

BOOK 2  
ETHICO-METAPHYSICAL  
FOUNDATIONS

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**PART 1**  
**THE CRITIQUE AND DYNAMICS OF MORALS**

**PART 2**  
**THE METAPHYSICS OF MORALS**

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## FUNDAMENTAL CLASSIFICATION

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Laws stated in the Qur’ānic Moral Code, the presentation of which has been undertaken in the second volume of the present book, are actually ethical judgments. But there are certain principles which form the theoretical core of all moral philosophy, because they deal with the nature of Morality. We may call them ‘basic ethical principles’, and state them under the following fundamental classification:

1. Theory of Moral Judgment.
2. Then, if the standard of moral judgment is Law, discussion relating to the Moral Law with regard to:
  - a. its nature
  - b. the spirit according to which it is to be practised;—and also:
3. Ends to which the moral law is directed:
  - a. The Immediate End or Ends to which the Moral Law is directed.
  - b. The Ultimate End, if any, which morality—although it is to be practised within its domain as an absolute value—should serve.
4. Penal Ethics, or, Theory of Punishment.
5. Moral, or, in the Qur’ānic perspective, Ethico-Religious, Dynamics.

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# PART 1

## THE CRITIQUE AND DYNAMICS OF MORALS

### *Chapter 1.*

## THEORY OF MORAL JUDGEMENT

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The *Moral Judgment* is the judgment, from the point of view of morality, of approval or condemnation of a mode of conduct. It relates to the following factors:

1. The Object of Moral Judgment, i.e., that which is approved or disapproved as good or bad. It can be conceived either as the motive of a performed voluntary action or as the consequence thereof.
2. The Subject of Moral Judgment, i.e., that which sits in judgment over the modes of conduct of the moral agent.
3. The Predicate of Moral Judgment, i.e., the term of moral approval or condemnation.
4. The Standard involved in the Moral Judgment, with reference to which the value of a mode of conduct is assessed. It can be conceived either as Law or as End.

Now, as to the Qur'ānic teaching in that behalf:

### ***1. Object of Moral Judgment :***

The *object of moral judgment* is, in the first instance, voluntary action which involves will, as opposed to reflex action which lacks will. Thus it has been affirmed:

“Allah will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths, but He will take you to task for that which your hearts have garnered ...” (2:223).

Again:

“... But if one is forced by necessity, without willful (i.e., voluntary) disobedience, nor transgressing the limits, then he is guiltless ...” (2:173).

The voluntary action comprises within it such elements as:

- a. The *conflict* between two motives, the motive of the performance of Duty (i.e., the *consciousness of an obligatory Law*) and the motive of the fulfilment of Desire (i.e., the *instinctive urge* in defiance of the moral law).

Duty is constituted of:

1. the consciousness of an obligatory Law;
2. the feeling of reverence associated with it;
3. the consciousness of want of moral value in the idea of failing in duty.

Desire is constituted of:

1. the idea of the end;

2. the feeling of pleasantness associated with the idea;
  3. present state of uneasiness from want of something.
- b. Besides the conflict, there is involved *deliberation*, i.e., the weighing and balancing of each of the two conflicting factors in the voluntary action.
  - c. Deliberation is followed by choice of either of the two conflicting motives of Duty and Desire, which is a *free choice* and every morally-conscious agent knows that it is free.
  - d. Finally, there is *resolution* to fulfil either the Desire or the Duty, thereby passing beyond mere intention.
  - e. The resolution is followed by the *execution* or the actual performance of the action.
  - f. The performance of the action brings in the *consequences*, or the result of the performance, which is causally determined by numerous factors not in control of the agent without *taufīq*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is the verdict of the Qur’ān (11:88). The question arises: what is the significance of *taufīq*? *Taufīq* means: ‘conformation’. As a Qur’ānic term it implies the existence of harmony between the effort of the moral agent and the extraneous factors through Divine Grace. The occasion for Divine Grace, in its turn, arises, according to the Holy Qur’ān, only when the moral agent takes the initiative (13:11)—which initiative, again, should be in consonance with the Law that governs the cosmological process and is reflected in history. We have discussed that Law in our “*Dynamics of Moral Revolution*”.

The analysis of voluntary action brings out and the Holy Qur'ān affirms that man is responsible only to the extent of the *freedom* he possesses:

“Allah does not hold anyone responsible except to the limit of his capability.” (2:286).

Now, because this capability is confined to the freedom of choice in respect of conflicting motives, the real object of moral judgment is the motive,<sup>2</sup> as the following verses confirm:

“... And there is no blame on you in the mistakes that you make unintentionally, but (what counts is) that which your hearts intend purposely ...” (33:5).

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<sup>2</sup> The Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) says:

“Verily the value of actions lies in the motives (by which they are prompted).” (Bukhārī: Ṣaḥīḥ; vol. 1, p. 2.).

It should also be noted that motives not translated into action (i.e., *lamam*) do not form the object of moral judgment, as we have been told:

“... those who avoid great sins and abominations, save the slight and unwilling deviations from virtue ...” (52:32).

This is the Qur'ānic view of the object of moral judgment. But there is a view opposed to it which regards ‘consequence’ as the object. That view is, however, unacceptable; because, in the first instance, consequence is determined not by the human will but by casual nexus. Secondly, morality is reduced thereby to expediency. Thirdly, because vice too is an expediency, virtue can hardly be separated from vice.



“... save him who is compelled thereto (i.e., unto the declaration of unbelief), while his heart is still contented with Faith ...” (16:106).

Namely, if his motive is not to defy the truth, the transgression committed by him under duress will not be condemned.

“... When the Hypocrites come to you (O Prophet!), they say, ‘we bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah’. Yes, Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger. But Allah bears witness that the Hypocrites are indeed liars (in respect of their motive).” (62:1).

“It is not their (i.e., the sacrificial animals’) meat, nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your (motive for) piety that reaches Him ...” (22:37).

Viewing the problem from another angle, it is the conflict between Desire and Duty that gives rise to the moral situation, wherein emerges the question: what is really binding as moral obligation? Now, the Qur’ānic verse: “Oh you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor ...” (4:135), implies that the moral imperative expressed in the words “stand out firmly for justice” is the standard to be adhered to without regard to any other consideration whatsoever, which means that an action is morally approvable only when it is performed in obedience to the imperative, and condemnable if performed in defiance of it. The value resides thus in the *motive* of the performed action, which relates

to the performance of Duty <sup>3</sup> in the case of virtue, and to the defiance of Duty and obedience to Desire <sup>4</sup> in the case of vice, and is subjected as such to moral approval and disapproval.

*Note on Desire:*

It should be clearly noted that it is not *desire* as such, nor the higher desires that relate to high and noble ends, but only the desires relating to the *instinctive urges*, called *hawā'* in Qur'ānic terminology, obedience to which, in defiance of the sense of duty, is what is meant here by 'obedience to Desire', as the verses quoted in footnote 2 signify.

The correctness of this Qur'ānic view is self-evident even though certain great religions like Buddhism,<sup>5</sup> and certain great moral

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. the verses:

“And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from the lust of the instinctive urges, or evil Desire, (out of respect for Duty), their abode will be the Garden.” (79:40-41).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the verses:

“Then, for such as had rebelled (against Duty) and chose the life of this world (—the life of following Desire in the sense of slavery to the lust of instinctive urges); lo! Hell will be his home”. (79:37-39).

<sup>5</sup> For a critical appraisal of the Buddhist point of view relating to the present discussion, as also to other philosophical and ethical problems, and its comparison with the Islamic point of view, readers should refer to the penetrating and masterly exposition presented by the young Muslim thinker

philosophers like Kant are opposed to it. For instance, maintaining that all desire is bad, Kant says: “The inclinations themselves being sources of want, are so far from having an absolute worth for which they should be desired, that on the contrary it must be the universal wish of every rational being to be wholly free from them”. (*Grundlegung*, 2; *E.T.*, Abbot, p. 46). Schopenhauer terms Kant’s view as the ‘apotheosis of lovelessness’. (*Ueber die Grundlage der Moral*; *E. T.*, Bullock, 1903, p. 49); because, in Kant’s estimation, even the most unselfish acts of benevolence towards, and love for, other human beings lose all their moral worth unless inspired by pure sense of duty and unless emptied of all *desire* to be benevolent towards fellow-beings.

If we take into consideration the facts of human psychology in reference to the proper realisation of the moral ideal, we are bound to hold to the Qur’ānic view that some desires deserve to be suppressed, some to be moderated, and some to be encouraged and enhanced, ultimately subordinating all to the spiritual yearning of obtaining Divine Pleasure,—keeping the sense of duty always dynamically alive and the action entrenched in the purest motivation.

However, Kant’s deification of Duty acquires meaning in the Qur’ān itself, in the idea of Absolute Duty to God, because the Divine Will is directed absolutely to *all* that is good—including the supreme

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from the West Indies, Imran Nazar Hosein, in his brilliant book: “*Islam and Buddhism in the Modern World*” (published by the World Federation of Islamic Missions, Karachi, Pakistan.).

good of humanity—and to good and good alone, and the negation of all Desire relating to this world at that level, except the inspiration of fellowship with the Absolute Ideal that is also absolutely Real, would be permissible, because it leads *ipso facto* to perfection above all the perfections that might be aimed at in relation to earthly life.]



## **2. Subject of Moral Judgment :**

The Qur'ānic view with regard to the *subject of moral judgment* is that it is the Conscience, or, Moral Reason, of the moral agent, because it maintains:

“Oh, but the human being (in his Conscience,<sup>6</sup> or, Moral Reason) is endowed with discernment concerning himself.”  
(75:14).

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<sup>6</sup> In respect of the *nature* of Conscience, there are two views in modern moral philosophy. One of them holds that it is ‘Moral Sense’,—that is, it is based on Feeling. The other maintains that it is Reason,—that is, its basis is Knowing. According to the Holy Qur’ān, it may best be termed as ‘Moral Reason’. This view we obtain from the word *basīrah* in the Arabic original of the word.

As regards the *function* of Conscience, again, there are two schools of thought. One, which Sidgwick names as ‘unphilosophical Intuitionism’, maintains that Conscience is a *dictator*, dictating all the time and in all acts as to the course of moral action. The other school, which is called ‘philosophical Intuitionism’, holds that Conscience is a *legislator*, legislating in respect of the morality of human actions. According to the Holy Qur’ān, Conscience is

And this is possible because of the duality of human nature:

“By the Soul, and Him Who gave it proportion and order, and inspired it (with the conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it.” (91:7-8).

Verse 8 implies that the human self is capable of wickedness (*fujūr*), which is the urge of the lower self, or, the “Impelling Self” (12:53), and also of virtue (*taqwā*), which is the urge of the higher self, or, the Moral Reason named as the “Reproaching Self” (75:2). But the urge of the lower self should be made subordinate to the urge of the higher self in order that it becomes finally powerless in respect of compelling the individual to follow the path of Desire in defiance of the call of Duty,—the human self at attaining finally the stage of the Beatified Self (89:27).



### ***3. Predicate of Moral Judgment :***

In respect of the *predicate of moral judgment*, which is constituted of the terms of moral approval and disapproval, it is necessary to have in view the nature of the Qur’ānic value-system

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the *judge* (or, the evaluator)—as *basīrah*, whose function is to judge whether a certain action is morally approvable or disapprovable in the light of the standard laid down by the Divine Law, that standard having reference to consequences also, as we shall shortly see.

Thus the Holy Qur’ān steers clear of the mistakes committed by the modern intuitionist thinkers in respect of the nature and function of Conscience.

wherein morality does not stand in isolation from the other values, especially the spiritual.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the Holy Qur'ān has not employed just one set of terms, like 'right' and 'wrong' and 'good' and 'bad', to denote the moral virtues and vices. Rather it has used different sets, and even single words, in different contexts, with the basic notions of moral goodness and evil running through them. Thus we find the following sets of opposites:

1. *ṣālihāt* and *sayyi'āt*: (45:20);
2. *khayr* and *sharr*: (99:7-8; etc.);
3. *birr* and *ithm*: (5:3);
4. *ḥasanah* and *sayyi'ah*: (27:91-92);
5. *ma'rūf* and *munkar*: (3:106; etc.);
6. *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*: (10:59; etc.);
7. *ṭaiyyib* and *ḥabīth*: (2:267; etc.).

As for single words, they, along with their connotations (all relating to evil in different gradations and categories), are:

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Rashdall: "If, finally, we ask what is the relation of the idea of value to the idea of 'moral' value, I should answer that all that has value has moral value, in the sense that it must be moral, in due proportion to the amount of that value, to promote it; but by moral value we generally mean the particular kind of value which we assign to a good character." (*Theory of Good and Evil*, vol. 1, p. 138).

1. *fasād* (2:205; etc.): corruption—a word capable of denoting all types of evil action.
2. *‘udwān* (2:85; etc.): disobedience.
3. *junāh*, (2:158; etc.): sin.
4. *fāhishah* (3:125; etc.): anything abominable beyond measure.
5. *khaṭi’ah* (4:112; etc.): mistake, fault in small or large measure, and intentional or unintentional.
6. *rijs* (5:90; etc.): something intensely filthy and unclean.
7. *najas* (9:28): something that is unclean according to Reason or Law.
8. *jurm* (11:35; etc.): sin—the Qur’ānic use almost invariably with reference to *kufr*.
9. *lamam* (52:32): slight and unwilled deviation from virtue—possibly in thought alone.
10. *ma‘ṣiyah* (58:8-9): disobedience.
11. *dhanb* (60:3; etc.): slip, lapse; trespassing correct boundaries of action intentionally or un-intentionally (Mark that *dhanb* is related to *dhanab* which means tail).

We are, however, really concerned with the seven sets of opposites that we have mentioned.

In that connection, the first fact to be noted is that the terms used in these sets fall into three categories, namely: evaluative,

classificatory and descriptive; and among these categories it is only the first that is of value to us in the present discussion. This becomes clear when we examine the semantic structure of each term and fix up its connotation. For this purpose we will take up here the positive terms contained in the sets.

1. *ṣālihāt*: Good deeds. The word *ṣālih* means sound, good, righteous, and its semantic constitution contains emphatic reference to belief in God, prayer, and goodwill and love for humanity. However, the practice of *ṣālihāt* is repeatedly joined to Faith. Thus this term connotes 'faith expressed in outward conduct'.

It may also be noted that this term has not been used in the Qur'ān in its singular form, *ṣālihāh*, which seems to be one of the necessary conditions for choosing a term for our purpose.

2. *khayr*: Good. It has been used in the Qur'ān as a comprehensive term for 'good', covering religious belief, worldly happiness and good in general.
3. *birr*: Godliness, righteousness, probity, kindness, charitable gift. The semantic constitution of this term seems to be similar to that of *ṣālih*.
4. *Ḥasanah*: Good deed, benefaction, charity. Its masculine form, *ḥasan*, means: beautiful, nice, good, agreeable, exquisite; while the word *ḥusn* means: beauty, excellence, perfection. In its semantic constitution, it covers not only the 'good' in respect of both the worldly and the religious spheres



of life, as we find in the case of *khayr*, but also *a powerful emphasis on moral goodness and on beauty, or, grace in conduct.*

5. *ma'rūf*: It seems to express a very general and comprehensive idea of religious goodness in the sense of compliance with the Divine Law. Literally, it means 'known', 'familiar', and hence 'approved'. Thus in the Qur'ānic usage, *al-ma'rūf* should be taken to mean: 'that which is known to ideal human nature' and hence familiar to and in harmony with it, whereby any act which is *ma'rūf* is a good act in the light of what the Qur'ān teaches as to the goodness of all that is in conformity with ideal human nature (30:30). However, it should be noted that the application of this term in the Qur'ān bears reference more vitally to the legal aspect of human relations than to morality.
6. *ḥalāl*: Lawful. It is a legal term. So too is *ḥarām*, its opposite.
7. *ṭayyib*: Good, pleasant, agreeable, delicious. The Qur'ān has employed it to denote religious goodness as well as goodness pertaining to worldly things.

Among these seven terms, the first four are evaluative; the next two classificatory; and the last is descriptive. Again, among the evaluative terms, *ḥasanah* emerges as the term related to the Qur'ānic predicate of moral judgment, which may be defined as 'moral Good'<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In respect of the predicate of moral judgment Kant has adopted the term 'right' in keeping with his ethical system; while others have chosen the term 'good' whereby moral judgments can be reasonably considered as judgments

joined to spiritual purity and aesthetic grace'. This selection is confirmed by the Divine Command:

“Verily Allah commands (observance of absolute) Justice and adherence to the *ḥasanah* ...” (16:90).



#### ***4. Standard of Moral Judgment:***

Coming now to the *standard of moral judgment*, it is Law, as has been clearly set down, among others, in the following verses:

“And those who do not judge on the standard of what Allah has revealed, verily they are transgressors.” (5:50).

“And those who do not judge on the standard of what Allah has revealed, verily they are unjust.” (5:48).

“And those who do not judge on the standard of what Allah has revealed, verily they are infidels.” (5:47).

This means that only actions performed in obedience to ‘Law’—the Law grounded in the transcendental value of Divine Pleasure—are

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of value containing at the same time the idea of ‘ought’ or obligation. Now, it is evident that the term ‘good’ is more appropriate—more correct—than the term ‘right’. In respect of ‘good’, again, the concept of ‘good’ is bound to vary in different ethical systems in accordance with the nature or scope of the ‘good’ conceived. In this respect, the Qur’ānic concept of the predicate is most perfect.

morally approvable or virtuous,<sup>9</sup> and those performed in defiance of ‘Law’ and obedience to ‘Desire’ are morally condemnable or vicious.<sup>10</sup>



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<sup>9</sup> *Cf.* the verses:

“Say: ‘Truly, my prayer and my (service of) sacrifice, my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds: No partner has He: This am I taught, and I am the first of those who bow to His Will’”. (6:162-163).

<sup>10</sup> *Cf.* the verse:

“... and follow not the lusts (of the instinctive urges), for they will mislead you from the Path of Allah ...” (38:26).

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*Chapter 2.*

## THE MORAL LAW

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### ***1. Nature of the Moral Law:***

The Qur'ān affirms the following characteristics in respect of the nature of Moral Law:

1. Besides the regard for the transcendental value of Divine Pleasure—which in itself makes the action most highly disinterested from the practical human point of view—it should not be conditioned by any interest other than morality. We are told:

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah (i.e., act solely out of respect for the Moral Law given by Allah) as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just ...” (5:9).

Again:

“And among mankind is he who would sell his ‘Self’ to the seeking of Allah’s Pleasure (alone) (i.e., seeking no other end but only the intrinsic good contained in the observance of the divinely-ordained Moral Law) ...” (2:207).

2. The Moral Law has been conceived as universally binding, i.e., binding on all rational beings—a principle contained in the following Qur'ānic affirmation:<sup>11</sup>

“Do they seek for other than the Divine Law?—while all (creatures) in the heavens and on the earth have, willing or unwilling, bowed to His Will (i.e., accepted the Divine Law), and to Him shall they all return.” (3:83).

3. The Moral Law is to be obeyed as unconditionally and absolutely binding:<sup>12</sup>

“They (i.e., the human beings) have never any choice (but to obey the Divine Law).” (28:68).

Again, as regards Muslims:

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. the Holy Prophet's verdict:

“None of you can have (real) belief (in Islam) until he loves for all human beings what he loves for himself.” (Ahmad: *Musnad*, vol. 3, p. 272).

<sup>12</sup> Because it emanates from the Absolute Good Will and is directed to the establishment of good will among human beings. As to the merit of good will, Kant expresses it beautifully thus: “If with its greatest efforts (the good will) should yet achieve nothing and there should remain only the good will (not to be sure a mere wish but the summoning of all means in our power), then, like a jewel, it would still shine by its own light, as a thing which has its whole value in itself.” (Kant: *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Sec. 1, *E. T.*, Abbot, p. 10).

“The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) in order that he (Muhammad) may judge between them, is no other than this: They say, ‘We hear and we obey’: It is such as these that will attain felicity.” (24:51).

[*Note on Kant’s Categorical Imperative*: Before we proceed to the next section, it is necessary to discuss Kant’s famous Categorical Imperative.

Among eminent moral thinkers of the modern age, Kant enjoys the distinction of not only being the most eminent but also of presenting an ethical philosophy which is nearer to the Qur’ānic ethical view than any other, so near in fact that in certain aspects the stand-points of the Holy Qur’ān and of Kant appear to be identical. This necessitates that while we have stated the Qur’ānic view concerning the ‘standard as Law’, we should have a clear understanding of the Kantian Categorical Imperative.

To begin with: Kant names the normative laws as ‘imperatives’ and says that they are of three kinds, namely: (1) the *hypothetical imperative*, which is not universally applicable and holds only under certain conditions; (2) the *assertorial imperative*, which can be conceived as universally applicable, but only in respect of the attainment of certain ends; and (3) the *categorical imperative*, which holds universally as well as unconditionally. He further says that the Moral Law is the *only* law that falls under the category of the categorical imperative; and he lays down the rule: “There is nothing

good without qualification except the good will”, thus denying all teleology in morals whereby action is conceived to be morally good in respect of its being conducive to certain desirable consequences. (Kant: *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Sec. 2, *E.T.*, Abbot, pp. 31-33).

Trying to understand Kant's view of the Categorical Imperative critically, the very first criticism that emerges is that, as defined by him, it is a 'form without content'; or, it is the 'ideal' divorced from the 'real'. Hence it cannot enjoy as such the status which Kant gives to it in his philosophy. To put it concretely: 'To will always what is good' ought to be accepted as a valid principle, but that does not as such provide any guidance in respect of 'willing the good' in particular situations.

As regards the Holy Qur'ān, it also prescribes a categorical imperative with regard to the maintenance of the good will. But in the Qur'ānic view, what is unconditionally and universally binding is strictly the obligation of Obedience to the Moral Law, which derives its authority, not from any utopian transcendental deduction—as in Kant, but from the absolute authority of the Absolute Good Will of the Moral Ruler of the universe, i.e., God. Moreover, it does not stop at the 'form' of the Categorical Imperative but also teaches its practical application in the concrete situations of moral action.

Kant lays down three laws in respect of the application of the Categorical Imperative, viz., (1) 'Act only on that maxim which you can at the same time will to become universal law'; (2) 'Treat every



rational being including yourself always as an end and never as a means'; (3) 'A principle of moral conduct is morally binding on me if, and only if, I can regard it as a law which I impose on myself'.

As to the first law, it stands challenged on different counts. Firstly, numerous situations in practical human life are conceivable where this law cannot be validly applied; for instance, becoming a teacher of a particular branch of knowledge, which is morally good but cannot be universalised. Secondly, Kant has bestowed on an unreal abstraction of one condition (i.e., obedience to a universal law) the status of being the essential condition for good will. Thirdly, he has confused the merit of performing an action with its goodness. Fourthly, he has erred in holding, as Professor Broad has pointed out (*Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 124 f), that a right action—right in respect of the factor of universality—must always be right, no matter what the inclinations of the agent are. For instance, if a man and a woman are married on considerations of Pure Reason, where alone the principle of universality resides, and no consideration is given to their respective inclinations and their unique circumstances, that marriage may prove to be evil for both of them, and not good in any sense of the word. Thus, the mere formal consistency which Kant has emphasised—i.e., that the rule of an action should be willed to be the rule of every person—can never by itself make an action good in terms of morality.

As to the second law, its validity may be said to have been challenged by Kant himself, inasmuch as his ethical philosophy makes

every human being, in respect of the realisation of the moral law, a mere means, so that he no more remains 'an end'!

As to the third law, it is correct in the sense that moral law, as distinguished from the political law, is surely a law that our own moral consciousness—our own conscience, and not any other factor, should make us incline to obey. It should form the behest of our higher self. Yet moral law should not be accepted as *merely* self-imposed, because the self can also dispense with it even as it can impose. Consequently it should be combined with the element of *absolute authority*, and such an authority can only be the authority of God.]



