
THE MESSAGE OF ISLAM

BY:

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Translated by:

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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allah. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His messenger Muhammad, his companions, his family and his followers until the day resurrection.

I am very happy to introduce this book (the Message of Islam) to all readers (Muslims and non-Muslims) for two reasons: the first is that I know brother Abd al-Raman al-Sheha for about a year now. I have dealt with him and found him to be one of the finest people I have met. By the grace of Allah, he has a good character and he is dedicated to the cause of serving Allah to the best. The second is that I find this book to be interesting and beneficial. The reader, whether being a Muslim or not, will find a presentation that is logical, orderly, and supported with evidence. I also find this book to be easy to read while containing all the necessary information about Islam.

The subject of this book is important not only because we need to refine our understanding of Islam, but also because many people don't have a comprehensive and yet detailed concept of Allah's way of life. Many followers of Islam limit the role of religion into mere acts of worship confined to the mosque or in times of hardships and difficulties. This is an incomplete and distorted understanding of Islam. Allah is perfect and his religion (or way of life) is complete and comprehensive. It is the fault of some followers of Islam who project this great and beautiful religion in a bad image.

As a reader, you need to read the entire book, so that you will know to what extent religion covers every aspect of our daily life. I am sure that at the end, by Allah's grace, you will pray for the author and you will be inwardly and outwardly rewarded.

I pray that Allah would reward my brother Abd al- Rahman Al-Sheha for writing this book and for all his effort in the cause of serving Islam, Muslims and humanity. All praise is due to Allah the Almighty.

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P r e f a c e

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful...

Praise be to Allah, Peace and blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger, Muhammad, and all his family and companions.

Allah, the Exalted, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘O People of the Scripture! Come to a word that is just between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for Lords besides Allah.’ Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:64).

Islam is the religion of pure human nature and clarity. It urges and calls its followers to ask about all things that are incomprehensible to them or the questions that occur to them. They are recommended to consult competent, knowledgeable authorities. In Islam there are no obscure or mysterious things that we have only to believe without being allowed to ask about them. Allah, Glory to Him says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...So ask the followers of the scriptures if you know not.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An Nahl, 16:43).

As human beings, we have many questions in our mind that require answers, which should be logical, convincing and unambiguous ones... It is the Noble Qur’aan which provides such answers in such fluent, convincing, and incomparable style. Let us observe these basic queries:

- If man inquires about his origin, he will find the answer in Almighty Allah's saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And indeed We created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay. Thereafter We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest firmly fixed. Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (fetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mu’minun, 23:12-14)

- If he inquires about his status in this Universe and his rank among other creatures, he will find the answer in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And indeed We have honored the children of Adam and We have carried them on land and sea and have provided them with good and pure things and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Isra’, 17:70).

- If he also inquires about the cause of his creation, he will find the answer in the following verses, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And I (Allah) have only created the jinn and mankind that they may worship Me (alone). No sustenance do I require of them nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allah is He who gives (all) sustenance, Lord of Power, the Most Strong.” (The Qur’aan Chapter Adh-Dhariyat, 51:56-58)

“Did you then think that We had created you in jest and that you would not be brought back to us (for account)? So Exalted is Allah, the True King: There is no god but He, the Lord of the Throne of Honor!” (The Qur’aan Chapter Al-Mu’minun, 23:115-116).

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- If man then asks about this Creator Who is the only One worthy of worship, he will find the answer in the following words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He is Allah beside Whom there is no other god, Who knows the unseen and the seen, He is the All-Beneficent, All-Merciful. He is Allah, beside Whom there is no other god; - the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Watcher over His creatures, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. Glory to Allah! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker (of all things), the Giver of forms. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth, glorify Him: And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Hashr, 59:22-24)

- If he asks about the attitude he should assume with the things Allah has created for him in this universe, he will find the answer in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to Allah, if it is Him you worship.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:172).

- If he inquires about the true religion that he should embrace and the path which leads to happiness in this life and in the hereafter, he will surely find the response in the Qur’aanic verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” (The Qur’aan Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:85)

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- If he inquires, too, about the path that leads to peace of mind/heart and mental stability, he will find the answer in the following words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those who have believed and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah: verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ar-Ra’d, 13:28)

- If he asks about the state (position) of those who lack belief in Allah, Glory to Him, and in His revelations, he will get the answer in the following, the meaning of which is translated as:

“But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e.:My Message), verily for him is a life of hardship and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.” (The Qur’aan Chapter Taha, 20:124).

- If he asks about his destiny in this life, he will find the answer in these words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Every soul shall taste of death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. Whosoever is removed from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he is indeed successful. The life of this world is but a comfort of illusion.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:185).

- If he inquires about the possibility of re-creating him, he will find a satisfactory answer in Allah's words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And if he has coined (compared) for Us a similitude, and has forgotten the fact of his creation, saying: Who will revive these bones when they have rotted away? Say: He will revive them Who produced them the first time, for He is All-Knower of every creation.” (The Qur’aan Chapter Yasin, 36:78-79).

And in the following words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O mankind! If you are in doubt concerning the Resurrection, then Lo! We have created you from dust, then from a drop of sperm, then from a clot, then from a little lump of flesh shapely and shapeless, that We may make (it) clear for you. And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed time and afterward We bring you forth as infants...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Hajj, 22:5)

If he asks what will happen after death, the answer will delineate that the matter is one of eternal life after death and resurrection: That is, the destination will be either eternity in Paradise or in Hell, and there is no third destination, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Those who disbelieve among the people of the scripture and the idolaters, will abide in the Fire of Hell. They are the worst of created beings. And Lo! Those who believe and do good works are the best of created beings. Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden underneath which rivers flow, wherein they dwell forever. Allah has pleasure in them and they have pleasure in Him. This is (in store) for him who fears his Lord.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baiyina, 98:6-8).

Dear reader:

I shall reaffirm that Islam offers optimum solutions to all current problems of the world and that implementation of the Islamic way of life, will, by all means, resolve such problems. The World has tried all doctrines that proved with the passage of time, to be incapable of solving its problems. So why does the World not accept the Islamic way of life and implement it for the well-being of the humanity.

F. Filweas,¹ and attributed to some western writers and philosophers, claiming that;

¹ A British naval officer who participated in both World Wars. He was raised as a Christian having a strong belief in the Messiah. Yet he embraced Islam

“Recent newspapers have published articles insinuating that Philosophy and Western writings claim that contemporary religions have become outdated and should be given up. This reveals the pessimism which most Western writers suffer from due to the complexities and obscurities they find in Christianity. Yet they have committed a grave mistake because Islam is the religion which provides the uniquely perfect response that never stops answering – and in the face of every change – it will still be ready to respond.”

Dear reader;

Truthfully speaking, I regret to say that some Muslims nowadays are quite far from actual implementation of Islam's principles and instructions. Unfortunately, they are Muslims only by name and not in the exact meaning of the word. A true Muslim takes the Glorious Qur'aan and the Pure Prophetic Sunnah, the main sources of Islam, as his way of life and code of conduct to which he adheres in all his/her private and public dealings and transactions. A real Muslim is not one who takes those aspects of Islam that suit his own interests, even at the expense of others' interests, while leaving what is in conflict with his own interests even though it is in the best interest of others.

It is absolutely unfair to associate Islam with certain countries or persons. It is wrong and improper to say that practices of the majority of Muslims nowadays in their real actual everyday life in full agreement with Islam's sublime teachings and objectives. The greatest majority of Muslims are quite far from practicing Islam. Islam is not, as some may think, mere religious rites that are practiced at set times only; rather, it comprises belief, law, devotions, transactions and dealings: It is a religion as well as a governmental system, in the full meaning of the word. It has been said, “What a great religion, if only there had been men who put its principles and teachings into action, complied with its commandments and avoided its prohibitions.”

In his book, “Arab Civilization”, Mr. J. S. Restler mentioned three different meanings for the term Islam: *“The first as religion, the*

in 1924 after he studied the Noble Qur'aan and a number of books on Islam. See “What they say about Islam” by Amad Ad-Din Khalil

second as state and government, and the third as culture - in short: it is a unique civilization."

ISLAM is Islam with its belief, devotions, dealings and law (i.e. Sharia), since it was revealed unto Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and is still the same as it was. No change or alteration has occurred to it. It is the people called Muslims who have undergone change and transformation. If one who calls himself a Muslim commits a mistake or something unlawful, this does not mean that Islam enjoins or accepts such behavior. If someone is given, for example, a dismantled vehicle and provided with a comprehensive accurate erection plan (Installation manual) from the manufacturer, but he assembles it incorrectly, can we say that the plan (manual) is incorrect? Rather it should be stated that this person has failed to follow the exact steps in an appropriate manner or to put the procedure fully into effect.

I would kindly invite (request) every reader of this work to have a detached mind, not influenced by religious sentiments or mental biases, with the aim of attaining the truth, not searching for faults and blunders for the sake of slander. The reader is also invited to read seeking to understand through his mind, not through his emotional views, lest he be of those censured by Allah as stated in the Glorious Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

*"And when it is said unto them: Follow that which Allah has revealed, they Say: We follow that wherein we found our fathers, What! Even though their fathers were wholly unintelligent and had no guidance?"
(The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:170).*

That is because a reasonably logical-minded man will not accept a thing unless he has studied it thoroughly and grown familiar with it. When he acquires such familiarity and becomes fully satisfied about its validity, he should not keep it to himself. Rather, he should disseminate his knowledge among people, thereby teaching the ignorant and correcting those who are mistaken.

I shall admit here that I have not covered or researched the subject thoroughly. That is because when you speak about Islam you speak, in

fact, about a comprehensive, all-embracing law which regulates all affairs pertaining to both worldly life and the hereafter. This will in fact, require a book, not a booklet, for explanation. However, I have only made hints on certain principles and basic morals of Islam that pave the way for those who desire to know more about the truth of Islam, supported by verses from the Noble Qur'aan which is the code of conduct for Muslims, and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

One may Say: the laws and regulations of contemporary societies have some similarities to those of Islam. In answer we may ask: Which is earlier: Has Islam preceded contemporary laws? The Islamic Sharia (Law) is over fourteen centuries older than these regulations and laws. Whatever is similar to Islamic laws and regulations may probably be derived from them, especially when we know that there were studies concerned with Islam by non-Muslims, particularly orientalist, with different intentions and objectives, since the beginning of its appearance.

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The Issue of Monotheism in Islam

Islam, like other revealed religions, advocates several precepts and beliefs that Allah has required its followers to believe in and propagate without coercion, in keeping with Allah's commandment, the meaning of which is translated as:

“There is no compulsion in religion...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:256)

One of Islam's fundamentals is the belief in the Oneness of Allah, glory to Him, and directing worship to Him alone. This is the thing for which Allah has created mankind and sent messengers as He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally besought of all! He begets not, nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ikhlās, 112:1-4)

This involves refraining from ascribing partners to Allah, as obvious from Allah's words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Indeed Allah pardons not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. He pardons all save that to whom He wills...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:116)

Islam ascribes the attributes of perfection to Him and glorifies and exalts Him above His creation as in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-seer.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ash-Shura, 42:11).

It has produced proofs of Allah’s oneness in matters of creation, ruling out any possibility of having any partners Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allah, then verily both would have been ruined...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Anbiya’, 21:22).

“...or each god would have assuredly taken away what he had created, and some of them would assuredly have overcome others...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mu’minun 23:91).

It has also called upon man to reflect on his self, the thing closest to him, so that through it he should see, the greatness and majesty of the Creator. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And (also) in yourselves, can you then not see? (The Qur’aan, Chapter Az-Zariyat, 51:21).

It is a call to meditation and reasoning which leads common sense and pure nature to believe in the greatness of Allah.

The human soul is given, since its creation, to recognize the existence of its Creator who has also created this Universe, which demonstrates the greatness of its Creator. That is what scientists call ‘religious inborn instinct or nature; Allah –glorious is He – says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So set your face(i.e;self) toward the religion as a man by nature upright – the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He has created man...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ar-Rum, 30:30)

This nature is inherent in all people without exception. However, some people deny it out of abstinence and pride, and other acknowledge and believe in it. It’s being inherent in everyone is evidenced by the fact that it comes out when it is aroused. When a person falls ill, for instance, or he is struck by an evil or surprised by something unpleasant, you find that he unconsciously cries. O God! Or he just raises his eyes to heaven, recognizing the existence of a great mighty power that is able to save him from his dilemma. This is only depicted in Allah’s words, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And if misfortune touches a man, he cries unto Us (while reclining) on his side or sitting or standing, but when We have relieved him of the misfortune he goes his way as though he had not cried unto Us because of a misfortune that afflicted him.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Yunus, 10:12).

Islam replied to those who were tempted into denying the Almighty Creator by a negative question, Allah said the, meaning of which is translated as:

“Or were they created out of nothing? Or were they (themselves) the Creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they are sure of nothing!” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Fatir, 52:35-36).

If it is impossible for man to come into being by accident, i.e.: without for man to create or bring himself into existence. Common sense and upright nature would admit that every being requires a creator and every effect involves a cause, thus remains the third possibility, i.e. the existence of a Creator. One nomad (bedouin), when asked how he knew about the existence of Allah, said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Droppings suggest the existence of ‘Camel, and footprints are a sign of walking. How about a sky holding mansions of the stars and an earth with tracks and passes; Don’t they indicate the existence of the Most Kind, All-Aware God?”

Fundamentals of Islam

Among the most important fundamentals of Islam are: *prohibition of aggression against life, honor, wealth, mind, offspring, or against the weak and the disabled.*

About the immunity and inviolability of life, the Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And slay not the life which Allah has forbidden save with right...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Isra', 17:33).

About the sanctity of honor Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), nor let women (deride) women who may be better than they are...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Hujurat, 49:11).

“Who so commits a delinquency or crime, then casts (the blame) thereof upon someone innocent, has burdened himself with falsehood and a flagrant crime.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter An-Nisa'a, 4:112)

On the prohibition of trespassing against crops and offspring (of animals or people) Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And when he turns away (from you), his effort in the land is to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and offspring; and Allah does not love mischief.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:205)

When speaking about the rights of the weak, the Qur'aan states the rights of parents, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none save (except) Him, and (that you show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with you, say not “Fie” to them nor repulse them, but

“speak to them a graceful word.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Isra’, 17:23)

And also the rights of orphans, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Therefore, the orphan oppress not.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ad-Duha, 93:9)

“Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better (to improve it).” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Isra’, 17:34)

And the rights of children, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And then you slay not your children because of poverty – We provide for you and for them.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-An’am, 6:151)

On the rights of the sick, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ² says:

“Give food (to the poor), visit the sick, and help to release prisoners from captivity.” (Narrated by Imam Bukhari).

On the rights of the elderly, the Prophet ﷺ says:

“Glorification of Allah involves honoring Muslims who grow old.”

He ﷺ also says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He is not one of us who does not respect our old people and have no mercy with our little children.”

This is all summed up in the following Hadith (Prophets’ famous speech in the farewell speech):

“Your blood, property and honor are as sacred to you, as sacred as this day of yours, in this city of

² This symbol represents a request for Allah to send peace and blessings upon him.

*yours, and in this month of yours.” (Narrated by
Imam Bukhari)*

All people are equal in such matters. This does not mean that other good morals are minor things in Islamic Law. In fact, they are duties that Muslims must stick to.

Features of Islam that Distinguish it from other Religions

1. Its texts have explicitly stated that religion, to Allah, is one and the same, that the prophets sent by Allah to mankind complement each other. These prophets began with Adam, peace be upon him, up to Muhammad ﷺ and the messages of those prophets and messengers are in agreement about calling to the following:

- Belief in the Oneness of Allah, glorious is He, with no associates, equals or likes.
- Belief in Allah, His angels, books, messengers, and the Hereafter.
- Good manners and refinement of the human self by guiding it to the way of reform and happiness in this life and the Hereafter.
- Direct worship of Almighty Allah without the intervention of any intermediaries in worship.
- The establishment of peace and love in human societies. Allah, glory to Him, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He has ordained for you the same religion that He commended unto Noah, and that which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad), and that which We commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus saying: Establish the religion, and be not divided therein. Dreadful for the idolaters is that unto which you call them.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ash-Shura, 42:13)

2. The Islamic Religion is the final and concluding Shari’ah or way of life: there is no religion to follow. Its primal constitution, which is the Glorious Qur’aan, is permanent and preserved and will remain up to the end of this world and all living things. This is indicated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! We, even We, have revealed the Reminder (Qur’aan) and Lo! We verily are its Guardian”. (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nahl, 15:9).

- Allah’s Messenger ﷺ is the last of messengers. There is no messenger or prophet after him. Prophet Muhammad, ﷺ said,

“My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for a space for one brick in a corner”. The people go about it and wonder at its beauty, they Say: “Would that this brick be put in its place!” So I am that brick, and I am the last of the prophets.” (Bukhari)

Issa (Jesus), however will come down in the last days of this world to fill the world with justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice. He will not be sent with a new religion of Muhammad, peace be upon him, as indicated by the last Prophet, ﷺ who said:

“The son of Mariam (i.e.:Jesus son of Mary) will soon descend among you as a Just Rule. He will break the cross, kill the pigs, put an end to jizya³, and wealth will be in such abundance that no one will accept it.” (Imam Ahmad & Bukhari).

To accept this universality, Muslims have been ordered to convey the Message of Islam and present it to mankind as stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that you may be witnesses over mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness over you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:143)

3. Islam completed and perfected the former religious codes which were spiritual in their roots. They addressed the human self and called

³ A tax taken from rich non-Muslims for defending them if they choose do not participate in defense of the nation.

to its purification, but did not take care or regulate worldly and living affairs, in contrast with Islam, which completed and regulated all aspects of life. It has covered all religious and worldly affairs, as will be made clear later. Allah has stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor for you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mai’dah, 5:3)

4. Allah, glory to Him, does not accept that devotion should be directed to other than Him or that anyone or anything should be worshipped as an intermediary between people and their Lord. He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:85)

5. Islam is a universal message addressed to the whole of humanity without exception, in every place and in every time. This message is addressed to humans and jinns,⁴ Arabs and non-Arabs, blacks and whites, male and female, poor and rich. Allah, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And We have not sent You (O Muhammad) except as a bearer of good news and a Warner to all mankind...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Saba, 34:28)

It is a universal religion: not revealed or sent exclusively to one race, class or nation. It unites all people, not on the basis of color, language, region, or lineage, but on basis of a specific creed that combines and unifies them all. Everyone who believes in Allah as his Lord, in Islam as his religion, and in Muhammad ﷺ as his Messenger, has come

⁴ An Arabic word that refers to “spirits.”

under the banner of Islam. Allah, glory to Him, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Lo! I am the Messenger of Allah to you all...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:158)

Allah’s Messenger, ﷺ said,

“I have been granted five (things) which were not granted to anyone before me. I have been supported by a form of fright that spans the distance of one month’s travel. The earth has been made a place of worship and purification for me. Whenever the time of prayer begins for any one of my Ummah (followers) he can pray wherever he is. The spoils of war have been made lawful for me. I have been granted intercession. And every prophet was sent particularly to his own people, whereas I have been sent to all people”. (Bukhari & Muslim)

This does not suggest a lack of belief in earlier messengers or scriptures: Jesus perfected the religion of Moses, and Muhammad perfected the religion of Jesus, and Muhammad closed the chain of prophets and messengers; peace be upon them all. It is part of the complete faith of a Muslim to believe in all the revealed books and prophets before the Prophet Muhammad, and anyone who does believe in all, or any, of them, then he will be a non-Muslim. This is clear from the Prophet’s statement when he was asked about belief. He ﷺ said:

“It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Hereafter and the divine Decree of good and evil.” (Muslim)

6. Islam is distinguished for its divine laws and instructions, which are not man-made and so they are free from defects and faults and from the impact of surrounding effects such as culture, heritage and environment. This is evident in reality: human laws and legislation are alterable – what fits one community may not fit another. For example laws and regulations of a capitalist society do not go well with the

conditions of a socialist one, and vice versa. Each legislator would choose what is in agreement with his aspirations and inclinations. In addition, such laws are unstable, for a more informed and knowledgeable person may object, rescind or add to the work of an earlier legislator.

Islamic law is however ordained by Allah. Its legislator is the Creator of the whole universe and all beings. He also knows all and is aware of all that is suitable for them and all that will bring them benefit in their affairs. Humans, however high their rank may be, have no right to object to or change any divine law, whether by increase or decrease or choosing what agrees with their desires and whims. Allah, glory to him said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And it becomes not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) have any claim in their affair.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ahzab, 33:36)

He also said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Is it a judgement to a people of the time of (pagan) ignorance that they are seeking? Who is better than Allah for judgement to a people who have certainty (in their belief)?” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mai’dah, 5:50)

Islam has introduced absolute, comprehensive and perfect rules and fundamentals that are not subject to change and revision with the elapse of time. It, nevertheless, left particulars and details that are not explicitly stated in the Qur’aan and Sunnah. Therefore, the responsible, authoritative and erudite scholars everywhere at any time may exert their effort to derive and infer verdicts and provisions that are in the public interest which suit the prevailing conditions in human societies at various times and environments. This religious reasoning and investigation – called Ijtihad – is not to be controlled by prejudices and desires but aims to reach truths that are of use to humankind, so that Islam should keep up with, and adapt its detailed regulations with every age and society. The role of the Muslim

government is to bring those divine laws and rules into force and enforce them on everyone, without distinguishing between the rich, the poor, between the noble, the lowly, between the president, or the chief and his subjects, nor between the whites and the blacks. All people are alike and equal before the law.

Bukhari and Muslim narrated, on the authority of A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her, that the Quraysh tribes were concerned about the case of a Makhzumi woman who was accused of theft. They said: "Who will plead on her behalf with Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him?" Some of them suggested – "Who other than Usamah Ibn Zaid, whom the Prophet loves very much, can do so?" As such, Usamah represented her case to the Prophet, who told him:

"Do you intercede in the matter of a grave crime involving punishment prescribed by Allah?"

So saying, he got up and delivered an address in which he said:

"The people who preceded you were destroyed because they use to let noble person go if he committed theft, while punishing a weak person who committed the same crime. By Allah, if Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, had committed this offense I would have cut off her hand".

7. Islam is distinguished by the fact that its texts and sources are original, genuine and intact (with no addition or omission). They are of permanent, eternal authenticity and validity up till the Day of Resurrection. Basic sources of Islamic Shariah are the Qur'aan and the Noble Sunnah. Allah, Exalted be He, has undertaken to preserve the Qur'aan He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Lo! We, even We, have revealed the Reminder (i.e. the Qur'aan) and Lo! We verily are its Guardian."
(The Qur'aan, Chapter An-Nahl, 15:9)

Since its revelation onto Muhammad, ﷺ up to the present, the Qur'aan had not undergone any change, distortion, increase or decrease. Many attempts have been made from the side of those who plotted against Islam to add or delete one word, but their efforts ended in failure. That

is because it was preserved in books and memories as it was recited in prayer or as a form of worship. According to the Gracious Prophet ﷺ:

“Whoever recites one letter from the Qur’aan will get one good reward, and that reward will be equal in recompense to ten good deeds. I do not say that ‘Alif Lam Meem’ is a letter, but ‘Alif’ is a letter, ‘Lam’ is a letter and ‘Meem’ is a letter.” (Tirmidhi)⁵

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

“The best among you are those who have learned the Qur’aan and taught it (to others).” (Bukhari)

For these reasons the Muslims earnestly hastened to teach the Qur’aan to others.

Many a Western scholar admitted the excellence of the Qur’aan and its influence on human thought and sciences. Of such scholars there is Margoliouth,⁶ who was famous for his prejudices against Islam. Yet the greatness of the Qur’aan did not deter him from telling the truth when he pointed out that,

“Researchers are all agreed that the Qur’aan occupied an outstanding rank among the dignified religious scriptures that made history, though the latest of them in revelation. It has surpassed all in its marvelous impact on man. It has created a new human thought and established a unique moral school.”

According to Jean Melia:⁷

⁵ This is in reference to the recited phrase “Alif-Lam-Meem” which appears at the beginning of a number of chapters of the Qur’aan, particularly nos. 2 and 3. Each phonetic word represents the initial of an Arabic letter, so as such it is not an actual word.

