

THE QUR'ĀNIC FOUNDATIONS &
STRUCTURE OF MUSLIM SOCIETY
VOLUME TWO



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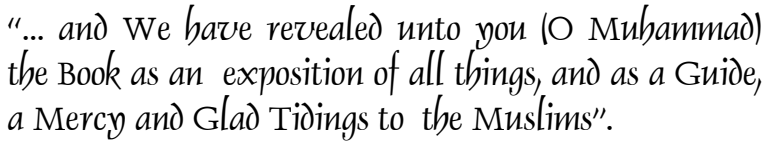
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Chapter 1.

THE MORAL CODE: WHY AND HOW?

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Chapter 1.

THE MORAL CODE: WHY AND HOW?

1. NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CODE OF LIFE:

Human life moves under the impact of different types of conflicts. To start with: there exists a conflict between the individual's theoretical yearnings and that to an extent that the fulfillment of one implies the frustration of another. For instance, in the field of Ethics, the yearning for Knowledge implies 'causality' and 'necessity', while the yearning for Morality affirms 'freedom'; and, in the domain of Metaphysics, the yearning for Knowledge demands the affirmation of the principles of 'unfolding' and 'immanence', while the yearning for Religion insists on accepting the validity of the principles of 'creation' and 'transcendence'. Secondly, there is the problem of the emergence of conflicts in the life of the individual at the instinctive level. For instance, the parental instinct which forces the parents to behave tenderly and affectionately towards the offspring stands in direct conflict with the instinct of self-assertion which requires the adoption of a stern attitude when the offspring commits an act of disobedience. Thirdly, the instinctive nature of the individual comes into conflict with his rational nature. Fourthly, the ideals embedded in the individual's rational nature may—and, its fact, do—come into conflict

with one another. Fifthly, every individual is unique in respect of his or her past experiences and environmental factors, and this uniqueness becomes the breeding ground of conflicts between individual and individual. Then, beyond the individual level, existence of conflicts between the individual and the society is a fact of human life. Lastly, the narrow racial, territorial and ideological loyalties and economic interests of different communities and nations become sources of conflicts which threaten the very existence of humanity, as they are doing nowadays,—not to speak of the realization of the spiritual and moral ideals.

In such a situation of manifold conflicts and of the dangers involved in respect of realization of the highest human ideals, the question emerges in the mind of every thoughtful and conscientious person: “How ought I to behave to realize my ideals?” In other words: “What should be the Code for determining my conduct?”

The Holy Qur’ān provides the answer to that all-important question by imparting sure¹ and complete² guidance in all the different problems of human life, including the metaphysical and ethical problems with which philosophy deals, and a comprehensive and genuine Moral Code.

Viewing the problem of the need for a Code from another angle: It is the Code which imparts *uniform pattern of behavior and the bond of community* to the group. It also creates optimistic outlook on life and forms the sure ground for progress. Because, if the individuals who constitute a group have a Code to govern their modes of

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behavior, they will always have a genuine and firm basis for reciprocal social responses.³ On the contrary, if a human group is devoid of a Code with social reference, as we find in respect of the Christian and the Greek pagan outlooks, the consequence shall be the emergence of a pessimistic view of life along with all its resultant evils.



2. BASIS OF SYSTEMATISATION OF THE QUR'ĀNIC MORAL CODE – THE QUR'ĀNIC IDEAL:

The effort to systematize the Moral Code has passed through several stages in the history of human thought. Among the ancients, it was Aristotle who gave a classification that is based on the main psychological aspects of human nature, viz., Knowing, Feeling and Willing. The highest virtue pertaining to Knowing is Wisdom, pertaining to Feeling is Temperance, and pertaining to willing is Courage, while Justice governs them all. But the Greek mind does not seem to have developed its moral consciousness properly,⁴ and that because of the fact that, as the historical account of Greek civilization available today shows, it was pagan in character and possessed no proper conception of 'personality'; whereas morality is inseparably related to 'personality' and seems to have developed under the impact of the teachings of revealed religions and not otherwise.⁵

Among the philosophers of the modern age, it was Kant who made an important contribution. But his emphasis on the form of the Moral Law as the standard of morality and his attitude of leaving the

contents of that Law to be traced from the established morality and the moral situation did not provide much lead in respect of the Moral Code, though the importance of his contribution to Moral Philosophy cannot be denied without injustice. Kent did furnish us with a classification of duties in order to complete his ethical system. But, the Code prescribed by him is through and through ideational and individualistic in character, because it does not attach importance to the duties of the moral agent towards the societal whole, nor is there any reference to the duties of the societal whole to its parts. This appears to be due to his limitation that he was born and lived in Christian environment,—the Christian point of view being that man's socio-cultural yearnings are inherently incompatible with his spirituo-moral yearnings.

What, then, is the basis of systematization of the Qur'ānic Moral Code? Answer to this question necessitates the statement of the Qur'ānic Ideal, which emerges in the following terms:

The Qur'ān places equal emphasis on the sensate and the transcendental yearnings of man⁶ and harmonizes them; and thus it lays down for humanity a comprehensive Ideal, which consists in the cultivation of: (1) Holiness based on a dynamic, vibrant and living faith in God, an earnest and courageous pursuit of Truth, and an ever present consciousness of Final Accountability; (2) sound and comprehensive Morality; (3) social, economic and political Justice; (4) Knowledge in all its dimensions; and (5) Aesthetic Grace,—all of these resulting in the conquest of harmful propensities within the individual, the conquest of evil within the society, and the conquest of

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the physical environment, or, Nature. In the pursuit of this Ideal, Holiness, Love for Humanity, Truth, Justice, Beauty, Discipline and Progress are the watchwords, while the concept of Unity⁷ permeates the entire movement towards the Ideal, and the motto of ‘simple living, hard labour and high thinking’ forms the wheel of progress.



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Chapter 2.

CLASSIFICATION OF DUTIES

1. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

The function of the Code should be the realization of the Ideal and the actualization of the norms that it implies.

Before we proceed to the structural constituents of systematization, however, it is necessary to establish the Qur'ānic point of view with respect to the concepts of 'Duty' and 'Right'.

Duty and Right:

The Qur'ānic moral code is based on the emphasis on 'obligation' or 'duty' in contrast to the emphasis on 'right' (5:48; etc.). Now, the implications of the emphasis respectively on duty and right are:

Right is a right against someone. Duty is a duty *towards* someone. Right means that someone else owes something to us. For, when we say: 'it is our right', it means that someone has to perform a duty to us. On the contrary when we say; 'it is our duty', it means that someone has a right against us.

The emphasis on duty creates *harmony* in social life, because if everyone were to concentrate on his or her duty, the emphasis on

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grumbling for rights will naturally vanish. On the contrary, the emphasis on rights creates *strife*, because if everyone were to think about his rights on others, he would hardly have the mind to think of his duties towards others. The immense increase in quarrels and strifes between the different classes of human beings, as for instance, between laborers and capitalists, and between races and nations, which we find in the world today, is the direct outcome of the emphasis on rights. As regards the political life in different countries, the subjects or citizens clamor for their rights more than taking pains for fulfilling their duties towards their fellow-beings, the state and the country. Everyone tries thus to transfer blame to the shoulders of others, and the confusion gets worse confounded. This state of affairs will not improve unless the world adopts the Qur'ānic emphasis on duty.

Then, the emphasis on duty creates *unity* among human beings, because it is built up on the idea and the sentiment of sympathy,—sympathy in the sense that in fulfilling our duty we have always to do some positive good to someone in the world. On the contrary, the emphasis on rights is conducive to disintegration and *disunity* among human beings, because it is based on the idea of demanding some thing from others. We all know that we feel happy when anyone *gives* something to us, and most people feel unhappy and miserable when anyone *demand*s anything from them.

The Empire of Duties:

As to the classification of Duties: Since, according to the Holy

Qur'ān, man is not merely a moral being but also a spiritual, physical, rational and aesthetical being, as we shall shortly see, the fulfillment of duties relating to all those aspects of the human personality is necessary for the realisation of the Qur'ānic moral Ideal.

Now, since morality originates in the attitude that man takes towards personality in his own being or in the being of others, the moral duties should be classified basically as: (1) *Duties to Self*, and (2) *Duties to Others*. And since the person who is nearest to the moral agent is his own person, Duties to Self should come first and the Duties to Others thereafter.

The question may now be raised: What is the relationship between Duties to Self and Duties to Others?

If the problem is viewed in the light of the ideational cultural philosophy, the two duties remain unconnected; because the point of view there is individualistic. Their relationship can be affirmed only on the basis of the Qur'ānic philosophy of idealistic, or integralistic, culture which is based on the synthesis of the ideational and the sensate, and which, consequently, stands for interdependent relationship between morality and social life. Thus moral perfection of the moral agent is conceived there with reference to the happiness of others, which, in its turn, is possible only in terms of social welfare.



2. DUTIES TO SELF

Human Personality and its Functions:

According to the Holy Qur'ān, humanity emerged in Creation primarily in the transcendental dimension of existence:

“We (God) said: ‘O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Garden; and eat of the bountiful things therein as you wish; but approach not this tree, or else you run into harm and transgression.’” (2:35).⁸

At that stage of existence itself, they possessed not only the spiritual but also the rational and the aesthetical dimensions of personality.

The spiritual dimension was there because of the very fact of the transcendental nature of their existence.

The existence of the rational dimension has been affirmed thus:

“And He (i.e., God) taught Adam the nature of all things.” (2:31).

The existence of the aesthetical dimension is established in the very concept of the “Garden” where Adam and Eve lived in innocent enjoyment.

Subsequently they fell victim to the Devil's Deception. After that they appeared in the physical world, which is spatio-temporal, as physical and moral beings:

“Then Satan caused them both (i.e., Adam and Eve) to deflect therefrom and got them expelled from that in which they had been. We (God) said: ‘Get you down *all* (i.e., let entire humanity commence its descent from the then transcendental stage towards the spatio-temporal, or, the physical, stage of existence),⁹ with the spirit of clash between yourselves (that being the condition of all struggle, including the moral). On earth (where you will stay with physical qualities required for a physical environment) will be your dwelling place and provision for a time (i.e., for the duration of each individual’s earthly sojourn)’.” (2:36).

Hence, the human personality and its functions are to be understood in the following terms:

1. The real human personality is spiritual in nature.

Besides 2:35, this fact is also corroborated by the following verse, which speaks, not only of the existence of all human beings—from the first to the last—at the dawn of Creation, but also of the possession of Consciousness—self-consciousness as well as consciousness of the Personality of God—and hence of personality, which is based and built up on conscious, appreciative and non-mechanical response to other personality or personalities:

“And recall that time (at the dawn of Creation and in the ‘world of spirits’) when your Lord took from the children of Adam¹⁰ their posterity from their back¹¹, and made them testify as to themselves, saying: ‘am I not your Lord?’ They said: ‘Yes we testify’¹². (Thus was the Covenant of Monotheism inscribed on every human Soul). That

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was lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: verily of this we have been unaware.” (7:172).

Thus, because this event relates to the transcendental world and conditions of transcendental existence, the transcendental, or spiritual nature of the original, *i.e.*, the real, human personality is thereby established.

This fact is further affirmed by the following verses:

“And they ask you regarding the (human) Soul. Say: the Soul proceeds from my Lord’s *Amr*, or, Command, created by Him, like other things); and of knowledge you have been vouchsafed but little. (Therefore, in spite of its intangibility, or non-physical character, do not doubt its reality).” (17:85).

“Surely there came over Man a period of Time when he was not a *thing that could he spoken of* (*i.e.*, a thing tangible).” (76:1).

2. The earthly existence of every human being commences when the human Soul, whose original abode is the transcendental world, projects itself into spatio-temporal dimensions and takes on the physical form, even as the personalities of Adam and Eve were projected into the material world (2:36).¹³

The assumption, under the Command of God, of tangibility, *i.e.*, physical form and function, after passing through different stages of evolution, has been directly referred to thus:

“O Man! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Bountiful?—Him Who created you, then fashioned you in due

proportion, then wrought you in symmetry; (then) into whatever *form* (or, *figure*) He willed, He constituted you.”¹⁴ (82:6-8).

3. Then, the human Soul, while retaining its transcendental dimension, viz., function and activity, and centered in devotion to its Source of Existence and Capabilities, namely, God, of Whom it is the vicegerent (2:30), functions in four other dimensions also : namely, physical, rational, moral and aesthetical.

4. Thus: the spiritual, the physical, the rational, the moral and the aesthetical constitute the five dimensions of human personality, and activity relating to all these five *should be pursued in a balanced and integrated manner*, in order that the human personality may evolve and function in a healthy form on the basis of healthy activity (*al-‘amal al-ṣāleḥ*)

“O you who believe! Enter into Submission wholly (i.e., adopt the Way of Life consisting of total submission to the Will of God with the totality of your life).” (2:208).

“For those who believe and practice *al-ṣāliḥāt* (i.e., engage in healthy activity according to God’s Law and with comprehensiveness and integration) is a reward that will never fail.” (41:8).

“... and healthy (or, righteous) activity does He exalt (thereby raising the practiser of healthy activity, or, righteousness, to higher and higher levels of his personality).” (35:10).¹⁵

5. Moral activity being thus a part of an empire of Activity, which forms an organic Whole, it cannot be taken up with genuine

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and rational enthusiasm, and cannot be pursued consequentially—namely, cannot lead to the proper enrichment of the human personality,—unless it is grounded in the very foundation of human personality, which is spiritual in nature and transcendental in its reach and scope, and also unless all the other aspects of human activity are properly coordinated with it.

Such being the Qur’ānic view, it is necessary that the Qur’ānic Moral Code should be viewed not only in the essentially moral perspective but also in the background of those spiritual, physical, intellectual and aesthetical duties that have a direct or indirect bearing on the moral life of a human being—moral life as it is conceived in the strict sense.

Categories of Duties to Self.

The above discussion leads us to the following five categories of Duties to Self:

A. Duties as Spiritual Being:

1. Duties with reference to God:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

2. Duties with reference to the Holy Prophet, (in whom God’s Blessings and Peace abide!)

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

3. Duties with reference to the Angels:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

B. Duties as Physical Being:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

C. Duties as Rational Being:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

D. Duties as Aesthetical Being:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

E. Duties as Moral Being:

- Duties of Commission;
- Duties of Omission.

The Spirituo-Moral Duties—Some Vital Facts:

Among the Duties to Self, besides the duties based on the earthly environment of Man, the Holy Qur'ān has explicitly prescribed certain duties which bear reference to the transcendental dimension of his

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personality and may, therefore, be termed as spirituo-moral, or, ethico-religious, duties. It says, for instance:

“Virtue does not consist in turning your faces towards the east and the west (in direction-worship, which has formed part of the practices of superstitious nations, including the Greeks, the Hindus and the Christians), but virtue is of him who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book (i.e., the Divine Scripture) and the Prophets; and gives of his wealth, for love of Him (i.e., from the purest self-less motive), unto kindred and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask and for the emancipation of slaves; and establishes Prayer; and pays the Poor-rate; and is of those who perform their covenants when they have covenanted; and is of the patient in adversity and affliction and time of violence. Such are those who have proved themselves true (in their Faith). Such are the God-fearing” (2:177).

Besides the essentially moral duties, this verse bears reference to the spirituo-moral duties also; which, though they appear to stand in the category of duties to others, are actually duties to Self—as we shall shortly observe.

The function of such duties is to nourish the faith that the world is a Moral Order, thereby continuously reinforcing the moral fibre of human beings and furnishing the ground for moral struggle—indeed, the *sure* ground; and they are to three types of personalities, viz., (1) God, (2) the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!)¹⁶ and, (3)

the Angels. With them may also be mentioned the duties of belief in Divine Guidance and in the Life Hereafter.

Now, since the Holy Qur'ān affirms the existence of the personal God, Who is the Possessor of all Perfection and Who undertakes to lead His creatures to perfection adequate to them, duties to Him become the foremost duties. However, those duties are, in the final analysis, duties to Self because God being *al-ṣamad* (112:2), He does not stand in need of anything from anyone while the entire Creation depends on Him for everything. Moreover, God being the ultimate condition of the realisation of Man's moral ideal, every duty to God is really duty to Self.

Duties to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (the Divinely-Blessed) originate, like the duties to God, in the Islamic Article of Faith itself; and they have been laid down by the Qur'ān in the interest of the Muslims themselves, because :

Firstly, he alone is the Leader who is to be followed *unconditionally*. Thus *the bond of loyalty to him is the bond of integrity of the Islamic world-community*.

[In that connection, it is necessary to emphasize that the 'bond of loyalty' to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!) resides in *absolute allegiance* to him, which means that the association of anyone else in that allegiance as a condition of faith in Islam—in terms of conferring upon anyone, or accepting anyone's claim to, divinely-bestowed Authority, on the basis of prophetic status or any status akin to it, in any sense whatsoever, is disbelief in the Prophet's

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status, and is regarded as disbelief in Islam itself, and that in spite of otherwise absolute allegiance to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!)—expels a person from the fold of Islam in the same way as when he associates anyone in any manner in the Godhood of Allah.]

Secondly, he is the Model of Perfection whom every Muslim is under obligation to imitate for advancement in his spiritual and moral life. But to imitate him consequentially is not possible without practicing love and respect for him, which has been prescribed as duty.

Thirdly, he is the Medium through whom Divine Grace flows to his followers¹⁷ in respect of their spiritual and moral purification (62:3-4).

These facts necessitate the maintenance of a constant dutiful attitude in terms of love and respect for him.

However, just as duties to God are really duties to Self, because they involve the self-perfection of the moral agent, in the same manner duties to the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!) are really duties to Self, because of the benefits that accrue to the person who fulfils them.

As regards the Angels, they are, according to the Holy Qur'ān, possessors of the attribute of personality¹⁸ (3:39, etc.). Also, they are sinless (i.e., holy) beings and function as executors of Divine Will in the universe (66:6). Thus, duties towards them¹⁹ appear to stand under three categories, viz., (1) duty of belief in their existence; (2) duty of

love for their sinless-ness; and (3) duty of respect for them as functionaries of the Divine Order.

The duty of belief in the existence of the Angels forms a part of the Islamic Creed, which means that it has a basic significance in the Islamic system. The question might arise here, however, that moral duty is duty of action and not of belief, and hence the duty of belief should not be included here. But the fact is that the duty of belief in the Angels is a duty of attitude and is actually a necessary prerequisite to the cultivation of purity in moral outlook on the basis of which alone moral life can be Islamically pursued. Thus it comes under the duty of the Moral Perfection of the Self. Also, this duty has a reference to Divine Control in the life of humanity, which highlights God's function as the Moral Ruler of the world.

We learn from the Holy Qur'ān about two functions of the Angels which bear a direct reference to our *moral* life, viz., bringing the Revelations to the Prophets from God for the guidance of man—Archangel Jibreel (Peace be on him!) being the chief functionary in this respect (22:75; 2:97); and recording the deeds of human beings for presentation to them on the Day of Judgment (82:10-12), when virtue and vice shall be finally and comprehensively recompensed by God.

It may be observed here in passing that belief in the Divine Messengers and the Divine Scriptures, mentioned in the above-quoted verse (2:177), and forming part of the Islamic Creed, bears reference to the existence of the Law concerning the Guidance of Man as a

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spiritual and moral being. Similarly, belief in the Life Hereafter has a bearing on the moral life of man, as also on his spiritual life, being the pre-requisite to the performance of the moral action with the purest motive wherein all earthly considerations are transcended.

Before closing the discussion on the spirituo-moral duties, we might discuss the question, which can possibly arise in certain minds: Are those duties real and meaningful?

At the very outset, the answer is: They are, because, in the Qur'ānic view of the cosmos, the transcendental plane of existence, or, the Spiritual Realm of the Cosmos, is not a fantasy, or just a regulative Idea, but a fact—and, for that matter, *the basic fact*.

The materialists hold to a naturalistic view of the universe. The idealists affirm what might be termed as a psychicalistic view. The Holy Qur'ān, in harmony with its integralistic approach and its philosophy of *Unity*, affirms the reality of both the realms of the cosmos, namely: (1) the realm governed by the Natural Law, or, the Spatio-Temporal level of Reality;—we may also call it the phenomenological level; and (2) the realm governed by the Metaphysical Law, or, the Spaceless-Timeless level of Reality. And it integrates both through the bond of the Unitary Divine Plan and Purpose, which has brought into existence both of them and maintains them within the framework of *Unity*.

Without going into the details of Qur'ānic cosmology: God's relationship with the cosmos as its Creator emerges in the Qur'ān at two levels, i.e., the levels of *al-Amr* and *al-Khalq*,—both established

and united under that Attribute of God which relates to cherishing, nourishing, evolving and perfecting, i.e., *al-Rabb*: "... Lo! His is *al-Khalq* and *al-Amr*. Blessed is Allah the *Rabb* of the worlds (i.e., the entire cosmos)." (7:54).

Thus, the Creation began with God's *Amr*: "The Originator of the heavens and the earth; and whensoever He decrees an affair (*Amr*), He only says to it 'Be' and it becomes. (Hence the origination of the cosmos also took place as a result of Allah's Command 'Be')" (2:117). "His *Amr* (i.e., law of bringing something into existence) is that when He intends a thing, He only says to it (by way of Command, or, *Amr*): 'Be'; and it *becomes*." (36:82).

Hence, the first stage in the creation of the cosmos should be affirmed in terms of 'Becoming'. We may also call it the stage of subtle existence, intangibility (as opposed to the tangibility of Matter), and spacelessness-cum-timelessness.

Looking at the process of creation in the background of the concept of evolution projected explicitly in the Qur'ān, we arrive at the view of evolutionary creation, wherein—like the evolutionary hypothesis in modern Science—we are led to the affirmation of the 'Primeval Atom' as the starting point, which functioned as the *nucleus* and out of which grew the entire cosmos through an evolutionary process;—even as we find it mentioned in the *hadīth* quoted in the foregoing footnote 17, wherein the concept of the 'First Created Light functioning as Nucleus' has been projected.