## ***2. The Spirit according to which the Moral Law is to be practised:***

The law is meant to be pursued as if it is *self-imposed*, i.e., it should form the behest of the higher self of the moral agent. But here would arise the difficulty: how to regard the Divine Law, which is externally-imposed, as a 'Law self-imposed'. This difficulty arises, however, in the want of understanding with respect to the expression 'divine origin'. Being of divine origin should not be taken to mean, according to the Qur'ānic teaching, that the Divine Law is foreign to the nature of man and is merely thrust from outside on him by God to be obeyed. Rather, it is simultaneously the 'Divine Law' as well as the 'Law of ideal Human Nature', and constitutes, therefore, the very behest of the higher human self.

The identity of the ‘Divine Law’ and the ‘Law of ideal Human Nature’ has been explicitly proclaimed thus:

“So set your purpose for religion as by nature <sup>13</sup> upright—the nature (framed) of Allah in which He has created the human beings.<sup>14</sup> There is no altering the laws of Allah’s creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not.”<sup>15</sup> (30:30).

Here it should be noted that the ‘ideal nature’ is the same, and has always been the same, in all human beings, of whatever race or tribe or country. In the Holy Qur’ān, this is implied in the fact that Divine Law relating to the ‘ideal nature’ has been revealed to all the communities of the world at one or the other period of human history (13:7). In history, it is confirmed by the fact that basic moral concepts

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<sup>13</sup> The nature conceived by the Holy Qur’ān is governed by a universal law which is fundamentally rational.

<sup>14</sup> Here the Holy Qur’ān refers to ideal human nature, i.e., the nature bestowed on humanity by God at the dawn of creation. It is not the same thing as Rousseau and some other moralists speak of in terms of ‘primitive’ or ‘original’ nature, because their view does not go beyond the spatio-temporal dimensions, wherein the modifications of the ‘ideal’ in respect of its manifestations must be presumed to have commenced at the very early period of human history—as we notice in the Holy Qur’ān in connection with “the story of the two descendants of Adam.” (5:27).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Cicero: “True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its demands and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions.” (*Republic*, 3.22).

have been the same in different civilisations and different ages—their differences consisting basically in the imperfect understanding of those concepts, or in their application to concrete problems of life. Mr. C.S. Lewis has put forward this truth ably thus: “Think of a country where people were *admired* for running away in battle, or where a man felt *proud* of double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two made five. Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was your own family or your fellow-citizen or everyone. But they have always agreed that you oughtn’t to put yourself first. Selfishness has never been admired. Men have differed as to whether you should have one wife or four. But they have always agreed that you mustn’t simply have any woman you liked.” (*Broadcast Talks*, p. 11). It means that we should affirm the existence of an absolute universal law, based on ideal human nature and underlying the moral judgments of human beings.



### *Chapter 3*

## ENDS TO WHICH THE MORAL LAW IS DIRECTED

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### ***1. The Immediate Ends:***

Morality being an action determined by Law, the difficulty arises: how to accommodate the purposive character of human activity in the scheme of moral life. It is, however, resolved when we find in the Holy Qur'ān that the Law is directed to a four-dimensional End, those dimensions being:

1. Moral and Spiritual Well-being of the Moral Agent.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“Oh you who believe! if you are careful of your duty to Allah (i.e., if you obey the Divine Law), He will grant you a Criterion (to judge between right and wrong), remove from you your (moral and spiritual) ills, and bestow on you forgiveness ...” (8:29).

2. Moral and Spiritual Well-being of Others.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“You are the best group, evolved for the service of humanity, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong ...” (3:110).

3. Material Well-being of Others,

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“... and do you good (to others) as Allah has been good to you ...” (28:77).

4. Material Well-being of the Moral Agent:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“... and forget not your portion (of Happiness) in this world ...” (28:77).

The Law is directed to the above four-dimensional End, without either the Law or the End becoming subservient to each other. Because the very act in obedience to the Law is at the same time the immediate fulfilment of the End. Thus the Holy Qur'ān harmonises the concepts of the 'Law' and the 'End', and establishes the principle that virtue should be regarded as consequential activity and not merely as 'Duty for the sake of Duty'.

Here it should be properly understood that the End is to be conceived as an organic whole, and its four dimensions are to be realised in harmony, namely, on the principle of *balance* enunciated and emphasised in the Holy Qur'ān (55:7-9). Otherwise, they are capable of coming into clash with one another, thereby thwarting the goals of integrated development of the individual and the creation of a social order based on the concept of integralistic culture—both being the Qur'ānic goals of morality.

It may be observed in passing that this Qur’ānic view of the four-dimensional End is richer and more sound than Kant’s formula wherein two dimensions of the End alone emerge explicitly, viz. (1) the moral perfection of the agent (or, the morally-struggling individual), in the sense of the attainment of a perfectly good will, and (2) the happiness of others. (Kant: *Preface to the Metaphysical Elements of Ethics*, E.T., Abbot, pp. 296-302).

In this connection Prof. Lillie observes:

“... this double standard of morality is surely a strange one for the philosopher who emphasised consistency and denied the relevancy of pleasant consequences to the rightness of actions. If perfection or the good will is the only good or the highest good for ourselves, it surely must also be the highest good for other people and, however little we can do for other people’s perfection, to do that little is far more important morally than to seek their happiness. And if happiness be a good for other people, it surely must also be a good for our selves.” (*Introduction to Ethics*, p. 175).



## **2. The Ultimate End:**

While the Holy Qur’ān is definitely committed to the view that the moral value has to be pursued at its own level as an absolute value, in order that the purity of motive and consequently the purity of moral action is not damaged, it does not subscribe to Kant’s barren

philosophical stand point which regards morality as the Supreme Good. Rather, it views morality in the perspective of spirituality, or, the transcendental dimension of the human personality, and hence it prescribes a spiritual end as the ultimate end for which a Muslim should always aspire, regarding it as the Supreme Good. That end is the absolute harmonisation of the human will with the Divine Will through the Qur'ānic technique of the spiritualisation of morality.<sup>16</sup> Says the Holy Qur'ān:

“But the most righteous shall be removed far from it (i.e., the Fire),—he who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification, and has in his mind no favour from anyone for which a reward is expected in return, but only the desire to seek the Countenance of his Lord Most High; and soon will he attain (complete) satisfaction.” (92:17-21).



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<sup>16</sup> It may be pointed out here that this is the actual pursuit of *Tasawwuf*, which is a vital dimension of Islamic orthodoxy; and this is also the actual implication of the Sufi doctrine of *fanā*.



## PENAL ETHICS

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As in the case of every organised society, it is the function of the Islamic Social Order to ensure the preservation of the values that it upholds through a Criminal Code which, though built up on spiritual and moral foundations, is to be enforced by the state-authority. Indeed, the Holy Qur'ān does not confine itself to mere sermonising on morals and does not want the upholders of its message and mission to be mere passive spectators or imbecile critics with respect to evil and evil-doers. Rather, it commissions them to control the incentives to crime and to combat the forces of moral evil and social ill-health actively and with masculine grace.<sup>17</sup>

Among the Western thinkers who, in modern times, have devoted their attention to a philosophical assessment of the problem of punishment, two stand out prominent, viz., Kant and Bentham. The former, who is famous for his categorical imperative and moral purism, holds to the retributive character of punishment, while the latter, who is famous for his utilitarianism, has projected utility as the basic consideration in respect of punishing criminals. But neither the absolute standard of Kant nor the utilitarian view of Bentham have satisfied the later legal thinkers when they have found themselves confronted with complicated legal situations. As a consequence,

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<sup>17</sup> 3:110; 22:41.

different other theories, which are ‘dubious mixtures’<sup>18</sup> of the above-mentioned two, have come into existence—of course, with the Benthamian bias, making confusion worse confounded, because crime, which it is the aim of all these theorists to control, has continued to increase in the Western society and in those others that are its camp-followers.

Coming to the Holy Qur’ān, there the obligation of punishment is, besides being legal, also moral and even spiritual, whereas it is only a legal obligation in the secular systems. It being so, the Qur’ānic outlook on the nature of punishment is that the values, which form the life-blood of the social order, should be preserved, if need be, even at the cost of mutilating, or taking the life of, the criminal, and no softness should be observed because that would degenerate finally into the adoption of expediency, the condoning of crimes, and the consequent deterioration of the moral standards.<sup>19</sup>

The ultimate end is the spiritual purification of the criminal through subjection to an ordeal and of the society through the

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<sup>18</sup> Professor K.O. Shatwell, Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Sydney, Australia, names them as “unproven theories” and deplors “that crime like the ever rolling stream with which we are all familiar is today not only in danger of over-flowing its banks but to some extent has already done so”. (See, his paper on “Crime and the Punishment of Crime” read at the Third Commonwealth and Empire Law Conference held at Sydney, and reported in the *Pakistan Legal Decisions*, Lahore, 1966, p. 103).

<sup>19</sup> This is what is happening in the West today, as we shall shortly see.

establishment of the correct moral and spiritual tone by means of creating genuine fear of evil consequences of crimes among the would-be criminals and thus restraining them from deviating from the right path—the path of virtue. This end is contained in the principle of comprehensive spiritual purification, which has been declared by the Holy Qur’ān to be the mission of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) (62:5).

As regards the gradation of punishment, the Qur’ānic principle that emerges is that the higher the value that is violated, the severer the punishment, and the lower in grade the violated value, the lighter—comparatively speaking—the punishment. Thus the Qur’ānic evaluatory scale of crimes stands, from above downwards in the following order : Fornication, Theft, Murder.

Now: Fornication is a crime against honour, as also against the healthy existence of family life, and thus against the very foundations of human society—because, as the Holy Qur’ān teaches (4:1), it is the family and not the individual which forms the basic unit of human society; theft is a crime against property; and murder is a crime against life.

The outlook of the Holy Qur’ān in respect of the punishment of these crimes is not the same in each case. It is the most severe in the case of fornication, because it has been commanded that Muslims should not show the slightest compassion in inflicting the punishment, or else they will land nothing less than their Faith itself in jeopardy (24:2). As for theft, robbery and treason, once they fall in the

punishable category and have been detected, there remains absolutely no possibility of condonement. Coming to murder: although the Holy Qur'ān prescribes retribution, it also permits payment of ransom if the aggrieved party agrees. This seems to be due to the fact that the inducement to commit murder is mostly rooted in the crimes against honour and property. Hence, once the crimes against honour and property have been dealt with more severely, as the Holy Qur'ān does, the crime of murder can be dealt with less severely, provided there exists a genuine ground for it, without damaging the social health.

Viewing the Qur'ānic punishments in the light of ethics, the punishments relating to fornication, adultery and homosexuality are reformatory in the sense that they imply the spiritual purification of the offenders; the punishments prescribed for theft, robbery and treason are of deterrent character; and the punishment in respect of murder is based on retribution which is tempered with mercy (2:178). The guiding light in all cases, however, is the procurement of spiritual good<sup>20</sup> of the individuals concerned and of the society.

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<sup>20</sup> Note the observations of Rashdall: "... the moment we insist upon the effect produced on the sufferer's soul by his punishment, the retributive theory is deserted by the reformatory or the deterrent ... If it be urged that avenging of the Moral Law (in the infliction of physical punishment) is right because it is the expression of the avenger's indignation (—as Kant would have it—) that is an intelligible answer; ... though this can be hardly regarded as an ultimate end but rather a means to further end—the spiritual good of the man himself and of society at large." (*Theory of Good and Evil*, pp. 285,301).

As for the principle of severity in respect of punishments, it is grounded in the following facts:

- a. The Qur’ānic view of the human being is that he is essentially a spiritual being and the Vicegerent of God, and not just an animal among animals. In consequence, the crimes in question acquire extraordinary gravity as forming fundamental violations of the human status.
- b. Like every criminal code which emerges on the basis of an over-all philosophy and code of life and is rationally enforceable in that perspective alone, the Qur’ānic penal code is meant to be enforced in a specific form of society—the Islamic society.
- c. The Islamic society, i.e., the society based positively in both theory and practice on the Qur’ānic Guidance and constituted of morally-struggling and spiritually-orientated individuals, is, in its turn, a society which is dedicated to the ever-active realisation of moral, legal, economic and political justice, which functions positively and devotedly for the eradication

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In contrast stands the defective and rigid view of Kant, who is one of the greatest of modern philosophers: “Juridical punishment can never be administered merely as a means for promoting another good, either with regard to the criminal himself or to civil society, but must in all cases be imposed only because the individual on whom it is inflicted *has committed a crime* ... The penal law is a Categorical Imperative (*Kant’s Philosophy of Law*, E.T. by Hastie, 1887, p. 195).

of the incentives to crime, and whose ultimate goal is through and through spiritual.<sup>21</sup>

Considered in terms of efficiency in respect of the eradication of crime, the success of the Qur'ānic penal code stands at the highest in human history.

Coming to the modern Western outlook, it is radically opposed to the Qur'ānic gradation of values. There, the highest in the scale is the crime against life, and after that comes the crime against property. As regards crimes relating to sex, chastity is not considered to be a value worthy of being protected with the arm of law! Rather, it is the sex-crimes that receive legal and, in some quarters, even ecclesiastical protection. How horrifying is the situation in this respect can be seen in the published proceedings of the legislative bodies in certain Western countries and in the facts and reports broadcast in the respectable journals of Europe and America. And, as already stated, it is not only the laity but also the clergy (!) of the Christian Church who have fallen victim to an absolutely immoral point of view in respect of sex-crimes. In evidence thereof, we may quote from a book entitled "*God speaks out on New Morality*"<sup>22</sup> (pp. 104, 105). Giving the heading: "Shocking Homosexuality in the Ministry", the authors of the book have reported:

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<sup>21</sup> Ref : Discussion on the nature of Islamic society in chapter 9 of Part 4 (vol. 1, Book 1).

<sup>22</sup> Compiled by Faculty Members and published by the Graduate School of Theology, Ambassador College, Pasadena, California, U.S.A. (1964).

“Here is a London newspaper report: ‘The archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, spoke in the House of Lords in support of a change in British Law to the make homosexual acts between consenting adults in private no longer a criminal offence. The Archbishop said: the right to decide one’s own moral code and obey it, even to a man’s hurt, was a ‘fundamental right of man given to him by God, and to be strictly respected by society and by a criminal code.’ *That from the head Minister of the Church of England! ...*

“A Congregationalist minister, Pastor Robert W. Wood, wrote a book, *Christ and the Homosexual*. A newspaper review of his book in a Pasadena paper said: Mr. Wood seems ... interested in proving that ‘homosexuality is the creation of God (since God is to the Creator of everything); and as such it is just as good and as any other creation of God’. He says further that homosexual love’—*he means lust*—‘can be truly sacramental, or holy, in the eyes of God. He has seriously discussed the desirability of performing marriages between two persons of the same sex.’”

“ ‘A homosexual’, he says, ‘can be a successful clergyman’ ... Mr. Wood maintains that the rate of homosexuality in the clergy is higher than in most other professions. The author even suggests that this perversion may one day be useful in solving the problem of over-population.’ (It certainly did solve the ‘over-population’ of Sodom and Gomorrah!!!). ‘He says that

homosexuality is not a sin, and that under certain conditions in certain ways it may even be morally right.’

“I have much, much more evidence ... many more such reports. Theological seminaries—several of them—are known to have, as students being trained to become pastors of churches, a high percentage of homosexuals. I have reports that homosexuals are organised—and that there is a determined campaign to seek out, seduce, and ‘convert’ to this loathsome perversion *child* ‘converts’ ...

“Some men who profess to be the ministers of Jesus Christ argue that the Bible nowhere condemns fornication or homosexuality.”

If ministers of the Christian Church, like the Archbishop of Canterbury and Pastor Robert W. Wood and many others, regard the *unnatural* crime of homosexuality as ‘holy in the eyes of God’, very naturally the Western civilisation of today accepts the *natural* crime of fornication much holier, and consequently the Western societies have gone forward to an unimaginable extent in that respect. This fact is so well known that it hardly requires any documentation.

Viewing the situation in respect of crimes in general, it seems as if the Western society<sup>23</sup> finds itself helpless in facing the challenge of crime. And this helplessness has reached a point where what was once regarded with utmost seriousness of conviction as an offence is now

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<sup>23</sup> and so, too, its camp-followers in Asia and Africa!



being legalised only because that offence is being widely committed, having received licence from a wrong philosophy of punishment for a long period of time.

It should not be too much to emphasise here that the whole fault lies with the West's legal philosophy, which in its turn is based on certain perverted concepts in the realm of moral philosophy.

The following observations of a former Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. A. R. Cornelius (a Christian), in respect of the consequences for morality of the legal procedures and punishments awarded under the present-day westernised Criminal Law, are worthy of note by those who object to the severity of punishments prescribed by the Holy Qur'ān. He says:<sup>24</sup>

“... As for criminal cases, it is probably correct to say that under the present system every decision has the quality of breeding more cases of the same kind ... cases in which guilty persons are acquitted probably form the majority. On the other hand, there are a number of cases in which innocent persons are convicted on the basis of oral evidence, and even suffer death.

“Cases are common enough where 10 or 15 persons have jointly slaughtered 3 or 4 of their enemies, and carried their heads in triumph aloft on spears through the village. One supposes that when they are acquitted, as they often are, the village lives in a state of terror from these persons when they

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<sup>24</sup> *Pakistan Legal Decisions*, Lahore, 1965, pp. 157-158.

return and the whole balance of life is upset once again, as it was when the murder took place and during the ensuing Police Investigation. By the inscrutable working of the judicial system, a situation has been created, to which under the necessities of life the people have to adapt themselves, and, at the cost of a part of their true character, they do so. Unfortunately, what is damaged in the process is that part of their character which is the distinguishing feature of the strong and noble human being. Belief in truth diminishes. Denial of the strength of evil becomes impossible ...”

Elsewhere, Mr. Cornelius observes:<sup>25</sup>

“I may appropriately end this paper by stating *my doubts regarding the utility of imprisonment*<sup>26</sup> in all cases as a mode of punishment for a crime. At a time when the common person all over the world is finding it increasingly difficult to provide subsistence for himself, there is something of an absurdity involved in the consideration that he can procure such subsistence and a good many amenities and facilities besides (such as medical care) by simply committing a crime ... the ever-increasing burden of maintaining prisons and highly-paid staff to provide accommodation, care, proper food and other amenities for persons of proved anti-social quality is one from

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<sup>25</sup> Pakistan Legal Decisions, 1956, p. 149.

<sup>26</sup> Italics, present writer's .

which an intelligent citizenry may justifiably seek to be relieved if alternative methods, cheaper and not less effective, can be found to create the desired effects of punishment, retribution and reformation.”



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## Chapter 5

# ETHICO-RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

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Morality, according to the Holy Qur'ān, is conscientious action in accordance with the Moral Law. But conscientious action is not possible without the possession of purity of motive by the moral agent, which, in its turn, necessitates a continuous psychological effort, named in Islamic terminology as *tazkiyah*:

“By the Soul and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;—truly he succeeds (in his spirituo-moral struggle) who subjects it successfully to *tazkiyah* (or, purifies it), and he fails who corrupts it.” (91:7-10).

The word *tazkiyah* means literally the removal of undesirable growths and impurities. As a spirituo-moral term it denotes the self-imposed effort of the moral agent for eradicating those tendencies within the human self which form obstacles in the path of moral development,—the eradication consisting in resolving the conflict between good and evil that rages in the human breast.

This internal conflict is, however, closely influenced by the conflict of good and evil existing in the society.

Thus, the Qur'ānic view is that, for the realisation of morality, evil must be subdued and good must be made to prevail at both the levels: the individual and the collective. Namely, it is not only the

internal conflict which should be resolved but also the external conflict. This is in keeping with the Qur'ānic integralistic outlook as opposed to the ideational outlook of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. Hence we may discuss briefly<sup>27</sup> with the techniques of both.



## 1. TECHNIQUE OF RESOLVING THE INTERNAL CONFLICT:

The Holy Qur'ān affirms, as we shall notice more fully in the “Metaphysics of Morals”, the existence of two aspects of human nature, namely, *al-Nafs al-Ammārah* (the Impelling or Carnal Self)<sup>28</sup> and *al-Nafs al-Lawwāmah* (the Reproaching or Moral Self),<sup>29</sup> and of the conflict between them. Moreover, it affirms that this situation of conflict has to be resolved through discarding the behests of the Carnal Self at the instance of the Moral Self, thereby enabling the self to be transformed into *al-Nafs al-Mutma'innah* (the Self-at-Peace, or, the Beatified Self).<sup>30</sup> It is through undertaking this process that an individual can avoid neurosis, develop as an integrated personality, and become capable of acting with due respect for the Moral Law.

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<sup>27</sup> Elaborate treatment necessitates a separate monograph, which the present author intends to present later.

<sup>28</sup> 12:53.

<sup>29</sup> 75:2

<sup>30</sup> 79:27.

This leads us to the question: What are the conditions that are required to be fulfilled for bringing about this transformation?

Those conditions are: (1) there must be such a comprehensive and sound Moral Code that may ensure to an individual the moral perfection adequate to human nature; (2) there must be a Model,<sup>31</sup> or Exemplar, of moral perfection, who may impart the assurance that moral values can be realised and moral norms can be actualised; (3) Acquisition of *tazkiyah* should be a historical fact and not a mere theoretical possibility.

The Qur’ānic Guidance fulfils all these conditions:

Firstly, it imparts a comprehensive Moral Code, as we shall shortly see in volume 2.

Secondly, it gives a Model of moral perfection in the person of the subject of Qur’ānic Revelation, viz., the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!):

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<sup>31</sup> Professor Muirhead observes: “As Professor Mackenzie puts it, ‘For the communication of the art of conduct example is better than precept, and experience is better than either; so that even if it were the business of ethics to lay down precepts, these precepts would still not suffice for instruction in the art of life’.” (*The Elements of Ethics*, p. 28).

According to Prof. William Lillie: “... the example of good men’s lives and the training of practical experience are likely to be more effective influence in producing good conduct.” (*Introduction to Ethics*, p. 20).

“You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an Excellent Model (i.e., Pattern of Conduct) for him who looks to Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.” (33:21).

Thirdly, it affirms the transformation of the human personality through *tazkiyah* not merely as a possibility but as an established historical fact:

“Assuredly Allah has shown grace to the Believers when He raised up unto them a Messenger from among themselves, who rehearses unto them His Signs, *purifies them (of spiritual and moral evils)*, and teaches them the Scripture and the Wisdom (—thereby imparting comprehensive knowledge <sup>32</sup> of, among other things, the moral dynamics and the moral code); although afore they were in flagrant error.” (3:164).

Coming to the technique of *tazkiyah*, the Qur'ānic Guidance bestows certain powerful feelings that reside in a true Muslim's soul. They are: intense love for God and fear of the Displeasure of God, on the one hand, and intense love for the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) and absolute loyalty to him, on the other. It is these which, in the emotional life of a Muslim, are meant to subdue the force of feeling associated with Desire (or, the feeling that leads to the

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<sup>32</sup> 16:89.



defiance of the Moral Law) and make *tazkiyah* possible.<sup>33</sup> Thus says the Holy Qur’ān:

***Love for God and Fear of God’s Displeasure:***

“... and those who believe are most intense in their love for Allah.” (2: 165).

“O you who believe! fear Allah (in respect of His Displeasure) with fear due to Him, and die not except you be Muslims (i.e., in a state of submission to Allah).” (3:102).

***Love and Respect for the Prophet:***

“The Prophet is nearer to the Believers than themselves (i.e., entitled to their utmost love and respect).” (30:6).

***Love for God is based on:***

1. His Absolute Perfection:

“(He is) Allah, the Possessor of Absolute Perfection.” (112:2).

And;

2. His concern for us, as detailed in the discussion on “God.”<sup>34</sup> Indeed, He is *al-Wadūd*, “the Loving One.” (85:14).

