

Al-Akhlaq Wassulooq

(Islamic Ethics and Social Tradition)

**Text Book for
Islamic Deeniyyath (Dharmacharya) Certificate Examination**

**الأخلاق والسلوك
الكتاب المقرر لشهادة الإمتحانات
الدينية للمعلمين
إصدار: إدارة الشؤون الإسلامية
كولومبو-سريلانكا**

**Published by:
Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs,
180, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10,
Sri Lanka.**



Advice and Guidance

: Dr. M. A. M. Shukry

Director,
Jaamiya Naleemiya Institute.

Ash Sheik A. C. Aghar Mohammed (Naleemi),

Deputy Director,
Jaamiya Naleemiya Institute.

Vice Chairman,
All Ceylon Jammiathul Ulama

Ash Sheik Y. L. M. Navavi (Naleemi),

Former Director,
Department of Muslim Religious and
Cultural Affairs.

Ash Sheik M. H. M. Zameel (Naleemi),

Former Director,
Department of Muslim Religious and
Cultural Affairs.

Ash Sheik M. R. M. Malik (Naleemi),

Director,
Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural
Affairs.

**Member of Writers in
Tamil Language**

: Dr. M. S. M. Jalaaldeen (Gaffoori)

B.A.(Hons),
Former Dean / Senior Lecturer,
South East University.

Ash Sheik F. M. A. Ansar Moulana, (Naleemi) M.A.

Lecturer,
Teachers Training College,
Addalaichenai.

Ash Sheik U. K. Abdul Raheem (Naleemi) M.A.

Teacher - Al-Hamra Maha Vidyalaya,
Oluwil.

- English Translation** : **Mr. Seyed Zafarullah Khan**
English Trained Government Teacher (Rtd.)
Accredited Media Consultant,
Copywriter and Graphic Designer
- Team of Editors** : **Mrs. A. I. Fathima (B.Ed),**
Special Trained Teacher,
Muslim Ladies College,
Colombo 04.
- Mr. M.M. Shazuly B.A. Social Sci. (Ind),**
English Trained Teacher (Rtd.)
Principal,
Amal International School.
- Title** : **Al - Akhlaq Wassulooq,**
(Islamic Ethics and Social Tradition)
Text Book for
Islamic Deeniyath (Dharmacharya)
Certificate Examination.
(Ahadhiyyah, Al Quran Schools) on Islamic Studies
- Editor** : **Al Haj Moulavi M. H. Noorul Ameen (Nadvi)**
B.A. (Cey),
Assistant Director,
Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs.
- Publishers** : **Department of Muslim Religious and**
Cultural Affairs,
No. 180, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.
- Print** : **Department of Government Printing,**
No.118, Dr. Danister de Silva Mawatha,
Colombo 08.
- First Edition** : **2017**
- Copy Right** : **Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural**
Affairs

The Message from Honourable Minister of Posts, Postal Services & Muslim Religious Affairs

Sri Lanka is the country that gives a prominent place and takes various steps to impart religious studies. One of the steps is to introduce Sunday religious classes for Buddhists, Hindu, Christian and Muslim children to gain knowledge of their own religions. It paved the way to conduct these religious classes at the respective places of worship, public Schools and private institutions.

Further, the government has been assisting these religious Schools by conducting the programme of teacher training, supplying teachers' guide books, syllabus, text books, students' uniforms and paying teachers' book allowance annually. It is praiseworthy that the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs is looking after the interest of the Muslim Religious Schools called as Ahadhiyyah Schools Island wide and provides the above stated facilities.

Supplying proper text books and teachers' guide books to these Schools is indispensable for the success at all levels of education system.

The Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs has taken steps to publish text books for the upper level of exams conducted by the Department of Exam since 2008, namely Ahadhiyyah Schools' Final Examination and Dharmacharya (Teachers) Exam. Although they have printed and supplied a considerable number of the books in this regard the department is still in the process of publishing rest of the books in the coming years.

As the Minister responsible for Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs, I am indeed happy about the performance of the Department. I thank all in the Department for their contribution for the success of the tasks entrusted to them.

Al Haj M. H. Abdul Haleem (M.P.)
Minister of Posts, Postal Services and
Muslim Religious Affairs.

Ministry of Posts, Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs,
No. 310, D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Message from the Honourable Deputy Minister of Posts, Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs

At a time when people belonging to all four major religions of Sri Lanka are making efforts to make an ethical society with icons of multi religious and cultural symbols. I feel it is a great privilege in expressing my message of greeting when the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs is publishing syllabus and syllabus based text books for the students of Islamic Religious Schools called Ahadiya Schools.

It is our duty to contribute through our ministry to fulfill this long standing need and enable the teachers and students to carry forward their educational task.

I strongly feel that the development of a country can last long only when the development is combined with social development along with economic and political development.

If we have to safeguard the moral standards of our society, Religious and Cultural welfares must also be taken care of. The service rendered by schools such as Ahadiya in protecting religious and cultural traditions is invaluable.

By training children from their tender ages to live with religious principles, we can expect to create a new generation that will protect the moral traditions of our country.

In a country like ours where people of multi-cultural religious communities live, it is a great service rendered by these religious schools to enable Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians to provide their respective religious knowledge and experience to their children.

I wish to express my thanks to the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs and all those who participated in the task.

Duleep Wijesekara (M.P.),

Deputy Minister of Posts, Postal Services & Muslim Religious Affairs.

Ministry of Posts, Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs,
No. 310, D.R. Wijewardena Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Message of the Secretary, Ministry of Posts, Postal Services & Muslim Religious Affairs

Religious Education plays a vital role in creating an ethical, well-disciplined just society. If we could inculcate religious thoughts in the minds of children from their childhood it would not be difficult to make better social atmosphere always. Religious education is a medium to offer useful experiences. It is a difficult task to impart religious education along with the formal education focused on tests and exams. As a complement to this formal education, religious education conducted on Sundays have yielded great success in this field.

Separate religious schools have been operating in Sri Lanka in order to develop the religious knowledge and religious atmosphere among each and every child either Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim or Christian children. Providing equal facilities for the children of each and every religion and catering to a long standing need for syllabus based text books have been published by the government and distributed among students of Muslim Religious Schools under the patronage of the Department of Muslim Religious & Cultural Affairs.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who are actively engaged in the exercise of providing ten text books for *Deeniyath* Certificate Exam which is an equivalent to *Dharmacharya* and *Ahadiya* (Daham) Final Certificate of Exams in Muslim Religious Schools.

D. G. M. V. Hapuarachchi,
Secretary,
Ministry of Posts, Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs.

Ministry of Posts, Postal Services and Muslim Religious Affairs,
No. 310, D.R.Wijewardena Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Message from the Director of the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs

At a time when religious, spiritual and cultural renaissance is much needed for the country and the world, the department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs has prepared a set of text books in English for the benefit of the students and teachers of Ahadiyya School. I consider it a privilege to parise their efforts with a complimentary message.

Ahadiyya schools have been functioning successfully in our country over the past fifty years. It is commendable that the department has provided a proper syllabus for the betterment of the Ahadiyya schools. This offers an oppotunity for implementation of the same syllabus of studies in all the Ahadiyya schools in the island.

In order to avail the right benifit from the syllabus, the publication of text books in Tamil for the F C E I and I D C E exams is a matter of praiseworthiness. These Publications will be of great value for the students who pursue their Islamic education in Tamil at the Ahadiyya schools and their teachers.

I understand that the government has spent approximately four million rupees for the translation of these text books into English for the benefit of students who follow their education in the English medium at the Ahadiyya schools.

I thank the team of writers and translators and the staff of the depeartment who rendered their services for the efforts of organizing these text books.

I sincerely pray to the Almighty Allah for the optimum benefit from these text books for the students and teachers of all Ahadiyya schools in the island.

Ash Sheik M. R. M. Malik,
Director,
Department of Muslim Religious
and Cultural Affairs.

Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs,
No. 180, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Message from the Former Director of the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs

Today's world is suffering from spiritual poverty and emptiness. It will not be an exaggeration of the facts if we say that the fundamental reason for all the problems of the world now is the spiritual degradation and its consequence of moral and ethical decay.

We are witnessing a draw back in spiritual, ethical and moral spheres because of the influence of anti-religious policies such as materialism, consumerism and secularism. The society that worships knowledge now ignores spiritualism. The society that takes care about the body, forgets about the hereafter. The Society that loves the world, rejects the world after death.

It should be mentioned that Ahadiya schools jointly with Arabic Colleges that are the training centres create a religious based society capable of guiding mankind with knowledge, expertise and personality to face anti-social challenges.

Ahadiya schools have been functioning for more than fifty years in Sri Lanka. Everyone knows that the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs has published complete syllabus for guiding these schools properly.

In order to gain the full benefit of the syllabus, the department has arranged to publish the necessary text books for Religious School Final Exam and Islamic Deeniyyath Certificate Exam. I am happy at this occasion in expressing my thanks to the committee members compiling these books, the team of editors, and to our Assistant Director As sheik M. H. Noorul Ameen for his continued efforts and to all those who contributed their share for this task. I pray to Almighty Allah to accept their deeds and reward them all.

Ash Sheik M. H. M. Zameel,
Former Director,
Department of Muslim Religious
and Cultural Affairs.

Message from the Former Director of the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs

Islam is a way of life. It is important to acquire the knowledge of Quran and Hadees if a person is to live as a Muslim. The prophet's sayings such as 'Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every Muslim' and 'The best person among you is the one who learns the Quran and teaches it to others' insist on the importance of it. Ahadiya school is a very good means to learn Islam during young age in Sri Lanka. It is a well known fact that the Department of Religious and Cultural Affairs has been doing a commendable service towards the development of Ahadiya Schools. The services rendered annually by the Department of Religious and Cultural Affairs are a great support to the growth of Ahadiya Schools.

Some of the services are designing the syllabus from pre-grade to the university for 14 years, organizing the Final Certificate Examination of Islamic Studies and the Islamic Deeniyyath (Dharmacharya) Final Examination through the Department of Examinations, conducting in district levels workshops and seminars for Ahadiya teachers, providing payment to the teachers for book purchase and providing uniforms to them.

Publishing Text Books according to the national curriculum is a milestone in the history of Ahadiya Schools.

I am highly delighted to see the fulfillment of the first phase of the unanimous appeal of the Ahadiya society. It must be commended that four books are published on Aqeeda, Masaadhirus Sharia, Fiqhul Islam, Seera wath Tharikh, and Akhlaq for the Ahadiya Final Certificate Examination. For Deeniyyath Final Examination, in addition to these four books another two books on Arabic and Islamic Literature are published. I firmly believe that these efforts will continue under the leadership of the new director.

Ash Sheik M.H.Noorul Ameen, Assistant Director who was actively engaged in this task from its inception, the staff of the Department, the Panel of writers and editors deserve my thanks. May Allah accept their endeavours. I consider it a great opportunity granted by Allah for me to serve with them in this task.

I am prepared to render my service in this regard in all possible means.

I pray for the blessings of Allah to all of you.

Ameen!

Ash Sheik Y.L.M.Navavi,

Former Director,

Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs.

**Message from the President of the
Ceylon Islamic Instructions Society Limited,
Central Federation & Ahadhiyyah Schools
in Sri Lanka**

Bismillah Hir Rahuman Nir Raheem

It gives me immense pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the publication of the Sinhala & English translation of the Tamil version of the Ahadhiyyah Text Book for Ahadhiyyah Final Examination & Ahadhiyyah Dheeniyath (Dharmacharya) Examination,

These publications complement in a very significant manner the available material for students of Ahadhiyyah.

These publications are sponsored and financed by the Department of Muslim Religious & Cultural Affairs who have in the recent past come to the aid of The Ceylon Islamic Instructions Society Limited (Central Federation of Ahadhiyyah Schools in Sri Lanka).

In addition, the Department of Muslim Religious & Cultural Affairs had taken up many issues with the relevant Authorities on our behalf, after representation being made, in respect of Ahadhiyyah Schools System and we appreciate and remember with gratitude their untiring efforts in resolving our issues.

Since the establishment in 1951, the Ahadhiyyah Schools activities, being accepted and acknowledged by the Community as essential to the community, have continued to grow in strength by the voluntary and motivating efforts of its functionaries as well as the tremendous support and enthusiasm of its sponsors.

Al Haj M. Shibly Aziz, PC
President,
The Ceylon Islamic Instructions Soc. Ltd.,
Central Federation of Ahadhiyyah Schools in Sri Lanka.

Forward Note

All Praise belongs to Almighty Allah. Alhamdulillah.

"I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me" (AI-Quran 51: 56)

The purpose of creating mankind in the world is to obey the commands of Allah and follow the foot steps of the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) properly and return to Allah. As slaves of Allah, every Muslim should live his life with righteous deeds and spiritual thoughts. This is evident from the saying of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), "If Allah desires good for a person in this world, he grants him clear understanding of religion" (AI-Hadeeth)

According to the above divine verses and the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), living according to the religion is compulsory. As such, to live with the qualities of fear of God, patience, tolerance, morality and good dispositions, it is important to receive religious education properly. There is no doubt in the fact that receiving a good religious education will guide a person to live as a true Muslim. It is commendable that in order to build up such a righteous society, many Islamic Sharia Education Institutes and private organizations are doing their part islandwide.

Focused on the above purpose, we appreciate the efforts of the chairman of Central Ahadiya Federation and their administrative team in implementing plans for the enhancement of the Ahadiya education for more than six decades.

The constructive activities undertaken by the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs for this purpose are noteworthy.

The department takes keen interest especially to enhance the standard of education in Islamic educational institutes such as Ahadiya Schools, Arabic Colleges and Quran Madrasas and expand their physical resources. The department has implemented many plans for the benefit of the students also. In this regard the department took its foremost task of publishing the syllabus for these institutes in 2003 for the first time and allocated fund and made arrangements to conduct the Ahadiya Final Certificate Examination in 2005. It also made arrangements to conduct the Deeniyath Dharmacharya Exam through the Department of Examination in 2008. A comprehensive Syllabus for grade one onwards was prepared and published in all three languages in the same year.

This department also provides books and uniforms to Ahadiya teachers every year and arranges workshops and seminars for them.

The students who wanted to sit for the Ahadiya Final Certificate Examination and Deeniyyath Examination had difficulties without proper text books. Taking this into account, our department embarked on a task in creating text books for these examinations.

I express my warm gratitude to the former Directors of the department Ash-Sheik M.I.Ameer, Ash -Sheik Y.L.M. Navavi and Ash - Sheik M. H. M. Zameel for pioneering the efforts and advising with the necessary guidance and to the present Director of the department Ash Sheik M. R. M. Malik for implementing the tasks necessary for the speedy realization of our efforts.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the Director of Nalimiya Institute Dr. M.A.M. Shukry and the Deputy Director of Nalimiya Institute As Sheikh A.C.Aghar Mohammed for their advice, guidance and consultation in designing and publishing these text books.

My heartiest and sincere thanks to the team of translators and editors for their remarkable effort taken in succeeding this task.

- Mr. Seyed Zafarullah Khan, English Trained Government Teacher (Rtd.), Accredited Media Consultant, Copywriter & Graphic Designer - Translator
- Mr. M. M. Shazuly B. A., Social Sci. (Ind), English Trained Teacher (Rtd.), Principal, Amal International School - Editor
- Mrs. A.I. Fathima (B. Ed.), Special Trained Teacher, Muslim Ladies College, Colombo 04 - Editor

After successfully publishing the text books in Tamil in 2015 , now is a great pleasure to fulfil the requirements of the English medium students by publishing the following text books in English for their benefit:

1. Aqeedah and Masadhirus Sharia (Islamic Principles and Sources of Jurisprudence for FCEIS)
2. Al Fiqhul Islam (Islamic Jurisprudence for FCEIS)
3. Al Akhlaqul Islamia (Islamic Ethics for FCEIS)
4. As Sheera Wathareeq (Islamic History for FCEIS)
5. Aqeedah and Masadhirus Sharia (Islamic Principles and Sources of Jurisprudence for IDCE)
6. Al Fiqhul Islam (Islamic Jurisprudence for IDCE)

7. Al -Akhlaq wassulooq (Ethics and Sociology in Islam IDCE)
8. As Sheera Wathareeq (Islamic History for IDCE)
9. Al Adabul Islami (Islamic Literature for IDCE)
10. Al Lukathul Arabia wa Ahkamuth Thajweed (Arabic Language and the Rules of Recitation)

My sincere thanks go to As Sheik M.M.M. Mufthi (Naleemi), Mrs. Mirsiya Thajudeen (Financial Assistant), Mrs. Faheema Junaideen (Former Management Assistant), Al Haj A.A. M. Azrin (Store Keeper), Miss M. N. F. Farmila (Management Assistant) and all others in the department who sincerely contributed for the successful outcome of the publication in many ways.

I also sincerely request you to send your opinions and suggestions for the enhancement of the text books on the second publication to the department.

May Allah accept the sincere efforts made by all for this cause and bless us with His rewards. Ameen !

Al Haj Moulavi M. H. Noorul Ameen,
Assistant Director,
Department of Muslim Religious and
Cultural Affairs.

Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs,
180, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Al-Akhlaq Wassulooq (Islamic Ethics and Social Tradition)

**Text Book for
Islamic Deeniyyath (Dharmacharya)
Certificate Examination**

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
1. Sociology ...	1
2. Islamic view of the Universe ...	3
3. The Role of an Individual in a Society ...	7
4. Family - A Definition ...	9
5. Society - Characteristics of Islamic Social Structure ...	15
6. Individual and Society ...	18
7. Relationship of Muslims with Multi-ethnic Communities ...	19
8. Social Ethics ...	22
9. Social Communication ...	23
10. Ethics ...	27
11. Islamic Social Ethics Regarding Human Relationships ...	44

Akhlaq Wassulooq (Sociology and Ethics)

Introduction

We wish to place on record our sincere appreciation of the efforts made by the Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs in bringing out a syllabus for the IDCE exam for the first time in 2003 and subsequently in 2008. The syllabus is being implemented in all Ahadiyya schools now for the benefit of students.

Instructions regarding the syllabus are contained in the Guidelines for teachers. This guideline prepared by a team of scholars and educationists has in fact fulfilled the long felt need of teachers for instructions on the syllabus.

By referring to the guidelines teachers can improve the efficiency of their teaching to meet the expectations of students in a satisfactory manner.

We also wish to emphasize that whatever is written in the book should not be taken as final on the subject but instead further search for facts is a right of the teachers and readers of the book.

Dr. Moulavi M. S. M. Jalaldeen,
Former Chancellor and Senior Lecturer,
South East University.

SOCIOLOGY

Introduction of Sociology

Man in Sociology

Man is a social animal. This is a general concept. Although born alone, man has the natural tendency to live closely with society.

He is made to be social by environmental factors and feelings of acquired experience in life.

In the beginning human beings lived in unity like the bees; but under some circumstances they broke away from this discipline and rules of life and tried to subdue other groups under each other's control. As a result of this fierce competition to dominate one another, mutual destruction and disorder spread among the feuding groups. Experience taught them to realize the futility of their destructive behavior and they tried to reform themselves. As a consequence they learnt to respect social structures and disciplines for mutual co-existence.

The Holy Quran informs us that mankind appeared from a single community. "O mankind! Fear your guardian Lord, who created you from a single person. Created out of it his mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; Fear Allah, through whom you demand your mutual (rights) and be heedful of the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you." (4:1)

The Almighty God who evolved mankind into societies, blessed mankind with a perfect code of life for good social structure and peace.

The basic unit of society is the family. Many families together constitute communities. Communities together expand to become villages, towns, cities, countries and finally the world. In an Islamic community structure, there is neither room for the type of communism for equal distribution of wealth to all the people without justice and irrespective of their work and contribution. Nor there is room for the self-centred exploiting nature of capitalism that creates conflicts.

Islam commands that every Muslim should understand and respect the state of life of other person. In an Islamic life situation both the rich and the poor live as neighbourly friends. They live under the concept of unity that all Muslims are brethren. In the sight of faith all differences of race, caste, ethnicity, colour, wealth and other considerations are set aside as all Muslims are united under the Islamic ethical and social system based on religious principles revealed by God Himself.

This was proclaimed in the following manner by Property (Sal), “A believer is like a building block to another believer. Like one part of the building enforces the other part, they enforce each other”, The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) built up a society during a period of twenty three years breaking all the human contradictions and differences of race and caste acquired during the period of ignorance and establishing the spirit of readiness to respect each other and sacrifice their health and wealth for the benefit of others.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized that ‘A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim.’ The Holy Quran also emphasizes that human beings should follow a collective life in society and act co-operating with one another with a sense of unity.

“O ye believers! Be helpful to each other in good deeds and fear of God. Do not support each other in wrongful deeds and sins”.

Emphasizing a life in connection with society, Islam provided many plans for the promotion of social unity based on ethical principles of justice and fair play.

ISLAMIC VIEW OF THE UNIVERSE

The universe denotes the ever expanding wider space in which all the stars, the sun, the planets, the earth and all that are rotating and orbiting in space. Human knowledge cannot fathom the distance or the size of the universe as it is fast expanding in all directions.

There are many theories and concepts regarding the formation of the universe. When we consider all these concepts regarding the universe we can divide them into two major divisions.

Evolutionary Theory

This concept exercised a great influence in the Greek society during 500 B.C. The Greek philosophers are the pioneers of this concept. According to the evolutionary theory, the universe and all that are in it evolved gradually from one form into another form.

During modern times when there appeared a renaissance of science after a prolonged power struggle between Christianity and free thinking, this theory was further studied, developed and popularized by Charles Darwin. Generally this theory is accepted by atheists and agnostics who do not follow any particular religion.

Creation Theory

The second concept of Creation theory regarding the universe is upheld by religions and religious minded thinkers. The creation theory states that everything in the universe has been created by God individually and separately rather than evolving gradually.

Islamic religion testifies the creation theory for the existence of the universe and everything in it.

According to Islam the universe and everything in it including man have been created by Allah with a plan and a purpose.

Allah created the heaven and the earth according to His Divine Will. He alone created the day and the night; the sun and the moon. In this way Islam states that there is a beginning for the universe and it has not been created in vain as an accident but with a purpose.

Islam considers the universe and all that is in it as great signs of Allah. No one can comprehend the reality of Allah. From Islamic point of view the universe and everything in it manifest the truth and the power of Allah. This view is clear from the Holy Quran's proclamation that the universe and everything in it are the signs of Allah.

“Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding...” (3: 190)

The universe and its movements and the movement of each and everything in it are under the control of Allah. No one can bring the universe and its movements under the control without His Power.

The Holy Quran further declares, **“Verily! His are the creation and the command. Blessed be Allah, the cherisher and sustainer of the Worlds!”** (7:54)

Islamic View of the Universe

It is the Islamic view that the universe and everything in it are made useful for human life and has been accessible to him in order to benefit from them. In this regard man has three important duties related to the universe. These are : Khilafat, Ibadat and Imarath.

I. Khilafath

This term denotes fulfilling the commands of Allah as a vicegerent of Allah on this earth.

II. Ibadath

This term means as a slave of Allah, submitting to Allah fully with worships and prayers as commanded by Him

III. Imarath

This term means the proper development of the earth to create a suitable environment for human life by proper use of the universe and everything in it according to the guidance of Allah

It is the principle of Islam that man should fulfill his mission on earth by completing the above duties towards Allah. A very good concept has been presented by Islam about man's position with regard to the universe and everything in it.

Islam demands man to uphold a balanced position in respect of life. Man should not exceed the limits and selfishly use worldly goods and forget his Creator and His Guidance.

At the same time Man should not totally ignore the worldly things. This position of Islam is well balanced, realistic and practical.

On the other hand the western materialistic concepts encourage man to over indulge in worldly goods forgetting the guidance of God. Some other religions preach that only by giving up the worldly goods, one can attain spiritual development.

However Islamic teachings are an excellent guidance for both material and spiritual developments of man.

Islamic Concept of Human Life

There are several concepts regarding human life . All religions have their own concepts of human life. Buddhism says that man is born into this world in order to experience the consequences of a previous life as such he will be in a good position or bad position according to his deeds in his previous births.

Christianity considers human beings as sinful creations. It considers that the sin of the first man continues to affect the lives of all human beings.

In modern times the three major theories Darwinism, Marxism and Freudism look at human life from a totally different angle.

Darwinism considers human beings as animals. Accordingly man is an evolved animal by natural selection. He evolved from a common ancestor so he was not created ; His life is basically animalistic and not different from any other animals. Darwinism observes man's life in this manner.

Karl Marx who started thinking about man on the line of Darwinism views man from an economic point of view and sees him as an economic entity devoid of any spiritual dimension.

Freudian also considers man as an evolved animal by natural selection and his behavior is based on the basic instinct of sex. As such all desires of men should have an outlet for him to live a satisfactory life. Unfulfilled desires act unconsciously in subconscious mind of the individual and people's hidden thoughts and feelings influence their behavior motivating them or de-motivating them to perform certain acts and behaviors in their adult life.

All these modern concepts have transformed man into animalistic nature with an utterly selfish nature for materialistic achievements devoid of moral or ethical considerations. Men have become like machines and objects of materialistic consumerism. The people who follow such base concepts finally end up in conflicts in their own lives. The individual life has become unprotected and unsafe and the family structure has become disorderly and unstable. The painful truth is displayed very well in the daily occurrence of shameful and immoral events all over the world.

But, Islam has a point of view of human life totally different from these man-made concepts.

The basic principle is that God created man and has made him his vicegerent (Caliph) on the earth and men belong to Almighty God.

The Holy Quran declares, “Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: **‘I will create a vicegerent on earth’**. They said: **‘Will Thou place therein one who will make Mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst do we celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy Holy(name) ?’** He said: **‘I know what ye know not’** (2:30)

According to this verse it is explicit that Allah has sent man as his vicegerent. Therefore, man is bound to live and maintain life on earth according to the guidance of Allah as the chosen vicegerent of Allah on earth.

Man has been created with a divine purpose. He is not born without any purpose or meaning for his life. Islam states that man is created with a great purpose. As such man should mould his life rightfully along the guidance of Allah and His messenger and make his life after death fruitful.

As the vicegerent of Allah man is a superior and dignified being. This fact is reiterated by the Holy Quran, **“We have indeed created man in the best of moulds (95 : 4)”**.

To man Allah gave the purest and best nature, and man’s duty is to preserve the pattern on which Allah has made him. Man’s position as vicegerent also gives him ‘will’ and ‘discretion’ by reasoning, and if he uses them wrongly he falls even lower than the beasts.

Further the Holy Quran illustrates, **“We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation”** (17:70)

Islam neither encourages over indulgence of the worldly goods nor become totally materialistic nor does it promote asceticism of totally forsaking the world. By following the principles of Islam man can attain prosperity in this world and prosperity in the next world.

Hence the Holy Quran has prescribed a special supplication for Muslims, “There are men who say: ***‘Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and save us from the torment of the fire!’***” (2:201)

On the other hand it should be understood when compared with the lofty status of the Hereafter, this world is temporary and perishable.

Islam prescribes the good things of this life for the preparation of the life of the hereafter. This world is the land to sow the fruits of the next world.

The Holy Quran further states, **“It is He Who hath produced you from the earth and settled you therein: then ask forgiveness”** (11:61)

THE ROLE OF AN INDIVIDUAL IN A SOCIETY

Islam has placed two types of responsibilities on man.

1. Hukukullah – Duties of an individual for the sake of Allah
2. Hukukul Ibadath – Duties of an individual for the society.

“Hukukullah’ refers to Daily worship, Fasting, Charity, Pilgrimage to Mecca, sacrifice of Ulhiya and Akeeka and other pious acts based on love, purity of thought and fear of God as a consequence of the relationship and closeness as an individual to Allah. It also means performing these duties on time without any expectation of praise from the people. Through these noble practices of individuals Islamic environments are fostered in families, societies and countries.

The duties that are due to Allah are in fact His rights on man. Regarding this an interpretation has been given by the Islamic scholar Moulana Moudoodi.

“The first right of Almighty God on Man is that he should trust only Allah as God and he should not associate any partners with Him. By declaring one’s faith by reciting lailaha Illallah, the Kalima this duty becomes fulfilled.”

“By declaring that the Holy Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) is the messenger of God, the second duty also becomes fulfilled. By these declarations man accepts the teachings from Allah with a truthful mind. The third duty towards Allah is fulfilling the commands of God. This third duty is fulfilled only by following the rules as incorporated in the Holy Quran and in the way of life of prophet (sal) of God.

The next duty is worshipping Allah. Obligatory prayers, Fasting, Zakat tax, and Haj Pilgrimage are parts of this duty and by fulfilling these requirements the fourth duty is completed.” (This is Islam – Moulana Moududi)

Individual duties towards society are concerned in Hukukul Ibadath. Several sayings of Al-Hadeeth clarify these duties of man towards his society:

1. Hazrat Numan ibnu Basheer (Rali) reports that the Messenger of Allah said, “The example of believers who love one another, show kindness to one another and live together is like a physical body. When one part of the body becomes sick all other parts suffer fever and sleeplessness” (Buhari, Muslim)
2. Hazrat Abu Huraira (Rali) reports that the messenger of Allah stated, “There are six duties to be done by a Muslim for his fellow Muslims:
 - (a) When you meet a Muslim you should say Salaam and further reply his salaam.

- (b) If he invites for feast, accept it.
- (c) If he asks advice from you, offer it.
- (d) If he sneezes and praises Allah, reply him ‘yarhamuka Allah’
- (e) If he falls sick visit him
- (f) If he dies, follow his Janaaza. (Muslim)

In the long list of duties towards society, human rights occupy an important place. Some people mistakenly think that the concept of human rights was born from the declaration of magna carta in England, on 15 June 1215. Actually this magna carta was proclaimed six hundred years after the appearance of Islam and by that time Islamic human rights principles were widely established.

FAMILY – A DEFINITION

The family as a unit is defined as a group of people related by marriage or through having the same ancestors. The famous sociologist Giddens has defined family as that the elders of the family are responsible for the maintenance of the younger members of the family.

Similarly the famous researcher Murdock has described family as a social unit consisting of a common place of living, economical structure and pro-generation. That unit also includes elderly male and female members with at least two members maintaining sexual relationship with social approval and have given birth to children or adopted children.

The family structure differs from society to society. The family structures are basically divided into two types by sociologists:

1. Nucleus Family or Core Family
2. Extended Family or Joint Family

The smallest family unit is called the nucleus family. This unit comprises of elders and their children as members. Larger than this unit is called extended family unit. The extension of the nucleus family becomes an extended family unit. The example of this is a family where the husband and wife living with their parents as one family unit. Another type of an extended family is where members of the same generation such as husband, wife and their brothers or sisters living together as one family unit.

In modern times families have changed from being extended families into small nucleus families.

The Role of a Family in an Islamic Social Structure

The Islamic family has great purposes and objectives. The most important purpose is to sustain an atmosphere for the development of great moral standards in life. The human body is driven by feelings and desires naturally. When these feelings are not properly guided the position of man becomes lowered to the beastly level and moral degradation ensues. Islam never ignores these natural feelings of man. Islam has introduced a family unit with a legally approved marital relationship to give these feelings the due place. Islam considers satisfying one's sexual desires in an illicit way as a major sin and upholds the fulfilling of the same desires within the marital relationship as a form of pious act. Islam connects the family unit with that of the physical moral discipline.

When a family life is based upon Islamic principles all aspects of such a life become valuable with Allah. In other words all these aspects of family life become pious acts

(Ibadaa). Choosing a bride and marrying her to be involved in a marriage life is a pious act. The messenger of Allah stated, “When a Muslim marries he actually fulfills half of the requirements of his religious life. Therefore for the balance half, he should be God conscious”

Moving with each other with love in a marital bondage is a pious act for a husband and a wife. The Prophet also mentioned, “A husband keeping a little food in the mouth of his wife with love is equal to charity. Copulating with your wife is also charity.”

Bearing children, bringing them up as good people, working hard for the requirement of one’s wife and children, spending for the family are all considered as meritorious reward giving pious acts or Ibadats.

Islam encourages family life and loathes ascetic way of life. When policies do not give due consideration for the natural human traits, mistakes will increase. Ascetic way of life and celibacy are against the very human nature. That is why no system that promotes celibacy and asceticism has ever succeeded in the world.

In human life a family life with love and peace is essential. A man can fulfill his carnal desires or physical needs in a wrong way. But such illicit relationship will not offer him the love and peace enjoyed in a family. A male works hard from the morning till going to bed in the night in order to earn for the family. He does not consider the sun, the rain, day or night as a hindrance to his life. He faces many problems and difficulties for this purpose with a positive attitude because he values his family and the loving atmosphere. In the evening his wife and family await his return home. All the pains he had undergone would vanish when he sees his family and keeps company with them. Since Allah has kept such a great blessing in the set up of a family, it is the duty of Muslims to safeguard the purity of family life.

The Role of a Family in the formation of an Individual

When the father as the head of the family and the mother as the queen of the house, live with a family it would run smoothly. understanding and respecting to each other’s role. In this way when a father fulfills his responsibility of leadership and a mother upholds her unique responsibility of motherhood a good family produces children with good personality traits and efficiency.

“They (your wives) are your garments and ye are their garments” (Holy Quran 2:187)

On the above verse the Holy Quran compares the mutual role played by spouses to that of the protective garments.

In Islam there is a place for male domination nor for feminism. Men are companions for women and women are companions for men. There are responsibilities and distinct characteristics for each. Therefore both men and women can play a vital role by fulfilling their responsibilities with the expectation of divine blessing, without any grudge and envy and contribute for the proper development of individual personalities in the society.

Women play a much more important role than men in influencing the thoughts, characters and conducts of individuals in a society. In fact they are the ones who lay the foundation for these developments when the child is in their womb itself. Mothers who make a good and proper society are the axis of the society. The characteristics of a society are verily a true reflection of the mothers of the society.