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As for the nature of the evolutionary process, it should be conceived in the very nature of the case, in terms of progressive decrease in subtle, refinement, intangibility and qualitative-ness, and progressive increase in respect of concreteness, crystallization, tangibility and quantitative-ness: on the basis of a progressive crystallization of the process of *al-Khalq*, which implies the creation of new objects from the existing materials. In other words, it must have been a progress towards more and more profound ‘expression’. This is what we understand from the Qur’ān as well as from Science.

Indeed, different things appear in the Qur’ān to have emerged into dynamic existence at different stages of the evolutionary process. Thus, there existed the Angels, the *jinn*s and the human beings in that pre-physical, or, transcendental, dimension of existence; and, among them, the Angels and the *jinn*s were there prior to the existence of the human beings, as the Holy Qur’ān testifies (2:30-34). Then, according to what we read in the holy book in plain terms, humanity was made to appear before God in her transcendental, or, pre-earthly, dimension of existence, to proclaim the Covenant of Monotheism (7:172),—which means that human beings existed at that stage of Creation. Similarly, the event of the ‘Covenant of the Prophets’ has been mentioned therein to have occurred in that stage of Creation (3:81),—which proves the existence of the Prophets at that stage.

All this means that a Realm of Created Beings and Things became gradually established in respect of their essential or ideal nature, even in the first stage of creation. But evolution was to continue, and has continued, according to God’s Plan. However,

because “Allah has set a measure (or, a scale of growth and maturity—which enshrines its destiny) for every thing” (65:3), certain things that had emerged from potentiality into actuality, had to stay in the state they had acquired:—the Angels, for instance; while others had to continue their evolutionary journey, finally emerging in the Spatio-Temporal Order of Existence:—the human beings, for instance.

However, we are not actually concerned here with the elaboration of the Qur'ānic cosmology. Rather, the above discussion has been undertaken to emphasize the following facts:

1. For the *formalistic* religious outlook, the worldview consists of certain dogmas, which are there to be believed in dogmatically, rather than to provide a dynamic, meaningful and comprehensive approach to the Spiritual Reality. Such an outlook is barren, and the Qur'ān does not endorse it.
2. The *naturalistic* outlook confines itself to the Physical Reality, and it leads, even in the case of a believer in religion, to a materialistic approach to life and its problems—at least, for all practical purposes. The Qur'ān also affirms the Physical Reality, giving a coherent and illuminating view of it—a view which is receiving increasing support from the world of Science as knowledge is advancing. However, it is conjoined therein to a clear-cut view of the Transcendental Reality—both the views forming thus one organic Whole.

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3. The Qur'ānic view that emerges thereby is an *Integralistic Spiritual View of the Universe*, wherein the spiritual, or, the transcendental, has primacy over the physical, or, the spatio-temporal, and which provides not merely a formal ground for religious life but a sound vision as well as philosophy for meaningfully cultivating a life dedicated to God and directed to the realisation of the ultimate human destiny, which is essentially spiritual,—that being the mission of Islam.
4. The essential human personality (*al-Rūḥ*), called 'the Soul' in common usage, belongs originally and basically to the Transcendental Realm of Existence.

The human being is, therefore, essentially a spiritual being, and should behave as such for his success.

5. Not only God, but the entire spiritual world created by Him, is *responsive* to human spiritual quest. The spiritual quest, in its turn, is of vital importance for the human being because of the fact that he is *essentially* a spiritual being and, as such, *can build up his essential personality only through exercise in that response*.
6. The spiritual world plays the same role in the preservation and development of the essential human personality (which has been already emphasized time and again to be spiritual) as the physical world plays in respect of the physical aspect of human existence.

There are numerous things in the physical environment of the human being which contribute to his physical preservation and

development,—they being of *different grades*, with the Sun at the centre of the planets fulfilling the most basic role, and the others standing next in importance in a descending order of merit. Human beings have to remain in a state of contact and communication with them in order to benefit from them, or, in other words, to obtain the physical blessings placed in them by God.

Similarly, there are things of *different grades* in the spiritual world, or the Transcendental Realm, out of which the physical world has emerged and through which it is controlled by God. Those things contribute to the spiritual preservation and development of the human being,—and, because the spiritual is the essential, to his *essential* preservation and development. Among them, the role of the Holy Prophet's personality is most basic in respect of a Muslim's spiritual preservation and development; while the roles of the Angels and the other spiritual things in Creation stand thereafter. Contact with the spiritual Blessings placed by God in the Holy Prophet's personality is obtained through the imitation of his *Sunnah* with the ideal of acquiring greater and greater spiritual and moral purity, and the exercise in *Ṣalāt* and *Salām* with intense devotion; while contact with the Spiritual Blessings placed by God in the Angels is obtained through leading a life of spiritual and moral purity and recitation of the Qur'ān.

Then, just as in the physical world there are forces of physical destruction, or, forces of physical evil, similarly there are forces of

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spiritual destruction, or, forces of spiritual evil, that influence the spiritual life of human beings. The Qur'ān has commanded the Muslims to avoid the former in the interest of their physical preservation, and to shun the latter for ensuring their spiritual preservation.

It is to be vehemently emphasized that Allah—and *none* else—is the Creator and the Bestower of all Blessings, whether physical or spiritual. But, *His Blessings flow to the human beings, not in a vacuum, but through the physical and the spiritual objects that He has created for that purpose.*

To confer divinity on any of those objects, even indirectly, is the worst form of infidelity to God; while to refuse to benefit from them is the worst form of ungratefulness to Him.

7. Communion with God, and communication, in terms of the establishment of spiritual contact, with the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!), with the Angels and with the spiritual verities in general, emerge, in the final analysis, as active sources of light and energy for the meaningful pursuit of Religion, in contrast to adherence to religious verities in lifeless formalism. In consequence, 'Duties to the Holy Prophet' and 'Duties to the Angels' assume vital importance for the spiritual development of a Muslim's personality.

Finally, we may recall what Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the Rumi of the modern age and the greatest Islamic thinker of the present century of Islamic era, said more than four decades ago: "Humanity

needs three things today—a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. Modern Europe has, no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines; but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring. This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced men while religion has always elevated individuals, and transformed whole societies. The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life, and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interests of the rich. Believe me, Europe to-day is the greatest hindrance in the way of man's ethical development.”

Unfortunately, the formalistic religious outlook that has emerged among the Muslims in the present age of their spiritual, moral and overall degeneration, has been progressively leading to the unconscious acceptance of the naturalistic and, for all practical purposes, materialistic, view of the human being as a mere ‘superior animals’, to the forgetfulness of the fact that he is essentially—i.e., in his origin, being and destiny—a ‘spiritual being’ whose nature was created by God, according to the explicit and unambiguous verdict of the Qur’ān, in terms of His vicegerency, through the infusion of what He names as ‘My spirit’ (*Rūḥ*) (15:29; etc.), and to the view of the Angels as mere “forces of Nature”—in the sense of naturalistic forces. In such a view of the human being and of the Angels, very naturally

the Holy Prophet is also regarded as nothing more than a ‘good man’, a ‘great leader’ and a ‘divine postman’; and any description of the transcendental dimension of his august personality appears to the upholders of that view as nothing less than superstition, even though they overthrow in this process of thinking the spiritual foundations of the Qur’ānic world-view which the profoundest Islamic theological thinkers down to Shah Waliullah took the greatest pains to preserve during the ages that have elapsed since the Qur’ānic Revelation.

Duties to Animals, Plants and Things-as Duties to Self:

We may also refer here to duties towards animals, plants, and things, to which the Holy Qur’ān has referred implicitly, while in the *Ḥadīth* they have been mentioned explicitly. They seem to fall under the category of duties to Others. But they are basically duties to Self in so far as they relate to the maintenance of the purity of our moral tone. They have, therefore, been dealt with in the Appendix to the ‘Duties to Self’.



3. DUTIES TO OTHERS

The obligatoriness of duties to Others is to be conceived in their two-fold origin: (1) in human shortcomings at the different stages of life, which necessitate assistance by other human beings; and (2) in the inherent social nature of human life.²⁰ Indeed, the individual and the society are mutually related and interdependent, and the individual’s realisation of moral good is not conceivable, according to the Qur’ānic view, without reference to the societal whole.

Now, viewing the human personality in its two basic aspects, *i.e.*, the empirical and the rational, duties to Others split up into two categories with *regards to the ends that they should serve*,—namely: (1) Duties relating to ‘Happiness’, or, Material Well-being; (2) Duties relating to ‘Moral Perfection’—meant actually to ensure Spiritual and Moral Preservation and Advancement.

Viewed with reference to those who are to be served by these duties, two basic categories emerge, namely: (1) Individualistic duties, or, duties to other individuals as individuals; (2) Collectivistic duties, or, duties relating to the Societal Whole.

As regards ‘Duties to Other Individuals’, they may be viewed basically in two perspectives: (1) other individuals in general, and (2) other individuals as related to the moral agent through specified functional relationships. Then, the other individuals may be Muslims—and that would form the primary reference,—and as such they have to be treated as members of the Islamic social order. Also, there may be—in fact, there are—the non-Muslims who, in the first instance, cannot be regarded properly as members of the Islamic social order, even though they may be living in an Islamic state; and, secondly, there may be among them persons belonging to different categories: for example: (1) non-Muslims who are friendly towards Muslims and tolerant towards Islam; (2) non-Muslims who are simply indifferent to Muslims and Islam; and (3) non-Muslims who are hostile to Muslims and Islam.

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Islam prescribes duties towards all the above categories of other individuals, laying down certain duties that are based on the concept that all human beings have certain inviolable rights as human beings and that absolute justice must be practised towards all; and giving another set of duties, in addition, relating to the specified areas of relationships.



4. DUTIES RELATING TO THE SOCIETAL WHOLE

Duties relating to the Societal Whole split up into two categories, namely: (1) Duties *to* the Societal Whole; and (2) Duties *of* the Societal Whole.

With reference to *Duties to the Societal Whole*, the Holy Qur’ān has commanded thus:

“And hold fast, all together, by the Covenant of Allah (*ḥabl-Allāh*), and be not split up among yourselves.” (3:102).

The word *ḥabl*, translated here as Covenant, means primarily a rope or a cord, and hence a cause of union or a Covenant which renders one responsible for the safety of a person or a thing. (Lane’s *Lexicon*).

The *ḥabl-Allāh* (Covenant with God) is, abstractly, allegiance to the objectives of *al-Dīn*, or, the Way of Collective Obedience to God, and, concretely, loyalty to the Islamic Society through loyalty and devotion to its Founder and Leader, the Holy Prophet Muhammad

(Peace be on him!), which loyalty should manifest itself basically in doing utmost to preserve the unity, the solidarity and the social, moral and spiritual health of the Islamic society. Hence the *Duties to the Societal Whole*.

Similarly, the *Duties of the Societal Whole* towards the Individual have been emphasized in the Holy Qur'ān; for instance, in the following verse which bears comprehensive reference to the spiritual, economic, moral and social welfare of the individuals:

“(Muslims are) those who, if We establish them in the land, set up regular Prayer and give regular charity, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong ...” (22:41).

Now, every organized Societal Whole takes, whenever and wherever possible, the form of the State, which, as an institution, is an indispensable means for the realisation of the social ideal. As regards its structural ethics, the following observations may be made.

Organisation of the Societal Whole as a state gives rise to subordination and super-ordination, wherein the foremost duty of the subordinate becomes obedience to the super-ordinate (4:59) and of the super-ordinate to administer the state through coercive authority, or, *al-Amārah* (mentioned in 4:59),—and that in the interest of the subordinate.²¹ Besides the multifarious dimensions of positive administration, the duty of punishing offenders for all cognizable offences against life, honor, property, and ensuring the spiritual, moral and economic well-being of the people, also devolves on the super-ordinate. Then, a further duty of the super-ordinate is that of

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preserving or reclaiming, as the case may be, the autonomy of the state against internal turmoil and external aggression, and for that purpose to wage war against all hostile forces.

An important fact should be noted here with respect to the State-Authority. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!) is the founder of the Islamic society, as also of the Islamic state. As such, and as the Medium of Obedience to God—indeed, as the representative *par excellence* of the Authority of God on earth, he is the Super- Leader of the Islamic state for all time (4:80; etc.). Hence no State-Authority can claim Islamically the right of obedience to itself except as the representative of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him!).²²

Note on Penal Code:

In the perspective of the super-ordinate's duty of punishing offenders of the Law, mentioned in the foregoing, emerges the Penal Code, to which we have devoted a separate section. As to the Qur'ānic *Philosophy of Punishment*, readers should refer to Volume 1, Book II, Chapter IV of the present book, where we have come to the following conclusion:

“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 of the individuals concerned and of the society.”

***Note on Tabligh*²³:**

The word *tabligh* means ‘to reach out the Message’. As a term it means ‘propagation of the Message of Islam’.

The Holy Qur’ān has given to it the status of an institution (3:104, etc.) and has ordained it as an important *societal duty*.

This duty has been conceived to function at two levels, i.e., within the Islamic social order, and outside the Islamic social order, where entire humanity comes under its purview.

The ends it serves are: (1) preservation, (2) development, and (3) perpetuation of the Islamic Community—and that in service to the cause of humanity (3:110).

The dimensions of this duty are:

1. education of new generations of Muslims in Islam;
2. improvement in Islamic knowledge and inspiration of the grown-up Muslims;
3. dissemination of the knowledge of Islam among non-Muslims—all the non-Muslims of the world wherever they may be found—in order that they may know the Divine Message that has come for them, and those among them who are seriously dedicated to Truth may accept it for their own good; while, in the case of others, correct knowledge

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about Islam may dissipate their ignorance and the consequent misunderstandings, finally bringing about among them goodwill for Islam—which, in itself, forms a genuine contribution to the promotion of inter-communal and international goodwill.

Thus, *tabligh* stands out as a duty towards other individuals in respect of their spiritual and moral progress.

Also, it contributes simultaneously to the spiritual and moral development of the persons who undertake it, and thus it becomes a duty to Self.

Its role, however, as a collectivistic or societal duty, remains supreme. Indeed, from that point of view, it stands out as the foremost duty without which the very existence of Islam becomes jeopardized.

As the Holy Qur'ān affirms, the Islamic Community is meant to continue to exist for all time—up to the Last Day. This is in the very nature of the case, because the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!) is the last and final Divine Messenger, and the Muslims are the last divinely-raised religious Group. As such, disappearance of the Islamic Community at any time in human history is not conceivable. But, the dissipation of the energies of communities and nations—both ideological and non-ideological—being the Law of History, one of the most important instruments for keeping the Islamic community alive and functioning genuinely and truly is the repeated infusion of fresh blood into the body-politic of Islam. This has already happened in Islamic history, as, for instance, when towards the end of the Abbaside

period, the Muslim world began to show signs of lassitude and weakness, the conversion of the Turko-Tartars revitalized the Islamic community to an extent that it could maintain its glory for several centuries more. The same seems to be the crying need today. But this need cannot be fulfilled without resort to an *enlightened, dynamic and multi-dimensional* movement in the field of *tabligh*, and *not just a ritualistic or professional performance*.



5. MANNERS²⁴

Manners may be defined as apparent modes of behavior in relation to others, and may be evaluated as small coins of virtue.

The Qur'ānic point of view; as emphasized already, is social. Consequently, in the Qur'ānic moral code we find as much emphasis on manners as on morals; perhaps more, because indifference to manners may nullify a virtue itself.

This is evident from the Qur'ānic emphasis on the manners to be observed in the performance of one of the highest virtues in relation to others, *viz.*, charity:

“O you who believe! Make not your charity worthless by laying an obligation and by hurt...” (3:264).

It is also evident from what has been said in connection with the manners to be observed in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!):

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“O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you may speak aloud to one another, lest your (good) deeds become vain and you perceive not.” (49:2).

Coming to classification: In conformity with the comprehensive nature of the Qur’ānic moral code, the Qur’ānic duties in respect of manners belong to two categories: (1) those relating to religious manners, and (2) those relating to social manners.



BOOK ONE - DUTIES TO SELF

Part 1. Duties as Spiritual Being

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DUTIES WITH REFERENCE TO GOD

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Part 5. Duties as Moral Being

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DUTIES OF OMISSION

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PART 1. DUTIES AS SPIRITUAL BEING

Chapter 1.

DUTIES WITH REFERENCE TO GOD

1. Duties of Respect;
2. Duties of Love.

ENDS:

(a) Objective:

Maintenance of a constant attitude of Respect and Love towards God for acquiring the Blessings of Divine Pleasure (*Riḍwān Allāh*) and Divine Love (*Ḥubb Allāh*),

As it has been said in the Holy Qur’ān:

Arabic text

“... seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure ...”
(48:29).

Also:

Arabic text

“... whom He will love, and they will love Him ...” (5:57).

(b) Subjective:

Creating in the moral agent:

1. Purity of will, leading to possible 'holiness' in the measure it may relate to human personality, as it has been said:

Arabic text

“And whosoever believes in Allah, He guides his heart (aright).” (64:11).

2. Stability in, and enthusiasm for, the pursuit of moral struggle, as we are told:

Arabic text

“... And he who rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. Allah is Hearer, Knower.” (2:256).



(I) DUTIES OF RESPECT

(a) Duties of Commission

- (1) Cultivation of genuine and complete Faith in God and its inner realisation enjoined:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Believe (with all the richness of belief) in Allah²⁵ and His Messenger, and the Scripture which He has sent to His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denies Allah, His Angels, His Books,

His Messengers and the Day of Judgment, has gone far far astray.”²⁶ (4:136).

(2) *Faith in the Unity of God—perfect monotheism—implying indivisible loyalty to Him, enjoined:*

Arabic text

“That is Allah, your Lord! There is no God but He, the Creator of all things: then worship Him (alone).” (6:102).

Arabic text

“... and your God is One God, so unto Him submit (wholly and solely).” (22:34).

(3) *Maintenance of the attitude of respect for God enjoined:*

Arabic text

“Verily those who believe and work righteousness, and humble themselves before their Lord, they will be Companions of the Garden, to dwell therein for ever.” (11:23).

(4) *Cultivation of the fear of Displeasure of God and of the Final Accountability by Him, enjoined:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Fear Allah²⁷ as He should be feared, and die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him).” (3:102).

Arabic text

“It is only the devil that suggests to you the fear of his votaries: Be not afraid of them, but fear Me, if you have faith.” (3:175).

Arabic text

“... except those that are bent on wickedness; so fear them not, but fear Me...” (2:150).

Arabic text

“And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord’s (tribunal) (on the Day of Judgment)²⁸ and had restrained (their) souls from lower Desires, their Abode will be the Garden.” (79:40-41).

(5) *Cultivation of Obedience to God enjoined:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Obey Allah...”²⁹ (4:59).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Give your response to (i.e., obey) Allah and His Messenger, when He calls you to that which will give you life;...”³⁰ (8:24).

Arabic text

“... and stand before Allah in a devout (frame of mind).”³¹ (2:238).

Arabic text

“Turn unto your Lord repentant, and *surrender unto Him*, before there comes unto you the torment, and then you shall not be helped.”³² (39:54).

Arabic text

“O mankind! worship your Lord,³³ Who has created you and those before you, so that you may ward off (evil).”³⁴ (2:21).

(6) *Cultivation of trust in God’s goodness, mercy and help enjoined:*

Arabic text

“Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of night prostrating himself or standing (in adoration), who takes heed of the Hereafter, and who places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord—(like one who does not)? Say: ‘Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endued with understanding that receive admonition.’” (39:9).

Arabic text

“Lo! those who believe and those who suffer exile (in defense of Truth) and strive and struggle in the path of Allah, they (i.e., such true Muslims) have hope of Allah’s mercy; and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (2:218).

Then there is the command:

Arabic text

“... and on Allah (i.e., in Allah’s goodness, mercy and help) put

your trust if you are believers.” (5:26).

(7) *Affirmation of one's dependence on God: Prayer to Him, enjoined:*

Arabic text

“And your Lord has said: Call on Me, I will answer your prayer. Verily those who are stiff-necked against My worship (i.e., against acknowledging Me as their Lord and Benefactor), will enter hell in humiliation.” (40:60).

Arabic text

“Call on your Lord with humility and in secret: Lo! Allah loves not those who trespass beyond (rational and respectful) limits.” (7:55).

Arabic text

“... and call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good (to others).” (7:56).

(8) *Seeking Help and Grace from God, the Possessor and the Source of all Power, enjoined:*

Says the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“... seek help from Allah...” (7:128).

Now, help should be sought basically from God alone. Muslims have been commanded to pray to God in these words:

Arabic text

“You (alone) do we worship, and of You (alone) do we seek help.” (1:4).

Again:

Arabic text

“and ask Allah of His Grace ... ” (4:32).

And this seeking of Grace from God is a constant attribute of the life of a Muslim:

Arabic text

“You will see them bow and prostrate themselves (in prayer) seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good pleasure...” (48:29).

(9) Seeking Guidance from God, the Possessor and Source of all Knowledge, enjoined:

It is a duty of every Muslim to pray to God for guidance in the following words:

Arabic text

“Guide us (O Allah) unto the path straight...” (1:5).

(10) Following the Divine Guidance revealed in the Holy Qur’ān, enjoined:

Arabic text

“Follow the Revelation given unto you (in the Holy Qur’ān) from your Lord ...” (7:3).

(11) Showing respect to God by believing in all the Messengers and all the Scriptures sent by Him for the guidance of man, enjoined:

Arabic text

“So believe in Allah and (all) His Messengers,” (3:179).

Arabic text

“(Muslims are those) who believe in the Revelation sent to you (O Muhammad), and that which was sent before you...” (2:4).

(b) Duties of Omission :

(1) Attributing any quality to God which is profane and blasphemous, prohibited:

Arabic text

“The most excellent Names belong to Allah: so call on Him by them; and shun the company³⁵ (and the blasphemies) of those who use profanity in His names. They will be repaid for what they do.” (7:180).

(2) Associating any partner with God and limiting His uniqueness and supremacy in any manner, prohibited:

Arabic text

“And worship Allah and associate not anything with Him (either in His Person or in His Attributes).” (4:36).

Arabic text

“And call not, besides Allah, on another god. There is no god but He ...” (28:88).