⁶ Margoliouth, Introduction to the Koran. Rev. J. M. Rodwell. London 1918.

⁷ Jean Melia: Le Coran Pour La France.

“It is a must to discard the pretension of some French philosophers. The Qur’aan should be recited slowly and deliberately. It has nothing of the charges of opponents that it preaches bigotry. Islam is a heavenly revealed religion, a religion of love, affection and honor, and the most tolerant of faiths.”

Hart Wighischfield⁸ held that;

“One need not feel surprised if it is said that the Qur’aan is the source of sciences. All that the Qur’aan has talked about, such as the earth, human life, trade and craft, was the subject-matter of study by scholars and commentators who shed light thereon in their books and commentaries on the Qur’aan. This opened up a broad latitude of research and reflection which paved the way for the advancement of science with Muslims. Its influence was not limited to Arabs. However, it caused Jewish philosophers to follow in the steps of Arabs in metaphysical questions of religion. It is needless to mention the benefits that Christian theology has derived from Arab research in theology.”

Then there is the case of the Prophet’s Sunnah, meaning his traditions, or acts, statements and confirmations. They are transmitted through a verifiable chain of transmitters, to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. As such the Sunnah represents the second source of the Islamic Law and the exponent of the Qur’aan and its verdicts. The Sunnah has also been preserved from abuse, invention and interpolation, through reliable chains of transmitters known for their integrity and soundness of memory. Such transmitters were upright scholars who devoted their lives to the study of narration from Allah’s Messenger.

Their chains of narration, texts, degree of authenticity, and status of their narrators and transmitters serve as a declaration of their eligibility or invalidation. As such, they sifted through all of the

⁸ Hartwig Hirshfeld: New Researches into Composition and Exegesis of the Qur’aan. London 1902, p.9

traditions (Hadiths) narrated from the Prophet and accepted only authentic ones, so they reached us pure and free from false narration. If one desires to know the way of Sunnah preservation, he can refer to books on the Hadith Science which was established to serve the Prophet's Hadiths, so that he may make sure about the certainty and authenticity of the Prophets' traditions we have received.

8. Islam considers all people equal in regard to their origin and birth, both male and female. Allah, glorious is He, first created Adam, the father of all humanity, and created from him, his wife Eve – the mother of humanity. He made them the origin of all human offspring. The Qur'aan declares ﷻ human equality in their origin:

“O mankind! fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate, and from them both a multitude of men and women have spread abroad. Be careful of your duty toward Allah in Whom you claim (your rights) of one another and toward the wombs (that bore you)...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter An-Nisa'a, 4:1).

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“People are the children of Adam and Adam was (created) from dust.” (Imam Ahmad).

All humans that exist or that ever will exist, are of Adam's progeny. They began with one religion and one language; but being large in number, they spread throughout the earth. This inevitably led to difference of color and nature. This included different ways of thinking and living and different beliefs. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Mankind was but one community, then they differed...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Yunus, 10:19).

Islamic instructions place man, regardless of his race, color, tongue, religion and homeland, on equal terms with his brethren, all equal before Allah. However, differences and conflict arise among them in as much as they are close to, or far from, compliance with Allah's

Law and way of life. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O mankind! Lo! We have created you from male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you in before Allah, is the most pious of you...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Hujarat, 49:13).

Based on this equality confirmed by Islam, all people are equal in freedom in the sight of Islamic Law. This slogan was launched by Caliph 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab fourteen centuries ago when, criticizing someone's harshness, he said:

“When did you enslave people whose mothers bore them free?”

All should have access to:

- Freedom of thinking and opinion. The Prophet, ﷺ required his companions to tell the truth and express their views fearing no blame when he, ﷺ said:

“He who holds back from telling the truth is silent devil.”

The Prophet's Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, put this principle into effect. One man addressed 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab saying: *“Fear Allah, Commander of the Believers!”* One man protested saying: *“You say this to the Commander of the Believers!”* 'Umar said: *“Let him say it. You are useless if you do not say it, and we are useless if we do not accept it from you.”*

On another occasion, when 'Umar was asked why he did not repute or reject Ali's judgement, as it was in conflict with 'Umar's, he answered: *“Had the matter been stated in the Qur'aan and Hadith I would have rejected it. But it is a matter of opinion and opinion is common and nobody is sure which of the two views is more right according to Allah.”*

- Everyone is free to own property and earn his living as stated in the Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“...Unto men a portion from that which they have earned, and unto women a portion from that which they have earned...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:32)

- Everyone should be given the chance to be educated, as stated by the Prophet ﷺ,

“Seeking knowledge is every Muslim’s duty.” (Baihaqi).

Islam requires scholars to disseminate knowledge and not to hide it, so that everyone may benefit by it. This is stated by the Prophet ﷺ:

“Whoever is asked about some knowledge, yet he conceals it, he will be bridled on the Day of Judgement with a bridle of fire.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi).

- Everyone has the right to utilize the resources deposited in this universe by its Creator. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He it is Who made the earth subservient unto you, so walk in the path thereof and eat of His provisions. And unto Him will be the resurrection (of the dead).” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mulk, 67:15).

- Everyone may have access to leadership in society if he is worthy and capable of it. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“If a person is placed in authority over Muslims and he appoints a man over them out of prejudice (in favor of him), Allah’s curse be upon him, and Allah will not accept any good deeds from him, until He throws him into hell-fire.” (Al-Hakim).

All this should be within the framework of Islam, and no aspect of freedom should be in conflict with the freedom of others. Philosopher and Historian, A. J. Toynbee, in his book, “Civilization on Trial”, states,

“Putting an end to racial discrimination and tribalism has been one of the greatest feats and prides of Islam. It is in fact the biggest need of this age. Undoubtedly, English speaking nations have achieved a certain degree of success in inter-linking of peoples and have given mankind good and mercy, but it should be admitted that they failed to get rid of racial and national sentiments.”

9. Islam has no independent spiritual powers like those given to the clergy in other religions. That is because, when it came, it eliminated all intermediaries that are placed or installed between God (Allah) and His servants. It criticized idolaters for their adoption of intermediaries in worship, as appears from the Qur’aanic verse that relates their false argument, the meaning of which is translated as:

“We worship them only that they may bring us near unto Allah.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Sad, 38:3).

Then Allah, Glory to Him, makes clear to them the true nature of these intermediaries, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Those whom you call besides Allah are servants like you. So call on them now and let them answer you, if you are truthful.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:194).

Thus Islam has established and stabilized the concept of direct God-man relationship on the basis of absolute belief in Allah and His revealed ordinances and way of life. Forgiveness must be sought directly from Him with no intermediaries. Whoever commits a sin should raise his hands and pray humbly to Allah for forgiveness. This is clear from the following words , the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever does evil or wrongs his own soul, then seeks pardon of Allah, will find Allah Forgiving, Merciful.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:110)

Islam, unlike other religions, has no clergymen who permit and prohibit as if they were – and they actually consider themselves as–

responsible on behalf of Allah for His servants. Consequently, they legislate for them, control their beliefs and admit whom they will into paradise and prevent whom they will. Allah, Glory to Him says about them, the meaning of which is translated as:

“They have taken as lords besides Allah their rabbis and their monks...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tawbah, 9:31).

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explained:

“They did not worship them; only they obeyed them when they made something lawful or unlawful for them.” (Tirmidhi)

10. Islam gave the individual rights that are due to them from society as well as rights due in the interest of all: The individual works in the interest of society and vice versa. The Prophet ﷺ said: *“The bonds of brotherhood between two Muslims are like parts of a building, one part strengthens and holds the other.”* Then he crossed the fingers of one hand between those of the other (to illustrate the point). (Bukhari)

However in case of conflict between individual and collective interests, the latter are to have priority over the former. As in the case of demolishing a house about to fall or taking out part of it to be added to the street in the public interest (of course after compensating the owner of the house). For example, a man from the Ansar (Muslims immigrants) had a fruit garden. In that garden there were a number of palm trees owned by a man called Samura Ibn Jundub, who used to go into the garden for his palm trees, but he caused harm to the garden and its owner. The owner complained about that to the Prophet ﷺ, so he said to Samura: *“Sell him the palm trees.”* Samura refused. The Prophet, ﷺ said: *“Pull them out.”* He refused. Therefore, the Prophet, ﷺ said to him: *“You are causing harm.”* Then he addressed the garden owner saying: *“Go and pluck out his palm trees.”*

11. Islam is the religion of mercy, pity and sympathy. It called to giving up severity and rudeness and following the Prophet’s example as described in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if you had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from about you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:159)

The Prophet ﷺ said in this connection:

“Merciful people are worthy of Allah’s Mercy. Show mercy to those living on earth and you will receive mercy from the One Who is in Heaven (Allah).” (Tirmidhi).

Islam has established kind and merciful treatment for all people, even with enemies. This is clear in the Prophet’s ﷺ commandment, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Treat prisoners of war kindly.”

If this is the Prophet’s direction about prisoners of war that fight against Muslims, what would you expect his directions would be about peaceful people?

Islam extended its mercy and sympathy even to animals, as seen from the following tradition:

“A woman was thrown into Hell-fire because she shut up a cat until it died. She neither gave it something to eat and drink nor let it pick up its food from the insects and other vermin of the earth.” (Bukahri & Muslim).

The Prophet Muhammad, ﷺ once saw a donkey which had been branded on its face, upon which he said:

”Allah’s curse be on him who has branded it.” (Muslim).

Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, once passed by some boys who had made a bird a target and were shooting arrows at it. Ibn ‘Umar asked:

“Who has done this? May Allah’s curse be upon the person who did this. Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him, has cursed the man who makes a living thing a target for shooting. (Bukhari & Muslim).

Once the Prophet ﷺ passed by a camel whose belly was sticking to his back (due to hunger). On this he remarked:

“Fear Allah and observe your duty to Him with these inarticulate animals...” (Abu Dawood).

If such is Islam’s mercy towards animals, how then would be its mercy towards man, whom Allah has honored more than all other creatures. Allah, glory to Him, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Verily We have honored the children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them above many of those whom We created with a marked preference.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Isra’, 17:70)

Islam has not only required mercy for animals; it has also made it a means of forgiveness from sins and a way to Paradise. This is clear from the following tradition:

“A very thirsty man walking along a path found a well and descended into it. He drank water to his fill and came out, then he saw a dog with its tongue licking up the mud to quench his thirst. The man said to himself that the dog was feeling the same extreme thirst as he had felt a little while before. So he descended once more into the well, filled his leather case with water and came up holding it by his teeth and gave the dog a drink. Allah appreciated this act of this man and forgave his sins.” The Prophet, peace be upon him, was asked: “Messenger of Allah, are we rewarded for kindness towards animals as well?” He said: “There is recompense for kindness to every living thing.” (Bukhari).

12. Islam is not a religion of monasticism, celibacy, devotion of life for the sake of the Hereafter, and abstention from enjoyment of good things created by Allah for man. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah, glory to Him, is pleased to see the effect of His Favors on His servant.” (Tirmidhi).

Islam is not a religion that allows uncontrolled indulgence in this worldly life; it is a religion of moderation that embraces both religious and secular affairs and considers them as complementary to each other; no one aspect should prevail at the expense of another. Allah, glorious is He, points this out, the meaning of which is translated as:

“But seek, with that which Allah has bestowed on you, the abode of the Hereafter, and neglect not your portion of the world, and be kind even as Allah has been kind to you.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Qasas, 28:77)

The Glorious Qur’aan has enjoined, in several verses, balancing the spirit and the body, so it instructed man to remember his physical needs pertaining to earning his living while being busy with worship, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah’s bounty...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Jumu’a, 62:10)

It also called man, while preoccupied with worldly matters and concerns, to remember his spiritual needs by performing the devotions prescribed by Allah, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguiles from remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and paying to the poor their due; who fear a day when hearts and sight will be overturned.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nur, 24:37)

Islam has introduced a way of life that preserves the rights of spirit, body and mind in accordance with a divine Law which keeps people away from going to extremes. As a Muslim is required to control his

soul and bring it to account for its acts, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whoever does good an atom’s weight will see it then, And whose does ill an atom’s weight of evil will see it then.” (The Qur’aan, Az-Zalazlah, 99:7-8),

The Prophet ﷺ said,

“A wise person is one who keeps a watch over himself and calls it to account and does good deeds in preparation for the Hereafter; whereas a helpless person is one who pursues his desires blindly and yet expects from Allah the fulfillment of his futile desires.” (Imam Ahmad),

Man is also required not to fail to enjoy the good things made lawful for him by Allah, including food, drink, clothing and marriage, as stated in the Noble Qur’aan , the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servant and the good things of His provisions?...’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:32)

Islam has forbidden only what is harmful for man, in his body, wealth or society. The human soul has been created by Allah and made viceroy in the earth so as to abide by His Law, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He it is who has placed you as successer upon the earth and has exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by (the test of) that which He has given you...” (The Qur’aan, Al-An’am, 6:165)

Allah has created for this soul, or spirit, a harmonious and integrated body. He says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Surely We created man of the best stature.” (The Qur’aan, At-Tin, 95:4)

That is in order that the soul should perform, by means of the body; devotions, rights, duties, construction and population of the earth as enjoined by Allah. Therefore, Allah has ordered that the body should be maintained and cared for:

- By purification and cleanness, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“...Truly Allah Loves those who turn unto Him in repentance, and loves those who purify themselves.”
(The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarh, 2:222)*

He has required ablution (wudu’) as a prerequisite to the integrity of prayer performed by Muslims five times a day the Prophet ﷺ said,

“No prayer is valid without performing ablution (wudu’)” (Abu Dawud).

It has also urged performing a ritual bath (ghusul) for Friday Prayer. The Prophet ﷺ said,

*“A bath (ghusul) on Friday is a duty recommended for every adult (Muslim), along with siwak (natural toothbrush) and whatever perfume possible.”
(Bukhari & Muslim).*

Ritual bath is obligatory in case of major ritual impurity (janaba) Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And if you are unclean (after sexual discharge or intercourse), purify yourselves (i.e. bath your whole body)...” (The Qur’aan, Al-Mai’dah, 5:6)

- By cleanness; i.e. by cleaning both hands before and after meals, in compliance with the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ,

“The blessing of food is (realized) by ablution prior to it and ablution following it.” (Imam Ahmad).

And also by cleaning the mouth, as recommended by the Prophet ﷺ,

“It is recommended for one who has eaten to pick his teeth: whatever he picks he should expel from his mouth and whatever he chews he should swallow.” (Ad-Darimi).

And taking care of his teeth, the Prophet ﷺ said,

“Had I not feared that it would cause inconvenience to my people, then I would have ordered them to use siwak before every prayer.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

As well as removing what can be a breeding ground for germs and dirt, in accordance with the Prophets’ ﷺ saying,

“There are five practices of pure nature: removal of hair from private parts, circumcision, removing hair from the armpits, trimming the moustache, and clipping of nails.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

- By instructing man to eat and drink only lawful things, as evidenced by the Noble Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you, and render thanks to Allah if it is (indeed) He whom you worship.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:172).

Such eating and drinking of lawful things are conditional upon avoidance of extravagance where the bad effects of which are quite evident, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... And eat and drink, but be not extravagant. Lo! He love not the extravagant.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:31)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,

“Man has never filled a pot worse than his stomach. However, if he insists on doing it, a third (of his stomach) should be apportioned to his food, a third to his drink and a third to his breath.” (Imam Ahmad).

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- By forbidding him to eat or drink what is bad or unlawful (such as carrion, blood, swine-flesh, wine, drugs and smoking) for securing the safety of the body. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He has forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swine-flesh, and that which has been sacrificed to other than Allah. But he who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing, it is no sin for him. Lo! Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:173)

- By encouraging the practice of sports, such as wrestling (without exposing privet parts or hurting others), swimming, shooting, horse riding and racing (foot racing). According to Ayesha, the Prophet's wife, may Allah be pleased with her:

“Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, raced with me and I won. That was before I filled out. Later he raced with me when I was heavier and he won.” He said: “This was for that.” (Imam Ahmad)

“Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, wrestled with Rukana and won.” (Abu Dawud)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said:

“Teach your children shooting, swimming and horse-riding.” (Muslim)

- By treatment of the body in case of sickness. According to the Prophet's ﷺ saying,

“Take medicine, for Allah has never sent down a disease without sending down a cure for it, some people know it and others do not know it.” (Imam Ahmad).

- By performing the prescribed devotions that provide the spirit with its nutrition and save it from anxiety which affects the body.
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Islam doesn't prescribe neglect, torture or deprivation of the body. According to Anas Ibn Malik, may Allah be pleased with him; three men called at the houses of the Prophet's wives to ask about his devotions. When they were told about them they found it less than they expected. They said: "*What are we to compare with Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, whose lapses, past and future are forgiven?*" One of them said: "*As for me, I shall spend my nights praying forever.*" The second said: "*As for me, I shall fast daily forever and never break my fast*". The third said: "*As for me, I shall abstain from women and never marry*". Then the Prophet ﷺ came to them and asked them, "*Is it you who said such and such? Listen, I swear in Allah, I am more pious and have more fear of Allah than you, yet I pray and sleep, fast and break (my fast), get married to women. Whoever deviates from my Sunnah (way or line of conduct) he is not of me.*" (Bukhari & Muslim).

According to a Muslim German Scholar, Muhammad Asad;

*"Islam does not regard the world, like Christianity, through black binoculars, yet it teaches us not to overestimate the worldly life, like the contemporary western civilization. Christianity scorns and condemns this worldly life, while the contemporary west – unlike the Christian spirit – is highly involved and deeply interested in this life. Islam, on the other hand, neither scorns nor overestimates it; it gives it due respect and consideration and at the same time deems it as a stage of our journey to a higher life – just a means and not an end. Islam guides us to pray: 'Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the hereafter that which is good.'"*⁹

13. Islam promotes knowledge and learning, and at the same time it disapproves of, and warns against ignorance. It classifies science into two categories:

⁹ Adapted from Mohammed Asad: Islam at the Cross-roads, Fifth Edition, P.29

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- a) Sciences whose learning is an individual duty prescribed upon every Muslim – both religious and worldly.
- b) Sciences whose learning is a collective duty prescribed upon an adequate number of people. The Qur'aan points out, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...Are those who know equal with those who know not?...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Az-Zumar, 39:9)

“... Allah will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to a high rank...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Mujadila, 58:11)

“...And say, ‘My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.’” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Ta-Ha, 20:114)

The blessed Prophet, ﷺ said,

“Seek knowledge even it were in China.” He also says: “On the Day of Judgement, the ink of scholars will be weighed with martyr's blood.”

Monsieur Casanova, one of the senior professors of College de France in Paris, commented on these traditions (Hadiths) saying:

“Many of us think that Muslims cannot assimilate our opinions or digest our concepts, forgetting that the Prophet of Islam is the one who stated that knowledge is superior to devotions. Who among the higher ranks of the clergy and priests has the courage to utter such decisive strong words, such words that are the essence of our contemporary intellectual life?”

Islam also respects scholars and gives them their due rank and rights. This is evident in the Prophet's ﷺ words,

“A person who does not respect our elders, has no compassion for our children, and does not recognize the rights of our scholars is not from my people.” (Imam Ahmad)

He ﷺ said,

“The virtue of a scholar over a worshipper is like that of my virtue over an ordinary Muslim among you.” (Tirmidhi)

Islam regards the search for knowledge and teaching an aspect of Jihad (i.e. strife in the cause of Allah) that is rewarded by Allah. This is stated in the following Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ,

“A person who goes out (of his house) in search of knowledge is on Allah’s way and he remains so till he returns.” (Tirmidhi)

He ﷺ also said,

“If a person follows a path for acquiring knowledge, Allah will make the passage to Paradise easy for him.” (Muslim)

Islam has not limited its exhortation of knowledge to religious sciences only. It has also encouraged secular sciences and considered learning them an aspect of worship that is rewarded by Allah (those considered as collective duty) as mankind is in need of such sciences or fields of knowledge. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So let man consider what he is created from. He is created from a gushing fluid, that issues from between the loins and ribs. (The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tariq, 86:5-7)

The Qur’aan also says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Have you not seen that Allah causes water to fall from the sky and We produce therewith fruit of diverse hues, and among the hills are streaks white and red, of diverse hues, and (others) raven-black; And of men and beasts and cattle, in like manner, diverse hues? The erudite among His servants fear

*Allah alone. Lo! Allah is All-Mighty, Oft Forgiving.”
(The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Fatir, 35:27-28)*

These verses contain an invitation to sound thinking and meditation which leads to recognition of the existence of a Creator of these things and to benefiting from the resources and treasures of this universe. Certainly, the “erudite” in this verse are not only religious scholars; they are also erudite scholars and scientists in all fields of human knowledge who possess the ability to know the secrets and mysteries of this universe.

For example the process of cloud formation or rainfall can only be understood through familiarity with chemistry and physics. The growth of trees, plants and fruits through familiarity with agriculture; the variation in the colors of the earth and mountains through familiarity with geology; the nature and character of people, their different races and the nature and instincts of animals, through ethnology and zoology. Seldillot stated in his book, ‘The History of Arabs’,

“Muslims in the Middle Ages were unrivalled in science, philosophy and arts. They disseminated such knowledge whenever they moved, then it was carried over to Europe where it led to its renaissance and advancement.”

Dr. G. Lebon, in his book, ‘Arab Civilization’, states that,

“We have never seen in history a nation so prominent in its impact as the Arabs, for all peoples that had relations with the Arabs embraced their culture even for a while.”

14. Islam is the religion of self-control. It trains its adherents to seek Allah’s pleasure in both their religious and worldly endeavors, as indicated in the Prophet’s ﷺ Hadith,

“Fear Allah, wherever you may be, do a virtuous act after an evil act as the former will undo the latter, and behave well with the people.” (Tirmidhi).

The way adopted by Islam in rooting the principle of self-control and internal monitoring is as follows:

First: It has made Muslims believe in One God Who has no partner in Sovereignty or equal to Him, i.e. :Allah, Glory to Him. The Qur'aan declares, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say, He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternally Besought of All. He begets not, nor He is begotten; and there is none like unto Him.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Ikhlās, 112:1-4)

- This God is the Originator and Creator of this world, along with all things in it, animate and inanimate. Allah said in the Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Glory be to Him Who created all the pairs, of that which the earth grows, and of themselves, and of that which they know not!” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Ya-Sin, 36:36)

- This God is the Lord and Owner of all creatures; to Him belong sovereignty, commandment and the right to forbid, and He is ever able to do everything, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He the ascended over the Throne (in the manner that suits His Majesty). He covers the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and has made the sun and the stars subservient by His command. His indeed is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-A'raf, 7:54)

- This God possesses all attributes of perfection, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“...There is nothing whatsoever like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ash Shura, 42:11).

- He, glory to Him, knows well everything that is going on or taking place in this Universe at all times, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... He knows all that enters the earth and all that emerges therefrom and all that comes down from the sky and all that ascends therein; and He is with you where-so-ever you may be and Allah is All-seer of what you do.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Hadid, 57:4)

Moreover, His knowledge goes beyond visible and tangible things to thoughts and emotions, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“He knows the deceit of the eyes, and all that the breast conceals.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mu’min, 40:19)

Second: Islam has ingrained the concept of resurrection after death in Muslims and deemed it one of its basic principles, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those who disbelieve assert that they will not be raised again. Say (unto them, O Muhammad): ‘Yes verily, by my Lord! You will be raised again and then you will be informed of what you did, and that is easy for Allah.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tagabun, 64:7)

Third: Islam has established and rooted the idea that man is to be brought to account before Allah, glory to Him, for all his deeds and words whatsoever – large or small, good and bad, then recompensed according to his acts – good for good and evil for evil. Such feeling drives him to seek Allah’s pleasure by complying with Allah’s commands and avoiding His prohibitions, doing everything good and shunning anything bad, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whoever does good an atom’s weight will see it then, And who-so does an atom’s weight of evil will see it then.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Az-Zalzalah, 99:7-8).