Family Relationship

(The Characteristics of Islamic Social Structure)

Family relationships are formed in two ways :

1. By blood relationship or lineage of relatives
2. By marriage

Blood relationship occurs through the mother or father. Islamic Sharia defines Mahrami and Aajnabee relation the lawful and unlawful relationships in this connection. Sharia divides these bloodrelationships into three sections:

- I. Al Usool
- II. Al Furu
- III. Al Hawashi

Al Usool refers to all relatives from father upwards. This link of relatives ascends as Father, Father's father, great grand father, father's mother, grand mother, great grand mother and other ancestors.

Al Buru refers to all relatives beginning with the child and descending such as son, grand son, great grand son, daughter, grand daughter and great grand daughter and all their offspring.

Al Hawashi refers to branches of relatives. This lineage does not ascend or descend divides into lateral relatives.

These relationships are so important that they have the rights of inheritance as family according to Islamic inheritance law.

By marriage new relationships are formed. Husband, wife, father -in -law, mother- in -law, son -in- law, daughter- in -law, brother- in -law, sister -in- law etc., are some of the relationships based on marriage and through these relationships love, respect, dignity and honour are built. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) considered these relationships as blessings of happiness and comfort to the eyes and prayed as mentioned in the Holy Quran:

“Our Lord! Grant unto us Wives and Offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes...”
(25:74)

Relatives and Neighbours

In the Islamic family structures relatives and neighbours have an important share. Not only they are important stake holders in the growth and well being of the family structure but even the Prophet had an apprehension whether they would enjoy the right to inheritance as the angel Huzrat Gabriel kept on emphasising.

The view of the Holy Quran regarding Relatives

- I. “O mankind fear your Guardian Lord, who created you from a single person, created, out of it, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; Fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and be heedful of the wombs (that bore you): For Allah Ever Watches over you.” (4:1)**
- II. “...Kindred by blood have prior rights against each other in the Book of Allah. Verily Allah is well-acquainted with all things.” (8:75)**
- III. “But those who break the Covenant of Allah, after having plighted their word thereto, and cut asunder those things Which Allah has commanded to be joined, and work mischief in the land; on them is the curse; for them is the terrible home” (13:25)**

Sayings of the Holy Prophet(peace be upon him) regarding Relatives and Neighbours

- I. Hazrat Abu Huraira(Ral) reports that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “*Whosoever believes in Allah and Last Day should not harm his neighbour, and whosoever believes in Allah and Last Day should entertain his guest generously and whosoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet (abstain from all kinds of evil and dirty talk, e.g. abusing, lying, backbiting etc.)*” (Buhari, Muslim)**
- II. Hazrat Anas (Ral) narrates that the messenger of God said, “*Whosoever desires that he should receive ample (sustenance) food and his life should be long must keep good ties with his relatives*” (Buhari, Muslim)**

The Holy Quran regarding Neighbours

“Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good – to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are of kin, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the way-farer (ye meet), and what your right hand possess: for Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious” (4:36)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding Neighbours

- I. Hazrat Ayesha (Ra) reports: I asked the Prophet, “O messenger of Allah, I have two neighbours. To whom should I give gifts?” The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) then replied, “ You should give to the one whose entrance of house is closer to you” (Buhari)
- II. Hazrat Ibnu Umar narrates that the Prophet said, “ Hazrat Jibreel kept on advising me on the rights of neighbours to the extent that I thought that the neighbours would have the rights of inheritance.” (Buhari, Muslim)

Islamic scholars have categorized the duties towards one’s neighbours as follows:

- I. A once duty-bound neighbour to whom we are responsible : A non Muslim brother living as neighbour
- II. A twice duty-bound neighbour to whom we are responsible: A Muslim brother who is not a relative to us but living as a neighbour.
- III. A thrice duty-bound neighbour to whom we are responsible: A Muslim brother who is also a relative and a neighbour.

SOCIETY- CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC SOCIAL STRUCTURE

EQUALITY

All the people of the world are the descendants of the first human beings Adam and Hawwa(Alai). Therefore all people are basically equal. One cannot become superior to others by money, position, educational degrees or family contacts and relationships. One becomes great only through fear of God, righteousness and good characters, thaqwa and noble conducts.

In the historical oration during the last pilgrimage the Prophet stated about equality:

“O people! Your God is one. Your father is also one. You all are the children of Adam. Adam was created with soil. The one who has piety and fear of Allah is great among you. Neither the Arabs are superior to Non Arabs nor are the Non Arabs superior to the Arabs. The White complexioned person is not superior to the black complexioned person or The black complexioned person is not superior to the white complexioned person except for righteousness.”

These Islamic principles did not remain as mere philosophies and die out. These principles in real life uprooted the afflictions of discrimination based on caste, race, tribe or colour which were wide spread before the advent of Islam. Islam established equality of mankind as never before in the world.

BROTHERHOOD

“O mankind fear your Guardian Lord, who created you from a single person, created, out of it, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; Fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and be heedful of the wombs (that bore you): For Allah Ever Watches over you.” The Holy Quran (4:1)

The following prayer of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is a proof regarding the important place given by Islam for brotherhood.

Hazrat Zaid bin Arkam narrates that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to supplicate to Allah after every salaah, as “O God! Our Lord!! The Cherisher of Every thing! You are the King. You are Allah. You are the one and

only. I bear witness that there are no partners or helpers for you . I bear witness that Mohammed is your slave and messenger. O God! Our Lord!! I bear witness that all people are brethren.”

Sayings of the Apostle of Allah regarding Brotherhood

1. “Whosoever loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah, and gives for the sake of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah; he has perfected his faith” (Abu Dawood)
2. “Whosoever becomes happy to taste the sweetness of faith in Allah, let him love all others for the sake of Allah” (Ahmed)
3. “On the day of judgment where there will be no shadow other than the shadow of Allah, two people will be among the seven types receiving shelter under the shadow. These two people loved each other for the sake of Allah and were together and separated on that basis.” (Buhari)
4. Pure brotherhood becomes the reason for higher status and entering paradise on the day of judgment. The Prophet further said, “ When two Muslims meet and shake hands, forgiveness of Allah is assured before they depart” (Abu Dawood, Ahmed)
5. “A Muslim is a brother to another Muslim. He will not do injustice to him. He will not hand over him to the enemies” (Buhari, Muslim)

Brotherhood is essential for the well being and development of a society. On the contrary when the feeling of brotherhood disappears, relationship weakens and the unity collapses and that will be a detrimental to the society.

The Holy Quran warns about this: **“And obey Allah and His Messenger; and fall into no disputes, lest you lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: For Allah is with those who patiently persevere:”** (8:46)

Freedom

Islam has offered several human right laws regarding the rights of an individual for freedom.

All property belonging to Muslims or non Muslims in an Islamic state will be deemed sacred. Islam upholds the dignity of people whosoever it may be. Therefore it is not allowed in Islam to make mockery or treat anyone with disrespect.

“Your blood and property and your dignity cannot be transgressed “ (Musnad, Ahmed, Buhari)

During the rule of Hazrat Umar (Ral) a verdict was given by him in favour of an ordinary citizen against the governor of Egypt with the following advice to the governor: “***O Amar Ibnu As! Why do you want to rule by keeping men as slaves. They are given birth by their mothers as free men!***”

The non Muslims (Dimmis) in an Islamic State are not forced to join in the propagation of Islam or Jihad or give financial help for these. There was a guarantee for their religious freedom.

Justice

Islamic judicial system does not discriminate between Muslims and non Muslims. All the people as slaves of God are entitled to equal and lawful justice in an Islamic judicial system.

Islam emphasizes justice and fair play. A Muslim should have these characteristics of justice and fairness with him. Islam is a religion of God to firmly establish justice.

“Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between people that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which he giveth you! For Allah is He Who Hearth and Seeth all things” (4:58)

Allah commands in his final revelation to deal all problems with justice avoiding injustice due to enmity and hatred they already had.

“O ye, who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you serve to wrong and depart from justice. Be Just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do.” (5:8)

The apostle of Allah admonished, “Avoid dealing with injustice. Injustice will create darkness in the life hereafter” (Muslim)

In order to transform oneself as a person with justice and guard oneself from committing injustice and protect oneself from injustice by others, it is indispensable to create a society based on the trust of God and His religion and be a member of such a society.

Only such divine laws can provide effective solutions for man to live in harmony with all others.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Human Rights in Islam

The Holy Prophet(peace be upon him) stated, “ Whosoever is deprived of his rights in this world. He will be given those rights in the hereafter and his sins and mistakes will be countered by the rights so offered” (Sahih Buhari, Musnad Ahmed)

Nobody should deprive the rights of others or obstruct justice to him. Doing such injustice is considered as a major sin in Islam. In the hereafter the offender will be held as an accused and the oppressed will be given justice and forgiveness (in compensation)”

Human Rights advocated by the Holy Quran

1. Man is a vicegerent of Allah (Sura Bakara : 30; Sura Isra :70)
2. The right for life and property of an individual (An Nisa : 93)
3. Safeguarding human dignity against slander and disrespect (Sura Hujurath : 11,12)
4. The right to live with tolerance and equality with an understanding of the diversity of society (sura Room :22)
5. The right to maintaining justice and fairness in society (Sura Maeeda :08)
6. The right to freedom of thought (Sura Ahraaf : 62)
7. The right to dignity, modesty and chastity of women (Sura Isra : 32).

Enjoining Right and Forbidding Wrong

The Duties and Characteristics of an Islamic Trainer

Islam as a way of life places solutions for social, family and individual problems on the principle of Halaal “the Permitted” and Haraam “the Forbidden”. Islam emphasizes that the preachers and trainers of Islam should have a good understanding of these concepts for properly implementing their service of enjoining good and forbidding wrong.

The Holy Quran commands Muslims : **“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong : They are the ones to attain felicity.”** (3:104)

They may have to face several problems when launching such social reforms but they should be able to patiently persevere in the reform activities empowered by great qualities such as tolerance and flexibility in our dealings with all peoples.

RELATIONSHIP OF MUSLIMS WITH MULTI-ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Whilst calling upon Muslims to foster unity and togetherness within the community and establish this world in an orderly harmonious and peaceful manner, Islam has also given us the necessary guidance on how to keep good relations with non Muslims.

People in this world live in different types of groups and divisions. They grade themselves on the basis of education, wealth, family status, country, ethnicity, colour, creed and region. Although this division is universal, it is unbecoming of institutions to look at people partially and with division.

As a religion Islam does not approach people in a partial and divisive way for practical purposes. As a religion sent for the entire mankind, on the principle of faith Islam views people as two different groups.

Those who accepted Islam fall into one side and those who have not accepted fall into the other side.

Almighty Allah reveals: **“It is He Who Created you. There are believers and rejecters among you. He Knows well what ye do” (Holy Quran)**

Islam explicitly explains how the relationship between these two groups should be when both these groups live in a region or a country.

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other) (49:13)

The rights of non Muslims under Islamic governments were properly honoured. As a Mercy of Allah to the entire mankind, Prophet Mohammed(Peace be upon him) was firm in dispensing equal justice to all irrespective of their differences of ethnicity, religion, language, region etc.,

The following sayings of the Prophet illustrate this clearly:

“Whosoever oppresses a minority non Muslim, I will be his enemy. Whosoever is my enemy when I am here, I will argue against him for justice on the day of judgment.” (Thariqu Bagdad- Al Kathibul Bagdadi)

“Whosoever murders a non Muslim living with a covenant in an Islamic state, he will not even smell the fragrant of paradise. As far as he is concerned, the fragrance of paradise will be 40 years of distance far away from him.” (Buhari)

By considering doing injustice or violating the rights of non Muslim as a major crime and sin, Islam stands out as a unique religion of universal values.

In the history of Islam especially in the life of the Prophet Mohammed, the non Muslims were treated with respect and trust and close relationship was maintained with them. The following are some records of it.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) maintained a peaceful relationship with non Muslims in his society and during the battle of Hunain he received help from Safwan Ibnu Umaiya who had not become a Muslim then.

During the Hijrat the Prophet chose a non Muslim called Abdullah Ibnu Uraikith as a guide for his travel to Medina.

There is the popular story of the Prophet obtaining a loan from a Jew.

It should also be mentioned that the Prophet whole heartedly received the gifts sent by non Muslim kings to him.

Once when seeing a funeral procession the Prophet stood up. It was said the procession was of a Jew (non Muslim). For that the Prophet replied, “Isn’t he a human soul!”.

On this basis every Muslim should regard every Non Muslim as a fellow human being and give him the honour he deserves. A Muslim should neither insult a Non Muslim viewing him as belonging to another religion or community nor condemn his religion or community. Islam orders us to honour the rights of other religionists and maintain a peaceful relationship with them.

The Holy Quran commands us and warns us : **“ Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance”** (6:108)

There are verses of the Holy Quran and examples of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding our dealings with the Non Muslim.

The UnderPrivileged in Society

The underprivileged and down trodden masses in a society need special attention. The following are root causes for their condition:

1. Economic Plight
2. Physical strength
3. Lack of Knowledge and Skills

On the basis of economy, the poor, the orphans, the widows etc., are identified as the underprivileged section of a society. Islam has given them relief through the practices of Zakaat (compulsory Tax), Sadaka (Optional Charity), Hadiya (Gifts), and Hibat (Givings).

With regard to physical fitness, the Prophet (Sal) acclaimed, “A believer who is strong is a servant of Allah more liked by Allah than a physically weak believer”

Islam encourages caring for the disabled and the physically less fit in our lives without ignoring them.

Career Guidance

It is expected of every matured man and woman to be involved in a job suitable for them. Islam encourages earning for the livelihood. Islam condemns begging and living lazily without laboring for one’s living. Islam emphasizes that a Muslim should earn in a permissible way and live a respectable life in society.

In this regard career guidance in the educational sector plays a vital role in developing the right attitude and gaining proper information of career opportunities for students who complete their basic education.

SOCIAL ETHICS

Muslims involved in the propagation of Islam will have to display tolerance, flexibility and humanity when dealing with people of diverse religious and social groups. There is an excellent example in the life of the Prophet during the Hudaibiya agreement with non Muslims.

Even though the companions of the Prophet pointed out that the terms of the agreement at Hudaibiya looked more favourable to the non Muslims and unfavourable to the Muslims, the prophet had the foresight to know that greater victory would be achieved in the future through tolerance, flexibility and discipline. As Surathul Fath indicates, the Prophet achieved great victory with unexpected changes in the ground situations within two years of the agreement. Islamic history records this as the 'Victory of Mecca' or Fathhul Mecca.

Thawasun -The Middle and Balanced Stand

It is a unique character of Islam as a perfect code of life it upholds a middle path with perfect balance between the life of this world and the life to come in the hereafter.

As the Holy Quran declares, "We have made you a balanced society to be a witness to the people". The Al-Hadeeth further states, "Of all the actions, the best is the middle and balanced action"

When the affairs of a Muslim are in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet, Islam approves the life as a spiritual one

"O our Lord! Give us what is best in this world and the next world. And protect us from the Hell Fire", the Prophet's prayer also shows the middle path, Thawasun. "Rabbana Athina Fiddunya a Hasanathun wabil Akirathi Hasanathan Wakina Athaban Naar."

Obeying Leadership

Leadership means leading the people without force on a planned direction by encouraging and persuading people to follow oneself as the leader of the group or society. Islamic leadership is a spiritual leadership based on the principle of obeying Allah and the Prophet. There are numerous evidences in the Holy Quran and the Life of the Prophet in this regard.

Similarly the contents of the oration made by the first Caliph Abubakr (Rali) at his assumption of duty exemplified the Islamic leadership qualities.

Leadership demands qualities of personality, consultation and a sense of justice. Social researchers are of the opinion that a good combination of leadership qualities and management skills can produce efficiency and productivity in proper administration and maintenance.

The following characteristics are expected from a leader:

1. Passion
2. Credibility
3. Foresight
4. Deep knowledge
5. Faultless character
6. Quick Decision Making
7. Respecting others
8. Ability to instruct
9. Management skill
10. Maturity and developed mind
11. Planning
12. Honest dealing.

All these great qualities have been bequeathed as a gift to the Muslims by the Holy Quran, the sayings the biographic of the Prophet, the companions the qualities of the imams and scholars.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Man is a talking creature. He employs language to express his feelings. This communication of his feelings has taken a new dimension. The evolution of communication has extended tremendously from just direct talk, to contact through different media such as postal service, mobiles, telephones, internet and social media such as face book etc.,

The Holy Quran instructs the discipline of social contacts in verses such as, "Say whatever you say clearly", "A good word is charity", "if you happen to argue with the ignorant, leave them with salaam".