(3) *Saying anything concerning God without the authority of Revelation, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“Say: The things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are: shameful deeds, whether open or secret; sins and trespasses against truth or reason; assigning of partners to Allah, for which you are given no authority; and *saying about Allah of which you have no knowledge.*” (7:33)

(4) *Disobedience to and arrogance in respect of God, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“... and they (i.e., the Believers) are not arrogant (in respect of worshipping Allah).” (32:15).

Arabic text

“But he who is greedy miser and *deems himself free from need (of Allah)*, and gives the lie to the Best (i.e., dishonors Truth), We will indeed make for him smooth the Path to Misery.” (92:8-10).

Again:

Arabic text

“If anyone disobeys (the Commands of) Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path.” (33:36).

(5) *Despairing of the Mercy of God prohibited:*

Arabic text

“...and never give up hope of Allah’s Soothing Mercy: truly no one despairs of Allah’s Soothing Mercy except those who have no Faith.” (12:87).

Arabic text

“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-Returning, Most Merciful.” (39:53).

(6) *Believing in superstitions and seeking help from superstitious objects, thereby indirectly insulting God,³⁶ prohibited:*

Arabic text

“... so shun the abomination of idols (i.e., evils of idolatrous practices).” (22:30).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Intoxicants and games of chance (i.e., all forms of gambling), *and stone altars³⁷ and (divination by)*

arrows,³⁸ are an abomination,—of Satan’s handiwork: shun it therefore, that you may prosper.” (5:93).

Arabic text

“It is not Allah Who has instituted (superstitions like those of) a slit-ear she-camel, or a she-camel let loose for free pasture, or idol sacrifices for twin-births in animals, or stallion-camels freed from work. It was blasphemers who invented a lie against Allah, and most of them lack wisdom.”³⁹ (5:103).

(7) Magic, being evil practice and opposed to godliness, condemned: hence to abstain from it is duty:

Speaking of the practice of magic by the Jews, the Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“... and they could harm none thereby (i.e., with their Magic) save by Allah’s Will (i.e., in accordance with His laws). And they (i.e., the Jews) have learnt that which harms them (spiritually and morally), and profits them not; and assuredly they knew (from their Scripture) that the buyers of Magic would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter.” (2:102).



(2) DUTIES OF LOVE

(a) Duties of Commission:

(1) Seeking in all actions the Pleasure of God, Who is the Moral Sovereign of the Universe, enjoined:

Arabic text

“And of mankind is he (i.e., the true Muslim) who would sell (even) his life to earn the Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to His devotees.” (2:207).

Nay: a true Muslim, in his highest spiritual effort, goes even beyond, and seeks God Himself;

Arabic text

“... and (the righteous) have in their minds no favor from anyone for which a reward is expected in return, but only the yearning to seek the Countenance of their Lord Most High.” (92:19-20).

(2) Cultivation of Gratefulness to God enjoined:

Arabic text

“... and express gratefulness to Allah, if it is (indeed) He Whom you worship.” (2:172).

Arabic text

“... and be grateful for the favor of Allah ...” (16:114).

(3) Cultivation of sincere devotion to God enjoined:

Arabic text

“... so serve Allah offering Him sincere devotion;...” (39:2).

(4) *Steadfastness in devotion to God enjoined:*

Arabic text

“... and hold fast by Allah (without swerving)! He is your Patron: an excellent Patron and an excellent Helper.” (22:78).

Arabic text

“... Your God is One God: so stand true to Him...” (41:6).

Arabic text

“Verily those who say: ‘Our Lord is Allah’, and remain steadfast thereto, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (46:13).

(5) *Seeking nearness to God, the Source of all Goodness and Holiness, enjoined:*

(a) *through turning penitently unto Him:*

Arabic text

“And turn penitently unto your Lord and submit unto Him before there comes unto you the torment, and then you shall not be succored.”⁴⁰ (39:54).

(b) *through seeking ardently the means of approach:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! fear Allah and *seek the means of approach unto Him* and strive with might and main in His cause: that you may prosper.”⁴¹ (5:38).

(c) *through detaching from worldly things and engaging in remembrance of and communion with Him:*

Arabic text

“And remember the name of your Lord, and devote yourself to Him with an exclusive devotion.”⁴² Lord of the East and the West! No God is there but He. Take Him therefore for (your) Disposer of Affairs.” (73:8-9).

Arabic text

“Therefore remember Me, I will remember you ...” (2:152).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance and glorify Him early and late.” (33:41-42).

Arabic text

“... and celebrate His praise.” (25:58).

Arabic text

“And remember your Lord in your (very) soul, with humility and in reverence, without loudness in word, in the mornings and evenings; and be not of those who are neglectful (of Allah’s remembrance).”⁴³ (7:205).

This remembrance should take the form of regular prayers also:

Arabic text

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

These regular, or, obligatory, prayers should be performed punctually at the appointed times:⁴⁴

Arabic text

“Verily regular prayers are enjoined on the Believers at fixed times.” (4:103).

The regular prayers are to be followed (and preceded) by as much remembrance of God as possible and practicable:

Arabic text

“Then when you have finished the prayer, remember Allah, standing and sitting and lying on your sides ...” (4:103).

Also, besides the regular and repeated daily communion and constant remembrance of Allah during the normal waking hours of the day and the night, devoted Muslims should sacrifice their comfort during the sleeping hours of the night, according to their individual capacity, for communion with their Lord:

Arabic text

“Only those believe in Our revelations who, when they (i.e. the revelations) are recited to them, fall down in adoration and celebrate the praises of their Lord, and they are not puffed up

with pride. Their limbs do forsake their beds of sleep (while yet there is night), the while they call on their Lord, in Fear and Hope, and of that wherewith We have provided them they spend (for the welfare of others).” (32:15-16).

Indeed, the ‘Servants of God’ are:

Arabic text

“... those who spend the night in adoration of their Lord, prostrate and standing ...” (25:64).

(6) Cultivation of Love⁴⁵ for God enjoined:

Allah is the Loving One (*al-Wadūd*)⁴⁶ and the cultivation of, and absorption in, His love forms the highest pursuit of a Muslim. The Holy Qur’ān speaks of the true Believers as “a people whom Allah loves and they love Him.” (5:54).

It is a relationship which is cultivated through right belief and right conduct:

Arabic text

“Verily those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, for them (Allah) Most Gracious will appoint (in this world as well as in the next) Love (i.e., His own love and the love of fellow-creatures).” (19:96).

This relationship is consciously and assiduously cultivated at a level where it surpasses a Muslim’s love for everything else:

Arabic text

“... but the Believers are strongest in love for Allah.” (2:165).

It forms the highest achievement for a Muslim, gives the direction to his will, and functions as the motivating force—equally with ‘fear of God’—for all the actions of his life.

(b) Duties of Omission

- (1) *Following lusts of the heart, thereby incurring God’s Displeasure, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“... and follow not the lusts (of your heart) that it beguile you from the Way of Allah. Lo! those who wander from the Way of Allah have an awful doom, for as much as they forgot the Day of Reckoning.” (38:26).

- (2) *Ungratefulness to God, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“... and unto Me give thanks, and *be not ungrateful to Me.*” (2:152).

- (3) *Behaving disloyally (as opposed to, sincere devotion) to God, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! be not disloyal to (or, betray not the trust of) Allah ...” (8:27).

- (4) *Worshipping false gods, whether those of the polytheists and idol-worshippers or those that reside within the human self, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“And assuredly We sent among every people a Messenger (with the Command:) ‘Serve God, and eschew Evil and shun false gods’⁴⁷.” (16:36).

- (5) *Fickle-mindedness in respect of faith in God’s Goodness, condemned: hence to abstain from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“And of mankind is he who worships Allah, as it were, on the verge: if there befall him good, he is contented therewith; but if there befalls him a trial, he turns round on his face; he loses the world and the Hereafter: that indeed is a loss manifest.” (22:11).

- (6) *Allowing pre-occupation with and engrossment in worldly things to stand in the way of God’s remembrance, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! let not your riches or your children—the two worldly things having a wide range of engrossment—divert you from the remembrance of Allah. And whosoever does that, the loss is their own”. (63:9).

- (7) *Lack of earnestness in prayers and in the remembrance of God in general, condemned as the way of the Hypocrites: hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“... (The Hypocrites) when they stand up in prayer, stand without earnestness, making a show to the people, and they remember not Allah but little.” (4:142).

- (8) *Befriending the forces of evil, thereby violating our duty of love for God, condemned:*

Arabic text

“Whosoever befriends Satan (who represents all the forces of evil), instead of Allah, has of a surety suffered a loss that is manifest.” (4:119).

This is so because:

Arabic text

“... Satan’s wish is to lead them astray far away (from the Right).” (4:60).

- (9) *Loving any object of worldly life in preference to love for God, severely condemned: hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“Say (O Muhammad! to the Muslims): If your fathers, and your sons, and your brothers, and your mates, and your kindred, and the wealth you have acquired, and the commerce in which you

fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight—(these) are dearer to you than Allah, or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause: then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.” (9:24).



Chapter 2.

DUTIES TO THE HOLY PROPHET⁴⁸

1. Duties of Respect;
2. Duties of Love.

ENDS:

(a) Objective

Maintenance of the attitude of obedience and loyalty through the constant cultivation of respect and love for the Teacher and Exemplar of Qur'ānic morals, in order to be able to act enthusiastically on the Qur'ānic Moral Code.

(b) Subjective

Maintenance of assurance, through the remembrance of the Example of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), in respect of his personal conduct and his achievements in the moral domain, so that the moral ideal set forth by the Holy Qur'ān is realizable.

We have seen in the foregoing that Love for God is a Muslim's highest pursuit and the highest duty. In that connection, the Holy Qur'ān states further that this love should manifest itself in loyally following and imitating the communicator and exemplar of God's Guidance for mankind, namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him). It says:

Arabic text

“Say (O Muhammad)! If you do love Allah, follow me (and build up your moral and spiritual life on my model): Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (3:31).

Following and imitating the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) is not possible, however, without maintaining the attitudes of respect and love towards him,—these, in their turn, giving rise respectively to obedience and absolute loyalty. Thus we arrive at four duties relating to our relation with the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), namely:

- 1) to respect him above all created beings;
- 2) to love him above all created beings;
- 3) to obey him without demur;
- 4) to be absolutely loyal to him.

Starting from the side of man, these four duties form the *essential condition* of the moral agent's Moral Perfection and of the Moral Perfection and Happiness of others—humanity at large, because true Guidance in that connection is available only through the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) and that Guidance cannot be truly accepted and enthusiastically followed without maintaining the attitude implied in those duties.

We may now state the duties in the language of the Qur'ān:



(1) DUTIES OF RESPECT

(a) *Subjective :*

To regard the Holy Prophet with respect;

(1) *Duty of Commission:*

Maintaining the attitude of positive respect enjoined:

Arabic text

“... So it is those who believe in him (i.e., Muhammad), and honor him, and help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him,—it is they who will prosper.” (7:157).

(2) *Duty of Omission:*

Directly or indirectly insulting the Holy Prophet prohibited:

Arabic text

“And it is not right for you to insult⁴⁹ Allah’s Messenger (Muhammad) ...” (33:53).

Worthy of note in this respect is the following stern command of God given to the Muslims of the Holy Prophet’s time:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Put not yourselves forward⁵⁰ before Allah and His Messenger; and fear Allah: for Allah hears and knows all things.

“O you who believe! raise not your voice above the voice of the Prophet (Muhammad), nor speak aloud to him in talk as you

may speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds (of righteousness) be rendered vain (thereby) and you perceive not (the loss).

“Verily those who lower their voice in the presence of Allah’s Messenger—these are they whose hearts Allah has disposed unto piety: For them is Forgiveness and a great Reward.” (49:1-3).

Also: the following guidance to the socially uncouth people of those days:

Arabic text

“Verily those who shout out to you (O Muhammad) from outside the inner apartments—most of them lack a path proper sense. If only they had patience until you could come out to them, it would be best for them: but Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (49:4-5).

(b) Objective:

To obey the Holy Prophet without demur.

(1) Duty of Commission:

Practicing positive obedience enjoined:

Arabic text

“... and obey the Messenger (Muhammad)... ” (4:59).

Arabic text

“The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that He 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).

(2) Duty of Omission:

Disobedience in any manner whatsoever, prohibited:

Arabic text

“... and whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he verily goes astray in error manifest.” (33:36).

Arabic text

“And whosoever opposes the Messenger even after Guidance has been plainly conveyed unto him, and follows a path other than that of the men of Faith, We shall leave him in the path he has chosen, and land him in Hell,—what an evil refuge!” (4:115).



(2) DUTIES OF LOVE

(a) Subjective:

To regard the Holy Prophet with love.

(1) Duty of Commission:

Maintaining the attitude of positive love—a love which transcends the love for any other created being, emphasized; hence it is duty:

Arabic text

“The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves (—this spiritual relationship entitling him to more love and respect from the Believers than for any created being related in any way).”⁵¹ (33:6).

This personal spiritual love for the Holy Prophet (on whom be Peace and the Blessings of Allah) is to be cultivated, besides obeying him in all things with overflowing love, through forming spiritual contact with him by reciting *ṣalāt* and *salām*, as commanded by God in the following verse:

Arabic text

“Lo! Allah and His Angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O you who believe! send your benedictions on him (i.e., ask Allah for His blessings on him) and salute him with a worthy salutation (i.e., with respect and love).”⁵² (33:56).

(a) Objective:

To foster absolute loyalty to the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him).

(1) Duty of Commission:

To be positively loyal to him emphasized as a condition of Faith; hence it is duty:

Arabic text

“But nay, 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, but accept them with the fullest submission.” (4:65).

Arabic text

“And it is unbecoming of a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair;...” (33:36).

(2) Duty of Omission:

Being disloyal to him in any manner, prohibited:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! be not disloyal to Allah and His Messenger...” (8:27).



Chapter 3.

DUTIES TO THE ANGELS

ENDS

(a) Objective:

Maintenance of the attitude of respect and love for purity of will and holiness wherever found in God's creatures.

(b) Subjective:

Constant consciousness of the fact that the world is a moral order, the Angels being the functionaries of God's moral scheme.

(1) NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ANGELS:

The Angels, according to the Holy Qur'ān, are neither impersonal forces in the sense of physical science, nor gods or demi-gods or sons or daughters of God, as some of the old mythologies conceived them to be. They are celestial beings endowed with personality⁵³ having been created⁵⁴ by God to act as His functionaries in the universe.⁵⁵

The establishment of relation with the spiritual world, which is a vital condition of the spiritual development of a human being, is not conceivable without faith in the existence of the Angels (—which, therefore, forms one of the cardinal articles of Islamic Belief—) and without a proper attitude towards them.

The Angels are sinless beings—incapable of committing any sin—and as such possessors of purity, because their function is only to behave as God’s absolutely obedient servants:

Arabic text

“... and the Angels; they are not arrogant (before their Lord). (Rather,) they fear their Lord, High above them, and they do whatever they are commanded.” (16:49-50).

They are honored servants of God:

Arabic text

“They (*i.e.*, the Angels) are (but) servants raised to honor. They precede Him not in word, and they act (in all things) by His command.” (21:26-27).

Besides their numerous functions mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān, they, out of love for the Believers, ask for God’s blessings on them:

Arabic text

“He it is Who sends blessings on you, *as do His Angels*, that He may bring you out from the depths of Darkness into Light: and He is Full of Mercy for the Believers.” (xxxiii: 43).

Also, they pray to God for forgiveness for all beings on the earth:

Arabic text

“... and the Angels celebrate the praises of their Lord, and ask forgiveness for those on the earth.” (42:5).

(2) DUTIES

Thus, because they are honored beings, they deserve respect; and because they are noble and pure, they deserve love. They deserve love and respect specially from the Believers, whom they love and for whom their solicitude is great.



PART 2. DUTIES AS PHYSICAL BEING

EXPOSITION

1. Duties of Omission

(or, Duties of Respect for the Self).

END:

Natural Self-Preservation — as the Holy Qur’ān commands:

Arabic text

“... and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction ...”⁵⁶ (2:195).

(1) *All things which harm physical health, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“O mankind! eat of whatsoever is on the earth, lawful and wholesome, and *follow not the footsteps of Satan (by using unlawfully-acquired and unclean and unwholesome foods*⁵⁷). Lo! he is to you an avowed enemy”. (2:168).

(2) *Self-stupefaction, gluttony and intoxication, prohibited:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things (whether they be foods or drinks or any other lawful pleasures)

which Allah has made lawful for you, nor transgress (in respect of your physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social health by making lawful for yourselves harmful foods, drinks, etc.); verily Allah loves not the transgressors.”⁵⁸ (5:87).

Arabic text

“... and eat and drink, but be not *immoderate and intemperate*: verily He loves not those who are immoderate and intemperate.” (7:31).

Arabic text

“Eat of the good things We have provided for your sustenance, but *commit no excess therein*, lest My wrath should justly descend on you; and those on whom descends My wrath do perish indeed.” (20:81).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Intoxicants⁵⁹ and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and divination by arrows, (all these) are an abomination, —of Satan’s handiwork: shun such (abomination), therefore, that you may prosper.” (5:93).

(3) *Considering lawful pleasures relating to natural appetites as illegitimate, prohibited.*⁶⁰

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Make not unlawful (for yourselves) the good things (relating to lawful pleasures) which Allah has made lawful for you ...” (5:87).

(4) *Abusing or damaging any limb of one’s body, including Castration, prohibited:*

The Holy Qur’an says:

Arabic text

“... and defraud not your trust...” (8:27).

The various limbs of the body, and the talents of a Muslim, are the “property” of God and he possesses them in “trust” for Him. A Muslim should not, therefore, abuse or damage any limb of his body.⁶¹

(5) *Committing suicide prohibited:*

Arabic text

“And kill not (or, destroy not) yourselves; verily Allah is unto you ever Merciful.”⁶² (4:29).



(2) Duties of Commission:

(or, Duties of Love for the Self).

END:

Happiness of the moral agent through the maintenance and promotion of his physical well-being:

(1) *Proper satisfaction of natural appetites enjoined:*

(a) *Satisfaction of Hunger and Thirst:*

Arabic text

“... and eat and drink, but be not immoderate and intemperate...” (7:31).

Arabic text

“They ask you (O Muhammad!) what is lawful to them (as food). Say: Lawful unto you are all things good and pure.” (5:5).

(b) *Satisfaction of sexual appetite:*

Satisfaction of sexual appetite has been permitted by the Holy Qur'ān through lawful marriage *only*, and marriage has been enjoined:

Arabic text

“Marry those among you who are single.”⁶³ (24:32).

A very important point should be noted here. Although the union of man and woman in marriage involves the satisfaction of sexual appetite, it is *not*, in the view of the Qur'ān, the end of marriage,—the end being spiritual companionship and mutual love, to which the sexual union itself should contribute, but which is marked off distinctly from mere sexual pleasure. The Holy Qur'ān says

Arabic text

“And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from yourselves, that you might obtain tranquility and solace in them, and He has ordained between you love and mercy. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect.” (30:21).

(c) *Rest and sleep*

Arabic Text

“It is of His Mercy that He has made for you Night and Day, that *therein* (i.e., *in the night*) you *may enjoy rest*, and that you may seek of His Grace (during the day);—and in order that you may be grateful (to Him).” (38:73).

(2) *Physical cleanliness*⁶⁴ *enjoined:*

Arabic text

“... then purify (yourselves) (with physical cleanliness)...” (5:6).

Arabic text

“Allah intends not to lay upon you a hardship, but intends to purify you (with physical cleanliness) and to complete His favor to you, that you may be grateful (for His bounties).” (5:6).

Arabic text

“... and He sent down water upon you from heaven that He might cleanse you thereby and remove from you the stain of Satan (—dirt being physically a symbol of evil)...” (8:11).

Arabic text

“Verily Allah loves those who turn to him constantly, and He loves those who practice cleanliness (in body, mind and spirit).” (2:222).

Arabic text

“And Allah loves those who always keep themselves clean.” (9:108).

(3) *Physical development enjoined:*

Arabic text

“Against them (i.e., the enemies of Islam, or, the forces of evil) prepare your Power (as individuals and as a community) to the utmost of your capacity...” (8:60).

Development of power by an individual includes the building up of a powerful physique. Hence, the command for the physical development of the individual is contained in the above comprehensive verse. This fact is corroborated by a *Ḥadīth* of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), reported by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the following words:

Arabic text

“A physically-strong Believer is better and more loved by Allah than a physically-weak Believer. And there is good in either of them. Be enthusiastic for everything which brings you good, and seek therein Divine Help, and do not lose heart in your endeavor...” (*Kitāb al-Qadr*).

BOOK I. - DUTIES TO SELF



PART 3. DUTIES AS RATIONAL BEING

EXPOSITION

ENDS:

(1) *Subjective:*

Balanced and healthy development of human knowledge in all dimensions.

(2) *Objective:*

Service to humanity in terms of correct and comprehensive Guidance.

(1) Duty of Commission

Pursuit of knowledge enjoined, with emphasis on:

1. *its sublimity and unavoidable necessity—basically and for proper moral life;*
2. *its importance for spiritual development;*
3. *its role in conferring greatness on individuals and communities;*
4. *its compatibility with Faith;*

5. *the principles of observation and research;*
6. *the principle of continuous and ceaseless endeavor for rising to higher and higher levels of knowledge;*
7. *the principle of Objectivity;*
8. *the principle of Comprehensiveness;*
9. *the attainment of the stage of al-Ḥikmah, or, the Wisdom;*
10. *the technique of attaining all Higher Knowledge.*

Thus:

- (1) *Sublimity of the pursuit of Knowledge and its unavoidable necessity—basically as also for proper moral life, emphasized:*

The Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“And He imparted to Adam knowledge of the nature of all things...” (2:31).

The story of Adam given in the Holy Qur’ān (2:30-39) reveals that knowledge was imparted to him by God:

- a. at the transcendental or spiritual stage of his existence,—when his life was sublime because of the innocence and the serene tranquility that he enjoyed, together with his wife, in the “Presence of God”;

- b. before he embarked on his earthly career, i.e., before he had the occasion to engage himself in worldly pursuits,—nay, before he had acquired any worldly interests;
- c. before he was confronted with the moral struggle.