Fourth: Islam requires its followers to give precedence to obedience of Allah, seeking His pleasure and avoiding His prohibitions over everything and everybody else whosoever, even if this were in conflict with their desires, for the sake of winning Allah’s reward in Paradise and escaping His punishment in Hell-fire. However, Islam has not ignored the physical aspects of punishment for those who rebel against its instructions and disobey its directives. Some people would require force to deter them from committing violations that are harmful to them and to their society. That is why Islam assigns for each crime a punishment that matches the extent of its seriousness. It has prescribed retaliation for intentional murder, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the murdered...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:178)

This is the case if the heir of the murdered does not forgive them, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his (injured) brother...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:178)

For robbery it has prescribed cutting off the hand, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds: an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:38)

When a thief is sure that his hand will be cut off if he steals, he will give up theft and thereby save his hand, and at the same time people's property and money will be safe from robbery.

Islam prescribes flogging in case of trespassing upon honor and modesty, i.e. in case of fornication, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The woman and the man guilty of fornication, scourge you each one of them (with) a hundred stripes...” (The Qur’aan Chapter An-Nur, 24:2)

For false accusation against chaste women (of adultery), it has prescribed eighty stripes, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And those who accuse honorable women (of adultery) but bring not four witnesses, scourge them (with) eighty stripes...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nur, 24:4)

The Islamic Law sets a general rule for penalties, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The recompense of a harm is a harm the like thereof...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ash-Shura, 42:40)

Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“If you punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith you were afflicted...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nahl, 16:126)

Islam has not made such penalties inevitable: it has left the way open to forgiveness, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...Let them forgive and show indulgence...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nur, 24:22)

“But whosoever pardons and amends, his wage is the affair of Allah...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ash-Shura, 42:40).

When it decides to implement these penalties, Islam does not aim at revenge and the spread of violence. It aims at preserving rights of people, establishing security and peace in society, and deterring those

who intend to disturb its peace and stability. When a murderer realizes that he will be executed, a thief that his hand will be cut off, an adulterer that he will be flogged, they will be deterred from committing their crime and thereby maintain their own and other's safety and security. The Qur'aan sums up this truth, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding.” (The Qur'aan Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:179)

One may say that the penalties ordained by Islam for certain crimes are cruel! The response to this is that everyone agrees these crimes are evidently harmful to society and must be fought and retaliated against; conflict and disagreement only exists over the kind of punishment. Let everybody ask himself and decide: Are the penalties prescribed by Islam more viable and effective to root out or minimize crime, or man-made legislative punishments?

15. Islam points out that good acts are multiplied and that good intention is to be rewarded even if it is not followed by action, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever brings a good deed will receive ten-fold the like thereof, while whoever brings an evil deed will be awarded but the like thereof.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter An-An'am, 6:160)

The Prophet, ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Intention determines the worth of a person's actions and he will attain what he intends.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Moreover, if a Muslim intends to do a good deed for fear of Allah's wrath, he will be rewarded for that. The Gracious Prophet ﷺ said,

“One who makes up his mind to do a good deed but does not carry it out, is rewarded by Allah for one full measure of it, and if he then proceeds to carry it out, Allah rewards him from ten to seven hundred times

and even many times more. He who makes up his mind to do an evil deed, but does not carry it out, is rewarded by Allah for one full measure of good deed. Should he carry it out, he is debited only by one evil deed.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

In addition, habits and permissible things turn into rewardable devotions when associated with good intention. Food and drink, for example, when associated with the intention to maintain the body and preserve its strength for earning a living and performing the prescribed devotions, as well as providing for one’s family, will be regarded an aspect of worship that deserves Allah’s reward. The Noble Prophet ﷺ said,

“...To cohabit with your wife is charity”.

He was asked: *“Is it possible that one of us should satisfy his desire and yet he would be rewarded?”* He said:

“Yes. If he satisfied his urge through illicit means, would it not be sinful? Likewise, when he satisfies it lawfully it is deserving reward.” (Muslim)

According to Islam, rewards are multiplied and the Muslim will be rewarded for a good intention, even if he does not implement it. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever brings a good deed shall have ten times the like thereof to his credit” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-An’am 6:160)

16. According to Islam, sins are replaced with good deeds if sinners are sincere in their repentance and determined never to return to their sins. The Qur’aan states in this context, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And those who do not invoke any other god along with Allah, nor take the life which Allah has forbidden save in (course of) justice, nor commit adultery – and whoever does this shall pay the penalty. The doom will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection,

and he will abide therein disdained forever. Save him who repents and believes and does righteous work: as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds, Allah is ever Forgiving, Most merciful” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Furqan, 25:68-70)

This is for what is due to Allah. As for rights of people, they should have access to them and apology should be offered to them for any pain or suffering caused. Examples include beating, abuse, backbiting and slander; but in case of trespassing on people’s property and the like, the trespasser will have to return what is due to the owner then to ask their forgiveness. Islamic Law has addressed the sinner’s mind directly and treated his or her troubled mentality by opening the way to repentance so that he or she should be deterred from sin. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: O my servants who have transgressed against themselves (by sinning), Despair not of the mercy of Allah, for verily Allah forgives all sins.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Az-Zumar, 39:53)

“Yet whoever does evil or wrongs his own soul, then seeks pardon of Allah, will find Allah ever forgiving, All-Merciful.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:110)

That is for Muslims. As for non-Muslims who embraced this religion, they will be given a double reward on account of their belief in their own messenger, besides their belief in the message of Muhammad, peace be upon him, The Qur’aan said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those unto whom We gave the Scripture before it, they believe in it. And when it is recited unto them, they Say: ‘We believe in it. Lo! It is the truth from our Lord. Lo! Even before it we were of those who surrender (unto Him).’ These will be given their reward twice over, because they are steadfast and repel evil with good, and spend of that wherewith We

have provided them.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Qasas, 28:52-54)

In addition, Allah will erase all their sins which they committed before accepting Islam, for the Gracious Prophet ﷺ said,

“Islam undoes all (ill-deeds) that has been done before (embracing) it.”

17. Islam ensures for Muslims the continuation of good deeds even after death through virtuous endeavors and ongoing charitable acts, so long as they are beneficial to the whole society. The Gracious Prophet ﷺ said,

“After the death of a person his actions stop, except three things that he leaves behind: 1) Continuous charity, (2) Knowledge from which some benefit may be obtained, and 3) a righteous child who prays for him.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

He ﷺ said,

“A person who invites others to righteousness shall have a recompense equal to the recompense of those who follow his guidance without reducing their recompense. A person who invites others to error shall have a share of punishment equal to that due to those who follow him without reducing their punishment.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

18. Islam highly values the human mind and encourages sound reasoning. It liberates it from the fetters of heathenism and mental bondage. There is no need for anybody or anything to interfere or intercede with Allah on behalf of His creation – All are equal before Allah, Who addresses mankind, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! In the heavens and the earth are portents (signs) for the believers. And in your creation, and all the beasts that He scatters in the earth, are portents for a folk whose faith is sure: And the alternations of night and day and the provision that Allah sends down from

the sky and thereby revives the earth after her death, and the ordering of the winds, are portents for a people who have sense.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Jathiya, 45:3-5)

Islam criticizes those who imitate and follow older generations without knowledge or guidance, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And when it is said unto them: ‘Follow that which Allah has revealed.’ They say: ‘We follow that wherein we found our fathers.’ What! Even though their fathers understood nothing and had no guidance?” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:170)

It is common in the Glorious Qur’aan to address the human mind: “Have they then no sense?” “Will they not then ponder...?” “Will you not then take thought?” Islam, however, has determined the domain of mental activity: The human mind should be used to perceive the visible and tangible; it has no access to the unseen which cannot be perceived by the senses, and engaging the mind with such things is a mere dissipation of efforts and energies.

19. Islam has liberated the human soul from being blindly controlled by others, imbuing it with conviction that none other than Allah can quicken the dead or cause death or harm. So no man, whatever his race, color, or position is, can benefit or harm, deprive or give, unless Allah, Glory be to Him, wills so. The Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And (they) possess not hurt nor profit for themselves, and possess not death nor life, nor power to raise the dead.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Furqan, 25:3)

If Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him, despite his high rank with Allah, is subject to what applies to other people: What would be the case for others? The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘For myself I have no power to benefit, nor power to hurt, save that which Allah wills. Had I knowledge of the Unseen, I should have abundance of wealth, and adversity would not touch me. I am but a warner, and a bearer of good tidings unto folk who believe.’ The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:188)

It has also freed the human mind from anxiety, fear and confusion, by treating their causes:

- If the cause is fear of death, it is stated in the Noble Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“No soul can ever die except by Allah’s Leave and at a term appointed...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Imran, 3:145)

However hard man tries to escape death, it is lying in wait for him. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘Lo! The death from which you flee will surely meet you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Jumu’a, 62:8)

- If it is fear of poverty, it is made clear in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...There is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof depends on Allah. He knows its habitation and its place. All is in a clear record.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Hud, 11:6)

- If it is fear of disease and misfortunes, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“If Allah touches you with affliction, there is none that can relieve it save Him, and if He desires good for you, there is none who can repel His bounty. He strikes with it whom He wills of His servants...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Yunus, 10:107)

The Qur'aan also states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“No disaster occurs in the earth or in yourselves but it is in a Book before We bring it into being – Lo! That is easy for Allah. That you grieve not for the sake of that which has escaped you, nor yet exult because of that which has been given to you. Allah does not love any prideful boaster.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Hadid, 57:22-23)

20. Islam does not order tasks that are beyond the scope of human ability. It is the religion of facility, simplicity, moderation, reasonableness, and freedom from hardship. This is stated in the Glorious Qur'aan said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah tasks not a soul beyond its scope. For it (is only) that which it has earned, and against it (only) that which it has deserved...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:286)

The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Allah has not sent me as a self-opinionated (messenger) nor to make others self-opinionated; but as a teacher and to facilitate things for people.” (Muslim)

He, ﷺ said:

“Make things easy and convenient and don't make them harsh and difficult. Give cheers and glad tidings and do not create hatred.” (Bukhari).

He, ﷺ said:

“If I order you to do something, do what you can thereof.” (Bukhari).

Once a man came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and said, “O Allah's Messenger! I have been ruined.” Allah's Messenger, ﷺ asked: ‘What was the matter with you’. He replied, “I had sexual intercourse with my wife while I was observing fast.” Allah's Messenger, ﷺ asked him:

“Can you afford to free a slave?” He replied in the negative. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ asked him: *“Can you observe fast for two successive months?”* He replied in the negative. The Prophet ﷺ asked him: *“Can you afford to feed sixty poor people?”* He replied in the negative. The Prophet kept silent and while we were in that state, a big basket full of dates was brought to the Prophet, ﷺ He asked: *“Where is the questioner?”* He replied, *“I (am here).”* The Prophet ﷺ said to him: *“Take this (basket of dates) and give it in charity.”* The man said, *“Should I give it to a person poorer than I? By Allah; there is no family between it’s (Al-Madinah’s) two mountains poorer than mine.”* The Prophet smiled till his molar teeth became visible and then He ﷺ said: *“Feed your family with it.”* (Al-Bukhari)

All principles and devotions of Islam are in harmony with human abilities, they do not tend to overburden them, so that people may have no excuse for neglecting such principles and devotions, taking into consideration that they can be dropped in cases of necessity. For example:

- One of the obligatory acts of prayer is standing if able. In case of the inability to stand, a worshipper may perform the prayer in a sitting posture; if not then in a reclining posture; if not then by gesturing. Likewise, Congregational Prayer at a Mosque is obligatory for men, but such an obligation is dropped in case of sickness, fear, extreme cold or heavy rain. Another example is relieving a woman in her menstrual cycle or post-natal period of prayer until ritual impurity is over; she is not required to make up for the missed prayer.
 - Payment of Zakat (the poor-due) is not required of those who do not possess the minimum amount of money, property or assets set for the imposition of Zakat.
 - A person who is too sick or too old to fast is exempt from fasting. A traveler and a woman in her menstrual cycle or post-natal period, are exempt from fasting until such conditions have ended. They merely make up for the days they have not fasted later.
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- Those who are physically or financially incapable of Hajj during its season are exempt from its duty, until they are capable. In which case the physically incapable person will have to delegate someone to perform Hajj on his behalf. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

"... And pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can bear the journey..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Ali 'Imran,3:97)

- If a person is afraid he will die, he is allowed to keep himself alive with unlawful food or drink, such as carrion, blood, pork or wine, provided he finds nothing lawful to eat or drink. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...But he who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing, it is no sin for him..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:173)

In his commentary on this verse, Sayyed Qutb said:

"It is the creed which acknowledges man as human, not as an animal, angel or devil. It recognizes him with all his weaknesses and strengths, takes him as one entity comprising a body with its desires, a mind with its power of reasoning and a spirit with its hopes and aspirations. It also prescribes for him obligations that he can afford and observes balancing and coordination between obligations and ability without causing any hardship or overburdening him".

21. Islam urges people to abstain from slander and to respect others' feelings by refraining from insulting their religious beliefs. In the Qur'aan, it is stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Revile not those unto whom they pray besides Allah, lest they wrongfully revile Allah through ignorance..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-An'am, 6:108)

22. Islam encourages meaningful dialogue which guides to the Divine Path and good manners, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to a word agreed upon between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others for Lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, Say: “Bear witness that we are Muslims.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:64)

23. Islam is the religion of middle-of-the-road and moderation in matters of both religion and worldly life. The Qur’aan states said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Thus We have made you a medium nation (Ummah), that you may be witnesses over mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness over you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:143)

Thus Islam is:

- Middle-of-the-road as regards prophets between those who held extreme views about them (like Christians) and those who were harsh to them (like Jews), since Muslims believe in all prophets and behave towards them with all due respect and love.
- Moderate in all Sharia – related matters: Islam is free from the strictness and burdens of the Jews and from the extreme indulgence and negligence of the Christians.

24. Islam considers every good deed performed by a Muslim an act of charity, as pointed out by the Prophet, ﷺ:

“Charity is necessary for every Muslim.”

He was asked: *“What if a person has nothing?”* The Prophet replied;

“He should work with his own hands for his benefit and also give (something out of such earnings in) charity”.

The companions said: *“And if he is not be able to work?”* The Prophet ﷺ said:

“He should help the poor and needy people.”

They said: *“And if he cannot do even that?”* The Prophet said,

“He should urge others to do good”.

The companions said: *“And if he doesn’t do that also?”* The Prophet said:

“Let him stoop himself from doing evil: That is charity also (for him)”. (Bukhari)

The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Do not consider even the smallest good deed as insignificant; even meeting your bother with a cheerful face (is a good deed).” (Muslim)

25. Islam orders Muslims to preserve the environment and refrain from causing any environmental pollution whatsoever:

- By urging them to plant useful trees, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“If a Muslim plants a tree, then whatever is eaten from it be human or animals is a charity.” (Muslim)

- By urging them to remove all that is harmful, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Removing anything which causes harm from the path of others is charity.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- By urging them to apply free-will quarantine, as this is called for in the Prophet’s ﷺ words:
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“If you hear of plague in a land, then do not go there, and if it occurs in a land (you are in) then do not run away from it.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

This is just to prevent epidemics and infectious diseases from being passed on to others and to save the lives of people.

- By warning them against killing birds, animals or other creatures without reasonable cause or purpose. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever kills a bird in vain, that bird says to Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement: ‘O Lord! So-and-so killed me just for fun and not for any good purpose.’” (Imam Ahmad and Nasa’i)

- By warning them against contaminating public utilities such as water sources, in view of the Prophet’s Hadith in this regard related on the authority of Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ prohibited urinating in standing water. (Muslim)
- And, finally, by warning them against any acts that cause environmental damage on earth. Allah, Glory to Him, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Work not corruption in the earth after its reformation, and call on Him in fear and hope. Lo! The mercy of Allah is (ever) near unto the good-doers.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 7:56)

He also says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And when he turns away (from you) his effort in the land is to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle; and Allah loves not mischief. And when it is said unto him: Be careful of your duty to Allah, pride takes him to sin. So Hell will be enough for him (as punishment), an evil resting-place.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:205-206)

26. Islam is the religion of all-embracing peace, in the full meaning of the word. Both on the internal level of the Muslim society: (as pointed out by the Prophet, ﷺ)

“The (true) Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand all Muslims are safe, and (true) emigrant is one who leaves those things which Allah has prohibited.”
(Bukhari & Muslim) Also: *“A (true) believer is from whom people are secure.”*

And on the global level on basis of establishing friendly relations that are based on security, stability and non-aggression between the Muslim society and other societies, especially those societies that do not play with religion, as stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Come all of you, into submission (Islam) unto Him: and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Lo! He is an open enemy for you.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:208)

In order to maintain such peace, Islam instructs Muslims to repel attacks and fight against oppression. This is stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... And one who assaults you, assault him in like manner as he assaulted you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:194)

To demonstrate its interest in peace and antipathy against oppression, murder and terrorism, Islam orders its adherents, even in case of war, to accept peace and stop fighting when the enemy requests that, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“But if they incline to peace, you also incline to it, and (put your) trust in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Anfal, 8:61)

^While Islam is keen on peace, it does not mean that its adherents should be humiliated for the sake of peace. Rather, it instructs them to

maintain peace while keeping their pride and dignity intact. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So be not weak and ask not for peace (from the enemies of Islam) while you are having the upper hand. Allah is with you and He will never decrease the reward of your good deeds.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Muhammad, 47:35)

27. Islam makes it a rule that embracing it should emanate from full conviction devoid of coercion. In the Noble Qur'aan it is stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:256)

And:

“And Say: ‘The Truth is from your Lord.’ Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Kahf, 18:29)

It is part of Islam's tolerance and justice to give people the freedom to choose their belief. It holds that mankind is free to accept or reject its teachings and that Jews or Christians who refuse to embrace it are completely free to practice their beliefs and doctrines without undergoing any kind of oppression or harassment that affects such practice. It is never allowed to ruin their churches or break their crosses, for the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Leave them to practice their own religion.”

Islam also gives them the freedom to have the foods or drinks deemed lawful by their religion, so their pigs should never be killed and their wine should not be spilt. As for civil affairs, such as marriage and divorce cases and financial transactions, they have the full freedom to behave according to their beliefs.

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, put this into action. While he was once inside a church in Jerusalem, the call to

prayer was announced, upon which he went out of the church for prayer and said to the Patriarch: *“I’m afraid if I prayed within the church that Muslims after me would say this is the praying place of ‘Umar and then demolish it and build a Mosque in its place..”* (Tabari).

According to the famous historian, Tabari, ‘Umar granted them a guarantee of security for themselves, their property, churches and crosses: that no damage or destruction shall be allowed to be inflicted on them, nor shall any coercion or oppression be practiced against them in matters of religion.

28. Islam is the first religion to call to the liberation of creatures, while prohibiting many forms of slavery: It closed all the doors to human bondage, except for one, i.e. through captivity from war, subject to conditions. This is clear from the fact that Islam narrowed the sources of slavery and expanded the outlets for emancipation, such as slave liberation in expiation of certain sins like:

- Killing by mistake. (as stated in the Qur’aan), the meaning of which is translated as:

“He who has killed a believer by mistake must set free a believing slave, and pay the blood-money to the family of the slain, unless they remit it as a charity. If he (the victim) be of a people hostile unto you, and he is a believer, then (the penance is) to set free a believing slave. And if he comes of a folk between whom and you there is a covenant, then the blood-money must be paid unto his folk and (also) a believing slave must be set free...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:92)

- The violation of one’s oath, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah will not take you to task for that which is unintentional in your oaths, but He will take you to task for the oaths which you swear in earnest. The expiation thereof is to feed ten of the needy with the

average of that wherewith you feed your own folk, or the clothing of them, or the liberation of a slave...”
(The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:89)

- Zihar,¹⁰ Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those who pronounce thihar among you (by saying their wives that they are as their mothers) and afterwards would go back on that which they have said, (the penalty) in that case (is) the freeing of a slave before they touch one another...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mujadila, 58:3)

- Performing sexual intercourse while fasting in Ramadan.
- Setting slaves free, which was highly encouraged by Islam, with promises of great reward for the emancipator, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Did We not assign unto him two eyes, and a tongue and two lips, and show him the two ways (of good and evil)? Why has he not attempted the ascent? Ah, what will convey unto you what the ascent is ! - It is to free a slave.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Balad, 90:8-13)

The Prophet, ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“A person who frees a Muslim slave, Allah will deliver everyone of his limbs from the fire of Hell in return for each of the limbs of the slave.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Writing of emancipation, (i.e. Mukatabah), which is an agreement between a master and his slave for emancipating the latter for an agreed amount of money. Certain jurists (especially Imam Ahmad, Allah’s mercy be upon him) held that in case a slave requests a writing of emancipation it will be incumbent upon his master to

¹⁰ Abstaining from one’s wife by declaring that she is the same as one’s mother and thereby not lawful for sexual relations.

respond positively, as stated in the Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...And such of your slaves seek a writing (of emancipation), write it for them if you are aware of any good in them, and bestow upon them from the wealth of Allah which has bestowed upon you..."
(The Qur'aan, Chapter An-Nur, 24:33)

Furthermore, Islam has made slave and captive emancipation one of the outlets for spending Zakat revenues or payment of one's Zakat (poor-due). The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

"The alms (i.e.:Zakat) are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and (for) the wayfarers; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." (The Qur'aan, Chapter At-Tauba, 9:60)

29. Islam encompasses all aspects of life – ideological, political, social, economic and moral. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'aan) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allah as Muslims)." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Nahl, 16:89)

Allah's Messenger, ﷺ said:

"Faith consists of seventy some branches, the highest of which is the testimony that there is no god but Allah, and the lowest is removing something harmful from the road. Modesty is one of the branches of faith." (Bukhari)

An evidence of such comprehensiveness is Islam's interest in human conduct and those particulars related to people's life. For example,

Allah's Messenger, ﷺ explains etiquette when entering or going out of the toilet, by saying:

"If one of you goes into the toilet, he should advance his left foot first and Say: 'In the name of Allah. O Allah ! I seek refuge in You from vicious males and female devils.' When he goes out, he should put his right foot first and Say: 'Praise be to Allah, Who has relieved me of nuisance and made me well.'"
(Bukhari).

The Spiritual Side of Islam

Devotions (Form of Worship)

Islam contains a host of verbal, practical and ideological devotions. Verbal and practical devotions represent what are called the 'Pillars of Islam', and represent the basis on which we describe someone as Muslim or non-Muslim. Of these Pillars the two testimonies of faith are verbal, fasting is physical, Zakat is financial and Hajj (Pilgrimage) is both physical and financial. Islam does not intend these pillars to be mere appearances: it aims at purifying and refining their souls through the performance of these devotions. It wants the performance of these pillars to be a means of reforming the individual. About prayer, the Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...The prayer prevents from great sins and evil deeds..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Ankabut, 29:45)

About Zakat:

"Take alms from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter At-Tauba, 9:103)

It purifies the soul of the filth of miserliness and avarice.

About fasting:

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:183)

It trains a person to refrain from indulgence in desires. This is explained by the Prophet’s Hadith ﷺ about fasting:

“If a person does not give up telling falsehood and acting according to it, Allah does not need his abstinence from eating and drinking.” (Bukhari)

About Hajj:

“The Hajj is (in) the well-known months. So whosoever intends to perform Hajj, then he should not have sexual relations, nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:197)

Devotions then play an essential role in the establishment and enhancement of good morals.

The Pillars of Islam

1. The Two Testimonies of Faith

It is to testify that ‘there is no god (worthy of worship) but Allah, and that Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allah.’

This verbal fundamental is the key to embracing Islam, and all other pillars of Islam are based on it. ‘There is no god but Allah’ means to deny the existence of any god worthy to be worshipped other than Allah, glory be to Him. To Him all kinds of devotions must be addressed, including supplication, wishes, hopes, sacrifice, bowing prostration, trust, vows, etc. He glory be to Him, is the Creator of everything that exists. He is also the Provider and the Absolute Sovereign. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“ And We sent no messenger before you but we inspired him, (saying: There is no God except Me (Allah), So worship me.” The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Anbiya’, 21:25)

The testimony that ‘Muhammad is Allah’s Messenger’ reflects the belief that he is the servant and messenger of Allah who received and conveyed divine revelation, that he was sent by Allah to all mankind as the final prophet. There will be no prophet or messenger is to come after him. He must be believed in and obeyed as he is the conveyor of Allah’s message and guidance.