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<sup>33</sup> The view that *tazkiyah* can be brought about through the Consciousness of Law seems to be untenable, because an abstract law or idea can never be so effective in moulding the human personality as the impact of another personality. Thus, the cultivation of love for the Holy Prophet (in whom God’s Blessings abide!) assumes supreme importance.

***Love for the Prophet (Peace be on him!) is based on:***

1. the grandeur of his spiritual and moral personality:

“And you (O Muhammad!) are (established) on an exalted standard of character.” (68:4).

“O Prophet! We have sent you as ... Illuminating Lamp (*par excellence*—a lamp that illumines for humanity the path of righteousness leading to God).” (33:46).

And;

2. his concern and function for us:

“Assuredly there has come unto you a Messenger from among yourselves: anything that harasses you grieves him: full of concern (is he) for you (in respect of your acquisition of the Good): to the Believers he is most kind and merciful.” (9:128).

“... and he (Muhammad) relieves them of the burdens and the shackles that have been upon them.” (7:157).

*Love for God should express itself* basically in following the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) both as Teacher of Godliness and as Model of Human Perfection:

“Say: If you (O Muslims!) love Allah, follow me (practically, as your ideal of human perfection): Allah will love you and

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<sup>34</sup> See “Metaphysics of Morals” ( vol 1, Part 2).

forgive you your sins: For Allah is Forgiving, Most Merciful.”  
(3:31).

*Love for the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) should express itself in unrestricted and unqualified loyalty to him—a loyalty which should be practical as distinct from being merely emotional:*

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no (real) Faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, accepting them with the fullest submission.” (4:65).

In connection with the function of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) for his followers, we may also note:

1. it is the spiritual impact of his personality that has been prescribed by God as the most powerful instrument of *tazkiyah* in the life of a Muslim;
2. the Holy Prophet’s basic function of bringing about *tazkiyah* in his followers—a function for which his other functions (as Teacher) are a means—transcends the limitations of space and time;
3. the Holy Prophet’s spiritual impact was available not only to the Muslims of the period of his physical existence but has remained available ever since and will remain available upto the Last Day.

These facts are contained in the following Qur’ānic verses:

“It is He Who has sent amongst the non-possessors of Revealed Truth <sup>35</sup> a Messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to purify them, and to instruct them in the Scripture and the Wisdom,—although they had been, before, in manifest error—as well as (to confer those benefits upon) others of them (i.e., of the Believers) who have not yet joined them (but will do so in future upto the Last Day): And He is Exalted in Might, Wise. Such is the Bounty of Allah which He

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<sup>35</sup> This should be accepted as the correct connotation of the term ‘*al-Ummiyyun*’ employed in the Arabic text. No doubt, the word ‘*ummi*’ stands, amongst its different connotations, for an ‘unlettered’ person also. But to translate ‘*al-Ummiyyun*’ as ‘the unlettered’ creates more difficulties in understanding the Qur’ān than it solves,—indeed, irresolvable difficulties. However, once we employ the semantic approach and turn to the Qur’ān itself for guidance, the problem of connotation is solved unambiguously and without difficulty. For instance, this term has been used in 3:20 in contradistinction to the category of ‘those who have received the Scripture’. Then, in verses 78 and 79 of sura 2, emerges the emphasis on the ‘non-possession of Revealed Truth’ in spite of the formal possession of a scripture, because there it bears reference to the Jews who are definitely among ‘those who have received the Scripture’. All this means that the term ‘*al-Ummiyyun*’, as employed in the verse under discussion, should be translated as ‘the non-possessors of the Revealed Truth’. And, might we also say that, although the primary reference is to the Arabs of those days, the secondary reference covers virtually entire humanity, because even those who claimed to possess a Scripture did not possess the Revealed Truth in its unadulterated form. (The view propounded here is supported by the verdict of Abdullah ibn Abbas. —Refer, among others, to Ibn Jarir al-Tabari’s *Tafsīr*, Vol. 2, p. 258).

bestows on whom He will (—and He has bestowed it on Muhammad). And Allah is the Lord of Grace Unbounded.” (62: 2, 3, 4).

What is needed *most* for *tazkiyah*, therefore, is the cultivation of love and reverence for God and the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) to a point of intensity where it may become possible for the moral agent to absorb the Divine blessings through the Holy Prophet’s spiritual personality, thereby acquiring that spiritual refinement and that moral force which may enable him to overcome all evil propensities and to act according to the highest demands of morality with pleasure and ease.

For this purpose, the Remembrance of God (*Zikr-Allah*) and offering *ṣalāt* and *salām* (i.e., invocation of God’s Blessings and salutation) to the Holy Prophet, the Beloved of God, as often and as much as possible, and with devotion and concentration of thought, form a basic practice, as enjoined by the Holy Qur’ān (33:41,56).

Now, development of intimate and living relation with God is fundamental to *tazkiyah*. But intimacy can be cultivated only through love. Love, in its turn, demands obedience to the beloved without demur. Indeed, the richer the exercise in obedience the greater the stabilisation of love in richness and depth.

However, love originates in appreciation, and appreciation is not possible without knowledge. The Muslim begins his quest for God *the Unknown* with *faith*—a faith which, though basically innate, is acquired in its proper dimensions from the Messenger of God, who

stands thus as the *axis* around which the entire structure of the Faith moves. Or, we might say, the Messenger of God is the 'door' through which alone the seeker of God can enter upon the Straight Path that leads to God; and this Straight Path, again, is nothing else than what is revealed in the personality of the Messenger of God. Thus the Messenger of God is the unavoidable Medium, the *wasīlah* spoken of in 5:35; while God is the Goal (53:42).

This being so, the exercise in love for and obedience to God begins with the cultivation of love for and obedience to the Messenger of God—the Holy Prophet Muhammad (in whom abide God's Choicest Blessings!). The Messenger of God being human, no human being can have difficulty in knowing him, which is the pre-requisite for loving him and obeying him.

Now, because the Messenger of God is not merely a wise man and a social reformer, and because the transcendental dimension of his personality—his intensely intimate relation with God—is its most vital aspect, approach with respect of *knowing* him must of necessity be two-fold, namely: *intellectual* and *spiritual*.

In respect of the *intellectual approach*, again, the avenues are two, viz., the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. The Qur'ān enshrines his Prophetic Consciousness and is the Mirror of his Personality, as Lady Ayesha, with her extraordinary wisdom and piety, emphasises.<sup>36</sup> The

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<sup>36</sup> She says: "The character of the Prophet (in whom Allah's Blessings and His Peace abide!) is (enshrined in) the Qur'ān. (*Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh*, *Bāb al-Witr*, *al-Faṣl al-Awwal*, p. 111; Cf. Muslim: *Ṣaḥīḥ*)

*Sunnah*, critically assessed, is the human record of his behaviour as the Perfect Man and as the Witness to God and the Vital Proof of God's existence (33:45).

Both the above sources of knowledge should be constantly studied as a serious exercise, until all the dimensions of the excellence and the greatness of his personality are assimilated in one's consciousness and they entrench themselves in memory as guiding refulgent stars. Such a knowledge will grow in depth as the study continues, and with that will grow the love which it automatically begets,—and, along with love, will grow the inspiration to imitate him and to obey him without hesitation. Then, because obedience to God consists in obedience to the Messenger of God (4:80), obedience to God will be simultaneously achieved—even though only functionally.

The goal, however, being the establishment of a living, vibrant and dynamic relation with God, Who is transcendent in His Being, a powerful exercise in *spiritual approach* to, and realisation of, the Holy Prophet's Personality is also vitally necessary, in order to build up the affinity for the Pursuit of that highest goal, as also to obtain the strength, through the blessings of the spiritual impact of the Holy Prophet's Personality, for the pilgrimage to God. It is for this end that God has commanded the Muslims, as mentioned above, to engage in *ṣalāt* and *salām*, wherein the greater the devotion the richer is the spiritual purification, and the richer the spiritual purification the sublimer is the purity of motive in moral action—of course, only when that exercise is combined with conscientious and wholehearted practical devotion to the Holy Prophet as Teacher and as Exemplar.

Cultivation of love for and obedience to the Holy Prophet paves the way for the love of God and obedience to Him. Indeed, love and obedience develop simultaneously in both respects, not only because attention focussed on the Messenger of God gets concurrently fixed up on God, but more so because in the spiritual quest of a Muslim the remembrance of God forms the fundamental exercise with which the exercise of *ṣalāt* and *salām* is combined as complimentary.

Remembrance of God, as the fundamental exercise, is directed to seeking the Nearness to God (96:19), and cannot therefore be something formal. As such, *firstly*, it should be undertaken in a state of 'withdrawal' (73:8), withdrawing attention from everything else and concentrating it solely on God. *Secondly*, it should be undertaken abundantly (3:41; 8:45; 33:41; 62:10: etc.)—nay, under all conditions and at all times (3:191). *Thirdly*, it should be joined to contemplation of the Signs of God which pervade the entire universe (3:191, etc.). *Fourthly*, it should be combined with a study of Divine Guidance as contained in the Holy Qur'ān (38:29), and with a serious exercise in moulding one's life in accordance with it to the fullest extent possible, (2:206; etc.). *Fifthly*, this entire exercise should proceed, most conscientiously as well as most intelligently (7:205; etc.), in order that the practical results and the tangible fruits of all this labour of love may be grasped at every step for enabling the pilgrim of eternity to undertake his spiritual flights and moral development at higher and higher levels with the attainment of ever-increasing refinement of the soul, on the one hand, and purity of will for moral action, on the other.



Indeed, this intellectual-cum-spiritual struggle in the domain of *tazkiyah* continues in the life of the conscientious struggling Muslim, until he becomes capable of establishing a living and abiding Communion with God, thereby attaining finally the realisation of God to an extent that establishes him firmly in submission to the Divine Will (which is the very meaning of the word ‘Islam’) and bestows upon him purity of motive in moral life, with perfection adequate to human nature,—even as we are told in the Qur’ān:

“O you who believe! If you keep your duty to Allah, He will grant you a Criterion (for judging by its light the rightness and wrongness of motives), will rid you of your evil propensities and deeds, and will bestow on you forgiveness (in respect of your natural shortcomings and past sins): For Allah is the Lord of Grace Unbounded.” (8:9).

It should be noted here that, because Islam is not just Moralism, moral purification is only the immediate goal, while spiritual purification the ultimate goal, for which the former forms the organically-necessary basis. Spiritual purification or refinement, again, is not an end-in-itself but only a means to the development of the transcendental dimension of Personality.<sup>37</sup> It is this activation

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<sup>37</sup> We may recall here what we have already recorded in our discussion relating to the “Unity of Human Personality” in chapter 6 of Part 4. The Qurānic concept of human personality includes three dimensions: the physical, the psychical, and the transcendental. The physical is spatio-temporal; the psychical is temporal; and the transcendental is spaceless and timeless, or, beyond space and time. It is the transcendental dimension which

which leads through *tazkiyah* to 'holiness', and 'holiness' is the distinctive quest of religion as opposed to the quests of philosophy and the physical sciences—nay, even of the normative and the social sciences, as we have already noticed in our discussion on the Religious Quest. The acquisition of 'holiness', in its turn, brings the seeker of God, at different levels of attainment, progressively nearer and nearer to God, the All-Holy, in respect of earning His Pleasure,—which is the highest ideal in Islam:

“But the greatest (achievement) is the Good Pleasure of Allah: That is the Felicity Supreme.” (9:72).

“But ah! O you the Soul-at-peace, return to your Lord well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter you, then, among My Devotees! Yes, enter you My Heaven!” (89:27-30).

Thus, the fact cannot be over-emphasised that *Faith in God* is meant in the Holy Qur'ān to be *lived* and not merely to be *held*, and it is impossible to live it without passing through the rigorous discipline of *tazkiyah*.

And it is not only *Faith in God* but also *Faith in the Messenger of God* which should be *lived*, and lived dynamically; because it is the

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forms the channel of Communion with God, on the one hand, and the substratum of human personality on the other,—substratum for the progressive emergence out of it of the temporal and the spatio-temporal dimensions of personality at the beginning of earthly career, and substratum for the survival of personality with the self-same Identity after the earthly death.

Messenger of God who has been appointed by God as the Divine Instrument of *tazkiyah* for all time (62:2-4; etc.).

There are some for whom, because of superficiality of thought or because of some temperamental prejudice, the reality of all that is nonphysical or metaphysical is, for all practical purposes, nothing more than that of a ‘regulative idea’ with which human beings are not practically concerned. Such an outlook gives birth to a virtually materialistic view of religion with all the inherent contradiction. In such a view, the religious verities become restricted and confined to a formal *belief* (*‘aqīda*), on which Dialectical Theology thrives with all its barrenness, to the detriment of a consequential and dynamic faith (*Imān*).

It is in the above perspective that the question emerges: God is Eternal, Ever-Living and Omnipresent; hence communion with Him is possible. But the Messenger of God was a human being who died long ago. How can communication and establishment of intimate spiritual relation with him be possible?

The Qur’ānic answer to this misgiving is very clear and unambiguous. *Firstly*, the human personality is not annihilated at death; it is only transferred from one level of existence to another with its Identity intact,—the life after death being a new *life*. *Secondly*, the levels of existence after death are *qualitatively* different in the case of each category of human beings, including the Muslims. Thus, about the martyrs it has been said: “And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah ‘dead’. Nay, they are alive; only you perceive not.”

(2:54). And again: “Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision: Jubilant (are they) because of that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not joined them but are left behind: that there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they grieve. They rejoice because of favour from Allah and kindness, and that Allah wastes not the wage of the Believers” (3:169-171). Here the qualitative distinction between the life of the ordinary Muslim and the life of the martyr, after death, is very clear. The martyr’s life after death is not just life, but it is a full life of enjoyment and activity and of attachment to those Muslims whom he has left behind in their earthly existence.

Now, who are these martyrs that have been spoken of? They are the spiritual children of the Messenger of God,—and, in that respect, they are not in the highest category, but are next in rank to those others who acquire the status of *Ṣiddīq*. The status of the life-after-death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!), who is not only superior to his followers but, as the Leader of all the Messengers of God (3:81), is supreme in entire Creation, should be in all justice accepted as immeasurable,—not to speak of accepting him as the Living Spiritual Medium for the Blessings of God that relate to the transcendental dimension of human personality.

The fact is that the goal of Islamic life is the establishment of a ‘*fellowship*’ of unique type at the transcendental plane, *right here on earth*, which is possible only if activity at the transcendental level of

existence is absolutely real and genuine. The Holy Qur’ān affirms the acquisition of that fellowship thus :

“Those who submit to Allah and the Messenger (establishing harmony with them), they are (blessed) with (the spiritual fellowship of) the Prophets, the Intensely Truthful and Sincere (Servants of Allah), the Martyrs (who are Witnesses to Allah), and the Possessors of Sound Godliness in general. Ah! What a beautiful Fellowship! Such is the Bounty of Allah, and Allah suffices as Knower (and because He affirms it, the factual character of that fellowship should not be questioned by anyone).” (4:69).

That fellowship is spiritual fellowship—fellowship in the transcendental dimension of existence. It is a living and consequential fellowship, and not a mere idea. It is a dynamic fellowship, like that of the sun, the moon and the earth, wherein the sun is the source of light and life created by God for everything existing on the earth and elsewhere, and the moon is the reflector of sun’s light and energy for the earthly creatures and other things. Then, just as water always flows through a channel from the higher to the lower level, spiritual blessings also flow similarly on the invisible transcendental beam. To receive them, however, it is necessary to rise to the spiritual level where fellowship becomes possible with the spiritual luminaries, among whom the greatest and the central luminary is Muhammad, the Beloved of God *par excellence* in whom God’s Choicest Blessings

abide in abounding measure.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, just as iron is transformed into a magnet in its fellowship with the magnet, and just as a perfumeless thing becomes perfumed simply through fellowship with the perfume embodied in a rose or a jasmine, so does the pursuer of *tazkiyah* acquire holiness at higher and higher levels in the fellowship of those on whom God has bestowed holiness.

One further important problem may also be examined here. The question may be raised: If *tazkiyah* involves such a high-level and rigorous discipline, together with an intellectual effort, how is it possible for the common man and woman to acquire the purity of motive demanded by the Qur'ān?

The answer is: The Islamic society has been conceived to be composed of individuals who are dedicated to the ideal of being spiritually progressive, morally integrated, the intellectually awakened and economically and politically, emancipated. This ideal is to be pursued by the Islamic community on a collective scale, with fanatical enthusiasm and rigorous discipline. Such a process imparts the impact of the virtues of better-talented individuals to those of lesser calibre through contagion of personality. This is the law of social psychology which has always governed all ideological societies, whether theistic or atheistic, including the early Islamic society and the present-day idealistic Communist society of China.

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<sup>38</sup> The Holy Quran, (108:1)

The fact is that there are natural gradations in respect of calibre and achievement in every society. All human beings are not gifted with every quality in equal measure. Hence what really counts is the spiritual, moral and intellectual achievements of those who can rise above the common level in any measure. The ideal is basically pursued *in all its dimensions* by them alone. And this brings us to the problem of Islamic leadership.



### ***Tazkiyah and Islamic Leadership:***

The foundations of Islamic society are basically ethico-religious. Hence, anyone who honestly comes forward to lead the Muslims to the Goal prescribed for them in the Holy Qur’ān should possess a personality refulgent in its spiritual, moral and intellectual dimensions.<sup>39</sup> This is the verdict of the Qur’ān, and this is the verdict of Islamic history.

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<sup>39</sup> Let it be noted that these three dimensions are so essential for leadership that they bear reference not only to God-affirming societies but also to Godless societies, such as the Communist, where an effort is made to forge an idealism—even though with materialistic bias. Under that idealism emerges a ‘cult of the spirit’ and a moral discipline of a certain type suited to the requirements of the ideology.

Again, rigorous discipline for Communist leadership, and even for the rank and file, is a vital element in Communist idealism.

And it is all this, more than anything else, which has bestowed success on Communist revolutions.

But how can such a personality be built up? By mere emotionalism? By mere mysticism? By mere intellectualism? By mere ritualism? By mere formal puritanism? By mere externalism and legalism? By mere ritualistic missionary-ism? By mere political agitationism in the name of Islam? No. A thousand times, No!

The only alchemy which can transform the human personality into 'pure gold' is the alchemy of the rigorous discipline of *tazkiyah*, with its rigours enhanced in the measure of the height of achievement desired. This is what has been taught and demonstrated by the Holy Prophet (in whom abide God's choicest Blessings!), and this is what has been practised throughout Islamic history by those who had truly grasped the dynamics of leadership in Islam and were consequently able to achieve historic success. One such personality was Saiyyid Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani of Baghdad, the Ghaus al-A'zam (Grand Master) of the Qadiriyyah Spiritual Discipline, who built up, with the spiritual dynamism of his personality and without any political power, the forces that crushed the menace of the Assassins for good, on the one hand, and the might of the Crusaders' barbaric hordes entrenched in Palestine at that time, on the other.

The Holy Prophet was *born* as Messenger of God, having been ordained by God as such at the dawn of Creation (3:81). Hence, he needed no spiritual exercise for earning that office. But we find him withdrawing from the life of the world to the Cave of Hira, in the stark solitude of wilderness, for fifteen years before he proclaimed his divine mission. Then, throughout his ministry, his exercise in the transcendental dimension with its spending of nights in prayers and



the days in fasting and prayers both, in the midst of handling the multifarious duties relating to the most glorious and comprehensive revolution of human history; with its majestic austerity enshrining extreme selflessness; with its flowering in the moral domain at the highest level; and with the flood of multi-dimensional blessings for humanity surging from his august personality—that exercise is the most conspicuous trait of his character. *In that he established the Sunnah for every future Islamic leader.*

There were in history many of his followers who realised the obligatoriness of this *Sunnah*, in opposition to other leaders whose personal limitations kept them away. One of the glorious products of this *Sunnah* was the great Saiyyid Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, to whom we have referred. It is recorded in history that, in imitation of the Holy Prophet’s exercise of retreat to Hira, he was accustomed to retreat to the forest every evening during the course of his formal education, and after the completion of that education he withdrew to the wilderness and stayed there in solitude for many years in total devotion to God, and finally acquiring through an extremely rigorous discipline that high level of *tazkiyah* which not only elevated him to great eminence in godliness but enabled him to change the course of history.

The history of Islam is studded with a host of other spiritual luminaries, commonly called *Sufis*, on whom the rigorous discipline of *tazkiyah* bestowed greatness in their achievements for the cause of humanity. Among them was Khwaja Mu’in al-Din of Sanjar (later of Ajmer) who, alone with his spiritual dynamism and without any army or political thrust, pitched the banner of Islam in the heart of an

inimical and alien population, changing the course of history in the South-Asian sub-continent permanently. Among them was Shaykh al-Islam Abdullah al-Ansari of Herat who fought with his spiritual armour alone against the corruptions of the tyrants and brought them down to their knees with masculine grace. Among them were the *Sufis* of the Naqshbandiyya Order who, under the most adverse circumstances when the prestige of the Muslims was at its lowest ebb, conquered, without any material means and purely through the power of their spiritual personalities, the hearts of the haughty enemies of Islam who had destroyed the political power of the Muslims under Halaku Khan—defeating at the same time the Buddhist and the Christian religious forces that were fully entrenched in the field. And, among them were a host of others who, through their *tazkiyah* and in contradistinction to those Muslim religious leaders who were devoid of *tazkiyah*, acquired the glorious distinction of becoming the sole pioneers in respect of the most difficult task of converting vast and widespread human communities to Islam.

Alas, the Islamic leaders of today have turned their backs on *tazkiyah*, with the result that they cannot benefit even the Muslims, not to speak of humanity at large. And the world of Islam presents a scene of unspeakable mass destruction of Islamic values, with the forces of the newfangled secular 'isms' pouncing upon the Muslim communities like vultures.

The world of Islam will have to revive the pursuit of comprehensive *tazkiyah* in accordance with the norms and principles laid down in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, in order that genuine Islamic

leadership of the Muhammadan Pattern emerges on a high level and in a large measure and acts fruitfully for the fulfilment of the mission of Islam.

As matters stand in respect of the Muslim religious leadership of the present day, neither those who are popularly known as *Sufis* nor those who have become anti-*Tasawwuf*, and neither the political agitators among the ‘*Ulama* nor the professional preachers and writers among them, seem to possess any chances of achieving success in defeating the forces of evil that sway the world.



## **2. TECHNIQUE OF RESOLVING THE EXTERNAL CONFLICT:<sup>40</sup>**

The conflict between good and evil rages not only within the inner world of the human personality but also in the external world of social phenomena. That conflict also has to be resolved if the moral development of the human beings in general has to be ensured. This is so, because man is a social being, and he is born and grows in society, whose good and evil influences have a potent influence on the formation of his character in either direction, i.e., good and evil. The social order has to be, therefore, of necessity transformed into, and maintained as, a moral order, if the individual is to attain his true moral stature. That is why the Holy Qur’ān has commissioned the

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<sup>40</sup> For a comprehensive understanding of this problem, readers are referred to the author’s: “*Dynamics of Moral Revolution.*”

Muslim Fraternity to strive for transforming the human society into a moral order (3:110).

The transformation of the society into moral order, however, presents a challenge to all morally-struggling individuals. Hence, every Muslim has been commanded and commissioned to meet this challenge with all his might and to wage a determined struggle without respite all his life to defeat the forces of evil and to enthrone the forces of good. The Holy Qur'ān calls it *Jihād*<sup>41</sup> and says:

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah, seek the Medium of Approach (*al-Wasīlah*)<sup>42</sup> unto Him, and strive with might

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<sup>41</sup> The word *Jihād* means: the act of exerting one's utmost for achieving an end. As a Qur'ānic term it stands for waging relentless war against evil, whether it exists in the personality of the moral agent—in his inner self—or in his societal environment. Islam evaluates the former as 'Greater *Jihād*' and the latter as 'Lesser *Jihād*', evidently because the former is the very basis for the latter.