All this means that, in the estimation of the Holy Qur'ān:

- a. Acquisition of knowledge is a sublime and a spiritual pursuit:
- b. Cultivation of knowledge is one of the most basic needs and, hence, one of the most basic duties, of a human being:
- c. Proper knowledge forms one of the most basic requirements of proper moral life.

(2) *Spiritual achievement through Knowledge, especially of empirical Reality, emphasized:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“... Those only among His Servants who are learned (i.e., possessors and pursuers of knowledge) truly fear Allah.” (35:28).

Here possession and pursuit of knowledge—all true knowledge⁶⁵—has been mentioned as the condition for true fear of God, which, in its turn, is, together with the love for God, the motivating force in the life of every true Muslim. Thus pursuit of knowledge becomes a duty from the point of view of leading a good spiritual and moral life.

(3) *Acquisition of greatness through Knowledge, emphasized:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“Allah will exalt those who have Faith among you, and those who have knowledge, to high ranks.”⁶⁶ (58:11).

According to this verse, the basis for exaltation in the estimation of God is not only Faith in God and all spiritual verities, which is the highest theme of Religion, but also Knowledge, which forms as high a theme in the religion presented by the Holy Qur'ān. This honored place given to knowledge makes it obligatory for a Muslim to devote himself to it whole-heartedly.

(4) *Compatibility of Knowledge and Faith emphasized:*

A very important point should be noted here. Faith and Knowledge, in the view of the Holy Qur'ān, are compatible with each other. Indeed they are complementary—wedded to one another, as another verse clearly establishes:

Arabic text

“And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: ‘We believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord’: and none will grasp the Message except men of understanding.” (3:7).

This is a unique feature of the Qur'ānic philosophy.

Thus, the Holy Qur'ān demands acceptance and adherence to its teachings on rational basis. It proclaims most emphatically:

Arabic text

“So that he who perishes (spiritually) should perish by indisputable (rational) evidence (or, proof) and he who survives (spiritually) should survive by indisputable (rational) evidence (or, proof).” (8:42).

It challenges its opponents on the basis of reason and knowledge in these words

Arabic text

“Say: ‘Have you any (certain) knowledge? If so, produce it before us. Lo! you follow nothing but opinion. Lo! you do but guess’. Say: ‘With Allah is the argument that reaches home’.” (6:148-149).

Again

Arabic text

“Will they not then ponder on the Qur'ān (i.e., examine its teachings rationally).” (4:82; 47:24).

In fact, the Holy Qur'ān appeals to humanity not less than forty-eight times—and at numerous places on the basis of the physical, the psychical and the social phenomena—to employ reason, emphasizing regarding the truth of its teaching that:

Arabic text

“And these similitudes We set forth for mankind. But their import is grasped by the reason of only those who possess knowledge.” (29:43).

(5) *Observation and Research emphasized:*

Similarly, the Holy Qur’ān appeals not less than seventeen times to contemplate and meditate on the natural phenomena as well as on the truth of its own teaching. In that connection, it emphasizes also the joint exploration of truth:

Arabic text

“Say: I admonish you on one point: that you stand up, for Allah’s sake, by twos and singly, and then contemplate.” (34:46).

This contemplation is to be pursued in the form of search and *research* for arriving at the truth:

Arabic text

“You will not see any want of proportion in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn your vision again: do you see any flaw? Then repeat your look twice over...” (67:3-4).

(6) *Endeavour to rise higher and higher in knowledge, emphasized:*

The Holy Qur’ān has taught the prayer:

Arabic text

“... and say: O my Lord! advance me in knowledge.” (20:114).

It is evident that to pray for advance in knowledge and not to strive for it with might and main would be the height of irrationality. Therefore, this prayer implies the Divine Command for striving after knowledge. Hence, the duty to strive with a devoted and sincere heart for continuous progress in knowledge.

(7) *Objectivity in Knowledge emphasized:*

But this duty has to be pursued, as the wordings of the above verse establish clearly, with reference to God, Who is the Source of all Truth. In other words, quest for knowledge should be based on unflinching faith in God and in His Guidance, and should be inspired purely by the motive of search for Reality and love for Truth. All pre-conceived notions, superficial opinions and conjectures should be avoided. In other words, the pursuit should be based on *objectivity*. Persons undertaking this pursuit should strive to be, as the Holy Qur'ān states:

Arabic text

“Those possessing knowledge with devotion to justice (or, objectivity in knowledge)”—in other words, “the learned who are balanced (in their view of Reality)”, being spiritually as well as rationally illumined.” (3:18).

According to the Holy Qur'ān this is rationally possible only for a devotee of God, Who is the Source of all Knowledge. It says:

Arabic text

“Behold! in the constitution of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the Day and the Night,—there are indeed Signs for the possessors of understanding (i.e., the wise),—such as celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and reflect on (the problems relating to) the constitution of the heavens and the earth (finally acquiring that stage of understanding the Reality where the conviction bursts out from them): ‘Our Lord! you did not create (all) this in vain? Glory be to You! Give us salvation from the Penalty of the Fire’.” (3:190-191).

Thus the pursuit of knowledge should have, as its technique, non-capricious penetrating observation of the universe and man.

(8) Comprehensive pursuit of Knowledge emphasized:

Observation relating to the Universe as a whole has been emphasized, among other verses, in 3:191 quoted above. Observation of man’s immediate environment—natural as well as social—and of his inner self has been emphasized in the following verses:

Arabic text

“On the earth are Signs for those who have sure faith (in the meaningfulness of all things), as also (there are Signs) in your own selves: will you not, then, observe?” (51:20-21).

(9) Quest for the stage of ‘Wisdom’ emphasized:

Such quest for knowledge will bear the fruit of *al-Ḥikmah*, or the Wisdom, about which the Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“... and whoso is granted the Wisdom, receives indeed abundant Good, but none receives admonition save those possessing understanding.” (2:269).

They will finally be blessed with guiding mankind aright on the basis of sure knowledge contained in the Divine Guidance, even as the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) has been asked by God to declare:

Arabic text

“Say: ‘This is my Way. I call to Allah with sure knowledge, I and whoever follows after me. To Allah be glory! And I am not among the idolators’.” (12:108).

(10) The correct technique of attaining Higher Knowledge:

The process of education for acquiring higher knowledge, deducible from the Holy Qur'ān, may also be mentioned here for further edification. Speaking of the functions of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) as Divine *Teacher*, the holy book informs us:

Arabic text

“It is He Who has sent among the Unlettered a Messenger (Muhammad) from among them, to rehearse His revelations to them, to purify them, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom...” (62:2).

Thus, we are given three stages of education for the acquisition of higher knowledge:

1. The stage of basic and general education, represented in the Holy Prophet's mission by communicating Divine Revelations to the people;
2. The stage of spiritual and moral purification for the sake of eradicating all subjective perversions and acquiring absolute devotion to truth, even as it was ordained in the Holy Prophet's mission;
3. The stage of pursuing knowledge at the higher level where research is undertaken on the different facets of Reality and direct conviction is acquired on the basis of personal observation and insight, represented in the Holy Prophet's mission by 'teaching the Book and the Wisdom'.

To sum up: Cultivation of all knowledge, employing the method laid down for ensuring the service to truth, is a duty, according to the Holy Qur'ān, commanded by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) in the following words:

Arabic text

“Quest for knowledge is a duty for every Muslim man and woman.” (Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al- 'Ilm*, p. 34).



(2) Duty of Omission

Subjectivity and capriciousness in the pursuit of knowledge, as also lack of the spirit of observation and open-minded understanding of Truth, condemned:

According to the Holy Qur'ān, those who employ subjectivity and caprice in the domain of knowledge remain misguided, in spite of the apparent scholarly tone of their endeavor:

Arabic text

“Have you seen him who has taken his caprice to be his god, and Allah has left him astray despite his knowledge, and has sealed up his hearing and his heart (and understanding), and has set on his sight a covering? Who, then, will guide him after Allah (has withdrawn guidance)? Will you not receive admonition?” (45:23).

This is so because:

Arabic text

“... they have no knowledge therein. They follow nothing but conjecture; and conjecture avails nothing against Truth.” (53:38).

As to those who lack the spirit of observation and open-minded understanding of the Truth, they are led to, or remain in, nothing less than infidelity. We are told:

Arabic text

“How many a Sign there is in the heavens and in the earth that they pass by, turning away from it. And most of them believe not in God without associating other gods with Him!” (12:105-106).

This is so, because:

Arabic text

“... They have hearts, but understand not with them (i.e., do not exert their will to understand); they have eyes, but perceive not with them; they have ears, but hear not with them. They are like cattle; nay, they are worse (in their listlessness). They are heedless.” (7:179).



PART 4. DUTIES AS AESTHETICAL BEING

Chapter 1.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

The Holy Qur'ān has given to humanity a theory of Aesthetics of its own. The present is not, however, the proper occasion to expound it. Only the following five points may be mentioned here:

1. The Qur'ānic concept of Beauty is wedded to spirituality or godliness.
2. According to the Qur'ānic teaching, the essential attributes of Beauty are:

Piety, Purity, Sublimity, Harmony, Balance, Proportion, Order and Perfection.
3. The Holy Qur'ān upholds only that Art which is noble and sublime, both in its conception and its goal, and it regards as vulgar and inadmissible all those forms of Art which do not enshrine the essential attributes of Beauty, as it understands and acknowledges.
4. According to the Holy Qur'ān, the spiritual value, or, religion, is the highest, and below it stand in serial order the moral, the intellectual and the physical values.

5. As regards the aesthetic value, it should permeate and pervade all the aspects of human life: physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social.

Our concern in the present discourse being the duties of man as the possessor of aesthetic consciousness, we may first of all observe with advantage the emphasis on aesthetic value found in the Holy Qur'ān in respect of God, universe and man.

We find in the Holy Writ as follows:—

(1) GOD:

God is the Possessor of Absolute Beauty:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.” (24:35).

This is one of the most profound verses, endowed with depths of meaning that are unfathomable. In understanding its implication from the point of view of the problem before us, however, the guidance for us lies in the fact that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, darkness is ugliness, as the following verse denotes:

Arabic text

“But those who have earned evil will have a reward (in the Hereafter) of like evil: ignominy will cover them: no protector they shall have from (the wrath of) Allah: (*ugliness will be their*

lot) as if their faces had been covered with a cloak of darkest night. Such are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein.” (10:27).

Now, if darkness relates to ugliness, light relates to beauty,—and thus the transcendental Light of God implies the possession of transcendental Beauty by Him.

Again, God is the Absolute, as we have seen elsewhere. Hence His beauty is Absolute Beauty.

The Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) has, as the expounder of the Holy Qur’ān *par excellence*, made a very explicit and direct statement in this regard. He says:

Arabic text

“Allah is Beautiful and He loves Beauty.” (Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Bāb Taḥrīm al-Kibr*, p. 65).



(2) UNIVERSE:

Being the Possessor of Absolute Beauty, God has very naturally created everything of the world in the frame of beauty, as the following verse says

Arabic text

“... He Who has created has made everything most Good and Beautiful.” (32:7).

This is a statement about the universe as a whole and covers all things in the heavens and on the earth.

The Holy Qur'ān goes, however, beyond this universal statement and embarks, in order to emphasize the existence of beauty further, on certain details with reference to: (1) the earth, its plant life and animal life, (2) the heavenly bodies that surround the earth, and (3) Heaven in the World Hereafter, or, what is called, the next world.

(1) *The earth, its plant life and animal life:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

(a) *in respect of all things:*

Arabic text

“That which is on the earth We have made but as an adornment⁶⁷ for it ...” (18:7).

(b) *in respect of minerals and plants:*

Arabic text

“... and We produced therein (i.e., in the earth) all kinds of things in due balance.”⁶⁸ (15:19).

(c) *in respect of plants only:*

Arabic text

“(vegetation grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out in beauty...” (10:24).

(d) *in respect of animals:*

Arabic text

“And cattle He has created for you (O mankind): from them you derive warmth, and numerous benefits, and of their (meat) you eat. And *therein is beauty for you* as you drive them home in evening, and as you lead them forth to pasture in the morning.” (16:5-6).

Arabic text

“And (God has created) horses, mules, and donkeys, that you may ride them, and as *adornment*; and He will create (in future, through the mind and ingenuity of man, other vehicles) that you know not (at the time of the revelation of the Qur’ān).” (16:8).

Arabic text

“(The sacrificial cow, ordered by Moses, was to be) bright in her color, providing pleasure to the beholders.” (2:69).

(2) *The heavenly bodies that surround the earth:*

In this respect, the Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“And assuredly We have set constellations in the heaven and We have beautified it for beholders.” (15:16).

Arabic text

“We have indeed decked the lower heaven with beauty (in) the stars...” (37:6).

(3) *Heaven in the World Hereafter:*

The Holy Qur'ān says about Heaven

Arabic text

“... how beautiful an abode and place of rest!” (25:76).

Arabic text

“... beautiful Place of (final) Return.” (38:25).

Arabic text

“Now no person knows what delight of the eyes (—what aesthetic satisfaction—) is kept hidden (in reserve) for them (in Heaven)—as a reward for their (good) deeds.” (32:17).

Arabic text

“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).

Arabic text

“Some faces, that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty), looking towards their Lord (Who is the Source of all Beauty and the Bestower of all Blessings).” (75:22-23).



(3) MAN:

According to the Holy Qur'ān, human beings are possessors of Beauty, both outwardly and inwardly. It says:

Arabic text

“We have indeed created man in the best and the most beautiful⁶⁹ constitution.^{70” 71} (95:4).

Arabic text

“And (it is Allah Who has) given you shape (O mankind!), and made your shapes beautiful...” (40:64).

Arabic text

“By the Soul and Him Who endowed it with proportion and order⁷²...” (91:7).

The above discussion proves that the Holy Qur'ān is vehemently emphatic on the aesthetic value, affirming as it does, beauty in God, universe and man.



Chapter II.

DUTIES

The facts stated in the preceding chapter being what they are, the question is: Has the Holy Qur'ān prescribed any duties relating to the aesthetic aspect of human life?

The answer is: yes.

Let us look into the details.

1. The Holy Qur'ān wants its followers to beautify their Faith and their actions, and strive to obtain beautiful reward from God, as the following verses reveal:

Arabic text

“Who can be more beautiful in religion—Faith and Action—than one who surrenders his whole self to Allah while doing good (to mankind)...” (4:125).

Arabic text

“... and that, seek the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance, He will grant you enjoyment, good and beautiful, for a term appointed.” (11:3).

Arabic text

“Those who do good (beautifying their deeds) obtain a (like) beautiful (reward)—and more (through Divine Grace). No darkness (of ugliness and sorrow) nor shame shall cover their

faces (on the Day of Judgment)! They are Companions of the Garden: therein they will abide.” (10:26).

Arabic text

“And if anyone earns any good, We shall give him an increase in beauty (or, of good) in respect thereof.” (42:23).

Arabic text

“But if any have done wrong and have thereafter substituted beauty (in conduct) to take the place of evil, truly, I am Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (27:11).

2. In *respect of beauty in conduct*, the Qur'ānic verses bear reference in the form of command to certain specific situations also. For instance

a. Beauty in speech:

Arabic text

“Speak to people employing beauty (in your speech).” (2:83).

b. Beauty in behavior towards Parents:

Arabic text

“We have enjoined on man beauty (in conduct) in respect of his parents.” (29:8).

c. Beauty in preaching and argument:

Arabic text

“Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most beautiful.” (16:125).

3. *As regards physical life*, the following emphatic verse refers to the duty of beautifying it in all manner, of course, in harmony with the Qur’ānic norms and principles:

Arabic text

“Say: Who has forbidden⁷³ things of beauty which Allah has brought forth for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, which He bath provided for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment. Thus do We explain the Signs in detail for those who have knowledge.” (7:32).

4. *In respect of dress*, we are told first that one of the functions of dress is beautification of the human personality:

Arabic text

“O children of Adam! We have bestowed upon you raiment to cover your shame⁷⁴ and as a means of beautification,⁷⁵ and the raiment of piety (which covers and beautifies the inner self) is the best⁷⁶ That is of the Signs of Allah that haply they may be admonished.” (7:26).

Then, as if to emphasize the element of *sanctity* in beautification through dress, and to emphasize it for rectifying the wrong notion preached by certain other religions, it says, referring to worship, and,

because a Muslim must compulsorily pray five times during the day and the night, referring actually to all the twenty-four hours of one's daily life, as follows

Arabic text

“O Children of Adam! look to your adornment⁷⁷ at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: (Enjoy) but waste not by excess;⁷⁸ for Allah loves not the wasters.” (7:31).

5. To conclude: *The Holy Qur'ān demands and commands positive beautification of every aspect of human life*: spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical. Its teaching in this respect has been beautifully summed up by the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) in these words:

Arabic text

“Verily Allah has made obligatory the employment of beauty in respect of everything.”⁷⁹ (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*). (*Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābīḥ, Kitāb al-Ṣaid, al-Faṣl al-awwal*, p. 357).

And let every Muslim artist and artisan remember the following Prophetic exhortation:

Arabic text

“Verily, when a servant (of Allah) executes any task, Allah loves that he executes it with thorough skill and for stability and perfection.”⁸⁰ (*Kanz al-'Ummāl*).



PART 5. DUTIES AS MORAL BEING

(or, Duties to Self relating strictly to Morality)

1. Duties of omission, (Duties of respect for the Self).
2. Duties of commission, (Duties of love for the Self).

Chapter 1.

DUTIES OF OMISSION

END:

Moral Self-Preservation.

(1) Lying, or False Speech, prohibited:

Arabic text

“.... and shun the word that is false.” (22:30).

Arabic text

“Verily Allah guides not those who are false and ungrateful.”
(39:3)

Arabic text

“Shall I inform you (O people!), on whom it is that the evil ones descend? They descend on every sinful liar.”⁸¹ (26:221-222).

(2) Mixing up truth with falsehood prohibited:

Arabic text

“And confound not truth with falsehood.” (2:44).

(3) *Concealing truth prohibited:*

Arabic text

“and conceal not the truth while you know (it).” (2:44).

(4) *Concealing evidence prohibited:*

Arabic text

“Conceal not evidence; for whoever conceals it,—his heart is tainted with sin. And Allah knows all that you do.” (2:283).

(5) *Aversion to truth (—a state of mental perversion—a moral disease—) condemned:*

Arabic text

“Verily We have brought the Truth to you: But most of you have hatred for truth (—truth being always bitter for those who become accustomed to living on and benefiting from falsehoods).” (43:78).

(6) *Assisting falsehood or fraud, and giving false evidence, ruled out from Islamic conduct: hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“... and (the servants of the Most Gracious are those) who witness no falsehood.” (25:72).

Note: ‘Witnessing no falsehood’ implies in the wordings of the Arabic text: (1) ‘do not give false evidence’; and (2) ‘do not assist falsehood or fraud’.

(7) *Spirit of Hypocrisy condemned: hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“And of the people there are some who say: ‘We believe in Allah and the Last Day’; but they do not (really) believe. Fain would they deceive Allah and those who believe, but they only deceive themselves, and how little they perceive! In their hearts is a disease, so Allah has increased unto them (that) disease; and grievous is the penalty they (incur), because they have been lying.” (2:8-10).

These verses speak of the Hypocrites of the Holy Prophet’s time, who were practicing deception in respect of the Muslims. They, however, lay down the moral principle that practicing deception in human relations is strongly condemnable, and he who practices it becomes morally diseased. Thus, it is duty not only to others, but also to one’s own self, to abstain from adopting hypocritical attitude in any matter whatsoever.

(8) *Deeds not conforming to words condemned: hence abstinence from the same is duty:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! why say that which you do not do? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not do.” (51:2-3).

Disparity between word and deed of a person may bring harm to others who may repose confidence in him in any matter, but it damages that person also, because: (1) he loses the capacity to stick to truth; and (2) he loses the confidence of his fellow-beings and, hence, his prestige.

(9) *The Spirit of Duplicity condemned: hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“When they (i.e., the Hypocrites) meet those who believe, they say: ‘We believe’; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say: ‘We are really with you: we were only jesting’. Allah will throw back their mockery on them and give them rope in their trespasses; so they will wander like blind ones (to and fro). These are they who have bartered guidance for error: But their traffic is profitless, and they have lost true direction.” (2:14-6).

Although these verses refer to the Hypocrites of Medina, they lay down a universal principle, namely, that duplicity, which is a deeper phase of hypocrisy, corrupts a person’s moral tone, on the one hand, and brings loss of face to him, on the other. Thus, side by side with being unjust to others, he who practices duplicity also damages himself. Hence it is a ‘duty to self’ to abstain from it completely.

(10) Making a show of hollow acts of goodness, devotion and charity, condemned; hence abstinence from that is duty:

Making a show of hollow acts of goodness, devotion and charity is a form of hypocrisy and, as such, has been condemned by the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their Prayers, *those who do (good) to be seen*, but refuse (to supply) (even) small kindnesses (or, neighborly needs).” (107:4-7).

(11) Oath-mongering condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

All habitual liars lose the faith of their fellow-beings and hence resort to habitual and false swearing in order to create belief and confidence in their word: while “the true man’s word is as good as his bond”. Oath-mongering is thus related to evil character and a false personality, and is disapproved by the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“Heed not the type of despicable man, —ready with oaths ...” (68:10).

(12) Following one’s lusts of the heart prohibited:

The Holy Qur'ān enjoins:

Arabic text

“So follow not lusts of the heart⁸² lest you lapse (from truth) ...” (4:135).

(13) Desiring false appreciation and being pleased with flattery condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“Think not that those who exult in what they have brought about, and *love to be praised for what they have not done*,—think not that they can escape the penalty. For them is a penalty grievous indeed.” (3:188).

(14) Flattery, as embodying self-debasement of the flatterer⁸³ ruled out in Islamic conduct; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Guard your duty to Allah and speak a straight speech: He will (on that account) make your conduct whole and sound ...” (33:70).

The Arabic word *Sadīd*, used in this verse, when applied to speech, means⁸⁴ ‘true’ and ‘directed to the right point’. Now true speech is ‘statement according to fact’, as also ‘sincere speech’. Moreover, a speech which is according to fact and sincere shall be a dignified speech. As for ‘directed to the right point’, it connotes a

‘speech which has no exaggeration or its opposite’. It also contains the sense of straightforwardness’.⁸⁵

The English word ‘flattery’ means: ‘treating with insincere and exaggerated praise and servile attentions’.⁸⁶

Flattery is, therefore, the very opposite of the ‘straight speech’ mentioned in the above verse.