2. Observing Regular Prayer

The Islamic Prayer (salat) comprises words (including invocations and glorification of Allah) and acts (including prostration and bowing) performed in glorification and reverence for Allah. It gives man an opportunity to humbly commune with his Lord. It is, in fact, a link between Allah and His servant. Whenever man gets immersed in worldly pleasures and the light of faith begins to fade in his heart, the call to prayer is announced and the light in his heart is revived, keeping him near to, and on good terms with his Creator at all times.

Prayer is to be performed five times a day. Adult Muslim males perform these prayers in congregation in Mosques unless there is some excuse. Congregational prayer helps people to get acquainted with one another, it strengthens the bonds of friendship and affection between them and motivates them to look after each other: visiting the sick, helping the needy, consoling the grieved, and giving advice to the negligent. Moreover, it removes all social differences, for Muslims all stand side by side, old and young, rich and poor, high and low – equal in their submission to Allah, facing one direction, performing the same movements and recitation simultaneously.

3. Payment of Zakat

Zakat is a specified rate given willfully by well-to-do Muslims, in compliance with Allah’s instructions and commandments, to their poor brothers, so as to meet their needs and save them from the humiliation caused by begging. It is incumbent on every Muslim who

owns the minimum amount of wealth liable to payment of zakat. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, keeping religion pure for Him, as men by nature upright, and to establish prayer and to pay the poor-due (zakat). That is true religion.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Baiyina, 98:5)

Those who deny zakat will commit an act of disbelief because they deprive the rightful recipients of zakat, including the poor and the needy, of their rights. Therefore, the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, fought those who refused to pay zakat after the Prophet's death, and uttered his well-known statement:

“By Allah! If they hold back from me even equal to a reign for a camel which they paid during the days of the Prophet, peace be upon him, then I shall fight against them for holding back this reign.”

Zakat is not, as claimed by some people who are unfamiliar with Islam, a tax levied by the Islamic State on its subject, for if it had been a tax it would have been collected by all of the population of the Islamic State, both Muslims and non-Muslims. In the case of zakat, however, it is required only of Muslims, it is not considered an obligation for non-Muslims.

The conditions and prerequisites of zakat as prescribed by Islam are as follows:

1. To have the minimum amount of money or property liable to payment of zakat (i.e. nisab) provided it is in excess of one's basic needs, namely: food, clothing, drink and residence.
2. Expiry of one year after the beginning of ownership; otherwise no zakat shall be paid.

Recipients of zakat are defined in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The alms (i.e.: zakat) are only for the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled (newly converted Muslims), and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and (for) the wayfarers; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.”(The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tauba, 9:60)

It is estimated at a percentage of 2.5%. By imposing it, Islam aims at uprooting poverty from society and dealing with its resulting dangers, such as robbery, murder, indecent assaults (like rape), as well as reviving the spirit of cooperation and social solidarity among Muslims by satisfying the needs of the poor and the destitute and helping debtors. If we read the Prophet’s Hadith ﷺ:

“A neighborhood in which one suffers from hunger will be deprived of Allah’s protection.” (Imam Ahmad)

Then the concept of zakat becomes clear. The difference between zakat and tax is seen in the fact that zakat is generally paid by a Muslim willingly without the need to compel him to do that. Moreover, its very name suggests purifying the souls of the rich of miserliness and avarice that induce them to forget their needy and poor brothers. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whoever is saved from his own greed, such are the successful.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tagabun, 64:16)

Zakat also purifies the hearts of poor people of hate and envy for the rich, especially when they see them pay the prescribed percentage and attend to them with kindness and generosity.

Allah has warned those who refuse to pay zakat, by saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And let not those who hoard up that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be their collar on the Day of

Resurrection...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:180)

The Prophet, ﷺ said in this regard:

“A wealthy person who has gold and silver, but does not pay the zakat due on them, (should know that) his gold and silver will be melted on the Day of Judgement and converted into slabs which will then be heated in the fire of Hell, and then his forehead, his sides, and his back will be branded therewith. Whenever these slabs get cold, they will be heated up once more (in the furnace of the Hell), the branding will be continued throughout the day, the duration of which will be equal to fifty thousand years, and the cases of all the people will have been decided by this time and they will be shown their way either to the Hell or to Paradise.” (Muslim)

4. Fasting During Ramadan

It is one month of the Lunar Calendar during which Muslims abstain from food, drinks, and sexual intercourse in the daytime, i.e. from dawn up to sunset, in accordance with the Qur’aanic verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may ward off (evil).” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 2:183).

Fasting is not limited to abstinence from tangible things that break it. It has a wider scope that includes, as well, such moral evils as telling lies, backbiting, tale-bearing, cheating, deceit, nonsense etc. It is to be borne in mind that such bad habits must be avoided at all times. However, this requirement is emphasized in the month of Ramadan, as pointed out in the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ:

“If a person does not refrain from lying and indecent activities, Allah does not want that he should abstain

from eating and drinking.” (Bukhari, Abu Dawud & Tirmidhi)

Fasting is a form of strife between the human soul and its desires and whims. It has social benefits explained in the following Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ:

“When anyone of you is fasting, he should abstain from loose talk and the noisy exchange of words. If someone starts cursing him or picks up a quarrel with him, he should tell him that ‘I am fasting.’ (Bukhari & Muslim)

Fasting also makes a Muslim feel the needs of his poor brothers who do not get sufficient food, clothing or housing and therefore he inquires about their conditions, seeing to their needs and requirements.

5. Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Hajj is a journey to the Sacred Mosque in Makkah for the performance of specific acts at specified times. This fifth pillar of Islam is obligatory, once in a lifetime for every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty, male or female, provided they are physically, financially and mentally capable. A sick Muslim with a terminal disease preventing the performance of Hajj, having the financial ability, should hire someone to perform Hajj on his or her behalf. Also a poor person who does not have sufficient money for the Hajj trip, in excess of his basic needs and the needs of his family, is exempt from Hajj. The Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And Pilgrimage to the House (of Allah) is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can bear the journey. As for him who disbelieves (let him know that) Lo! Allah is Independent of (all) creatures.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:97)

Hajj is the largest Islamic congregation in which Muslims from everywhere gather at one place, at one time, to pray unto One Lord. They put on uniform dress, perform the same rites, repeating one utterance:

“Here I am at your Service, O Allah, here I am at your service. Here I am. There is no partner with you. Here I am. Verily, all praise and grace is Yours, and the sovereignty too. There is no partner with you.”

It is as if the pilgrims are saying, ‘O Allah! We have come to this place in compliance with your call, seeking your pleasure and acknowledging your Oneness, and that you alone are worthy of sincere worship.’”

In Hajj, there is no difference or discrimination between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the black and the white, the Arab and the non-Arabs --- all are equal in the before Allah. Only righteousness differentiates between people. This helps to confirm brotherly relations between Muslims and unify their feelings and hopes.

Another benefit of such devotional activity is that related to belief. Belief in the necessity of this form of worship is obligatory, since it was contained in the scriptures revealed by Allah, and Prophets were commanded to convey it and call people to believe in it without compulsion. Conviction is a must, for coercion makes a man proclaim with his tongue what is in conflict with what he hides in his mind or heart, and that is, in fact, hypocrisy condemned by Islam and deemed to be worse than disbelief. In several verses, the Qur’aan made it clear that Prophet’s mission is limited to guidance of people to good and conveyance of the divine message. It states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... but if you turn away, then the duty of Our Messenger is only to convey (the message) plainly.”
(The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tagabun, 64:12)

Yet calling to the way of Allah, glory be to Him, should be in the best manner as stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Call unto the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and argue with them in the better way...”
(The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nahl, 16:125)

Guidance is from Allah only, as stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“Lo! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom you love,
but Allah guides whom He wills.” (The Qur’aan,
Chapter Al-Qasas, 28:56)*

Such devotions are defined as the ‘Fundamentals of Faith’ and the faith, or belief, of a Muslim can never be complete unless he believes in all of them. Therefore whoever denies any of them is a disbeliever in all of the religion.

Fundamentals of Faith

1. Belief in Allah

It is the belief in the existence of Allah and in the truth that He, alone is the Creator, the Provider, the Giver of Life and Cause of Death. That He is the Creator and Arranger of all things in the Universe; only what He wills can exist; He has no partner in His Lordship or Divinity. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, The Lord of the Worlds!" (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-A'raf, 7:54)

He is the Only God Worthy of Worship; in Him alone trust is to be put, and to Him only invocations, vows and devotions are to be directed. He, glory by to Him, has the most beautiful and perfect attributes stated in the Qur'aan or the Prophet's traditions. None of His creatures is like Him in relation to His attributes. No physical interpretation or invalidation of the divine attributes is to be entertained. Nothing is similar, comparable, or equivalent to Him. He is free from all imperfections. That is made clear in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

"... There is nothing whatsoever like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, All-Knower." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Ash-Shura, 42:11)

2. Belief in Angels

It is the belief that Allah, glory to Him, has created creatures known as angels whose total number is known only to Allah. He has created them to serve and worship Him. He says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"The Messiah will never scorn to be a servant of Allah, nor will the favored angels..." (The Qur'aan, Chapter An-Nisa'a, 4:172)

He has also created them to perform the tasks assigned to them by Allah, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...A Fire... over which are set angels strong (stern), severe, who resist not Allah in that which He commands them, but do that which they are commanded.” (The Qur’aan Chapter At-Tahrim, 66:6)

Those angels are not rivals to Allah, nor are they His children, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And they Say: ‘The Most Beneficent has taken unto Himself a son. Glorious is He! Nay, but (those whom they call sons) are honored servants; They speak not until He has spoken, and they act by His command.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Anbiya’, 26:27)

Allah, Glory to Him, has told us about the names and tasks of some of the angels, but He has not told us about others. Nevertheless, we are required to believe in them all. Among the angels, there are:

- Gabriel, peace be upon him, who is assigned the task of conveying Allah’s revelations to His prophets.
 - Michael, peace be upon him, who is in charged of the affairs of rain.
 - The Angel of Death, peace be upon him, who is designated to take man’s soul at death.
 - Israfil, peace be upon him, who is in charged of blowing the trumpet at the end of this world when everybody’s soul is taken away, and again at the time of resurrection.
 - Ridwan, peace be upon him, keeper of the Garden (Paradise).
 - Malik, peace be upon him, keeper of the Hell-fire.
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- The Guards of Hell (Zabaniyah), responsible for punishing and tormenting the dwellers of Hell.
 - The two angels, one of which is charged with writing down all good deeds, and the other with writing down all evil deeds.

There are other angels who do whatever they are instructed by Allah to do. They are obedient to Allah – they never disobey Allah’s commands, but do that which they are commanded. According to the Prophet’s ﷺ description. He ﷺ said:

“Angels were created from light, Jinns from burning fire, and Adam was created from that thing which you have already been told.” (Muslim)

Although they were created from invisible light, they have been given the ability to take different shapes in which they can be seen. In the Noble Qur’aan we read about Mary, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“And she chose seclusion from them. Then We sent unto her Our spirit (Gabriel), and he assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man. She said: ‘Lo! I seek refuge in the All-Beneficent One from you, if you are God-fearing.’ He said: ‘I am only a messenger of your Lord, that I may bestow on you a faultless son.’”
(The Qur’aan, Chapter Maryam, 19:17-19)*

Angels have wings. Some angels have two wings, some have three, others have more. The Qur’aan describes them by the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Praise be to Allah, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers with wings – two, three and four. He increases in creation what He wills...” (The Qur’aan Chapter Fatir, 35:1)

There are many other details about them that are only known to Allah.

3. Belief in Divine Books

It is the belief that Allah revealed sacred scriptures to His messengers to convey them to people. Of those books or scriptures are the following:

- The Scriptures of Ibrahim (Abraham) and Moses, peace be upon them, some of whose teachings are indicated in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Or has he not been informed of what is in the scriptures of Moses, and of Ibrahim (Abraham), who fulfilled (what he was commanded), That no laden one shall bear another’s load, and that man has only that for which he makes effort, and that his effort will be seen. And afterward he will be repaid for it with the fullest payment.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Najm, 53:36-41)

- The Torah, which is the holy book revealed to Moses, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! We did revealed the Torah, wherein is guidance and a light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah’s Will, judged for the Jews, and the rabbis and the priests (judged) by such of Allah’s Scripture as they were bidden to observe and thereunto were they witnesses. So fear not mankind, but fear Me. And barter not My revelations for a little gain. Whoever judges not by that which Allah has revealed: such are disbelievers.” (The Qur’aan Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:44)

The Noble Qur'aan has conveyed some of the content of the Torah, including some aspects of Prophet Muhammad's character. It states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those with him are hard on the disbelievers and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling prostrate, seeking bounty from Allah and (His)

acceptance. The mark of them is on their foreheads from the trace of prostration. Such is their likeness in the Torah...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Fath, 48:29)

The Noble Qur’aan has also indicated some of the jurisprudence rulings contained in the Torah, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And We prescribed for them therein: A life for a life, and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and a ear for a ear, and a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds, retaliation. But whoever forgoes it (in the way of charity) it shall be expiation for him. Whoever judges not by that which Allah has revealed such are wrong-doers.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:45)

- The Psalms, revealed to David. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... and as We imparted unto David the Psalms.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:163)

- The Gospel, revealed to Jesus (‘Issa). The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, confirming that which was (revealed) before him, and We bestowed on him the Gospel, wherein is guidance and a light confirming that which was (revealed) before it in the Torah – a guidance and an admonition unto those who fear Allah.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:46)

The existing Gospels, in the hands of people, are in fact, not the word of Allah or Jesus, but the words of his followers and disciples, in which they incorporated a many of his biographical stories, exhortations and commandments, and introduced many distortions, changes and falsifications in order to serve certain purposes.

According to the T. Tacker,¹¹ the Gospels were introduced to reflect a clear concept of the practical requirements of the community for whom they were written. Frequently material has been employed in them without the slightest concern about transforming them or distorting them.

A Muslim is required to believe in the Gospel as the Word of Allah, but not this one in the hands of people nowadays; it is the authentic Gospel revealed to Jesus, peace be upon him, that the Muslim must believe in. He is not required to follow it or put it to action because it was revealed for a certain group of people at a specific period of time. Jesus said:

“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 15:24)

The Noble Qur’aan indicated some hints in the Gospel that foretold of Muhammad’s prophethood, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And My Mercy encompasses all things, therefore I shall ordain it for those who ward off (evil) and pay the poor-due, and those who believe in Our revelations; Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel (which are) with them. He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them (all) good things and prohibit for them (only) the evils; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that they used to wear...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-A’raf, 156:157)

The Noble Qur’aan also pointed out that both the Gospel and the Torah, before it, had exhorted jihad (i.e.:fighting) in the way of Allah in order to exalt His Word, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

¹¹ See “Islam and Messianism” by ‘Aziz Samad.

“Lo! Allah has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth so that the Garden will be theirs. They fight in the way of Allah and slay and are slain. It is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur’aan. Who fulfils his covenant better than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made, for that is the supreme triumph.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter At-Tauba, 9:111)

- The Glorious Qur’aan: It must be believed that it is the Word of Allah revealed through Gabriel, peace be upon him, unto Muhammad, blessing and peace be upon him, and that it is the last of the Revealed Scriptures. It differs from preceding scriptures in the following ways:
- It is the last of the Revealed Books. Therefore, Allah – Glory to Him, has promised to preserve it for humanity till the end of this world, and no addition or deletion has occurred to it, as He has declared, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! We, even We, have revealed the Reminder (i.e.:the Qur’aan), and Lo! We verily are its Guardian.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Hijr, 15:9)

- Its recitation is one aspect of worship.
- It embraces all laws and regulations on which a virtuous society can be founded. According to J. S. Restler (a contemporary French Scholar and Professor at the Islamic Institute, Paris), in his book, “The Arab Civilization”:

“The Qur’aan finds answers to all issues and establishes the link between the religious and the moral law. It aims to create order and social consolidation and to alleviate distress, hard-heartedness and remove superstition. It seeks to help the oppressed and enjoins mercy and kindness. With respect to legislation, it has laid rules and directives for daily cooperation and organized contracting and inheritance. As for family, it has identified for

everyone forms of conduct towards children, captives, animals, health, clothing, etc.”

- It is a historical document that shows the sequence of events and respective revelations for all messengers of Allah since Adam up to Muhammad, peace be upon them all.
- It was revealed for all mankind, not only for the Arabs, as indicated in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Alif, Lam, Ra, (This is) a scripture which We have revealed unto you (Muhammad) that thereby you may bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ibrahim, 14:1)

4. Belief in the Messengers of Allah

It is the belief that Allah, Glory to Him, has chosen from mankind prophets and messengers. He revealed scriptures to the messengers to convey them to people so that they should have no plea against Allah. As for prophets, they did not receive scriptures or convey a new religious law; but they were sent by Allah only to confirm and preach the law of prophets and messengers who preceded them. There were many Prophets and messengers; only Allah knows their real number. The Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Verily We sent messengers before thee, among them those of whom We have told you, and some of whom We have not told you...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Mu’min, 40:78)

Those prophets and messengers were all human beings, as stated in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your God is only One God. And Whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and make none to share int the

worship due of his Lord.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Kahf, 18:110).

The Glorious Qur’aan tells us about Jesus, peace be upon him, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger. Messengers (the like of whom) had passed away before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth. And they both used to eat (earthly) food. See how We make the signs clear for them, and yet see how they are turned away!” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:75)

The Qur’aan has mentioned the names of twenty-five prophets and messengers:

“That is Our argument, We gave it unto Abraham against his folk. We raise unto degrees (of wisdom) whom We will. Lo! Your Lord is All-Wise, Well-Aware. And We bestowed upon him, Isaac and Jacob, each of them We guided; and Noah did We guide aforetime; and of his seed (We guided) David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward the good. And Zachariah and John and Jesus and Elias. Each one (of them) was of the righteous. And Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot. Each on of them did We prefer above (Our) creatures (of their times).” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-An’am, 6:83-86)

About Adam, peace be upon him, the Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

Lo! Allah, preferred Adam and Noah and the Family of Abraham and the Family of ‘Imran above the peoples (of their times).” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:33)

About Hud, peace be upon him, the Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And unto (the tribe of) ‘Aad (We sent) their brother, Hud. He said: ‘O my people! worship Allah! You have no other God save Him...’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Hud, 11:50)

About Shu‘ayb, peace be upon him, the Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And unto Midian (We sent) their brother Shu‘ayb. He said: O my people! worship Allah. You have no other God save Him...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Hud, 11:84)

About Idris, peace be upon him, the Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And (mention) Ishmail, and Idris, and Dhul-Kifl. All were of the steadfast.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Anbiya’, 21:85)

And about Muhammad, ﷺ:

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those with him are hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Fatah, 48:29)

The belief in all prophets is imperative, if one believes in some of them and rejects others he will be deemed a disbeliever. This is pointed out in the Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and seek to make distinction between Allah and His messengers, and Say: “We believe in some and disbelieve in others,” and seek to choose a way in between; such are disbelievers in truth; and for disbelievers We have prepared a shameful doom.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:150-151)

The first of those messengers was Adam and the last was Muhammad; therefore, there is no prophet or messenger after him.

5. Belief in the Hereafter

It is firm belief in the fact that this world will come to an end and perish one day. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Every one that is thereon will pass away. There remains but the Face of your Lord full of Might and Glory.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Ar-Rahman, 55:26-27)

This also includes the belief that a day will follow on which Allah resurrects all creatures from their tombs to be paid their due. Those who did good will be rewarded for their good, while those who did evil will be punished for their evil deeds. The Qur'aan gives several instances in which Allah explains the possibility of resurrection:

Contemplating the revival of dead earth by the crops He produces therefrom, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water thereon, it stimulates and swells and brings forth every lovely kind (of growth). That is because Allah, He is the Truth and because He is Able to do all things; and because the Hour will come, there is no doubt thereof; and because Allah will raise those who are in the grave...” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Hajj, 22:5-7)

Contemplating the creation of the heavens and the earth, which is greater than the creation of man, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Have they not seen that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye, He verily is ever Able to do all thins.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Ahqaf, 46:33)

Reflecting on how man sleeps and awakens, as if it is life after death. In this vain, sleep is call the ‘minor death.’ Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah takes souls at the time of their death, and those which die not (He takes) during their sleep. He keeps those (souls) for which He has ordained death and dismisses the rest till an appointed term. Lo! Herein verily are portents for people who take thought.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Az-Zumar, 39:42)

Considering the first creation of man, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And he (man) has coined for Us a similitude, and forgotten the fact of his creation, saying: ‘Who will revive these bones when they have rotten away?’ Say: ‘He will revive them Who produced them at the first, for He is All-Knower of every creature.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ya-Sin, 36:78-79)

Believing in the Hereafter involves belief in the interval between the worldly life and the Hereafter, during which those who do good enjoy bliss and comfort, while the those who do evil suffer punishment. It also involves belief in resurrection after death, as well as assembly, judgement, testimony of man’s limbs, reckoning, the the Bridge across Hell, recompense by Paradise or Hell-Fire, and eternal, never-ending life in the Hereafter. The Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Those who disbelieve, among the people of the Scripture and the idolaters, will abide in fire of hell. They are the worst of created beings. (And) Lo! Those who believe and do good works are the best of created beings. Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of Eden beneath which rivers flow, wherein they dwell forever. Allah is pleased with and they are pleased with Him. This is for him who fears his Lord.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Baiyina, 98:6-8)

6. Belief in the Divine Decree and the Divine Will

It is the firm belief that Allah always knew all things before they took place and how they would be. Then He brought things into existence in accordance with His unlimited knowledge and apportioning. This is stated in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

"...He has created everything and has meted out for it a measure." (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Furqan, 25:2)

Whatever happened or happens throughout existence is known to Allah before it happens, then it takes place in accordance with the Will and Decree. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"No one shall be deemed a believer unless he believes in divine destiny, whether for the good or harm (of man), and he must believe that what happened to him would never have missed him, and what missed him would never have happened to him." (Tirmidhi)

This should not preclude using the right or required means to achieve his aims. For example, a man who wishes to have children should act and resort to marriage, which is the means or method that would realize this for him. However this may or may not bring about the desired results, as Allah wills, because it is not the causes that bring about effects by themselves; it is the Will of Allah that makes means or causes work. In fact causes are created and ordained by Allah, Glory to Him.

In this context, the Prophet, peace be upon him, was asked about invocations and medications whether they can ward off anything preordained by Allah. He said: *"They are part of Allah's preordainment."*

Hunger, thirst and cold are aspects of Allah's preordainment, and people try to ward off hunger by eating food, thirst by drinking water, and cold by warming themselves. So they defend themselves against what is preordained for them (hunger, thirst and cold) by what is preordained for them (food, drink and warmth). This means that they ward off the preordainment with the preordainment.

Belief in Divine Destiny, after use of means and causes, has many advantages, including:

Acceptance and contentment with preordained events or things results in peace of mind, which rids the heart or mind of concerns and sorrow for what happens or what is lost. It is well-known that lack of content and satisfaction may lead to many diseases and disorders, whereas belief in Divine Destiny relieves the human souls of the effects of unrest and anxiety. The Glorious Qur'aan makes this clear in this verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allah. In order that you may not grieve at the things that you fail to get, nor rejoice over that which has been given to you. Allah likes not prideful boasters.” (The Qur'aan, Chapter Al-Hadid, 57:22-23)

An invitation to seek knowledge and explore the secrets and reserves or resources of the Universe. What is preordained for man, such as illness, moves him to look for medication or cure that helps him to save himself by preordained cure from predestined illness.

Alleviate man's calamities. If a person undergoes loss of money or trade, such loss is a disaster for him, but if he gives in to grief, the disaster will be doubled for him. But if he believes truly in Divine Destiny he will be relieved and content, as he is aware that it is inescapable. The Noble Prophet ﷺ guides us in this respect by saying:

“Stick to what is useful to you, work, do well, seek help from Allah and never give in. If anything befalls you, just say: ‘Allah has preordained and done what He has willed.’ Do not say: ‘If only..’ because it opens the way for the devil’s work.”

