without restriction and all persons that may be asked have the same Allah to plead with.

As for charity that is also open to all, a believer does not need to be materially rich, to be generous in charities and giving to the most entitled people with the right hand without the left hand knowing. Scholars can teach this. Sharing of the word or message of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger comes topmost. Material things are of lower grade because they have to be acquired rightly and given out rightly.

The promise of Allah is that **whoever engages accordingly and sincerely will be facing Him, moving towards Him, and when they meet, the seeing, grasp etc. of the believer will be His.** Whoever patiently perseveres to attain this and sticks to it **will have no need to ask another believer to assist him and will be fulfilled.** Allah will not fail him. How can such a leader be **a threat to anybody?**

There is **nothing** prohibitive or discouraging about any suggested or recommended recitations of the pure words of Allah or His attributes. It must be appreciated that Allah had, has and can answer His caller by whatever **clean** means or words He pleases.

NnaRabi Muhammad

I am very satisfied with this.

Muhammad Mansur

It is unlikely that anyone will not be satisfied with this.

Muhammad Naibi Bokun

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. We can now refresh a mixture of the favourite drinks of the Messenger of Allah. I had wanted to soak dates overnight and top it up, but Allah did not permit it.

GogoFati Muhammad

Alhamdu liLahi. In appreciation, we have come with different things to share with you too.

CLOSING

The youths asked for an additional tray which Muhammad Naibi obliged. That was placed before him. They differently shared what they had between the three trays to serve Muhammad Naibi Bokun, the sisters and the brothers. Each tray was served slices of pineapple, water melon, apple and mango. There were also grape, guavas and berries. They ate pleasantly and drank what they had kept from the beginning. Muhammad Naibi Bokun requested each of them to pray in gratitude. They recited Fatiha, Ikhlas, Kafiroon, Falaq, Nas, Nasr, Kauthar and Qadr. He smiled and recited the verses of the Throne and Light. He then pleaded that Allah envelopes them with the blessings of the chapters and verses He has willed them to recite. They all answered, Amen. They greeted as usual to leave and they expressed missing each other already.

MUHAMMAD NAIBI BOKUN'S PARTING GIFT OF REMINDERS TO HIS GUESTS

OPENING REMINDER

Narrated Anas (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, “Whoever said ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allah’ and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of a barley grain will be taken out of Hell. And whoever said: ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allah’ and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of a wheat grain will be taken out of Hell. And whoever said, ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allah’ and has in his heart good (faith) equal to the weight of an atom will be taken out of Hell.” (Bukhari)

This is the crux of the matter. Declaration of faith or submission with the lips and sincere belief in the declaration is a guarantee for eventually making Paradise if it is not built up. This is certainly not a sufficient status. The goal should be, not visiting Hell Fire in the first place.

This foundation is what is required to be built to the utmost by a believer. And it does not require any external factors to be achieved. It is entirely personal and resting in the heart of a believer, to propel whatever right action he will commit or sins to avoid. The first is in respect of Allah (SWT). The second that clarifies and affirms it is following the path of Muhammad (SAW).

It was narrated that Anas bin Malik (RA) said: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, ‘There are three things, whoever attains them will find therein the sweetness of faith: When Allah (SWT), the Mighty and Sublime, and His Messenger (SAW) are dearer to him than all else; when he loves for the sake of Allah (SWT) and hates for the sake of Allah (SWT); and when a huge fire be lit and he fall into it, than associate anything with Allah (SWT).’” (Nasa’i)

The second logically relates to His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW).

Narrated Ibn ‘Abbas (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “Love Allah for what He nourishes you with of His Blessings, love me due to the love of Allah, and love the people of my house due to love of me.” (Tirmidhi)

Beyond the lips and the heart, the head will need to be vigorously engaged in seeking guidance by knowledge. A believer must never rest in seeking knowledge of what is right, because any believer who knows is under compulsion to share. And it is not instructed to be for any fee. The Prophet (SAW) did not charge fees for guidance. Unfortunately knowledge can be expensive in the Ummah. What a shame? Are the leaders dead or wicked?

Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said: “He who is asked something he knows and conceals it will have a bridle of fire put on him on the Day of Resurrection.” (Abu Dawud)

And there is a growing and developing bonus for those who know and share, for righteousness. It is therefore foolish not to share what is right. Another security is that whoever spreads false knowledge has his portion in Hell Fire.

Abu Huraira (RA) reported Allah’s Messenger (SAW) as saying: “He who called (people) to righteousness, there would be reward (assured) for him like the rewards of those who adhered to it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect. And he who called (people) to error, he shall have to carry (the burden) of its sin, like those who committed it, without their sins being diminished in any respect.” (Muslim)

For the believer who commits himself or herself to the search for knowledge, the honour is enormous.

Narrated Kathir ibn Qays (RA): I was sitting with Abu Darda’a (RA) in the mosque of Damascus. A man came to him and said: “Abu Darda’a, I have come to you from the town of the Messenger of Allah (SAW) for a tradition that I have

heard you relate from the Messenger of Allah (SAW). I have come for no other purpose.” He said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) say: “If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the Heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.” (Abu Dawud)

Allah revealed in His Book that men and Jinns have been created to serve Him. What then will be greater favour than knowledge of the religion?

Mu’awiyah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “When Allah wishes good for someone, He bestows upon him the understanding of Deen.” (Riyadh As-Salihin)

It is right knowledge and discipline of the Deen that will guard a believer and especially a leader against reckless ambition in the service of Allah. One example is building a mosque in order to have its type built for one in *Jannah*. Simply because someone has done this worthy work does not mean that it will be fitting for everyone. One of the signs of end times is the division of the Ummah by the number of mosques. Why does a government house need a regular mosque in a town where there is a central mosque already facing competition by different groups’ mosques? The most questionable level is private residence mosques where five compulsory prayers are held. How is this avoidable or get corrected if, when and where leaders are ignorant, avoid the knowledgeable or live with fearful or greedy men of knowledge? Indeed how many leaders make learning and association with the scholars key to their leadership? The worst leader who

is a believer will be the one who scorns or avoids men and women of right knowledge and discipline.

Narrated Anas ibn Malik (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said: “The Last Hour will not come until people vie with one another about mosques.” (Abu Dawud)

Another very poor practice of fear is in respect of caring for orphans. In Islam, every end has a standard means to realize it. Conversation with Allah is best in Salat. Reproduction of the Ummah is through marriage. Transactions are by honest recording or witnesses, etc. Orphans are children from legal marriages. They may be from relatives or non-relatives. War situations or natural calamities like earthquakes may produce them. Any adjustments to the terms or recognized means can distort the sustenance and boosting of righteousness in the Ummah. How many moneyed believers and leaders are in this mix up today? Do we not praise them helplessly? What knowledge built it?

Narrated Sahl (RA): Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said, “I and the one who looks after an orphan will be like this in Paradise,” showing his middle and index fingers and separating them. (Bukhari)

The believer has an enormous opportunity for investment that is not expensive but can be of lasting benefits even after his death. The land of Allah is freely and widely available for this. Unfortunately believers are often found to be ignorant or nonchalant except they are forced to do this.

Narrated Anas ibn Malik (RA): Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said, “There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift for him.” (Bukhari)

The very same type of opportunity is limitless for a believer in the glorification or remembrance of Allah. And the means is His Book and attributes or whatever does not contradict these.

Narrated Abu Musa (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, “The example of the one who celebrates the Praises of his Lord (Allah) in comparison to the one who does not celebrate the Praises of his Lord, is that of a living creature compared to a dead one.” (Bukhari)

Asma daughter of Yazid (RA) reported the Prophet (SAW) as saying: “Allah’s Greatest Names is in these two verses: ‘And your Ilaah (God) is One Ilaah (God), none has the right to be worshipped but He, the Ever-Merciful, the Mercy-Giving.’ and the beginning of Surah Ali-Imran, ‘A.L.M. Allah, there is no deity but He, the Living, the Eternal.’” (Abu Dawud)

Narrated Abdullah ibn Mas’ud (RA): “Allah has not created in the heavens nor in the earth what is more magnificent than Ayat Al-Kursi.” Sufyan said: “Because Ayat Al-Kursi is the Speech of Allah, and Allah’s Speech is greater than Allah’s creation of the heavens and the earth.” (Tirmidhi)

All the same, a believer must be cautious of these simple and abundant opportunities because the tongue can be used for goodly rewards as well as a source of self damnation with Allah.

Abu Abdur-Rahman Bilal ibn Al-Harith Al-Muzani (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, “A man speaks a good word without knowing its worth, Allah records for him His Good Pleasure till the day he will meet Him; and a man utters an evil word without realizing its importance, Allah records for him His displeasure till the day he will meet Him.” (Riyad as-Salihin)

Thus, every believer is opportune to serve Allah rightly for as long as Allah grants him life.

Abdur-Rahman ibn Abi-Bakrah (RA) narrated from his father that a man said: “O Messenger of Allah (SAW)! Which of the people is the best?” He said: “He whose

life is long and his deeds are good.” He said: “Then which of the people is the worst?” He said: “He whose life is long and his deeds are bad.” (Tirmidhi)

For the benefit of the doubtful, material acquisitions should neither divert the attention and commitment of a believer nor jealous of those who are so diverted in their commitment. The Prophet (SAW) has guided that if the entire world and its content were worth a wing of mosquito, Allah will not permit its benefit to an unbeliever. Real life and reward is in the Hereafter. And this is what he prayed for the Ansar who vowed and were committed to supporting him.