Moreover, according to the above verse, ‘straight speech’ renders one’s conduct whole and sound, which means that flattery renders conduct unsound.

Therefore, viewing it in the light of the Qur’ānic teaching, flattery is immoral, and a Muslim should abstain from it totally. Condemning this vice, the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) says:

Arabic text

“When you meet the flatterers, throw dust into their mouths.” (Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*; Abū Dā’ūd’s *Sunan*, Chap. on “Disapprobation of Flattery”).

(15) *Love for pomp and show—Ostentation*⁸⁷, prohibited:

Arabic text

“And be not like those who started from their homes insolently and to be seen of men (i.e., in vainglory and ostentation).” (8:47).

Referring to the unseemly conduct of the enemies of Islam at the battle of Badr, this verse lays down the moral injunction that a Muslim

should always abstain from vainglory and ostentation.

(16) Conceit condemned: hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān disapproves conceit in the following reference:

Arabic text

“... and on the day of (the battle of) Hunain: Behold! your superiority in numbers elated you; then it availed you nothing, and the earth, for all that it is wide, straitened unto you; then you turned back in retreat.” (9:25).

This verse relates to the battle of Hunain, in which for the first time the Muslim army outnumbered the enemy forces; yet it was in this battle that the Muslim forces suffered a severe set-back first, which has been ascribed to the spirit of elation, as opposed to the spirit of faith in God, which overtook the minds of a part of them, i.e., the new converts and the less-disciplined.

The moral principle contained in that event is that God disapproves and punishes conceit and self-elation. Hence the duty to abstain from the same.

(17) Exultation in one's achievements condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

Arabic text

“Think not that *those who exult in what they have brought about*, and love to be praised for what they have not done,—

think not that they can escape the penalty. For them is a penalty grievous indeed.” (3:188).

Exultation in one’s achievements has been condemned here because it breeds pride which leads to a person’s ruin at least in damaging his character. In fact, it also blocks further progress.

A Muslim should always attribute his achievements to the favor of God and maintain the state of mind known as humility.

(18) Self-goodness—self-piousness (piety-complex) condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur’ān lays down the rule:

Arabic text

“Therefore ascribe not purity (i.e., goodness and righteousness) unto yourselves. He is Best Aware of him who wards off evil.”⁸⁸ (53:32).

Many of those who are strict in conformity to external religious behaviour, without imbibing thoroughly the inner spirit of religious life, develop consciously or unconsciously, what may be termed as ‘piety-complex’, which is actually a form of self-esteem culminating in contempt for others.

Many others who strive to be morally-good develop a feeling of self-esteem in that respect.

Both of these wrong attitudes have been disapproved by the Holy Qur’ān and should be shunned by every Muslim.

(19) Haughtiness prohibited.

Haughtiness in all forms has been regarded as a basic evil by the Holy Qur'ān. *Iblīs*, who enjoyed the prerogative of the holy company of Angels, became Devil because he compared himself with Adam and said:

Arabic text

“... I am better than he.” (38:76).

and thus:

Arabic text

“he was haughty, and became one of those who reject Faith (— indeed, became the Devil).” (38:74).

As regards mankind:

Arabic text

“Verily He (i.e., God) loves not those who are haughty.” (16:23).

and:

Arabic text

“... evil indeed is the abode of those who are haughty.” (16:29).

Hence, it is a Qur'ānic moral duty to abstain from haughtiness in all forms. It should be shunned in thought, word and deed. The Holy Qur'ān lays down the rules:

Arabic text

“Swell not your cheek (for pride) at the people, and walk not in insolence through the earth⁸⁹; for Allah loves not any vainglorious⁹⁰ boastful⁹¹ (person). And be modest in your gait, and lower your voice (in humility)⁹²; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of an ass.” (31:18-19).

Another verse which condemns the demonstration of haughtiness in very strong terms may also be quoted:

Arabic text

“And walk not in insolence through the earth. Verily, you will by no means rend the earth, nor can you attain to the mountains in stature.” (17:37).

(20) Obstinacy, Perverseness, Self-righteousness ruled out; hence abstinence from the same is duty:

In emphasizing the qualities of the righteous, the Holy Qur’ān says:—

Arabic text

“...and they are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done.” (3:135).

It is thus a duty to abstain from obstinacy, perverseness and self-righteousness in all the situations of life.

(21) Quarrelsomeness prohibited.

The Holy Qur’ān has mentioned quarrelsomeness as the opposite of righteousness:—

Arabic text

“So have We made the (Qur’ān) easy in your own tongue, that with it you may give glad tidings to the righteous, and warn therewith the vehemently quarrelsome folk.” (19:97).

The holy book also says about true Muslims:—

Arabic text

“... and when the ignorant address them (in arrogance and lack of culture), they say, ‘Peace!’ (avoiding thus all quarrel with them)...” (25:63).

Finally, there is the command, given to the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), but meant to be obeyed by all Muslims, according to their situation:

Arabic text

“... and keep away from the (disputations raked up by the) ignorant.”⁹³ (7:199).

It is, therefore, a duty for everyone who aims at righteousness, i.e., every true follower of the Qur’ān, to abstain completely from quarrelsomeness.

(22) *Being over-powered by wrath ruled out; hence abstinence from it is duty:*

In emphasizing the qualities of the righteous, the Holy Qur’ān says:—

Arabic text

“... and (those) who control their wrath” (3:135).

Hence, it is a Qur’ānic duty of omission not to permit oneself under any circumstance to be over-powered by wrath.

(23) Light-heartedness prohibited:

The Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“...and (in order that) you may not (lose the balance of your mind in) joy because of that (worldly good) which has been given (to you)...” (57:23).

Exultation over the good things of the world is wedded to light-heartedness. The man of God should regard all worldly good fortune as illusory (57:20)⁹⁴. Hence he should not suffer from emotional disturbance on such occasions, and should maintain his serenity, knowing, as he does, its true value. In other words, he should avoid light-heartedness.

(24) Pessimism, i.e., being over-powered by despair, prohibited:

The Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“That you may not despair over matters which have escaped you ...” (57:23).

Elsewhere, the exhortation is in the form of the emphatic command:

Arabic text

“... and never give up hope of Allah’s Soothing Mercy: Truly no one despairs of Allah’s Soothing Mercy except those who have no faith.” (12:87).

This should be so, because every true Muslim is a man of God and devotion to Him is the be-all and end-all of his life:

Arabic text

“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.’” (6:162-163).

It is through this intense devotion that the light of Faith and Hope continues to burn constantly in his heart, and despair can never overtake him. Indeed, he is, in his religious make-up, out and out an optimist, and pessimism is the very negation of his Faith.

Hence the Qur’ānic duty of shunning Pessimism completely and thoroughly.

(25) Being over-powered by fear ruled out; hence the effort to eradicate it is duty:

Fear is one of the greatest scourge of human life, and he who can overcome it is really a fortunate man.

The Holy Qur’ān has given a teaching which ensures this merit thoroughly.

According to the holy book, a true Muslim is he who has absolute faith in God and cultivates true devotion to Him (6:162).⁹⁵ This faith and this devotion lend strength to his will, a balance to his emotions and a grace to his personality which never fail him in life, because God's help and protection is unfailingly and always available to him:

Arabic text

“So whoever rejects Evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks.” (3:256).

Thus a true Muslim is never afraid of anything of this world. He leads a life free of fear in proportion to the strength of his faith and trust in God:

Arabic text

“Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve; those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil; for them are Glad Tidings in the life of the Present and in the Hereafter: No change can there be in the Words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme Felicity.” (10:62-64).

For them, the Comforting Message and the Command is:

Arabic text

“Entertain no fear!” (41:30).

Because: all things and the consequences of all events, are under the control and command of the All-Powerful, the All-Just and the Most Merciful God:

Arabic text

“Blessed be He in Whose hands is Dominion; and He over all things has Power...” (67:1).

Arabic text

“... and with Allah rests the end of (all) affairs.” (22:41).

It is thus the duty of a Muslim not to allow himself to be over-powered by fear.

(26) Cowardice on the battlefield prohibited:

A true Muslim develops the strength of his heart through a dynamic and vibrant faith in God to such an extent that cowardice on the battlefield is inconceivable in his case:

Arabic text

“... and those who are firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic and violence.⁹⁶ These are they who are proven true (in their faith in God); and these are they who are (truly) righteous.” (2:177).

Therefore, the Holy Qur'ān lays down the command:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! When you meet the Unbelievers⁹⁷ in hostile array, *never turn your backs to them*.

“If any do turn his back to them on such a day, unless it be in a stratagem of war or to retreat to a troop (of his own), he draws

on himself the wrath of Allah, and his abode is Hell, —an evil refuge (indeed)!” (8:15-16).

Thus, to abstain from cowardice is a duty.

*(27) Fear of opponents of truth and justice ruled out;
hence abstinence from it is duty:*

The Holy Qur’ān mentions it as one of the essential qualities of a true Muslim that, in upholding truth and justice, he is never afraid of those who may be opposed to him:

Arabic text

“and (they are) never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault...” (5:57).

Thus, to abstain from fear of opposition in respect of upholding truth and justice is a duty.

*(28) Cultivation of sadness, anxiety and worry in respect of
worldly events and things prohibited:*

A true Muslim is, as we have already noted, a man of God, and his motto in life is to commit all his affairs to His care:

Arabic text

“(He said:) and I commit my affair to Allah: for Allah (ever) watches over His Servants.” (40:44).

This motto, taught by the Holy Qur’ān, cuts at the very root of that attitude of mind which subjects a person to indulge irrationally in sadness, anxiety and worry, thereby damaging him in many ways.

Speaking directly of the problem, the holy book says:

Arabic text

“... that (He might teach) you not to grieve for that which you missed or for that which befell you...” (3:153).

Thus it is the duty of every true Muslim not to cultivate sadness, anxiety and worry in respect of what happens to him in his life.

(29) (a) *Capriciousness,*

(b) *indulgence in fancies and phantasms divorced from the realities of life, and*

(c) *harboring evil thoughts,*

—all ruled out in Islamic conduct; hence abstinence from them is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān regards *waswās* as a great evil, so much so that it teaches a definite prayer for seeking God's protection against it. The prayer is:

Arabic text

“Say: I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind, the King (or Ruler) of Mankind, the God (or Judge) of Mankind from the evil of the *waswās* of (or caused by) the slinking (devil), who whispers in the hearts of Mankind, —among jinns and among men.” (Sura 114).

The word ‘*waswās*’ which has been left un-translated by the present writer comprehends within it several meanings that relate to different aspects of evil in the thoughts and feelings of human beings. The “*Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*” gives the following meanings:

“devilish insinuation, temptation, wicked thoughts, doubt, misgiving, suspicion; delusion, fixed idea; uneasiness, anxiety, concern, melancholy.”

The word ‘*waswās*’ covers, therefore: (1) depression of spirits through thoughts of sadness (—melancholy); (2) anxiety; worry (—uneasiness and concern); (3) capriciousness (—doubt, misgiving, suspicion); (4) indulgence in delusions; (5) harboring of evil thoughts.

Thus, the above prayer, while it emphasizes the duty of abstaining from cultivation of sadness, anxiety and worry—stated in the immediately preceding section, also emphasizes the duty of (1) shunning of capriciousness, and (2)⁹⁸ abstaining from indulgence in delusions, namely, in fancies and phantasms divorced from the realities of life and consequently living in an imaginary world of one’s own making, and (3) guarding oneself against harboring evil thoughts.

(30) *Perversion—straying, and leading others, into evil courses condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:*

The Holy Qur’ān condemns perversion in all its forms in the following verses:

Arabic text

“And relate to them the story⁹⁹ of the man to whom We sent Our Signs, but he passed them by: So Satan followed him up, and he became of the perverted.” (7:175).

Arabic text

“And the Fierce Fire shall be placed in full view before the perverted ones.” (26:91).

Hence, it is a duty to abstain from perversion in all its forms.

(31) Indulgence in everything vain ruled out; hence abstinence from it is duty:

Emphasizing certain essential attributes of Islamic conduct, the Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“... and those (Believers) who from (everything) vain keep away” (23:3).

At another place, the same trait of Muslim character has been mentioned in these words:

Arabic text

“... and when they pass by some vanity (like vain random talk, unedifying jokes, vain ‘recreations’, etc.), they pass by it with dignified (avoidance).”¹⁰⁰ (25:72).

(32) Idle discourse disapproved; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The following verse of the Holy Qur'ān, though it relates to a particular event, also lays down a general rule of conduct:

Arabic text

“And of mankind are those who purchase (i.e., are occupied with) idle discourse¹⁰¹, to mislead (men) from Allah's Way (— which is the way of beneficial spending of time and energy) without knowledge (i.e., on the basis of vain fanciful stories), and throw ridicule on it: for such there will be a humiliating Penalty.” (31:6).

It is, therefore, duty to abstain from wasting time and energy in vain talks, frivolous discourses and idle tales.

(33) Recklessness prohibited:

One of the attributes of the unrighteous mentioned by the Holy Qur'ān is that of being ‘*musrif*’ (40:28), which word comprehends ‘recklessness’ in its meanings.

Also, the injunction has been laid down:

Arabic text

“... Do not practice recklessness ...” (7:31).

(34) Abstinence enjoined in respect of:

- a. Idle curiosity;
- b. Believing in unfounded reports;
- c. Spreading unfounded reports;

- d. Entering into discussions without correct knowledge of the problem;
- e. Entertaining opinions for which no strong reason to believe exists;
- f. Proffering uncertain opinion;
- g. Tendering uncertain advice.

In the following pithy verse, whose Arabic text can be but poorly translated into English, the Holy Qur'ān lays down a comprehensive duty of omission which covers all the above vices:

Arabic text

“Pursue not and follow not that whereof you have no knowledge”. (17:36).

(35) Idleness ruled out; hence abstinence from it is duty.

The Holy Qur'ān commands the Muslims in these words:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! persevere, and excel in perseverance, and be (always) in a state of readiness, and observe your duty to Allah that haply you may prosper.” (3:200).

Idleness, or aversion to labour, is possible in a physically normal person only when: (a) he has no serious end in view, and (b) he

possesses a tone of mind whereby he suffers from lack of perseverance.

The Holy Qur'ān cuts at the root of both of these short-comings when it commands the Muslims, in the above verse, to develop the very opposite character, namely, maximum of perseverance and the most serious end, i.e., making observance of the duty to God the goal of life.

Thus, idleness is definitely a vice in the Qur'ānic moral system and should, as such, be shunned by every Muslim.

Expounding this Qur'ānic teaching, the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) has taught the Muslims to seek God's refuge from idleness. The wordings of the prayer are:

Arabic text

“O Allah! I seek refuge with you from worry and grief and incompetence (in the performance of duties) and idleness and cowardice and miserliness and the burden of debt and the tyranny of the people.” (Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*).

(36) Abstinence enjoined in respect of false endeavour in earning livelihood:

- a. through beggary;
- b. through acquiring money falsely by religious pretences and superstitious practices;
- c. through gambling.

(a) Through Beggary:

The qualities of the needy person who deserves financial help have been laid down thus:

Arabic text

“(Voluntary financial help is¹⁰²) for those in need, (who, in Allah’s cause¹⁰³, are restricted, and cannot move about in the land (seeking for trade or work). The ignorant man thinks because of their modesty (in respect of asking for help), that they are free from want. You will know them from their (unfailing) mark. They beg not importunately from all and sundry...” (2:273).

Thus: the person who deserves help should fulfill the following conditions:

- his need for money should be genuine;
- it should arise from some honorable or acceptable cause, including inability to work due to physical ailments or non-availability of employment;
- he should be respectable in his demeanor;
- he should not beg from all and sundry, namely, should not adopt beggary as a profession.

Professional beggary, which is a debasing form of acquiring easy money, is, therefore, completely ruled out by the Holy Qur'ān. Indeed, it has no place in Muslim society.¹⁰⁴

(b) Acquiring money falsely through religious pretences and superstitious practices:

The Holy Qur'ān points out condemningly another false means of earning money which damages both the recipient and the giver of money,—the means, namely, of employing religious pretences and superstitions, or, so-called “spiritual” practices. It says:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! verily many of the priests and the monks devour the substances of the people in falsehood (i.e., on false pretences) ...” (9:34).

This verse refers to the Jewish priests and divines and the Christian monks and clergy. The false pretences consisted in that the Jewish priests used to misinterpret the law for the benefit of obtaining money from the interested parties,¹⁰⁵ and the Christian monks and clergy used to issue indulgences and dispensations and had made the shrines of their saints a source of revenue for themselves.¹⁰⁶

The condemnation by the Holy Qur'ān means that it is the duty of a Muslim to abstain from acquiring money from all types of false pretences and practices in the name of spirituality and religion.

(c) Gambling, as embodying the spirit of earning wealth without labour, prohibited:

Another way of acquiring easy money is through the different forms of gambling. The Holy Qur'ān commands the Muslims to shun all those forms of false-earning, when it says:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling¹⁰⁷, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination—of Satan’s handwork: Shun it, therefore, that you may prosper.”¹⁰⁸ (5:89).

Thus, it is a duty to abstain totally from all forms of gambling.

(37) Love of wealth for its own sake¹⁰⁹ vehemently condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān, while condemning unrighteousness, recounts love of wealth as one of the vices:

Arabic text

“... and you love wealth with inordinate love.” (89:20).

Arabic text

“and lo! in the love of wealth he (i.e., the unregenerate man who is ungrateful to God) is violent.” (100:8).

Arabic text

“The emulous desire for abundance and increase (in wealth, status and other worldly possessions) distracts you (from the more serious and higher things), until you visit the graves (i.e., you die).” (102:1-2).

Arabic text

“Woe to every kind of scandal-monger and backbiter, who amasses wealth and counts it (often out of love for it), thinking his wealth would make him last for ever. By no means! He will surely be thrown into that (Hell) which breaks to pieces.” (104:1-4).

It is, therefore, the duty of a Muslim to shun love for wealth totally, regarding wealth only as a means to virtue.

(38) Abstinence enjoined in respect of Covetousness¹¹⁰ or, the spirit of Greed, which expresses itself in:

- a. *Covetous Selfishness*, or, withholding from others the goods possessed by one’s own self (i.e. miserliness); and
- b. *Coveting other’s goods*.

(a) Covetous Selfishness:

The Holy Qur’ān has laid down the rule:

Arabic text

“And those saved from the covetousness¹¹¹ of their own souls,—they are the ones that achieve prosperity.” (59:9; 64:16).

Thus it is a duty to abstain from harbouring the spirit of covetousness—covetous selfishness—in all things that we possess.

(b) Coveting others' goods prohibited:

By coveting others' goods:

- one damages his spirit of contentment and, as a consequence, his peace of mind; and
- he cultivates the spirit of jealousy.

Both of these are vices.

The Holy Qur'ān, therefore, says:

Arabic text

“And in no wise covet those things in which Allah has made some of you excel others.” (4:32).

It is, thus, a duty to abstain from coveting the goods that others possess.

(39) Permitting oneself the very Spirit of Miserliness, prohibited.

The Holy Qur'ān commands:

Arabic text

“Make not your hand tied (in miserliness) to your neck...” (17:29).

Because, the true Muslims are those who:

Arabic text

“are not niggardly.” (25:67).

And every Muslim should always remember that:

Arabic text

“... there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of Allah: announce unto them a most grievous penalty—on the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the fire of Hell, and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs: (And it will be said to them:) ‘This is the (treasure) which you buried for yourselves: taste you, then, the (treasure) you buried’.” (9:34-35).

and:

Arabic text

“Let not those who are niggardly in respect of the gifts which Allah has given of His Grace, think it is good for them: nay! it is bad for them. Soon shall the things withheld in niggardliness be tied to their necks like a collar (—the collar of agonizing misery—) on the Day of Judgment. To Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and earth; and Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.” (3:180).

It is, therefore, a duty to self to keep one’s heart absolutely clear of the spirit of miserliness.

(40) Practicing miserliness in respect of one’s self specifically condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty.

People are generally miserly in respect of others. But there are those also who are miserly, not only towards others, but even towards

themselves. Namely, they deprive themselves of rationally and justly benefiting from those means of healthy living which God bestows on them. Such persons have been condemned by the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“Verily, Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious;—nor those who are niggardly and command mankind to niggardliness and *hide the bounties which Allah has bestowed on them*; and We have prepared for the ungrateful a punishment that steepes them in contempt...” (4:36-37).

“Hiding the bounties which Allah has bestowed on them” implies:

- a. withholding bounties from others;
- b. Disallowing those bounties from manifesting themselves on one's person and in the different aspects of one's personal life.

There is a *Ḥadīth* which clarifies the duty in respect of the second implication directly:

Arabic text

“Allah loves to see the effects of His bounties on the person of His Servant.” (Tirmizi).

It is, therefore, the duty of a Muslim to abstain from practicing miserliness towards his own self.

(41) (a) *Squandering—Vain Spending, prohibited:*

The Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“... but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. Verily spendthrifts are associates of (i.e. of the same family as) the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful¹¹². ”¹¹³ (17:26-27).

It is, therefore, a duty to abstain totally from squandering one’s wealth, whether for one’s own self and dependants or for others.

(b) *Insincerity in acts seemingly of charity and spending one’s wealth for show in general, condemned:*

Arabic text

“Verily Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious ... those who expend their substance to show off to men . . . ” (4:36-38).

(42) *Impatience, or want of calm endurance and perseverance, disapproved; hence abstinence from it is duty:*

Arabic text

“If only they had patience until you (O Prophet) could come out to them, it would have been good for them. (That they behaved impatiently was bad for them).” (49:5).

This verse indicates that impatience, namely, want of calm endurance and perseverance, is bad for one’s self. Hence to abstain from it is duty to self.

(43) Spirit of Ungratefulness condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“Verily, Allah loves not any treacherous, ungrateful (person).”
(22:38).