Belief in Divine Destiny is not, as some would think, an invitation to helpless dependence and lack of activity. The Noble Prophet ﷺ urges us to the contrary by saying:

“If one of you takes his rope to gather a bundle of wood and then sells it, it would be better for him than to beg from people, whether they give, or refuse to give him.”

He ﷺ, said to the person who asked him about his riding animal which he had left without tying or hobbling it under the pretext of trust in Allah:

“Restrain it and trust (Allah).”

The Political Aspect of Islam

The Islamic legislation in the political domain, as in other domains, has introduced basic principles and general rules that constitute the nucleus of the Muslim State. The ruler of the Muslim State is considered an agent that implements the commands of Allah through the implementation of these rules and principles. The Noble Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever judges not by that which Allah has revealed; such are the disbelievers” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Ma’idah, 5:44)

The ruler of the Muslim State is representative of the whole nation delegated to perform the following:

1. To do his best to provide honest and honorable ways of living for them, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the meaning of which is translated as:

“If a person is made to look after some affairs of the Muslims, but fails to work for their cause and their welfare as he does for himself, he will not get even the aroma of the Paradise.” (Al-Tabarani)

The ruler of the Muslim State must be as described by the Caliph ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, when he said to his companions; “Guide me to a man whom I can assign to take care of certain affairs of the Muslims which are of concern to me.”

They mentioned Abdur-Rahman Ibn 'Auf. He said, "He is weak." They mentioned another one and he did not approve of him. Then they asked, "Who do you want?" He said: "I want a man who, when appointed a governor, he behaves as if he was one of them, and even when he is not their leader, he appears as if he were their leader." They said; "We think Ar-Rabi'a Ibn Al-Harith is the one." 'Umar said, "You are right", and he appointed him.

2. Not to appoint in authority over the Muslims anyone who is not up to bearing responsibility or trust, such as when he favors a friend or a relative more than worthier people to the position. Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, said to Yazeed Ibn Sufyan when he sent him to Syria, "*O Yazeed! You have relatives and you may favor them more than others with the rank of governor, which makes me most worried about you.*" Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

"If one is placed in authority over the Muslims and he appoints some one over them, favoring him due to his relationship with him, Allah's curse be upon him and no acts shall be accepted from him until Allah throws him into Hell." (Bukhari & Muslim).

The aforesaid rules and principles are characterized by the following;

- They are divine, ordained by Allah. According to them, all are equal; the ruler and the ruled, the rich and the poor, the noble and the lowly, the black and the white – no one, however high-ranking, is to violate them or pass laws that are in conflict with them. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with them, said in this regard: "*The Commander of the Faithful (i.e.:the Caliph) is one of you, but he is the most heavy-laden among you.*"

All are required to respect these rules and principles and to demand their implementation by both the ruler and the ruled. In Islam there is no absolute power for any human, even the rulers' powers are governed by the Law. In case he has a compliant with the Law, he has no right to being heard or obeyed. The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“It is obligatory upon a Muslim to listen and obey (the authority) whether he likes it or not; save when he is asked to do something sinful. If he is asked to do a sinful act, then there is no hearing or obedience.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

Consultation is the pivot of the political system of Islam. The Qur’aan refers to this basic element by saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if you had been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs.” (The Qur’aan, Ali ‘Imran, 3:159)

In the former verse, consultation is mentioned side by side with prayer, the pillar of Islam, thereby gaining prominence. The counsel of wise knowledgeable people should be sought in everything that relates to the nation’s interests. At the end of the verse, Allah, glory to Him, praises the believers in general in view of their commitment to consultation in all their affairs.

In the latter verse, Allah, the Exalted, instructs His Messenger, who was the Sovereign of the Muslim State, to seek counsel in those matters related to the interests and affairs of the people if no judgment or verdict was revealed by Allah about them. However if there is a clear text containing a verdict, it will not be subject to consultation. Allah’s Messenger used to consult his companions as stated by Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him; *“I have never seen a person who is more keen on consulting his companions than Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him.” (Al-Tirmidhi)*

Several events indicated that the Prophet, peace be upon him, changed his mind after he had consulted his companions.

Jurisprudence considered it obligatory for the ruler to consult the people about matters relating their interests. Even if he neglects consultation, people are required to insist on their right to say their word and give their opinion. That is based on the above mentioned

verses, because the Islamic Law considers the ruler a representative (of the nation) who is responsible to perform what is delegated to him. The people, in return, are required to control the ruler's implementation of the Law. Islam gives everyone the freedom of opinion and criticism in the manner he deems appropriate. The Gracious Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Whoever among you notices something evil should correct it with his own hands, and if he is unable to do so, he should prohibit the same with his tongue, and if he is unable even to do this, he should at least consider it as bad in his heart; this is the lowest degree of faith.” (Muslim).

It even considers opinion-giving a duty, as indicated in the following Hadith, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The best Jihad (struggle in the cause of Allah) is to utter a word of justice before a tyrannical ruler.” (Abu Dawood & Tirmidhi).

This opinion-giving, however, should be within the limits of constructive criticism, away from slander, insult and trouble making. Abu Bakr addressed people, saying:

“O people! I have been appointed as your ruler though I am not the best among you. So If you find me in the right, just help me. But if you find me in the wrong, just correct me. Obey me so long as I obey Allah in conducting your affairs. However, if I disobey Him I have no claim to your obedience.”

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, one day stood on the pulpit addressing people: *“O people! If you find that I have some crookedness, correct me.”* One bedouin rose to his feet and said: *“By Allah! If we find you crooked, we will correct you with our swords.”* Yet ‘Umar did not get angry or harbor malice towards him, he only raised his hands towards the heaven and said:

“Praise be to Allah, Who has created among our people a person who is able to correct the crookedness of ‘Umar.”

The ruler was even called to account. Once, ‘Umar addressed people while having a two-piece dress on. When he said:

“O people! Listen and obey.” A man stood up and said: “No listening! No obedience!” ‘Umar asked why. The man answered: “Because you have a two-piece dress while we have only a single one.” ‘Umar at once called out: “Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar! Tell them.” Abdullah said: “I gave him my garment.” The man then said: “Now listen and obey.”

Thus Islam preserved rights and protected public and private freedoms. It kept the sources of legislation away from the narrow-scooped whims and desires of legislators, as their legislation is the outcome of personal or regional needs and circumstances. What was legislated yesterday is invalidated today, and what is legislated today is likely to be invalidated tomorrow. Islam has not legislated for other partial issues and affairs. It aims to leave the door open for Muslims to lay down proper rules and regulations that suit their conditions and meet their requirements and interests anywhere and at any time, provided such rules and regulations are not in conflict with the principles and fundamentals of Islam.

The Military Aspect of Islam

In principle, Islam considers peace and reconciliation the basis of relations with other nations, considering that the word “Islam” means “peace”. Islam, however, prescribes and considers war lawful, after exhausting all means of promoting peace, only in three cases, namely;

1. Self-defense, i.e., defense of one’s body, family and country. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:190)

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2. To save people from injustice and oppression, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women and children, whose cry is: ‘Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors, and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.’” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:75)

“But if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Anfal, 8:72)

3. Defense of religion against triflers, and fighting against those who try to stand in the way of conveying the divine message and law of Islam, because Islam is a world call which is not limited to certain people. Every human being must have the chance to hear and be acquainted with Islam and its principles of good, justice, fraternity, love and equality, after which he can decide whether or not to embrace this religion. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And fight them until there is no more persecution, and the religion will all be for Allah alone.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Anfal, 8:39)

If the enemy stops fighting and offers peace, war must be stopped, it is forbidden to carry on fighting against them, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So if they withdraw from you and fight not against you and offer you peace, then Allah has opened no way for you against them.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:90)

Other types of wars, such as expansionist wars leading to destruction, or wars for pompous show of power, are prohibited by Islam because

fighting is permitted only for raising high the word of Allah, not for personal desires. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Be not as those who came forth from their dwellings boastfully and to be seen of men.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Anfal, 8:47)

The Prophet, ﷺ stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

“One who fights to uphold the message of Allah, is the person who carries on Jihad (fighting) in the cause of Allah.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

While Islam permits fighting in cases of necessity or emergency, it has prescribed rules and standards that control it. No enemy should be killed unless he has participated in or helped with the fight. As for old people, women, children, patients, those taking care of the sick and the wounded and devoted worshippers, they must not be killed. The wounded should not be killed, the dead should not be mutilated, their animals should not be slaughtered, their houses should not be demolished, their waters and wells should not be contaminated, and those who flee from battle should not be chased, because all this is part of corruption. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...and seek not corruption in the earth, Lo! Allah loves not those who cause corruption.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Qasas, 28:77)

And Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, said:

“Fight in the name of Allah, and in the cause of Allah, those who disbelieve in Allah. Fight, but never betray, mutilate, or kill a newborn.” (Muslim)

Abu Bakr, the first Caliph after the blessed Prophet used to advise commanders of the Muslim troops when he sent them for battle as follows:

“Listen to these ten tips and learn them by heart: Don’t betray, defraud (by stealing from the war booty), break your promise, mutilate, kill a little child, kill an old man or a woman, injure or burn palm trees, cut down a fruitful tree, slaughter a sheep or a cow or a camel except for eating. You will come across people who secluded themselves in hermitages, so leave them alone.” (Tabari, Vol. 3)

In addition, war should be declared prior to starting the fight, so as to avoid deceit, betrayal and perfidy.

As for prisoners of war, Islam does not allow them to be tortured, scared humiliated, mutilated or starved to death. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And (they) feed with food, despite their love and desire for it, the needy wretch, the orphan and the prisoner, (saying): ‘We feed you for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you.’” (The Qur’aan, Ad-Dahr, 76:8-9)

The Muslim State after that may either set them free without ransom, or for ransom (a sum of money) or in exchange for Muslim prisoners of war. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Now when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then it is smiting on the necks until, when you have routed them, then making fast of bonds: and afterwards either grace or ransom till the war lay down its burdens.” (The Qur’aan, Muhammad, 47:4).

As for non-Muslims who are defeated in war and are living under Muslim protection, Muslims are required to keep their honor intact, their wealth and property secure, their houses and property from being demolished or vandalized. They must not be exposed to any acts of vengeance; it is required to improve their conditions, enjoin on them what is good and prohibit them from doing evil things, treat them equally and respect their beliefs. The Glorious Qur’aan states in this regard, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, establish prayer and pay the poor due and enjoin kindness and forbid inequity. And Allah’s is the sequel of events.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Hajj, 22:41)

A good example is the pledge given by ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab to the people of Jerusalem when he conquered it, it read as follows:

“In the name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful. This is the pledge of protection given by Allah’s Servant, ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, Commander of the Faithful, to the people of Jerusalem: To safeguard them, their property, churches, crosses, etc., not to be coerced in matters of their religion, and not to cause damage to any of them...”

Has history witnessed better than such noble-mindedness, justice and tolerance extended from a conqueror to the conquered? ‘Umar could have dictated whatever he willed on them, but – as always – he preferred justice and adhered to the dictates of divine Law enforcing it on all people equally.

A small amount of money is required of them, namely “the tribute” or Jizia, to be collected from those who choose to stick to their religion and not to embrace Islam. It is classified into three categories:

1. A sum of money taken from the rich, amounting to 48 dirhams¹² a year.
2. A sum taken from middle class people, such as traders and farmers, amounting to 24 dirhams a year.
3. A sum taken from workmen and craftsmen (who have jobs), amounting to 12 dirhams a year.

This tribute is generally paid for protection, care, and safeguarding them, their honor and wealth, and enjoying all rights enjoyed by the Muslim conquerors. Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed, in one of his treaties stated: *“I have covenanted with you for both tribute and protection. If*

¹² A dirham is a silver coin that weighs 2.979 grams.

we protect you we will receive the tribute; otherwise we will take nothing until we protect you."¹³

This tax is not incumbent on all non-Muslim subjects. Poor and young people, women, monks in their hermitage, blind and disabled people are all exempted from the tax. Besides, the Muslim State is responsible for taking care of these people and providing them with their expenses from the Treasury. In a pledge given by the Muslim Leader Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed to people of Al-Hirah,¹⁴ it was sated:

"Whatever old man who is unable to work or stricken with illness, or he becomes poor after affluence so that the followers of his religion give charity to him, he shall be relieved of the tribute and supported along with his family from the Treasury." (Abu Yusuf: Al-Kharaj)

Once 'Umar Ibn Al-khattab passed by an old Jewish man who was begging, when he asked about him and knew he used to pay the tribute tax he said to him;

"It's unfair to take the tax from you while young and then neglect you in old age."

Then he took him to his own house and gave him food and clothes. Later he instructed the Treasurer to look for such poor people and give them sufficient provisions for them and their families from the Treasury, for Allah says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"The alms (of Zakat) are only for the poor and the needy..."

"The poor are the Muslims and the needy are the people of the Scriptures." (ibid)

The German woman researcher, Lise Lichtenstadter, stated,

¹³ Al-Balazari's *History*

¹⁴ The capital city of the Arab Lakhmi Kings. It was located between Najaf and Kufa in Iraq.

“In Persian and Roman territories, a choice was given to people. Not between the sword and Islam, but between Islam and the poll-tax or tribute (taken only from well-to-do people for their protection), the plan that was worthy of praise; it was adopted later in England during the rule of Queen Elizabeth.” (Islam in the Modern Age, p. 67).

Non-Muslims in Muslim territories must be protected from oppression and injustice. Their rights must be respected and they should receive fair treatment. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah does not forbid you to deal justly with those who fought not against you on account of religion nor drove you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Mumtahana, 60:8)

The Gracious Prophet, ﷺ said:

“If a person wrongs, belittles, overburdens or robs a free non-Muslim under Muslim rule by force, I shall be his opponent on the Day of Judgement.” (Abu Dawood)

The Economic Aspect of Islam

Islam aims to erect a society free from excessively rich or poor people, because it seeks to establish social justice and honorable living for all its members. Allah, Glory to Him, tells us, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Wealth and children are an ornament of life of the world.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Kahf, 18:46)

Since Islam considers money one of the indispensable necessities for individuals and groups, it has ordained a specific percentage, 2.5 % called poor due or Zakat, to be taken from the funds of rich people after the elapse of one lunar year and given to poor people as

explained before. It is one of the rights due to the poor and cannot be withheld from them.

This does not mean that Islam abolishes individual ownership and private business, in fact, it sanctions and respects them in terms of giving everyone his due. The Qur'aan has forbidden any aggression against the property of others by saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:188)

Islam, therefore, has enacted Laws and regulations, the implementation of which is guaranteed by keenness on the attainment of honorable life for every member of the Muslim society. Such regulations include the following:

1. Usury has been forbidden because it exploits the efforts of others or taking their property unrightfully. Property is inviolable. The spread of usury will lead to the loss of kindness among people and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a certain group of people. The Qur'aan addresses Muslims saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from usury, if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger, but if you repent, you shall have your capital sums (without interest). Wrong not, and you shall not be wronged.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:278-279)

The Islamic Law prescribes that a grace period should preferably be granted to a debtor in case of insolvency if he really intends to pay back his debt, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And if the debtor is in a hard time, then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:280)

The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Whoever gives a grace period to one in debt, he will be deemed to have done an act of charity for each day.”

2. Islam recommends reduction of debt in case of difficulty in repayment, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“...but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:280)

3. It prohibits a person from entering into a transaction when his brother is already making a transaction, unless the latter gives permission, because this would lead to enmity and hatred among people. The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“A person should not enter into a transaction when his brother is already making a transaction, and he should not make a proposal of marriage when his brother has already made a proposal, except when he gives permission.” (Muslim)

4. Greed and hoarding of foodstuff are forbidden as this would lead to food shortage in the market and to inflated prices, which is harmful to both the rich and the poor. The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“No one hoards but the sinner.” (Muslim)

According to Abu Yusuf, the fellow scholar of Imam Abu Hanifah:

“If the hoarding of any goods proves to be harmful to the public, it would be considered a monopoly, even if it is gold or silver. Whoever hoards it is deemed to have abused his right of ownership. The prevention of monopoly aims to protect people from harm, for people have different needs and monopoly causes hardship to people.”

A ruler may force one who hoards a commodity to sell it at a reasonable profit, which is prejudicial neither to the seller nor the

purchaser. If the monopolist refuses to sell at that profit, the ruler may confiscate the commodity and sell it at a reasonable price in order to stop the monopolists from hoarding.

5. It has prohibited unwarranted taxes as pointed out in the Prophet's Hadith:

"A taxman shall never be admitted into Paradise." (Abu Dawood)

An unwarranted tax is a sum of money collected from a trader to allow them to sell their goods or to import them into the country. This money is collected unlawfully and given also to those who are not entitled to it. All those who contribute to tax collection, including tax collectors, clerks, witnesses and receivers, come under the Prophet's saying:

"No flesh that grows from unlawful things shall be admitted into Paradise; Hell-fire shall have the best claim to them." (Imam Ahmad)

Unlawful things here include any unlawful amounts of money, food or drink.

6. It has forbidden hoarding up gold and silver (i.e.: money) and refraining from spending them on the welfare of both the individual and the society. The Qur'aan declares, the meaning of which is translated as:

"They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings of painful doom." (The Qur'aan, At-Tauba, 9:34)

This is because money should be in current or general use so that the economy remains active and beneficial to all members of the society.

As Islam respects individual ownership, it imposes rights and duties associated with it. Such duties include the owner's duty to spend on himself and on those relatives supported by him, his duty towards the members of his society (including the payment of Zakat, almsgiving and kindness) and his duty toward his society collectively (including the construction... of schools, hospitals, orphanages, mosques and

everything of use to the society). This will help prevent the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a limited number of people.

7. It has forbidden wine (alcoholic drinks) and gambling since they help squander human and financial resources and capabilities without benefiting either individuals or the society in general. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Indeed, intoxicants, gambling, idols, and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave it aside in order that you may succeed.” (The Qur'aan Chapter Al-Ma'idah 5:90)

8. It has forbidden giving less in measure and weight. The Glorious Qur'aan says in this regard, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Woe to those who give less in measure and weight, Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, demand full measure, and when they have to give by measure or weight to (other) men, give less than due.” (The Qur'aan 83:1-3)

That is because it is a kind of stealth and deceit.

9. It has prohibited monopolizing public utilities, such as water and public pastures, and preventing people from benefiting by them. Allah's Messenger, ﷺ said:

“There are three persons whom Allah will not talk to, look at, or purify on the Day of Judgment, and they will suffer a painful punishment... and a man who refused to give excess water (to those who need it badly). On that day, Allah will say to him: ‘Today I withhold from you my grace as you withheld what is in excess of your needs, though you are not its creator.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

10. The Law of Inheritance: Islam has distributed inheritance among heirs according to nearness or distance of relationship and benefit to the deceased. Nobody has the
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right to distribute inheritance as he wishes. One of the advantages of inheritance distribution is that it breaks up wealth or property, however large, into small amounts or estates, and precludes accumulation of wealth in the hands of a particular group of people.

11. Private and Public Social Security: Islam has prescribed the systems of endowments, which falls into two categories.
 - A. Private or special endowment limited to the family or offspring of the initiator of the endowment with the aim of protecting them from want and begging. One of the conditions of validity of this type of endowment is to transfer its returns and benefit, when no more offspring exists, to welfare work and charitable purposes.
 - B. Public or general charitable endowment, which aims to use the income of endowed property, or the property itself, for the sake of welfare and benevolence, including the construction of hospitals, schools, roads, public libraries, mosques, social welfare houses for orphans, and old people. All of this is in the interest of the whole society.
12. Islam has forbidden all that comes under the Quranic verse:

“O you who believe! Eat not up your wealth among yourselves in vanity.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:29)

This includes:

- Usurpation, which involves wronging others and perverting society; The Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Whoever usurps a Muslim’s property through a false oath, Allah will make Hell his abode and forbid him from Paradise.”

One man asked: *“Even if it were the twig of a bush, O Messenger of Allah?”* The Prophet answered,

“Even if it were the twig of a bush.” (Muslim)

- Robbery, The Glorious Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds: an exemplary punishment from Allah.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:38)

- Deceit and Cheating, Allah’s Messenger, ﷺ said:

“One who cheats is not one of us.” (Muslim)

- Bribery, the Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And eat not up your property among yourselves in vanity, nor seek by it to gain the hearing of the judges that you may knowingly devour a portion of the property of others wrongfully.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:188)

Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, ﷺ said in this connection:

“May Allah curse the briber, the one bribed, and the one who goes between them.” (Ibn Hibban).

The one bribed, by giving a bribe, helps to spread this evil in society. By accepting a bribe, the one doing the bribing takes what is not his, unrightfully, and commits a breach of trust for he takes a price for a duty above the designated salary or wages. The one who goes between the giver and receiver of a bribe helps to promote this sin and accepts unlawful money.

- A man should not buy in opposition to his brother unless the latter gives him permission. The Prophet, ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Do not forsake one another, nor buy in opposition to each other.” (Muslim)

The Social Aspect of Islam

Islamic Laws have regulated the mutual rights and duties of the members of society in order to ensure social stability. Such rights and duties are either special or general. Special rights and duties or obligations include:

- People's Obligations Towards the Ruler:

It is stated in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and those of you who are in authority." (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:59)

These obligations are as follows:

- To obey the ruler unless his orders are in conflict with Islam. This is in keeping with the Prophet's ﷺ Hadith:

"Listen and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is appointed as your leader, as long as he implements Allah's Book (i.e.:The Qur'aan) among you." (Narrated by the Major Hadith Imams, except Bukhari).

Thus, obedience to the ruler, if he orders no sin, is part of obedience to Allah, hence disobedience to him, in this context, implies disobedience to Allah.

- To extend sincere advice to the ruler, gently and leniently, on things that are helpful to him and are in the interest of his subjects. Allah, glory to Him, instructed Moses and his brother Aaron, on sending them to Pharaoh to preach the true religion to him:

"And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allah)." (The Qur'aan, Ta-Ha, 20:44).

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- To stand up for him in times of adversity or crises and not to rise against him or let him down, even though he does not pledge allegiance to him. According to the Prophet's:

"If someone comes, while you are united under one leader, and he wants to stir up discord among you or to disrupt your unity, just kill him." (Muslim)

- The Ruler's Obligations towards the Ruled

People's rights or the ruler's obligations toward them can be summed up by five items:

1. Absolute justice which is realized by giving everyone higher due. So a ruler is required to be fair in protecting others' rights. Performing his duties, distribution or allocation of responsibilities, and implementation of rules and decisions. All people are equal before him the ruler. If a person or group should be favored more than others, the Prophet ﷺ said:

"The nearest to Allah and most favored by Him is the fair ruler and the worst in tyranny and the most disliked by Him is the unfair one." (Tirmidhi)

2. He should consult them regarding all affairs pertaining to their political, social and economic interests (consultation is limited to those matters for which there is no explicit text from the Qur'aan or Sunnah), allows them the chance to give their views and express themselves freely, and accept such views if they prove to be in the public interest. When the Prophet, in the battle of Badr, stopped at the nearest spring of Badr, one of his companions asked him, "Has Allah inspired you to choose this very spot or is it strategy of war?" The Prophet replied, "It is the strategy of war." The companion said, "This place is no good, let us go and camp on the well nearest to the enemy and make a basin full of water, then destroy all the wells so that the enemy should be deprived of water." The Prophet approved of his plan and agreed to carry it out.