It was narrated that Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr (RA) said: “I heard Anas ibn Malik (RA) say: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: ‘The dead person is followed by three: His family, his wealth and his deeds. Then two of them come back: His family and his wealth, and there remain only his deeds.’” (Nasa’i)

Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, “When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: a continuous charity, a knowledge they left which is beneficial; or a virtuous child who prays for them.” (Muslim).

Consequently, certify for yourself, while alive, what have you kept well by pronouncement, commitment or distinction, as a parent, as a learned, as a blessed person with material resources, as a leader which someone or people have followed suit? What Shepherd have you been, in the light of the Qur’an and Sunnah?

REMINDER NUMBER ONE

Ibn Ka'b ibn Malik Al-Ansari (RA) narrated from his father, that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "Two wolves free among sheep are no more destructive to them than a man's desire for wealth and honour is to his religion." (Tirmidhi)

What a graphical expression for defining an evil quality, a dangerous and destructive attribute? There is no doubt that wolves do not farm or shepherd animals. Humans do and manage them for their own benefits with logic and sense. It may be for commerce. It may be for charity. It may be for food. And they feed and care for their health to reproduce and meet their needs as they arise with time. Not wolves. For them, it is to eat with inordinate greed destructively. They can eat part of one and as it falls to die they ignore it and pounce on another. You can then imagine doubling this scenario in active competition. The cleanest will be like the case of a lion that escaped while the guards were returning it into its cage. Residents around the zoo were logically and sensibly in fear until it was certified to have been returned into its cage. It was found to have entered into the cage of goats. It had feasted on them and laid calm. Humans are most unlikely to do so. But humans are WORSE in crave for wealth and honour.

Without religion an intelligent unbeliever is not likely to do this. He cannot be wasteful as to kill another sheep for food if and where one will satisfy immediate need. An unintelligent one can sell a herd out and drink with the money. The difference between a believing person and one that is not, is the guidance of limits within what is halal and without waste.

Outside limitations exercised by self or imposed, either of them can be just like the wolves, when it comes to acquisitions or even worse. Have we not heard or known of an individual with tens of titles? The question is, if the titles are not accepted, can the same person not be able to make contributions to the community or organization or country? This is very applicable to traditional titles that can

even be bought. It is no wonder that in some domains of excesses, titles that historically are unknown to them are imported. There are even instances where two persons will be bearing the same title, one differentiated as senior. There are people who properly have numerous qualifications but will be spending fortunes to different bodies in order to bear their honour. University honorary degrees have largely suffered being awarded to money bags. There is no correlation between the honours awarded and the building of the university. Beyond falling learning standard, even the physical buildings are not fitting. It is either they are collapsing or the users are not benefiting because of the number of students. It is so bad that a non-performer in his locality will shamelessly accept an honour of recognition outside. It happens at national level, in organizations and with religious groups. We have had an experience where a family of Muslims and non-Muslims has its head awarded the honour of a leader of Muslims. The taste or acquisition or crave for honour can be something else.

It is rarely unconnected with pride or arrogance. Imagine a leader who attends an informal occasion and every person rises up except one. And he questions why the one refused. He desires that the rising be full. At the individual level it may be revealed in his dressing. This is why the Qur'an warns against being pompous or walking arrogantly because such person can never get to the height of mountains or crack the earth surface. It can be revealed in the kind of accommodation one constructs for living in. A look at state houses or houses of some leaders can be mind-boggling. Have we not heard of a public servant possessing a gold plated handset? Even for a business entrepreneur, the richest rarely do such things. What of a wife of a leader possessing one hundred pairs of shoes? Each and all of these are directed towards standing out ahead and being different. But believers who understand know that honour belongs to Allah.

This is not different with the likeness and acquisition of wealth. It is a common inclination of man. And the prison is defined by the constant availability of new

things in their types, colours, weight, shape, size, quality, costs, etc. It is not uncommon to have an insane person pick an architectural design of a house or school in a temperate environment and plant it in the tropics. The descriptive word opulence is sometimes used to cover the stupidity. Like cars, there are magazines of such class. Indeed there are clubs or associations that only such different creatures can join.

To be sure, the last person to enter Paradise will continue to undertake that he will not ask Allah for any favour other than not facing the fire. But he will ask again and again, so long as he discovers another station. Unfortunately, no one can make use of anything beyond his lifetime and the end is unknowable. Chaining inordinate greed is therefore a key Jihad of Self for every believer. And only transparency can aid this and not tying people to one's whims by luring, by deceit, by force, etc.

While it may not appear to matter for an individual to be so mad, it will only be on the surface. This is because, without restraint the strong will be the dictators of what is right. This was the understanding of the people of Talut. Indeed Prophet Muhammad (SAW) faced such ignorance. The men of honour and wealth wondered why someone who had no wealth or their kind of honour or recognition will be the right person to bear the message of Allah. They considered themselves as those most fitting or Muhammad (SAW) was just devising a means to overtake them. This implies that the challenge of modesty applies to all classes of men, relationships, etc. for the safety and prosperity of all.

If there is no guidance, siblings can commit murder like in the case of the sons of Adam. If there is no law of adultery, men will either choose not to marry or the wives of other men will not be safe because the integrity of others will be freely abused.

In an organization, how can one or two persons be accountable for all spending and having discretionary access to the funds? Only a rational and sensible arrangement can enable that. The alternative of having all members given the same powers invites the culture of free wolves described in this hadith. In fact, even with the order of accountability and audit are organizations and countries not battling with corruption? Unfortunately some ignorant leaders wrongly think that the solution to this is in arresting and prosecuting the guilty, which may include forfeiture of sums and property. This has led to the initiative of institutions building. Either way, man is central to the solution as he is the creator of the problem. Until and unless mankind attend to the quality of man, the problem will only transform into a more complex challenge.

Beyond the individual, family and organizational levels, the unpardonable is wolves at national level.

The instruction of this hadith is an alert or warning, against a naive assumption that a leader will definitely not be corrupt. Have we not experienced an anointed in governorship position and role, not performing? Does that take away his knowledge? No. It is a matter of discipline and no one is full-proof from error or even excesses. We had someone from a humble background consumed by the privileges of office and abandoned his lieutenants to whatever pleases them. The age of a person or claims before getting public trust is therefore not sufficient. It will be foolish. As a result, while it may be easy for an ascetic not to indulge as long as he is in a hermit in the outskirts of the town there is no guarantee when he comes into town. A greater power of resistance will be required. There is no issue in the honesty of a man who has not been entrusted with what he needs, wants and fancies. It will then be most foolish to expect that someone who is not a true ascetic not to turn into a smart thief. He can either use direct fronts to steal, turn away from stealing by confidants, in order to benefit from the loot later or

not minding being served by certified thieves. Such a leader may legally not be a thief but is in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah a more dangerous thief.

Therefore a believer should not be deceived or deceive himself. What is critical for a believer is that non-compliance to the knowledge and discipline of what is right against what is wrong will necessarily lead to excesses and madness. It will lead to greater commitment to worldly things at the expense of matters of his soul that is superior. You can imagine a very rich man worrying about both the safety of his property or money and his personal life, because the intruder targeting his money may want to secure his track by taking his life. The poor man has only his life to worry about and in abnormal circumstances like those seeking for body parts for rituals to get rich. Excesses are common inclinations and can easily lead to losing the favour of Allah. Qaroon was a good example. Pharaoh was another.

A believer should beware and much so for a leader.

Abu Huraira (RA) reported Allah's Messenger (SAW) as saying: "A servant says, 'My wealth! My wealth!' but out of his wealth three things are only his: whatever he eats and makes use of or by means of which he dresses himself and it wears out or he gives as charity, and this is what he stored for himself (as a reward for the Hereafter), and what is beyond this (it is of no use to you) because you are to depart and leave it for other people." (Muslim)

For this reason, nothing is more foolhardy than to commit oneself by straight or crooked means, to either amass wealth for self or for some particular persons. In the latter case, to indirectly serve self makes no difference. And if it is just for love, it is out of ignorance because it is like giving a child a serpent to farm. Not even an enemy deserves it. Is Allah not the Provider, Sustainer and Distributor of worldly and eternal good as He pleases?

REMINDER NUMBER TWO

Narrated Abu Musa (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, “A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other.” While (saying that) the Prophet (SAW) clasped his hands, by interlacing his fingers. (Bukhari)

This hadith instructs that a believing husband is required to support a believing wife. A believing wife is equally required to support a believing husband. Accordingly, believing parents are required to support believing children just as believing children are required to support believing parents. And in the circle of kins or relatives, those who believe are required to support one another. This is at the home front.

The believers in a household are required to support believing members of outside. These neighbours may be physical household members within immediate or distant proximity or in work place locations or in transitory relationships like a common journey, in the hospital seeking for medical attention, in the market – like a bank, supermarket, central market, etc.

The believers who are scholars are required to support believing political leaders just as the political leaders are required to support believing scholars. These categories of believers are required to support believing entrepreneurs and believing entrepreneurs are required to support believing political leaders and scholars.

At the base of it all, the mature, the successful, the strong, who are believers are required to support the unripe, the young, the struggling, the weak (their men and their women) who are believers.

Nothing in this requirement permits for ruling on any terms other than belief in Allah, His Messenger and living according to the singular guidance and not contradicting the clear and simple terms. This is consistent with the destruction

of the son of Prophet Nuhu and the wife of Prophet Lut in spite of the familial relationships. It is accordingly consistent with the hijra of the Messenger of Allah to Madina. It qualified Bilal, to have his steps heard in Paradise by the Prophet (SAW), ahead of him. It is the qualification for admitting the Hadith collection of Imam Bukhari as the most authentic. What is consistent is not the origin of Makkah, is not the clan of Quraish, is not the language or race of Arab.