This verse emphasizes basically the spirit of ungratefulness. Of course, active ungratefulness, whether towards God or towards fellow-beings, is also definitely included.

It is, therefore, duty to eschew the spirit of ungratefulness and to abstain from being ungrateful to anyone, whereby the moral purity of one's own inner personality is damaged.

(44) Indecency, lewdness and everything abominable in thought and word and deed, prohibited:

The Holy Qur'ān has commanded:

Arabic text

“... and draw not nigh to indecencies, whether open or secret...”¹¹⁴ (6:151).

Again:

Arabic text

“... and He forbids lewdness and abomination and wickedness...”¹¹⁵ (16:90).

It is, thus, duty to abstain totally from indecency, lewdness and everything abominable in thought, in speech and in action.

(45) *The very Spirit of Sexual Immodesty prohibited:*

The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“And come not nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils).” (17:32).

The words “come not nigh to” imply abstinence from the very spirit of sexual immodesty, as also the attitude and the behaviour in which it manifests itself. Thus it is a duty to shun¹¹⁶, the very spirit of sexual immodesty, as also the immodest attitudes and behaviour that cause temptation in relations between the sexes.

(46) *Defiling one's spiritual and moral purity through illicit sexual gratification, including homosexuality and self-abuse, prohibited:*

Abstinence from lewdness has already been included in the duty mentioned in the previous section. Here we may quote the verses where the command has been given with particular reference to sexual appetite. The Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“Say (O Prophet!) to the believing men that they should lower their gaze (in the spirit of sexual modesty) and guard their

private parts (against misuse): that will make for greater purity for them. And Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do.

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts (against misuse).” (24:30-31.)

These verses lay down the duty of abstaining from defiling one's purity by illicit sexual relations and sexual self-abuse.¹¹⁷

(47) Indifference to self-reform condemned; hence abstinence from it is duty:

The greatest of moral diseases consists in the attitude of indifference to self-reform. The Holy Qur'ān takes full cognizance of it and, in order to warn the Muslims of its evil implications and consequences, condemns the presence of this disease among the clergy and the people of a previous religious community.

Addressing their clergy, it says:

Arabic text

“Do you enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves, and yet you study the Scripture? Will you not understand?” (2:44.).

Arabic text

“Thenceforth your hearts hardened: they became like a rock and even worse in hardness. For among rocks there are some from which rivers gush forth; others there are which when split

asunder send forth water; and others which sink for fear of Allah: and Allah is not unmindful of your actions.” (2:74).

It is, therefore, the duty of a Muslim to abstain from cultivating or retaining an attitude which may disable him from reforming himself in respect of his weaknesses and deficiencies.



Chapter 2.

DUTIES OF COMMISSION

END:

Moral Development ensuring Moral Perfection.

(1) Cultivation and practice of Truthfulness enjoined:

The Holy Qur'ān lays down the command in the following two verses:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Guard your duty to Allah (in respect of truthfulness) and be with those who are true (in thought, word and deed).” (9:119).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Guard your duty to Allah and speak words (that are) true and directed to the right point: that He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins. He that obeys Allah and His Messenger, has indeed attained the highest achievement.” (33:70-71).

The first verse commands the Muslims:

- a. to be most conscientiously truthful, namely, through guarding their duty of obedience to God Who is all time a witness even

to their innermost thoughts and feelings, not to speak of speech and action;

- b. to be comprehensively truthful, because conscientious truthfulness means truthfulness in every respect, namely, in thought, word and deed;
- c. to develop the spirit and activity of truthfulness by upholding the cause of truthfulness and by loving the company of those who are genuinely truthful.

The second verse commands, not only conscientious truthfulness in speech, but also guarding against even unconscious slip from truth by making the speech “directed to the right point.”¹¹⁸

Truthfulness in thought, word and deed is, therefore, a duty. Indeed, it is such an important duty that it forms one of the essential attributes of righteousness (3:14-6), and Heaven has been promised to those who uphold truth in their hearts and practice it in their actions (33:35). In Heaven itself, the righteous will enjoy their blissful life in “*an Assembly of Truth* in the Presence of the Sovereign Omnipotent.” (54:55).

(2) *Guarding of Oaths enjoined:*

Taking lightly one’s oaths is the quality of the person who is deficient in moral earnestness and lacks in true devotion to truthfulness. Hence, in order to maintain sound moral outlook and

character, it is a duty to guard one's oaths, i.e., to be true to one's oaths; and this is what the Holy Qur'ān has commanded:

Arabic text

“... and guard your oaths.” (5:89).

(3) *Cultivation of the spirit of Sincerity and Uprightness enjoined:*

Sincerity means freedom from pretence. Uprightness (or, honesty) means freedom from fraud. Both these qualities are actually forms of truthfulness, implying that there should be sameness in reality as in appearance. In other words, what we express in words should be the same as we feel in our hearts, and in no way should we do injustice to our speech by making it immoral through making it discordant with what we believe to be true. The Holy Qur'ān has thus commanded sincerity and uprightiness (side by side with truthfulness in giving evidence and with justice in pronouncing judgment), in the following verse:

Arabic text

“... and when you utter a word, do justice there unto...”
(6:152).

(4) *Steadfastness in everything good and true enjoined:*

The Holy Qur'ān has commanded the Muslims to be steadfast in the cause of Truth:

Arabic text

“... and be ever ready (i.e., fixed in your resolve)...” (3:200).

Again:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! when you meet a (hostile) force, stay firm...” (8:45).

This should be so, because firmness is one of the basic qualities of true Believers:

Arabic text

“Allah keeps firm those who believe, with the Word that stands firm, in this world and in the Hereafter ...” (14:27).

Hence, steadfastness in all that is good and true is duty.

(5) Modesty enjoined:

Modesty, which means “restraint by a sense of seemliness” and which implies spiritual purity and moral decency in one’s inner attitudes and outward behaviour in respect of moral decorum, has been emphasized in a beautiful manner in the following Qur’ānic verses:

Arabic text

“O children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to conceal your shame, and as an adornment. But the raiment of piety, that is the best. Such are among the Signs of Allah, that you may be admonished.

“O children of Adam! *Let not Satan seduce you*, in the same manner as he got your parents out of the Garden (of felicity), stripping them of the raiment (of innocence and purity), that he might manifest their shame to them ...” (7:26-27).

‘Raiment of piety’, in verse 26, emphasizes the observance of modesty in the inner attitude as well as outward behaviour; while the words: ‘let not Satan seduce you’ in verse 27, proclaim the duty of the observance of modesty.¹¹⁹

(6) *Marriage enjoined for providing the protection of the moral fortress of married life to the individual:*

The law has been laid down:

Arabic text

Marry those among you who are single, or the virtuous ones among your slaves, male or female: If they are in poverty Allah will give them Means out of His Grace: for Allah encompasses all, and He knows all things.” (24:32).

That marriage provides a moral fortress, a fortress of chastity, has been emphasized by the Holy Qur’ān in the word *muḥṣin—ḥiṣn* meaning fortress—employed in the verse which points out the true motive with which a Muslim should marry:

Arabic text

“... desiring chastity, not lust ...” (4:24).

(7) *Chastity under all conditions: Preservation of sexual sanctity enjoined:*

Chastity implies maintenance of purity in thought, word and deed, in respect of the sexual passion. The Holy Qur'ān makes it a duty when it commands:

Arabic text

“Those who find not the wherewithal of marriage shall keep themselves chaste (in thought, word and deed)...” (24:33).

Elsewhere, the womenfolk have been specifically commanded:

Arabic text

“... and that they shall observe the principle of chastity (even in respect of the most distantly related aspects of attitude and behaviour), that is best for them...” (24:60).

(8) *Laboring for earning one's livelihood enjoined:*

The Holy Qur'ān has commanded:

Arabic text

“... and seek of (i.e., strive and labour for) Allah's Bounty (i.e., means of livelihood): and remember Allah much, that you may prosper.” (62:10).

The above command to strive and labour for earning one's livelihood has actually been given in the context of the observance of special weekly congregational worship on Fridays. This does not mean, however, that the command is confined only to Fridays. On the

contrary, the Holy Qur'ān has emphasized the virtue of laboring for earning one's livelihood by repudiating the Jewish-Christian notion of the Sabbath—of the false belief as to the sanctity of idleness and abstinence from work—and asserting that labour for honest earning is most definitely a part of worship.

Expounding the Qur'ānic view, the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) says:

Arabic text

“To engage in labour for honest livelihood is duty...” (*Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, vol. 2, p. 7).

(9) *Earning livelihood through honest means enjoined.*

The verse quoted in the preceding injunction¹²⁰ implies one more command: namely, to earn one's livelihood by honest means and in honest manner, because it has to be earned as “God's Bounty” and not as Satan's favor. Moreover, the command to earn has been combined with the command to “remember Allah much, that you may prosper”, thereby commanding spiritualization of the effort for earning, which alone can truly guarantee the maintenance of one's conscience as sound and unblemished.

(10) *Benefiting oneself from only that which has been lawfully acquired, enjoined:*

The most basic need of man is food, and hence it is hunger in respect of which it is most difficult to observe lawfulness. Even an honest person finds it most difficult to abstain from employing

debasing or illegitimate means, like theft, when he is confronted with death by starvation. Hence, the Holy Qur'ān has mentioned food when laying down the duty of benefiting oneself from only that which has been lawfully acquired. It says:

Arabic text

“O mankind! eat of whatsoever is on the earth (provided it is) lawfully acquired, and good (i.e., lawful for your health) ...” (2:168).

Then the Holy Qur'ān goes beyond food and lays down the general law:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Spend out of the good things which you have lawfully earned and out of that which we have brought forth for you from the earth . . .” (2:267).

According to Qur'ānic commentators, this verse relates to spending in charity for others¹²¹, from which a person benefits spiritually. But, spending on one's personal needs should all the more strictly be based on what one has lawfully earned, because in that way alone can the spiritual health—the integrity of personality—be properly maintained.

(11) Virtue of industry enjoined:

To lead a hard life, to engage in perpetual endeavor for the flowering up of one's talents and faculties, to struggle incessantly through honest labour for higher and higher achievement: that is the

law of life in Islam, emphasized time and again in the Holy Qur'ān and enshrined in the life of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him). Emphasizing this law, the Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“... and that for man shall be nothing (i.e., no man deserves) save that wherefor he makes effort, and that (the fruit of) his effort will soon come in sight.” (52:39-40).

Again:

Arabic text

“For each (human being) is a rank according to the *deeds* which he does: for your Lord is not unaware of what they do.” (6:132).

The first verse says that no human being deserves any success in life except what he labours for. The second verse emphasizes progress on the basis of genuine, practical endeavor.

Industry is, therefore, an important duty to self, according to the Holy Qur'ān.

(12) Virtue of pursuing stable and sound Progress life, through:

- a. Planning one's life and activity soundly;
- b. Aiming at consequential (as opposed to wasteful) activity.
- c. Aiming at the highest and the soundest productivity in one's activity,

enjoined:

The Holy Qur'ān commands:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Fear Allah (in wasting your life and talents in vain or wrong pursuits and through unsound planning and execution), and (in all types of actions) let every soul look to what (resulting good and worthiness for success and progress) he has sent forth for the morrow. And fear Allah (for making your activity positive, planned, consequential and progressive, thereby manifesting your true and active thankfulness to Him for His bounties): for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do.” (59:18).

That the human outlook should be progressive, which necessitates aiming at the highest and the soundest productivity, is borne out by the fact that man, according to the Holy Qur'ān, is an evolutionary being and the character of human life is evolutionary:¹²²

Arabic text

“So I do call to witness the ruddy glow of Sunset; the Night and its Homing; and the Moon in her Fullness: you shall surely travel from stage to stage.” (84:16-19).

(13) Cultivation and maintenance of Optimism enjoined:

Optimism, or maintaining an unflinching attitude of hope, is based, in a Muslim's life, on his unswerving faith in and sincere

reliance on God, and has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān as an essential attribute of Islamic life:¹²³

Arabic text

“Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of the night prostrating himself and standing (in adoration), who takes heed of the Hereafter, and who places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord (like one who does not)? ...” (39:9).

To maintain optimistic attitude in life is, therefore, duty.

(14) Cultivation and maintenance of the spirit and the attitude of Generosity (or, Spirit of Benevolence) enjoined:

Actual generosity is a duty to others. But the cultivation and maintenance of the spirit and the attitude of generosity is a duty towards self because of the purity and enrichment that it acquires thereby. It is this spirit and this attitude that have been emphasized together with actual generosity, as essential attributes of righteousness, in the following verses:

Arabic text

“And vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord, and to a Garden whose breadth is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth, prepared for the righteous, —those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity or in adversity...” (3:133-134).

Arabic text

“Those who spend (in Charity) of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (2:274).

(15) Constancy in Life commanded; hence its observance is duty:

Success and productivity in life demands constancy in our effort, and hence devotion to the principle of constancy is a duty to self. The Holy Qur’ān enjoins it in respect of Prayer, saying that life is truly and ultimately successful of those “who,” besides possessing other virtues, “are constant at their worship.”¹²⁴ (70:23).

Now, Prayer being the most basic character-building exercise according to the Holy Qur’ān, the above verse refers indirectly to the merit of cultivation and maintenance of the principle of constancy in respect of all virtues. This fact has been directly emphasized by the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) when he says:

Arabic text

“The action (of goodness) most loved by God is that in which the principle of Constancy is observed most.” (Bukhārī: *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, p. 957).

(16) Punctuality and Regularity in life enjoined:

The Holy Qur’ān has enjoined punctuality in respect of Prayer:

Arabic text

“Verily the Prayer is prescribed unto the Believers at definite times (or, at appointed hours).” (4:103).

In this manner the Holy Qur’ān trains and accustoms the Muslims to punctuality in all the affairs of life.

Moreover, the holy book appeals repeatedly to the Believers to observe the principle of regularity found in Nature and within their own selves, and take lesson from it all. For instance:

Arabic text

“On the earth are Signs for those of assured Faith, as also in your own selves: will you not then observe?” (51:20-21).

Arabic text

“Behold! In the constitution of the heavenly bodies and the earth, and the alternation of the Day and the Night, there are indeed Signs for the possessors of understanding ...” (3:190).

Such being the importance of punctuality and regularity according to the Holy Qur’ān, it is a duty to observe them in life to the best of one’s ability.

(17) Observance of the principle of Moderation enjoined:

According to the Holy Qur’ān, conformity to the just mean in all things of life is one of the basic distinguishing marks of Islamic conduct. God says:

Arabic text

“Thus We have exalted you as a community (*ummah*) conforming to the just mean ...” (2:143).

Having laid down the principle basically and for universal application in life, the holy book also refers to certain concrete instances of its application. For instance:

(a) Concerning prayer:

Arabic text

“Neither be too loud in your Prayer nor be too quiet in it, but seek a middle course between.” (17:110).

(b) Concerning spending:

The true servants of God are:

Arabic text

“those who, when they spend¹²⁵ (their wealth, talents, time, energy, etc.), are neither extravagant nor sparing, but hold, a just (balance) between those (extremes).” (25:67).

(c) Concerning walking;

Arabic text

“And be moderate in your pace...” (31:19).

Thus, observance of the principle of moderation in all things is a duty.

(18) Observance and maintenance of Discipline enjoined:

A true Muslim's life is a disciplined life. It is hedged in by principles, rules and laws from all sides, named by the Holy Qur'ān as 'limits ordained by God', and it is a duty to maintain life strictly within those limits. Discipline is thus the hall-mark of Islamic life. Speaking of the true Believers the Holy Qur'ān says:

Arabic text

“And those who keep the limits ordained by Allah. So proclaim the glad tidings to the Believers.” (9:112).

As regards those who are undisciplined and violate those limits, we are told:

Arabic text

“These are the limits (ordained by) Allah. Transgress them not. For whoso transgresses Allah's limits: such are wrong-doers.” (2:229).

Again:

Arabic text

“... and any who transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, does verily wrong his own soul ...” (65:1).

Observance of strict discipline in life is, therefore, duty to self.

(19) Cultivation and practice of Moral Courage enjoined:

Moral courage consists in upholding and advocating truth without fear.

According to the Holy Qur'ān, it forms one of the essential attributes of Islamic conduct. For, the true Believers are those who are:

Arabic text

“... never afraid (in upholding Truth) of the reproaches of such as find fault.” (5:57).

Hence, cultivation and maintenance of moral courage is duty.

(20) Remaining pitched in battle against the forces of evil enjoined:

A true Muslim is a man of God and, as such, his function is to enjoin what is right and to forbid what is wrong.¹²⁶ He cannot perform this function, however, unless he remains pitched in battle against the forces of evil. And this he has been commanded by the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him (constantly) as an enemy (remaining engaged in perpetual fight with him).” (35:6).

Shaiṭān, or, Satan, is, according to Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon*, not only ‘the devil’, but ‘any that is exceedingly, or inordinately, proud or corrupt or unbelieving or rebellious.’ As such, Satan represents all evils, whatever their form, wherever they are found, and whenever they manifest themselves. Used as a proper noun, i.e., as ‘the Satan’, the word signifies the personification of Evil. In any case, the promptings to evil are there all the time: the forces of

evil, in their multifarious forms, are perpetually at work. Those who do not treat evil as their enemy fall a victim to it. But every Muslim is, so to say, born to destroy evil and to establish the good. He cannot treat evil even with indifference, not to speak of befriending it. He must fight, fight continuously and with all his might, against evil, wherever it is within his reach and whatever its form. It is his unavoidable duty.

Expounding this duty, the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) says:

Arabic text

“Whoever observes evil it is his duty to eradicate it with his hand (or, power of authority). But he who is unable to do that, let him employ (the power of) his tongue. In case there is one who is unable even to do that, let him (at least detest it) with his heart. This last, however, is the weakest degree of Faith.” (Muslim: *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 51).

(21) Cultivation and practice of Bravery enjoined:

True Muslims, according to the Holy Qur'ān, are those who face all hardships and trials, and the forces of the enemy at the battlefield, bravely:

Arabic text

“... and those who observe firmness and calmness in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic and violence (i.e., in war): Such are they who are true (in their Faith).¹²⁷ Such are the God-fearing.” (2:177).

Muslims have been, therefore, commanded:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! When you meet a force (of the enemy on the battlefield), hold firm (i.e., face the enemy bravely), and call Allah in remembrance much¹²⁸ (and often), that you may be successful.” (8:45).

Again :

Arabic text

“O you who believe! When you meet the Unbelievers in battle, never turn your back to them ...” (8:15).

(22) Observance of Self-Respect, Magnanimity and Sobriety enjoined:

It is the duty of every Muslim to cultivate and observe self-respect, side by side with humility; because the very fact that he is a Muslim make every true follower of Islam honorable. The Holy Qur’ān says:

Arabic text

“Ye are the best community (in respect of your ideology and your mission)...” (3:110).

Arabic text

“Honor belong to Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) and the (true) Believers; ...” (63:8).

That is why God has commanded the self-respecting attitude of the *Aṣḥāb-uṣ-Ṣuffah* (People of the Platform) in 2:273, already quoted¹²⁹, and has referred to the virtues of self-respect, magnanimity and sobriety as the virtues which should be practiced by all of His true Servants:

Arabic text

“... and when they pass by what is nonsense, they pass by it observing self-respect, magnanimity and sobriety.” (25:72).

(23) Self-defense against wrong enjoined:

Self-respect makes self-defense necessary, wherever required. Of course, all mischief is to be avoided (7:56; 28:77, etc.) and nothing should be done which violates any of the virtues that have been enjoined (2:208).

With these precautions, self-defense is a duty, because it has been mentioned by the Holy Qur'ān as a quality of the Believer's conduct:

Arabic text

“... and those who, when an oppressive wrong is inflicted on them, help and defend themselves.”¹³⁰ (42:39).

(24) Observance of the spirit of Contentment enjoined:

Discontentment can be in respect of:

(a) one's resources, or, (b) one's possessions.

a. As to the first: one may feel that if he is able to acquire the patronage of the high-ups, he can increase his resourcefulness

for increasing his possessions : wealth, prestige, power, etc. Such an ambition leads almost always to debasement of the self, and consequently to the violation of the virtue of self-respect. Hence, a Muslim has been commanded to direct all his needs and all his ambitions to God and God alone, as, for instance, in the basic Muslim prayer:

Arabic text

“You alone (O Allah) do we worship and Your help alone we seek.” (1:5).

The Holy Qur’ān wants a Muslim to be absolutely contented with the Patronage of God, Who is the Source of all Good, when it asks emphatically:

Arabic text

“Is not Allah enough for His servant?” (39:36).

- b. The usual form of discontentment is in respect of what one possesses, and it becomes more damaging morally when one starts cultivating jealousy in relation to what others possess.

The Holy Qur’ān has forbidden it outright:

Arabic Text

“And covet not the thing in which Allah has made some of you excel others (but cultivate the spirit of contentment). Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned and unto women from that which they have earned. (Be not jealous of one another) but ask Allah of his bounty (through positive, rational

effort and the fulfillment of your genuine needs). Lo! Allah is ever Knower of all things (including your innermost feelings; so be careful).” (4:32).

Cultivation and maintenance of the spirit of contentment¹³¹ is, therefore, a duty to self for keeping it morally healthy.

(25) Practice of Selflessness in doing good enjoined:

The Prophets of God, who have embodied service to humanity at its highest, were asked by God to proclaim in unequivocal terms that they did not want any reward for it. The Holy Qur’ān has mentioned this time and again,¹³² thus laying down the principle that it is a duty to observe selflessness in doing a duty to others.

In fact, all good to others should be done purely out of love for God,¹³³ and therefore, never for any selfish end. Or else, the merit of the otherwise virtuous deed will become null and void, as the Holy Qur’ān warns:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Render not vain your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury...” (2:264).

On the positive side, the following motto of selflessness has been laid down as the guiding light for all true Muslims. Their attitude, whenever they do any good to others, should invariably be:

Arabic text

“... No reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.” (76:9).