In the same way the sayings of the Prophet has laid the foundation for proper social communication:

1. "Whosoever believes in Allah and the Hereafter, let him talk what is right or be silent" (Buhari, Muslim);
2. "A backbiting slanderer will not enter Paradise" (Muslim);
3. Once when the Prophet asked his companions, "Who is a Mublis?". The companions humbly replied, "Only Allah and His Messenger know!". Then the Prophet proceeded to explain, "A person who looked good doing righteous deeds in the world will be ready to enter Paradise in the presence of the Almighty Allah. At that time some people will complain against him," O Allah! He scolded us, slandered about us and spread false rumour about us with his tongue." When the accusations are proven true in Allah's presence, all the good deeds of his will be distributed to those who were harmed by him. Because of this he would be bankrupt of any good deeds. The one who had to enter paradise would finally end up in Hell due to his violations of human rights. He is a Mublis" (Muslim).

Matters that Develop or Destroy Social Relations

Due to unavoidable circumstances a Muslim may live in a country where Islamic Laws are not in practice. This can be the result of employment, education or historical reasons. But Muslims should be an example to others in his words and deeds wherever they may live. Their actions and dealings with others should portray that they are a unique representation of a different principle of life. The era of calling countries where Muslims live as minorities as 'Darul Kufr' and 'Darul Harb' is over and nowadays they are called as 'Darul Sahada' and 'Darul Dawa'.

From this point of view only we should look at the life and their role in national life. Modern Islamic scholars reiterate that minorities like us should mix without being assimilated into other cultures and at the same time maintain our identity without isolation.

Muslim society is a transparent society. This community has been made for the sake of other communities. This community has been established to ensure and promote world peace, security and welfare. The purpose of this community is not aiming their share in global wealth and working to achieve only that. Neither it is established to control and exploit global resources to fatten itself at the cost of poverty suffered by other communities.

An ideal Muslim would know to establish good relationship with all civilizations without being apologetic to alternative thoughts, civilizations and cultures. Because he is aware that there was no community to which a divine messenger had not been sent.

In all communities the signs of divine messengers can be observed. Therefore he will find unity in diversity and will not try to divide people on the basis of differences.

The Holy Quran proclaims, **“Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind. Enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah...” (3:110)**

It is worth noting the term employed here to denote the 'best of peoples'. The term 'Khairu Umma' is translated as 'the best community' but it has in it the word 'Khair' which has a wider plethora of meaning such as 'resource, 'benefit,' 'goodness', 'usefulness, 'wealth' etc., The deep meaning of this verse means

Muslims as a community can benefit and offer goodness for mankind at all times.

The Taabyeen Mufasssireen (commentator of the Holy Quran,) Ikrima (Rah) Thabieen gives an explicit interpretation, “Earlier communities were not safe for mankind. But Muslims are a community safe for all other communities”.

Sri Lankan Muslim community should foster good relationship with all other communities for the betterment of the country and people whilst preserving its own identity.

There are some aspects of relationships that ruin the unity among different communities:

1. Jealousy and Envy
2. Prejudice
3. Spreading rumour and slander
4. Backbiting
5. Intolerance and inflexibility.

When many communities live together in a country, there are a few factors that can go to create disunity among them and create disorder.

- a.* Ignorance of the history and background of a community and its religious principles
- b.* Prejudice and misunderstanding about a community by other communities.
- c.* Jealousy and envy at the religious, economical and educational progress of a community by other communities.
- d.* The interference of foreign vested interests to disrupt the harmony and unity that is conducive to the progress of a country with multi-religious and multi-ethnic composition.
- e.* Failure to understand the language of other communities.

The above factors contribute to create opportunities to disrupt the unity among different members living in a multi-ethnic country.

In such a situation there should be attempts to foster unity among different communities.

1. Stopping criminal activities that disrupt communal co-existence and harmony.
2. Creating awareness about the negative consequences that can be as a result of communal troubles.
3. Spreading the teaching of religions that condemn sins such as jealousy, envy, grudge, fraud, prejudice and evil conspiring etc.
4. Gaining insight and knowledge into the good things preached by other religions and communities.
5. In a multi-community environment every community whilst safeguarding their own identity, can still organize workshops and seminars for promoting better understanding with other communities.
6. In matters relating to national interests, voicing concern against evils and injustices in society and extending assistance during natural disaster, all communities can work together leaving aside their differences in religion and ethnicity.
7. Every community should take interest in learning the language of other communities in order to remove the gap in communication and understanding of languages. Plans for this can be implemented at private as well as government levels.

By considering the above facts, if proper practices are implemented in the Society, the disruptive factors could be reduced and healthy social relationships could be maintained.

ETHICS

Ethics on the relationship of Man and God

Islam pays great attention regarding the ethical principles on the relationship between man and God and its development. It is the principle of Islam that by developing a close relationship with Almighty Allah, every individual in a community will be far away from sins and will possess the necessary spiritual characteristics.

Islam has outlined some characteristics that are necessary for the development of a closer relationship with God.

Ikhlas

Ikhlas can be translated into English as 'Pure unpolluted thought or intention'. Having one's thoughts and deeds totally for the sake of Allah is called

Ikhlas is divided into two categories:

1. Keeping one's thoughts pure and unadulterated
2. Keeping one's deeds clean and pure.

A Muslim should focus his thoughts and actions with the sole purpose of getting reward from Allah. The Holy Quran and Al-Hadeeth teach us that Allah rewards our thoughts and actions only when the thoughts and actions are based on such pure intention.

The Holy Quran mentions about Ikhlaas as follows, **“And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship Allah, offering him sincere devotion, Being true (in faith); to establish zakaat; and that is the religion right and straight.” (98:05)**

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) explained and defined the basic concept about Iqlaas, **“ Verily, all actions are based on intentions. For every man will receive what he intends only”** (Buhari,Muslim)

The Prophet gave the example of Hijrat, the great sacrifice in the annals of Islam as an example for Ikhals. The migration undertaken by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) of Islam along with his companions for the sake of Islam seeking the pleasure of Allah with Ihlas is called Hijrat. When the Prophet left his birth place, from with the most sacred place of worship of Islam in seeking the pleasure of the Almighty by obeying his command to medina

A companion who accompanied went on this journey with the view of marrying a woman So prophet (Sal) states about it in the latter part of the hadees. “Whose purpose of migration was for the sake of Allah and His messenger, their Hijrat indeed was for Allah and His messenger. Whose purpose of migration was for worldly affairs or marrying a woman, their migration indeed was solely for that.”

By this Al-Hadeeth it is evident that even a great deed like migration should be for the purpose of satisfying the command of Allah and not for worldly gains. Even such pious deeds are not rewarded by Allah if the intention was anything other than for Allah’s sake.

Islam is greatly concerned that all good deeds and pious acts of worship **should not be** mixed with worldly purposes but should be based on purity of thought called Ikhlas.

A person asked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), “O messenger of Allah! **I like to do a deed for the sake of Allah. Also I desire that people should see that. What is your opinion about this?**” The Prophet was silent for a while and at that time Divine verse was revealed to the Prophet: “Say: “ **I am but a man like yourselves, (but) The inspiration has come to me, that your God is One God: whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and in the worship of his Lord, admit not one as partner.**” (18:110 “(IbnAbi Hatheem)

When one performs pious acts of religious deeds due to Allah with the mixed purpose of worldly benefits such as wealth, fame, status, respect, there is a danger of Shirk or ‘associating partner with Allah’. The above quotations from the Holy Quran and Al-Hadeeth throw light on this.

The opposite characteristic of Ikhlas or purity of thought is flattery. Pious deeds that are due only to Allah when performed in order to get benefits from his creatures become flattery.

This is a form of associating partner with Allah.

“The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) admonished, “*The one I fear for you is small Shirk*” When the companions asked him what it was, he answered “**Flattery!**” and continued, “*on the day of judgment when rewards are given for the good deeds, Allah will say to such people “See if you can get the reward from those to whom you wanted to show your deed*”.(Musnad, Ahmed)

We should take heed of the concept that even a small deed done with Ikhlas will deserve a reward from Allah whereas a big deed done without ikhlas will be thrown away by Allah without any reward.

The verses from 107 to 110 of the Sura Thouba in the Holy Quran and the background event for these revelations is ample evidence for this concept.

A mosque was built by hypocrites (Munafeeqs) in Kufa in competition with the mosque built on the basis of good characteristics of fear of Allah and purity of thoughts. This new mosque was built with the intention of creating disunity based on evil thoughts such as envy, grudge and jealousy. Efforts were made by Munafeeqs to make the Holy

Prophet (peace be upon him) to lead the prayers in the new mosque. On this occasion Allah revealed the above mentioned verses to clarify the actual situation. In one of the verses in the chapter, Allah raises a question, **“Which then is best? He that layeth his foundation on piety to Allah and His Good Pleasure? Or he that layeth his foundation on an undermined sand-cliff ready to crumble to pieces? And it doth crumble to pieces with him, into to the fire of Hell. And Allah guided not people that do wrong.”** (09:109)

The same concept is expressed by the saying of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). *“ On the day of judgment all deeds done in this world will be submitted in front of Allah. From these will be separated all deeds done only for the sake of Allah with piety and all other deeds done for other purposes will be thrown into Hell”* (Baihaki)

It is also mentioned in the Al-Hadeeth that Allah rewards a person even if he could not accomplish a deed which he firmly intended doing for the sake of Allah solely seeking His Pleasure.

Hazrat Anas (Ral) reports, “When we were returning with the Prophet after the battle of Tabook, the Prophet said: ‘ Behind us are left out some people in Medina. But they are with us when we cross the valleys and mountain ranges since they were restrained from joining us by valid reasons” (Buhari)

Even when those Sahabaas desired whole heartedly to join the battle of Tabook, they were not able to do so for valid reasons. These sahabas also would receive the reward of taking part in the Jihad although they did not actually participate in the Jihad. The reason for that is their purity of thought as explained by the above Al-Hadeeth.

Allah does not look at deeds done for getting attention from people or pomp and show. What matters for Him is the purity of our heart.

The Prophet said, “Verily, Allah does not look at your physical body or appearance. On the contrary he looks at your hearts and your deeds” (Muslim)

Whatever education we follow should not be only for worldly purposes and such education will not be of use to us in the hereafter.

“If a person learns lessons that can give him the Pleasure of Allah but with the intention of success in this world; on the day of resurrection he will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise” (Abu Dawood)

We should keep all our deeds only for gaining the pleasure of Allah.

The Prophet pointed out about some people who had made great accomplishments in this world. “One of them is a martyr who sacrificed his life struggling on the way of Allah. The other one acquired knowledge and imparted to others, reciting the Holy Quran excellently. The third one gave generously to the poor. Allah will call all these three people and will refer about the blessings he gave to them in this world. They will

also accept the facts. Then each one would be asked what he did with these blessings. The people would describe their good deeds in the world. After hearing all what they say, Allah will inform: “All the deeds of these people were for the sake of praise by the people. These deeds were not of purity of thought seeking only the Pleasure of Allah. Whatever they intended to receive by these deeds they received as the benefit already (of fame and popularity). The benefits were as per their intention in the world itself.” Allah will command them to be thrown into Hell Fire” (Muslim)

So it is important that we should possess the characteristics of purity of thought called Iqlaas in all our deeds.

Thaqwa

Although Thaqwa is rendered in English as ‘Fear of God’, the word signifies a broader concept.

The Arabic term, ‘Thaqwa’ has the verbal base of ‘Waq’a’. This verb has the meanings of ‘protected oneself’ and ‘liberated oneself’. We can define the meaning of Thaqwa as follows on this basis:

“Living by accepting what is commanded by Allah and the messenger and rejecting what is forbidden by Allah and his messenger”

Accordingly a person should perform the religious duties emphasized by Islam. He should also perform optional religious duties as far as possible. Holding on to the righteous characteristics taught by Islam and avoiding all major and minor sins including Shirk, a Muslim should lead his life with God consciousness and purity of thoughts all the time.

Hazrat Umar (Ral) inquired Hazrat Dubai Bin Kahf (Ral) about Thakwa.

Hazrat Ubai Bin Kahf (Ral) asked, “*Have you ever walked on a path full of thorns?*” when Hazrat Umar (Ral) said, “yes”, Hazrat Ubain Bin Kaf continued, “*What would you do then?*”. Hazrat Umar (Ral) replied, “*I will hold my clothes carefully and walk cautiously.*” On that Hazrat Ubain Bin Kahf (Ral) stated. “*Takwa is like that*”. (Tafseer Ibnu Kaseer)

The above event indicates that one has to make a concerted effort in order to live with Taqwa.

Almighty Allah mentioned about Taqwa in the very beginning of the Holy Quran and states that the Holy Book would guide only those with Taqwa.

“Aleef Laam Meem... This is the Book; In it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who Fear Allah; who believe in the unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what have provided for them...” (2:2-3)

The above verses of the Holy Quran clearly indicate that only those who are with Taqwa would receive guidance and would excel in their social and spiritual lives by following the divine guidance. In the verses following this description the Almighty Allah states that people with Taqwa will firmly believe the Holy Quran revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and also will believe the scriptures revealed to other prophets and the day of judgment.

These are the noble qualities possessed by those who walk in the world with Taqwa. They will have firm belief and fulfill religious obligations and duties for the sake of Allah. In the same way they will pay charity tax of zakaat and carry on optional charity called sadaka and will be dutiful toward fellow human beings.

The Holy Quran further illustrates this, **“They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, and in the hours of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness, and in their wealth there is a due share for the beggar and the deprived. On the earth are signs for those of assured faith”** (51:17 -20)

The fundamental principles of Islam such as daily worship, fasting, zakaat, and Haj and other optional prophetic religious practices are imposed with the aim of cultivating fear of God or Taqwa in the hearts of men and women.

“O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint.” (Holy Quran 2:183).

The above verse also proves this concept of Taqwa.

A person is able to come closer to God because of the fear of God and Taqwa inculcated in him during his religious observances and practices. This spiritual state of Taqwa guards a person from committing sins openly or in secret.

Everybody knows that the world is full of problems. There are no people who do not face problems in their lives. The Holy Quran promises that Allah will show an easy way out of the problems for those who have fear of God or Taqwa in their hearts:

“...to him who believes in Allah and the Last Day, And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way out. And He provides for him from (sources) he never could expect. And if any one puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him. For Allah will surely accomplish His purpose. Verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion.” (64:2-3)

The Holy Quran and Al-Hadeeth proclaim that the honour of a person is measured not by his ethnicity, nationality, tribe, language or status of life but by the level of his fear of Allah.

Thus the Almighty God declares in his revelation, **“The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.”** (49: 13)

When asked who was the most honoured among men, the Prophet answered, **“The one with greater fear of God (taqwa)”** (Buhari, Muslim)

The idea of the Quran is that success and bliss in the hereafter belongs to the one who lives with the fear of Allah and dies in that state with the fear of Allah.

“Verily for the righteous there will be an achievement, gardens enclosed and grapevines, maidens of equal age, and a cup full. No vanity shall they hear therein nor untruth; recompense from thy Lord, a Gift, (amply) sufficient”
(78: 31 -36)

Tawakkul – Reliance on Allah

Tawakkul in English means reliance on somebody. In Islamic terminology it implies total reliance on Allah with trust for the deeds and their results.

The Holy Quran says, **“And on Allah let all men of faith put their trust”** (14:11)

The above verse of the Holy Quran demonstrates that Tawakkul should be one of the traits of believers.

One of the righteous characters taught by the Holy Quran is that we should put our trust on Allah when we decide to commence any good deed. **“When thou hast taken a decision put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)”** (3:159)

The Holy Quran mentions three great characteristics of believers who excel in faith:

1. When they hear the name of Allah their hearts will be shaken with the fear of Allah.
2. When they listen to the verses of the Holy Quran their belief will increase.
3. They will put their trust on Allah for all their affairs.

“For believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, fell a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His revelations rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord.” (08:02)

Likewise there are many verses of the Holy Quran emphasizing that believers should put trust on Allah for all their affairs. The word ‘Tawakkul’ has been employed in 42 places in the Holy Quran.

Many Imaams have given their opinion about the concept of Tawakkul.

Imaam Zaid bin Zubair (Rah) opines about Tawakkul: “Putting Trust on Allah encompasses everything of Imaan” (Ibnu AbiShaifa)

Imaam Ibnul Qaim (Rah) expresses his opinion on Tawakul as follows, “Tawakkul is half of religion. The other half is returning towards Allah. Because religion means both seeking help from Allah and observing religious practices. Tawakul means seeking His Help. Turning towards Allah is a (Ibadath) Religious observance. (Madarisul Saaliheen)

Imaam Ibnu Thaymiya explains that it is wajib or a compulsory duty for a believer to put his trust in all his good deeds and permissible affairs of the world. Just like a bath or ablution is compulsory to come out of impurity (Janaabath), it is likewise compulsory to have Thawakkal during every deed. (Majmoou Fathawa)

It is obvious in the life of the Prophet that he faithfully adhered to the commands of the Holy Quran and put trust on Allah in all his affairs.

The Apostle of God said, “If you put your trust on Allah in a proper way, Allah will feed you the same way he feeds the birds which leaves out with an empty stomach and return to their nests with fully filled stomach” (Thirmidi, Ibnu Maja)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite the following supplement from the Quran seven times in the morning and evening : **“Allah sufficeth me: There is no god but He. On Him is my trust, He is the Lord of the Throne Supreme”**

(9: 129)

When discussing about Thawakkul it is also important to look at the wrong notion about it among the general public. Some people think that physical factors are not to be taken into consideration in matters concerning Thawakkal. Such people say that it is not important to labour for food or seek medicine for diseases. They also say it is sufficient to make Dua when Kafirs attack Muslims. In all such situations, they think it is important to have trust on Allah and Allah will look after everything.