It will therefore be contradictory and abusive, between a husband and wife or between children and parents, to substitute the primacy of submission to Allah and His Messenger with anything on which Allah and His Messenger have decided. For example, a three times divorced wife cannot return to the same husband without proper marriage and utmost commitment to another believer, which Allah may decide to make unworkable. It will be irresponsible for a wife to resist the proper marriage of another woman by the husband and even more irresponsible of the children. These will amount to deviation from the path of believers. What then can be the excuse for husband and wife not interacting or even 'saving' intimacy for three days, outside the rules of family relationship? The common guidance must be what is admissible in Islam.

This is why belief is incomplete when and where a neighbour of any grade is insecure with a believer. The Prophet (SAW) had expressed his fear, when angel Jibril was instructing him on the rights of his neighbours, that he may include them as those to inherit him. Thus, an employer has his limits just as the employee. Believers have no right or room or justification to either be whimsical, oppressive or carefree, in their relationship with others. Rights and duties must be obliged within the limits of what are legal.

The struggle or fight or war between believers for the burden to serve is for that reason out of measure. The service that for believers must be for the sake of Allah, cannot admit cutting down a fellow believer by every available means. This will

be their affair and not of Allah and His Messenger. And the definition of the limits of this is easy to establish by knowledge and discipline. The political leaders who are bankrupt in this should have the scholars who come to their aid. For example if competition can be allowed before elections, it will not be defensible after elections. And believing Muslims cannot have rightly contributed to the election of a non-Muslim believer and still gang up against him after elections. Only fools desperately fight to bear burdens. This is because the bearer who is happy with it is foolish. And as the processes cannot be devoid of using resources, the support of entrepreneurs is required for the right course. This is why if a leader is discovered to be a real liar, the foot soldiers, political chieftains and supporting entrepreneurs cannot but be hypocritical. Closest associates or aides are undoubtedly the first mirrors for understanding a leader. It is instructive to know that even thieves do not accept dishonesty among themselves. Transparency is possible. And no amount or style of pretence can make up to make hypocrisy righteous. Therefore, if a leader who professes Iman will for instance use a front to personally benefit from public resources and scream purity, the lieutenants will do exactly the same outside the authority and opportunity to award contracts to fronts. They will create and use other means to extort and exploit, to entrust to fronts. They are all thieves. This is not the instruction of this hadith.

Hence, it will be careless of a believing leader to watch and permit anyone that has no responsibility for his mandate to roam in the authority space entrusted to him and indeed irresponsible of a believer to adopt such relationship with the leader. It will not matter whether the person is his spouse or any level of neighbourhood. These can be school mates, classmates, club members, relative or whatever. When and where such happens, it must be admitted that faith is not the rule and it is questionable.

And nothing in the instruction from this hadith invites or justifies abuse or destruction or non-safety of a non-Muslim or a non-believer. This is because there

is no compulsion in submission to Allah. And the foundation for clarity and guidance is right knowledge and discipline. There is no room for temporary or phasic livelihood of combining what is consistent with belief and what is contradictory.

It is only when there is consistency in the fitness of the knowledge and discipline of what is right to daily activities and commitments of believers, with the clear results of the safety and prosperity of all, that the bearers of Iman will become the best for and among mankind.

The instruction and guidance of the Prophet (SAW) that every believer is a shepherd and shall be accountable for his trust commences from the daily charity required for the benefits of the abilities granted one by Allah through courtesies or processes to informal and formal contracts. Relationship is the centre of actions while Allah and His Messenger are the focus for determining what is necessary, what is commendable, what is tolerable, as against what is wrong and unacceptable.

Nu'man ibn Bashir (RA) reported: Messenger of Allah (SAW) said, "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever." (Riyad as-Salihin)

Narrated 'Abdullah ibn Umar (RA): Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfils the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfil his needs; whoever brings his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screens a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection." (Bukhari)

The Prophet (SAW) indeed warned against the division of the Ummah after his death. The starter will be the one against the Messenger of Allah.

REMINDER NUMBER THREE

It was narrated from Hakim ibn Mu'awiyah (RA) that his paternal uncle Mikhmar ibn Mu'awiyah (RA) said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) say: 'Do not believe in omens, and good fortune is only to be found in three things: A woman, a horse and a house.'" (Ibn Majah)

Omens are at best for waiters, but living is not experienced in waiting status or condition. And it is illogical and senseless to claim or attribute reality to omens. This is why resting on omens is foolish and absolutely a matter of wishful thinking. Why will one read, sit for an examination, pass and attribute it to some omen? It amounts to ignorance, ingratitude to Allah and approaching associating something else with Allah. This is not for believers.

And this is not to deny good fortune, which is not mysterious. Good fortune is in a woman who is an obedient believer. A learned one is superior to one merely from a high ranking family or in such risky position – by authority or command of resources. And the pleasant to mere sight is the least. It means that family making by companionship can possibly be good. And the guidance is that the man should have in positive view, what children or generations can arise from her. The positive assumption here is that the man is not a rascal. What is required is responsible investigation to certify that the woman is both right and suitable. And there can be mistakes. Allah has provided for guidance in making corrections. For example, a woman can be very suitable and approached for marriage. However, on establishing that another believer is already involved in the same process, stepping down is most commendable. No suitor is required to be a wolf nor parents or guardians permitted to game with choices. Even after marriage, there can be unbearable challenges. For instance, the regular disobedience of the wife or living the script of parents or friends. An honourable dissolution of the marriage may be the ultimate solution. On the preferred side, is

it not possible and do we not see good marriages, good couples, good families with attributes of attraction that are permissible by Allah and His Messenger? Do these not cut across families of the learned, the leaders, entrepreneurs and the commoners? Within this scope, are there not some from backgrounds of ignorance, misbelief, mischief and the wicked? Between these, does Allah not make possible good or evil? Do we not witness that goodness is a matter of efforts, and any from good background can drop out while any from non-commendable background can sprout out? And did we not all come to this world naked? So why will the admixture of the blessings of Allah and what our mischiefs have permitted blind us to see and understand the truth?

Mankind is in the forms of communities, societies and nations or states. And they arise and are based on families. If the families are catered for the multiplier effect is a better society or nation. And the greater the proportion of the making of the families by the joining of good men to good women, the better and suitable will the greater proportion of the society be blessed by Allah, trainable and disciplined.

The same applies to the horse, the transport, the logistics or the process. It is a clear good fortune to ask for the hand of a woman for marriage from her parents or guardian and to keep to the limits of Allah and His Messenger by both parties. Sex before marriage will amount to an abuse even if the two parties consider that it is the only way to compel either of the parents or sponsors to consent to their being joined together. A modest gift and celebrating the wedlock as modest as the steps to climb a staircase to a bedroom is the best. The purpose and goals are in the bedroom. Time, energy and resources need therefore not be wasted on either the quality or length or width or type or form of the staircase. If either of the parties or the parents engage in this, it is a clear misfortune. What more, where items in boxes will be required to be 'completed' otherwise the joining will be cancelled? Why would suitors not rent the requirements or loan them, to be

returned disgracefully or refunded painfully? What misfortune can be greater than this in starting a family, by believers? Why will we impose on ourselves inflictions and pretend that they do not hurt?

There is no difference in the case of a winner of an election on the platform of pure fraud or admixture of fraud and good. In other words, there is no real difference between a thief who scales through a judicial process to retain a win and a seemingly good man sponsored by thieves to win. It will be illogical, senseless, unintelligent and ungodly to expect an easy cruise of governance. This is because, for the first the platform is shameful and for the second it will be a betrayal not to serve the sponsors. But a good fortune is not impossible. In either case, the leader can be transparent and fair enough to make the wrong partners adjust, with their prospect of progress not sealed or cut off. Thus, prosperity is never prohibited but the process of backdoor arrangement is the unacceptable mischief. And transformation doesn't have to be killing. The greatest misfortune that a leader can impose on himself will be the assumption of the status of knowing it all alone or the sacred adoption of evil partners and associates as lieutenants or assistants. There is no question of good or evil omens being causative of miscarriage of justice or oppression or good governance. The horse is either healthy or not. The process is either right or wrong. This is why it is laughable for persons qualified to vote to hesitate to register or swear to the suitability of a candidate or contribute to serve as witnesses to his preferred candidature or cast their votes for him, including protecting the votes so casted. In the same vein, it is immodest of one who is unable to manage his family to his satisfaction and other believers on the terms of Allah and His Messenger to present himself without pre-correction. When this is ignored, it is most feasible to have the irresponsible family culture bearing on his leadership. This does not require a 'fortune' teller or manager and any miserable client to understand or sort out. In exactly the same terms can private enterprises succeed or collapse.

And is it not logical that where there is no home the house is meaningless? Do we not know, hear and see that unstable nations or crisis-ridden nations do not attract positive investments? Do banks accept to give loans without securities – even when they declare that applications and collaterals are not required? The foundation of goodness is what attracts good at individual, family, association or national or leadership levels. A pretender good leader will be foolish to expect sincere scholars, sacrificing entrepreneurs who are supporters of truth. Indeed he will lose anyone that he has. If they do not physically distant themselves from him, they will live with him without guiding him. Truth does not accept arrogance or hypocrisy as a companion.

A believer must therefore avoid being hoodwinked into believing that between a belief or principle and a goal, no deliberate positive actions or commitment is required. The believers are enjoined to strive towards the best according to what is permissible and hope on attainment by the Grace of Allah. In this manner and way, the known and unknown are taken care of. Or is it disputable that we cannot always be absolutely certain about success even after our best? It is foolish to turn a blind eye to the other aspect just as it is irresponsible to ignore the process.