<sup>42</sup> According to the Holy Qur'ān, God is All-Seeing, All-Knowing, Everywhere-Present, and Above all need of the least dependence in anything or anyone. But just as he has created the angels to act as the Medium for the execution of His Will in the universe, He has created the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!) to act as that Medium for the Muslims through which they can acquire the spiritual capacity for *meaningful* and *consequential* approach to Him—an approach which should, assume the level of *contact* in the transcendental dimension, flowering finally into the establishment of genuine and living *intimacy*, with God. In both cases, the Medium is there, not because of any deficiency in God's Power, but because

and main (*jāhidū*) in His Way (which comprehends spiritual and moral *tazkiyah* at individual and collective levels): that you may succeed.” (5:35).

Again:

“And strive hard for Allah (which includes eradication of vice and establishment of virtue on earth)—as is due unto Him hard striving (*jihād*). He has chosen you (for this striving), and has not placed upon you any narrowness in religion.” (22:78).

In human nature we find that there are only two incentives which bring out the best in man and lift him up in the scale of personality, namely, ambition and danger. *Jihād* provides both. Now, the greater and the more difficult of achievement the ambition,—and what social ambition can be greater than the transformation of human society into a moral order—, the greater the dangers that are involved. And the greater the dangers involved, the greater the incentive for the maintenance of disciplined struggle and integrity of character; and the greater the said incentive, the greater the *tazkiyah*.



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of the demands placed in the constitutions of the universe and Man by God for the execution of His Plan.

## APPENDIX 1

### ART AND MORALITY

Vulgar aestheticism, with its base in erotic art, forms a very serious obstacle in the way of moral progress. Coming into conflict with the genuinely-moral yearnings, it exerts a profound immoral influence if it is permitted to hold sway, even as it is exerting on a progressively more and more damaging scale among the Westernised human societies—especially in the countries of origin, where vulgar pursuit of aestheticism is assuming alarming proportions day by day leading the affected communities headlong to ultimate spiritual and moral destruction.

Now, while the Holy Qur’ān itself affirms the aesthetical value and prescribes aesthetical duties, as we have recorded elsewhere in this book,<sup>43</sup> it is with the same vehemence opposed to the immoralisation of the aesthetical pursuit. Indeed, it lends the entire weight of its philosophy of life firmly to the principle that the aesthetical value cannot stay pure unless it is wedded to the highest spiritual and moral considerations. It is convinced that aestheticism based on sensuousness is the mother of all moral ills and spiritual perversions.

Behind this attitude of the Qur’ān, which has withstood the test of history, there is its scheme of values wherein the gradation is: (1)

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<sup>43</sup> Ref : Volume 2, pp. 49-59.

Religion; (2) Morality; (3) Knowledge; (4) Art.<sup>44</sup>

This gradation of values emerges when we consider, in the first instance, the oft-repeated Qur’ānic expression:

“those who possess Faith and practise the Virtues.” (2:25; etc.—mentioned 49 times).

Here ‘religion’ forms the highest value, and next to it stands ‘morality’.

Then, in the following verse, ‘religion’ stands first and ‘knowledge’ stands second:

“... Allah will exalt those of you who possess Faith and those who are endowed with Knowledge ...” (58:11).

However, because, according to the Qur’ānic philosophy of life, Faith is meaningless without the possession of sound Morality, which makes religion and morality twins, as in the previously-quoted verse, the gradation finally deducible from the above verses is: Religion, Morality, Knowledge.

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<sup>44</sup> Only such cultures as are pessimistic in outlook and stand consequently in need of dopes, can reasonably idolise Art and give it a status higher than that of Morality or Religion or Knowledge in their gradation of values. Indeed, they are in need of employing momentary ‘contemplation of the beautiful’ as an escape from the sense the of misery and the consequent agony to which the pessimistic outlook on life gives rise. This cannot be possible in the case of the Qur’ānic philosophy of life which upholds vigorously an optimistic outlook and regards pessimism as nothing less than Infidelity: *Kufr* (12:87).

As for the pursuit of the Beautiful, the Qur'ānic standpoint is:

- a. That pursuit can be undertaken both ways: good and evil; and hence it should always be treated in terms of morality. Thus we are told:

“Lo! We have made that which is on the earth an ornament (i.e., source of beauty) thereof (i.e., with reference to the life on it, which is related to sensuous pleasure—both refined and vulgar) that We may try them (i.e., the human beings): which of them is best in conduct (with respect to their aesthetical pursuit wherein the test is whether they indulge in vulgarity and indecency or adopt in that respect the highest moral standards).” (18:7).

- b. All sensuous vulgar pursuit in the aesthetical domain is from the Devil and should, therefore, be avoided:<sup>45</sup>

“Lo! he (i.e., the Devil) commands indecency and abomination ...” (24:21).

And the holy Book has reminded us that it is the mission of the Devil to employ beauty for misleading mankind, inasmuch as he had proclaimed at the dawn of Creation:

“... I verily shall employ Beauty for them (i.e., the human beings) in the earth (i.e., based on the earthly environment,

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<sup>45</sup> For certain direct commands relating to this problem, refer to 24:31, 60; etc.



inducing them to the love of sensuous pleasure and to the adoption, for that purpose, of the materialistic and hedonistic approach to Art), and shall mislead them all,—except such as are your perfectly devoted servants.” (15:39-40).

Thus, the aesthetical pursuit has, in the very nature of the case, to be subordinated always to the demands of morality, whereby alone the moral tone and social health of the human beings can be ensured.



## APPENDIX 2

### THE PROBLEM OF DESPAIR AND THE GOSPEL OF EMANCIPATION

In many human beings the consciousness of past sinfulness creates a sense of despair—sometimes involving great severity—as to the possibility of their moral emancipation; and it can actually damage their prospects with respect to moral reformation, unless they are offered some principle that may ensure to them that the evil spiritual consequences of their past sins could be washed away, enabling them to build up a healthy moral life with hope and confidence and serenity, and without any lurking sense of past guilt that may disturb their moral enthusiasm.

The Holy Qur’ān has supplied that principle in its teaching that sincere repentance (*taubah*)<sup>46</sup> brings immediate forgiveness from God which washes away the spiritual stains of guilt. It says:

“O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance: Belike your Lord will expiate from you your misdeeds ...” (66:8).

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<sup>46</sup> The act of *taubah* is actually three-dimensional, because it consists of: (1) sincere acknowledgment in one’s heart of the wrong committed; (2) firm establishment in one’s consciousness of a proper estimate of the evil nature of that wrong and the consequent dissociation from it; (3) firm resolve in respect of avoiding its commission in the future. As such, it might be termed as a ‘contract with the future’.

The fact is that doubtlessly the commission of sins leads a person farther and farther away from moral purity. But once a person performs *taubah*, i.e., repents truly and with all the force of his personality, his latent will for the good is revived and activated, reinforcing his moral fibre. This is what we learn from the story of Adam, the father of humanity. The Holy Qur’ān attributes his entanglement in the Devil’s deception not to deficiency in knowledge but to deficiency in will.

It says :

“And verily We made a covenant of old with Adam, but he forgot: and We found in him no firm resolve <sup>47</sup> (in that affair).”  
(20:115).

The wrong which Adam had committed was of an innocent type, consisting, as it did, not in moral turpitude but only in error of judgment. But even so, it did not repeat itself, because his repentance brought about the *tazkiyah*, i.e., purified him of the deficiency in his will, as we read in the Holy Qur’ān:

“Then Adam learnt from his Lord words (of penitence), and He relented towards him; for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.”  
(2:37).

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<sup>47</sup> “*wa lam najid lahū ‘azmā*” in the Arabic text may also mean: “and We did not find in him determination (to disobey)”—implying that Adam’s act of eating from the forbidden tree was not voluntary, and, consequently, Adam’s sinlessness was not impaired in spite of that act.

The Attribute of God as ‘Oft-Returning’ (*Tawwāb*) in the above verse is expressive of the Islamic teaching that God’s attitude towards the sinners is one of continued mercy and compassion. Persons with weak will but a good heart may relapse time and again from their commitment in respect of *taubah*. But they should not lose heart. Rather, they should re-affirm their *taubah* with greater determination, each time they fail, and keep up the exercise for their firm establishment on the path of virtue. For that they will have to return again and again to the seeking of God’s mercy; and they will not fail to get it, because God is Oft-returning, Most Merciful.

Besides inviting to Repentance, the Holy Qur’ān has also stated the law:

“Lo! good deeds annul ill deeds: Be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord).” (11:114).

However, the following proclamation forms the greatest Message of Hope even for the worst sinners, provided they repent truly and start their life in conformity with the Divine Law:

“Say: ‘O My Servants who have transgressed against their souls! despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for *Allah forgives all sins*: verily, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Turn you to your Lord (in repentance) and bow to His (Will), before the Penalty comes on you after that you shall not be helped.” (39:53-54).

Indeed, evils already committed can be blotted out, with regard to the spiritual effects on the human personality, if: (a) an evil-doer repents truly, and (b) wages a determined struggle for pursuing Good in Submission to God.



## RELEVANT METAPHYSICAL PROBLEMS

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Moral consciousness seeks not only the Moral Good but also the *realisation of the Moral Ideal*, which consists in the triumph of moral good and the defeat of moral evil.

Both of these problems are ethical in character. But their solutions necessitate a metaphysics. Because they cannot be solved without a proper solution of the relevant problems concerning the nature, function and purpose of man and of the world, and the existence and Attributes of God, and the bearing of those Attributes on the working of the world and the life of man.

Now, in respect of the realisation of the moral ideal, the question emerges: what are the conditions that make it possible?

The answer that presents itself to the human reason is: The foremost condition is that man ought to be *free* to realise that ideal. But even if he is free, he cannot realise such a grand ideal in his short span of earthly life and with the obstacles that he has to face within and around him. He must, therefore, be *immortal*. But even if he is immortal, the realisation of the ideal remains inconceivable unless *the world is so constituted as to admit of success in his moral struggle*. But that it can be only if it has been *created* for that very purpose. The duality in human nature, however, which forms the internal obstacle in the realisation of the moral ideal, and the existence of insurmountable difficulties which seem to be embedded in the life of the world, both give the impression of incompatibility with it. Hence the need from

the moral point of view for an all-Perfect Being, Who could, out of sheer Grace, remove this disharmony and incompatibility. That is, the realisation of the moral ideal would be possible only if *God* exists.

*Thus: Freedom of the Will, Immortality of Man, Creation of the World, its Harmony with the Moral Struggle, and the Existence of God and His Gracious Interference to lead Man to success, are the metaphysical implications of the realisation of the moral ideal, and form, therefore, the Metaphysical Basis of the Moral Code,—or, in other words, the Metaphysics of Morals.*

In the discussion of these verities, we shall proceed, on the basis of the Holy Qur’ān, under the basic classification of Man, World and God.



## PART 2 THE METAPHYSICS OF MORALS

### *Chapter 1*

## THE MAN

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### 1. BASIC PRINCIPLES

The following observations seem relevant in connection with our present discussion concerning the origin, function, nature, purpose and destiny of man:

1. Man should be a created being. Namely, he should possess no aboriginal nature independent of the Creator's design. In other words, his nature should only be that which has been conferred on him by his Creator in conformity with the purpose of his creation—the realisation of the moral ideal forming a vital part of that purpose.
2. Man should be a purposive being and an evolutionary being, in order that struggle for some serious purpose and capability to rise higher and higher may form the very essence of his personality.
3. Man should be a moral being, in order to be capable of leading moral life and pursuing moral struggle.
4. Man should be supreme in Creation, in order to be able to mould the forces of the world around him for the realisation



of the moral ideal.

5. But even if man is supreme in Creation, he is a finite being—an imperfect being—and his powers cannot be unlimited; and as such he must suffer from definite shortcomings and weaknesses. Moreover, he is a created being and, as such, dependent on his Creator. He, therefore, needs help from the Creator, Who, with all His Attributes of Perfection and through His Grace, should be prepared to help him in the realisation of the moral ideal. To obtain this Divine Help and Grace and to save himself from pessimism, despair and frustration, man should by nature be a worshipping being—namely, faith in God and quest for God should be ingrained in his nature.
6. Morality cannot be realised except in society. Man should, therefore, be a social being.
7. Man's nature should be essentially good in order that his struggle for the realisation of virtue in his life and in the life of mankind should form the natural demand of his nature and be thereby rational (= reasonable) for him.
8. Man's personality should contain within it the conflict between Duty and Desire in order to provide the moral situation.
9. Man should possess Freedom of Will, without which moral struggle would be absolutely inconceivable.

10. Imperfect as the world and the human personality are, Man should survive his earthly existence with the selfsame Identity and should be subject to Resurrection and Final Accountability for his moral actions in this world—it being a necessary condition for the realisation of the moral ideal wherein virtue should be adequately rewarded and vice adequately punished.
11. The consequences of the realisation of the moral ideal should be such as to be capable of forming the highest aspiration of Man in order to provide the highest incentive for moral struggle in the face of hardships, sufferings and trials, which must always form vital concomitants of that struggle and which can sometimes assume the most poignant forms.



## 2. IN THE LIGHT OF THE QUR'ĀN

### 1. *MAN—A CREATED BEING:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“But does not Man call to mind that We (God) created him *before*, when he was naught.” (19:67).



### 2. *MAN—A PURPOSIVE BEING AND AN EVOLUTIONARY BEING:*

Purposiveness has been affirmed thus:

“Deem you that We have created you (O humankind!) in vain (i.e., with no serious purpose) and that unto Us you are not to be returned (for account). So exalted be Allah, the True King ...” (23:115-116).

As for the evolutionary character of the human personality, it has been affirmed, among other verses, in the following:

“Man We did create (at the earthly stage) from a quintessence of clay; then 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 (foetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature (—a creature who is not a mere animal but a being endowed with spiritual, moral, aesthetic and intellectual faculties and capable of pursuing ideals). So blessed is Allah, the Best to create! After that, at length you will die. Again, on the Day of Judgment, will you be raised up.” (23:12-16).

“Verily, We created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: So We gave him (the gifts of) Hearing and Sight (i.e., endowed him with responsibility). We showed him the Way (of Right and Wrong): whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will).” (76:2-3).

“And surely He has created you by stages (i.e., by various steps or changes from the original form till you acquired the full stature of human personality).” (71:14).



### 3. *MAN—A MORAL BEING:*

That Man has been created with the purpose of pursuing moral struggle has been affirmed thus:<sup>48</sup>

“... (Allah) created Death and Life, that He may try you as to who among you is best in conduct.” (67:2).

Elsewhere, the very purpose of creation of the world itself has been stated to be the pursuit of moral struggle by Man:

“He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six (Cosmic) Days—and His Throne (of Authority) was on the Waters (from where life evolved)—that He might try you (as to) which of you is best in conduct,” (11:7).



### 4. *MAN—SUPREME IN CREATION*

*a. Man is a creature honoured and honourable:*

“And assuredly We have honoured the Children of Adam (i.e., humankind).” (17:70).

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. also the verse 76:3, quoted above, where the existence of moral Consciousness in Man has been clearly affirmed. That Man is a being created for struggle has been directly emphasised in the following verse: “Verily We have created Man into toil and struggle” (90:4).

*b. Man has been made the vicegerent of God on earth and, as such, supreme among all the creatures on the earth:*

“Behold ! your Lord said to the angels: verily I am going to place a vicegerent on the earth.” (2:30).

*c. The angels made obeisance to Adam, thus acknowledging Man’s superiority in Creation:*

“And recall that time We said unto the angels: prostrate yourselves before Adam, they prostrated themselves ...” (2:34).

*d. Everything on the earth has been created for Man:*

“He it is Who created for you (i.e., for your service, O humankind!) all that is on the earth.” (2:29).

*e. Everything in the heavens and on the earth has been made subservient to Man:*

“And He has subjected to you (O humankind!), as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on the earth. Behold! in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect.” (45:13).



##### *5. MAN—A WORSHIPPING BEING:*

Man’s need for God arises in his weaknesses and shortcomings, which are found in him as definite facts of his life. The Holy Qur’ān says:

*a. Man is weak and susceptible to error:*

“Allah intends to lighten your (difficulties): For Man has been created weak (i.e., weak in flesh, weak in judgment and weak in respect of overpowering desire).” (4:28).

In this respect, Man needs Divine Grace.

As regards the initial weakness of the human will, the reference to Adam’s lapse is significant (20:115). The Holy Qur’ān mentions elsewhere that immediately after that lapse, Adam acquired perfect firmness of resolve (20:122) through repentance (6:23). There is guidance in this for all human beings that they have to train their will by committing themselves to higher ideals, by cultivating patience and constancy in that respect, and through communion with God. The Holy Qur’ān says:

“Oh you who believe! seek help with patient Perseverance and Prayer (Communion with Allah): verily Allah is with those who patiently persevere.” (2:153).

*b. Man is given to impatience, i.e., desires easy success*

“Man is a creature of haste.”<sup>49</sup> (21:37).<sup>50</sup>

*c. Man suffers from sentimentalism:*

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<sup>49</sup> The word ‘*Ajal*’, translated as ‘haste’, signifies “the seeking, and pursuing, or endeavouring after, a thing before its proper time, or season.” (Lane’s *Lexicon*).

<sup>50</sup> Cf: also 17:11

“And if We let Man taste mercy from Us, and thereafter withdraw it from him, verily he is despairing, blaspheming.”

“And if We let him taste favour after harm has touched him, he says: the ills have departed from me; verily he becomes elated, boastful. Not so do those who practise patience and constancy, and work righteousness; for them is forgiveness (of sins) and a great reward.” (11:9-11).

In respect of (b) and (c) above, the human personality needs tuning to submission to the Divine Will in order to avoid failure, as expressed in verse 2 above.

*d. Man is a contentious creature:*

“... Man is in most things contentious.” (18:54).

In respect of this weakness, Man needs a Moral Code based on universal laws and given by the Supreme Authority, i.e., God, in order to provide true arbitration and the consequent harmony and peace in human relations.

We have pointed out above that the situation arising out of human weaknesses and shortcomings can be remedied through Divine Guidance and Grace. The Holy Qur’ān has affirmed it repeatedly. In fact, it forms the keynote of its teaching. We may quote here just one verse:

“Oh you who believe! If you are careful of (your duty to) Allah, He will grant you a Criterion (to judge between right and

wrong), remove from you (all) evils (that may afflict) you (including your weaknesses and shortcomings), and forgive you: for Allah is the Lord of Grace Unbounded.” (8:29).

Now Divine Guidance and Grace cannot come to Man without his belief in the existence of God. And this belief should not be a mere logical necessity for him, as Kant would have it, but embedded in his very nature—in what is called his Unconscious. The Holy Qur'ān mentions this fact in terms of the ‘Covenant of Monotheism’ which all human beings made in the world of spirits at the time of Creation. It says:

“And when your Lord brought forth from the children of Adam their posterity from their backs, and (after endowing them with sufficient intelligence and understanding) made them to testify as to themselves (saying): am I not your Lord? They said: Yes! we do testify. (Thus was the belief in God inscribed upon the soul of Man). (That was) lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection (by way of excuse for atheism, polytheism or idolatry): verily of this we have been unaware.” (7:172).

We are also told that seeking Divine Help in times of need is ingrained in human nature:

“When harm touches human beings, they cry to their Lord, turning to Him in repentance. (30:33).

“When a wave covers them (i.e., those who are unmindful of Allah otherwise) like the canopy (of clouds) (i.e., a storm



overtakes them at sea), they call to Allah, offering Him sincere devotion.” (31:32).

We are further told that the human beings with healthy minds remember God at all times:

“... possessors of understanding, namely, those who remember Allah standing, sitting and lying on their sides ...” (3:190-191).

Then the Holy Qur’ān proceeds to emphasise that the human heart finds its true peace only through confidence in Divine Help which comes to him by establishing the relation of intimacy with God through Remembrance (*al-Zikr*):

“Lo! in the remembrance of Allah hearts do find rest (i.e., serene tranquillity and steady peace of mind).” (13:28).

As for God Himself and his role for man, the holy Qur’ān proclaims that He is Beneficent, Merciful, Forgiving, Loving and Bestower of grace, and is always ready to help him. We shall deal with this aspect of the problem in the discussion about God.

But, the facts of human nature and human life being what they are, *the Holy Qur’ān exhorts Man to cultivate the worshipping aspect of his nature through communion with God and to maintain a constant worshipful attitude towards Him, thereby ensuring optimism and hope and success in his moral struggle.* Some of the verses having a bearing on this read:

“And your lord has said: call unto Me, and I shall answer your prayer. Verily those who are stiff-necked against My worship, anon they will enter Hell abject.” (40:60).

“And when My devotees ask you regarding me, then verily I am Nigh; I answer the call of the caller when he calls unto Me; so let them answer me and believe in Me, haply they may be rightly guided.” (2:186)

“And remember Allah much that you may prosper (in the health of the mind and the spirit, and thus attain true success in life, including moral life).” (62:10).

“ Verily I! I am Allah! No God there is but I; so worship Me, and establish prayer for My remembrance.” (20:14)



## 6. *MAN—A SOCIAL BEING :*

It has been proclaimed:

“Your creation (in the past) and your resurrection (in the future) are only as though of one soul.” (31:28).

This statement implies that all the individuals constituting humanity in the past, the present and the future, possess among themselves such an intimate bond of unity that the benefits and the sufferings of one individual should be conceived morally to be the benefits and sufferings of every other individual. In other words, Man is a social creature in his origin, nature, purpose and destiny.

Of similar import is the following verse:

“Oh humankind! fear your Lord (in your dealings with one another), Who created you from a single primeval Self, created, of like nature, the spouse thereof, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women:—fear Allah, through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and be careful of your duty to Allah and (in respect of) the wombs (i.e., the ties of family relationship); verily Allah ever watches over you.” (4:1).

We have also been told:

“And He it is Who has made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth, and has raised some of you over others in degrees, that He may try you in the gifts you receive. Verily your lord is swift in punishing : yet he is indeed oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (6:165).

This verse indicates that the very structure of human society, built up as it is on human inequality in respect of talents and functions, has been made by God, in its very nature, of such a type as to form the ground for moral struggle by the individuals, in whatever degree they may have received the different Divine gifts. Morality and social life have been thus affirmed by the Holy Qur’ān to be interdependent. And because Man is a moral being in his very creation, he has been made a social being also by God.



### 7. *ESSENTIAL GOODNESS OF MAN'S NATURE:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

“Assuredly We have created Man in the best make <sup>51</sup> (having the goodliest nature).” (95:4).

This verse establishes the essential goodness of human nature in contradistinction to ideational culture where Man, has been conceived to have been born either with the stigma of sin or fettered to the chains of re-incarnation; and it proves human competence for pursuing good successfully and fighting evil on individual and collective levels.

The story of Adam may also be mentioned in the present context. That the angels, who are holy and pure, prostrated before him, while *Iblīs*, the embodiment of evil, refused to do so, indicates that, in his very creation, Man has affinity with the angels and thereby with goodness, while evil is set in disharmony with him and, consequently, with his nature.

In short, Man is the goodliest specimen of God's handiwork, born sinless and with essentially good nature.



### 8. *CONFLICT IN HUMAN NATURE:*

However, essentially good though human nature is, Man has been created to pursue moral struggle and, therefore, while he is capable of

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<sup>51</sup> Note that *taqwīm* means: make, mould, symmetry, form, nature, constitution.

scaling the loftiest heights of perfection adequate to his nature, he can also sink to the lowest of the low in Creation, as it has been said:

“Thereafter (i.e., in consequence of wrong use of his opportunities and misuse of his free-will by Man) We (as the Author of the Universal Scheme) abase him (to be) the lowest of the low (—he himself having destroyed his original purity and goodness),—save those who believe and practise righteousness. Theirs shall be a reward unfailing.” (95:5-6).