This is a wrong notion held by those who have failed to understand Islam properly. The above position of inaction is not called 'Tawakkal' or 'Reliance on Allah'. On the contrary it is a foolish notion nothing to do with Tawakkal.

Islam is not a religion for lazy people who do not labour for a living. It is a religion for wise, passionate and laboring people. The Thawakkal preached by Islam is not in contradiction to employing physical factors for achievement.

In Islam Thawakkal means putting one's trust on Allah and making every effort possible for the accomplishment of the tasks.

The Al-Hadeeth above regarding the birds also expresses the same concept. Flying in search of food is their effort. They do not idly stay in their nests hoping for food to come to them. But it is Allah's decision about the amount of food to be received by them. Trust of Allah should be with our own efforts.

When we look at the Islamic history we see the efforts made by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) for the propagation of Islam, the struggles and battles faced by him, the injuries sustained by him, and the sufferings by his companions and all such deeds imbibe on us the spirit of Tawakkal in proper perspective. The Hijrat undertaken by the Prophet also teaches us how much consideration he gave for physical factors

We see a great example in the affairs of the Prophet during the Hijrat on how he used a different route to Medina than the usual one, how he appointed a guide to show him the route, how he hid in the cave of Thaur for safety and the way he appointed proper people for gathering information on the enemies and for procuring food and water. This is Tawakkal with proper planning as preached by Islam.

When a Muslim thinks every thing will be enough if all physical factors are properly in place and totally depend on them for his affairs without any trust on Allah, he lacks a sense of Tawakkal or trust on God. On the other hand if he ignores all physical factors and expect Allah to see all his affairs, he suffers from ignorance. As a matter of fact he will not receive the help and blessings because he has ignored the natural laws and physical factors created by Allah in this world. In such a situation he will receive only failure and disappointment in his life.

Rila – Contentment of Divine Decree

The Arabic term 'Rila' signifies a mental attitude of accepting the decree of God with full satisfaction.

Imaam Ibnu Hajar defines this as follows:

“Rilah means accepting Allah’s decree with full contentment of the heart” (Fathul Bari)

Some scholars of Islam give the following explanation with regard to Rilah.

Rilah means not suffering because of a lost matter or worrying about it” (Sufabul Imaan)

On the basis of such definition we can interpret Rilah as follows:

‘Rilah is when a believer acts upon the commands of Allah, avoids every thing prohibited by Allah and becomes pleased with whatever Allah has bestowed upon him and standing fast in times of trials and tribulations by keeping total faith and trust on Allah with Tawakkal’.

The Holy Quran and the Ways of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) point out Rilah as an important trait to be found in a truly believing Muslim.

“...for such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, and dwell therein (for ever). Allah well pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the party of Allah. Truly it is the party of Allah that will achieve success” (58: 22)

In the above verse, Allah refers to the group that is successful. He also mentions such people are pleased with Allah. It means they accepted the will of Allah with contentment.

The below Al-Hadeeth of the Prophet signifies the importance of Rilah in our lives.

Hazrat Abbas (Ral) narrates: I heard the Prophet saying as follows – ***The person who has accepted Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion and Muhammed as the messenger of Allah has in fact realized the sweetness of faith***” (Muslim)

After accepting Allah as one’s Lord a believer will be ready to accept with equanimity and contentment both happiness and sadness in his life.

Our predecessors have expressed several opinions about the importance of Rilah.

Hazrat Abu Darda states about this, “The peak of Imaan or faith is composed of four things. Patience, Contentment, Purity of Heart and Total Obedience to Allah” (Ithihad Ahlus Sunna)

Imaam Ahmed Bin Hanbal used to say during his times of tribulation: “Ninety Imaams belonging to our predecessors of Thabeens, and other salaafussaaliheen unanimously held the view that ‘accepting the decree of Allah with contentment and obeying His commands fully and being patient at his verdict’ is the first and foremost thing left by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) till his death. (Al Aqeeda – Imaam Ahmed)

Some Imaams have categorized the quality of Rilah as below:

1. Rilah Wajeeb - Compulsory
2. Rilah Mustahab - Preferred
3. Rilah Haraam - Prohibited

“Rilah Wajeeb” means accepting Allah as the Lord and obeying His verdicts and will with full contentment of the heart and accepting Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) as the messenger of Allah and being contented with Islam as a way of life.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite three times in the mornings and evenings as follows:

“ I accept fully Allah as my Lord. I accept Islam as my religion. I accept Muhammed as the Prophet and Messenger of God” (Ahmed)

Rilah Mustahab means following the matters mentioned in the Rila wajeeb to the best of one’s ability.

Rilah Haraam means accepting sins and matters contrary to Islam with contentment. This kind of Rilah is prohibited.

Rila is one of the important qualities of the mind stated in Islam and we should high characteristics uphold this in our life in order to become perfect Muslims.

Mahabbat – Divine Love

Having Love for Allah is called Mahabbat. This is one of the fundamentals of Islam. For a Muslim this is connected with the affairs of his heart and spiritual development. Imaan of a believer will increase or decrease according to the increase or decrease of his or her love for Allah. According to the level of love one has for Allah, obeying the commands of Allah will be felt easy or difficult. When the love for Allah increases, obeying His commands will also become easier. When the love for Allah decreases, obeying His commands will also become difficult.

The consensus of opinion among the Imaams is that it is the duty of a believer to love Allah. And it is also important for a believer to search for the necessary things to cultivate and expand the love of Allah in one’s heart.

The following verse of the Holy Quran reveals, “**Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear decline: or the dwellings in which ye delight –**

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’
(09:24)

The above verse emphasizes the condition of having nothing dearer to us more than Allah and it is our bounden duty to love Allah and His Messenger more than anything in this life.

A person with love for Allah will be obeying the commandments of Allah wholeheartedly, avoiding all that is prohibited by Allah, making pious acts of worship frequently, and being grateful to the almighty in his life. For this kind of person living as a Muslim will be much easier.

Love of Allah is the basis for showing kindness and love for all living creatures and for performing the duties towards them properly. When the understanding grows stronger that all are actually the creations of the most merciful Allah, a person’s love for these creations also increases as he considers them to be the creations of the one whom he loves most.

There are fundamental signs to show whether a person has real love for Allah and Allah is dearer to him or not.

Signs that can show the love of believer for Allah

1. The Desire to meet Allah:

If a person has real love for someone, he will like to meet that person loved by him. Similarly when a believer has real love for Allah, he will like to meet Allah. The Prophet elaborated, “Whosoever desires to meet Allah, Allah also desires to meet him: Whosoever hates to meet Allah, Allah also hates to meet such a person” (Narrator : Hazrat Ubadath Bin Samid .(Rali) Buhari, Muslim)

2. The Desire to do dhikr and think about Allah in solitude and recite the Quran.
3. The Desire to be involved in more religious practices and willingness to bear the difficulties encountered in performing religious acts of worship.
4. Being steadfast with patience during difficulties and sorrows.
5. Not loving any thing in the world more than Allah and His Messenger.
6. Becoming moved to tears with fear of God on hearing the name of Allah.
7. Hating sins and Objecting to sinful acts

8. Immense liking for reciting, understanding and acting upon the Holy Quran, the word of Allah.
9. Having an attitude of regret regarding missed prayers and religious practices.
10. Feeling that the good deeds done by one is not sufficient.

Above such signs present in a person are considered by Imaams to be indications of true love of a believer towards Allah.

Imaams also have instructed regarding acts that can increase the faith of a believer in his heart. Some of the few such acts are -

1. Reciting the Holy Quran thoughtfully and with understanding of the meanings of the verses.
2. Acting upon the commands of Allah and avoiding things that violate His commands.
3. Doing more acts of Sunnath and Nafl along with Farl acts.
4. Remembering Allah with heart, tongue and action.
5. Even if a matter is desirable to one's heart avoiding it if it violates the commands of Allah and acting upon a matter even if it is not desirable to one's heart if it receives the pleasure of Allah.
6. Pondering over the blessings on oneself and around one's surroundings.
7. Worshipping Allah in the latter part of the night alone when Allah comes to the lower sky.

Benefit accrued by loving Allah

1. Entering paradise and distancing away from Hell
2. Receiving the Love and Mercy of Allah.
3. Being successful in worldly life.
4. Prayers and supplications being accepted.
5. Gaining the protection and blessings of Allah

Shukr – A Sense of Gratitude

It is the duty of all human beings to be grateful to Allah who created and sustained them and created all other things and all other creatures in the entire world subservient and under submission to them.

As far as a believer is concerned, he is much more grateful to Allah for the guidance given to him by Allah through the messengers and making him enlightened of the truth.

Being grateful to one's Lord, Allah, is a great quality. The Holy Quran mentions this as a great trait of the messenger of Allah, pious servants of Allah, the truthful and those who are closer and dearer to Allah.

In the Holy Quran referring to Hazrat Nuh (Alai) **“O ye that are sprung from those whom we carried (in the ark) with Noah! Verily he was a devotee Most Grateful”** (17:03)

Hazrat Ayesha (Ral) once asked the Prophet, *“Since you are a person forgiven for all former and later sins by Allah, why are you standing and praying in the night till your legs are swollen?”* The Prophet replied, *“Should not I be a grateful servant of Allah”*. (Buhari, Muslim)

The Prophet went one further step up and sought Allah to enable him to be grateful to Allah.

“O Allah! Help me remember you, be thankful to you and make ibadat for you in a beautiful manner” (Abu Dawood)

This great character of gratitude is mentioned in several places in the Holy Quran. In some places Allah commands people to be grateful to Him. For example, He says, **“Then do ye remember me: I will remember you. Be grateful to me and reject not faith.”** (02:152)

In some other places Allah claims that He created human kind for being grateful to Him. **“It is He who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers when ye knew nothing; and He gave hearing and sight and intelligence and affections, that ye may give thanks (to Allah)”** (16:78)

Allah also reveals that he rewards swiftly those servants who are grateful to Him. **“He will swiftly reward those who (serve Him) with gratitude”** (3:144)

The word 'Shukr' meaning 'gratitude' has been employed by Allah in several places of the Holy Quran. From this fact it could be understood Allah expects this high quality of being grateful to Allah in the life of a believer.

Only a grateful believer will ponder over the blessings to him from Allah. When he ponders over such blessings his heart will be filled with gratitude. As an expression of his gratitude will fulfill the duties imposed upon him by Allah. On such occasions he will feel that it is not just sufficient to fulfill the duties and will seek to fulfill optional religious performance as well. His tongue will be pleased with the recitation of Dikr. His Imaan will increase and he will become dearer and closer servant of Allah.

Imaam Ibnul Qaieem (Rah) says, “If we divide Imaan into two, one part will be shukr ‘gratitude’ and the other part will be, sabr ‘patience’ “ (Zad-ul Maad)

How to show gratitude to Allah

Islam expects a person to show gratitude to Allah for creating, sustaining and granting him guidance with unlimited blessings in the following ways:

1. Fully obeying Allah with a sense of gratitude and fulfilling religious obligations.
2. Loving Allah by remembering his blessings with gratitude.
3. Accepting the blessings of Allah.
4. Praising Allah.
5. Making use of the blessings given by Allah only in the ways liked by Him and avoiding the use of them in prohibited ways.

Islamic scholars have identified three methods of showing gratitude to Allah

1. Showing gratitude with one’s heart.
2. Showing gratitude with one’s words
3. Showing gratitude with one’s body parts.

Gratitude shown by Hearts

This implies the realization of the truth that all blessings, opportunities and fortunes are from Allah and being grateful to Him in one’s heart.

Allah points out to His Blessings to mankind and asks them should not they realize this fact with gratitude. The verses 57 to 72 in Surathul Waqia is an example for this.

2. Gratitude with Words

When a sense of gratitude springs up from the heart, automatically the tongue will begin to praise and glorify Allah. This is the gratitude offered by the tongue. The prayers recited by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) during several occasions are in fact

expressions of gratitude to Allah. We should also offer such supplications and be rewarded.

3. Gratitude by Bodily Actions

All practices called ‘Amalus Salihath are in fact expressions of gratitude to Allah in bodily actions. Salaath (daily worships), Saum (fasting), Zakat (charity), Haj (pilgrimage) and optional religious practices of worship and fasting, (sadaka) optional charity, recitation of the Quran and assistance to fellow human beings - all come as gratitude to Allah in action.

In this category falls the act of ‘Sujda Sukr’, a prostration with the hope of offering gratitude to Allah.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (Rali) reports: “When a happy news or glad tidings is given to the Prophet, he would fall in prostration thanking Allah for it” (Abu Dawood)

In the practice of Salaat (Daily worship) all the above three modes of gratitude are present.

Talking about the blessings of Allah (Nihmath) , remembering the blessings frequently, acting out showing such benefits outwardly – all are actions of expressing gratitude.

Hazrat Imraan Bin Hussain (Rali) narrates a Al-Hadeeth, “Talking about the Blessings of Allah is also a form of gratitude. Avoiding this is rejecting. Being in congregation is a blessing. Separation is agony” (Musnad Ahmed)

Aspects that can increase our sense of gratitude to God:

The Holy Quran and the Sunna present aspects that encourage us to be grateful to God.

1. Looking at those who are below oneself rather than looking at those who are above oneself.
2. Remembering the Blessings of Allah often.
3. Possessing a sense of accountability that one will be inquired into in the hereafter about the blessings enjoyed in this world.
4. Seeking Allah to help gain opportunities to be grateful to Him.

Benefits of Gratitude to Allah

By our gratitude no benefit will accrue to Allah. On the contrary, we as his slaves will gain innumerable benefits in this world. Some of these benefits are listed below:

1. Freedom from the punishment of Allah

The following verse from the Holy Quran states that there is no need for Allah to punish his grateful slave:

“What can Allah gain by your punishment. If ye are grateful and ye believe? Nay, it is Allah that recognizes (All good), and knoweth all things” (04:147)

2. Gaining the pleasure of Allah

The most important benefit for a grateful slave is gaining the pleasure of Allah. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Allah accepts with pleasure the slave who praises Allah for what he eats and drinks” (Muslim)

3. Steadfast in the path of Islam by the Grace of Allah

The Holy Quran expounds that Allah will choose only grateful slaves in the right path and keep them steadfast in it. “Thus did we test some of them by others that they should say: **‘Is it these then that Allah has favoured from amongst us?’ Doth not Allah know best those who are grateful?’**” (06:53)

4. Increase in the Blessings of Allah

It is important to show gratitude to Allah for increasing the blessings of Allah with us and keep those blessings without leaving us. “And remember! Your Lord caused to be declared :

“If ye are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you; But if ye show ingratitude, Truly my punishment is Terrible indeed.” (14:07)

Hazrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (Ral) says as follows: **“By showing gratefulness to Allah, keep all His Blessings and favors packed with you”** (Shuabul Imaan)

Hazrat Rabi Bin Anas (Ral) said, “ If you remember Allah, He will remember you; If you show gratitude, He will increase (his favours); if you reject Him, he will give punishment” (Shuabul Imaan)

5. Acceptance of Supplication.

By expressing gratitude to Allah, our prayers would be accepted.

Many hadees mention that our supplications are not rejected by Allah when we remember the blessings, praise Allah and express our gratitude.

Showing Gratitude to People

When mentioning about gratitude to Allah, gratitude to people also should be mentioned. Since when people express gratitude to one another, the quality of gratefulness to Allah will also come to people. Many benefits will accrue to us as a consequence.

Therefore Shariat commands us to be grateful to people who do good to us and help us.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) declared, “*Whosoever does not show gratitude to people, will not show gratitude to Allah*” (Abud Dawood, Thirmadhi)

Our parents are the most important people for whom our gratitude is due. Islam teaches us not to forget the trouble experienced by them to give birth to us, bring us as good people, educate us and make us what we are today.

Allah says in Soorathul Lukman in the Holy Quran, “And we have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him. And years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), “Show gratitude to me and to thy parents: to me is (thy final) goal.” (31:14)

After our parents, the people who deserve our gratitude are those who have done something good to us. Once the Prophet acclaimed as follows standing on the pulpit, “*Whosoever does not show gratitude for small matters, will not show gratitude for big matters; whosoever does not show gratitude to people, will not show gratitude to Allah. Talking about the favours and blessings of Allah is a form of showing gratitude. Leaving this is rejection of faith. Being with the congregation is a blessing. Separation is agony.*” (Musnaad, Ahmed)

It is pertinent to note the difference between being grateful to Allah and being grateful to people. Being grateful to Allah is connected with the worship of Allah, fear of Allah, and full obedience to the commands of Allah. But being grateful to people does not involve these pious acts of religion. It involves reciprocation of help, making Dua for the person and being benevolent to him. We should understand the differences clearly.