REMINDER NUMBER FOUR

It was narrated from Salamah ibn ‘Ubaidullah ibn Mihsan Al-Ansari (RA) that his father said: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: ‘Whoever among you wakes up physically healthy, feeling safe and secure within himself, with food for the day, it is as if he acquired the whole world.’” (Ibn Majah)

This is the manifesto for comfortable living, to guide those who sincerely believe.

The first justification for this is that, the ultimate goal of a believer is to attain admission into *Jannah*, which are in grades – up to one hundred for jihadists. The real implication of this is that this world and all of its affairs are temporary and transitory, for those who understand. This is what informs the guidance that a believer should live in this world like a traveller as against a settler.

The second reality is the indisputable and irresistible Qadr assigned to everyone and everything. This is what is realizable between seeming utmost effort and chance. Believers know with certainty that it cannot be abused. However, it is hidden and requires to be discovered. The duty of the believer is to do his utmost. And since man has been granted the will of choice in terms of what is good, the limits of this and what is evil, commitment is the fun in the struggling. For instance, there are foods and drinks that are permissible for believers after excluding those that are prohibited and those that are doubtful. For example, there is beef, cow milk, dates, honey, water. For all of these, whatever quantity is sufficient for one person can satisfactorily serve two persons. The standard structure required for feeding is for a believer to fill up a third of his stomach with food, another with water and a third with air. At the level of the choice or discretion of limits is that, it is not prohibited to feed on less and a believer does not become a hypocrite by feeding on more. For instance with a varied structure of more air or more water or more food. This is why there is nothing wrong with those who take three to four courses of meals three to four times in a day. They

are not necessarily gluttonous. However it can be deduced that a believer is not to choose to live to eat and drink. The very same principle applies to housing. A believer has no requirement to have extra accommodation for more than a guest, because it will be for Satan. But nothing prohibits a believer from having more than one house either in the same town, different towns or countries. It is a matter of legal ability and needs. However, no human can sleep in more than a corner or centre of a room at a time. Clothings are not in exemption. A believer can have a ceremonial wear for Jumu'at. Indeed those who can afford are encouraged to make good outings as gratitude for the blessings of Allah. This is very far from dictating wears trend in the society. And from the best examples, the Prophet (SAW) did not live on even the comfortable minimum prescribed, in his choices. When his beloved daughter asked for a slave to be assisting at home he recommended that she does the house chores herself and top it up with what is best – to glorify Allah and thank Him, before going to bed. His household used to spend days without cooking food to eat because there was none.

It was narrated from Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “O people, fear Allah and be moderate in seeking a living, for no soul will die until it has received all its provision, even if it is slow in coming. So fear Allah and be moderate in seeking provision; take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden.” (Ibn Majah)

But these colourful reality is not possible like the dropping of manna from heaven. Men and society will require the physical health and security to realize them.

At the individual level and group level, these are not possible in isolation. They have to be through relationships. For example, no one produces all that he needs and no group can do it. This applies to both health and security. In modern times the embodiment of value is money, which can be used for exchange for whatever one needs or wants or fancy. And men do different things in relationships to raise

money. In Islam all levels have to be permissible. And that is the beginning of the problem. The judicial or fair management of the differences. To get the work, to qualify, to get paid, to be able to buy the material or service, etc. require crossing all sorts of relationships safely. For example, qualifying can be problematic either by the teachers asking to sleep with the students or by admitting unsuitable candidates because they have paid. In the end, standard has to be compromised because the payers will pay through and the readers will read through. When they are both certified the right entitlements for those qualified will logically be reduced or even blocked. To get paid for work done can become a problem and purchasing power is determined by factors beyond the control of the employee who gets paid. Inflation can be a challenge if not miscreants who may take his earnings or part of it from him. Health can be a serious challenge outside normally aging challenges. If the egg available is actually plastic and hospital bills are expensive for diagnosis and fake or expired drugs handled by quack personnel, it can be difficult. Safety against burglary, robbery, kidnapping are essential. In a society where they become the priorities for regular mention, the importance of the terms of relationships through which our needs, wants and fancies are realized will not need to be emphasized.

Leadership is the deciding factor. This is discipline. From the family level, if there is no sincerity between a husband and his family members, wives and children, that will be the beginning of failure. A family leader who takes good care of himself and cares less or abandons his family is as irresponsible as the family members who demand for things outside their convenient reach. It will be impossible for such members to add the values of right knowledge and discipline of what is right to the livelihood of the Ummah. The scholars do not have less role to play. Commendation must not shift from the struggle to attain the minimum and those who have attained it. This is the only orientation that will generate understanding for those who excel.

How can basic personal health be attained if the environment is not sanitized? But not every and all persons know the value and care. Indeed if they do, how can the environment outside their immediate vicinity be catered for? Will there be no need for an order to both ensure and sustain the cleanliness? Estate managers and landlords will tell you frightening stories about tenants who live in new houses and leave them as if they are piggeries. Tenants will be living in houses and the tap will wear out but no one will care to volunteer replacing the head, against waste. Indeed they can be reluctant or even impossible in paying the bills except it is part of service charges. The deduction here is the ordinary difficulty of having a secure and healthy foundation in the Ummah without the responsible combination of discipline across board and leadership to manage common affairs.

REMINDER NUMBER FIVE

Narrated ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said: “There are four things that whoever has them, then he is a hypocrite, and whoever has one attribute from among them, then he has an attribute of hypocrisy, until he leaves it: He lies whenever he speaks, he does not fulfil whenever he promises, he is vulgar whenever he argues, and whenever he makes an agreement he proves treacherous.” (Tirmidhi)

Even on the surface of the words, these are traits that are negative in all circumstances.

Telling lies to oneself or of oneself is never helpful. The first is in relation to oneself. For example, a believer says to himself, I am the best and never wrong in what I think, desire and pursue. But he couldn't have known anything without learning. And from whatever source or means he learns or must have learnt, there is a criteria of right and wrong. What is right to thieves is not right to the owners. But what is right to the owners and wrong to the thieves is what is right for all. In other words, what is right or wrong is beyond the preference of one person or group. And because there is always the inclination for one or a group to only see itself, in blindness of others or for even the collection of many or all individuals or groups to ‘resolve’ on what is right by imposition of the thoughts, desires and pursuits of the strong or clever, the creator of all is absolutely the best reference for what is right and what is wrong.

For believers, the Qur’an provides the guidance on and to what is right against what is wrong. The Prophet (SAW) and his tradition completed the explanation and standard for the practice of what is right against what is wrong. The duty of believers is to strive safely within the limits or boundaries provided. The first is to avoid all prohibitions to the best of one’s abilities and optimally get committed

to all injunctions. Above these are bonuses by the status of what are commendable.

Hypocrisy therefore amounts to any form, type or mode of commitment by a believer that will contradict these setting. For example a disbeliever who denies that the Qur'an is not the message of Allah or that Prophet Muhammad is not the bearer of the message is less evil than the believer who proclaims the beliefs and commits contrary expressions and actions. This is the logic of hosting hypocrites in the lowest depth of Hell Fire.

For example, where a leader shares with a scholar that he will make deliberate effort to ease the difficulties of marriage by supporting youths getting married to check the irresponsible tradition of material burdens of getting married, because the consequence is fuelling *zina* in the Ummah, it will attract agreement and support. If the leader fulfils such the scholar will get equal reward, the struggle of the scholar will be, to remind him. This is the relationship between the leader and Allah rather than the scholar. The scholar is only a witness and supporter. Allah can decide to give the full reward if the leader is genuinely unable after struggling to do so. However, where he becomes able and he is reminded and he turns his back, it is not upon Allah and the scholar along with those who could have benefited he has turned his back but to himself. What is more, if he is followed and encouraged to still do it and he advises that he will do it and still fails?

In this horrible example of toying with a jihad against a great sin, the leader is foolishly on the path of being registered as a hypocrite, due to consistent hesitation to do good and its connection to a pillar of evil. The Prophet (SAW) has warned that consistency is the value of actions. A believer who continues to fail risks being registered as such. And better for good. A believer who consistently does good and becomes unable by health or travel reason can get full

reward. The hypocrisy of a leader can be more grievous because he has or can have more damaging effect. Imagine if such a leader were to keep his words and others emulate him. The level, strength and scope of *zina* could be doused. Indeed if the leader enables a law to check the practices along with the expressed promise it would have been wonderful.

It is also in the greater domain of a leader to engage right and suitable lieutenants to enable him serve Allah and the Ummah best. The leader who knows such and delays what possible good he envisages can result from the support of such a person is wicked. As a duty to the Ummah he would be failing for every day that he hesitates. This is because Allah has given him the authority and he is toying with it. Where the person to be invited knows and is asked to wait, it amounts to caging a bird and not caring for it. The burden will continue to register as double and the Ummah that is so denied the possible benefits is a different burden.

What will be worse than a leader behaving in the same manner of accepting to collaborate or engage entrepreneurs to ease material hardships by boosting employment and productivity but hesitating, always promising and yet postponing, pleading and yet waiting? If the parties are non-Muslims or unbelievers, he will be a bad ambassador of Islam and his Ummah. For those who cannot differentiate between the two, Islam is not transparent or his followers are fools.

