

The Human Self and Allah

The Human Self and Allah

(The Quranic Concept of God)

G. A. Parwez

That introduction of Allah which He Himself has expounded in His Own Book and from which this reality also becomes evidently clear as to what is the mutual relationship between Allah and Man.

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About the Author

Ghulam Ahmad Parwez was born in Batala, Punjab, in British India on 9th July 1903 into a profoundly religious family. His grandfather, who was deeply religious and belonged to the Hanafi school of thought, was a renowned religious scholar who intended to make the author inherit his knowledge and religious understanding. As a consequence, his education and training were carried out under the direction of his grandfather. While he studied the traditional religious teachings, he also had the desire and inkling to question its content using his intellect and reasoning. This led to his inner conflict with the external religious environment and he continued to question the prevalent religious concepts and practices. He noticed that whatever was being taught as part of the religion was being referred to some Imam or religious scholar for authority. It was also noted in the religious literature, that whatever the forefathers had followed should be obeyed without any question, and this was considered to be a requirement of Islam.

For Parwez this did not satisfy his desire to seek reason and logic in every claim and statement made within the religious literature. However, he could not express these doubts and reservations initially due to his respect for his grandfather, and the constraints of the religious environment which prevailed at the time in his town. Later, due to his employment, he moved to Lahore (now part of Pakistan), and found a degree of freedom to question some of these religious concepts and beliefs. After the death of his grandfather, he found complete freedom to pursue his line of enquiry and research into the prevalent Islamic beliefs, doctrines, ideologies, and religious practices.

This led to his discovering that most of these have been acquired from others. He tried to study the Quran using the traditional religious approach but was unable to find the answers to all his doubts, which required satisfaction from a logical point of view. He also studied the life of the last messenger and the establishment of the Islamic State in the seventh century in his quest to determine the cause which contributed to this greatest revolution based on the Quran. He especially paid attention to the statement from the last messenger, 'The Quran is not a product of my thinking or that of any other human being' and that this is the message from Allah. He soon learnt the procedure to understand the Quran.

Through his contact with the famous philosopher and poet, Allama Iqbal, who had a deep interest in the Quran, Parwez concluded that to understand the Quran one has to understand three fundamentally important points:

- (1) The Quran calls itself Light (*Nur*) and a light does not need any external source or aid to make itself visible. It makes itself evident and also exposes the reality of those things which are within its domain.
- (2) The Quran is revealed in the Arabic language and, to understand it correctly, one needs to understand the Arabic context which was prevalent at the time of its revelation.
- (3) The Quran has guided us by saying that through *Tasreef-ul-Ayat* (through cross reference within the verses of the Quran) it makes its guidance clear e.g. see (6:106).

In order to meet the second requirement regarding the precise meaning of the Arabic words in the Quran, he researched and compiled a *Lughat-ul-Quran* (now translated into English), which is a dictionary of all the words and terms used in the Quran and which includes the meanings which were prevalent among the Arabs at the time of the Quranic Revelation. For the third requirement of *Tasreef-ul-Ayat*, the Quran is different from books written by human beings, where the latter are usually divided based on various subjects - the Quran is based on mentioning a reality in one verse or verses and then its further explanation is noted in another place or places. For example, in *Surah Inaam* the Quran states:

And thus do We explain the signs by various verses, so that they acknowledge 'You have explained them', and We make the Quran clear for a people who know. (6:105)

In order to meet this requirement, Parwez felt the need to compile all the verses under one subject as referred in various verses of the Quran and he compiled a book in Urdu titled *Tabweeb-ul-Quran* i.e. Classification of the Quran. This made it easy to refer to various subjects and look at all the verses mentioned in the Quran relating to a subject.

Along with writing and producing literature on the Quran, Parwez also held a regular weekly meeting in Lahore to deliver a *Dars* (lecture explaining the Quran) in Urdu, and these are also available in audio and video recordings. He dedicated most of his life to researching the Quran and its significance in relation to presenting an alternative solution to human problems, and answering questions relating to human creation, its purpose and the question of death and the next life.

He also participated in the struggle for Independence during the period 1938-1947 and the creation of Pakistan, which was based on the ideology of the Quran, with a view to establishing an Islamic State for the Muslims of the sub-continent. He worked very closely with the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (*Quaid-e-Azam* or Great Leader) and had regular discussions with him on various aspects of the message of the Quran. In order to support the movement for a separate

State for the Muslims of India and to counter the arguments put forward by some of the religious lobby who opposed the creation of Pakistan, he published a monthly journal called Tolu-e-Islam (Dawn of Islam), commencing in 1938.

Parwez joined the Indian Civil Service in the Home Department in 1927, and after the creation of Pakistan he migrated to Karachi and continued to serve in the same department till 1955, when he took early retirement and devoted the rest of his life fully to his work on the Quran. He moved to Lahore from Karachi and settled there.

He left this life on 24th February 1985 in Lahore and his body was laid to rest in Lahore.

FOREWORD

In connection with the understanding of the Quran (*Mafhoom ul Quran*), the series of '*Maarif ul Quran*' by Parwez commenced in 1941, when the first volume of this was published in Delhi (India). The second edition was also published there in 1947, the title of this volume was 'Allah'. After this, other links in this series, Volume I, Volume II, Volume III etc. were published. When the time arrived for the publication of their latest editions, advice was given that since each volume is about a permanent subject, hence, instead of calling them first, second and third volume, every volume should have a separate title according to its subject. This was sensible advice therefore it was accepted. According to this decision, the title of the first volume was suggested as '*Mann O Yazdan*', and the succeeding volumes were published with titles of *Iblees O Adam*, *Jooy e Nur*, *Barq e Tur*, *Shola e Mastoor*, *Mairaaaj e Insaniyat* etc.