By being grateful to our creator and also to people, we could achieve the highest moral excellence in our lives.

ISLAMIC SOCIAL ETHICS REGARDING HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Islam is a perfect way of life. It is a divine guidance of life by the almighty Allah. There is spiritual as well as worldly guidance in this divine plan. As religious acts of worships and pious practices are made obligatory for spiritual maturity of a Muslim, social ethics are also obligatory upon a Muslim to make his worldly affairs excellent. A person can be a true Muslim only when he or she follows these social ethics in his or her life. When people adhere to these social ethical principles imposed by Islam, there will be unity and purity as expected by Islam in the Muslim community. Community will be powerful and free from crimes. Let us look at some of these ethical principles of Islam:

Brotherhood

Among the essential ethics to be present in the Islamic society, brotherhood is a very important principle prescribed by Islam. The Holy Quran has reiterated by many verses through the Prophet about the importance of this quality in the society: **“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and well acquainted (with all things)” (49:13)**

Through this revelation Allah explains great truths to mankind.

- All people in the world, irrespective of the fact whether they are Muslims or not, are descendants of the same male and female in origin. Therefore all the people in the world are brethren. In this regard it is worth noting that the Holy Quran exclaims as, “O mankind!”
- All the tribes, clans, races and ethnic groups in the world are equal. There are no differences in their status and rights in a society. There is no room for discrimination on account of their differences. The reason for their existence is historical and social conditions. The purpose of such divisions is for recognizing one another and communicating and developing the brotherly bonds that are separated by historical and social conditions.
- Real dignity and honour comes only to those who are righteous by obeying Allah and following His guidance in this world.

The above mentioned verse of the Holy Quran establishes the above basic facts and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) called people for unity on that basis only.

During the time when the Prophet Mhammed (peace be upon him) was sent as a divine messenger, there was no brotherhood or unity among the communities. They were divided on the basis of tribes, clans, ethnic groups, races and families. Some groups were deemed as superior and others were disregarded as inferior. Special privileges and authorities were enjoyed by the superior groups. The inferior groups had no equal rights and privileges but lived under oppression by the superior groups.

They quarreled among themselves for little things. A small dispute of misunderstanding between two individuals would blow up into a full scale battle among two communities and would last for many years.

It was the same situation not only in Arabia but in the entire world. In countries like India the lower caste people were segregated as 'untouchables' by the high caste people and no social contacts were allowed with them. Even today in most parts of India, this kind of apartheid still exist. The high caste people would go to the extent of murdering a low caste person if he happens to drink water from the wells allocated for the high caste.

In such a background of inequality among the people all around the world, the last messenger of Allah appeared with the divine message of equality and brotherhood to unite the peoples of the world.

From the point of view of equality, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) built up the Islamic community on the basis of two powers.

1. The Power of Faith or Imaan
2. The Power of Brotherhood of mankind.

These two powers made Islam victorious and made it spread far and wide and become a global religion.

The Holy Prophet(peace be upon him) said,

“ Narrated an-Numan bin Bashir: Allah’s messenger said, “ You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind among themselves resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well the whole body shares the sleeplessness and fever with it” (Buhari, Muslim)

Muslims are brethren to one another joined together by the power of Imaan transcending all national boundaries and differences of caste, race, tribe and other considerations in whichever corner of the world they may live.

When a Muslim is under distress wherever in the world, all others should feel the pain. As a result efforts must be made by all other Muslims to bring relief to that Muslim.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) also said,

“Whosoever do not heed to the problems of other Muslims, they do not indeed belong to them (Muslim community)” (Tabarani)

The view is that those who do not take part in the problems of fellow Muslims and do not make an effort for their protection are not of the Muslim community.

The Holy Quran and Al-Hadeeth admonish us that quarreling among ourselves without maintaining brotherhood will bring many set backs to the community.

“And hold fast all together, by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves” (03:103)

“And obey Allah and His Messenger; and fall into no disputes, let ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere” (08: 46)

The root cause for Muslims to be defeated and dishonoured in front of other nations is their disunity by forgetting the power of their brotherhood, as explained by these verses above.

Guidance of Islam for Strengthening Brotherhood

Islam had commanded us to follow several practices in order to maintain strong bonds of unity and brotherhood among Muslims. Let us look at some of these prescriptions:

1. Performing Worships in Congregation

Islam emphasizes that religious obligations such as daily worship, zakat, fasting and Haj should be fulfilled in congregation. The main reason for this commandment is to build brotherhood and equality among Muslims.

2. Keeping the Bond of Kinship

Keeping close relationship with relatives and honouring their rights are aspects basically aimed at establishing and strengthening brotherhood among Muslims.

“Verily Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to kith and kin, and He forbids all indecent deeds, and evil and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition” (Al Quran - 16:90)

Narrated Jubain Bin Mutim (Ral) that he heard the Prophet saying, *“the person who severs the bond of kinship will not enter paradise”* (Buhari).

Many Quran verses mention that the brotherhood in a community exists as a blessing of Allah.

Respecting the Rights of Neighbours

Islam commands that a Muslim should be very careful about honouring the rights of his neighbour even if it is a non Muslim. The reason for this is also to build up brotherhood in the community.

The following narration of Al-Hadeeth illustrates this concept: “When the Prophet announced thrice repeatedly ‘He cannot be a believer’. It was asked of him who it was. The Prophet claimed, **“He is not a believer from whose harms the neighbours are not free”** (Buhari, Muslim)

4. Helping Others and Concealing their Faults

Islam considers helping others earnestly and concealing their faults as a basic characteristic for developing unity and brotherhood among the people of a community. Islam promises the help of Allah in this world and in the next world for those who adhere to this principle. The Prophet said, **“Whosoever removes a distress of a believer in this world for him Allah will remove a distress in the hereafter”** and **“Whosoever conceals a fault of a Muslim in this world, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and in the hereafter”** and **“As long as a slave of Allah helps his brethren, Allah also helps him”** (Muslim)

5. Caring for One’s Duties for others

The Prophet listed the duties a Muslim owes to another Muslim as follows: “Duties by a Muslim for another Muslim are five: Replying the salutation of salaam, Visiting him when he is sick, Following his funeral procession, Accepting his invitation, Supplicating for him when he sneezes ” (Buhari)(Muslim)

7. Avoiding Matters that harm Brotherhood

The Holy Quran and sayings of the Prophet strongly advocate avoiding matters that are harmful for unity and brotherhood. We should guard ourselves against committing harms such as backbiting, slandering, blaming one another, teasing, interfering unnecessarily in the affairs of others, spying on one another, calling names, quarrelling, undercutting and deserting each other for trivial things.

Allah proclaims in the Holy Quran,
“The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that ye May receive Mercy.”

“O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor let some women laugh at others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): *Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: And those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong. O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it...but fear Allah: for Allah is Oft-returning, Most Merciful”* (49 :11-12)

Almighty Allah in his unique wisdom has admonished in the above verses Muslims to avoid even what we may think as small matters that can cause division and conflicts among Muslims.

Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) also warned us, “I warn you against conjecture based on doubts, because conjecture is great a lie. Do not go after probing the faults of other people. Do not spy on each other. Do not compete with each other to diminish each other. Do not envy one another. Do not hate each other. Do not conspire against each other. Be brothers to each other slaves of Allah as commanded by Allah. A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. He will never do injustice to another Muslim. He will not indulge in conspiracies against his fellow Muslim. He will not dishonour or degrade him”. After giving the warning, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) pointed out at his heart and claimed three times, “Fear of God is here”. (Buhari, Muslim)

From the above quotations the significance given by Islam to brotherhood is obvious. And it is the bounden duty of a Muslim to live accordingly.

Integrity – Truthfulness

Truthfulness means not only speaking the truth but also being truthful at all times. The Holy Quran and Al-Hadeeth emphasize truthfulness as an indispensable characteristic to be with a Muslim.

“O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are truthful” (Al Quran 09:119)

When explaining who would possess the character of ‘fear of God’ and would deserve the pleasure of paradise, the Holy Quran reinforces the quality of ‘Truthfulness’ as an essential ingredient of character.

“Those who show patience (firmness and self-control) who are true (in word and deed); who worship devoutly; who spend (in the way of Allah); and who pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning” (03:17)

Speaking the truth and being truthful with integrity is connected with faith and fear of God. Whosoever does not have the quality of truthfulness such person's faith is weak and affected. Such persons will not possess the characteristic called 'fear of God' - .

The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) stated, "Verily truth guides towards righteousness. Righteousness will lead towards paradise. When a person continues to speak the truth, he will be recorded as Siddique (the truthful) in the sight of Allah. Verily, lies and falsehood guide towards sins. Sins will lead a person to Hell. When a person continues to tell lies, he will be registered as 'Liar' in the sight of Allah." (Buhari, Muslim)

Truth is something abiding. Falsehood is perishable and temporary. Therefore truth provides peace of mind and comfort. Falsehood will bring disturbance of mind and distress. This notion is explained by the Prophet as follows: "You should leave aside what is doubtful and hold on to what is not doubtful. Because truth means peace of mind and falsehood means disturbance of mind and doubts" (Thirmadi)

A person should be truthful in his business dealings and all other transactions of employment. Then only there will be (barakaths) prosperity in his business and it will develop further and progress. If falsehood is mixed in his business it will not develop further but will perish.

The prophet has clarified this point in the following Al-Hadeeth, "When a seller and buyer speak the truth with each other and transact transparently, there will be prosperity in their business. On the contrary if they hide the facts and tell lies to each other the prosperity in the transaction will be destroyed" (Buhari, Muslim)

As truth will give popularity, progress and success in this world and paradise in the next world, falsehood will give loss and degradation in this world and will make one person enter Hell in the next world. This fact should be borne in the mind of every Muslim.

The prophet mentioned uttering lies as a characteristic of a hypocrite (Munafeeq) and the Prophet hated no other bad quality as he hated deeply the quality of telling lies. (Ahmed)

A Muslim should not have the habit of telling lies, as expressed by the narration of the Prophet: "It was asked of the prophet whether a Muslim would be a coward. It was replied 'Yes' by the prophet. It was asked of the prophet whether a Muslim would be a miser and the prophet replied in the affirmative 'yes'. But when asked if a Muslim could be a liar, the Prophet emphatically stated, "No" as the answer" (Muwatha, Malik)

Islam pays great attention to the fact that responsible people like writers, journalists, media people, politicians and social leaders should be truthful people. But if these people are liars, spreading false news and ideas, giving false promises to people, the consequences will be serious. That is why the punishment for liars is very harsh.

The Prophet narrated, “Last night I saw two men (angels in the form of human beings) coming to me. (After showing me some sights) they told me thus: ‘The man you saw being severely punished with his jaws split is a liar. The lie he told spread all over the world. In this way he would be punished till the day of judgment’” (Buhari)

The Prophet listed three types of people who would never enter paradise:

1. An old person indulging in adultery.
2. A leader telling lies
3. A poor man who speaks proudly about himself.(Fassar)

Islam preaches that children should be taught to speak truthfully from their tender ages.

The Prophet said, “If a person calls a child promising to give something to the child, he should definitely give that promised thing to the child. Otherwise it will be counted as a lie” (Ahmed)

Another stand taken by Islam regarding falsehood is that even for a joke you should not utter a lie.

Thus said the Prophet, “***A person who tells lies to make others laugh be cursed...be cursed...be cursed***” (Thirmidi)

From Islamic point of view praising a person with flattery for the sake of getting some favour from him is also falling under the category of telling lies.

The Prophet ordered that soil be thrown on the face of such people who indulge in flattery contrary to the truth.

We should be steadfast in truth when giving witness or awarding certificates; if these things are contrary to the truth, they would be major sins of great lies.

“The prophet mentioned giving false witness and telling lies as a major sin” (Buhari, Muslim)

Once the prophet asked, “Shall I show you what major sins are?” We replied “Yes, the messenger of Allah, please tell us”. The Prophet mentioned, “Associating partners with Allah and harming parents” and continued to say after sitting up straight “Telling lies”. The Prophet used to repeat it so much to the extent that we started to think if he would not be silent then” (Buhari, Muslim)

The fact that the Prophet was seated when telling about other things and the Prophet stood up and repeated it emphatically several times, indicates the seriousness of its harm.

The following saying of the prophet is also evident on how far one should follow truthfulness in Islam.

“If you think that there will be destruction by speaking the truth, speak the truth. Because success is in it (speaking the truth) - (Ibnu Abithdunya)

We should be fully determined in our lives to uphold the truth and shun lies in all our affairs.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a word incorporating many concepts of honesty and sincerity.

Trustworthiness is the characteristic of discharging responsibilities and disposing trusts entrusted to oneself in an honest and proper manner.

“Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between people that ye judge with justice...” (4:58)

In another place Allah mentions about mankind who have accepted the burden of trust:

“We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it. Being afraid thereof But Man undertook it: He was indeed unjust and foolish” (33:72)

It is illustrated in the above verses that trust is a responsibility and man who undertook the trust of differentiating between what is right and wrong failed miserably and brought punishment on himself for his betrayal of the great trust. However the Quran mentions, ***“Allah turns in mercy to the believers, men and women: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful”***. The righteous people who are able to discharge this trust faithfully would receive the Mercy and Forgiveness of Allah.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was popular as a trustworthy person in Mecca in discharging the trusts. Therefore the people of Mecca called him ‘Al Ameen’ with respect.

Normally people think ‘Trustworthiness’ means returning the things given to them for trust keeping to their rightful owner. This is a narrow interpretation of the word.

Actually ‘Trustworthiness’ implies broader meaning with a deeper sense. The following saying of the Prophet gives a wider interpretation to the word: “All of you are trustees. You will be questioned about your trusts. The Imaam or the leader is a trustee and he will be held accountable for his trust. Every man is responsible as a trustee for his family. He will be questioned about his trust. Every woman is responsible as a trustee of the house of her husband and she will be questioned about this. A servant is responsible as

a trustee for the belongings of his master and he will be questioned about it” (Buhari, Muslim)

The above Al-Hadeeth sheds light on the fact that trustworthiness is not confined to a single trust but it includes several responsibilities and positions in our lives.

1. Safekeeping the things entrusted to oneself

We noted that the Prophet discharged his responsibilities of safekeeping goods and money entrusted to him in a trustworthy manner and earned a reputation of his honesty and integrity even before being appointed as a divine apostle. The people of Mecca used to keep valuable things with the Prophet for safekeeping. The Prophet kept these things with him safely and returned to the owners without any shortcomings when they required. Because of the praise and popularity he received as a noble man, even after declaring his prophethood, the people who rejected his claim for prophethood also continued to keep their valuable things with him for safe keeping. Because of this trust, even at the time he had to migrate to Medina, he still had a lot of valuables to be given back to many people. He migrated to Medina only after having made proper arrangements for the disposal of these goods to the rightful owners. Such was his noble character of discharging responsibilities entrusted to him. As such the Prophet declared, “The person who fails to safeguard the trusts under him has lost his imaan. The one who does not fulfill his promise has forsaken Islam” (Ahmed)

2. Discharging the Responsibilities entrusted to oneself

Conducting oneself in a trustworthy manner whilst holding a responsible position is very important. This characteristic should be one of the basic qualities of a Muslim. Such great qualities can be expected only when positions and responsibilities are entrusted to the people suitable for such positions.

“When Hazrat Abu Dhar (Rali) appealed to the Prophet to appoint him as a governor to one region, the Prophet advised him,” Abu Dhar you are weak. This responsibility is a great trust. This can lead to a degrading position losing one’s honour on the day of judgment. However whoever takes this position with its accompanying responsibilities will be saved.” (Muslim)

It is a prophesized sign of the last days of the world that positions and responsibilities will be abused and wasted. “A person asked the Prophet as to when would be the Day of Judgment. The Prophet replied, “When trust is wasted, await the day of judgment nearer”. When he asked how it would be wasted, the prophet explained, “When responsibilities are entrusted to unsuitable persons, expect the day of the judgment.” (Buhari)

3. Safeguarding the Secrets

It is a trust to safely guard the secrets of other people entrusted to us. When a person asks us advice on matters of confidentiality to him, it is our duty to keep those secrets with us and not divulge those to outsiders. In the same way a husband and wife should keep their trust and safeguard their secrets. Islam commands us not to publicize the secrets of one another. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) put forward a question, “Who would be the most wicked on the day of the judgment?” and proceeded to reply, “One would love his wife immensely. But would expose the secrets of his wife to others. He will be the wickedest on the day of judgment.” (Muslim)

4. Utilizing one’s Capabilities and Wealth properly

The Skills, talents, capabilities, special abilities and wealth all are trusts given to a person by Allah. It is expected of him to use these things for oneself and the society trustfully with the aim of gaining the pleasure of Allah. If he does not keep up the trust, he will be found a loser in the accountability of his trust on the day of judgment..

There is no doubt that all Muslims can receive the pleasure of Allah if they live safeguarding the trusts under them sincerely and honestly.

The Attitude of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a special characteristic expected by Allah among the peoples. Allah is a great forgiver. He forgives the sins and mistakes of his slaves. And He also expects his slaves to forgive one another for the mistakes and errors.