At the family level it is not different. Allah and His Messenger have set down standards of what is required and what is wrong. Avoiding cohabitation during monthly flow or post birth flow extend to sharing orgasm experience for selfishness. Any amendments to these will be despicable. What more of adultery by the wife that leads to pregnancy and it is undeclared as such? This abuses the standard of strict family or blood identity. The consequences include derail into *zina* and the complications of the persons suitable for marriage. In a situation

where foster relationships are not legal for joining, what will become of real siblings? Where will the rule of never changing the father of a child have value? The actions and cover up that enable these are hypocrisy. Hypocrisy can as such destroy a generation of the Ummah. You can imagine the possibility in a society where some members hold unto children and make them bear the same surname with the mother because the father of the bastard child did not pay the dowry. The children of the rascal in marriage can meet the bastard and even get married. They may only come to discover after producing children. What kind of Ummah will be this?

Veering from the right knowledge and discipline by a believer as an individual, in his relationship with others, in marriage or leadership is wrong. It is hypocrisy where what is right is known and avoided out of pretence, selfishness or whatever. And it does not matter whether it is committed by delay of time, swapping the order of things or eventually doing the right thing after failure to do the wrong thing. This is not uncommon with the legislation and administration of laws or policies. Leaders in formal positions of trust are likely to fall into this damning hypocrisy.

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the believer is the one from whom the people’s lives and wealth are safe.” (Nasa’i)

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said, “The worst of all mankind is the double-faced one, who comes to some people with one face and to others, with another face.” (Bukhari)

REMINDER NUMBER SIX

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (RA) said: “O you people! You recite this Ayah: Take care of yourselves! If you follow the guidance no harm shall come to you. I indeed heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) saying: ‘When the people see the wrongdoer and they do not take him by the hand, then soon Allah shall envelope you in a punishment from him.’” (Tirmidhi)

The reference here is to the speech of Allah – O ye who believe! Guard your own souls: If ye follow (right) Guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who stray. The goal of you all is to Allah. It is He that will show you the truth of all that ye do (Qur’an 5: 105). The interpretation here from the Prophet (SAW) is that, it is of collective significance as against individual isolation. The Ummah is to live, struggle and prosper as one. In other words, your guard will not be enough or secure without the guard of others. This is like his other instruction that your beliefs can not be complete without loving for your brother or sister what you love for yourself.

The livelihood of believers is focused on goodness and what is good. Not AGAINST anyone or anything or anybody. Accordingly, if one of them or a party of them veers into established wrongdoing, it is the priority duty of the others to help him, correct him or check him to comply properly. It is logical that if this is ignored or fails, his harm will spread. And the consequence is that others will become culpable for the wrath of Allah that He may choose to descend upon him. Does the speech of Allah not specifically warn believers against tribulations that does not exclude the righteous? How can a believer expect that eating from the same cooking pot that has bacon, dog meat and beef separated by planks be pure of each? This is why the rule of marriage in Islam makes an adulterer fit for an adulteress as against an honourable man for an honourable woman. It is the

foundation of guarding against not just possible physical disease but the moral discipline of the Ummah.

It is instructive to note that the hand, the action is the first target. In Islam, that is the best level of faith that defines reality. Islam is not based on the amount of knowledge that you have or of what is right against what is wrong. A non-Muslim and a non-believer is free to learn and be taught Islam. His submission is what makes him a believer just like a believer can abandon the submission and become an unbeliever. In another instruction the Prophet (SAW) clarified that second to this is to advise, where you cannot enable the correction directly. And the weakest is to dissociate oneself from the wrong. A holy tradition also instructs that godliness is not attained until a believer proceeds beyond completing compulsory compliance in respect of what must be avoided and what must be committed. The believer will require to stabilize in commendable compliances before getting on the course of godliness. And as he crawls, Allah walks towards him. As he walks, Allah runs towards him. Then when they meet, the believer can be favoured with godliness. And so long as he maintains the level of compliance Allah may keep him in that favour. It is a living relationship. If he drops, he will cease to enjoy the favour.

As a result, it is most commendable for the Ummah to build and strengthen the advisory foundation. This is what we find being done by teachers. This is what we get weekly in sermons. Indeed in occasions like graduation ceremonies, conferences, seminars, marriage ceremonies, etc. we get such benefits. The best forms of these are those recorded for reference. This is what makes books, the vendors, students, teachers, scholars and connective leaders, the best colour of the Ummah, the foundation for prospective building. A society without a large proportion of these is doomed to experience difficulties, frustration, crisis, mishaps and more failures than successes because it will be living in darkness. It will be more dead than alive and thus deadly for normal livelihood.

Leadership is therefore most critical and the cheapest means to guarding the souls of believers. And everybody is a shepherd and will account for his trust. At the family level, it will be wrong for a husband to simply watch his wife exceeding bounds, when and where he knows the bounds of Allah and His Messenger for their marriage. The wife will become unfitting as long and the more she persists in the wrong. It is then unacceptable in the Ummah for such a husband to say, she will bear her burden. The same applies to the husband who is engaged in prohibited and non-commendable culture. The wife has the responsibility of drawing his attention to the illness of such. She can engage their parents or guardians or teachers who are responsible to support the correction. Where the matters encroach on the boundaries of Allah, the honourable dissolution of the marriage is invited. The very same principle and practice applies to the relationship between the parents and the children. Do we not see that even organizations and companies have conditions of service? An employee who defrauds the company does not get a warning but suspension and recovery or prosecution and dismissal. The end-action is the level of reality that matters.

This is the justification for entrusting leaders with authority and coercive instruments for responsible use, in the interest of all members. The Shariah courts adjudicate on differences or disagreements. A dangerous member is identified and arrested. Irate and irresponsible groups who seek to or actually begin to threaten the common good are at least dispersed to enable arrest of members or leaders and dealing with them. There can be no society with goodness where everyone does as he or she pleases because it will inevitably affect others. And the common good is superior to any individuals or group good.

And we are living witnesses to the laxity or even abuse of this instruction. The stupidity of holding democracy as absolutely neutral has brought and imposed on us a trending culture of self-destruction. Our ignorance and confusion has covered our logic and sense of admitting that neutrality can be of negative effect on what

is established as right, if not protected. Those who seek security and prosperity in being alone will not stop receding until they ask and find it impossible to return to the wombs of their origin. While this does not appear very evident but we foolishly scream over a priest consenting to join a brother and sister in marriage. We frown at a father putting his daughter in a family way or a mother and a son having a baby. This is not impossible where limits are not protected. Beyond the family level, are believers not at war with one another? Is it the fight between Muslims or the ones between Muslims and Christians that is justifiable? Are there two scriptures for Muslims? Are there two scriptures for Christians? Are there two creators for Christians and Muslims? Even with a constitution that our own produced we are still unable to be better. What a shame!

Why then are we looking outside for the source of our problems? Very simple. Some of the ‘leaders’ of ignorance, division, destruction and materialistic opportunists have grown and developed into powerful agents of Satan. They are recognizable when they descend to praise and support the ignorant that wrongly possesses what they crave for – money and fame. If they had played their foundation roles of right knowledge and discipline of what is right such ignorant will not come to power in the first place. One failure leads to another.

Abu Hurairah (RA) narrated that: The Prophet (SAW) said: “Whatever I have commanded you do it, and whatever I have forbidden you, refrain from it.” (Ibn Majah).

Amendments will never help believers.

REMINDER NUMBER SEVEN

Narrated Ma'qil (RA): I heard the Prophet (SAW) saying, “Any man whom Allah has given the authority of ruling some people and he does not look after them in an honest manner, will never feel even the smell of Paradise.” (Bukhari)

Who is this type of person? Who are these people? And Paradise can be smelled a distance of years away.

What applies to the identity of such a person is authority or recognized power over others, to which the others are required to submit or support.

The parents have authority over their children. However this does warrant molestation of children. The instance where a father will put his daughter in the family way amounts to abuse. The same applies to a Nanny who abuses a child placed in her care. There is no difference in the case of a teacher who harasses his student sexually. These are a few examples at informal level of relationships.

At the formal level, the relationship between a police officer and a citizen is as related as between an employer and employee or between a physician and a patient or between a judge and disputants, etc. The most obvious and critical for greatest emphasis is the person entrusted and wielding authority over a society along with instruments for sanctions against disobedience. In our case, it is the president. This is the president more than the principal of a school, the senate of a university, the chairman of a local government, the governor, etc. because he cannot be resisted ordinarily.

What is the honesty required of each of these leaders, all of them and especially the president? To begin with, the president is the one that personifies all of the levels or forms and more. This is the inevitable position because the president is most unlikely not a parent. If he is the husband who punches his wife, that is not a free part of the marriage contract. Indeed if he loves his children like the parents

of the children Allah saved by instructing Khidr to execute the child, it is dishonest. Children are a gift but more of a trust and are not meant to be treated like property. The failure for a child to grow and belong to their gender are termed as suffering from fixation. Parental love is not an excuse to hold a child against growing or independence. A child that does not begin to form its own right identity early is unfortunate. Of what comfort or value is a child who cannot be or is not mentioned except through the parents? While the children will always remain children to the parents, the children should grow to stand for the parents to lean on or refer to for good. How evil, selfish and irresponsible then, is a parent who resists or blocks such, for whatever love or fear? It will be most dishonest since that is not the path of believers. And so, whoever and especially the president who plays such a role in his position or her position as a parent, has veered away from the commendable standard for believers. These are the kind of children that will often have comfort in their marital relationships either by involving their parents or the parents dabbling into their affairs before they are satisfied that the marriage is on proper course. The new family will not have the opportunity of beginning to grow until such parents die. And it can be a regular war in settling differences where the new family is a joining of children from such dishonest parents. If the parents of one of the parties (the wife or husband) is the president, the other party has only the option of submitting or suffering some costs, even if the child of the president is wrong. This is not different where the child of a president goes to school with a motorcade or a security personnel. That is not the standard of Islam if the leader is a believer. However, if by becoming a president the child and wife become smaller ones, it is dishonest as none of them will be accountable for the abuse he is permitting them and they will only be wasting the time they should invest in their own growth and development. And the cost can eventually be high. If one is a leader, it is a burden of discipline required to support others to increase, expand and promote good. It is not an opportunity to be reckless, loose or play god. This is at the informal level.