(26) Soft-heartedness, Gentleness and Kindness enjoined:

A Muslim, while he has been commanded to be stiff and mighty against evil,¹³⁴ has to be, in his basic character, soft-hearted. This is what the Holy Qur'ān has taught. A Muslim should practice humility (33:35) which means showing respect to others. That makes it impossible for him to be of harsh temperament. Then, he is to be the pursuer of "compassion and kindness" (90:17). Taking both of these qualities into consideration, the basic tone of his character should not but be that of soft-heartedness, gentleness and kindness, unless any exceptional situation justly demands otherwise.

Moreover, he has to follow the examples of the Prophets whose conduct has been set for him as a pattern. Now, the Holy Qur'ān says, on the one hand, that: "there is for you an excellent pattern (of conduct) in Abraham and those with him..." (60:4); and on the other hand, it informs us: "Lo! Abraham was softhearted, long-suffering" (9:114). Therefore, to cultivate and maintain soft-heartedness is duty.

Concerning the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) the Holy Qur'ān emphasizes his soft-heartedness in these words:

Arabic text

"It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you do deal soft-heartedly with them..." (3:159).

Indeed, he is:

Arabic text

"Mercy (and Blessing) unto all the worlds." (21:107).

And:

Arabic text

“... To the Believers he is most kind, merciful.” (9:128).

To follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) is duty.¹³⁵ To cultivate and maintain soft-heartedness, gentleness and kindness is, therefore, also duty,

(27) *Patience, Forbearance, Perseverance, Composure, Equanimity, Steadfastness, Self-control and Hardiness enjoined.*

The virtues mentioned above are very closely related to one another and are included in the Arabic word *sabr*¹³⁶, which has been repeatedly emphasized by the Holy Qur'ān in different contexts and has been enjoined forcefully.

The holy book says.

Arabic text

“O you who believe! seek help in *ṣabr* and prayer; verily Allah is with those who practice *ṣabr* ...

“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who practice *ṣabr*, who say, when afflicted with calamity: ‘To Allah we belong and to Him is our return’: They are those on whom (descend) the Blessings and the Mercy of Allah and they are the rightly-guided.” (2:153, 155-157).

Arabic text

“... and those who practice *ṣabr* in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic and violence. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing.” (2:177).

Arabic text

“... and Allah loves those who practice *ṣabr*.” (3:146).

Arabic text

“... the men and the women who practice *ṣabr*,...for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and great reward.” (33:35).

Arabic text

“Those who observe *ṣabr*, seeking their Lord’s Countenance (i.e., Divine Pleasure) ... for such there is the final attainment of the (Eternal) Home.” (13:22).

It is, therefore, the duty of every Muslim to practice *ṣabr* with a view to attain perfection in it:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! practice *ṣabr*, vie in the practice of *ṣabr* and be (ever) ready (in the cause of Truth); and be careful of your duty to Allah; that you may succeed and prosper.” (3:200).

(28) *Cultivating the spirit of Humility and Modesty enjoined:*

The Holy Qur'ān refers to, and enjoins the duty of, cultivating and observing humility and modesty in the following verses:

Arabic text

“... the men and the women who possess the spirit of humility ... for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and mighty reward.” (33:35).

Arabic text

“And the servants of (God) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth with humility, and when the ignorant address them (in arrogance), they (do not insult them or engage with them, but) say (or, wish them) ‘Peace!’ (separating themselves from them calmly).¹³⁷ (25:63).

Arabic text

“And swell not your cheek (for pride) at the fellow beings,¹³⁸ nor walk in insolence through the earth¹³⁹; for Allah loves not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice¹⁴⁰; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass.” (31:18-19).

(29) Observance of the spirit of Thankfulness¹⁴¹ enjoined:

The Holy Qur'ān contains the command, originally given by God to the Holy Prophet Moses (Peace be on him) but meant to be obeyed by every Muslim:

Arabic text

“... and be of those who are thankful.” (7:144).

Speaking directly to its addressees, the holy book has commanded:

Arabic text

“... and be thankful for the favors of Allah, if it is He Whom you serve.” (16:114).

It should be noted here that all the goods that a man receives in his life, through whatever medium they might be delivered to him, are God’s favors according to the Qur’ānic teaching. When a person bestows his favors on anyone, not only the thing that he bestows, but he himself, becomes for him God’s favor in that respect. It is thus a duty to thank God for every good that one receives, as also to thank him who acts as the agency for obtaining that good.¹⁴²

(30) Struggle to achieve Self-Purification, along with its Qur’ānic technique, enjoined:

(A) According to the Holy Qur’ān, the servants of God, namely, true Muslims, are those who not only practice righteousness but constantly yearn for perfection in it:

Arabic text

“And those who pray, ‘Our Lord! bestow on us coolness of eyes from our wives and our offspring, and make us (so perfect in virtue that we may be) unto the righteous a pattern (to be followed)’.” (25:74).

And this yearning becomes a reality in the case of those who strive for it truly:

Arabic text

“... and among them (i.e., the followers of the Qur’ān) there are those who, by Allah’s leave, are foremost in virtues. That is the great Grace (i.e., the most honorable achievement).” (35:32).

For that achievement, however, it is necessary to purify the self. Hence, true Muslims are those who:

Arabic text

“act aiming at (self-) purification.” (23:4).

And, thereby they develop:

Arabic text

“a sound heart.” (26:89).

Hence, Self-purification and development of Conscientiousness is duty.

(B) But the human heart cannot be developed into a morally-sound heart without:

- a. constant self-examination; and
- b. the consequent struggle directed at abstaining from evil of every type and practising good in every way.

The Holy Qur’ān commands its followers in respect of both:

- (a) As to constant self-examination:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Fear Allah, and let every soul look to (i.e., examine) what it has sent forth for the morrow. And fear Allah: for Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.” (59:18).

(b) As regards the struggle:

- against all evil within and without the self:

Arabic text

“Verily Satan (who represents and prompts all evils within and without the self) is an enemy to you: so treat him constantly) as an enemy (remaining engaged in perpetual fight with him).” (35:6).

- in favor of all that is good;

Arabic text

“And strive for Allah (i.e., for the establishment of the highest good within and without the self) as is due unto Him, hard striving. He has chosen you (for it).” (22:78).

Thus, constant Self-examination and the Struggle to destroy evil and to establish the good are Qur’ānic duties to self.

(C) But the Struggle (*Jihād*) mentioned above is not possible without a living and dynamic faith in God and devotion¹⁴³ to Him, i.e., without maintaining the heart as:

Arabic text

“a heart turned in devotion to God.” (50:33).

For that, however, it is necessary:

(a) to conscientiously and devotedly practise:

- Communion with God;

As to communion with God, it has prescribed three forms and has enjoined their observance:

- *Constant remembrance of God:*

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Celebrate the remembrance of Allah, remembering (Him) much (in word and in thought), and glorify Him morning and evening.” (33:41-42).

- *Observance of Regular Prayer, in congregation and otherwise:*

Arabic text

“And establish regular prayer...”¹⁴⁴ (2:110).

- *Congregational worship at the highest level:*

Arabic text

“And pilgrimage to the House (i.e., the *Ka'bah* at the Mecca) (for congregational worship at world-level) is a duty unto Allah for mankind,—for him who can afford the journey...” (3:97).

■ Fasting;

As to fasting, which is the most potent exercise for the practice of self-control, the Holy Qur'ān orders it in these words:

Arabic text

“ O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you, even as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may (learn) self-restraint.” (2:183).

■ Charity;

As to charity, the Holy Qur'ān enjoins:

- compulsory charity (*Zakāt*, etc.), as well as
- optional charity.

It says:

Arabic text

“... and pay the poor-due...”¹⁴⁵ (2:110).

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Spend (for helping those in need) out of the good things which you have (honorably) earned, and of that which We bring forth from the earth for you...”¹⁴⁶ (2:267).

(b) to fulfill all duties rigorously, whether they are to self or to others.

As regards fulfillment of all duties rigorously, whether they are to self or to others, the Holy Qur'ān lays down the command:

Arabic text

“O you who believe! Enter into Islam wholly (i.e., fulfill all the duties prescribed by Islam, including those related to apparently inconsequential issues of life).” (2:208).

The Holy Qur'ān has enjoined all the above as duty.



APPENDIX

DUTIES TO ANIMALS AND THINGS

Note: Duties to animals and things are really duties to Self, because in the final analysis, they form part of “duty of Conscientiousness”. Hence they have been included as appendix to “Duties to Self.”

God says in the Holy Qur’ān:

(1)

Arabic text

“... and do good to parents ... and to what your right hands own...” (4:36).

According to the celebrated commentator Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi¹⁴⁷, the expression “what your right hands own,” stands for all those that have no civil rights, including the dumb animals. Thus this verse lays down the duty¹⁴⁸ of being good towards, and doing good to, the animals.

(2)

Arabic text

“It is He Who has created for you all things that are on the earth...” (2:29).

All things having been created for our benefit, it becomes our natural duty:

- to protect everything from damage;
- to employ it for our benefit in keeping with its dignity as God's creation;
- to promote its well-being, as far as possible, thereby establishing our thankfulness to God for His Blessing in a practical manner.



ENDNOTES

¹ 16:9.

² 16:89.

³ It may be remarked here in passing that it is the radical conflict in outlooks because of which (Islam does not permit marriage between a Believer and a *mushrikah* (pagan woman), while it allows marriage between a Believer and a *Kitābiyah* (i.e., a woman professing faith in some revealed religion), because the *Kitābiyah* has an avenue, however imperfect, through which an appeal can be made to her personality. (See: The Holy Qur’ān, 2:221; 5:5).

⁴ Speaking of that period in the life of humanity as a whole, Illingworth observes: “... as a rule it is beyond dispute that neither the universality nor the unity of personality, its two most important features were adequately understood” (*Personality: Human and Divine*, p. 8).

Commenting on the deficiencies in Greek moral thought, D.M. Donaldson says: “As evidence of Aristotle’s unwillingness to grant the benefits of his conception of personality universally we may instance the facts that he was ready to rule out some men on the ground that they were of barbarous origin, others because they were of slave origin, and women he regarded ‘as nature’s failures in the attempt to produce men’. That he was likewise unable to unify human nature is clear from his ‘unsolved dualism between the soul and its organism’, and from the fact that he had ‘no clear conception of the will, and hardly any of the conscience’.” (*Studies in Muslim Ethics*, p. 274).

- ⁵ Cf. The role of religions which claim to be revealed, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam; as also of other and earlier religions of the world, including those of primitive peoples, in which the idea of 'personality' with reference to the Supreme Being has found emphasis,—their monotheism providing the clue to their revealed origin. (Ref: among other works, Wilhelm Schmidt's book, entitled: *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee: Eine historisch—Kritische und positive Studie*. 12 vols. Munster in Westfalen, Germany, 1912-1955).
- ⁶ Cf. Along with other references, the prayer taught by the Qur'ān in 2:201.
- ⁷ Ref: Vol 1, Book 1, Part 4, Chapter 6: "The Philosophy of Unity".
- ⁸ That the "Garden" did not belong to the earth is borne out by the next verse which tells us unambiguously that the Divine decree in respect of "getting down" and "dwelling on the earth" was pronounced afterwards, i.e., after Adam's and Eve's Deception.
- ⁹ The emergence of individual human beings on the earth seems to have been designed to take place through a process of evolution covering countless stages of transformation and in the form of a series spread over a vast span of time, as different Qur'ānic verses and the verdict of Muslim thinkers like Rumi affirms. (See: Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p 115).
- ¹⁰ Adam and Eve have not been mentioned here, because they had already experienced intimate relation with God (2:31, ff).
- ¹¹ The word 'backs' should be understood in terms of transcendental existence.

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- ¹² Here, the fact should be kept in mind that in the Qur’ānic view of life, it is the Soul, and not any physiological mechanism, which is the real repository of Consciousness and the dynamo for Activity, Hence, in respect of the verse under reference, the postulation of any thing beside the Soul stands ruled out.
- ¹³ Quoted already.
- ¹⁴ There is a Qur’ānic statement: “When I have made him and have breathed into him of My spirit ...” (15:29). It should be noted that the spirit mentioned here is ‘God’s spirit’, and not the human soul; and consequently this verse should not be understood as saying that God perfected first a soul-less physical structure and then placed the soul in it. And ‘the breathing of God’s spirit’ seems to stand for the bestowal of those extraordinary qualities that relate to the earthly and the cosmic mission of the human being in terms of the vicegerency of God.
- ¹⁵ Cf. Other Qur’ānic verses relating to the importance of *healthy* activity.
- ¹⁶ The Holy Qur’ān has ordained that Muslims should affirm the Blessings of God on the Holy Prophet and should salute him (33:56). Hence, while mentioning his sacred name, a Muslim may proclaim the affirmation as, for instance, has been done on page 11, or may salute him—the standard form of Islamic salutation being in terms of the prayerful expression: ‘Peace be on you!’, or, ‘Peace be on him!’, etc.
- ¹⁷ In fact, as “Mercy unto the worlds” (21:107), he has been exalted by God to be the Medium of His Blessings in an immeasurably wider perspective. The unique position which he holds among all creatures, has been unambiguously affirmed also in a *Ḥadīth* reported by the Holy Prophet’s Companion Jābir and upheld as authentic in Islamic history by eminent authorities, among whom may be mentioned, by way of

example, one of the classical Qur'ānic commentators, Allāma Alusi (vide his classical *Tafsīr*, the *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, vol. 1, p. 51). It is to the effect: "Jābir (Allah be pleased with him!) reports: I said 'O Messenger of Allah! Inform me about the thing which Allah created before all (other) things'. He replied: 'Verily, Allah, the Almighty, created before all (other) things the Light of your Prophet through His Light...' (Quoted on the authority of *muḥaddith*' Abd al-Razzāq (the eminent forerunner of Imam Bukhārī and author of *Al-Muṣannaf*) by Allāma Yusuf b. Ismāil al-Nabhānī, in *Al-Anwār al-Muḥammadiyyah min Mawāhib al-Ludunniyah*, p. 12, Beirut, 1310 A.H.]. The *Ḥadīth* then proceeds to inform that the entire universe was created by God from that original created Light, which the luminaries of Islam have named as the 'Light of Muhammad'. It may be pointed out that the statement made on the basis of the Qur'ān on p. 289 (footnote) of the present volume, is corroborated by this *Ḥadīth*. (Relevant discussions in volume 1 in respect of the Holy Prophet's personality may also be referred to).

- ¹⁸ Mark that this bears reference to moral relationship, because morality consists in the attitude of one personality towards another. Also, it should be noted that the affirmation of personality in the Angels does not imply anthropomorphism.
- ¹⁹ It may be emphasized that they are basically duties of attitude, and are not meant to be institutionalized.
- ²⁰ Says Aristotle: "He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god." (*Politics*. Bk. 1, Ch. 2).
- ²¹ It may be emphasized here that the greater the selflessness and sacrifice which the super-ordinate imposes on itself, the stronger will it be in wielding its authority; and the more the vested interests it creates, the

weaker will be its authority. The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him!) set a perfect example of selflessness and the elimination of all forms of vested interests by: (1) banning the payment of *Zakāt* to his progeny; (2) avoiding the giving of key posts to his kith and kin during his regime as head of the Islamic state; and (3) keeping open to all Muslims the office of the head of the state for all time after his demise.

²² This truth is borne out by the fact that the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, and all other Caliphs after him, have called themselves *Khalīfatur-Rasūlullāh* (Vicegerent of the Messenger of God) and not *Khalīfatullāh* (Vicegerent of God).

²³ Also written as ‘*tablīgh*’.

²⁴ “Conduct may include inward activities like motives and desires as well as outward activities like speech and movements of the doer’s limbs, and so these also will fall within the sphere of ethics. We so commonly think of these as causing outward bodily movements that we forget that they too are activities and liable to be judged good or bad even apart from the outward movements they produce.” (W. Lillie: *Introduction to Ethics*, p. 4).

²⁵ The word “Allah”, which is employed for the ‘One True God’ in Islamic terminology, is regarded untranslatable in orthodox Muslim thought. Hence, while using the word God normally, I have avoided substituting it for “Allah” in quoting the Qur’ānic verses.

²⁶ Mark that belief in God is meaningless without:

- a. having faith in Him in accordance with what He has revealed about His essence and His Attributes; and
- b. having faith in all the verities implied by the belief in Him.

It may also be noted that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, belief in religious verities mentioned in the above verse is fruitless unless the possessor of that belief earns good by performing deeds of righteousness. (6:158).

- ²⁷ Fear of God is a necessary condition of our spiritual and moral development because fear is a vital element of respect. Again, fear of God does not relate to any inimical revenge from His side, but it is fear of being disowned by Him, as we read in the Holy Qur'ān:

Arabic text

“It will be said (on the Day of Judgment): ‘This Day We will forget you as you forgot the meeting of this Day of yours!’” (45:34).

Still again, it is the fear of Him who is ‘Most Beneficent’ and ‘Most Merciful’ (1:1, etc., etc.).

- ²⁸ This is connected with the Islamic article of faith relating to belief in the Last Day—the Day of Final Reckoning and of receiving final reward and punishment—emphasized over and over again in the Holy Qur'ān.

- ²⁹ The word *tā'ah* and *istijābah* and *qanūt* used in the first, second and third verse respectively—all of them denote obedience. But *tā'ah* and *istijābah* seem to emphasize *external* conformity to God's commands, *qanūt* seems to emphasize the *inwardness*, the purity of the heart—the Will—in submission to God.

Mark also that the “devout frame of mind” should be externally maintained by every Muslim (3:17; 33:35).

- ³⁰ *See previous note.*

- ³¹ *See previous note.*

³² In another verse total submission to Allah has been emphasized:

Arabic text

“Nay,—whoever submits his whole self to Allah and is a doer of good, he will get the reward with his Lord; on such shall be no fear nor shall they grieve.” (2:112).

³³ and Him alone:

Arabic text

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him...” (17:23).

³⁴ The Holy Qur’ān demands not merely formal obedience but obedience with all one’s heart and it demands not obedience in certain matters only—as is demanded in the Christian maxim: “Give unto God what is God’s and unto Caesar what is Caesar’s—but total surrender, surrender of the whole self and surrender with indivisible loyalty to God. Indeed, a Muslim’s attitude towards God should be that of worship, in which his role is that of a humble slave only.

³⁵ Mark here that not only their blasphemies but even their company is to be shunned.

³⁶ It may be noted that anyone who indulges in superstitions insults also his own dignity as a human being.

³⁷ The stone altars were objects of superstitious worship in pre-Islamic Arabia. Oil was poured on them for consecration. They were also used for sacrifices to idols. Says Robertson Smith: “In Arabia, where sacrifice by fire is almost unknown, we find no proper altar, but in its place a rude pillar or heap of stones, besides which the victim is slain, the blood being poured out over the stone or its base ... The sacred stones ... are called *anṣāb*, i.e., stones set up, pillars.” (*Religion of the Semites*, p. 281).

³⁸ Divination by arrows was a superstitious practice prevalent among the pre-Islamic Arabs. *Zalam* is “an arrow without a head and without feather: plural *Azlām*, which was applied to those arrows by means of which the Arabs in the Time of Ignorance sought to know that which was allotted to them; ... and they put them in a receptacle, and when any of them desired to make a journey, or to accomplish a want, or when he desired to perform some affairs. he put his hand into that receptacle, and took forth an arrow: and if the arrow upon which was ‘Command’ came forth, he went to accomplish his purpose, but if that upon which was ‘Prohibition’ came forth, he refrained; and if the blank came forth, they shuffled them a second time.” (Lane’s *Lexicon*).

³⁹ This verse condemns four superstitions that were prevalent among the pagan Arabs. There are other superstitious notions and practices of the pagan Arabs also which have been condemned by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) in his Sayings. Thus Islam has actually condemned all types of superstitions.

⁴⁰ Cf, the Qur’ānic verse:

Arabic text

“... who fears (Allah) Most Gracious in secret and comes with a heart penitent (turned to Him): enter it (i.e., Heaven) in Peace and Security. This is the Day of Eternal Life.” (50:33-34).

⁴¹ Mark that God is such an object of fear that, instead of being avoided, He is to be approached by us with all our Love. ‘Fear of Allah’ is thus the fear of our own deprivation of Divine Blessings which occurs when we remove ourselves away from Him.

Also mark that the way of approach lies in striving with might and main in His cause, something which even the pious Muslims of today seem to

have forgotten, and hence the degeneration of the Muslim community everywhere.

⁴² *tabattala ilallāh* means: “He detached himself from worldly things and devoted himself to God; ... or he forsook every other thing, and applied himself to the service of God.” (Lane’s *Lexicon*).

⁴³ Indeed, God’s remembrance should be constant. *Cf.* the Qur’ānic verse which says that the wise are “those who remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining” (3:191), because: “lo! in the remembrance of Allah hearts do find serene tranquility and steady peace.” (13:28).

⁴⁴ Five times a day: at dawn, immediately after noon, late afternoon, immediately after sunset, and before retirement to bed (in the first quarter of the night).

⁴⁵ The Qur’ānic concept of love for God has no affinity whatsoever with sensuous love. God is Most Sublime, according to the Holy Qur’ān. As such, love for Him should be of sublime nature—namely, love modified by extreme respect. That is why the Qur’ānic teaching combines ‘Love for Allah’ with ‘fear of Allah’

⁴⁶ 85:14.

⁴⁷ *ijtanibū al-tāgūt* implies both meanings. Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s version is: ‘eschew evil’, while Marmaduke Pickthall’s version is: ‘shun false gods’.

Al-tāgūt is “whatever is worshipped instead, or to the exclusion, of God”. (Lane’s *Lexicon*).

⁴⁸ According to the Holy Qur’ān, the status of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) is that of *nabī* and *rasūl*. Unfortunately, there is no English word capable of conveying the connotation of these

terms properly. As regards the word “Prophet”, it means, according to English lexicon, “a spokesman of the deity, one who proclaims a divine message, a preacher, a foreteller whether claiming to be inspired or not.” Thus it can be adopted as an Islamic term only in a qualified manner—signifying there: “a spokesman of the One True God, who receives the Message from Him through Revelation, and proclaims and preaches it as a divinely-appointed Teacher and as the possessor of a flawless, sublime and extraordinary spiritual and moral personality”.

In the Qur’ānic verses quoted in this book, the words *nabī* and *rasūl* have been translated as “Prophet” and “Messenger” respectively.