The Holy Quran says, **“Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity or in adversity: who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men; for Allah loves those who do good”** (03:134)

The above verse quotes ‘forgiveness’ as one of the characteristic of those who fear Allah. Also Allah addresses the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), **“Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant.”** (07:199)

In accordance with the commandment of Allah, the Prophet adhered to this great quality and upheld the attitude of forgiveness throughout his life.

When the Prophet was expelled from the town of Taif by the tribal leaders for being accused of asking permission to preach Islam, the Prophet showed his generosity and forgave the people of Taif and averted a great destruction to be brought down upon them by the angels as a punishment for disobeying the Prophet and harming him.

He also forgave the enemies who fought against him during the Uhud battle and caused severe distress to him and his companions. Particularly he forgave a wicked woman called Hinda who murdered and ate the liver of Hazrat Hamza, the brother of Prophet's father.

During the great triumph of Mecca, the Prophet readily and generously forgave all those enemies who inflicted severe distress, oppressed him and his companions, and were the cause for him to leave his birth place and migrate to Medina and who were now helplessly at his mercy. He forgave them by saying: 'you can go free'.

Not only that when Bedouin Arabs savagely argued with him in an uncivilized manner and one of them urinated in his mosque, the Prophet controlled his companions who rose up demanding punishment for the wrong doers and dispensed forgiveness with kindness.

Likewise the attribute of forgiveness was taken as an important characteristic of himself by the Prophet. He also expected his followers to rise up and raise their level of forgiveness and kindness to mankind.

Let us forgive others and cherish this noble attitude of forgiveness in our lives.

Purity

Islam is a pure religion. The Almighty God who revealed Islam to mankind is also Pure. He also expects us as His slaves to be pure.

“...Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean” (Holy Quran 02: 222)

“Purity and cleanliness is half of Imaan”, the Prophet declared. (Muslim)

Whosoever lives without a sense to be pure and clean in a dirty environment, his imaan is not perfect even though he calls himself a Muslim. This fact is evident from the above Al-Hadeeth.

This important concept of cleanliness in Islam is viewed from two angles.

1. The Internal Purity and Cleanliness
2. The External Purity and Cleanliness

1. The Internal Purity and Cleanliness

The Internal Purity and Cleanliness means keeping one's heart and mind pure. This is conceptualized by the terms 'Thazkiyathun Nafs' and "Salaamathus Sadr". It is the duty of every Muslim to keep one's heart clean and make efforts to guard against things that

spoil one's heart of its purity. The one who keeps his heart clean will be victorious and the one who fails to do so will be a loser, according to the Holy Quran. **“Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!”** (Holy Quran 91: 9 -10)

The following verse of the Holy Quran indicates that the work of purifying the souls of people was one of the tasks of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

“It is He who has sent amongst the Unlettered a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to purify them, and to instruct them in the Book and Wisdom – although they had been, before, in manifest error”
(62:02)

The Prophet elaborated the need to keep one's soul and heart pure as follows:

“ Know ye! Verily, there is a part inside the body. If it is well, the entire body will be well; if it is spoilt, the entire body will be spoilt too. Know that is the ‘heart’”(Buhari, Muslim)

When a man's heart is righteous, all his bodily actions will also be right. When the heart is impure with evil thoughts, all his bodily actions will also become wrongful and evil.

Envy, Anger, Grudge, Jealousy, Enmity, Hypocrisy, Suspicion, Prejudice and Pride are sicknesses of the heart that can harm a person spiritually and physically. Islam preaches all Muslims that they should keep their hearts free from these sicknesses of the heart.

2. External Purity and Cleanliness

External Cleanliness implies keeping one's physique, dress, dwelling place and surroundings clean from dirt. Islam gives equal importance for external purity and internal purity.

Islam has imposed on Muslims the duty of cleaning oneself from all impurities, because of sexual intercourse or monthly menstruation for women, as a necessary condition before performing daily worship and Haj pilgrimage. A Muslim is required to take ablution before standing for daily prayers and it is mustahab (most desirable act) to take ablution before recitation of the Holy Quran. It is also a way of life of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Sunnah, to be with ablution most of the time in one's daily life.

During worshipping it is compulsory to keep one's body, dress and place of worship to be clean and pure.

If a Muslim's house, his surroundings and his path of walking are dirty and disorderly, it is evident that Muslim's Imaan or faith is not perfect and he lacks the characteristics of a Muslim in Islamic perspective. It also means that he has not even attained the basic level of faith in Islam.

Narrated Hazrat Abu Huraira (Ral): The Prophet said, "Faith consists of more than sixty or seventy subdivisions or branches and the highest is 'Laeelah Illallah 'there is no god but Allah' and the least level of Imaan is 'removing a harmful thing from the paths. Bashfulness out of modesty is one part of Imaan (Buhari, Muslim)

Some people think keeping their beard, hair and dress unkempt, as the manifestation of faith. This is a totally a wrong deed born of misunderstanding. This is contrary to the guidance of the apostle of Allah as shown in his ways of life.

When the Prophet said, " whosoever has pride even to the amount of a mustard seed will not enter paradise", a person asked the prophet, "a man may desire that his clothes should be neat and his shoes should look good". The Prophet explained: "**Allah likes beauty. Pride means hiding the truth and degrading people**" (Muslim)

It will never be considered as 'pride' when a person dresses well and beautifully and keeps himself clean. On the other hand it a praiseworthy act to dress well and neat. The Prophet used to trim, comb and oil his hair and wear clean dress. He used to trim his nails and remove the hair around pubic area and arm pits. Numerous sayings of Al-Hadeeth can be quoted regarding this from the Al-Hadeeth book called 'Thirmidi'.

Another habit of the Prophet (Sal) was brushing his teeth regularly and frequently. He has emphasized the practice of brushing teeth for his followers too. When the mouth becomes foul smelling, such practice becomes a religious duty compulsorily to be observed by a Muslim.

Islam also orders its followers to clean after urinating and answering the call of nature. If the body or clothes are soiled by such filth, it should be cleaned properly.

In all the law books of Islam compiled by imams, the chapter on Purity has been placed at the beginning and explanation given comprehensively.

The importance Islam gives to personal cleanliness both internal and external is phenomenal.

Compassion

Compassion is a great quality that is one of the attributes of Allah. Human beings have been created with this quality in their hearts. Islam expects people to share this quality of compassion and kindness with one another and develop brotherhood and unity with mutual love in their lives.

The following verse of the Holy Quran points out that true believers will live with the bond of compassion”.

“Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against unbelievers (but) compassionate amongst each other” (48: 29).

It is not enough believers live with one another compassionately, because at times with the instigation of evil spirit (satan) problems could be created among them. A situation of conflict among them can arise. Allah commands true believers to advise one another with patience and compassion to avoid or overcome such conflicting situations.

“Then will he be of those who believe and enjoin patience (constancy, self-restrain), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion” (Al Quran 90: 17)

Allah also shows his compassion only to the human being who in turn moves with other people showing sympathy, kindness and love.

The Prophet claimed, *“Allah will not show kindness to those who do not show kindness to other people”* (Buhari, Muslim)

The prophet has also mentioned in the following Al-Hadeeth too, that Allah’s mercy and compassion will be to those who have the character of compassion.

“The Compassionate One Who Blesses (God) shows His Compassion only to those who are themselves compassionate. Show compassion to those on earth; The One in heaven will show compassion to you” (Abu Dawood,, Thirmadi)

Showing one’s love to one’s wife, children and relatives is a highly meritorious trait. Embracing one’s children with love and kissing them exposes the inner love in the heart openly to them.

“When a Bedouin saw the prophet kissing his grand children, he said, although he had ten children he had never kissed any one of them. The prophet retorted, “Has Allah retrieved kindness from you heart?” (Buhari, Muslim)

Islam enjoins us not only to possess compassion and love in our character, but also to show this love and compassion to people with good disposition.

Mentioning about the three types of people entering paradise, the prophet included in it the person who shows kindness to relatives and other Muslims with a soft heart. (Buhari, Muslim)

It is the kindness in the heart that makes a person get involved in social work with the aim of helping other people. The Prophet said such people will be rewarded for their good deeds by Allah.

“The person who struggles for the benefit of the poor and the widows is like the person who struggles in the cause of Allah, or the person worshipping tirelessly or the person who fasts without a break” (Buhari, Muslim)

A person who has love for others will not hurt them. He will not do injustice to them. He will not expose their faults. He will not hesitate to render help when they need it. A good society is established only with such good people who have mutual love and kindness.

Narrated An-Numan bin Bashir: Allah’s messenger said, “you see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind among themselves resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness (insomnia) and fever with it” (Buhari, Muslim)

Al-Haya or Virtuous Bashfulness

Islam regards bashfulness as a virtuous trait to be found in a true believer. If he does not feel ashamed out of modesty, his imaan is not perfect.

Abu Huraira (Rali) reports as the saying of the Prophet, “Imaan consists of more than sixty branches. Al Haya (this term, covers a large number of concepts which are to be taken together, amongst them are self-respect, modesty, bashfulness and honour) or bashfulness is part of imaan” (Buhari)

A Muslim with a sense of Imaan will also possess a sense of bashfulness naturally. This can not be cultivated artificially. Once when the Prophet passed a person advising his brother about ‘haya’, The Prophet said, “Leave him as Al-Haya is part of faith” (Buhari Muslim)

The sense of Haya or (feeling ashamed to do something bad) bashfulness will restrain a Muslim from committing sins. When a person lives with this moral sense, he will avoid involving in anti-social activities. In fact this feeling of shame will produce only something good for a Muslim. The Prophet confirmed this concept, “Al-Haya or bashfulness will not produce anything other than good” (Buhari, Muslim)

In another Al-Hadeeth mentioned in the Al-Hadeeth Book ‘Muslim’, it is reported that all aspects of Shamefulness or bashfulness is good.”

The meaning is that moral shamefulness will not give any bad results. It will produce good things out of a person. When a man feels morally conscious and ashamed to do to the contrary his respect and honour are well protected.

A person without this moral quality will be careless in his performances of religious duties to Allah. He will shamelessly indulge in fraud in his transactions with other men.

He will transgress all limits in taking bribe, committing fraud, adultery and cheating people. Further he will not hesitate to exceed the limits set by Allah and follow his own lowly desires. The Prophet concerning such people implored, “If you have no shame; do everything you desire” (Buhari, Muslim)

Let us have Haya; Let us have Imaan.

Patience

Patience is one of the characteristics reiterated by Islam. The Holy Quran commands us in more than **ninety** instances to uphold this moral quality. No other quality has been emphasized in the Quran to this extent. From this it could be understood how much importance is given to the quality of Patience by Allah.

Allah orders people to be patient and steadfast in worship when asking His Help.

“Seek Allah’s help with patient perseverance and prayer: it is indeed hard, except to those who are humble” (02:45)

Allah mentions that his blessings and nearness is for the patiently persevering people, “O ye who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and Prayer: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere” (02:153)

The Holy Quran also informs that such patient people will be rewarded fully in the Hereafter: **“Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!”** (39:10)

When explaining who would most deserve the pleasure of the paradise, Al Quran mentions ‘Patience’ as an important trait. **“Those who show patience,(firmness and self control) who are true (in word and deed); who worship devoutly; who spend (in the way of Allah); and who pray for forgiveness in the early hours of the morning”** (03:17)

So many verses of the Quran preach us to have patience.

The Prophet described ‘patience’ as ‘Light’ and said, ‘When a Muslim is afflicted with trials and tribulations, difficulties and pain, sickness or sorrow, if he is patiently persevering Allah will forgive all his past sins as expiation. Even to the extend of forgiving the sins for the prick of a thorn’ (Buahri, Muslim)

We understand from the Prophet’s sayings that there is no other reward for patience but paradise. The Holy Quran also acclaims, “And because they were patient and constant, He will Reward them with a Garden and Garments of Silk (in the Hereafter)”(76:12)

A warm welcome will be given by the angels to those who were patiently persevering. It will be perhaps the greatest blessing. “And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation) *‘Peace unto you for that ye persevered in patience! Now How excellent is the final Home’* (13"23-24)

Types of Patience

From the point of view of Al Quran and Al-Hadeeth, Islamic scholars have divided the concept of patience into three categories:

1. Patience during Trials and Tribulations

Human life is nothing but tests and trials. Happiness and Sadness alternate in life. During happiness we should not indulge in pomp and show; and during sadness we should not be heartbroken and desperate. In both situations we should uphold patience. The Holy Quran expounds the tests and trials in human life. **“Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods, lives and the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere,- who say, when afflicted with calamity: “To Allah we belong, and to Him is our Return. They are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance” (02:155-157)**

Even the messengers of Allah were tested. The Holy Quran informs us that Prophet Hazrat Ayuub (Alai) was tested severely in his life. He was a man of wealth but he lost every thing. He even lost his children and was afflicted with a disease. In all instances he persevered with patience and Allah accepted his attitude and made him one of those closer to Him and made him live well afterwards.

The great prophet Ibrahim also underwent many tests and trials. He was thrown into a pit of fire as a punishment by the king for propagating Islam. He was expelled from his country at a young age leaving him home and relatives. For a long time in his life he was without any children and this was also a test. At the old age he was blessed with a son, but he was commanded by Allah to leave his wife and the baby alone in the desert. He complied with the divine commandment patiently. Then when his son Ismael grew up he was tested again. Allah commanded him to slaughter his son as a sacrifice for Allah. Hazrat Ibrahim willingly obeyed the command and prepared to sacrifice his son to receive the divine pleasure. At the end Allah showered his blessings on him and made him victorious and an excellent example for mankind.

Almost all the prophets were tested likewise. The nature and amount of testing varied but they all bore it with patience and proved their divine mettle.

“For whomsoever Allah wishes good; Allah will test him”, so said the Prophet (Buhari,Muslim).

It is important to persevere patiently during tests and trials in one's life and supplicate to Almighty Allah firmly and constantly so that we will receive His blessings and be victorious.

2. Patience in Obeying Allah

A lot of patience is required to fulfill the religious duties ordered by Allah constantly, to perform optional practices as shown by the prophet, and to follow the guidance of Allah regarding what is permitted and what is prohibited by Allah. Regarding patience of this kind, Allah says, in the Holy Quran, **“Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and of all that is between them: so worship Him, and be constant and patient in His worship: knowest thou of any who worthy of same Name as He?” (19:65)**

A Muslim will have to set aside time at intervals daily for the performance of his five times prayers ordered by Allah. He has to awake from sleep at dawn. During fasting he has to abstain from food and marital relationship. When paying the compulsory Zakaat he has to give away a portion of his wealth to others. When on Haj pilgrimage he has to part from his family and relatives besides spending a considerable amount of his wealth for the sake of Haj. Not only that, during Haj he has to undergo extreme difficulties in completing his basic daily needs at the midst of millions of people. In order to bear all these difficulties and hardship, the quality of patience is of utmost importance to him or her.

3. Patience in the Face of Evil Desires

There are two types of feelings at work in a human being. One is the noble spiritual feelings connected with Allah. The other one is the lower carnal feelings connected with the evil desires of the mind. A believer is forbidden to act according to all the evil desires of the mind. Sinful acts such as drinking alcohol, fornication and adultery, evil entertainments of gambling and dancing, spending time on pornography - all are the consequence of the evil desires originating in the mind. Hence the messenger of Allah described, *“Hell is surrounded by evil desires of the mind; whereas paradise is surrounded by things that are hated by the mind”* (Buhari, Muslim)

Therefore a Muslim should learn to control one's evil desires and patience is indispensable for this task.

4. Patience in Co-existing with People

Man is a social animal. He cannot live alone in isolation. Especially a believer cannot live apart from his community as he has to fulfill certain obligations for the community or society in which he lives. These obligations vary from person to person according to his abilities, skills, facilities and qualifications and experience provided by Allah to him.

In this way when Muslims live with other people of the community, they will have to face different situations, difficulties, criticisms in their lives. In such circumstances a Muslim should not escape from the community or confront the community negatively with a sense of revenge. The highest quality a Muslim needs at the hour of need is patience. The Prophet illustrated this fact, “A believer who keeps in touch with the society and patiently tolerate the troubles caused by them is better than a believer who does not keep contact with people and tolerate their troubles “ (Thirmidi). Exercising patience and tolerance during troubles given by other people will make more people to join our side. Even an enemy may become a friend due to our patience.

The Holy Quran exclaims, ***“Nor can Goodness and Evil Be Equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better: then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate! And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint, None but persons of the greatest good fortune”*** (41:34-35)

5. Patience during the Propagation of Islam

Dawa or propagation of Islam is not an easy task. This task which has been made as a duty upon us is in fact the noble task of the divine Prophets. When undertaking these tasks even the prophets who were closer to Allah also suffered immense troubles and faced challenges. When we undertake this task we will be compelled to confront criticism and abuse by so many people. Patience is the right weapon to defend us at such situations. The Holy Quran brings forth this fact as an advice given by Hazrat Lukman to his son: ***“O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong: and bear with patient constancy whatever betide thee: for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs.”*** (31:17)

On the road to dawa, as the above verse clearly explains, there will be tribulations and misery, but we have to patiently persevere.