At the same informal level, the person of the president does not cease to be a friend or a relative of someone or some people. It will be dishonest to suspend or cancel or abuse undertakings, obligations, promises or commitments that are legal, with them, just because one has become president. This is neither part of the requirement for making a good president nor excusable. Such amounts to double dishonesty. The least consequence is the example of woman the Prophet reported to have seen in punishment. Jibril explained to him that she kept a cat without feeding it. It was dishonest of her because it is an abuse of their relationship. Believers must beware of the challenge of being asked by Allah on the Day of Resurrection why He was denied of a need. And the believer will discover that serving some rightful person would have been serving Allah. The denial will justify Allah's denial of the person what he will need. A pathetic case I am aware of is the case of two persons who promised to provide water supply in a community if the righteous members plead with Allah to grant them success. Each of them got more than they asked for and turned their back. There is another who undertook to raise the name of Allah for the pleasure of Allah. Allah in His infinite mercy and power showered him with favours. But turned his back. Like those who promised water supply, they devised means of avoiding the witnesses of Allah to please themselves. But they forget that the affair of Allah is His and His Will is not resistible. I have also seen that Allah has brought another person who provided the water. Dishonesty is the summary of evil pursued by hypocrisy.

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money (to compensate for wrong deeds), but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him."

(Bukhari)

At the formal level, it is more disastrous. The simple reason is that the leader is in this case expressly committed for the good and safety of the people with different and contradictory identities. The president in this case is required to be universal by enabling optimal good across all without allowing any one to be harmed. These will include the relationship between his family, his relatives, his friends, those he knows or has met, those he does not know and has not met, those he can know or meet, those he cannot know or meet, those who do not want to meet him, those who do not like him, those who hate him, etc.

It was narrated that Abu Hurairah (RA) that: the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “There are three supplications that will undoubtedly be answered: the supplication of one who has been wronged; the supplication of the traveller; and the supplication of a father for his child.” (Ibn Majah)

This is more tricky and challenging. To enable him be honest, any party that is not directly involved in his management of affairs must gradually and clearly understand that its non-involvement is not a disadvantage or harmful. While it is common for every party to claim right of joining, it is not disputable that when unfitting members are opportune, it fails to serve both the responsibility of the leader and that of the party, that misbelieved physical representation and participation for representation of principles. The burden is on the leader to be honest in ensuring service to all without sacrificing appearance representation completely. It will for that reason be irresponsible to listen or oblige those who are hypocritical about this, even if they had equally been leaders because it is dishonest. But it will be unacceptable and a slight to subject a society of thirty seven families to one family. It is worse if that family is reported to be reckless and irresponsible in personifying the duties on the shoulders of the president. If formal arrangements will provide for transparency, orderliness, procedures, accountability, audit, discipline along with duties and rewards, it will be most

dishonest to enable or ignore anyone who will partake in the affair of management along with the leader informally even on intermittent or temporary terms.

This is why the evaluation of leadership performance is very hard. This is more so in our setting where the person seeks for the burden and struggles to get it. If on top of this he sleeps happily and even celebrates along with attributes of dishonesty, it will be most unfortunate. The society and Allah will not be on his side.

Narrated Ibn Umar (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, “Oppression will be a darkness on the Day of Resurrection.” (Bukhari)

Bakkar ibn Abdul-Aziz (RA) reported from his grandfather that the Prophet (SAW), said, “Allah will defer whatever wrong actions He wills until the Day of Rising except for tyrannical behaviour, disobeying parents or cutting off relatives. He will punish the one who commits those things in this world before he dies.” (Al-Adab Al-Mufrad)

But this is not the end of the evaluation of a dishonest leader against an honest one because history builds up positively or negatively. Do leaders not do as their predecessors did or children like parents or otherwise? In Islam, it is consequential. Thus, the idea of ‘my turn’ is both irresponsible and unacceptable for a leader – whether a Muslim or non-Muslim or an unbeliever. An oppressor or a tyrant is the same. Whatever a leader sets for reference will remain his. A leader has no excuse to be good or right at the formal level and be irresponsible at the informal level or careless at the formal level and be commendable at the informal level.

Narrated Ibn Jarir ibn Abdullah (RA): from his father that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “Whoever starts a good tradition which is followed, then for him is a reward, and the likes of their rewards of whoever follows him, there being

nothing diminished from their rewards. And whoever starts a bad tradition which is followed, then for him is the sin, and the likes of the sins of whoever follows him, there being nothing diminished from their sins.” (Tirmidhi)

REMINDER NUMBER EIGHT

It was narrated that Al-Qasim ibn Muhammad (RA) said: I heard my paternal aunt say: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said; “Whoever among you is appointed to a position of authority; if Allah wills good for him, He will give him a righteous minister who will remind him if he forgets and help him if he remembers.” (Nasa’i)

Who is a righteous minister? And will he drop from the heavens or be appointed by the nomination of an Angel?

To begin with, the position of authority is a burden because mankind are basically created to strive to be good, then the blessings and mercies of Allah will descend upon them. Allah who created mankind has sent down His Message and sent the final Messenger to complete His Guidance. No single person is born righteous without learning and living right to become guided. And it is a sociological process. The child learns from parents. Parents learn from experience and elders in the knowledge and discipline of what is right. The children then grow to join them. In Islam, the best process has been established. Allah revealed and taught the Prophet through Jibril, he lived it by example and was succeeded by his rightly guided companions. And we have three generations for reference between the BEST led by the Messenger of Allah, the better and the good.

The Amir is therefore not a joyful status except he is empty of the truth. It is like being asked to farm wolves, sheep, chickens, eagles, eggs and pythons together and happily accepting it.

It is impossible to lead or even rule alone. An order of lieutenants will be necessary. Are not all men vicegerents of Allah? Is anyone of men created condemned? That is not the standard of Islam. The first challenge of the Leader is that he is bearing the crown of securing and enabling prosperity of all

irrespective of the conditions he has found them. The only basis of discrimination that will be justifiable will be what opposes and will obstruct such realization by any member or a group of members. And in the process no individual or group shall share by dictating to him, what must be done. This singular privilege is what can qualify him for tyranny if and when he abuses it.

Thus, a leader is not expected to be a blank, empty or ignorant person in the basic knowledge of the truth and discipline that is right for himself and others. This must be, apart from any disciplinary exposure or skills he may possess. It will be unfitting for a barrister at law who is neither sincere nor respectful of others, to be entrusted with the affairs of others – that will definitely include his seniors, his juniors, his friends, his enemies, etc. Age can also become consequential because it is the necessary foundation for possible exposures for maturity. So, it is unlikely that a leader may possibly be the best in the society. It is even rarely possible to have a better than most of the good members in the society, with our gambling methods of making leaders. We are yet to commonly have good people pooling to challenge a clear better person to take the mantle of leadership, not to talk of better persons engaging one that is better than them. But because this ought to be the approach, for optimal commitment and easier results we have to make do with less.

In our case, a prospective leader starts off from an ambition of getting the right things done informed by the satisfactory self-assessment of at least more suitability than the incumbent. But the standard of Islam is that the prospective leader be the considered invitation of believers of good knowledge and discipline. Then the aid of Allah will easily flow. This is contrary to fighting for it by means including blackmail, thuggery, name dropping and unrealistic appearances. This is why characteristics like asserting to solve problems within a given period or changing the prices of things or that winning is certainly for one, etc. are immodest. It is even common to exclude by the grace of Allah.

Consequently, head or tail, a leader needs a righteous minister to remind him if he forgets and to help him when he remembers. In reference to the history of the Prophet (SAW), it can be said that, every leader needs an UMAR. It was Umar (RA) that raised the need for hijab for the decency of women believers and a revelation to that effect followed. It was Umar (RA) who raised the need for the discipline of the wives of the Prophet (SAW) and a stern revelation followed, giving the option between total obedience and relief to pursue the world. It was Umar (RA) who recommended prayer by the spot of Abraham in the Ka'ba and a revelation followed. It is Umar who is among those promised Paradise by Allah before their death. It was in the Paradise of Umar the Prophet (SAW) sighted a woman and reported that he passed on when he remembered the *ghira* of Umar. Indeed in the beginning, there were two Umars at the time of ignorance who were courageous. And the Prophet (SAW) invoked Allah to guide one in his support. It fell on Umar ibn Khattab. And his first mark was to have the prayer called aloud and openly. Today, even non-believers make talent hunt.

The first deduction from this tradition is that a leader is required to be of reasonable level of knowledge and discipline of what is right in his own livelihood. The second is the effort to connect with a satisfactorily good or better person in the knowledge and discipline of what is right against what is wrong. And most importantly, to submit with sincerity to the encouragement or guidance of the person. As a minister, the person must be given close access.

From this aide, the leader must appreciate and welcome criticism or disagreements with what the leader intends to commit or in the process of committing or may have committed. Any leader who is a believer and enjoys only praises from lieutenants is vulnerable to doom. In the tradition of Islam only Allah is entitled to praise. He loves it so much that He praises Himself and has enjoined believers to praise Him. This is His unique right because He is faultless. For a believer, what is recommended is to sincerely acknowledge the relationship

between a person and a success. This will be specific to particular activities or incidents. It must not be conclusive because only Allah knows the beginning, the end, the inside, the outside, the genuine or falsity of any person and his actions.