3. The Islamic Law, must be the source of the ruler's decisions and constitution. This leaves no way for personal whims or wanton decisions that may hit or miss the mark. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, may
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Allah be pleased with him, after assuming the Caliphate, said to Abu Maryam Al-Saluli, who had killed his brother Zaid Ibn Al-Khattab (before he embraced Islam). *“By Allah, I won’t like you until the earth likes blood.”* Al-Saluli asked: *“Will this deprive me of any of my rights?”* ‘Umar replied: *“No”* The man said: *“No harm, only women will be unhappy if they are not liked.”*

4. He should not conceal himself from his people or lock his doors in their faces, nor should he look down upon them and place between himself and his subjects mediators who allow some people in and prevent others. The Gracious Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Whoever is appointed, by Allah’s favor, as ruler or governor, then keeps himself absent from them, thereby ignoring their needs and poverty, Allah will ignore his needs and destitution on the Day of Judgment.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

5. He should be merciful to his subjects. He should not assign to them unbearable or unaffordable tasks or constrict their way of living. Also he should treat the elderly as parents, the young as sons or daughters and those his own age as his brothers. Thus he respects his parents, shows mercy to his children and respects his brothers. The Glorious Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about you, so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah’s) forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Ali ‘Imran, 3:159)

The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah shows His mercy to those who are merciful. Show mercy to those living on earth, and Allah will give you His mercy.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab indicated the importance of this by saying:

“By Allah, if a mule tripped over and fell in Iraq, I would be afraid that Allah will ask me why I did not level the road for it.”

A Muslim ruler must be as described in a letter which Imam Al-Hassan Al-Basri sent to ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul-‘Aziz, may Allah’s mercy be on him, in which he said:

“O Commander of the Faithful, be informed that Allah has made the fair ruler a prop for supporting what is tilted (not upright), a restraint on oppressors, a reformation of perverted people, strength for the weak, justice to the oppressed, and a refuge for the afflicted.

A fair ruler, O Commander of the Faithful, is like a shepherd who is kind to his camels, so he looks for the best pasture and drives them away from the areas of danger, wild animals and hot or cold weather. The just ruler, O Commander of the Faithful, is like a caring father who toils for the sake of his children, educates them as they grow up, supports them and keeps for them what he leaves to them after his death.

O Commander of the Faithful, a just ruler is like an affectionate mother who has loving care for her son. She bore him with hardship. She cared for him when he was a little child; she sat up late with him when he stayed awake at night, and became calm when he was peaceful, at times feeding him, and at other times weaning him, feeling happy about his good health and unhappy about his complaints.

O Commander of the Faithful, a just ruler is the guardian of orphans and a sponsor of the needy: he cares for the young and provides for the old.

A just ruler, O Commander of the Faithful, is like a heart within the ribs: when the heart is healthy the ribs become healthy, but when it is sick they grow unhealthy.

A just ruler, O Commander of the Faithful, stands between Allah and His servants: He hears the word of Allah and conveys it to them, looks forward to Allah (with his heart) and makes them look forward to Him, submits his will to his Lord and leads them to Him.

O Commander of the Faithful, don't be, in what Allah has bestowed upon you, like a slave who was entrusted by his master with his wealth and family, but he wasted the master's wealth and made his children homeless and destitute.

As you know, Prince of the Faithful, Allah has prescribed punishments (stipulated in the Qur'aan) to deter his servants from deadly sins and evils, what if the one in charge of such punishments commits such sins? Allah has also stipulated retaliation to protect the lives of the people, what then if the one who is in charge of retaliation commits murder?

O Commander of the Faithful, recall death and the Hereafter, and the futility of your supporters and followers in the face of death, so get ready for it and the horrors that follow.

O Commander of the Faithful! You should know that, apart from your present residence, there is still another one where your sleep will last long, and your friends will part company with you and leave you alone at the bottom of that place. Therefore, provide yourself with what keeps you company "on the days when a man flees from his brother, and his mother and his father, and his wife and his children?"¹⁵

Remember also the time, "when the contents of the graves are poured fourth: and the secrets of the

¹⁵Quoted from the Qur'an 80:34-36

breasts are made known.”¹⁶ Thus secrets are out, and there is “a book... that leaves not a small thing but has counted it.” Now there is still time for you before death comes and hopes are shattered and lost.

O Commander of the Faithful! Do not judge between them in the way of ignorant people. Do not lead them in the way of the wrong-doers. Do not give proud people power over feeble ones, as they observe towards a believer neither pact nor honor, so that you should not bear the burdens of other sins besides yours. Do not be deceived by those who enjoy those things that lead to your misery, and devour the good things while depriving you of the good things of the Hereafter. Do not think of your power today; think of it tomorrow when you become the captive of death. Then stand on the Day of Judgment before Almighty Allah in the presence of an assembly of angels, prophets and messengers, when “faces humble themselves before the Living and Eternal” Allah, glory be to Him.

O Commander of the Faithful! I have not attained with my advice the level of wise preachers or men or reason and wisdom before me; but I have done my best to be sincere in my advice to you. So take my message to you as a medicine given by a loving person to his favorite friend, though it has bitter taste, in the hope of his cure.

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.”

- **Parents’ Rights**

They have a claim on our obedience to them (unless a sin is involved) and responding to their orders. We should extend our kindness and generosity to them, and provide them with their necessities, including

¹⁶Qur’an 100:9-10

food, drink, clothes and accommodation. We are required to speak to them leniently and humbly, to serve them patiently, and to respect their feelings, no words should be addressed to them that hurt their feelings. The Qur'aan recommends in this respect by saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honor. And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and Say: ‘My Lord! Bestow on them your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young.’” (The Qur'aan, Bani Israil, 17:23-24)

The great Prophet, ﷺ said:

“Allah’s pleasure originates from parents’ pleasure, and His wrath originates from parents’ anger.” (Tirmidhi)

The aforesaid rights are due to parents even if they were non-Muslims in the light of Ayesha’s tradition in which she said:

“My mother visited me when she was an idolater. I inquired with Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him, saying: ‘O Messenger of Allah! My mother has visited me willingly. Shall I receive her?’ He answered: ‘Yes, receive and honor her.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The mother is given priority over the father in matters of kind treatment and good companionship. This is understood from the following tradition:

“A man came to Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him, and asked: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which person of all the people is best entitled to my kind treatment and companionship?’ He answered: ‘Your mother’, The man asked: ‘And then?’ He said: ‘Your mother’, and after her? He said: ‘Your mother’, and after her?”

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Your father'".

The Prophet ﷺ accorded the mother three rights and the father one right, because the former bears hardships and suffering that the latter cannot bear. As described in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

"His mother bears him with hardship, and gives him birth with hardship." (The Qur'aan, Al-Ahqaf, 46:15)

She suffers from hardship when she bears him in her womb, when she gives birth to him, and when she feeds and cares for him after delivery.

- **A Wife's Obligations towards her Husband:**

1. To acknowledge her husband's authority and management of the family's affairs in the best interest of the family. However, this authority is not an absolute authority or superiority. The Quran says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women)." (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:34)

That is because men generally use their minds in dealing with events, in contrast to women whose conduct are dominated by emotions.

2. To obey him unless his orders or requests are in conflict with Allah's commands. When the Prophet ﷺ was asked by Ayesha about the one who has the greatest claim on a woman's obedience, he ﷺ replied: *"Her husband."* When asked who has the greatest claim on a man's obedience and kindness, he replied: *"His mother."* (Al-Hakim)

3. She should not refuse to go with her husband when he calls her to bed. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"If a man calls his wife to his bed and she refuses, and he spends the night in anger with her, the angels

will keep cursing her till the morning.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

4. She should not request things that are unaffordable by her husband. It is her duty to protect his wealth, children and reputation, not to go out of his house without his permission; and not to allow into his house anyone whom he dislikes. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The best of women is the one who pleases her husband when he looks at her, obeys him if he orders her, and preserves herself (her chastity) and his property in his absence.” (Tabarani).

Early Muslims used to put such instructions into effect. A woman gave this piece of advice to her daughter on her wedding day:

“My daughter, you have parted your home where you have grown up, to a man you are not familiar with. So be his maid and he will be your slave. Observe for him ten qualities, and he will be a treasure for you: contentment, obedience, taking care of your beauty and pleasant smell, taking heed of the time of his sleep and meals, taking care of his wealth and children, refraining from disobedience to him, and keeping his secrets. Don’t show pleasure with him when he is worried or grief when he is pleased.”

- **A Husband’s Obligations towards his Wife**

1. The Dowry

A woman has a right to a dowry, which should be stated when concluding the marriage contract. It is an essential part of the marriage contract and cannot be conceded or given away by the wife until the contract has been concluded. The Qur’aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And give unto the woman their bridal gift with a good heart; but if they of their own accord remit unto you a part thereof, then you are welcome to consume it without any harm.” The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:4).

2. Justice and Equality

If a man has more than one wife, he is required to be fair in their treatment, including food, drink, dress, residence and stay, in the light of the Prophet's ﷺ tradition:

“If a man has two wives yet does not treat them equally, he will come dragging one side on the Day of Judgment.” (Tirmidhi).

3. Spending on his Wife and Children

A husband is required to provide appropriate residence, living requirements, as well as money within his means. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him.” (The Qur'aan, At-Talaq, 65:7)

4. Overnight Stay and Sexual Intercourse

It is one of the husbands' important obligations. As a wife, she is in need of a loving heart and a husband who plays with her, caresses her and satisfies her desire to protect her from undesired consequences.

5. Keeping her Secrets

He should keep private (intimate) relationship secrets, and refrain from exposing her secrets, shortcomings and other things he notices or hears from her. The Gracious Prophet ﷺ said:

“The worst of people before Allah on the Day of Judgment, is the man who goes with his wife, or she with him, then one of them divulges the secrets of the other.” (Muslim)

6. Good Treatment

A husband should treat his wife with kindness. He should be patient with her and tolerate her slips and nuisances. Besides, he should consult her in mutual everyday matters, provide her with the means of happiness and comfort by joking and playing with her.

7. Modesty and its Preservation

He protects her from incidents of evil and corruption. In this regard, Allah, glory to Him, orders us by saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones.” (The Qur’aan, At-Tahrim, 66:6)

8. Preserving her Money or Property

He should not take anything that belongs to her unless she gives him permission, nor should any of her property be disposed of without her approval.

- **Rights of Relatives**

Islam has urged well to do people to help their relatives by complying with their needs, inquiring about their conditions, treating them with kindness and sympathy and sharing their joys and sorrows. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and do not cut the relations of the wombs (kinship).” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:1)

Islam has urged good treatment of one’s close relatives even if they do not treat him kindly, forgiving them even if they wrong him, and seeking their friendship even if they are unfriendly with him. The Noble Prophet ﷺ said:

“To be kind to your close relatives in the full meaning of the word, it is not sufficient to match them in

kindness; but to be kind to them when they cut relation with you.” (Bukhari)

Islam has also warned against cutting the relations of kinship and considered it one of the major sins. In the Qur’aan it is stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“Would you then, if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land, and sever your ties of kinship?”
(The Qur’aan, Muhammad, 47:22)*

- **Rights of Children**

Children have the right to safeguard their lives and have appropriate names. This is made clear in the Prophet’s ﷺ tradition:

“You will be called by your given names and fathers’ names, so have beautiful names.” (Imam Ahmed)

We should also take care of them, provide their needs, give them a proper education and teach them good manners. We should also prevent them from bad speech or behavior. The Noble Prophet ﷺ said:

“It suffices a man to be a sinner that he ruins him whom he supports.” (Abu Dawood & Nas’e)

He ﷺ also said, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“All of you hold a responsibility over someone, and you will be questioned about your responsibility.”
(Bukhari & Muslim)*

Children should be treated equally and no discrimination in gifts or kind treatment should be made between them. This is because such discrimination would cause undutiful behavior and hatred. Once a man came to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ to make him a witness to a gift he intended to give one of his children. The Prophet, however, asked him: *“Have you made a similar gifts to each of your children?”* He said no, whereupon the Prophet said: *“Then make someone else a witness to this, for I do not want to be a witness to an injustice. Fear Allah and be fair to your children.”* (Bukhari & Muslim)

- **Rights of Neighbors**

Islam has enjoyed kindness to neighbors and refrain from causing them any physical or psychological inconvenience, like raising one's voice, offending his sight with disliked things or his nose with harmful smell. Allah, glory to Him, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And worship Allah. Ascribe nothing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbor who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbor who is not of kin, and the fellow traveler and the wayfarer and (the captives) whom your right hand possess. Lo! Allah loves not such as are proud and boastful.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:36)

In another tradition, the Prophet ﷺ states a neighbor's rights:

“Do you know what a neighbor's rights are? If he asks you for help, you should provide help for him, if he falls ill you should visit him, if something good happens to him you should congratulate him, if something bad happens to him you should console him; if he dies you should participate in his funeral procession. You should not raise your building so high that you obstruct the passage of wind to him unless he gives his permission. You should not hurt him with the smell of your cooking pot unless you send him some of the food. If you buy fruit send him some as a gift, otherwise you have to bring it into your house secretly and not allow your children to take it out to vex his children with it.” (Al-Khara’iti)

A Muslim should bear the trouble caused by his neighbor and extend kindness to him. One man came to ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas and said to him: A neighbor of mine causes me a lot of trouble, insults me and causes me inconvenience. Ibn ‘Abbass replied: *“If he disobey Allah*

(by hurting you), Obey Allah (by being kind to him)." (Imam Ghazali, Ihyaa Ulum-ud-Din, Vol. 2, p.212)

He should respect his neighbor, even if he tries to place a beam on his wall he should not prevent him, as understood from the Prophet's ﷺ words:

"Let not a neighbor forbid his immediate neighbor from placing his beam on his wall." (Bukhari & Muslim)

He should not sell or lease a property that is adjacent to him before he offers it to him or seeks his advice about that. This is based on the Prophet's ﷺ tradition:

"If one has a neighbor or partner in a farm or garden, let him not sell it until he offers him to purchase it first." (Al-Hakim)

There are three kinds of neighbors:

1. A neighbor who is a relative. He has three rights: as a relative, as a neighbor and as a Muslim.
2. A Muslim neighbor. He has two rights: as a neighbor and as a Muslim.
3. A non-Muslim neighbor. He has one right, as a neighbor.

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar had a sheep slaughtered, then asked his family: Have you sent our Jewish neighbor some of it as present? I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ say, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Gabriel kept exhorting me about (obligations towards) the neighbor so much that I thought that he would include him among the heirs." (Tirmidhi & Abu Dawood)

- **Rights of Friends and Companions**

Islam has taken great care of friends' rights and prescribed certain rights that should be fulfilled for a friend, such as kind treatment and sincere advice. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The best friend before of Allah is the one who is best to his companion, and the best neighbor before Allah is he who behaves best towards his neighbors.”
(Tirmidhi)

- **Rights of Guests**

Guests have a right to entertainment. This is based on the Noble Prophet's ﷺ following tradition:

“One who believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment should honor his guest according to his right.” He was asked: “O Messenger of Allah! What is his right?” He said: “A day and night (of provisions) or hospitality for three days. Thereafter it is an act of charity.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

A guest, however, should take the conditions of his host into consideration, not burdening him with what he cannot afford. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“It is lawful for a Muslim to stay so long with his brother (as a guest) as to not involve himself in sin” He was asked as to how he could be involved in sin? He answered: “By prolonging his stay with his host when he has nothing (left in his house) to entertain him with” (Muslim).

Imam Ghazali, in his book, “Ihya' Ulum-ud-Din” (the Revival of Religious Sciences), wrote about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who is an example to all Muslims:

“The Prophet used to honor his guests, he even spread his garment for a non-relative guest to sit on it. He used to offer his guest his own cushion and

insist until the latter would accept it from him. No one came to him as a guest but thought that he was the most generous of people. He gave each one of his companions sitting with him his due portion of his attention. He directed his listening, talking, looking and attention to all his companions. His meetings were characterized by modesty, humbleness and honesty. He used to call his companions by their favorite nickname to honor them. He was the farthest from being angry and the easiest to be content.”

- **General Rights and Obligations**

Islam requires a Muslim to take care of his Muslim brothers by extending help to them and trying to improve their conditions wherever they are. This is stressed by the following Hadith:

“Muslims, in their mutual love, kindness and compassion, are like one body: If one of its parts is in agony, the entire body feels the pain both in sleeplessness and fever.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

Another Hadith says:

“The bonds of brotherhood between two Muslims are like parts of a house, one part strengthens and supports the other.” He crossed the fingers of one hand between those of the other. (Bukhari & Muslim)

Another Hadith says:

“None of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (Bukhari)

In the field of labor, for example, Islam has enacted rules and criteria that determine the employer and employee relationship.

- **Labor’s Rights**

The employer – labor relationship must be based on brotherhood and equality in human dignity. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Your servants are your brothers whom Allah the Most High has placed under your authority. Therefore, a person who has a brother under his authority, should feed him out of that which he eats himself. He should dress him with the same kind of clothes he wears. He should not assign work to him that is beyond his capacity, and if you do so, then help him in his work.” (Bukhari)

Islam has preserved the workman’s honor and dignity. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The best gain is that of the workman who works to earn his living if he sticks to honesty.” (Ahmad)

It ordained that workman’s wages should be made clear before he commences his work, for the Prophet, peace be upon him, required the employer to make the workman’s wage clear before he hires him. (Ahmad)

It confirmed the workman’s right to his wages. The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah said:

“There are three for whom I will be an adversary on the Day of Judgment: The person who makes a promise with an oath in My name and then breaks it. The person who sells a free man as a slave and appropriates his price; And the person who engages a workman and having taken full work from him fails to pay him his dues.” (Bukhari)

It is required that he should be given his wages immediately after he completed his work. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Give a worker his wages before his sweat dries.” (Ibn Majah)

It is also required for employers not to assign work that is beyond the worker’s ability. If they assign such heavy work they should help them materially by increasing their wages, or physically by helping them with their work. The Prophet ﷺ said:

*“Do not give them work that is beyond their capacity and if you do so, then help them with their work.”
(Bukhari)*

- **The Employers Rights**

As Islam required the employer to care for his employee's rights, it requires the employees, in return, to observe the employer's rights by carrying out their work in the best manner. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah likes, if one of you performs a portion of work, that he should do it well.”

This means that a Muslim who is entrusted with a job should do it well as this is a means for gaining favor with his Almighty Lord.

Moral Aspects of Islam

In Islam manners are of different categories. In summary, they are either virtuous or evil. Virtuous manners are all good acts and sayings, such as honesty, telling the truth, charity, cooperation and modesty. Whereas evil ones are all harmful acts and sayings, such as dishonesty, telling lies, injustices, cruelty and hatred.

The Qur'aan has summed up good manners in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Keep to forgiveness (O Muhammad), and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant.” (The Qur'aan, Al-A'raf, 7:199)

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has stated the objective of his mission:

*“I have been sent to raise good morals to perfection.”
(Bukhari)*

Examples of Some Prohibited Acts

- Islam has forbidden polytheism, meaning associating partners to Allah. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“Lo! Allah pardons not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. He pardons besides that whom He wills.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:116)

It has forbidden all forms of magic. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Avoid the seven destructive sins.” The companions asked: “O Messenger of Allah! What are these things? He answered: “Associating partners with Allah; magic; unwarranted killing of person whose life has been made sacred by Allah; usury; consuming the property of an orphan; fleeing in battle; and slandering chaste, innocent, believing women.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- It has forbidden injustice and oppression, which generally denote wronging others by words or deeds or failing to give others their due rights. The Noble Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The way (of blame) is only against those who oppress mankind, and wrongfully rebel in the earth. For such there is a painful doom.” (The Qur’aan, Ash Shura, 42:42)

It also says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Say: ‘My Lord forbids only indecencies, such of them as are apparent and hidden and tyranny without right.’” The Qur’aan, Al-A’raf, 7:33)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah the Most High has revealed to me that you should be humble, so that nobody oppresses, or holds himself above others.” (Muslim)

In another tradition, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah admonishes you: ‘O my servants, I have prohibited oppression on Myself and I have forbidden it among you. So do not wrong anyone.’” (Muslim)

This does not imply being content with humiliation, for Islam enjoined repressing injustice and preventing aggression. The Glorious Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And one who assaults you, assault him in like manner as he assaulted you.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:194)

It also enjoined helping the victims of injustice even if they belonged to a different religion. The Noble Qur’aan said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And if one of the idolaters seeks your protection then protect him so that he may hear the Word of Allah, and afterward convey him to his place of safety.” (The Qur’aan, At-Tauba, 9:6)

That is because Islam does not permit people to be deprived of their rights, their freedom, or for their feelings to be hurt, even if they are not Muslims.

It also enjoins this on both the oppressor and the oppressed. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Help your brother whether he is an oppressor or an oppressed person.” A companion asked: “Messenger of Allah I will help him if he is an oppressed person, but please tell me how I am to help him if he happens to be an oppressor.” The Prophet answered: “Prevent him from oppressing others. Because preventing him from committing aggression is a form of help for him.” (Bukhari)

- It has prohibited slaying the life which Allah has forbidden except with due right. The Noble Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever intentionally kills a believer, his recompense is Hell forever. Allah is wrath against him and He has cursed him and prepared for him an awful doom” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:93)

The Qur’aan also says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“For that cause We decreed upon the children of Israel that whosoever kills a soul for other than (retalitation for) unless for a soul or (to cause) corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind. And whosoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he saved the life of all mankind.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:32)

The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“A Muslim remains enjoying the safety and protection of his religion, so long as he does not commit an unlawful murder.” (Bukhari)

Exempt from this threat are those who kill or are killed in self-defense, or defense of his property, or honor. Moreover, there is no difference whether the killed person is a Muslim or non-Muslim who are entitled to protection by the Muslim State. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever killed a person with whom is a treaty, he shall not smell the smell of Paradise though its smell is perceived from a distance of forty years.” (Bukhari)

- Islam has prohibited severing family ties and deserting relatives. Allah, the Most High, says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Would you then, if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land and sever your ties of kinship? Such are they whom Allah has cursed, so that He has made them deaf and blinded their sight.” (The Qur’aan, Muhammad, 47:22-23)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“No one who severs the ties of kinship shall be admitted into Paradise.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Severing family ties includes failing to visit ones relatives in order to be aware of their condition. It also includes treating them in a degrading manner, and neglecting to help the poor and weak among them if one is affluent. This is because charity to the poor (if not a relative) is mere charity, but if its is a relative, then it will be considered both charity and a means of nurturing the ties of kinship. If one is without wealth to give, he can nurture the ties of kinship by greeting them, inquiring about their condition, and meeting them with gentle words and a cheerful smile. The Prophet ﷺ encouraged good family relations saying:

“Nurture the ties of kinship with your relatives by greeting them with the greeting of peace.”

- Islam has prohibited disobedience and unkindness to parents. The Qur’aan has stated, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honor. And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and Say: ‘My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young.’” (The Qur’aan, Bani Israil, 17:23-24)

The Great Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Allah’s pleasure is based on parents’ pleasure, and His wrath is based on their wrath.” (Tirmidhi)

When asked about the definition of disobedience to parents, Ka’ab Al-Ahbar replied:

“It means that if one’s parents take an oath he does not make good on their oath; if they order him he does not obey them; if they ask him for something he does not give them; and if they trust him he betrays their trust.”

- Islam has forbidden fornication and all things and practices that lead to it. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And come not near to unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is an abomination and an evil way.” (The Qur’aan, Bani Israil, 17:32)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“There is no sin after polytheism worse than a man placing his sperm into an unlawful vulva.” (Ahmad).

The Glorious Qur’aan mentioned a fornicator’s punishment, the meaning of which is translated as:

“The woman and the man guilty of illegal sexual intercourse, flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of the believers witness their punishment.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nur, 24:2)

This punishment is for persons who were never married that commit the above crime. If persons married or previously married commit it, then the punishment is to stone them to death.

To put such punishment into effect, either of two prerequisites is a must:

1. Confession by both the man and woman who have committed this crime.
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2. Four witnesses who are able to describe the event in the most minute of details, such that it proves the crime beyond all doubt.

This is, in fact, possible only when the two adulterers commit their crime in public and are witnessed the four witnesses, which is rare or even impossible. The history of Islam has witnessed only two or three events in which the punishment was carried out based on confession and only after those who committed adultery or fornication insisted on execution of the ordained punishment. Such punishment demonstrates the gravity of the committed sin and aims to preserve against the degradation of honor, to protect the people and their morals from corruption, the society from disintegration and disease, and the lineage from impurity and confusion in matters of inheritance and marriage. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“If the sin of adultery spreads among people in public, plague and other new diseases will also spread among them.” (Ibn Majah)

The most abominable form of this sin is incest. One tradition related by Al-Hakim states:

“Whoever commits incest, kill him.”