Patience should be an ornament to be worn during our march for dawa. We should not be shaken by distress and pain caused by abuse and criticism leveled at us.

It is also important we should neither take revenge nor curse those who act without understanding the Dawa. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions were successful because they acted with great patience and tolerance.

6. Patience during Jihad

Islam is a religion not in favour of war. Peace is its soul. But when war becomes unavoidable and indispensable to protect Islam, Muslims and their properties, Islam does not advocate retreating as cowards. In such imposed situations making war becomes a compulsory duty upon Muslims, and Muslims are commanded to fight steadfastly for Islam.

“If there are a hundred of you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred, and if a thousand, they will vanquish two thousand, with the leave of Allah: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere “ (08: 66).

Islam considers retreating from the battlefield with cowardice as a major sin deserving the curse of Allah. Islam extols its followers to bear the difficulties and danger of the battle field patiently and fight against the aggressors firmly.

Islamic scholars have categorized the concept of patience into six types from the point of view of Islam and the ways of the Prophet.

It will be helpful if the concept of patience is understood from the above angle to avoid thinking patience as a quality of weakness and cowardice.

If we act hastily first being frustrated during distress, difficulties, losses and sorrows, then there is no point in becoming patient when there is no other alternative. That is not the patience expected by Islam. The reward promised by Islam for the quality of patience will not be available for such perverted patience after damage is done with haste actions.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “The prophet once passed by a grave yard. He saw an old lady wailing and lamenting with her hair in disorder and understood it was for the death of her son. He advised her to uphold patience. Not identifying the prophet, she scolded him back, “mind your job and go away!”... Later only she came to know that it was the prophet. She came to the prophet to seek pardon. The Prophet advised her and told that patience should come in the very beginning of a sorrow “(Buhari,Muslim)

We should not forget to possess this quality at the very beginning of a happening to avoid unpleasant consequences.

Disciplines regarding Other Creatures and Things

Showing kindness to creatures and benefitting them

Allah has not only created mankind in this world. He has created animals, birds, plants and matter along with mankind. Allah also has advised us on the discipline to be adopted regarding our relationship with all.

The Holy Quran also declares that Allah has subjected all the creatures to mankind:

“ Do ye not see that Allah has subjected to your (use) all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made His bounties flow to you in exceeding measure,(both) seen and unseen?” (31: 20)

Man is able to exercise control on everything in the world because almighty Allah has subjected them to him. He is also able to derive benefits from them.

Although all things in the world are created for the use and benefit of man, still he has to abide by the rules of discipline, as taught by Islam. Especially when we make use of animals and plants, it is our duty to properly look after them.

“There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end” (06:38)

The above verse of the Holy Quran expounds a basic truth we should keep in our mind about other creatures. They are made to live as communities like us by Allah. Whilst exercising his authority on these creatures, man should not do as he desires but deal with them according to the guidance provided by Allah.

Islam has given permission to man to feed on some animals and birds. But when killing for the purpose of food, he should follow moral rules as emphasized by Islam. When you observe these principles, you will be able to appreciate the mercy shown by Islam to all creatures.

1. Only sharp knives must be used to slaughter animals. When slaughtering with blunt knives, it will not cut easily and rapidly and as a result the animal may suffer for a longer period. If a sharp knife is used to cut the neck of the animal, the cutting will be easier and as a result the animal will be slaughtered fast and will die soon and without suffering long.

The Prophet said, “Allah has made it a rule that everything should happen correctly and properly. If you slaughter an animal, slaughter it in a proper and excellent way. One of you should sharpen the knife well and leave it till it breathes its life out fully” (Muslim)

2. The animal to be slaughtered should not be tied tightly, distressed or tortured.
3. Slaughtering an animal in front of another animal should be avoided.
4. Skinning off the animal or cutting a part of the animal while it is still alive or strangulating its neck is totally prohibited.

Such rules are imposed to ensure that man should be merciful during the slaughtering of animals and birds.

Apart from this we learn from Al-Hadeeths how Islam has ordered us to show mercy to all living creatures.

Hazrat Umar (Ral) narrates that the Prophet stated, “A woman had to be in Hell for restraining a cat till it died. Neither did she gave any food to it nor did she allow it to feed on insects and worms by itself. She received the punishment for these acts” (Buhari, Muslim)

The Prophet also said that another sinful woman was forgiven her sins and became worthy of paradise after she quenched the thirst of a dog.

“A sinful immoral woman saw a dog suffering from thirst. There was a well nearby. The dog came around the well with thirst. She tied her shoe with her clothe and dragged water from the well and squeezed out water into its mouth and quenched its thirst. Her sins were forgiven because of this good deed” (Buhari, Muslim)

The Prophet forbade all deeds that harm and distress the animals and other living creatures.

One of the things restricted by the Prophet in this way is separating the nestlings from the mother bird. He also opposed the punishment by burning of any living creatures

Hazrat Ibnu Masood reports, “We were with the prophet on a journey. On one such occasion the prophet departed from us for a short while to attend to his personal need. We saw a red bird with two nestlings. We took both the baby birds from the nest. The mother bird came and started searching in distress for her babies here and there. At that instant the prophet came and inquired who troubled this bird by its babies. He ordered us to hand over the babies to the mother bird.”

Once the Prophet saw an ant hill was burned by fire. He asked “Who burned this ant hole?” we answered, “We only did it”. The prophet then admonished us, “Nobody has the right to punish with burning except the Sustainer of the Fire (Allah)” (Abu Dawood).

Islam does not allow keeping a living creature as a target for shooting with arrows or guns.

“The messenger of Allah cursed those who keep a living creature as a target of shooting” (Buhari, Muslim)

Some of the sufferings inflicted upon living creatures include embedding inscriptions on the animals with heated rods and cutting part of the wings of birds to stop them from flying away.

The Prophet was opposed to such acts of unkindness to living creatures.

“A donkey was passing by the Prophet. There were scars on its face, caused by heated rods. Seeing this the Prophet exclaimed, “Allah curses the one who made this mark on it” (Muslim)

Allah has subjected some animals to us for employing them to ease our tasks. Sheep, goats, bulls, cows, camels, donkeys, Horses and elephants are some of these. Al-Hadeeth informs us that it is a crime to over burden these beasts of service and deprive them of food, water and rest.

Affection for Plants

Today there are publicity campaigns and action plans encouraging tree planting all over the world in order to maintain the environmental balance. Islam has preached us to plant useful trees and there would be rewards from Allah for such noble actions. Not only that Islam preached that it would be a sin to cut useful trees and shelter giving plants without any purpose.

“Even when the end of the world comes whilst you hold a seedling in your hand, plant it”
(Ahmed)

After taking office as Caliph, when Hazrat Abu Bakr (Rali) addressed the battalion to be sent under the leadership of Usama (Rali) he also mentioned as follows:” Do not destroy date trees. Do not burn them. Do not cut fruit bearing trees”

It is obvious taking care of plants is a deed encouraged by Islam.

Protecting one’s Physical Environment

Things that surround us such as land, forest, water, air and atmosphere are called physical environments. It is no exaggeration if we state that Islam gives equal importance to matters such as protection of environment as it gives to religious duties called ‘Ibadaat’.

Islamic Sharia or Law of religion pays attention to five essential aspects. These are called the fundamentals of Sharia by Ulamas.

1. Practicing and protecting Religion.
2. Respecting life and protecting it.
3. Honouring good tradition and heredity and protecting it.
4. Acquiring wealth and protecting it.
5. Receiving Knowledge and protecting it.

When the physical environment around us is polluted all the above five fundamental are affected. That is why Islam takes great interest in the protection of the environment, according to Islamic scholar Dr. Yousuf Al Gazrawi. There are verses of the Quran regarding this matter. Some verses explicitly draw our mind to this and others express ideas subtly.

“Do not do mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order,..”
(07:56)

Of all the disorders taking place on earth, the physical disorder is a serious one.

Another Quranic teaching on this expresses, **“There is the type of man whose speech about this world’s life may dazzle thee, and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet is he the most contentious of enemies. When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and progeny but Allah loveth not mischief”** (02: 205)

All acts such as destruction of crops, deforestation, pollution of water ways and atmosphere, finally destroy the healthy life of man and affect the progeny. Allah condemns mischief in terse verse with strong and deep meaning.

Cutting down trees wastefully is perhaps the worst activity that upsets the balance of nature and affects our physical resources. The prophet exclaimed condemning such activity: “Whosoever cuts a tree providing shelter to the way farer and animals will be thrown into hell headlong” (Abu Dawood)

We can categorize the guidelines provided by Islam for protection of environment as follows:

1. Planting of Trees

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has encouraged planting of trees in many instances. He did not see it only as a worldly affair, but as a sacred spiritual justice giving rewards of Allah. “When a Muslim plants a tree or a crop, it will be a charity for him as long as people or animals eat from it” (Buhari, Muslim)

“Even when the end of the world comes whilst you hold a seedling in your hand, plant it” (Ahmed)

We should ponder on the deep insight of meaning in these saying of Al-Hadeeth.

Even though the world is about to end, the prophet did not ask the person to leave the plant and run to the mosque. He advised him to plant the tree that can benefit future generations without worrying about the result of planting. Such is the spirit of the Prophet’s preaching of Islam

2. Developing the Earth

This activity is called Imaarath in Arabic. It is included in the three services incumbent on man in the world, the other activities being Ibadad and Khilafat. The duty of cultivating and developing the earth is connected with environmental protection. By using the resources on the earth, man should undertake activities to utilize or change it suitably to enable people to live properly. **“It is He Who hath produced you from the earth and settled you therein..”** (Al Quran 11:61)

MAINTENANCE OF CLEANLINESS AND ORDER

Maintaining cleanliness and order is paramount in the protection of the environment. In Islam cleanliness is connected with Imaan and Ibaadath. The Prophet proclaimed, “Cleanliness is half of faith (Imaan) (Buhari, Muslim).

One of the most important conditions necessary for the worship is cleanliness of oneself, one’s dress, place of worship and surroundings. That is why the Shariah has imposed ablution for a person in normal condition and a compulsory bath for a person with junooob, impure after acts of intercourse, wet dream or monthly menstruation for women.

In the same manner one has to ensure the cleanliness of the surrounds before worship and the prophet has also forbidden any activity that dirties the cleanliness and neatness of the surroundings. The Prophet warned us to be fearful of two things that can be cursed. When the companions wanted to know what they were, the prophet said, “Answering the call of nature and urinating on roads or shadow giving places used by the people. (Muslim)

Water ways are an important part of the physical environment and polluting them is severely reprimanded by the prophet. “The Apostle of Allah has prohibited urinating into still water ways” (Muslim)

Protecting the Natural Resources

Islam gives prominent place to safeguarding the health and hygiene of people. Hence Islam considers exploitation and abuse of God given natural resources and the resultant imbalance of nature and all actions connected with such vices as serious crimes. Exploitation and indiscriminate usage of natural resources such as water, air and minerals can cause various health and social problems hazardous to human health and wellbeing. This can lead to different types of diseases and afflict the people with distress and discomfort. The Holy Quran declares that causing distress to people unjustly is a major sin.

“And those who annoy Believing men and women undeservedly, bear (on themselves) a calumny and a glaring sin” (Holy Quran 33 : 58)

Islam vehemently condemns men causing themselves destruction with their vicious activities. **“And make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; and do good, for Allah loveth those who do good” (Holy Quran 02 : 195)**

As vicegerent of the Almighty Allah, man has a greater responsibility of safeguarding natural resources provided by Allah in a befitting manner of trustworthiness.

In today's world harmful wastages expelled from large factories pollute and destroy natural water resources and the atmosphere causing great damage not only to living creatures but also to mankind.

When installing factories arrangements should be made for the waste collection without harming the environments and habitats. This is an important social responsibility for which Muslims are accountable from the point of view of Islam. Since causing harm to lives directly or indirectly is a violation of Allah's guidance; punishment for such activities become due in the Hereafter as well.

Looking after the Interests of the Country

A Muslim should care for his country and keep the interest of the country upper most in his mind. It is a characteristic of every good man to have love for his country as he has love for himself, his parents, his children and relatives. One should have affection and devotion for his country as a good citizen and the welfare of his country should come first before his own interests.

The Prophet loved his birth place, Mecca, from his young age itself. When he was reluctantly compelled to leave his beloved Mecca and migrate to Medina, the Prophet departed with a heavy heart. His attachment to Mecca was very deep. Even his companions had great feelings for their beloved place and Hazrat Bilaal(Rali) composed a poem in this regard as follows: *“Will I ever spend another night in a slope like this surrounded by the grasses idkir and jalil! Will I ever drink water of the spring majinna. Will the mountains Shama and Thabeel ever appear to me again!”*

The Prophet earnestly prayed for those who made the circumstance for his emigration, thus,:

“O Allah! In the same manner Shaiba, Udhba and Umaiya expelled and chased us from our place to this place of sickness, remove them from your mercy”(Buhari).

These instances prove that the Prophet and his companions much loved their birth place. We should too love our birth place and country following this tradition.

Managing Calamity and Disaster

Accidents, Wars, Earthquakes, Volcanic Eruptions, Storms, Floods, Hurricanes, Fire and Accidents etc., create great destruction and are called disasters. Managing these calamities and disasters are important as some activities have to be undertaken before a calamity strikes and some after it.

Disasters can be divided into two categories:

1. **Disasters that can be averted by our efforts: example – War and accidents.**
2. **Disasters that are beyond our power and efforts: example – Earth Eartquake, Tsunami, Floods etc.,**

The aim of disaster management is to reduce devastation caused by disasters drastically and provide proper relief to the affected people. Under Disaster Management come three important purviews:

1. Preventive actions to be taken before the disaster
2. Actions to reduce the effect during disaster
3. Actions to provide relief and rehabilitation assistance after the disaster.

Islam gives guidance to a Muslim on how to act in all three circumstances. From Islamic perspective it is “Farl Kifaya” or Duty compulsory for the entire society, to take preventive measures regarding disasters. Famine and drought are also types of disasters. The Holy Quran in the chapter Soora Yousuf gives the example of the foresighted preventive planning of Prophet Hazrat Yousuf (Alai) in averting this kind of disaster about to happen in his country, Egypt.

It is a great character trait of a Muslim to learn a lesson from an experience. When commenting on this character of a Muslim the Prophet said, “A believer will not keep his legs twice in the snake hole” (Buhari, Muslim)

If we face destruction due to a disaster, we should make preparation to escape destruction and reduce the effect of such disaster in future time. This is an important aspect of disaster management.

Nowadays due to technological advance, meteorological forecasts are useful in knowing about disaster before hand. In the same way seismological alarms are activated under the sea when there is a vibration due to Tsunami starting and precautionary activities to vacate the people and property can be arranged before Tsunami attacks.

Scientific inventions and technological advances play a pivotal role in mitigating the effects of natural disaster and restoring normalcy faster.

In the same manner traditional ways observing the nature can also be helpful in confronting natural disasters in a proper manner. Observing the reaction of animals and birds and reptiles can give us an idea of an impending disaster and alert us to take precautionary measures. Allah has blessed certain creatures with instincts of premonition which guide them to safety before disasters hit the world.

Whether by scientific methods or traditional observation methods averting a disaster and saving the lives of people are meritorious acts deserving the rewards of Allah.

“And if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.” (Al Quran 05: 32)

Many types of problems will arise after a disaster or calamity. People would have lost their dwelling places. They would have been pushed to helpless state losing their money and wealth. They would have lost their livelihood and loved ones and become destitute. They would be in need of immediate food and water and temporary shelters. After suffering such consequences of the disaster they would be affected mentally and depressed.

In such a situations relief workers need to identify problems that need urgent attention and relief and sort out long term problems in a systematic way. Taking part and contributing one’s wealth, knowledge, experience and hard work for the benefit of the people is the duty of Muslims.

From Islamic point of view not only religious worships and pious acts like fasting are ibadads that get rewards from Allah, even fulfilling social responsibilities and obligations is also a great deed of ibadat deserving the reward of almighty Allah.

“It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness – to believe in Allah and the Last day, and angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the way-farer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and give zakat. to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God fearing” (Al Quran 02: 177)

In the above revelation Allah has listed out duties connected with other people as righteous deeds along with religious duties such as Salaat and Zakaat and has indicated the person who fulfills all these duties is indeed a person possessing the great character of ‘Fear of God’.

The prophet also deemed those activities of building up a society better than optional Sunnath religious practices. Only through such activities we can uplift the lives of people affected with afflictions and problems.

The following Al-Hadeeth of the Prophet clearly shows this attitude: “The person who works hard for the good of the widows and the poor is like the one fighting in the cause of Allah. He is also like the one who constantly prays standing and fasts often. (Buhari, Muslim)

Therefore taking precautionary and preventive measures to avert and mitigate damages caused by disasters and serving the communities in various capacities during and after the disaster to provide relief to the people is a golden character enshrined in the purview of Islam.