A believer who is a leader and either rests on relations or non-relatives who seek to please him or share with him the opportunities of his trust for other objectives is a failure. And it will amount to irresponsibility to protect or shield such rascals even after their harm has been pointed out. This is because leadership is a service to the Ummah and worship to Allah. It will be arrogant to resist transparency for the reason that evil can be defended by wits or force. The difference between a right leader and a hypocrite is submission to Allah and avoiding the plain and straight path.

A hypocritical leader is the one who takes offense with such a person, whether appointed by him or a goodly associate outside appointment machinery or a volunteer or a stranger, with such attributes. The most foolish leader ceases or cuts off relationships with such persons. Wise leaders welcome such people. Intelligent leaders invite such people. Allah-fearing leaders visit such people. But those that Allah does not will good for, either do not get such persons or gets them and drives them away and will not benefit from them even if they are in his cabinet.

An-Nawas ibn Sama'an (RA) narrated that a man came asking the Messenger of Allah (SAW) about righteousness and sin. So the Prophet (SAW) said: "Righteousness is good behaviour, and sin is what fluctuates in your chest, and you would hate that the people discovered it about you." (Tirmidhi)

REMINDER NUMBER NINE

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): The Prophet (SAW) said, “If Allah loves a person, He calls Gabriel saying: ‘Allah loves so and so; O Gabriel, love him.’ Gabriel would love him, and then Gabriel would make an announcement among the residents of the Heaven, ‘Allah loves so-and-so, therefore, you should love him also.’ So, all the residents of the Heavens would love him and then he is granted the pleasure of the people of the earth.” (Bukhari)

Do not be fooled and do not be foolish. Do not be illogical and do not be senseless. Appearances are not necessarily true or right. Are we not familiar with photo tricks? Do certified university graduates not appear for interviews and their performance fail to meet less than minimum capacity? Have some dropouts from schools not excelled in the real world? In the same terms, submissions are not necessarily right. Are there no false oaths? Are paid witnesses not real? Have delegates from primary elections not agreed to support a candidate and end up supporting another? Do people not get raised or mentioned by nominations for honours? Are all nominations confirmed for honour of the right or even responsible people? Does the president of the United States not see himself and is believed to be the leader of the world? Do celebrities not have fans running to millions?

A believer should know that Allah is pure and only clean things and people can be associated with Him. The believer should know that the instruction is that Allah can and expresses love for His righteous servants and His creations partake in the same. No one should therefore loose his knots to believe that he is one, because some people have read this hadith in relation to him. There is no absolute guarantee of being right. The part of a believer is to strive to his utmost in right compliance to what is right and true according to guidance.

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "If Allah wants to do good to somebody, He afflicts him with trials." (Bukhari)

The first guide is in completion of what is necessary and topping it up with what is commendable. This is the believer that is on the path. For every and all believers, the compulsory aspects of the five pillars of Islam followed by commendable ones apply. This is irrespective of whether the believer is married or not. Whether a man or woman. This means that if he or she is married, the same principles apply. The compulsory aspects of marital duties or discipline and the commendable aspects. Where the person is an entrepreneur or a scholar, there is no difference. A leader is not different. This is the believer that seeks Allah, continues to do so and may be favoured by Allah meeting him. It applies to an individual, a family, a group or nation.

And Allah did not promise a free meeting or recognition. What He has promised is cleanliness as the path. The believer will clean himself by negating all major prohibitions followed by as much minor ones as possible. An example is not to eat pork. Then to eat just enough as against filling up with halal food or drink. It is on this plane one will appreciate the association of eating egg with pride. Beyond cleaning oneself, this cleaning extends to relationships. For entrepreneurs, measures must be full and the material must be permissible. All the things doubtful are out, along with prohibited ones. For scholars and teachers absolute sincerity is the challenge in ensuring that what is clear is not mixed up with what is complicated or controversial. And for a political leader the immediate welfare of all is the forefront priority and not catching thieves. Here, time is of great significance. The leader has no right to do as he pleases. He must be committed enough and be seen to strive to achieve his duties with quality time. Every student can become a first class material if he has all the time. Unfortunately it does not make sense because learning cannot be tied to what suits every individual. The meeting point is what is admissible between minimum time

and maximum time. The ultimate justification for this is that no one knows when he will die. Living is thus based on a rate that is generally understandable as rational and sensible. This means that a leader must not waste the lives of people, directly or indirectly. The challenge that believers have to face is to achieve the best in the earliest possible time. Leadership is an affair that connects the leader to the people for the benefit of the people, kindly, responsibly, rationally, sensibly and togetherly, with the largest number of good, better and best members. This is because it is the affair of Allah and the people and not the personal or private affair of the leader. Then he will be accountable for the management.

It was narrated from Anas ibn Malik (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “The greatest reward comes with the greatest trial. When Allah loves a people He tests them. Whoever accepts that wins His pleasure but whoever is discontent with that earns His wrath.” (Ibn Majah)

Is Muhammad (SAW) not the best of all believers? Is he not the most tried? Even his fever is that of two persons. Was he not physically wounded in a jihad? Did some of his wives not connive out of jealousy? Did he not get angry over the mischief rumour on his wife, until Allah cleared her? Is the superiority of his generation not based on the greatest trials with their physical bodies and wealth for their souls?

The scholars have the duty of not misguiding leaders or the common folks by issuing certificates they neither possess nor are authorized to issue. And a leader must deal with whoever lures him into such belief. This will be the gesture of modesty on his part. Silence or pretending to be neutral after hearing such association is an indication of enjoying it and amounts to hypocrisy.

It may be more tolerable to appreciate a declaration by the *ulama* that a leader appears to be Allah-fearing after confronting him over burning affairs of the people, on the standard of Islam. Because truth that is right is impersonal and the

purpose the leader is entrusted to submit to, he must be transparently accessible and submit to evaluation by the learned and disciplined. The less or absence of this opportunity, the distant a leader who is a believer will be from good reminding. The more he may suffer from isolation or blindness of the right connection between truth and reality. This is far, far, far superior to media chat in democracies. Those who are naive, ignorant or mischievous about the trappings of leadership and immature in cognate experiences of the connection between leadership and expectations of citizens are not fit for this. PAID representatives are likely to be worse.

And the more a leader is rightly knowledgeable and disciplined the greater his capacity and prospect to weather through the trials to his utmost.

A leader who has the misfortune of being surrounded or supported by either ignorants or people with knowledge but of wild ambitions or carefree aides or those who fear the leader against the fear of Allah, the consequences will be immodest.

Anyone who associates a serious leader who believes with this kind of certificate should be asked the simple question: Is this knowledge on witness?

REMINDER NUMBER TEN

Aisha (RA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “Six are cursed, being cursed by Allah and by every Prophet that came: The one who adds to Allah’s Book, the one who denies Allah’s *Qadr*, the one who rules with tyranny by which he honours whom Allah has debased, and he dishonours whom Allah has honoured, and the one who legalizes what Allah forbade, and the one from my family who legalizes what Allah forbade, and the abandoner of my Sunnah.” (Tirmidhi)

To curse is to damn or invoke retribution for someone in reaction to committing wrong. From day to day experiences, everyone can do it. However only two categories are generally considered to be of value or significance. The one is by a parent to a child. This is because of spending part of their lives in living for the child in joy – regardless of the difficulties they might have had to overcome. And they are the first to teach them and can claim them for ever. This relationship is special or unique since it cannot be adjusted or changed. Indeed it never arises with choice or consultation. The second is spiritual, in the connection between Allah and His creations. Accordingly, we know those or what has been cursed. There are among animals and men and nations and spirits. The worst that is bearing this curse is Satan. The common consequence of bearing a curse is that the affairs of the believer or creature becomes valueless. The ultimate purpose of worship that is the attainment of *Jannah* is set aside. In effect, it is a certification or qualification for being hosted in the Hell Fire. And it is the discretion of Allah to keep the person there on the status of permanent resident or temporary one. Allah forbid either, considering the standard quality of Fire, what is minimum torment and the length of time compared to this worlds arrangements.

Then if a believer can stand the chance of bearing the curse of Allah (SWT) Himself and all His chosen Leading servants, the prophets, the most foolish and

hopeless thing that a believer will inflict upon himself will be ignorance of the chance or conditions along with approaching such conditions. Is it rational and sensible for a man to keep a hippopotamus, a python, a bear as a pet? Do not only sick people do it? Will it be rational, sensible or godly to sympathize with any of the keepers who falls victim of any of them? But are we not aware of such relationships and gradually entertaining them as part of fun? Extreme abnormalities are therefore not only possible and live with us like pigs and Satan but, they can appear to be safe until something happens. These examples are not useful for any believer to investigate for establishing the truth or otherwise. It rests with Allah and His Messenger. For example the Prophet (SAW) has cursed any believer who changes his presentation from how Allah has created him. Even dressing like a different gender or tattooing are extremities. Cursed people, things or creatures are one terrible points of trial for believers. For Allah has not promised that those who submit will not be tried. Those who join the path or party of Satan are a source of trials to those who choose to thread the right, middle and straight path of Allah, His Messenger and the Sincere, their men and their womenfolk.