- Islam has forbidden sodomy. The Qur'aan tells us about the people of Lot, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So when Our Commandment came, We turned (the towns of Sodom in Palestine) upside down, and rained on them stones of baked clay, in a well-arranged manner one after another; Marked from your Lord; and they are not ever far from the evil-doers.(The Qur'aan, Hud, 11:82-83)

The above suggests that whoever behaves like the people of Lot should beware lest he be struck with the same punishment. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Four person expose themselves to the wrath of Allah every morning and evening.” When he was asked

about them he answered: "Men who imitate women, women who imitate men, those who have sexual intercourse with animals and those who commit sodomy." (Tabarani)

Islam has forbidden devouring the property of orphans, as this involves wasting the rights of the weak. Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, eat up a fire to their own bodies; they will soon be enduring a blazing fire!" (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:10)

An exception to this is the case of a poor guardian of an orphan. He is permitted to take a reasonable percentage or portion for his supervision, care, and services including feeding, clothing, and the investment of property in the best interest of the orphan. The Glorious Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

"And whoever (among guardians) is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable." (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:6)

The Prophet ﷺ recommended us to take care of orphans and treat them kindly, He ﷺ said:

"I and the guardian of an orphan are like these."

He pointed his forefinger and middle finger. (Bukhari)

He also said:

"If a person takes a Muslim orphan and supports him until he grows up and is able to support himself, he will become worthy of entering Paradise, unless he commits an unforgivable sin." (Tirmidhi)

- Islam has forbidden the ruler to wrong or cheat his people. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Consider not that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do, but He gives them respite up to a Day when the eyes will stare in horror. (They will be) hastening forward with necks outstretched, their heads raised up (towards the sky), their gaze returning not towards them and their hearts empty (from thinking because of extreme fear).” (The Qur’aan, Ibrahim, 14:42-43)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“If a ruler is entrusted by Allah with people but fails to be sincere to them, he will be forbidden access to Paradise.” In another narration:

“...If he dies while he is deceiving his people, he will be forbidden entry into Paradise. (Bukhari)

He also ﷺ said:

“An unjust ruler will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Judgment.” (Tabarani)

He ﷺ also used to say the following prayer:

“O Allah! Whoever holds authority over my nation and is kind to them, be kind to him; but if he treats them with cruelty, be hard on him.” (Muslim)

- Islam has forbidden false testimony and perjury and considered it a deadly sin the insistence on which may lead to disbelief. The Glorious Qur’aan says about righteous servants of Allah, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And those who do not bear witness to falsehood, and if they pass by some evil play or evil talk, they pass by it with dignity.” (The Qur’aan, Ash-Shu’araa, 26:72)

Allah’s Prophet ﷺ asked his companions if they wish him to inform them about the biggest of sins, and when they answered positively he ﷺ said:

“Ascribing partners to Allah, and disobedience to parents.” He sat up from the leaning position and said: “Beware of false words, beware of false testimony...”

He went on repeating it until they wished he had kept quiet. (Bukhari)

That is due to the hazards caused by such testimony to society, including waste of people’s rights and the spread of injustice. It causes harm to both the witness (as it helps him with his injustice) and the innocent victim.

Islam has forbidden gambling and drinking of wine, as well as taking drugs. The Qur’aan states ﷻ, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks) and gambling and idols and dividing arrows are only an infamy of Satan’s handiwork. Leave it aside in order that you may succeed. Satan seeks only to cast among you enmity and hatred by means of strong drink and games of chance, and to turn you from remembrance of Allah and from worship. Will you then not abstain?” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 3 5:90-91).

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“One who is disobedient to his parents or addicted to alcohol shall not enter Paradise.” (Nasae’i)

In order to obstruct the way of marketing or promoting alcoholic drinks, even without drinking it, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Curse be on wine, it’s drinker, server, seller, purchaser, presser, the one for whom it is pressed, it’s carrier, the one to whom it is carried, and the receiver of its price.” (Abu Dawood).

By such a serious threat, Islam seeks to protect the human mind and feelings from being deranged or crippled. Islam does not want man to step down from his human status to a lower one of other unconscious creatures. It is a well-known fact that a drug or alcohol addict will do

his utmost to obtain money to purchase drugs or alcohol whatever the means maybe. This may lead him to commit other grave sins. Therefore, Islam called alcohol the origin or source of all deadly sins.

As for gambling, if one wins he will consume another's property or money unrightfully, and the exultation at winning may drive him to use tricks and deceit to win again. If he loses he will waste his money in vain, and he may resort to robbery if he loses all his money in order to play games again and compensate for his loss.

Islam has forbidden robbery because it is the illegal appropriation of others' property. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And (as for) the male thief and the female thief, cut off their (right) hands as a recompense for that which they committed, a punishment by way of example from Allah. And Allah is All-Powerful, All Wise.” The Qur'aan, Al-Ma'idah, 5:38)

The application of this punishment is subject to the following:

1. The stolen property must be safeguarded and the robber comes and breaks into a safe, for example, to steal it.
2. The objective of the thief should not be want of food, drink or dress; otherwise, there will be no cutting of the hand. This is supported by 'Umar's conduct in the year of famine (18AH).
3. The stolen property should be equal to the minimum amount liable to cut the hand.

Some scholars pointed out that no repentance is accepted from the robber until he has returned the stolen property to its owner, but if he is penniless he may ask the owner of the stolen money to relinquish his right before the case comes before the court. This is the verdict for theft. However, if the case is one of armed robbery, then it is the same as highway robbery, which has a different punishment.

- Islam has forbidden banditry or highway robbery, which involves armed robbery, terrorizing peaceful people, or murder, as this causes instability and terror. The Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“Lo! Those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah’s covenant and their oaths, they have no portion in the Hereafter. Allah will neither speak to them nor look upon them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful doom.” (The Qur’aan, Ali ‘Imran, 3:77)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“A person who usurps the right of a Muslim, by swearing (falsely) will be condemned by Allah to Hell and deprived of Paradise.” A man asked: “O Messenger of Allah! Even if it is a small thing?” He said: “Even if it is twig of a bush.” (Muslim)

That is because this involves wrongfully consuming the rights of another.

Islam has forbidden suicide, as stated in the Noble Qur’aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And do not kill one another. Lo! Allah is ever Merciful unto you. Whosoever does that through aggression and injustice, We shall cast him into Fire, and that is ever easy for Allah.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:29-30)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“If a person kills himself with an iron (knife), he will be in Hell with his knife in his hand stabbing himself there forever. If a person kills himself with poison, his poison will be in his hand, administering it in Hell forever. If a person throws himself down a mountain to death, he will fall continuously into Hell forever.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- Islam has forbidden falsehood, dishonesty and deceit; it enjoins truthfulness, keeping promises and restoring deposits to their owners. It has warned against breaking promises and
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denying trusts. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor Knowingly betray your trusts.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Anfal, 8:27)

It has also enjoined secrecy as stated in the Prophet's ﷺ tradition:

“If a man tells you something then turns his head away, what he tells you is a trust.” (Abu Dawood & Tirmidhi).

It has encouraged sincerity when giving advice. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“An adviser is entrusted.” (Abu Dawood & Tirmidhi)

It has also associated trust with faith. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“There is no faith in one who lacks trustworthiness, and there is no religion in one who lacks commitment to his promise.” (Ahmad and Baihaqi)

He also ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“There are four (habits) which, if found in a person, then he has pure hypocrisy. However if one of these traits is found in a person, then he has only one sign of hypocrisy, until he leaves it. The four are: When he is entrusted (with something) he embezzles; when he talks he lies; when he promises or give a pledge he betrays, and when he quarrels he starts abusing verbally.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Islam has forbidden backbiting, because it spreads hatred among the members of the society. This is indicated in the following tradition:

The Prophet ﷺ asked the companions: “Do you know what is meant by backbiting?” They answered: “Allah and His Messenger knows better.” He said: “To narrate such things about your (Muslim) brother which he dislikes.” One of the audience asked: “Even if my brother maybe like that?” He ﷺ said: “If such defects are present in

him as you say, then you have backbitten him, but if he does not have what you say, then you have slandered him.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Islam has forbidden resentment and envy because it reveals base motives that drive a person to take revenge to quench the thirst of his jealousy and malice. The Prophet ﷺ was asked: “Which is the best of people?” He ﷺ said: “He is the pure-hearted, truthful one.” They said: “We understand truthfulness, but what is -meant by pure-heartedness?” He said: “It means the righteous, sinless person whose heart is free from sin, injustice, malice and jealousy.”

The Prophet ﷺ has indicated the consequences of envy, for it commonly leads to enmity and hatred. He ﷺ said:

“Jealousy destroys good deeds as fire destroys wood.” (Abu Dawud)

- Islam has forbidden deserting each other, as indicated in the following tradition, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Do not cut off relations with each other, do not harbor ill-will or envy, and - O servants of Allah – be brethren to each other. It is not permissible for a Muslim to keep away from his brother for more than three days.” (Bukhari and Muslim).

- It has forbidden cursing, as stated in the Prophet’s ﷺ following tradition:

“Those person who are addicted to cursing too much will neither be interceded nor witnessed on the Day of Resurrection.” (Muslim)

Even with enemies, a Muslim should pray to Allah for their guidance to the right path and he should refrain from cursing them or invoking evil upon them. According to Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, it was said to the Prophet: “O Messenger of Allah, invoke Allah against the idol worshipers.” He ﷺ answered: “I have not been sent as one who curses, I have been sent as a mercy.” (Muslim)

- Islam has warned against miserliness, because it considers wealth something that belongs to Allah, and Allah has
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entrusted it to man to spend it on himself and on his dependants, taking into consideration that his needy brothers have a right to a portion of it. Allah's Messenger ﷺ has indicated the miser's guilt in the following tradition:

"No cheater, miser or one who reminds of his favor to others shall enter Paradise." (Tirmidhi)

The Great Prophet ﷺ explained the consequences the epidemic of miserliness spreads in a society by saying:

"Avoid cruelty and injustice, for on the Day of Judgment, the same will turn into several darkness. And guard yourselves against miserliness; for this has ruined nations who lived before you. Miserliness led them to bloodshed and to treat the unlawful as lawful." (Muslim)

- Islam has forbidden extravagance and wasting money. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"And give to the kinsman his due, and to the needy and to the wayfarer. But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the devils and the devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord." (The Qur'aan, Bani Israil, 17:26-27)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Allah the Exalted has forbidden you disobedience to mothers, depriving others of begging and burying little daughters alive. He dislikes you to carry tales, excessive questioning, and wasting wealth." (Bukhari & Muslim)

- Islam has forbidden excessiveness or extremism in matters of religion. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“Allah desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:185)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Give good tidings, not bad; make things easier, not harder.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- Islam has warned against and self-conceit and pride. Allah the Exalted has advised us in this verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And turn not your cheek away (with pride) toward people, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the braying of the donkey.” (The Qur’aan, Luqman, 31:18-19)

The Prophet ﷺ warned against vanity by saying:

“Avoid vanity.” (Bukhari)

He also ﷺ dispraised arrogance by saying:

“A person who has in his heart an atom’s weight of pride will not enter Paradise.” One man said: “O Messenger of Allah, a man likes his garment and shoes to be nice.” The Prophet said: “Allah is beautiful and likes beauty. Pride is the denial of truth and belittling the people.” (Muslim)

He ﷺ also said:

“Allah will not look at one who drags his garment with pride on the Day of Resurrection.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- Islam has warned against all causes of dispute and separation. The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:
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“And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah, and do not separate.” (The Qur’aan, Ali ‘Imran, 3:103)

- It has forbidden and warned against mistrust and suspicion, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Avoid much assumption, indeed some suspicion is sin.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Beware of suspicion, for it is the most misleading of talks.” (Bukhari)

Islam ordered us to make sure when conveying news The Glorious Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! If a disobedient brings you an information, verify it, lest you smite some folk in ignorance and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:6)

- It has forbidden and warned against bad temper and obscenity. The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“A believer is not one who defames others, one who curses others, nor does he speak in an offensive or obscene manner.” (Tirmidhi)

- It has warned against rejoicing over the troubles of others. The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Do not rejoice over the troubles of your (Muslim) brother lest Allah might save him (by His Mercy) and involve you in the same trouble.” (Tirmidhi)

- It has warned against interfering in the business of others when it does not concern oneself. The Prophet ﷺ said:
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“It is part of the excellence of a person’s Islam that he should discard that is of no concern or benefit to him either in this world or the Hereafter.” (Tirmidhi)

- It has warned against anger. The Noble Qur’aan describes the believers in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And those who avoid the greater sins, and immoralities, and when they angry, forgive.” (The Qur’aan. Ash-Shura, 42:37)

And:

“Repel (the evil) with one which is better, then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.” (The Qur’aan, Fussilat, 41:34)

Ibn ‘Abbas explained: *What is meant of patience at the time of anger, forgiveness after receiving insult. If they behave accordingly, Allah will safeguard them and their enemy will submit to them like a close friend.* (Reported by Imam Bukhari)

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported the Prophet ﷺ as saying to the person who requested his advice: *“Do not get angry.”* When the man repeated his question he answered several times: *“Do not get angry.”* (Bukhari)

- Islam has forbidden despising other people.

The Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)

- It has forbidden taking what belongs to others in any manner because it involves injustice and corruption for the society. The Prophet ﷺ said:
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“Allah has decreed the Fire of Hell for a person who takes the property of a Muslim through false oath and debarred him from Paradise.” A companion asked: “O Messenger of Allah! Even if it may be small? He answered; “Even if it may be the twig of a bush.” (Muslim)

- It has forbidden the judge to commit injustice, whether he is learned or unlearned. This is because in Islam a judge is considered responsible for implementation of Allah’s Law. Thus his role is of an executive not legislative nature. Therefore, if he committed injustice he would betray the trust put in him. The Qur’aan states this clearly, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Whoever judges not by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:44)

The Gracious Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Judges are three: One in Paradise and two in Hell. A judge who has known the truth and judged accordingly: he will be in Paradise. A judge who has known the truth and deviated from justice on purpose: he will be in Hell. And a judge who has judged ignorantly: he will be in Hell.” They asked: “What’s the guilt of an ignorant judge?” He said: “He is guilty because he should not be a judge unless he is a learned man.” (Hakim)

- Islam has forbidden a man to lack a sense of honor with his womenfolk. This denotes consent to illicit sexual relationships within his family or close relatives. The Prophet ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Three people shall be forbidden access to Paradise: the one addicted to alcohol, a person who disobeys his parents, and panderer who consents to the adultery committed by his wife.” (Nasa’i)

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- It has forbidden men and woman from imitating each other in their dress and other peculiar habits. According to the Prophet's ﷺ tradition:

*“Allah’s Messenger ﷺ cursed those men who imitate women, and those women who imitate men.”
(Bukhari)*

- Islam has forbidden reminders of a favor of generosity, that is, when you remind someone for whom you have done a favor in a way that will injure him. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Beware of reminding others of a favor you have done to them because this makes thankfulness futile, and wipe out reward.”

Then he recited the Qur’aanic verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“O you who believe! Do not render in vain your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury.”
(The Qur’aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:264)*

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The person who retracts a gift is like the dog that devours its own vomit.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- It has forbidden slandering and backbiting whether through words, acts or signs. The Glorious Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Woe to every slanderer and backbiter.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Humaza, 104:1)

- It has forbidden insulting each other by nicknames. The Qur’aan address the believers in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the

former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad it is to insult one's brother after having faith. And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed the wrongdoers." (The Qur'aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)

- It has forbidden spying on people, looking for their shortcomings and listening to their talks unawares. The Glorious Qur'aan said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"O you who believe! Avoid much assumption, indeed some suspicion is sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Yet you abhor that! And keep your duty (to Allah). Indeed Allah is oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (The Qur'aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"If a person listens to other's talk to their dislike, he will have molten lead poured into his ears on the Day of Judgment." (Bukhari)

- Islam has forbidden carrying tales for mischief. It has threatened the carrier of such tales with the worst punishment. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"And do not obey each worthless habitual swearer, detractor, spreader of slanders." (The Qur'aan, Al-Qalam, 68:10-11)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"A person who is addicted to carrying tales will not enter Paradise." (Bukhari & Muslim)

Such spread of slander for mischief may lead to murder, or at least to enmity and trouble. This was condemned by the Prophet ﷺ in his saying:

“It is not proper for a Muslim to keep away from his brother for more than three days so much that when they meet they move away from each other. The best among them is the one who is the first to greet the other.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

It may also lead to suspicion and spying to decide the truth of the carried tales, which involves several sins. The Noble Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

*“Indeed some assumptions are sins, and spy not.”
(The Qur’aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)*

- Islam has forbidden belittling the weak and trespassing on their rights, whether the weakness is physical (for example, the sick, the disabled and the aged) or financial (the poor and the needy) or if they are under ones patronage. The aims to create a consolidated society dominated by mercy, love and brotherhood. The Noble Qur’aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship), and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the needy the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful.” (The Qur’aan, An-Nisa’a, 4:36)

- Islam has prohibited causing a neighbor any harm or “inconvenience” by words or deeds. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“By Allah, he is not a believer! By Allah, he is not a believer!” He was asked: “Who O Messenger of Allah?” He said: “The one whose neighbor is not safe from his mischief.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

He ﷺ also said:

“If one believes in Allah and the Last Day, he should not hurt his neighbor.” (Bukhari)

Islam has elevated the rank of neighbors, and assigned them considerable privilege as understood from the following Prophet's ﷺ words:

“Gabriel continued recommending me to take care of the neighbor so much that I thought that he would give him a right to inheritance.” (Abu Dawood & Tirmidhi)

- It has prohibited causing any harm or loss to heirs when writing a will. This occurs when the deceased falsely writes in his will that he owes someone a debt, just to prevent wealth from his legal heirs. This is made clear in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... after payment of legacies he may have bequeathed, or debts, so that no loss is caused (to anyone).” (the Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:12)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Allah has decreed for each heir their due, so there is no bequeathal to an heir.” (Tirmidhi)

Commandments

The following are some of the injunctions and commandments of Islam:

Islam has enjoined absolute justice in speech and action. The Glorious Qur'aan states , the meaning of which is translated as:

“Lo! Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorts you in order that you may take heed.” (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:90)

Abu Bakr, the first Muslim Caliph, on assuming his responsibilities of Caliphate, said:

“To me, the strong man among you is weak until I exact what is due on him, and the weak man is strong until I avail him of what is due to him. Obey me as long as I obey Allah in conducting your affairs.”

Justice is a must in case of pleasure and displeasure, towards Muslims and non-Muslims. The Qur’aan says ﷻ, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... And let not hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to piety.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:8)

Justice is also required when dealing with relatives and non-relatives, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And whenever you give your word, say the truth even if a near relative is concerned, and fulfill the Covenant of Allah. This He commands you, that you may remember.” (The Qur’aan, Al-An’am, 6:152)

Allah has commanded us even to use force, if needed, to impose justice. He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Indeed We have sent Our Messenger with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice. And We brought forth iron wherein is mighty power as well as many benefits.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Hadid, 57:25)

In his commentary on this verse, Imam Ibn Taimia, Allah’s mercy be on him, said:

“Sending Messengers and Revelation of Books are intended for people to perform their obligations as ordained by Allah in accordance with justice. If one deviates from the Book he will be corrected with iron (i.e. by force).”

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- Islam has enjoined altruism and encouraged it because it reflects true love and a sense of brotherhood and has positive implications on the society. It enhances the ties between its members, motivating them to serve each other sincerely. The Noble Qur'aan has praised those who prefer others over themselves in matters of benevolence and benefit, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own greed, such are they who will be the successful.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Hashr, 59:9)

- It urged keeping good company and warned against bad company. The Prophet ﷺ has given us an example that clearly shows us the consequences of good company and bad company. He ﷺ said:

“The example of a good companion and that of a bad companion is like that of one who deals in musk and the blacksmith. The companion of the musk dealer might buy some from him, or at least you might smell its fragrance. As regards the other, he might set your clothes a fire, or at least you will breathe fumes from the furnace.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- Islam has enjoined reconciliation between people in case of dispute. The Glorious Qur'aan states, the meaning of which is translated as:

“There is no good in much of their secret conferences save (in) him who enjoins alms giving and kindness and peace-making among the people. Whoever does that, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, We shall bestow on him a vast reward.” (The Qur'aan, An-Nisa'a, 4:114)

Reconciliation between people occupies a high rank. It is not inferior to prayer, fasting and other forms of worship. In this context, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Shall I tell you of something better than the rank of fasting, prayer and charity (Zakat)? It is reconciliation between people, because discord is an exterminator (of society).”

Islam allows lying in cases of reconciliation in order to infuse hearts with love and accord, unite them and protect them from conflicts and separation. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“I do not count a liar, the man who utters words for the sake of making peace, in war, a husband’s talk with his wife, and a wife’s talk with her husband.”
(Abu Dawood)

He ﷺ also said:

“He is not a liar who brings about peace between people by saying or attributing good words (to others).” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Islam has commanded enjoining virtue and forbidding evil by all means, each according to his capacity, because this would safeguard people against injustice, corruption, loss of rights, and dominance of lawlessness. Enjoining virtue and forbidding evil teaches the ignorant, arouses the dormant from inertia and negligence of duty, corrects wrongdoers and help the righteous. The Qur’aan says , the meaning of which is translated as:

“... Help you one another in righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another in sin and transgression.”
(The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:2)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Anybody among you who notices something evil, should correct it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, he should prohibit the same with his tongue. If he

is unable even to do this, he should at least hate it in his heart; this is the lowest degree of faith.” (Muslim)

The Noble Qur’aan has stated the punishment of those who neglect such a duty in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Those of the children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David, and of Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they rebelled and used to transgress.” (The Qur’aan, Al-Ma’idah, 5:78)

The Prophet ﷺ described the consequences of failure to enjoin virtue and forbid evil by saying:

“The example of a person who obeys injunctions of Allah and the one who disregards these limits is like passengers on a boat who decide by drawing lots as to who should occupy the upper deck and who should go to the lower deck. Those in the lower deck had to pass through the upper deck to fetch water, which caused some inconvenience to the occupants of the upper deck. So they suggested to the occupants of the upper deck to allow them to bore a hole in the lower deck and to draw water without causing any inconvenience to them. If the occupants of the upper deck were to leave the others to carry out their design, they would all perish together; but if they were to stop them from carrying it out they would save themselves and the others.” (Bukhari)

Islam, however, has prescribed some limits and criteria for enjoining virtue and prohibiting evil. The following are some of them:

1. The one who takes up this task must be knowledgeable about what he enjoins or prohibits.
 2. His prohibition of evil should not lead to a bigger evil.
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3. He should not do what he prohibits nor should he neglect what he enjoins, as made clear in the Noble Qur'aan, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Why say you that which you do not? It is most hateful to Allah that you say what you do not do.” (The Qur'aan, As-Saff, 61:2-3)

4. He should be kind and gentle when he enjoins or prohibits. He should also bear any inconvenience resulting from this task, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... and enjoin kindness and forbid inequity, and persevere whatever may befall you. Lo! That is the steadfast heart of things.” (The Qur'aan, Luqman, 31:17)

5. He should not resort to spying on others in order to discover evil acts. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“... And spy not.” (The Qur'aan, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)

- Islam has enjoined good manners. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Among the Muslims, the most perfect, with regard to his faith, is one whose character is excellent, and who treats his wife with gentleness.” (Tirmidhi)

The Prophet ﷺ has also pointed out the reward of good manners, He ﷺ said:

“On the Day of Judgment, the dearest and closest to me, as regards my company, will be those persons, who will bear the best moral character. And those among you, who are excessive talkers and are given to boasting, will be the most repugnant to me, and the farthest from me on the Day of Judgment.” (Tirmidhi)

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- Islam has enjoined doing kindness, as stated in the Prophet's ﷺ tradition:

“Show kindness to those worthy or unworthy of it; if you show it to those worthy, then they are worthy of it. But if you do not show it to those not worthy of it then you will indeed be in need of it.”