This double capacity—for moral success and for moral failure—is grounded in the conflict with which human nature has been endowed, as the Holy Qur’ān says:

“By the Sun and his (glorious) splendour, by the Moon as she follows him, by the Day as it shows up (the Sun’s) glory, by the Night as it conceals it, by the Firmament and its (wonderful) structure, by the Earth and its (wide) expanse, by the Soul and Him Who gave it proportion and order, and inspired it with the wickedness thereof (which comes through the devil and is developed to a responsible human act by Man’s own free-will) and the piety thereof (which comes through the angels and is developed to a responsible human act by Man’s own free-will), truly he succeeds that keeps it pure and he fails that corrupts it.” (91:1-10).

The conflict between wickedness and piety in the human soul, mentioned above, is there;—and it must have been so, because the

moral situation can arise only in a situation of conflict. That conflict develops in the following way:

On the one side, there is excessive love of instinctive desires in human nature, the reality of which has been emphasised in these words:

“Fair-seeming in the eyes of human beings is the love of things they covet (under the impact of instinctive urges): women and sons, heaped up hoards of gold and silver, horses branded (for blood and excellence), and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. All that is the enjoyment of the life of the world: but in nearness to God is the best of goals.” (3:14).

On the other side, there is ingrained in the human soul the pursuit of ideals—the highest among them being the ideal of attaining nearness to God, referred to at the end of the above verse. Leading one’s life in the pursuit of noble ideals has been beautifully emphasised in the verses which immediately follow. There, it has been said:

“Say (O Muhammad!): shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those (i.e. objects of instinctive desires recounted in 3:14)? For the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home; with companions pure (and holy); and the Good Pleasure of Allah. For in Allah’s sight are all His servants,—(namely) those who say: ‘Our Lord! we have indeed believed, wherefore forgive us our sins and protect us from the agony of the Fire’:

those who practise *ṣabr* (i.e., patience, perseverance and self-control), who are truthful, who worship devoutly, who spend (for their fellow-beings), and who pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.” (3:15-17).

It may be observed that, according to the Holy Qur’ān, the attraction for the objects of instincts is neither condemnable in itself nor irrelevant to the requirements of the “best make” in which Man has been created. The Qur’ānic moral guidance aims at the balanced, appropriate and just satisfaction of both the aspects of human nature—the sentient and the rational<sup>52</sup>—that have been bestowed upon it by its Creator, to which the following verse bears reference through the emphasis on ideal human nature :

“So set your purpose for religion as one by nature upright—the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He has created Man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah’s creation. That is the right religion (containing the philosophy of human conduct), but most men know not.” (30:30).

It should be noted, however, that, according to the Holy Qur’ān, the human self has, as already stated, three stages of, and states in, development:

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<sup>52</sup> The conflict between these two aspects of human nature may present a difficult situation only to those—like the Christians, the Buddhists and the Hindus—according to whom not the wrong manner of fulfilling the instinctive wants but the instinctive wants themselves are evil.

1. the *nafs-al-ammārah*,
2. the *nafs-al-lawwāmah*,
3. the *nafs-al-muṭma'innah*,

Now, what renders the pursuit of the instinctive demands questionable is the *nafs-al-ammārah*,<sup>53</sup> or the Impelling Self, which impels the moral agent to satisfy these demands unchecked, and thus to commit evil, as the Holy Qur'ān says:

“... Verily the Self impels to evil, unless my Lord do bestow His Mercy, but surely my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (12:53).

Then there is the stage, and the state, of *nafs-al-lawwāmah* or the Reproaching Self, which reproaches when the instinctive demands are fulfilled under the impact of *nafs-al-ammārah*. The Holy Qur'ān refers to *nafs-al-lawwāmah* in the following verse:

“And I do call to witness the Reproaching Self.” (75:2).

Therefore, the healthy development of the human self lies in counteracting the evil force of the Impelling Self and conquering it. Once it is conquered, the human self outgrows the torture of self-reproach and becomes *nafs-al-muṭma'innah* or the Beatified Self.<sup>54</sup> The Holy Qur'ān refers to the Beatified Self and its reward thus:

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<sup>53</sup> “*Ammārah*” signifies : prone, impelling, headstrong, passionate.

<sup>54</sup> *Lit*, Self-at-Peace: the self in complete satisfaction and free from all pain and sorrow.



“O you Beatified Soul! return unto your Lord well pleased (yourself) and well pleasing (unto Him). Enter you among My Devotees and enter you My Garden.” (89:27-30).

Reverting to the *excessive attraction for the objects of instincts*, it may be said that the instinctive urges have their respective goals which can be achieved through much less instinctive exertion than what is required by the disproportionately-excessive demand that afflicts an un-balanced personality. Thus, if personality is integrated through *tazkiyah*, and the *necessary minimum* fulfilment of—instead of excessive indulgence in—the instinctive urges becomes the guiding light of human conduct, the surplus energy available thereby can be utilised in the pursuit of higher values—that being necessary for all cultural development and progress.



#### 9. MAN POSSESSES FREE WILL:

Viewing the conflict and the urge for moral betterment in human nature we are led to the conclusion that for realising morality and the moral ideal it is essential that Man should be *free*.

For *realising morality*, he should be free to choose between the two conflicting motives within his inner self, i.e., the motive of the fulfilment of Desire (command of *nafs-al-ammārah*) and the motive of the fulfilment of Duty (behest of *nafs-al-lawwāmāh*).

For *realising the moral ideal*, he should be free not only to choose between the above-mentioned conflicting motives within his

own self but also to struggle in the social situation for transforming the world of human relations into a moral order in the face of the conflict that rages there.

We are, therefore, confronted now with the questions:

1. what is Freedom of Will?
2. how is Freedom of Will conceivable?
3. does the Holy Qur'ān affirm Freedom of Will?

*1. What is Freedom of Will?*

Freedom of Will consists in the independence of the will of the moral agent from all internal restraint and external constraint in the choice of motive in the situation of moral conflict.

*2. How is Freedom of Will conceivable?*

The question 'how is Freedom conceivable?' can be answered in this way. If, in the act of Creation, "being" (*wajud*) has been bestowed as an act of Grace on the *shai'*, i.e. the aimed-at-Idea, and Personality and Freedom of Will have been conferred upon Man as acts of Grace by the fiat of the Divine Will, the concept of necessity is eliminated with reference to human will and freedom becomes conceivable as a final and ultimate fact.

However, as emphasised earlier, the proper attitude in response to the question: how is human Freedom of Will possible?, is: somehow it is a fact; we may or may not be able to explain 'how' in the manner of

exact sciences.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, it is only the speculative consciousness that stumbles; while moral consciousness affirms it as vehemently as the speculative consciousness stumbles.

That Freedom of Will is a fact is known to us intuitively. Indeed, it is deeply ingrained in our consciousness, on account of which we insist on moral responsibility and believe in the validity of moral approval and condemnation.

It may be emphasised that human freedom is restricted to the choice of the motive and does not extend to the consequence, which follows as necessity. It should, however never mean that the consequence is *necessarily* against the yearning of the moral agent.

### 3. *Does the Holy Qur'ān affirm Freedom of Will?*

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<sup>55</sup> The observation of the famous English philosopher, Locke, in respect of intuitive judgments is worthy of note. He says: “But God has not been so sparing to men to make them barely two-legged creatures and left it to Aristotle to make them rational ... He has given them a mind that can reason without being instructed in syllogizing.” (*Concerning Human Understanding*, Book 4, Ch. 17).

Among the scholars of Moral Philosophy in the present time, Prof. William Lillie judges the same problem thus: “... it is certainly the case that direct or intuitive judgment plays a far larger part in normative sciences, and especially in ethics, than it does in the physical descriptive sciences”, (*An Introduction to Ethics*, p. 18).

It may be observed at the very outset that the Holy Qur'ān affirms the human Freedom of Will in clear terms. Its basic statement in this connection is:

“We (God) did indeed offer the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but Man undertook it,<sup>56</sup>—he<sup>57</sup> is indeed very unjust (to himself in not fulfilling his responsibility in respect thereof) and very ignorant (in respect of the evil consequences of not fulfilling his responsibility),—(with the result) that Allah has to punish the Hypocrites, men and women, and the Unbelievers (*lit.*, polytheists), men and women; and Allah turns in Mercy to the Believers, men and women: For Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.” (30:72-73).

According to the Commentators of the Holy Qur'ān, “Trust” stands here for “moral responsibility, which is human sense of

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<sup>56</sup> Speaking of the acceptance of the Trust by Man, Sir Muhammad Iqbal observes: “In the case of man in whom individuality deepens into personality, opening up possibilities of wrong-doing, the sense of the tragedy of life becomes much more acute. But the acceptance of self-hood as a form of life involves the acceptance of all the imperfections that flow from the finitude of selfhood. The Qur'ān represents man as having accepted at his peril the trust of personality which the heavens, the earth, and the mountains refused to bear.” (*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, London 1934, pp. 121, 122).

<sup>57</sup> The word “he” actually stands here for those among humankind who are unfaithful to the Trust.

answerableness for all acts of thought and conduct. Its first and foremost pre-requisite is freedom of choice, which is the real function of a human being as a moral agent. The ‘trust’ referred to is obviously the trust of free choice or accountability.” (*English Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur’ān* by Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, p. 680, n. 136).

We may now quote other important verses which clearly and directly affirm and proclaim the possession of freedom of will by Man,—namely:

“Do what you will (i.e. act as you choose in accordance with your free-will). Verily He (God) sees (clearly) all that you do.” (41:40).

“We have shown him (i.e., Man) the Way (of Right and Wrong); (now it rests on his will) whether to be grateful (by using the gift of free-will in the service of Good) or ungrateful (by serving Evil through his free-will).” (76:3).

“Say: The Truth is from your Lord; let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject it.”<sup>58</sup> (18:29).

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<sup>58</sup> “Thus”, says Iqbal (*op. cit.*, p. 151), “the element of guidance and directive control in the ego’s activity clearly shows that the ego is a free, personal causality. He shares in the life and freedom of the Ultimate Ego, who, by permitting the emergence of a finite ego, capable of private initiative, has limited this freedom of His own free-will.”

“That is the Day of Certainty. Whosoever therefore wills, let him betake unto his Lord a resort.” (78:39).

“... a warning to humankind,—to any of you that chooses (through his will) to go forward (towards Good) or to lag behind.” (74:36-37).

Man is, however, a created being. As such he cannot be independent of his Creator in anything. Even free-will is not possessed by him of his own right, unlike his Creator Who owns it in His own right. Man’s freedom of will has been conferred on him by his Creator as an element of Personality. Hence the human will functions as a ‘State within State’.

In other words, Man’s *limited* freedom functions within the *absolute* Freedom of the Creator’s Will. We will see later in this discussion that the Creator’s Will is not, and can never be, capricious, irrational, arbitrary and unjust, and does never interfere in the freedom of human will. How the human free-will functions as free-will while remaining within the Will of God?—this question relates to an *ultimate* fact which is beyond the powers of human reason to comprehend fully.<sup>59</sup> But logically it is valid, because, on the one hand, human reason demands that Man must possess free-will in order to be a moral all being, and moral consciousness affirms vehemently that he

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<sup>59</sup> What we can understand from the Holy Qur’ān is that the human will is *sustained* by the Divine Will and the Divine Will assists the human beings in the light of the motive chosen by the human will, whether the motive is for good or for evil.

does possess free-will; and, on the other hand, if there is a Creator of the cosmos—as He is there, His existence being affirmed by reason and Revelation both—everything in the cosmos, including human will and its freedom, must be encompassed by Him <sup>60</sup> and cannot ever be conceivable as independent of Him.

It is this fact, and not the negation of human freedom of will, that has been emphasised in the following verses:

“Nay, verily this (Qur’ān) is an Admonition: so let him who will (i.e., has the will to do so), heed it. But they shall not heed except as Allah wills (in His infinite Wisdom and that in accordance with His Universal Scheme): He is the Lord of Righteousness and the Lord of Forgiveness.”<sup>61</sup> (74:55-56).

“This is an Admonition: then whosoever (shall exert his) will, may choose a way unto his Lord. But you will not except as Allah wills <sup>62</sup> (in His infinite Wisdom and in accordance with

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. the Holy Qur’ān: 4:126.

<sup>61</sup> Commenting on this verse, A. Yusuf Ali says: “Righteousness as well as Forgiveness have their source in God’s Will. Man’s righteousness has no meaning except in relation to the Universal Will.” (*The Holy Qur’ān: English Translation and Commentary*, p. 1647, n. 5808).

<sup>62</sup> “Man in himself is weak; he must seek God’s Grace, without it he can do nothing; with it he can do all. For God knows all things. and His Wisdom comprehends the good of all.” (A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 1660, n. 5861).

His Universal Scheme); for Allah is full of Knowledge<sup>63</sup> and Wisdom.<sup>64</sup> He will admit to His Mercy whom He will<sup>65</sup> (in accordance with the requirements of His Gracious Nature and of the demands of Absolute and Universal Divine Justice); but the wrongdoers,—for them He has prepared a grievous Penalty (in accordance with the misuse of their free-will).” (76:29-31).

“Verily this (i.e., the Qur’ān) is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds (i.e., it is universal)—unto whomsoever among you wills to go straight:<sup>66</sup> but you shall not will except as Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds, wills<sup>67</sup>.” (81:27-29).

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<sup>63</sup> i.e., “His supreme knowledge comprehends all conditions and circumstances”—a knowledge which He employs for the benefit of mankind.

<sup>64</sup> i.e., “His Wisdom surpasses the insight of all finite beings”—a wisdom used to rectify the evils of the deviations of human will.

<sup>65</sup> A. Yusuf Ali says: “That is, according to His Just and Wise Plan. If the will is of the right, it obtains God’s Grace and Mercy. If the will of man rejects God, man suffer Penalty,” (*op. cit.*, p. 1661, n. 5862).

<sup>66</sup> “i.e., such alone can profit by it. This repudiates the doctrine of *Karma* and determinism, in all its forms and varieties.” (Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *op. cit.*, p. 938, n. 167).

<sup>67</sup> Commenting on this verse, A. Yusuf Ali says: “*Cf.* 74:55-56. God is the Cherisher of the Worlds, Lord of Grace and Mercy, and His guidance is open to all who have the will to profit by it. But that will must be exercised in conformity with God’s Will (verse 29). Such conformity is Islam. Verse 28 points to human free-will and responsibility; verse 29 to its limitations. Both



extremes, viz: cast-iron Determinism and the idea of Chaotic Free-will are condemned.” (*op. cit.*, p. 1697, n. 5996).

An important point to be noted here is that the expression ‘but you shall not will except as Allah wills’ is to be found in the Holy Qur’ān only in the three verses quoted above. Another important point to be noted is that in all these verses, there is reference only to the acceptance of Spiritual Truth—to Good and not to Evil. This is so, because Good and Good alone has its source in God; and hence the pursuit of Good is not possible except when there is identity between the human will for Good and the Divine Will. Also, these verses mean that the acceptance of the Divine Faith can be possible only for those who possess, as moral beings, the good will. And because the will of Man cannot bear fruit without the assistance of the Divine Will—its freedom being limited to the choice of the motive alone,—no one as a spiritual being will receive the strength from the Divine Will to accept the True Faith unless he possesses good-will already as a moral being.

Here we may take notice of a verse wherein Divine Will has been mentioned with reference to the existence of evil. The verse is: “If Allah had willed (i.e., if it had been God’s Plan), they would not have taken false gods.” (6:107). But this verse does not say that God assists evil. It only says that, on the one hand, He has the power to eliminate evil, and that, on the other hand, He does not interfere when the wrong-doers adopt evil through their free-will. This point has been made clear emphatically in another verse which reads: “And they say: if it had been the Will of (God) Most Gracious, we would not have worshipped these (idols). They have no knowledge thereof; they are only guessing.” (43:20).

As for the Divine Plan in permitting the existence of evil, it relates to the provision of those conditions whereby alone can the moral and spiritual struggle be pursued, which, in its turn, forms the foundation on which alone

We said in the foregoing that God's Will is not, and can never be, capricious, irrational, arbitrary and unjust. There are numerous verses in the Holy Qur'ān which emphasise this fact vehemently. For instance, the following:

“Verily Allah deals not unjustly with Man in anything. It is (actually) Man that wrongs his own soul.” (10:44)<sup>68</sup>

This is a general statement which covers the human life. As for the Day of Judgment specially—the Day of final reward and punishment, the Holy Qur'ān proclaims in unambiguous terms thus:

“Then, on that Day, not a soul will be wronged in the least, and you shall but be repaid the meeds of your past Deeds.” (36:54).<sup>69</sup>

Having negated injustice on the part of God, we may now quote the verse which affirms the law of Absolute Justice in God's dealings with man:

“Never will I (God) suffer to be lost the work of any of you, whether male or female.” (3:195)

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the evolution of human personality to greater and greater heights is possible. More of it on some other occasion. (In this connection see the author's book on the *Dynamics of Moral Revolution*, to be published shortly).

<sup>68</sup> Other (similar verses are: 2:57; 3:117; 7:160; 9:70; 9:80; 16:30; 16:118; 29:40; 30:9.)

<sup>69</sup> Cf. 21:47.

The Holy Qur’ān affirms positively that no action of God can ever be irrational and arbitrary. It says:

“Verily, my Lord (Allah) is on the Straight Path.”<sup>70</sup> (11:56).

Further, the Holy Qur’ān negates capriciousness absolutely when it speaks of the Perfect Knowledge and Wisdom of God on page after page. It proclaims:

“Verily Allah is Perfect in Knowledge and Perfect in Wisdom.”  
(76:30).

Then, besides perfection in knowledge and wisdom, God is *Rabb-ul-‘Ālameen*<sup>71</sup> (the Cherisher of everything in the cosmos), *al-Raḥmān*<sup>72</sup> (Most Gracious), *al-Raḥeem*<sup>73</sup> (Most Merciful), *al-Ra’ūf*<sup>74</sup> (Full of Kindness), *al-Wadūd*<sup>75</sup> (Loving), *al-Ghaḥḥār*<sup>76</sup> (Most Forgiving), *Al-Ḥafeez*<sup>77</sup> (the Protector). And He is even more than all

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<sup>70</sup> According to A. Yusuf Ali, “the standard of virtue and righteousness is in the Will of God, the Universal Will that controls all things in goodness and justice.” (*op. cit.*, p. 539, n. 1552).

<sup>71</sup> 1:2.

<sup>72</sup> 1:3.

<sup>73</sup> 1:3.

<sup>74</sup> 3:30.

<sup>75</sup> 11:90.

<sup>76</sup> 20:82.

<sup>77</sup> 11:57.

that, because He is *Zul-Faḍl-il-'Azeem* <sup>78</sup> (the Lord of Abounding Grace) Who gives to man more than he deserves.

There are, however, certain verses in the Holy Qur'ān which, if read unintelligently and without full reference to other connected verses, might give the wrong impression to the superficial reader that God guides and leads astray, and rewards and punishes, human beings arbitrarily and that, therefore, the human will enjoys no freedom whatsoever. But if we understand the meanings and implications of all such verses properly, we find that they nowhere negate the freedom of human will in the manner and in the measure that it has been conferred on Man by God. We give herein below some such typical verses, along with their proper connotation and explanation.

God says in the very early part of the Holy Qur'ān:

“As to those who reject Faith (deliberately), it is all the same to them. Whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe (because they have no will to believe). Allah has set <sup>79</sup> a seal on their hearts (by their being inured to disobedience and disbelief). and on their hearing and on their eyes is a veil ; and unto them shall be

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<sup>78</sup> 57:29.

<sup>79</sup> It may be noted that the Holy Qur'ān refers all actions to God, because, according to it, nothing can occur outside His Knowledge and Power.

It is also important to note that the sealing of the hearts, by God is *not the cause* of disbelief *but follows* the deliberate rejection of Faith.

a torment mighty (as a just retribution for the misuse of the free-will conferred on them by God).”<sup>80</sup> (2:6-7).

At another place, we have been told:

“If Allah so willed (i.e., if it had been the Divine Plan), He could make you all one People.<sup>81</sup> But He leaves straying <sup>82</sup> whom He pleases, and He guides whom He pleases: and you

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<sup>80</sup> Commenting on this Verse, Abdullah Yusuf Ali says: “*Kafara, Kufir, Kafir* and other derivative forms of the word, imply a deliberate rejection of Faith as opposed to a mistaken idea of God or faith, which is not inconsistent with an earnest desire to see the truth. Where there is such desire, the grace and mercy of God gives the guidance. But that guidance is not efficacious, when it is deliberately rejected, and the possibility of rejection follows from the grant of free-will. The consequence of rejection is that the spiritual faculties become dead or impervious to better influences.” (*op. cit.*, p. 18, n. 30).

<sup>81</sup> For the Divine Wisdom in not willing it, refer to the author’s forthcoming book on according the “*Dynamics of Moral Revolution*”.

<sup>82</sup> Some translators have wrongly translated the word as “leads astray”. Commenting on this verse, Abdullah Yusuf Ali says: “God’s Will and Plan, in allowing limited free-will to man, is, not to force man’s will, but to give all guidance, and leave alone those who reject the guidance, in case they should repent and come back into Grace. But in all cases, in so far as we are given the choice, we shall be called to account for all our actions. ‘Leaving to stray’ does not mean that we can do what we please. Our personal responsibility remains.” (*op. cit.*, p. 682, n. 2133).

shall certainly be called to account for all your actions.”  
(16:93).<sup>83</sup>

In understanding this verse, some people fall into the error of believing that human beings adopt the right and wrong paths, not on the basis of their free-will but because it is so willed for them by God. This means pure Determinism. But when we read the above verse, or any other verse of similar import, in conjunction with other relevant verses, we find that to deduce determinism from such verses is absolutely baseless.

The question is: Does God leave straying anyone for no fault of his, and does He guide anyone for no merit on his part? The Qur'ānic answer is: No. It says clearly:

“And Allah will leave to stray the wrong-doers (in consequence of their misuse of free-will); and Allah does what He wills (i.e., His Will is not in subjection to the will of any body).” (14:27).<sup>84</sup>

It means that, inspite of being All-Powerful, God leaves straying only those who earn it through their transgression, which is based on their free-will.

Then we are told:

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<sup>83</sup> There are some other verses of similar import, e.g., 6:88; 14:4; 24:35; 74:31.

<sup>84</sup> *Cf.* 42:13.

“And He (i.e., Allah) guides unto Himself (i.e., to the Right Path) those who turn to Him in penitence.” (13:27).

Coming now to forgiveness and punishment by God, We are told thus:

“And Allah’s is the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whomsoever He will and torments whom He will; and Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.” (48:14).<sup>85</sup>

Now God’s will to forgive is for the righteous: the Believers:<sup>86</sup>

“Allah has promised those who believe and practice righteousness that for them shall be forgiveness and a mighty reward.” (5:9).

“Oh you who believe! if you are careful of your duty to Allah (of which righteousness is an integral part), He will bless you with a Criterion (to judge between right and wrong), and will rid you of your evil thoughts and deeds, and will *forgive you*. For Allah is the Lord of Abounding Grace.” (8:29).

And God’s will to punish is for the wrong-doers: i.e., those who commit *Zulm*, whether spiritually or morally:

“Verily the wrong-doers! for them is grievous Penalty.” (14:22).<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> There are several other verses also of the same import.

<sup>86</sup> There are numerous verses in the Holy Qur’ān which bear out this fact. We have quoted here only two.

“... and unto the Rejectors of Truth shall be grievous Penalty.”  
(2:104).

It means that reward and punishment come to human beings on the basis of their own free-will and not because of any arbitrary attitude on the part of God.

It is Man's nature, however, that he would like to avoid the responsibility for evil, unless his will has been purified. That is why the idol-worshippers of Arabia said:

“... If it had been the Will of (God) Most Gracious, we would not have worshipped these (idols).” (42:20).