This hadith specifically identifies one of such people, whether believers or not, who venture into adding anything to the Book of Allah – the Qur'an. Believers know from the Qur'an that there were revelations of Allah for the guidance of believers before the Qur'an. The scriptures that are specifically mentioned are like the Zabur and Injil. The Qur'an further confirms that these scriptures were tampered with and is the source or reason of the seeming and experienced inconsistency in the progression from one to another. The Qur'an for that reason clarifies what is wrong and completes the message. Above this, Allah granted us a living model that is like one of us and makes it applicable to mankind and Jinns across the worlds. The bonus over this is that its protection rests with Him. This goes to indicate that although it is a great sin to attempt to add anything to the

message, a believer or unbeliever may attempt to do so. The assurance however that is it will be a futile attempt. And we have experienced the mass production of a copy with such attempt but it was discovered and discarded. Those who successfully did it to earlier messages are in the frontline of this bearing and whoever ventures the same will only follow suit. Even among men we abhor plagiarism and copyright laws can be stringent. What more of mis-producing an original work? Why will one do to Allah what we hate for ourselves? Imagine a fake copy of the constitution of a country injected with corruption as legal and subject to award, what sanction will the person deserve? Praise be to Allah who has made it possible for believers to keep it accurately in their memories. And blessed be the Ummah for keeping and improving on this tradition.

This risk is especially for the literate to beware. And from modern disciplines, those in the arts and classics or philosophy are probable slipperers in this direction. This connects to the specific warning that the Qur'an is not poetry and the Messenger of Allah (SAW) is not a poet. As complex as the width and depth of meanings that can be discovered or understood, of the message of the Qur'an, it is plain and simple for understanding and practice to attain *Jannah* by any believer of average intelligence. Those parts that have hidden meanings do not give those who understand them or gamblers in the interpretations any advantage with Allah. For instance, the compulsory prayers in a day are five and a prayer has ten portions of reward. Achieving it is not by just knowing them but practicing them. And the most knowledgeable is not necessarily the best practitioner.

The second cursed person is the one who denies Allah's *Qadr*. This is one example in the shade of beliefs. A believer is simply required to believe that the beginning, the process and the end of his fate, regarding success or failure in all matters, on the purpose of his creation is known, ordered and realized by the Will of Allah alone. The requirement on the part of a believer is to DISCOVER his fate. And what is right is clearly defined against what is wrong. What is doubtful

is a risk for whoever chooses. The polemical relationship between predestination and free will is for those given of understanding. The consequences of generating schools from this is out of the fold of the requirement for success. And the instructions of the Prophet (SAW) relating to this settles any dragging between the talkative and the compliant believer. The Prophet (SAW) instructed that believers are to strive goodly to their utmost without overbearing themselves as Allah does not get tired of rewarding good deeds but the believer can get exhausted. And the end deeds indicate the fate of a believer. This made the case of a fervent warrior who ended up committing suicide instructive against a murderer who sincerely sought for Allah. And the new convert who achieved martyrdom completes the picture of Allah knowing the truth and doing as He pleases without denying those who submit their rewards. How can one begin to create compartments of responsibility between man and Allah when it is Allah that created him including his provisions and capacities for abilities? How does one want to explain the submission of cows and horses to men for various uses and benefits whereas they are stronger than men? Is training or taming an absolute answer? The denial of the *Qadr* of Allah amounts to denying Him. Why then will such not deserve the curse of Allah and His prophets?

Narrated Imran (RA): I said, “O Allah’s Messenger (SAW)! Why should a doer (people) try to do good deeds?” The Prophet (SAW) said, “Everybody will find easy to do such deeds as will lead him to his destined place for which he has been created.” (Bukhari)

The leader who rules with tyranny is another. When Allah grants one that advantaged position which compels or requires fellow men to submit to him, his duty is to lead and guide them to Allah along with himself if he is a believer. In our setting of democracy, the leader who is not a Muslim or even a believer is required by Allah to enable believers serve Him. And this is provided for in our constitution. Any leader who obstructs this by whatever guise is cursed by Allah

because he has transformed into an animal. But tyranny does not begin and end with obstruction of people's rights to serve Allah. The leader that raises those that Allah has turned away from due to their traits or records of injustice, mischief, wickedness and corruption is a tyrant. By so doing, he will make it difficult for the people to be served optimally. The flag bearer of the collective interest of the public must not be a trickster neither is he required or preferred to be a hypocrite nor his lieutenants or ambassador. Allah is for everybody. Religion is a voluntary thing. There is no difference between a Muslim tyrant, a non-Muslim tyrant and a tyrant who is an unbeliever. They all stand cursed.

This is why there is no difference between any leader or ruler who is a tyrant and a descendant of the Messenger of Allah who encroaches into the boundaries of Allah to make what Allah has forbidden legal. It does not matter whether the society is claiming to be military, democracy, monarchy, communist or religious.

And for leaders in the Ummah, be they scholars, politicians, entrepreneurs, professionals or parents, if they venture into abandoning the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) they stand cursed. His Sunnah covers what he instructs, what he encouraged, what he did and what he loved. Anyone who makes subtraction from these stands cursed.

All shades of leaders from a husband through a group leader, a senior colleague, the individual believer and leaders that are non-Muslims or unbelievers can fall into this curse. May Allah save the sincere.

REMINDER NUMBER ELEVEN

It was narrated that Abdullah said: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: ‘Whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, and whoever cannot afford it should fast, for it will be a restraint (*Wija*) for him.’” (Nasa’i)

Whenever the subject of marriage comes up, it is easy or common to miss its wider scope beyond the individual, the man who is instructed to take a wife. And the interpretation or meaning is restricted to the basic or foundation meaning. This meaning is the covering or protection of man from the sin of fornication. As such a believer who is not married and can find a suitable partner and offer an honourable gift should do so. If this basic ability is not there he is encouraged to take to fasting. However, the farthest he can go is like the tradition of Dawud (AS). To fast every alternate day.

The question is, how many have taken to this instruction and not found the favour of Allah opening up for them to get married? It is certainly not the practice. The point that is missed is that marriage is half of our religion or submission foundation. Whoever is married has a companion and the honour of leadership assigned. And it is a fair opening for trials. The instruction of Muhammad (SAW), who has no power to provide the means to the believer is to direct him to Allah who provides – on the best platform. A fasting believer cannot be one who ignores or abandons Salat or engages in careless talk or actions, during the day or night. And does not Allah bless His slaves as He pleases, either obliging their pleas or more? Did Sulayman (AS) not ask for wisdom and had a Kingdom added to it?

So, it is wrong to assume that the standard for basic take off for good closes the scope. But we strive to have more cars, more houses, more money, more companies, more appointments, more certificates, more honours, more foods, more drinks etc., the better of these and the variety of these. Indeed hypocrites

engage mistresses and *Zina* arrangements along with their marriage or without marriage. But they will scream monogamy is the standard and holier for justice.

We are consequently trapped in the admixture of ignorance and selfishness rather than submitting to the guidance of Allah and His Messenger. We want to reserve marriage for only pleasure and self-aggrandizement. But Allah is irresistible and most merciful. Do those who practice monogamy affirm that they make the best or better parents or relationships or children or happiness? Are we witnesses to such?

This is one country in which one aspect of building unity is marriage promotion across the geography of Nigeria. But how many leaders have married across like late Ado Bayero who got to Ilorin or Ganduje who gave his daughter out? But the youths who should learn are encouraged to plunge into it without examples. Moreover at what age is it impossible to get honourably married? Can an elder not marry a widow or divorcee? If it is common will the cementing not have become evident? Shall we not be exposed to appreciating and supporting each other on the terms of universal truth? Do the leaders in the Ummah not need to give this example? Is marriage just for sex? Or have they not been able to afford it. Is the ability in their case money? What a shame. Majority of them identify with monogamy, actually live plural lifestyles or in real frustration or all. How can such bear the true flag of the Messenger of Allah (SAW)? Those who are ashamed or fear to tread the right path must not expect to stand with the Sincere.

CLOSING WARNING

Narrated ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr (RA): The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “Indeed Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, created His creation in darkness, then He cast His Light upon them, so whoever is touched by that light he is guided, and whoever is not, he goes astray. It is for this reason that I say that the pens have dried with Allah’s knowledge.” (Tirmidhi)

Then what excuse shall one have against seeking Allah to get out of darkness? Has the message not reached us? Shall we be able to deny or actually deliberately ignore?

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “The (Last) Hour shall not come till the sun rises from the place of its setting. And on the day when it rises from the place of its setting even if all the people together affirmed their faith, it would not be of any avail to one who did not believe previously and derived no good out of his belief.” (Muslim)

To be sure, your last hour that is best is before your death that comes up before the above sign. Whoever is favoured to live and dies before the revelation of the sign and fails to make the best use of it, is the one who has refused to be admitted into *Jannah*. And who knows when and where he will die? May Allah distant us from witnessing the signs, as they will appear when only the expression of *shahada* as a fanciful tradition is scantily left. But other leading signs are already (part of us) here, preceding the example that is out of us. All the abuses or drawbacks in upholding the Qur’an and Sunnah within the Ummah. These characteristics of degeneration are the negative subtle ways in which men resist, cut down or avoid the abundant *Rahama* of Allah. One example is major or little shirk by leaders who are believers. It has several consequences. The lieutenants and followers who are ignorant adopt it as properly part of Shariah. It becomes a tradition for following generations. Another example is the commission of seers

by leaders. The tradition of reference to seers eventually becomes part of the orientation of the masses. Pure knowledge becomes corrupted. What is for appreciation and fancy becomes a primary standard. This orientation of leaders is inevitably joined with moral laxity because the personalities of the seers have become the reference point. Leaders and the society are therefore reduced to livelihood by **WHATEVER WORKS** without regard to rightness. **BUT** the first standard and path to Allah is righteousness. *Zina*, pen robbery and lies with women leading or in competition have become the colours of our history. As with the leaders, so applies to the followers and the youths that follow from the families.