- It has enjoined giving sincere advice. In this context, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“(The basis of) faith is sincerity.” We (i.e. the Prophet's companions) submitted: “O Prophet of Allah! For whom?” He said: “Towards Allah, the Noble Qur'aan, His Messenger and the Muslims – both leaders and masses.” (Muslim)

1. Sincerity towards Allah can be realized by believing in Him, worshipping Him alone, ascribing no partners to Him, declaring Him free from imperfection in His Names and Attributes, and that He controls the affairs of existence. What He wills shall be, and what He does not will shall not be, as well as complying with His commands and avoiding His prohibitions.
 2. Sincerity towards His Book, (The Noble Qur'aan) is realized by believing that it is the word of Allah, revealed by Him, and that it is the Final of revealed scriptures. As well as holding lawful all that is stated as lawful in the Qur'aan and holding forbidden all that is forbidden in it, and considering it as the right path and way of life for Muslims.
 3. Sincerity towards His Messenger is realized by obeying his orders, believing what he informed of, refraining from what he prohibited, loving and respecting him, complying with his teachings and propagating it among people.
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4. Sincerity to the leaders of the Muslims is realized by obeying them unless they enjoin sin, guiding them to good and helping them with it, to refrain from rebelling against them, to gently advise them, and to remind them of the rights of other people.
 5. Sincerity towards the Muslim masses is realized by guiding them to what is good for them in matters of their religion and worldly life. Helping them to satisfying their needs, protecting them from harm, loving for them what he likes for himself, disliking for them what he dislikes for himself, and treating them in the manner he wants them to treat him.
- Islam has enjoined generosity, as it leads to people's friendliness and affection. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Two traits are liked by Allah: good manners and generosity. Two traits are disliked by Allah: bad manners and miserliness. If Allah wants to favor a servant of His, He uses him to satisfy people's needs.”

The criterion regarding generosity is given in the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And let not your hand be chained to your neck (in greed) nor open it with a complete opening (like a spendthrift's), lest you sit down rebuked, denied (and impoverished).” (The Qur'aan, Bani Israil, 17:29)

Allah the Exalted has warned against squandering wealth and going beyond the moderate limits of generosity. He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (your wealth) in wantonness...Lo! The squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord.” (The Qur'aan, Bani Israil, 17:26-27)

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- Islam has enjoined mercy, as stated in the Prophet's ﷺ words:

“He who shows no mercy shall receive no mercy. Have mercy for those on earth, and Allah will have mercy for you.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

- It has enjoined kindness and gentleness. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Wherever there is gentleness, it beautifies, and from whatever it is removed, its beauty is removed.” (Muslim)

- It has enjoined covering the faults of others and alleviating their distress. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“One who helps a fellow Muslim in removing his difficulty in this world, Allah will remove the formers' distress on the Day of Judgment. He who helps to remove the hardship of another, will have his difficulties removed by Allah in this world and in the Hereafter. One who covers the shortcomings of another Muslim will have his faults covered up in this world and the next by Allah. Allah continues to help his servant so long as he goes on helping his brother.” (Muslim)

- Islam has enjoined and urged patience in performing devotion and refraining from prohibitions. The Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“So wait patiently for your Lord's decree, for surely you are in Our sight.” (The Qur'aan, At-Tur, 52:48)

This may mean having patience with one's circumstances and the events of life, such as poverty, hunger, illness and fear. The Glorious Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops;

but give glad tidings to the steadfast. Who say, when a misfortune strikes them: 'Indeed we are Allah's and indeed to Him we are returning.' Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided." (The Qur'aan, Al-Baqarah, 2:155-157)

Allah, Glory to Him, has stated the reward of the steadfast, He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Verily the steadfast will be paid their wages without constraint." (The Qur'aan, Az-Zumar, 39:10)

- It has enjoined suppression of anger, and forgiveness, especially when one is capable of avenging himself. This will make ties among the members of society stronger, help to remove all causes of hatred and enmity, and lead to great reward. Therefore, Allah has praised those who possess such excellent traits. He said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous. Those who spend in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving towards mankind; Allah loves the good." (The Qur'aan, Ali 'Imran, 3:133-134)

Islam has also called Muslims to meet evil with good in order to refine hearts and purify them of enmity. The Noble Qur'aan says, the meaning of which is translated as:

"Repel (the evil deed) with what is better. Then indeed he between whom and you there was enmity (will become) as though he was a close friend." (The Qur'aan, Fussilat, 41:34)

Aspects of Islamic Etiquette

Islamic Law has introduced and propagated a cluster of public ethics. At the same time, it warned of failure to strictly abide by it, as this will entail punishment in the Hereafter. Imam Muslim narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Do you know who is the bankrupt?” They answered: “A bankrupt person among us is the person who has neither money nor property.” The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The bankrupt in my nation is the one who comes on the Day of Resurrection with prayer, Zakat and fasting, yet he used to insult, slander, slay and beat others. Thus claimants are rewarded according to their good deeds. If one’s good deeds are gone, he is punished for his ill-doings until he is thrown into Hell.”

- **Dining Ethics:**

1. One should start eating by mentioning the name of Allah and conclude with praising and thanking Allah. He should eat from the nearest side of the dish and use his right hand, because the left hand is generally used for cleaning filth.

Imams Bukhari and Muslim narrated on the authority of ‘Umar Ibn Abi Salamah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Mention the name of Allah, eat with your right hand and eat from the nearest side of the dish.”

2. One should never complain or disapprove of the food presented.

Bukhari and Muslim narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, that;

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never found fault with any food. If he liked it, he would eat it, if not he would just leave it.”

3. One should avoid eating or drinking in excess quantity, in the light of Allah’s saying, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And eat and drink but do not be excessive.”

The Prophet’s ﷺ words:

“The son of Adam (man) has never filled a vessel worse than his stomach. If there is no other way out, then let there be a third for his food, another for his drink, and another for his breath.” (Narrated by Ahmad)

4. One should never breath or blow into vessels. According to Ibn ‘Abbas the Prophet ﷺ forbade breathing or blowing into the dish. (Tirmidhi)
5. One should eat with others, not alone, since Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Gather around your food so that it may be blessed.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

6. If one is are invited to a meal and wants to take somebody with him, he should seek permission for him. According to Abu Mas’ud Al-Badri, may Allah be pleased with him, a man invited Allah’s Prophet ﷺ to a meal along with four other people. A man followed the Prophet. At the door, the Prophet ﷺ said to the host:

“This man has come with us: If you’d permit, he will come in; if not he will go back.” The host said: “I give him my permission, O Allah’s Messenger.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- **Ethics of Seeking Permission**

There are two kinds of ethics:

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1. Those relating to social formalities, as Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own until you ask permission and greet their inhabitants...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nur, 24:27)

2. Those relating to formalities in the home, as Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“And when the children among you come to puberty then let them ask permission even as those before them used to ask it...” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nur, 24:59)

This is all intended to keep household secrets and protect the privacy of homes, as pointed out in the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“Asking permission is intended for protection against what may be seen.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

It is advisable not to persist in asking permission as pointed out in the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“You should ask permission three times. If you are not admitted, go back.” (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim)

- **Ethics of Greeting**

- Islam has encouraged the custom of greetings among the members of society because it leads to love and friendship. This is supported by the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“You will never enter Paradise until you become believers, and you will not become believers until you love each other. Shall I guide you to something that makes you love each other? Spread the greeting of peace among you.” (Muslim)

- Answering a greeting is obligatory, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“When you are greeted with greetings, reply with a better than it or return it...”(The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:86)

- Islam has also explained obligations in matters of greeting priorities. According to the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“A rider should greet a pedestrian, a pedestrian should greet one sitting, and a small number of people should greet a larger number.” (Narrated by both Bukhari and Muslim)

In one narration by Bukhari, it is added: *“A young person should greet an elder.”*

- **Ethics of Sitting**

- One should greet attendants of the meeting or gathering, as pointed out in the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“If one comes to a meeting he should Say: ‘Peace be upon you!’ Upon leaving he should do the same, for the first greeting is not more important than the latter.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

- It is not appropriate to ask someone to leave his sitting place for someone else as pointed out in the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“Never should anyone of you make someone rise from his place to sit there. Rather make more room for others to sit.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

“If someone leave his sitting place then returns to it, he will have more right to it”, as stated by the Prophet ﷺ. (Muslim)

- One should never separate two persons sitting together as pointed out in the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“It is not permissible for a man to separate two men (by inserting himself sitting between them) unless they give permission.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

- One should never talk to a friend privately in the presence of a third person as pointed out in the Prophet's ﷺ saying:

“If there are three of you, never should two of them talk without the third until you mix with other people, for this would grieve the third.” (Bukhari)

- Never sit in the middle of a circle or group of people, as pointed out in the Prophet's ﷺ saying:

“Damned is he who sits in the middle of a sitting group.” (Abu Dawood)

- Leave space for others to sit, Allah said, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! When it is said, ‘Make room!’ In assemblies, then make room; Allah will make way for you (hereafter). And when it is said, ‘Come up higher!’ Go up higher; Allah will exalt those who have knowledge, to high ranks. Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Az-Zukhruf, 43:11)

- It is desirable to suppress yawning as far as possible as it is a sign of laziness, as pointed out in the Prophet's ﷺ saying:

“Yawning is from Satan, so when one of you yawns let him try to repel it as far as possible, for if one utters ‘Haa!’ (when yawning) the devil will laugh at him.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

- About sneezing, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“If one of you sneezes, let him say: ‘Praise be to Allah!’ And his Muslim brother should say to him: ‘May Allah have mercy on you’ Upon which he answers: ‘May Allah guide you and make you well.’” (Bukhari)

It is also advisable for one to cover one's mouth when sneezing. Allah's Messenger ﷺ:

“When sneezing; would cover his mouth with his hand or garment and suppress his voice.” (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

- One should avoid belching while sitting in the presence of others. According to Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, one man belched in the presence of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. He said to him:

“Stop belching, Those who eat most in this worldly life will be the hungriest in the Hereafter.” (Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah)

- The assembly should not be busy with nonsense or void of the remembrance of Allah and useful discussions of worldly and religious affairs. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Whoever rises from an assembly in which the name of Allah is not mentioned is like one who rises from around a donkey’s carcass. And that assembly will be a source of sorrow for them.” (Abu Dawood)

- One should not face those sitting with him with what they dislike.

- **Ethics of Gathering**

In order to make gathering desirable and repel all that cause people to hate gatherings, Islam respects the feelings of the individuals who gather somewhere. Therefore, Islam instructs its followers keep themselves clean, free of bad smells, and with clean clothing, without things that appear offensive to others. It also instructs them to listen to the speaker without interrupting him and to sit where they find room without stepping over people’s neck or causing them any inconvenience by pressing against them. This is supported by the Prophet’s ﷺ saying while addressing Muslims during a Friday sermon:

“Whoever has a bath on Friday, puts on the best of his clothes, puts some scent on if any, then attends the Friday prayer without crossing over people’s necks and performs whatever units of prayer he could. Then if he keeps quiet when the Imam ascends the pulpit

until he concludes prayer, his prayer will be an atonement for the whole week preceding that prayer”.
(Abu Dawood).

- **Etiquette of Conversation**

- One should listen to the speaker without interrupting him until he finishes talking. In his speech during the Farewell Pilgrimage, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Ask people to keep quiet.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

- One should speak clearly so that the listener may understand what he is saying. Ayesah, the Prophet’s wife said: “The Prophet’s words were so clear that everyone could understand them.” (Abu Dawood).

- One should be cheerful and speak pleasantly. This is in accordance with the Prophet’s ﷺ saying:

“Do not underestimate any of your deeds, even to receive your brother cheerfully.” (Muslim)

He also said:

“A good word is charity.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

Al-Hussain, may Allah be pleased with him, said:

“I asked my father about the Prophet’s behavior among his companions, to which he answered ‘He was always cheerful, easy mannered and lenient. He was not rough, noisy, vulgar, insulting, or greedy. He used to overlook what he disliked without depriving others of hope or answering them negatively. He refrained from disputing, chattering and curiosity. He spared others from three things: He never censured, found fault with or spied on them. He spoke only what he hoped he would be rewarded for. When he spoke, his listeners lowered their head quietly and when he was silent they spoke. They never spoke haphazardly in front of him. If one talked in his

presence they listened to him until he finished. He used to laugh and wonder at whatever his company laughed or wondered at. He was patient with the strangers who were rude in both their talk and requests.’’

- **Etiquette of Joking**

- Allah’s Messenger, peace be upon him, said to his companion Hanzala, who thought that life should be free from fun and entertainment and that he committed hypocrisy when he played and jested with his wife and children

“But, Hanzala, refresh your heart from time to time.” (Muslim).

Here the Prophet explained to the man that permissible fun and self-refreshment is desirable for the human soul to regain its activity and liveliness. He ﷺ also taught them the rules of conduct when joking. When asked about his joking with them, he said:

“Yes, but I speak truthfully.” (Tirmidhi).

- Once an old woman came to him and said: *“O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah for me to be admitted into Paradise.”* He ﷺ said:

“No old woman will be admitted into Paradise.” On hearing this she went away crying. He said: “Tell her that she won’t be an old woman when she goes into Paradise. Allah, the Exalted says ‘Indeed We have created them a (new) creation and made them virgins, lovers, friends.’” (The Qur’aan, Chapter Al-Qamar, 54:35-37).

- The jokes of the Prophet ﷺ were not limited to words, they included acts as well. Anas Ibn Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, said,

“A bedouin called Zaher used to bring presents from the desert to the Prophet ﷺ and the Prophet ﷺ would supply him with provisions when he left. He ﷺ said about him, ‘Zaher is our desert and we are his city.’

The Prophet loved him, though he did not have a pleasant face. One day, the Prophet ﷺ grabbed him from behind him. Zaher said: 'Release me.' Then he looked behind him and recognized the Prophet, so he pressed his back against the Prophet's ﷺ chest. The Prophet ﷺ called out: 'Who purchases this slave?' Zaher said: 'O Messenger of Allah, you will find me not sellable.' The Prophet ﷺ answered: 'But to Allah, you are not sellable' or he said: 'To Allah, you are so dear.'" (Tirmidhi).

- A joke should not involve any harm or insult to any Muslim. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, the meaning of which is translated as:

"No Muslim is allowed to scare another Muslim." (Abu Dawood)

He also said:

"Nobody should take his (Muslim) brother's belongings." (Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi)

- Joking should not drive a Muslim to lie in order to make others laugh, as understood from the Prophet's ﷺ words:

"Woe to him who lies when speaking to make people laugh. Woe to him! Woe to him!"

- **Etiquette of Condolence**

- Condolence has been prescribed to console the dead person's family, relieve their sorrows and alleviate their distress. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

"A believer who condoles with his brother on a bereavement will be dressed by Allah in the robes of honor and glory on the Day of Resurrection".

- There is no specific formula for condolence. However, Imam Shafi'i recommended the expression: *"May Allah magnify your reward, give you solace and forgive your deceased one."*

- It is desirable to prepare food for the family of the deceased as is clear by the saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Make food for Ja‘far’s family as they are distracted by the loss.”

- **Etiquette of Sleeping**

- One should mention the name of Allah and lie on the right side when sleeping in accordance with the Prophet’s ﷺ words to Al-Baraa bin Azeb:

“If you want to go to bed, perform ablution as that for prayer, then lie down on your right side, and say: ‘O Allah! I submit myself to You, and turn my face towards You, and confide my cause unto You, and take refuge in You, out of love and fear of You. There is no refuge or escape from You except in You. I believe in Your Book which You have revealed and Your Prophet, whom You have sent as Messenger.’”
(Bukhari & Muslim)

- One should not sit up late at night. He should do his best to sleep early unless there is some need or necessity. It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ disliked sleeping before the evening prayer and sitting and talking after it. (Bukhari & Muslim)

- One should not sleep his stomach as this was prohibited by the Prophet ﷺ:

“Such manner of lying down is disliked by Allah.”
(Abu Dawood)

- One should make sure that there is nothing that hurts him in his bedding, as recommended by the gracious Prophet ﷺ:

“When one of you goes to bed, he should clear his bed with part of his loincloth as he does not know what is lying inside after he has left it, and let him say: ‘O Allah! With Your name I have laid on my side, and with Your name I raise it. O Allah! If You hold

my soul (i.e. take my life), then have mercy on it, and if You return it, then protect it with what You protect Your pious servants.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- One should be cautious and ward off the sources of danger. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“This fire is an enemy to you, so when you want to sleep put it out”. (Bukhari)

- **Etiquette of Marital Sexual Relations**

- It is desirable, before cohabitation with one’s wife or husband to mention the name of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“When one of you cohabits with his wife, if he says, ‘In the name of, O Allah! Keep us away from Satan, and keep Satan away from (the offspring) that you may grant us,’ Then if a child is born out of this union, Satan will have no access to hurt his child.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

- Private relations between husband and wife must be kept secret, as stated in the following by the Prophet ﷺ:

“The worst in of people before Allah on the Day of Resurrection will be the man who cohabits with his wife or the woman who cohabits with her husband, then either they divulges the secret of the other.” (Muslim)

- Allah’s Messenger ﷺ recommended play, flirtation and kissing prior to sexual intercourse as evidenced by his words to one of his companions:

“Don’t make love with her unless she has had the same degree of sexual appetite as you, so that you do not discharge before her.” He asked: “Should I do this?” The Prophet said; “Yes, you kiss, caress and touch her until you find that she has the same degree of erotic urge and excitement as you, then make love with her.” (Imam Ahmad)

- The husband should not pull out until she has finished her sexual desire.

- **Etiquette of Travelling**

- One should return trusts to their owners, settle grievances and debts, and leave their family sufficient provisions. He should never travel alone except in cases of emergency when he find no company. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“One traveler is one devil, two travelers are two devils, but three travelers make a caravan.” (Abu Dawood, Nasa’i and Tirmidhi)

- On travelling, one should choose good company and select one person as a leader. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“When three people set out on a journey they should appoint one of them as a leader.” (Abu Dawood)

- One should inform his family of the time of his return from a journey. He should not return at night as this is undesirable since he might see something he dislikes. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“If one of you is absent from home for a long time, he should not come back to his family by night”.

- In another version of the Prophet ﷺ prohibited a man from returning home by night. (Bukhari and Muslim)

- He should say goodbye to his family, friends and companions, as the Prophet ﷺ said

“If one of you intends to set out on a journey, let him say goodbye to his brothers, for Allah Almighty will make in their prayers a blessing for him.”

- He should return home quickly after he achieves the objective of his journey. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Travel is a piece of anguish as it deprives each traveler (of you) of the facilities of eating, drinking

and sleeping. Therefore, when one of you has completed the purpose of your journey he should return home quickly.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

- Conduct in the Market

- Among the rules of behavior in the market are those included in the Prophet’s ﷺ words when he said:

“Refrain from sitting in the streets.” The Companions said: “O Messenger of Allah, we have no alternative, there is no other place where we can sit and discuss matters.” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said: “If it is so, then in that case, discharge your responsibilities due to the street.” The Companions asked what their due to the street was. He said: “Keeping your eyes down, clearing the streets of obstacles, responding to greetings, enjoining virtuous deeds and forbidding evil.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

- In another narration he ﷺ added:

“Helping the aggrieved and guide the lost.” (Abu Dawood)

He ﷺ also said:

“Beware of the two cursed practices.”

His Companions asked: *“What are the two cursed practices?”* He ﷺ answered:

“Answering the call of nature in a public thoroughfare or in a patch of shade.” (Muslim)

- A passer-by should refrain from carrying harmful weapons or devices, as enjoined by the Gracious Prophet ﷺ. He said:

“When any one of you happens to go through our mosque or bazaar with an arrow (in his hand) he must grasp its pointed head in his palm, so that none of the Muslims should receive any injury from it.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

- **Etiquette for Buying and Selling**

- Selling is essentially lawful in Islam because it is based on exchange of benefits between the salesman and the purchaser. However, in case any harm occurs to either party, the deal becomes unlawful based on the following verse, the meaning of which is translated as:

“O you who believe! Squander not your wealth among yourselves in vanity.” (The Qur’aan, Chapter An-Nisa’a, 4:29),

- Once the Messenger passed by a heap of corn. He put his hand into it and his fingers got wet from it. He said to the owner: *“What is this?”* He replied: *“Messenger of Allah, these have been drenched by rainfall.”* He remarked: *“Why did you not place this on top so that people could see it? He who deceives is not of me.” (Muslim)*

- Truthfulness and clear description (of defects, if any) is required in accordance with the Messenger’s ﷺ saying:

“Both parties in a business transaction have the right to annul it as long as they have not separated. Thus, if they speak the truth and make everything clear they will be blessed in their transaction; but if they tell a lie and conceal anything, the blessing on their transaction will be blotted out”. (Bukhari and Muslim)

- Benevolence and fair dealing is also recommended in business, since this is a means of strengthening seller-buyer relations as pointed out by Allah’s Messenger ﷺ:

“May Allah have mercy on a person who is easy and courteous when he sells, buys or asks for the payment of his dues.” (Bukhari)

That is because Islam wants this ease of dealing and tolerance in matters of selling and buying to save people from panting for material interests that undermine brotherly and human relations.

- One should avoid making oaths when selling, in compliance with the Prophet's ﷺ instruction, the meaning of which is translated as:

“Avoid too much swearing during sales, for in the beginning it promotes business, and then it brings only loss.” (Muslim)

The above are some Islamic etiquette and ethics, and there are many others that would take a very long time to explain. Nevertheless, it would suffice here to remind that no human affair, private or public, goes without Qur'aanic or Prophetic instruction or guidance that defines or regulates it.

Conclusion

We conclude our book with the viewpoint of two people who embraced Islam.

F. Filweas asserted: *“The West is suffering from a vast spiritual void which no principle or faith could fill to bring about happiness. Despite the affluence there, and the so-called economic prosperity, besides the satisfaction of physical needs of people, the Western man still has a sense of worthlessness in his life. He wonder why he is living, where he is going, and why. But no one so far has given him a satisfactory response. Unfortunately, he has no idea that his remedy is in the right religion about which he knows nothing more than doubts. However, the beginning of a light has started to breakthrough after a few groups of Westerners embraced Islam and Western man began to see men and women put Islam into practice and live up to its teachings with his own eyes. Everyday some people there embrace the true religion. It is just the beginning.”*

An American lady, D. Potter, who was born in Traverse, Michigan, and graduated from Michigan University with a degree in Journalism, asserts:

“Islam is the Law of God. It is evident in nature all around us. Mountains, oceans, planets and star move in orbit by Allah’s command. They are submissive to the Will of Allah their Creator just as characters in a novel are controlled by its author, since they speak and act in the way planned and determined by him. Allah’s will is Sublime Similitude. Thus, every atom or particle in this universe, even inanimate objects, is submissive to the Will of Allah. However, man is an exception since he has been given the freedom of choice, so he has the will to submit to Allah’s commands or to lay down his own laws or religion. Unfortunately, he has mostly chosen the second option. People in Europe and America are embracing Islam in large numbers because they are thirsty for peace of mind and spiritual security. Moreover, a number of Christian orientalists and preachers who commenced their campaign to destroy Islam and bring out its alleged shortcomings have themselves become Muslims. That is because the evidence of the truth is irrefutable.”

رسالة الإسلام

يتناول هذا الكتاب بشكل موجز ما يأتي :

- قضية التوحيد في الدين الإسلامي .
 - المبادئ الأساسية في الدين الإسلامي.
 - جانب من خصائص الدين الإسلامي .
 - الجانب الروحي في الإسلام .
 - الجانب السياسي في الإسلام .
 - الجانب الاقتصادي في الإسلام .
 - الجانب الاجتماعي في الإسلام .
 - الجانب الأخلاقي في الإسلام .
 - جانب من الآداب الإسلامية .
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This book consists of the following issues:

- The Issue of Monotheism in Islam
 - Fundamentals of Islam
 - Aspects of Islamic Etiquette
 - The Spiritual Side of Islam
 - The Political Aspect of Islam
 - The Military Aspect of Islam
 - The Economic Aspect of Islam
 - The Social Aspect of Islam
 - Moral Aspect of Islam
 - Commandments
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