But God refused to accept this plea, because inspite the of the supremacy of Divine Will, He does not force the will of anyone into any channel—i.e., He does not interfere with anyone's free-will. Hence, in the next part of the above-quoted verse, it has been said:

“They have no knowledge thereof (i.e., of the working of the Divine Will in the universe); they are only guessing. Have We vouchsafed to them any Book <sup>88</sup> before this, so that they are holding fast thereto?” (43:21).

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<sup>87</sup> Ref: several other verses of similar import.

Consider also the verse: “... nor is Allah going to punish them while they ask forgiveness,” (8:33).

<sup>88</sup> Here the emphasis is on the truth that the *knowledge* of the ultimate facts, of which the relation between God's Will and the human will is one, belongs only to God, Who alone can enlighten human beings about them; and as for



In other words, they have neither rational nor scriptural basis for the denial of their free-will and responsibility.

The upshot of the entire foregoing discussion is that the Holy Qur’ān affirms freedom of will for Man in the moral domain. It is limited freedom, of course,—namely, it is limited to the choice of the motive and does not extend to the consequences of an action; but it is freedom all the same. And the Divine Will, which is supreme in the universe, sustains the human will but does not interfere in its working. The Divine Knowledge and Power arranges the consequences in the earthly life of Man in accordance with the Divine Plan, wherein the world is a Moral Order. Man shall, however, be rewarded and punished on the Day of Judgment (or, Final Accountability) in the measure and on the basis of his freedom of will. Says the Holy Qur’ān:

“On no soul does Allah place a burden except according to its capacity. For it shall be the Good it earns (through the exercise of free-will) and against it the evil it earns (—again through free-will) (—all non-voluntary states of mind and actions being excluded from accountability).”<sup>89</sup> (2:286).

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the human efforts, even of philosophers, to unveil them through speculative endeavour, their resultant opinions can never consistently claim the status of *knowledge*, and should, therefore, be rightfully termed as *conjectures*.

<sup>89</sup> Mark that this verse repudiates ‘original sin’, ‘universal redemption’ and determinism and it proclaims that every individual must, through the exercise



## 10. LIFE AFTER DEATH :

We have seen that Freedom of Will is a necessary condition for the realisation of morality and the moral ideal. We have also seen that the Holy Qur'ān affirms Freedom of Will.

But, although affirmation of the Freedom of Will, taken by itself, may render morality possible, the realisation of the moral ideal remains inconceivable without, among other verities,<sup>90</sup> belief in Life-after-Death, or Life-Hereafter.

This is so, because it is common experience that virtue is not adequately rewarded during the short period of human life on earth. Nay, quite often the virtuous actually suffer. And in many cases it is observed that the evil minded persons do not suffer the consequences of their evil acts.

Now, the appearance of incompatibility with the moral ideal which the world thus gives, especially in those instances where even the most disinterested moral efforts are frustrated by persons who possess violently devilish motives, is likely to unhinge the moral faith. But moral consciousness revolts against the very idea of virtue

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of freedom of will conferred on him by God, work out himself the possibilities of his spiritual success.

<sup>90</sup> The other verities are: belief in the creation of the world essentially as moral order, and belief in the existence of God.

remaining frustrated or inadequately rewarded and evil and crime escaping their nemesis wholly or partly.

Therefore, to meet the consummation of the moral struggle and to realise the reciprocity of virtue and success, and of vice and punishment, the moral consciousness demands that man must survive after his death.<sup>91</sup>

Moreover, utmost effort for the realisation of the moral ideal cannot be invited from the human beings without faith in life-after-death. If survival after death is believed in, it will be easier not only to preserve the morals but also to lay down one's life for the sake of the ideal.

Life-after-death is also the requirement of human nature from four other angles:

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<sup>91</sup> It may be observed here that life-after-death, or immortality, is not the condition of the realisation of the moral ideal alone but of all spiritual ideals, as affirmed by the Holy Qur'ān. For instance, the ideal of art consists in the beautification of the self and the surroundings. According to the Holy Qur'ān, this ideal will be realised in the form of Heavenly Bliss in the next world, as a reward of righteous life in this world. Again, the actual fact of religion consists in faith in a metaphysical outlook on the testimony of Prophetic Revelation. But there is also involved the ideal of intimate experience of religious verities, including the direct Vision of God. This ideal is to be realised, according to the Holy Qur'ān, as a reward in the Life-Hereafter. (see: forthcoming discussion on "Heaven").

Firstly, the love of life <sup>92</sup> and the yearning for self-preservation, which are ingrained in human nature, refuse to admit the cessation of life in death.

Secondly, denial of life after death engenders nihilistic attitude, and nihilism is wedded to despair.

Thirdly, confining the reward or punishment of actions to immediate execution in this life amounts to a negation of the world being a moral order, because the individual is deprived of the chance of exhausting the possibilities of improving himself. And if the world is not accepted as a perfect moral order, moral struggle becomes a meaningless idea.

Fourthly, no human action—good or evil—can mature as regards its consequences until the present human world endures, because every action gives rise to an endless chain reaction. This renders the fulfilment of the principle of just and adequate reward and punishment in the present life impossible.

Hence final and full reward and punishment should be conceived to be deferred to the Life-Hereafter, where, according to the Holy Qur'ān, Heaven and Hell exist for this purpose;<sup>93</sup> though, in this life

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<sup>92</sup> This love may have roots in what is called the Unconscious and may be representative of the urge of human ego to survive to witness the transformation of the world as moral order.

<sup>93</sup> Here we should keep in mind the distinction in the belief of life-after-death imparted by the Holy Qur'ān and the notion of Immortality presented by Kant. Kant's notion originates in *despair*, which seems to be based on the

also, virtue does bear fruit, even if not adequately and in all cases, and, as regards evil, the individuals cannot escape in acute cases the nemesis of their evil actions.

It may be observed here in passing that it is only in the *nihilistic* attitude, which emerges in the present-day *conjectures* of materialistic approach to human life, that we come across a denial of life-after-death. Modern Materialism objects, without any conclusive proof, to the concept of Personality, and teaches, again, without any conclusive proof, that the human being is only an embodiment of the interplay of mechanical forces—emerging as an accident and dissolving finally into oblivion. This is a subjective and fallacious judgment born of temperamental despair, and it is a challenge to human nature as well as to human history, wherein belief in survival after death has been held by almost all the human communities in one form or the other.

One of the most brilliant exponents of the philosophy of Nihilism is Bertrand Russell, who, with all his academic genius, has spoken more as a poet than as a scientific thinker. In his Essay on “*Free Man’s Worship*”, he projects his belief about Man thus:

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Christian dogma of sinful beginning of human life and the evil character of the earthly environment. This despair leads to the view, that the present life is basically unamenable to success in the realisation of the moral ideal, and that there ought to be a Life-Hereafter in order that the said ideal may be realised. The Qur’ānic point of view is based on the other hand, on *hope* which is enshrined in the Qur’ānic concept of Evolution.

“... Man is the product of the causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving, that his origin, his growth, his hopes and his fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collection of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave, that all the labours of ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievement must inevitably be buried under a debris of ruins ...”<sup>94</sup>

Then, side by side with that arbitrary verdict, he lands himself in contradiction when he proceeds to project, with all his poetic fancy and with passionate idealistic fervour, all the grace and beauty of *freedom* for the ‘slave of blind forces’ that Man is in his estimation! He says:

“The life of Man, viewed outwardly, is but a small thing compared with the forces of Nature. The slave is doomed to worship Time and Fate and Death, because they are greater than anything he finds himself, and because all his thoughts are of things which they devour. But, great as they are, to think of them greatly, to feel their passionless splendour, is greater still. And such thought makes us free men; we no longer bow before the inevitable in Oriental subjection but

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<sup>94</sup> Bertrand Russell : *Mysticism and Logic* (London 1969), p. 4 1.

we absorb it, and make it a part of ourselves. To abandon the struggle of private happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, to burn with passion for eternal things—this is emancipation, and this is free man’s worship. And this liberation is effected by a contemplation of Fate; for Fate itself is subdued by the mind which leaves nothing to be purged by the purifying fire of Time.

“United with his fellow-men by the strongest of all ties, the tie of a common doom, the free man finds that a new vision is with him always, shedding over every daily task the light of love. The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided ...

“Brief and powerless is Man’s life; on him and on all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gates of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of

chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.”<sup>95</sup>

With the above preliminary discussion, we may turn to the guidance of the Holy Qur’ān.

***Belief in Life-Hereafter—an Article of Islamic Creed:***

We may start by noting that belief in the Life-Hereafter forms an article of Islamic Creed in the Holy Qur’ān. Namely, it is a basic truth without active belief in which it is impossible for anyone to be a Muslim. Indeed, the Qur’ānic Guidance can benefit only him who, among other religious verities, believes in the Life-Hereafter, as, for instance, the following verse, which is to be found in the very early part of the holy book, clearly proclaims:

“This Book, whereof there is no doubt, is a guidance unto the god-fearing (or, Pursuers of Righteousness with Faith in God)—(namely, those) who believe in the Unseen (Reality), and establish prayer, and out of what We have provided for them spend (for the well-being of others); and who believe in the Revelation sent to you (O Muhammad!), and (sent) before

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<sup>95</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.



your time, *and of the (life-) Hereafter they have firm conviction.*

These are on the right path guided by their Lord, and these are the successful (in this life as well as in the next).” (2:2-5).

Indeed, belief in the Life-Hereafter is so important in the estimation of the Holy Qur’ān that it has been mentioned therein at many places conjoined with belief in God<sup>96</sup>, which indicates that, according to the Qur’ānic evaluation, it stands immediately next to belief in God in importance for human success, which depends, in its turn, on proper approach to life.

For those who do not believe in the Life-Hereafter, the Holy Qur’ān has emphasised the wrongfulness of their attitude and its consequences thus:

“Verily you call them unto a Straight Way (—the Way of Balanced Life). *And verily those who believe not in the Hereafter are deviators from that Way* (and cannot, therefore, enjoy balanced life and, as a result, cannot attain genuine success). And though We have mercy on them and We may remove the distress which is on them, they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering perplexed. We inflicted torment on them, but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor do they submissively entreat (Him)!—until We open

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<sup>96</sup> E.g.: in the following verses: 2:228, 2:264, 3:114, 4:59, 9:29, 9:44, 9:45, 9:99. 65:2.

on them a gate leading to a severe torment: then lo! they will be plunged in despair<sup>97</sup> therein.”<sup>98</sup> (33:73-77).

The following verses are also of similar import:

“Nay, it is those who believe not in the Hereafter, they are in a torment and error far-reaching.

“Behold they not<sup>99</sup> that which is before them and that which is behind them of the heaven and the earth.” (34:8-9).

### ***Qur'ānic Arguments in favour of Life-Hereafter:***

The error (referred to in verse 8 above), whose evil consequences are far-reaching in so far as it deprives human beings of genuine success in this life and brings them grievous failure in the Hereafter, is rooted in a wrong philosophy which has been referred to in the Holy Qur'ān thus:

“And they (i.e., the deniers of Life-Hereafter) say: there is nothing (i.e., no other life) but our life of the world, we die and

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. our remark earlier: “... denial of life-after-death engenders nihilistic attitude, and nihilism is wedded to despair.”

<sup>98</sup> The verses portray the psychology of the person who disbelieves in the Life-Hereafter and the evil consequences of such disbelief.

<sup>99</sup> Commencing on it, A. Yusuf Ali says: “The men who walk in spiritual darkness and laugh at a Hereafter, have but to observe the power of God in the nature around them. He who created the heavens and the earth and sustains them can surely make a new Creation (*op. cit.*, p. 1135, n. 3796).

we live (of ourselves, with no reference to the Creator),<sup>100</sup> and nothing destroys us save Time.<sup>101</sup> And they have no knowledge thereof: they do but guess (i.e., their denial is not based on any sound logical argument or any rational facts, but on mere superstition). And when Our Clear Signs (which affirm Life Hereafter) are rehearsed to them, their argument is nothing but this: they say: ‘Bring (back) our forefathers, if what you say is true’.” (45:24-25).<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> As to the pagan Arabs’ materialistic outlook and indifference to spiritual values Hitti observes: “The hedonistic Arabian character was too much absorbed in the immediate issues of life to devote much thought to the Hereafter. In the words of an old bard:

‘We spin about, whirl our own way through life, then, rich and poor alike, at last seek rest below the ground in hollow pits slate-covered, and there do we abide’. (*History of the Arabs*, p. 102).

<sup>101</sup> We may quote here the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*: “Time in the abstract was popularly imagined to be the cause of all earthly happiness, and especially of all earthly misery ... The poets are continually alluding to Time (*dahr*, *Zamān*), for which they often substitute ‘the days’, or ‘the nights’. Time is represented as bringing misfortune, causing perpetual change, as biting, weaning down, shooting arrows that never miss the mark, blowing stones and so forth. In such cases we are often obliged to render ‘time’ by ‘fate’ which is not quite correct, since time is here conceived as the determining factor, not as being itself determined by some other power, least of all by a conscious agent.” (vol. 1; pp. 661, 662).

<sup>102</sup> Cf. 23:37.

Verse 9 of chapter 34, quoted prior to the above verses, gives an argument against disbelief in the Life-Hereafter which is sound; but it may not be properly graspable by the common folk. On other occasions, however, the argument has been stated in simpler terms. For instance, in reply to the argument of the disbelievers in the Hereafter, in 45:24-25, the holy book proceeds to state the counter-argument thus:

“Say! ‘It is Allah Who gives you life, then gives you death; then He will gather you for the Day of Judgment about which there is no doubt’: but most of humankind know not.”  
(45:26).<sup>103</sup>

At another place, the argument has been stated in terms of Evolution. Thus we read:

“Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled (without purpose and without moral responsibility)? Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form)? Then did he become a leech-like clot; then did (Allah) make and fashion (him) in due proportion. And of him He made two sexes, male and female. Is not That One then able to quicken the dead?” (75:36-40).<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Other verses with similar wordings and the same import are: 2:28; 22:66; 30:40.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. 23:12-16, and other similar verses.

Another form of the Qur'ānic argument in support of the Hereafter is in terms of the revival of the dead earth. For instance, we read:

“Know that Allah quickens the earth after its death. We have made clear Our Signs to you, that haply you may be able to understand rationally (the phenomenon of future Resurrection).” (57:17).

“And We send down from the sky rain charged with blessings, and We produce therewith gardens and grain for harvest; and tall (and stately) palm-trees, with shoots of fruit-stalks, piled one over another;—as sustenance for (Our) servants;—and We give new life therewith to a land that is dead: *thus will be the Resurrection*. Before them (i.e., pagan Arabs) was denied (the Hereafter) by the people of Noah, the Companions of the Russ, the *Thamud*, the *‘Ād*, Pharoah, the Brethren of Lot, the Companions of the Wood, and the People of *Tubba*‘; each one of them rejected the Messengers, and My warning was duly fulfilled (in them). Are We then weary with the first Creation, that they should be in confusion about a new Creation (in the Hereafter)?” (50: 9-15).<sup>105</sup>

***The Qur'ānic conception of Life Hereafter related in all its steps to the concept of the World being a Moral Order:***

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<sup>105</sup> Cf. 30:50.

Having seen that the Qur'ān affirms the Life-Hereafter, we may now proceed to note that, in the Qur'ānic system of meaning, Life-Hereafter is grounded in the Qur'ānic teaching that the world is a Moral Order, wherein every action of man, however insignificant, is accountable and must meet its reward or punishment.

The first point that has been emphasised in this connection is that all our actions, including our most hidden thoughts and motives, are known to God at all times, and that instead of becoming relegated to oblivion—as might be thought by the ignorant, every human action, whether virtuous or vicious, is recorded and preserved by Divine Arrangement. We are told:

“He (i.e., Allah) knows the unseen and that which is open: He is the Great, the Most High. It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceal his speech or declare it openly; whether he lie hid by night or walk forth freely by day. For each (one) there are angels in succession, before and behind them: they guard him with Allah's command.” (13:9-11).

“And assuredly We have created Man and We know whatsoever his soul whispers unto him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.” (50:16).

“Verily We shall give life to the dead (on the Day of Resurrection), and We record that which they send before (i.e., their own deeds, good or bad), and of all things have We taken account in a clear Book (of evidence).” (36:12).

The recording and preservation of human words and deeds is done by the angels <sup>106</sup> appointed by God for this purpose. Thus says the Qur’ān:

“By no means! But, you belie the Requital. But verily over you are appointed (angels) to protect you,—kind and honourable—writing down (your deeds). They know whatsoever you do.” (82:9-12).

“Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (human doings) (and note them), one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel <sup>107</sup> by him ready (to note it).” (50:17-18).

Man’s deeds, good or evil, are not only recorded by the angels, but they also hang round his neck. Thus “are his actions inseparable from him; and it is they that make or mar a man’s fortune.”<sup>108</sup> The Holy Qur’ān says:

“Every man’s deeds We have fastened on his own neck: and on the Day of Judgment We shall bring out for him a scroll (containing the record of all his thoughts and actions), which he will see spread open. And it will be said (to him) ‘Read your

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<sup>106</sup> The personality of an angel should not be understood in the anthropomorphic sense.

<sup>107</sup> The three together seem to constitute the honourable Recorders, *Kirāman Kātibīn* (plural, not dual number), mentioned in 82:11.

<sup>108</sup> Abdul Majid Daryabadi (*op. cit.*, p, 460, n. 46.),

(own) record. Sufficient is your soul this day to make out an account against you'." (17:13-14).

Verse 14 points out that the recording of actions is done in order to produce evidence before every human being on the Day of Final Accountability on which Day God will pronounce the Judgment in order that every human action, having matured, reaches its full reward or punishment:

“Verily the Hour (of Final Accountability) is coming—My design is to keep it hidden—in order that everyone may be requitted according to that which he has endeavoured.”<sup>109</sup> (20:15).

That every action must reach its reward or punishment is the immutable Law of God, ingrained, so to say, in the very constitution of the universe and in the very destiny of Man:

“Yes, to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth: so that He may recompense those who do evil according to their deeds, and He may reward those who do good with ‘what is best’.” (53:31).<sup>110</sup>

The good and evil fruits of human deeds become manifest, in accordance with the limitations of man’s earthly life, even in this world. The Holy Qur’ān affirms this fact when it says:

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<sup>109</sup> Mark the word ‘endeavoured’.

<sup>110</sup> There are numerous other verses also of the same import, e.g.: 10:4; 14:48-50; 30:45; etc.



“Verily, your endeavour is (directed to) diverse (ends) (which may be broadly classified as good and evil). Then as for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to God, and (in all sincerity) testifies to the Good,—We will indeed make for him smooth the path to ease (by way of reward).

“And as for him who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient (not believing in accountability in the Hereafter), and belies the Good,—We will indeed make smooth for him the path to hardship (by way of punishment).” (92:4-10).

On the Day of Judgment in the Life-Hereafter, however, every human action, however insignificant it might appear to us in this life, shall meet its full and complete recompense:

“When the earth is shaken to her (utmost) convulsion, and she throws up her burdens (from within), and Man cries (distressed): ‘What is the matter with her’,—on that Day will she declare her tidings (i.e., will declare all the events that ever took place on her): for that your Lord will have given her inspiration. On that Day will humankind proceed in companies sorted out, that they may be shown their Deeds. Then whosoever has worked good of an atom’s weight shall behold it; and whosoever has worked evil of an atom’s weight shall behold it (—i.e., the subtlest form of good and evil will then be brought to account).” (94:1-8).<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Cf. 39:67.

Virtue might give the appearance of being frustrated in this life, and vice might appear in certain circumstances to gain the upper hand, and this may cause suffering to the virtuous; but on the Day of Final Accountability in the Life-Hereafter, the virtuous shall be more than fully rewarded for their righteous life, and they shall have the upper hand. So says the Holy Qur'ān:

“Those who are god-fearing (i.e., cultivate and practise righteousness out of respect for Divine Pleasure) shall be (triumphant) above them (i.e., the Unbelievers in Submission to God, or the unrighteous) on the Day of Resurrection.” (2:212).

As we remarked before, the moral ideal consists in adequate, nay, full reward of virtue and vice. We have now seen that the Holy Qur'ān ensures it through the affirmation of the Life Hereafter and Final Accountability, and for that purpose it affirms the existence of Heaven for the former and of Hell for the latter:

“Then, when there comes the great, overwhelming Event,—the Day when Man shall remember (all) that he strove for, and Hell-Fire shall be placed in view for (all) to see,—then, for such as had transgressed all bounds (in rebellion against Truth and Goodness) and had preferred the life of this world (in respect of *indulgence* in the satisfaction of their lower Desires), his abode shall be Hell-Fire. And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from (the sway of) lower Desires, their abode will be the Garden.” (79:34-41).

[Note : Basic Principle no: 11, mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, shall be taken up in chapter 2 under ‘Heaven and Hell’.]



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## THE WORLD

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### 1

#### **COMPATIBILITY OF THE WORLD WITH SUCCESS IN THE REALISATION OF THE MORAL IDEAL**

We have seen that the Holy Qur'ān affirms Freedom of Will and Life-after-Death. But, along with the affirmation of these two verities, it is also necessary, for the realisation of the moral ideal, to affirm that the world is compatible in its origin, constitution and destiny with success in the moral struggle.



#### *1. BASIC QUESTIONS:*

Now, the questions that emerge in that respect, and their implications, are:

#### *A. With regard to Origin:*

- a. Did the world have an origin? Namely, is the existence of the world based on *creation*?
- b. If the world had an origin, did it originate essentially as a *moral* order?

It is a necessary requirement of the realisation of the moral ideal that the answers to both the above questions should be in the affirmative.

- a. Affirmation of *creation* is necessary, because:
  1. The concept of *creation* alone involves the necessary existence of an All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Controlling *Creator*. And His Wisdom, Power and Control are also proved in respect of being evident in the very constitution of the world as it exists.
  2. The existence of an All-Wise, All-Powerfull, All-Controlling Creator involves, in its turn, the necessary existence of a Plan and a Purpose in the working of the world.

In brief, affirmation of *creation* implies the existence of Plan and Purpose.

- b. Existence of Plan and Purpose is, however, not enough as such for ensuring the realisation of the moral ideal. What is needed is that, side by side with being a physical order, the world should also be in its Plan a moral order; and, as for its Purpose, it should refer directly to the realisation of the moral ideal.

***B. With regard to Constitution :***

- a. Is the world real?
- b. Is the world essentially good, and is it the best possible world?

- c. Is the basis for struggle ingrained in the very constitution of the world; and, if so, how?

It is a necessary condition of the realisation of the moral ideal that the answers to the above questions should be in the affirmative, because :

- a. The affirmation of the existence of the world independently of the percipient being, which is ingrained in the realistic consciousness of man, is indispensable for the idealistic attitude, because, unless the world *exists*, neither morality, nor the unification of knowledge under systematic categories, nor the possibility of turning the ugly into beautiful, nor the need for belief in the existence of God, can ever come into being, because dissatisfaction with what exists and the aspiration to transform it according to the demands of human yearnings will lose all validity. Hence it has to be affirmed, as the necessary requirement of the realisation of the moral ideal, that human beings, society and environment do exist with reference to which the moral agent has to adopt a particular attitude and has to wage a successful struggle within his domain.
- b. The essential goodness of the world implies that it is so constituted since its very origin that it is compatible with success in the struggle for the realisation of man's ideals, including the moral ideal.

That this world is the best possible world implies the highest degree of its goodness.

This is in contradistinction to the world-view entertained by pagan cultures, e.g., Hellenism, that the forces of nature are pitched in conspiracy against humanity for bringing about frustration in human struggles.

Thus, affirmation of the essential goodness of the world is a necessary condition for the realisation of the moral ideal.

- c. Affirmation of the existence of a basis for struggle in the very constitution of the world is a necessary requirement in that behalf, because, man being a part of the world, that alone will provide valid ground for the moral struggle. Again, that basis should be in the form of two opposing principles—one possessing positive character, the other possessing negative character; one representing the Good, the other representing Evil, existing in a state of perpetual conflict with one another—each one dominating the other by turns.