- ⁴⁹ Insult: *ʿAzā*, the Arabic word used here, may equally mean: to annoy, to vex, to cause hurt or injury, to ill-treat by slander or unseemly conduct, or hurt the feelings.
- ⁵⁰ i.e., do not attempt to give your advice in any matter before you are asked to do so by the Holy Prophet himself.
- ⁵¹ Cf. the Saying of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him):

Arabic text

“None of you can have Faith unless I become to him dearer than his parents, his off-springs and (in fact) all human beings.” (Bukhārī: *Ṣaḥīḥ*; Chapter on: *Ḥubb al Rasūl min al-Imān*).

- ⁵² The shortest formula in this connection is:

Arabic text

i.e., “Allah has bestowed on him His Blessings and Peace”. This formula has been further condensed in the form: “Peace is with him”, and is employed in the form of prayer: “Peace be on him.”

These words should be repeated whenever a Muslim hears or mentions his sacred name.

⁵³ 35:1.

⁵⁴ 35:1.

⁵⁵ 35:1.

⁵⁶ This verse has the context of participation in collective welfare. But it also lays down a general principle which covers all situations and aspects of life.

⁵⁷ Some of the unclean and unwholesome foods expressly mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān are:

Arabic text

“Forbidden unto you (for food) are carrion, and blood, and swine flesh, and that over which is invoked the name of other than Allah, and the strangled, the felled (i.e. killed by a blow), and the dead through falling from a height, and that which has been killed by (the goring of) horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by wild beasts—saving that which you make lawful (by the death-stroke), and that which has been slaughtered on the altars (according to the custom of pagan Arabs). . .” (5:4).

Arabic text

“And eat not of that whereon Allah’s name has not been mentioned, for lo! It is abomination.” (6:121).

⁵⁸ This verse forbids:—(1) self-mortification, upheld by asceticism; (2) self-indulgence, and the consequent self-stupefaction, upheld by the hedonistic attitude.

- ⁵⁹ The word *Khamr* used in the Arabic text stands, according to Lane, for “any intoxicating thing that clouds or obscures (lit. covers) the intellect.” (*Arabic-English Lexicon*). Thus the prohibition here relates to all intoxicants.

Of course, the most immediate reference here is to alcohol, or, wine, which was used as an intoxicant by the Arabs of those days and which is the scourge of the modern civilization also.

The total prohibition of wine by the Qur'ān is a fact of history, to which all historians of Islam, including its worst critics, have borne testimony. For instance, D.S. Margoliouth says: “When the revelation came, zealous followers went round the houses of the Moslems and emptied their vessels of all liquor which was supposed to be intoxicating, in many cases breaking the vessels themselves . . . The prohibition was extended to vinegar made of wine and a categorical denial was given to the suggestion that wine had medicinal value.” (*Mohammad*, p. 283).

Still there are some “Muslims” today who, under the impact of the irreligious and the hedonistic influences of Western culture, not only drink wine but try to believe themselves and make others believe that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, wine is not something totally evil,—wrongly taking shelter in the Qur'ānic verse which says:

Arabic text

“They ask you (O Prophet) about wine and gambling. Tell (them): in both is a great sin, and *some benefits for men*, but the sin of them is (far) greater than their benefit . . .” (2:219).

The vehement condemnation of wine even in this verse is very definite. However, coming to the words ‘some benefits’, what has been really affirmed is not any benefit in respect of human consumption but the

other benefits to which a scientist refers thus: "Alcohol's most useful sphere of action is as a solvent in industrial concerns It has also some uses as an external application." (Dastur, *Alcohol: Its Use and Misuse*, p. 109).

The truth, based on all available evidence, is that all intoxicants, including alcohol, are among the greatest enemies of mankind. As the medical scientist whom we have just quoted says: "Alcohol belongs to a family of poisonous chemicals. Its theoretic food-value is of no value in practical dietics. It is never a stimulant. It has a sedative drug-action in moderate doses, and a narcotic poison-action in excess . . . Its use as a beverage is physiologically unsound, economically disastrous, socially disruptive, and materially poisonous." (*op. cit.*, pp. 108, 109). As regards the social evils promoted by alcohol, the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* pronounces the verdict that "There is universal testimony as to the close relationship between excessive drinking and breaches of the moral law and the laws of the State. This is a direct consequence of the paralysis of the higher faculties, intellectual and moral, and the resulting free-play given to the lower inclinations." (vol. 1, p. 301) This verdict is confirmed by the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, which says (I: p. 333): "... the statistics of Baer, Kurella, Gallavandis, and Sichart show that from 25 to 85 per cent of all malefactors are drunkards."

We may observe here in passing the very unfortunate fact that certain religious groups, which have wielded a tremendous influence in human history, should have been responsible for patronizing an evil that has engulfed a large part of mankind today. We may refer, for instance, to the Jews and the Christians. In the estimation of the Bible, wine 'cheereth God and man'. (*Judg.* 9:14). As for the Jewish religious practice, Friendlier says in *The Jewish Religion* that: "it has been ordered

(in the Jewish religion) that our meal on the eve of Sabbath and Festival should begin with a cup of wine in the honor of the day ... The *kidduah* consists of two blessings: one over the wine, and one that refers to the holiness of the day.” (p. 341). Coming to the Christian Church and clergy, the use of alcohol “was never absent from the Church nor from its clergy.” (Smith and Cheetam’s *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, p. 585). According to Cheyne and Black’s *Encyclopedia Biblica* (c. 1569), in the case of fire on the Sabbath day, only three necessities of life are to be rescued by the good Christians, viz., “a basket of loaves, a cake of dried figs and a jar of wine.”

- ⁶⁰ The following verse is more explicit in disapproving Asceticism as a philosophy of life:

Arabic text

“But (the institution of) Asceticism (Monasticism) which they (i.e., the early Christians) invented for themselves, We prescribed it not for them: (We commanded) only the seeking of Divine Pleasure; but that they did not foster as they should have done. Yet We bestowed, on those among them who believed, their (due) reward, but many of them are transgressors.” (57:27).

That the unnatural suppression of sexual appetite by the institution of Asceticism promotes sexual vice, rather than curbing it, is borne out by the history of Christianity. As Scott says: “With the passing of the concubine, the nuns in the convents provided the ‘holy men’ with the means of satisfying their sexual cravings.” (*History of Prostitution*, p. 112).

- ⁶¹ Those spiritualists who have regarded the body as an impediment in the way of their so-called spiritual progress have practiced, as among a sect

of the Hindus, the “drying up”, or deliberate emaciation, of the limbs. Similarly, castration has been considered a means of curbing the sexual appetite and thereby acquiring the freedom to pursue “spirituality”.

⁶² Speaking of this Qur’ānic injunction, which prohibits suicide in all its forms, Professor Lecky says: “Suicide, which is never expressly condemned in the Bible, is more than once forbidden in the Koran.” (*History of European Morals*, II, p. 23).

⁶³ i.e., not in the bond of wedlock: they may be those who are unmarried, or those who have been lawfully divorced, or those who have been widowed.

⁶⁴ The Holy Qur’ān’s emphasis on physical cleanliness stands in sharp contrast with the “merit of uncleanness” emphasized in the life of the followers of certain other religions, e.g., Christianity. Writing of the medieval Christian aspirants of holiness, Professor Lecky says: “The cleanliness of the body was regarded as a pollution of the soul, and the saints who were most admired had become one hideous mass of clotted filth. St. Athanasius relates with enthusiasm how St. Anthony, the patriarch of monarchism, had never, to extreme old age, been guilty of washing his feet . . . St. Euphraxia joined a convent of one hundred and thirty nuns, who never washed their feet, and who shuddered at the mention of a bath.” (*op. cit.* 11, p. 47). Of a Christian pilgrim of the 4th century, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* informs: “(she) boasted that she had not washed her face for 18 years for fear of removing the baptismal chrism.” (I, p. 49).

“Dirt and disease became (in Christendom) the honorable insignia of saint-ship; loathsome fakirs exhibited their filth and their sores for the veneration of the faithful.” (Hammerton: *Universal History of the World.*, IV, p. 2333).

“Certainly,” says another Western scholar, “the maxim which places cleanliness next to godliness, has no place in the biographies of the saints and heroes of monasticism even in climates where bathing would seem almost one of the necessities of life. Jerome warns ascetics against warm bath as morally enervating, and in a letter to one of his female disciples denounces every sort of bathing for women. Augustine allows a bath once a month only.” (*Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. II, p. 939).

- ⁶⁵ It is necessary to note here that the theme which is sealed by this verse, being contained in the verses immediately preceding and joining it, relates to the study of natural phenomena—the theme of physical science—,which means that the knowledge which has been commended here so highly comprehends within itself the cultivation of knowledge of God’s creation and through that the realization of the greatness and the majesty of God. The immediately preceding verses are:

Arabic text

“See you not that Allah sends down rain from the sky? With it We then bring out produce of various colors. And in the mountains are tracts white and red, of various shades of color, and black intense in hue. And so amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle, are they of various colors” (35:27-28).

- ⁶⁶ This verse lays down clearly the Divine law for all human communities that one of the major factors which can make them great and powerful in the world is the cultivation of knowledge.

⁶⁷ Mark that ‘adorn’ means ‘add beauty to’.

⁶⁸ Mark that ‘balance’ is an essential attribute of beauty.

⁶⁹ *Aḥsan* means: the best, the most beautiful.

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- ⁷⁰ *Taqwīm* means: constitution, mould, form, nature, symmetry.
- ⁷¹ Man is, therefore, “the comeliest specimen of God’s handiwork”, according to Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi (*English Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur’ān*, p. 956, n. 438); and according to Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali (*English Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur’ān*, p. 1759, n. 6199), “to man God gave the purest and the best nature.” Mark here that symmetry and purity are the attributes of beauty.
- ⁷² Mark that proportion and order are attributes of Beauty. Hence this verse refers definitely to the beauty of the inner personality of the human being.
- ⁷³ The religious view of life has often been based on ascetism which stands for the negation of beauty. According to the Holy Qur’ān, it is a wrong view of sanctity.
- ⁷⁴ Here the Holy Qur’ān condemns the cult of nudism, which is a product of the psychological perversions of modern times.
- ⁷⁵ (a) Note here a relevant *Ḥadīth* The Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) used to praise God when putting on a new dress in these words:

Arabic text

“Praise be to Allah who gave me to wear that which covers the part of the body that should remain hidden, and whereby I acquire beauty in my life.” (Tirmizī *Jāme’*). (*Al-Tāj al-Jēme’ li al-Uṣūl, fī Aḥādīth al-Rasūl, Kitāb al-Libās*, p. 174).

(b) Dress, according to Westermarck, “owes its origin, at least in great many cases, to the desire of men and women to make themselves mutually attractive”. (Quoted in *Encyclopedia. Br.* VII, p. 649).

- ⁷⁶ Here we obtain the principle that the garments we wear should never transgress the bounds of piety; otherwise, they will become source of ugliness.

Thus, the Holy Qur'ān voices a masculine protest against those perversions in dress which have plagued modern womanhood in the West and in the countries coming under the influence of the West.

- ⁷⁷ It means not only dressing for grace and piety but also keeping the hair in proper form, and toilet and cleanliness.

The following incident of the Holy Prophet's time may be quoted here with advantage, as it reveals the attitude of Islam in practice:

“The Prophet (Peace be on him) was in the masjid, when a person came there with the hair of his head and beard in a disheveled condition. The Prophet (Peace be on him) made a sign towards him which implied that he was ordering him to set his hair in order. That person (left the masjid), obeyed the command and returned. Then the Prophet (Peace be on him) remarked: ‘Is it not better than that someone among you comes with disheveled hair as if he is Satan.’” (*Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 384).

- ⁷⁸ Mark that the Holy Qur'ān allows aesthetic fulfillment but not luxury, which is vice.

- ⁷⁹ The Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) has commanded Muslims to fulfill aesthetic requirements even in respect of such matters as putting on the clothing over the dead body, preparing a grave, slaughtering an animal and killing an enemy soldier on the battlefield. (See: *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, *Bāb Ghusl- al-Mayyit*, p. 143; and *Kitāb al-Ṣaid*, p. 357).

- ⁸⁰ Mark that ‘perfection’ is the attribute of beauty.

- ⁸¹ *Cf.* 45:7.

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- ⁸² The word *Hawā* used in the Arabic text does not mean simple desire but “blameable or evil inclination”. (Lane’s *Arabic-English Lexicon*). It is “lusts of the heart” when related to morality, and “caprice” when related to knowledge.
- ⁸³ It damages morally the other party also. We shall deal with it in “Duties to others”.
- ⁸⁴ Lane’s *Lexicon*. It also means: correct, right, relevant, pertinent.
- ⁸⁵ The other implications of ‘straight speech’ shall be dealt with in connection with the duty of truthfulness.
- ⁸⁶ See Chambers’ Twentieth Century Dictionary.
- ⁸⁷ i.e., display to draw attention or admiration.
- ⁸⁸ *zāḳā-un*, i.e., purity, goodness, righteousness ... and *zakā nafsahu*: “He praised himself.” (Lane’s *Lexicon*).
- ⁸⁹ These injunctions relate to behaviour in general.
- ⁹⁰ Vainglorious, i.e., proud in the heart. This emphasizes condemnation of haughtiness as it is to be found in the haughty person’s thought.
- ⁹¹ The reference here is to abstain from employing haughty tone in talk.
- ⁹² The reference here is to abstain from employing haughty tone in talk.
- ⁹³ It should be noted that in its relation to the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him), which forms its real context, this command has a more comprehensive implication. He was commanded not to engage in fruitless controversies with his ignorant strong-headed opponents, nor to conciliate them, but to ignore them; “holding to forgiveness and commanding what was right.” (7:199, first part of the verse).
- ⁹⁴ The verse reads:

Arabic text

“What is the life of this world but a matter of illusion.”

⁹⁵ Quoted above.

⁹⁶ i.e., in war.

⁹⁷ War between Muslim states is inconceivable in Islam.

⁹⁸ With regard to this duty, refer also to 26:225 where the word *wahm* has been employed.

⁹⁹ “The story is preferably to be taken in a general sense, and not with reference to any particular individual.” (Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *op. cit.*, p. 298, n. 295.)

¹⁰⁰ i.e., neither indulging in it nor being fussy about it.

¹⁰¹ “Life is taken seriously by men who realize the issues that hang upon it, But there are men of a frivolous turn of mind who prefer idle tales to true Realities and they are justly rebuked here”. (A. Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 1080).

¹⁰² (primarily).

¹⁰³ All genuine service to mankind, specially religious service, is included here.

¹⁰⁴ This fact is affirmed further by the uncompromising verdict of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) against beggary. (See: e.g. Abū Dā’ūd: *Sunan*, vol. 1. pp. 232, 247).

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Is.* 1:23; *Je.* 6:13; *Mi.* 3:11.

¹⁰⁶ See: Prof. Lecky’s *History of European Morals*.

¹⁰⁷ Gambling: The word *maisir*, used in the Arabic text, denotes literally: a means of getting something too easily—getting profit without labour and on the basis of chance. Finally, it is ‘any game of hazard, or play of stakes, or wagers, so that even the game of children with walnut is included under this name by Mujahid’. (Lane’s *Arabic- English Lexicon*). The most familiar form of gambling among the Arabs was based on the principle of lottery through the employment of arrows. The Greeks used knuckle-bones. The Roman children employed ‘head-or-tail’ system with the coins. The Israelites used to draw lots. Certain other communities like the Aryans, used dice. (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, VI, pp. 163, 164).

¹⁰⁸ The total abolition of this evil practice in Muslim society by the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) has been admitted even by his worst critics as one of the “most celebrated” reforms accomplished by him. (See: D.S. Margoliouth in: *Encyclopedia Brit.*, XVII, p. 407, 11th Ed.). As for the non-Muslim communities, even of the present ‘age of enlightenment’: “The extent to which gambling prevails at the present time is difficult to assess ... Most of it is centered in the horse-racing ... on the whole, it may safely be asserted that little short of £100,000,000 changes hands every year in England in connection with gambling transactions ... Side by side with the betting odds and betting tips, the newspapers record the tragic results on those who yield to the temptation. In 13 years (1895-96 to 1906-7) there were 156 suicides in England assigned to this cause, as well as 719 cases of theft or embezzlement, and 442 bankruptcies”. (*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, VI, pp. 164, 168). Indeed, the close relationship between gambling and crime, including sexual crime and crime against life and property, is an established fact of human history and can be perused in the cultural histories of the different communities who have indulged in this devastating vice.

- ¹⁰⁹ It should be noted that the verses which voice condemnation of love for wealth are all to be found in the closing part of the Holy Qur'ān. This fact seems to emphasize that love for wealth may damage even an otherwise virtuous life. Hence, the greatest caution is necessary in that respect.
- ¹¹⁰ Synonymous words are; Avarice, avidity, cupidity, greed, greediness.
- ¹¹¹ The word used here in the Arabic text is *shuḥḥ*, which means 'covetousness combined with stinginess'. We may call it 'covetous selfishness'.
- ¹¹² Hence those who squander their wealth commit no less a sin than that of being grateful to God by misusing His bounty.
- ¹¹³ *Cf.* another verse:

Arabic text

- "... nor open it (i.e., the hand) with a complete opening lest you become blameworthy and destitute." (17:29).
- ¹¹⁴ The words *fawāḥish* and *fahshā* used in the above verses for shameful things are very rich in their meanings and cannot be translated into English.
- ¹¹⁵ The words *fawāḥish* and *fahshā* used in the above verses for shameful things are very rich in their meanings and cannot be translated into English.
- ¹¹⁶ This stern moral attitude of Islam may be compared with the spirit, the attitude, and the consequent behaviour, nurtured in the Western communities, where, because of freedom of promiscuity, adultery "has become fashionable in both England and America" and elsewhere. (Scott: *History of Prostitution*, p. 226). Indeed, because of the absence of

the spirit of sexual modesty and of the cultivation of general license in respect of sexual manners, sexual morality has been damaged to such an extent that: “The old type of prostitute who pranced about gaudily and drunkenly in the Strand, Leicester Square, Piccadilly and Regent Street, is a thing of the past... There has been a huge increase in promiscuity among men and even greater increase among women ... The results are that more and more every year is man turning to so-called girls of respectability in order to satisfy his sexual appetite ... Virginity among women is becoming something to sneer at ... Where all are practicing what is virtually prostitution there can be no such thing as prostitution.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 224, 225, 228). There is a lesson in this for all those Muslims who advocate the adoption of western culture. Alas! the social evils of the West are only too fast penetrating the Muslim communities also under the spell of modernization!

- ¹¹⁷ The only way of satisfying the sexual appetite recognised by the Holy Qur’ān as legitimate and chaste is that of marriage between man and woman duly solemnized. (23:5-7; 70:29-31). All other ways are totally prohibited.
- ¹¹⁸ “directed to the right point” also means employing accuracy in expression, which is a part of wisdom—another great excellence upheld by the Holy Qur’ān. (2:269).
- ¹¹⁹ The Holy Qur’ān has not only laid down this duty in fundamental terms, but has also given certain rules in that respect. We shall state those rules in the section on “Manners”.
- ¹²⁰ 62:10.
- ¹²¹ Actually speaking, there is nothing in the wordings of the verse whereby personal expenditure should be excluded.

- ¹²² A critical study of the Holy Qur'ān reveals that it is not only the human personality which is evolutionary but also the universe wherein humanity originated and has to fulfill its destiny.
- ¹²³ That Pessimism, as mentioned before, amounts to infidelity (*Kufr*) also shows that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, the Faithful is he for whom Optimism is an inseparable quality of character.
- ¹²⁴ **Arabic text**
- ¹²⁵ Here there is no specific mention of wealth. Hence the reference is general.
- ¹²⁶ 3:110; 9:71; 9:112; etc.
- ¹²⁷ Mark that bravery belongs to the heart and not to the body. It is the true faith and the true spirit (i.e., true devotion to an ideal) that makes a man brave. In the case of a Muslim, it is Faith in God in all its aspects which is the only motivating force in his life; and Faith in God is the highest and the most unfailing source of strength.
- ¹²⁸ Mark that bravery is cultivated at higher and higher levels through devotion to God.
- ¹²⁹ See page ??
- ¹³⁰ This verse relates to individual as well as collective action, according to the form of the wrong inflicted.
- ¹³¹ Contentment should be clearly distinguished from want of effort for improving one's life in all those things which have been approved or commended by God, including rational possessions of the goods of this world.

¹³² 6:90; 11:29; 11:51; 25:57; 26:109; 26:127; 26:145; 26:164; 26:180; 38:86; 42:23; etc. The words mentioned in connection with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) are :

Arabic text

“... Say: No reward for this (i.e., my service to humanity as Prophet of God) do I ask of you...” (4:90).

¹³³ 2:177; etc.

¹³⁴ See page ??? . Also: 48:29.

¹³⁵ 33:21; 3:31.

¹³⁶ See: *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, published by Cornell University Press, U.S.A.

¹³⁷ i.e., “Peace, and Good-bye; let me leave you.” (Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 941, n. 3123).

¹³⁸ This is the command to observe humility in one’s behavior in general.

¹³⁹ This is the command to observe humility in walking.

¹⁴⁰ This is the command to observe humility in the tone of one’s talk.

¹⁴¹ Thankfulness comes into operation with regard to others, and as such it is a duty to others. But the spirit of thankfulness enriches the inner personality of the moral agent himself. Hence it forms a duty to self also.

¹⁴² This has been emphasized in direct terms by the Holy Prophet (Peace be on him) when he says:—

Arabic text

“He who does not express thankfulness to human beings is not (really) thankful to Allah (also).” (Bukhārī: *Adab al-Mufrad*, p. 34).

- ¹⁴³ Duty in this respect has been mentioned on pp. 33-38.
- ¹⁴⁴ This command has been repeated at numerous places in the Holy Qur'ān.
- ¹⁴⁵ This command has been repeated at numerous places in the Holy Qur'ān. It shall be properly referred to in the "Duties to Others".
- ¹⁴⁶ This command has been repeated at numerous places in the holy book.
- ¹⁴⁷ See *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*, vol. III p. 323.
- ¹⁴⁸ This duty has been taught in an elaborate form in the *Ḥadīth*.