***C. With regard to Destiny:***

Is it enshrined in the very destiny of the world, in that, come what may, the realisation of the moral ideal—the final and total triumph of virtue over vice—is irrevocably assured?

The fact is that while the affirmative answers with respect to the previous questions envisage merely the *possibility* of the realisation of the moral ideal, that possibility is transformed into a *guarantee*



through the affirmative answer to this last question—which thus forms a vital condition in that regard.



## 2. IN THE LIGHT OF THE QUR'ĀN:

Turning to the Holy Qur'ān, we find that the different requirements affirmed in the foregoing with regard to the realisation of the moral ideal are contained explicitly in the guidance it offers. It says:

### 1. *The world is not eternal but has been created by God:*

*“To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: when He decrees a matter, He says to it: ‘Be’, and it is.” (2:117).*

He (i.e., Prophet Abraham) said: ‘Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, He Who brought *them into existence*: and I am a witness to this (truth).’ (21:56).

“Allah originates the creation (—nothing existing of its own accord or fortuitously) ...” (30:11).<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> As to the words *bada'a*, *faṭara*, *bada'a* used for the act of creation in the above verses: *Bada'a* stands for the very primal beginning; *Faṭara* implies, like *bada'a*, the creating of a thing out of nothing and after no pre-existing similitude, or, the creation of primeval matter to which further processes were applied later; *Bada'a* (without the 'ain) denotes beginning the process of creation. (Ref: Lane's *Arabic English Lexicon*).

2. *The world has been created by the All-Wise, All-Powerful, All-Controlling God with exquisite Plan and Design:*

“Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His Servant (Muhammad), that he may be unto all nations a Warner—He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: no son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion: It is He Who created every thing, and ordained for it a measure (establishing thereby exquisite Plan and Design).” (25:1-2).

“No want of proportion will you see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn your vision again. See you any flaw?” (67:3).

3. *The world created for a serious and definite Purpose:*

“We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, merely in (idle) sport: We created them not except for just ends, But most of them do not understand.” (44:38-39).

4. *Creation of the world is for a moral end—the world is a Moral Order:*

“And Allah has created the heavens and the earth with purpose (and for just ends) and in order that every soul may find the recompense of what it has earned, and none of them be wronged.” (45:22).

“Blessed is He in Whose hands (i.e., possession) is the Dominion, and He over all things has Power;—He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deeds: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving.” (67:1-2).

5. *The world is real:*

“And it is He Who has created the heavens and the earth in Truth (or, as real).” (6:73).

“Not falsely and without purpose did We create the heavens and the earth and all between! That were the thought of the Rejectors of Truth.” (38:27).

“Behold! in the constitution of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the Day and the Night, there are indeed Signs for those who possess and employ understanding. (They are those) who remember Allah standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) Creation in the heavens and the earth (and say): ‘Our Lord! You have created not all this falsely (and in vain).<sup>113</sup> Glory be to You! Preserve us from the doom of the Fire.’” (3:191).

Also, we have been told:

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<sup>113</sup> Here the Hindu doctrine of *Maya*, which regards the whole universe as an illusion, has been repudiated, affirming the reality of the world as we perceive it by our senses.

“(O Man!) pursue not that of which you have no knowledge (i.e., entertain no such opinion for which you have no sound reason to believe to be true). Verily, the hearing and the sight and the heart—each of these is accountable in respect of it.” (17:36).

It should be noted here that if the contents of sense experience be unreal, the accountability of the senses would become meaningless. Hence, the world, according to this verse also, is *real*.

6. *The world is essentially Good and it is the Best Possible World:*

“... He Who has made every thing which He has created Most Good ...” (33:7).

7. *Basis for struggle in the form of pairs of conflicting forces functioning under the Law of Opposites,<sup>114</sup> is ingrained in the very constitution of the world:*

“And in all things We have created pairs (—pairs of opposites and pairs of complimentaries—): that haply you may reflect (and obtain the guidance involved).” (51:49).

8. *Realisation of the Moral Ideal enshrined in the very Destiny of the world:*

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<sup>114</sup> This Law has been discussed in detail in the Author's forthcoming book on the “*Dynamics of Moral Revolution*”.

This point has been discussed and affirmed in detail in the section on “Life-after-Death”. Here we may quote just two verses:

The following verse refers to the success of the forces of the Good and the defeat of the forces of Evil, both in the earthly career of humanity and the Life Hereafter:

“Yes, to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth: so that He may recompense those who do evil according to their deeds, and He may reward those who do good with what is best.” (53:31).

The following verse speaks specially of the final and total triumph of the forces of the Good in the Life-Hereafter:

“Those who are god-fearing (i.e., cultivate and practise righteousness out of respect for Divine Pleasure) shall be (triumphant) above them (i.e., the Unbelievers in the principle of Submission to God—or, the unrighteous) on the Day of the Resurrection.” (2:212).



## 2

### **CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN AND HELL AS RELATED DIRECTLY TO THE MORAL IDEAL:**

Having discussed ‘the Man’ and ‘the World’ in their different relevant dimensions, we are now confronted with the question: What is the Qur’ānic conception of Heaven and Hell.

In that connection, we may consider the disparity that exists, in the earthly life of Man, between the Actual and the Ideal,—and exists as an irresolvable difficulty and an unsolvable problem, while the human heart is in dead earnest for the way out.

To elaborate:

<p><i>1. Nature of Physical Happiness:</i></p> <p>Only 'pleasure mixed with pain' possible.</p>	<p><i>1. Ideal of Physical Happiness:</i></p> <p>Possession of healthy and abiding Pleasure along with total absence of pain.</p>
<p><i>2. Nature of Moral Life:</i></p> <p>Performance of Duty under the stress of a two-fold limitation:</p> <p>a. want of absolute purity of the will;</p> <p>b. moral effort constantly frustrated by others.</p>	<p><i>2. Ideal of Morality:</i></p> <p>a. Possession of absolute purity of the Will.</p> <p>b. Realisation of the perfect Moral Order.</p>
<p><i>3. Nature of the Pursuit of Art:</i></p> <p>Beautification of a very minute portion of Reality, and that too in imperfect manner and measure, alone</p>	<p><i>3. Ideal of Art:</i></p> <p>Comprehensive beautification of the Self and the Environment</p>

possible.

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4. *Nature of the Pursuit of Knowledge:*

Knowledge of only an infinitesimally small portion of Reality, alone possible.

4. *Ideal of Knowledge:*

Possession of complete and direct knowledge of Reality.

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5. *Nature of the Pursuit of Religion:*

a. Indirect faith in religious verities on the testimony of the Prophet, or at best imperfect experience of those verities and communion with God from behind the veil: alone possible.

b. Holiness acquirable only in limited measure because of the continuous existence of devilish forces in the environment.

5. *Ideal of Religion:*

a. Acquiring direct and intimate experience of religious verities, including the Vision of God, the Really Real and the Source of all Grace.

b. Acquiring perfect holiness in accordance with human status.

Now:

*Heaven* is the realisation of the above ideals; while:

*Hell* bears reference to Evil Will, Ugliness, Deprivation of Communion with God, and Torture of different types, in consequence of the denial of the Source of Grace and of the conditions necessary for the realisation of the above-mentioned ideals.

The following verses <sup>115</sup> of the Holy Qur'ān concerning Heaven and Hell bear out the above statement:

*THE HEAVEN:*

- a. *Heaven as the reward of righteous life; Peace, Security, Eternal Life—nay, the realisation of all Positive human yearnings and ideals (mentioned above)—and even more:*

“And the Garden will be brought nigh to the righteous,—no more a thing distant. (Any they will be told:) ‘This is what was promised for you,—for everyone who turned (to Allah) in sincere repentance, who kept (His Law), who feared (the Displeasure of Allah) Most Gracious unseen, and brought a heart turned in devotion (to Him)—: Enter you therein in *Peace and Security*. This is the Day of *Eternal Life!*’ *There will be for them therein all that they yearn,*<sup>116</sup>*—and more besides in Our Presence.*” (50:31-35).

- b. *Abode of Peace:*

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<sup>115</sup> Only representative verses, which depict different aspects, have been quoted.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. 42:22.



“But Allah invites (humanity through the Holy Qur’ān) to the *Abode of Peace* (in which there shall be no fear, frustration or sorrow, but only perfect security from evil of all types).” (10:25).

“For them (i.e., the god-fearing righteous) there will be an *Abode of Peace* in the Presence of their Lord: He will be their Patron and Friend, because they practised (righteousness).” (6:127).

“Their salutation on the Day they meet Him will be ‘Peace !’; and He has prepared for them a generous reward.” (33:44).

c. *Absolute Purity of Will—Social Harmony and Love:*

The spirit of rancour and jealousy will be totally obliterated from the hearts of the righteous, giving place to absolute purity of will, on the one hand, and to love and harmony, on the other, and establishing genuine fraternal relations wherein each member of the fraternity of the righteous will enjoy his or her own dignity and will deal with others with joy and confidence. Also, the delights of Heaven will be perfect, for there will be absolute freedom from fear, frustration and sorrow and from toil and fatigue:

“The righteous (will be) amidst Gardens and springs. (And the greeting to them of the angels will be:) ‘Enter you here in peace and security’. *And We shall have removed whatsoever of rancour and jealousy and sense of injury may be in their hearts. (They will be) in fraternal relationship, (joyfully)*

facing each other on thrones (of dignity). There no sense of toil and fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave.” (15:45-48).

In the perfect felicity of the righteous all lurking memories of disappointments in earthly life shall be blotted out:

“And those who believe and work righteousness,—no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear,—they will be companions of the Garden, therein to dwell (for ever).

“And *We shall remove from their hearts whatsoever lurking sense of disappointment and injury there may have been*, rivers flowing beneath them; and they will say: ‘all praise unto Allah Who has guided us to this (felicity) ...’ (7:42-43).

*d. Company of the Blessed Servants of God:*

“And whosoever obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), then *those shall be in the company of those whom Allah has blessed*,—of the Prophets (who teach the Truth), the Sincere (who are lovers of Truth), the Witnesses (who testify to Truth through martyrdom), and the Righteous (who do good normally). Ah! what an Excellent (and Exalted) Fellowship! That is the Grace from Allah, and Allah suffices as Knower.” (4:69-70).<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> This verse refers to spiritual fellowship with members of the Righteous Hierarchy of four types of the Blessed Servants of God in the earthly life also. That fellowship will assume concrete shape in the Life Hereafter as

e. *Light will run before the inmates of Heaven and by their right hands:*

“(Mention the) Day whereon you (O Prophet!) shall see the believing men and the believing women, their Light running before them and by their right hand ...” (57:12).

f. *Light of Beauty and Blissful Joy:*

“But Allah will deliver them from the evil of that Day, and will shed over them a *Light of Beauty and a (Blissful) Joy.*” (76:11).

g. *Assembly of Truth in the Presence of God:*

“As to the god-fearing righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers, in an *Assembly of Truth*, in the Presence of the Sovereign Omnipotent.” (54:54-55).

h. *Direct Knowledge of the Cosmos:*

“Truly the Pious will be in Bliss: on thrones (of Dignity) will they command a sight (of all things): You will recognise in their faces the brightness of Bliss (as a result of the attainment of complete satisfaction at the realisation, among other ideals, of the ideal of Knowledge).” (88:22-24).

i. *Stabilisation in the state of Absolute Purity of the Will; Acquisition of Holiness; Attainment of complete peace and satisfaction; well-*

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Grace from God, (Hierarchy = a body classified in successively subordinate grades. Ref: *Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary*, section 'H').

*pleased with and well-pleasing to God; company of the righteous servants of the Lord;*<sup>118</sup> *entry into God's 'own' Heaven—the highest stage of Bliss:*

“(God will address the righteous thus:) O (you) soul that has attained complete peace and satisfaction! Come back you to your Lord,—well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter you, then, among My Devotees! Yes, enter you My Heaven!” (89:27-30).<sup>119</sup>

“Allah will say: This is a Day whereon their *truthfulness will benefit the truthful*. Theirs are Gardens beneath which rivers flow; (they shall be) abiders therein for ever: Allah well-pleased with them and they well-pleased with Him: that is the achievement supreme.” (5:122).

*j. Angels' salutation of Peace to the entrants; thanks-giving to God by the inmates; angels hymning praise of the Lord:*

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<sup>118</sup> Cf. 4:69-70.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. 98:7-8.

Mark that this verse states the stabilisation of harmony between the human will and the perfectly Holy Will, i.e., the Will of God. It is this harmony whereby alone Man attains absolute and abiding purity of the will and genuine human holiness. This state of blessed life is fed perennially through constant communion with God and is stabilised through direct Vision of Him. That has been mentioned in the verses that follow.

“And those who were careful of duty to their Lord will be led to the Garden in troops till, when they arrive there, and the portals thereof will be opened, the *keepers thereof will say unto them: ‘peace be unto you! well have you done! enter you here to dwell therein for ever’*.<sup>120</sup> They will say: ‘Praise be unto Allah, Who has truly fulfilled His promise to us, and has given us (this) land in heritage for (eternity), so that we may dwell in the Garden wherever we will: how excellent a reward for those who work (righteousness)’. And you (O Prophet!) will see *the angels surrounding the Throne (Divine) on all sides, singing Glory and Praise to their Lord*. The Decision between them (at Judgment) will be in (perfect) justice, and the cry (on all sides) will be: ‘Praise be to Allah, Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds’.” (39:73-75).

*k. Realisation of the highest Ideal in obtaining the Supreme Blessing of the Vision of God:*

“Faces (of the Righteous Servants of God) will, on that Day, beam (in brightness and beauty),—*looking towards their Lord*.” (75:22-23).

*l. Peace with God, Peace with Fellowbeings, Peace with the rest of God’s Creation, will be attained in the highest degree:*

“Those who believe and work righteousness,—their Lord will guide them because of their Faith: beneath them will flow

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<sup>120</sup> Cf. 16:32.

rivers in Gardens of Bliss. Their cry (of adoration to God, i.e., their loud chanting of hymn of prayer) therein will be 'Glory to You, O Allah!' and 'Peace' will be their greeting therein! and the close of their cry will be: 'Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds'." (10:9-10).

*m. Garden in nearness to God; eternal home; companions pure and holy; cool shades; highest satisfaction of the sentient aspect of the self in its transcendental transformation:*

"For the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord ..."  
(3:15).

"But give glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that their portion is *Gardens, beneath which rivers flow*. Everytime they are *fed with fruits therefrom*, they say: 'Why, this is what we were fed with before'. *For they are given things in similitude*: and they have therein companions pure (and holy)<sup>121</sup> and they *abide therein (for ever)*." (2:25).

*n. Happily employed, with the highest enjoyment suited to the heavenly life of the righteous; Greeting of 'Peace' from God:*

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<sup>121</sup> The participants in this 'companionship' will be men as well as women, and, as emphasised in this verse, this companionship will be based on purity and holiness and without any earthly grossness. Also, all objects of beauty and enjoyment, which have been mentioned symbolically in connection with the heavenly life, here and at different other places in the Qur'ān, will belong *equally* to men and women: both. (33:35).

“Verily the Companions of the Garden *shall that Day be happily employed*. They and their spouses will be in groves of (cool) shade, reclining on thrones (of dignity); every fruit <sup>122</sup> (i.e., highest enjoyment) will be there for them; *and they shall have whatever they call for*; <sup>123</sup> ‘Peace’—a Word (of greeting) from the Lord Merciful.”<sup>124</sup> (36:55-58).

*o. Enduring delights:*

“Their Lord gives them glad tidings of Mercy from Himself, of His Good Pleasure, and of Gardens for them, wherein are

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<sup>122</sup> As to the word *fākihātun*, employed in the Arabic original of the Qur’ānic text for the word ‘fruit’, it refers actually to an inner quality of heavenly life, because its root-word stands for: ‘to rejoice greatly’, ‘to be full of merriment’. Thus, what it actually emphasises is the notion of the ‘highest enjoyment’. Even in its literal sense, it should be taken to mean ‘fruit’ as possessing not earthly but transcendental nature.

<sup>123</sup> According to A. Yusuf Ali, “using the language of this life, the musician’s heaven will be full of music; the mathematician’s will be full of mathematical symmetry and perfection; the artist’s will be full of beauty of form, and so on.” (*op. cit.*, p. 1183, n. 4003). The fact that heavenly life will not be a static life—a life of idle duration, but a dynamic life—a life full of *activity and achievement*, as the statement in the verse under comment about being “happily employed” affirms, should be given due importance in this connection. (It will be a ‘life of achievement’ with reference to itself, and a ‘life of reward’ with reference to the earthly life lived previously).

<sup>124</sup> Cf. LXXVI : 14.

*Delights that endure*: they will dwell therein forever. Verily in Allah's Presence is a reward, the greatest (of all)." (4:21-22).

*p. Beautiful Mansions in Gardens:*

"Allah has promised to the Believers, men and women, Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and *beautiful mansions*<sup>125</sup> in Gardens of everlasting bliss. But *the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the achievement supreme.*"<sup>126</sup> (4:72).

*q. Costly adornments:*

"As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a (single) righteous deed.

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<sup>125</sup> Cf. "lofty mansions one above another", in description of Heaven in 39:20.

<sup>126</sup> Mark that the blessing of "Beautiful Mansions in Gardens" has been contrasted in this verse with the "Good Pleasure of Allah", emphasising about the latter that it is "the achievement supreme". Thus, it is plain that not only is the Qur'ānic ideal of heavenly life not anthropomorphic, as we shall discuss later, but even such enjoyments which bear affinity with the earthly enjoyments—of course, only nominally—do not constitute the real ideal but are only ancillary. In other words, *holiness* permeates the entire Qur'ānic concept of Heaven.



“For them will be *Gardens of Eternity*,<sup>127</sup> beneath which rivers flow: they will be adorned therein with *bracelets of gold*<sup>128</sup> and they will wear green garments of *fine silk*<sup>129</sup> and *heavy brocade*: they will recline therein on *raised thrones*.<sup>130</sup> How good the recompense! How beautiful a couch to recline on!” (18:30-31).<sup>131</sup>

*r. Hospitable homes:*

“For those who believe and work righteousness, are Gardens as *hospitable homes* (where they will be entertained as honourable guests), for their (good) deeds.” (32:19).

*s. No sorrow, no dull happiness:*

“Gardens of Eternity will they enter: therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments there will be of silk. And they will say: ‘Praise to Allah, *Who has removed us from (all) sorrow*: for our Lord is indeed Oft-

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<sup>127</sup> and not the gardens of this world.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. “bracelets of gold and pearls” in 22:23.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. 76:12.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. 76:13.

<sup>131</sup> All the blessings mentioned in verse 31 should be understood only in respect of their transcendental nature and form. The “Garden” as well as the adornments signify comfort, dignity and beauty. So also the things mentioned in the forthcoming verses.

Forgiving, ready to appreciate (service): Who has, out of His Bounty, settled us in the abode of permanence: no toil *nor sense of monotony* and weariness (in the enjoyment of perpetual happiness) shall touch us in it'." (35:33-35).

t. *Enjoyment of honour and dignity; passing round of the social cup; company of chaste women:*

“But the sincere servants of Allah,—for them is a sustenance determined, fruits (or Delights); and they (shall enjoy) honour and dignity, in Gardens of Felicity, facing each other on thrones (of dignity); around will be passed to them a *Cup*<sup>132</sup> *from a clear-flowing fountain*, crystal-white, of a taste delicious to those who drink (thereof), free from headiness, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom.<sup>133</sup> And besides them shall be *chaste women, restraining their glances*,<sup>134</sup> with large eyes (having grace and beauty) as though they were delicate eggs closely guarded.”<sup>135</sup> (37:40-49).<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Cf. “vessels of silver and goblets of crystal” (76:15-16). Also: “a Cup (full to the brim)” (78:34)

<sup>133</sup> Mark that the evil accompaniments of earthly sensate pleasures have been negated here totally, although such pleasures have been mentioned here as types.

<sup>134</sup> Mark the emphasis on chastity and lack of boldness. These characteristics relate to *moral purity*, which is an integral part of *holiness*.

<sup>135</sup> The implication is of natural beauty, innocence and grace.

*u. Complete happiness and perfect realisation of spiritual and aesthetic ideals:*

“It will be said unto the righteous:) ‘Enter you the Garden, and your spouses, in (beauty and) rejoicing. To them will be passed round dishes and goblets of gold:<sup>137</sup> and therein will be whatsoever souls desire and eyes delight in; and you will be therein abiders. Such will be the Garden of which you are made heirs for your (good) deeds (in earthly life). you shall

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<sup>136</sup> Cf. 37:49-54; 6:46-77; 56:10-12, 22-24, 32-40; 88:12-16.

<sup>137</sup> A very important fact is worthy of notice here. The Islamic view of righteousness is built up on the concept of simplicity—nay, even austerity, in life. Thus, self-control and self-sacrifice are its watch words, and the Path of Righteousness cannot be travelled, according to the Holy Quran, without avoiding indulgence in luxuries (79:40-41). This fact is thoroughly exemplified in the personality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and of every other Prophet of God—Jesus, Moses, Abraham, etc., and in the personalities of all the exemplary followers of Islam, like the Righteous Caliphs, the illustrious Imams, and the great Sufis.

Now, the heavenly ideal consists in the attainment of perfection adequate to human personality in respect of the rational, moral and spiritual values. The luxuries denied to themselves by the righteous in the earthly life will, however, be compensated *in a transcendental and hallowed form*, in keeping with the holiness of Heaven, as a further reward implying the perfection also of the sentient dimension of human personality which it lived in its earthly life.

have therein abundance of fruit, from which you shall have satisfaction.” (43:70-73).

v. *No further death.*

“As to the Righteous (they will be) in a position of Security, among Gardens and Springs; dressed in fine silk and in rich brocade,<sup>138</sup> they will face each other. Thus it shall be; and We shall join them to Companions with beautiful and lustrous eyes (*Hūr*<sup>139</sup> *ūin*). They will call therein for every kind of fruit in peace and security;<sup>140</sup> and *they will not taste Death therein*, except the first death (which removed them from their earthly life); and He will preserve them from the torments of the Flaming Fire,—as Bounty of Grace from your Lord! That (Bounty of Grace) will be the Supreme Achievement!” (44:51-57).

w. *Delicious drinks; Grace from the Lord; no vain discourse; Salutations of Peace; Sustenance:*

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<sup>138</sup> Cf. 75:21.

<sup>139</sup> The word *Hūr* implies the following ideas: “(1) *purity*; possibly the word *Hawāriyyūn*, as applied to the first Disciples of Jesus, is connected with this root; (2) *beauty*, especially of eyes, where the intense white of the eye-balls stands out against the intense black of the pupil, thus giving the appearance of lustre, and intense feeling, as opposed to dullness or want of expression; and (3) *truth and good will*.” ( A.Yusuf Ali, *op.cit.*,p.1352, n.4729 )

<sup>140</sup> Cf. 69:21-24.

“(Here is) a *Parable*<sup>141</sup> of the Garden which the (god-fearing) righteous are promised: in it are *rivers of water* incorruptible; *rivers of milk* of which the taste never changes; *rivers of wine*, a joy to those who drink; and *rivers of honey* pure and clear. In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and *Grace from their Lord*.”<sup>142</sup> (47:15).

“Gardens of Eternity, those which the Most Gracious (Allah) has promised to His servants in the Unseen; for His promise must (necessarily) come to pass.”

“*They will not hear any vain discourse therein*,<sup>143</sup> but only *salutations of Peace*<sup>144</sup> and therein they will have their

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<sup>141</sup> Note the word ‘parable’. The water, the milk, the wine, the honey, the fruits, as also all other things which bear reference to earthly life but have been mentioned in connection with the life in Heaven, are symbolisms, whose true nature is known to God alone, and the words used denote the heavenly blessings metaphorically only; and they are meant to convey to us the truth that the heavenly blessings are real and meaningful.

Thus, the four drinks mentioned in this verse refer to those heavenly blessings which will refresh the spirits, nourish the personalities, warm up the hearts and sweeten the lives of the righteous.

<sup>142</sup> Mark the mention of bestowal of ‘Grace from the Lord’, which represents all *spiritual delights*, after the mention of such blessings as bear reference to earthly life—in this verse, as well as in other verses of the Holy Qur’ān.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. “No vanity shall they hear therein, nor untruth.” (78:35). Also: 88:11.

*sustenance*,<sup>145</sup> morning and evening (i.e., always).<sup>146</sup> Such is the Garden which We will give as an inheritance to those of Our servants who guard against evil.”<sup>147</sup> (19:61-62).<sup>148</sup>

*x. Social bliss; Family re-union; Fruits and meat; No frivolity, nor taint of ill; Service:*

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<sup>144</sup> “*Salām*, translated ‘Peace’, has a much wider signification. It includes: (1) a sense of security and permanence, which is unknown in this life; (2) soundness, freedom from defects, perfection, as in the word *sālim*; (3) preservation, salvation, deliverance, as in the word *sallama*; (4) salutation. accorded with those around us; (5) resignation, in the sense that we are satisfied and not discontented; beside (6) the ordinary meaning of Peace, i.e., freedom from any jarring element. All these shades of meaning are implied in the word *Islam*. Heaven therefore is the perfection of *Islam*.” (A.Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p.780. n. 2512).

<sup>145</sup> Namely, provision of all the requirements for the fulfilment of human destiny in the transcendental dimension of existence in Heaven.

<sup>146</sup> According to Abdul Majid Daryabadi “... ‘morning’ and ‘evening’ are only used in relative sense, so as to be comprehended by us, as there will be no actual sunset in the Paradise.” (*op.cit.*, p. 500). But, in the view of the present writer, there is a possibility of some phenomena of transcendental or metaphysical nature in Heaven akin in some sense to morning and evening in our present dimension of existence.

<sup>147</sup> Note the emphasis on all such occasions on moral merit, which should, of course, be combined with true relationship with God.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. 56:25-33.

“As to the god-fearing righteous, they will be in Gardens and in Happiness,—enjoying the (Bliss) which their Lord has bestowed on them, and their Lord shall deliver them from the torment of the Fire. (To them will be said:) ‘Eat and drink with profit and health, because of your good deeds’. They will recline (in comfort) on thrones (of dignity) arranged in ranks, and We shall join them to Companions with beautiful, big and lustrous eyes. *And those who believe and whose families follow them in Faith,—to them We shall join their families:* nor shall We deprive them (of the fruit) of anything of their works: (yet) is each individual in pledge for his deeds. And We shall bestow on them of fruit and meat—anything they shall desire. They shall there exchange, one with another, a (loving) *cup*<sup>149</sup> free of frivolity, free of all taint of ill. Round about will serve,

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<sup>149</sup> Cf. “As to the *abrār* (i.e., those perfect in Piety), they shall drink of a cup whereof the admixture (or, odour) is (like unto) camphor.” (76:5).

Also: “And they will be given therein to drink of a cup the admixture (or, odour) whereof is (like unto) ginger,—from a fountain therein named *salsabīl*” (76:17-18).

Also: “Their thirst will be slaked with Pure Wine sealed: the seal thereof will be Musk: and for this (i.e., the blessings of heaven described in verses 22-24 and in this verse) let those aspire, who have aspiration (for eternal happiness): with it will be given a mixture of *Tasnīm*: a spring from (the waters) whereof drink those Nearest to God (*muqarrabūn*).” (83:25-28).

(devoted) to them, youths (handsome) as pearls well-guarded (i.e., of exquisite beauty).”<sup>150</sup> (52:17-24).

y. *Fragrance for the ‘Nearest-to-God’ and mutual greetings of Peace among the Companions of the Right Hand:*

“Thus, then, if he be of the ‘Nearest-to-God’ (*muqarrabūn*), (there is for him) *comfort* and *fragrance* and a Garden of Delights. And if he be of the Companions of the Right Hand, (for him is the salutation:) ‘*Peace be unto you*’, *from the Companions of the Right Hand.*” (56:88-91).

z. *Realm magnificent:*

“And when you look (at the Heaven), it is there you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent.” (76:20).

### ***Two Important Points :***

There are two important points which must be kept in view while considering the Qur’ānic conception of Heaven and trying to understand the real implication of the verses relating thereto. The points are:

1. Before the Day of Judgment, the world will be destroyed and re-created in a new form:

“One day the earth will be changed into a different earth, and so will be the heavens ...” (14:48).

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<sup>150</sup> Cf. 76:19.



As for the human beings, they also will be re-created in a new form:

“We have decreed death to be your common lot, and We are not to be frustrated from changing *your forms* and *creating you (again) in (forms) that you know not*. And you certainly know already the first form of (your) creation. Why then you heed not?” (56:60-62).

Thus the conditions of life and nature of experience, in the next world will be so different from what we know and experience now in the phenomenal world that presently we can only imagine it and must find it impossible to comprehend it truly:

“Now no person knows what delights of the eyes <sup>151</sup> are, kept hidden (in reserve) for them (in Heaven)—as a reward for their (good) Deeds.” (32:17).

2. Now life and experience in Heaven (as also in Hell) being on a different plane, it can be described to us here only by symbols and metaphors. And this is what the Holy Qur’ān has plainly affirmed; as, for instance, when it gives the description of delicious drinks in Heaven, it starts that description with the words:

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<sup>151</sup> “delights of the eyes” is an idiom for that which gives the highest satisfaction. It should not be taken to mean sensuous pleasure.

“(Here is) a *parable* of the Garden which the righteous are promised.” (47:15).

Thus *the entire Qur'ānic description of Heaven and Hell is symbolical*, and it would be the greatest intellectual dishonesty on the part of anyone to try to understand it in the literal sense.

The critics of Islam have stumbled especially in connection with the description of the delights of Heaven. But, as explained, the description there has been given through the medium of symbols and metaphors which actually have very profound and rich spiritual connotation.

***Recapitulation:***

Having made the above clarification, we may now state that the description of Heaven in the Holy Qur'ān contains the following basic elements:

1. Immortality;
2. Peace ;
3. Absolute Purity of the Will enjoyed by all;
4. Social Harmony and Love;
5. Companionship of the Blessed Servants of God;
6. Light;
7. Beauty;
8. Truth;

9. Direct Experience of Reality;

10. Holiness;

11. Happiness.

No. 1 forms the basic human yearning in connection with the realisation of all human ideals.

Nos. 2 to 5 form the ideal of Morality.

Nos. 6 and 7 form the ideal of Aesthetic Enjoyment.

Nos. 8 and 9 form the ideal of Knowledge.

No. 10 forms the ideal of Religion.

No. 11 forms the ideal of the Sentient Self.

Thus the realisation of all healthy human yearnings and ideals has been affirmed in the Qur'ānic conception of Heaven.

Re-stating this fact in other words: The form of human personality—its constitution—will be changed in the next world. It will exist in a different dimension—on a different plane,—with all the grossness and carnality of its earthly physical existence removed. Thus the individual will enjoy all that he desires here in respect of physical happiness, but he will enjoy it in a sublimated form, i.e., without the grossness and other limitations of physical existence. *It will not be physical happiness but beatitude, i.e., heavenly happiness—happiness of the highest kind, all spiritual delights, having been figured forth from parallel experiences in our present life.*

He will also enjoy the aesthetic pleasures, but those pleasures shall be free of all morbidity and grossness, experienced as they will be on the non-physical plane.

Thus the ideals of physical happiness and aesthetic enjoyment will be realised in Heaven to the full but on a higher level—the level of *holiness*,—and all that as a reward of moral effort and the maintenance of true relationship with God in this earthly life.<sup>152</sup>

And not only that. Man's moral effort and his trials and sufferings in the Way of God—in the Path of God-orientated Righteousness—shall culminate in Heaven in the perfect realisation of the moral ideal, i.e., the attainment of Moral Bliss and Social Bliss.

The reward, however, will not end there. The recipients of heavenly life shall be blessed with the direct knowledge of the Reality of the Cosmos. Then, even beyond that: they will be blessed with the direct Vision of God, the Really-Real, the Source of all that exists.

And they will be blessed not only with the direct Vision of God, but will live in Divine Presence and will be fed by Divine Pleasure eternally—increasing qualitatively in holiness and employed happily all the time, each individual in accordance with his individual taste, calibre and destiny.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> The Holy Qur'ān has stated this fact clearly and beautifully in verses 3:14-17.

<sup>153</sup> That there are numerous degrees in good and evil, in respect of the deeds and motives of human beings, and that, consequently, there will be degrees in

## THE HELL:

As regards Hell, it has been mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān as punishment for the rejectors of Truth (2:24; etc.) and the wrong-doers (50:25; etc.), wherever Heaven has been mentioned as a reward for the righteous,—and it has been described as a contrast of Heaven. Its symbol is the Fire (2:24; etc.), in contrast to the Garden, which is the symbol of Heaven. “(It is) the *Fire* of God (namely, having come into existence under the command of God) kindled (to a blaze), which *rises above the hearts: It shall be made into a vault over them, in columns outstretched*” (104:7-9). In other words, the hell-fire originates within the hearts of those who reject the Source of Goodness, namely, God, and the Pattern of Goodness, namely, the Prophet of God, and nurture evil in their breasts. They will be those “to whom God will not speak, nor will He look at them on the Day of Judgment; nor will He purify them (on that Day)” (2:77). And because on the hearts of those who earn Hell in this life “is the stain of the (evil) which they do, verily, from (the Light of) their Lord, that Day, will they be veiled” (83:14-15), becoming thus deprived of all the Blessings which will flow to the inmates of Heaven from the Bounties of God. The life of the inmates of Hell will, indeed, be a life of roasting in agony (4:56; 14:17; 25:13-14; 25:55; 32:20). They will be

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respect of rewards and the respective spiritual positions of the recipients of heavenly life, has been affirmed in the following verse of the Holy Qur’ān: “For all (morally-responsible beings) will be degrees (of rewards) in accordance with that which they did.” (6:132).

held in bondage to the punishment brought on them by their evil beliefs and evil deeds (32:19-22; 69:30-37). Their faces will be covered with humiliation (88:23-26), and their surroundings will be pervaded by ugliness and darkness “in the shades of Black Smoke: nothing will there be to refresh, nor to please: for that they were wont to indulge, before that, in wealth (and luxury), and persisted obstinately in wickedness supreme!” (56:43-46). Their life will be a life of horrible misery, even in respect of their “foods” and “drinks” which will be of the most painful type (14:17; 14:49-50; 37:62-67; 44:43-48; 55:43-44; 56:52-55; 78:21-25). In short, the conditions of life in Hell shall be the exact opposite of those we have described in detail in connection with Heaven. Life in Heaven being the life of Fulfilment, life in Hell will reflect the Agony attendant on Frustration, in the onward march towards the realisation of Human Destiny. The nature and the measure of punishment will vary in respect of the denizens of Hell, even as reward will vary in the case of the inmates of Heaven (6:132).



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### Chapter 3

## THE GOD (*ALLĀH*)

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Although morality may be regarded as conceivable inspite of disbelief in God's existence, moral consciousness is denuded of all enthusiasm for moral struggle without a dynamic faith in God.

Moreover, the appearance of incompatibility with the realisation of the moral ideal which the world gives, and the imperfections from which Man suffers, on the one hand, and Man's state of dissatisfaction with the Actual and his yearning to transform it into the Ideal, on the other, form a source of agony for him; and the human soul yearns for an all-Perfect Being Who, through His interference, and out of sheer Grace, may guide him on the *straight path* to success in the realisation of his ideal, inspite of the internal and external obstacles.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Cf. The prayer that the Holy Qur'ān has taught—a prayer for beseeching Divine Guidance, a prayer obligatory for a Muslim to recite in all the institutional Prayers that he has been commanded to offer: "Guide us (O Lord!) unto the Straight Path—the path of those on whom You have bestowed your Grace, not of those whose portion is Wrath nor of those who go astray" (1:6-7).

Through this prayer a Muslim aspires for guidance in order to bring about, preserve and promote the Islamic social order—a social order which is meant to be constituted of spiritually and morally integrated individuals. Such individuals, it may be emphasised, cannot be evolved except through



Also: Creation, which has been already proved to be the necessary requirement of the realisation of the moral ideal, implies necessarily the existence of an All-Powerful, All-Wise, All-Controlling Creator, Who is also the Moral Ruler of the universe.

Thus the affirmation of the existence of God from the point of view of moral consciousness is a necessity.

The question now arises: It being so, what are the Divine Attributes that are indispensable in respect of Man's success in his moral struggle?

Such Attributes are:

1. God should be the *Creator* of everything in the world, in order that the world and everything belonging to it may be amenable to His interference.
2. He should be *Eternal*, in order to be capable of functioning and interfering at all stages in the life of the universe.
3. He should be *Omnipotent* (Almighty), and
4. *Omnipresent*, and
5. *Omniscient*, in order to have *perfect control* not only over the universe as a system but also over discreet events and objects.

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intensive and extensive moral struggle, wherein success can be possible only through Divine Guidance and Grace: "And whosoever has faith in Allah, He guides his heart (to the path of success)." (64:11).

6. He should be the *Possessor of Perfect Wisdom*, in order that He may be capable of acting unerringly in guiding Man in his struggles, including the moral struggle.
7. He should be *the Guide*, i.e., the possessor of the Will to guide human beings in their moral struggle.
8. He should be the *Possessor of Mercy and Love*, in order that help to human beings may be the inherent demand of His nature.
9. He should be *Capable of Response*, in order that human beings may approach Him with confidence in times of need and may commune with Him.
10. &
11. Since it is possible that Man may remain, at some stage of his life, indifferent to the demands of his moral nature and subsequently he may have the despair that the wrongs and the evil deeds committed by him cannot be undone, and that therefore their evil effects cannot be avoided—a despair that must kill the enthusiasm to lead a morally-good life,—God should be the *Forgiver of sins* and the *Acceptor of Repentance*; thereby ensuring the possibility of acquiring enthusiasm for participation in the moral struggle even for the worst evil-doer.
12. The duality of human nature and the conflict thereof form a hinderance in respect of Man's rising to his full moral

stature, and it is difficult for him to stick in his actions to the purest moral standard as regards the motive.

Hence, *God should be the possessor of the Will to remove the deficiencies in the consequences of the morally-good actions* through His unbounded Grace. In other words, he should be the *Possessor of Unbounded Grace*.

13. He should be the *Debaser of Evil* and the *Avenger of Wrongs* in order to assist the righteous in their moral struggle.
14. Since the consequences of good and evil do not mature during the earthly life of the individual, He should be the *Sovereign of the Day of Judgment*, in order to act as the *Judge Supreme* for recompensing good and evil in the requisite measure, whereby alone the moral ideal can be realised.
15. He should be '*Above-every-want*', i.e., independent of everyone else and everything, and, also, He should be capable of fulfilling every conceivable need of every one.
16. He *should not suffer from any infirmities*, in order that His relation with the world and Man remains immune from all deviational defects.
17. He should be *al-Rabb* (i.e., *the Evolver and the Perfector*), in order that human beings can be successful with certainty,

through Him, in their struggle for moral and spiritual perfection.

18. He should be positively *Righteous* in all His actions, in order to be the Helper of the righteous unflinchingly.
19. He should be *Perfectly Holy*, i.e., *Possessor of Absolute Good*, in order that His relationship with His creatures may not be tainted with evil even in the smallest measure.
20. He should be *the One and the Unique*, with no compeer who may challenge His authority in any manner and in any respect whatsoever.
21. He should be *the Perfect Being*, in order that human beings may be able to attain perfection adequate to their nature, including moral perfection—through His Grace.

The Holy Qur'ān affirms all the above-mentioned Attributes of God:

1. *He is the Creator of everything, having originated the existence of everything:*

“The Originator (*Badī'*) of the heavens and the earth.”  
(2:177).

“Say: O Allah! Creator (*Fāṭir*) of the heavens and the earth (*ab novo*)! ...” (39:46).

“Allah is the Creator (*Khāliq*) of all things, and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs.” (39:62).

“He is Allah, the Creator (*Khāliq*), the Evolver (*Bārī*), the Bestower of Forms (*Muṣawwir*). To Him belong the Most Excellent Names.” (59:24).

2. *He is the Self-Existent, the Eternal:*

“Allah! There is no God save He,—*the Ever-Living, the Self-Existent, the Eternal*. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. Unto Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him save by His leave? He knows what (appears to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind. Nor shall they encompass of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne does extend over the heavens and the earth, and the guarding of the twain wears Him not. For He is the Sublime, the Supreme.” (2:255).

3. *He is Omnipotent, and*

4. *He is Omnipresent, and*

5. *He is Omniscient:*

a. *As to His Omnipotence.*<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Besides the Attributes contained in 3:189 and 85:16, there are, in the Holy Qur’ān, several others also which bear reference to God’s Greatness, Majesty and Omnipotence. For instance: the Sublime, the Most High, the Exalted, the

“To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and Allah has Power over all things.” (3:189).

“(Allah is) the Doer of all that He intends.” (85:16).

b. As to His *Omnipresence*:

“... and He it is that encompasses all things.” (4:126).

“... and whithersoever you turn, there is Allah’s countenance. Lo! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.” (2:115).

“He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah is Seer of what you do.” (57:4).

c. As to *Omniscience*:

“... and He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.” (42:11).

“Verily Allah has perfect knowledge of all things.” (29: 62).

“(Allah is) Knower of the Invisible<sup>156</sup> and the Visible,<sup>157</sup> and He is All-Wise (and) the Perfectly-Informed (of all events and things).” (6:73).

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Supreme, the Great, the Most Great, the Exalted in Might, the Strong, the Prevaler, the Irresistible, the Almighty, the Lord of Majesty and Honour.

<sup>156</sup> i.e., whatever is kept secret, whatever has happened in the past or is to happen in future.

<sup>157</sup> i.e., whatever is open and public, whatever is happening at a given moment.

“And Allah is ever Watcher over all things.” (33:52).

“Verily Allah is over everything a Witness.”<sup>158</sup> (22:17).

“... and that Allah comprehends all things in (His) Knowledge.” (65:12).

6. *He is the Possessor of Perfect Wisdom:*

“And unto Him (alone) belongs Majesty in the heavens and on the earth; and He is Exalted in Power, Possessor of Perfect Wisdom.” (45:37).

7. *He possesses the Will to guide:*

“And your Lord suffices as Guide and Helper.” (25:31).

“... for verily Allah is the Guide of those who believe (in His guidance), to the Straight Way.” (22:54).

“Glorify the name of your Guardian-Lord Most High, Who created, and bestowed order and proportion; Who has ordained laws and has guided (all things to their goal) ...” (87:1-3).

8. *He is the Possessor of Mercy and Love:*

“All Praise unto Allah, the Cherisher, Sustainer, Evolver and Perfector of (all) the Worlds, the Compassionate, the Merciful.”<sup>159</sup> (1:1-2).

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<sup>158</sup> (so He will requite everyone according to his deeds).

“He is the One that sends down the saving rain after they have despaired, and scatters His Mercy (far and wide). He is the Protecting Friend, the Praiseworthy.” (42:28).

“... and He is the Forgiving, the Loving.” (85:14).

9. *He is Responsive to Supplications:*

“(Says Allah:) When My servants ask you (O Muhammad!) concerning Me, then surely I am near (to them). I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he cries unto Me ...” (2:186).

“... then ask forgiveness of Him, and turn to Him (in repentance): for my Lord is (always) near, Responsive (unto those who supplicate Him).” (11:61).

10. &

11. *He is the Forgiver of Sins and Acceptor of Repentance:*

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<sup>159</sup> Commenting on Allah’s Attribute of Mercy, Abdul Majid Daryabadi says: “Both words *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* are derived from *Rahmah* which signifies tenderness, requiring the exercise of beneficence and thus comprising the idea of love and mercy. Both are intensive forms. The former denotes tenderness towards all His creatures in general, and the latter towards His worshippers in particular. The Divine attribute of *Rahmah* may on analysis be found to have the following as its components:—(1) His provision of everything beforehand that could be needed by man in the world: (2) His concern for the well-being of man, both in life and death; (3) His tenderness for man’s helplessness; and (4) a disposition on His part to deal kindly and generously with man.” (*op.cit.*, p. 2, n. 15).



*a. As Forgiver of Sins*

“And Allah knows (all) that is in your hearts: and Allah is All-knowing, Most Forbearing.” (33:51).

“Verily He is the Benign (or Beneficent), the Merciful.” (52:28).

“Verily, Allah is Most Kind and Most Merciful to human beings.” (22:65).

“Verily, Allah is One that blots out (sins) and forgives again and again.” (22:60).

“... the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all between,—the Exalted in Might, Able to enforce His Will, Most Forgiving.” (38:66).

*b. As Acceptor of Repentance:*

“Know they not that Allah does accept repentance from his votaries and receives their gifts of charity, and that Allah is surely Oft-Returning (in accepting repentance), Most Merciful.” (9:104).

*12. He is the Possessor of Unbounded Grace:*

“... and Allah is the Possessor of Unbounded Grace.” (8:29).

*13. He is the Debaser of Evil and the Avenger of wrongs:*

“And those who earn evil deeds, (for them) the requital of each evil deed is by the like thereof; and ignominy overtakes them ...” (25:19).

“And who among you does wrong, We shall make him taste great torment (unless he repents and adopts the path of Righteousness).” (10:28).

14. *He is the Sovereign of the Day of Judgment and the Judge Supreme:*

“(All) Praise unto Allah, the Evolver and the Perfector of (all) the Worlds; the Compassionate, the Merciful; *Sovereign of the Day of Judgment.*” (1:1-3).

“And He is the Supreme over His creatures, and He sends guardians over you until when death comes unto (any) one of you, Our messengers (i.e., angels) take his soul, and they fail not. Then they all shall be taken back unto Allah, their true Master. Lo! *His shall be the judgment.* And He is Most Swift in taking account.” (6:61-62).

15. *He is ‘Above-every-want’, while all depend on him:*

“O you men! It is you that have the need of Allah: but Allah is the One Free of all wants, Worthy of all praise.” (35:15).

“And whosoever disbelieves, (let him know that) lo! Allah is Independent of (all) the creatures.” (3:97).

16. *He does not suffer from any infirmities, emotional or otherwise:*

“Verily Allah! He is the Great Provider of Sustenance, Lord of Power, Steadfast (for ever).” (51:58).

17. *He is al-Rabb, i.e., the Evolver and the Perfector:*

“All praise is due to Allah, the *Rabb*, i.e., the Sustainer, the Nourisher, the Evolver, the Perfector, of all the Worlds.” (1:1).

“Say: shall I seek for my *Rabb* other than Allah, while He is the *Rabb* of all things (that exist).” (6:164).

“(Allah is the) *Rabb* of the heavens and the earth, and of all that is between them: so worship Him, and be constant and patient in His worship: Know you of any who is worthy of the same Name (and status) as He?” (19:65).

18. *He is positively Righteous :*

“Lo! my Lord is on the Straight Path.” (11:56).

19. *He is perfectly Holy and the Possessor of all Good:*

“Allah is He, than Whom there is no other God;—He the Sovereign, *the all-Holy*, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Protector, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. Glory to Allah! (High is He) above all that they associate (with Him).” (59:23).

“... O Allah! ... In your hand is all Good.” (3:26).

20. *He is the One and the Unique:*

“... And He is the one (or, the sole God), the Almighty.” (13:16).

“Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the Absolute, the Perfect. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there has never

been co-equal with Him anyone (and, as such, He is the Unique).” (112:1-4).

“... Not like unto Him is aught ...” (42:11).

21. *He is the Absolute, the Perfect:*

“Allah (is) the Absolute, the Perfect.” (112:2).