This book was published in Pakistan under the title '*Mann O Yazdan*', which remained unavailable for a while. Now the fresh edition (i.e. fourth edition of the original book) has been published after revision of the author. In the previous editions a permanent and long chapter on '*Masbe'at*'¹ was also included. But during this period, the book titled 'The Book of Destiny' by Parwez was published, in the presence of which the need for the chapter on '*Masbe'at*' to be included is considered to be unnecessary. Hence this chapter has been removed.

In this time when the prices of essential commodities are sky high, the publication of new editions of these books is a daunting task. Keeping in mind their importance and due to the demands of members, fresh editions of all of these books have been published. Only one book, *Shola e Mastoor*, remains, which is going into press. During this time, some new writings of Parwez have also been published. The latest book is '*Shah Kar e Risala*' – Umer Farooq², which has earned fame far and wide. Tolu-e-Islam is a missionary institution whose aim is to disseminate and communicate the Quranic thinking of Parwez. May Allah grant us strength for this work!

In the writings of Parwez the reference to the verses of the Quran is like this – the number of Surah comes first followed by the number of the verse.
Salaam!

Tolu-e-Islam Trust
25 – B, Gulberg II, Lahore, Pakistan
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¹ *Masbe'at* – the word here means Allah's Will.

² The second Caliph in the early Islamic era.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This book is a translation of the Urdu book '*Mann-o-Yazdan*' by G. A. Parwez, which is a title taken from the Persian language by the author. The literal translation is '*Man and God*'. However, since the purpose of the human creation is to provide an opportunity for man to develop his self, therefore the book has been titled '*The Human Self and Allah*', as the author has discussed in the book, Allah and God are not interchangeable. This is the reason that wherever God of the Quran is referred to by the author, the term Allah is used to differentiate between the two. Similarly, the author has used the term Deen³ as noted in the Quran, as it refers to a system in its own right. Hence, the word religion has not been used in the book when referring to the Islam of the Quran. The English translation of the Quranic verses is mostly based on the work of Abdullah Yousuf Ali. The term Rasul-ullah refers to the last messenger of Allah, Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Arguments about the existence of God and His nature are ongoing, and these will continue till the end of time. In our time this debate has become more intense, and religions have come under more intense scrutiny. This book throws light on the concept put forward by the Quran, and aids in comprehending the concept of Allah, and its application, need and role in the development of the human self. The Quran repeatedly draws our attention to all the vast array of physical and non-physical signs which are dispersed throughout the universe, including planet earth - an abode selected for man to live his earthly life as a first stage in his life. It repeatedly invites us to question both our existence and the existence of the universe. The Quran's addressee is the human mind i.e. the faculties of intellect and reasoning, the meta-cognitive ability which is exclusively made available to man in order to carry out the purpose of human creation. Then the Quran makes it easy to reflect by pointing first of all to the signs in the outer physical world, and then brings attention back to the inner self of man. It answers all of the requisite questions which can possibly arise in the human mind in all times to provide the most logical answer and evidence which can appeal to human reason. The question of death, and the next life in the hereafter, is discussed in detail and can be understood at an intellectual level by anyone who is looking for a logical explanation of such an important concluding event for every human being in this life. The Quran presents man as being the most important creation at the heart of this universe for whom the universe owes its existence, and it states:

Allah created the heavens and the earth for just ends, and in order that each self may find the recompense of what it has earned, and none of them be wronged. (45:22)

³ Deen is commonly translated as religion which is incorrect. Deen denotes the system by which to manage human affairs within the confines of the Permanent Values of the Quran. This aspect is discussed in detail in the book by the author titled '*What is Islam?*'. (Ed)

In order to explore this verse further, please refer to the book titled *The Life in the Hereafter: What does the Quran say?* by the author. This is a very comprehensive book in which the author has discussed Allah and His attributes in detail as noted in the Quran. The history of the concept of god, and its evolution in relation to the various religions, provides the background to this age-old concept. The concept of Allah as revealed in the Quran is unique, as it is based on Divine attributes which serve as a model for the development of the human self. i.e. since man has a self, hence there is a need for a higher self to serve as a model for man. This is an important point to understand as it changes human outlook and brings a new understanding of human life and its purpose. It also solves the issue of the purpose of death, and casts light on life after death and the immense possibilities which await man for his further development. At the level of the human self, the Quran points to the fact that life continues as one entity and declares physical death to be just the conclusion of the first phase of human existence on this planet called Earth.⁴

In the world today, which is full of conflict amongst people and nations, this and other books by the author provide food for thought regarding an alternative system of life, which can not only accommodate the physical needs of this world, but can also effectively cater for the development of the human self which no man-made system has the ability to do, since human beings cannot reach this comprehension without the aid of the guidance of the Quran. Recognition of the existence of a self within us is the first step towards realising its need for development, and the Quran draws our attention to this fact, and then presents guidance as a prerequisite for the development of this self. This takes away all competitiveness, greed and desire for power over other human beings, and once man engages in considering the possibility of no death occurring at the level of the self, then the whole of human outlook becomes focused on the correct priorities in life in this world. This then provides a logical basis for resolving the issue of death which has confused man for centuries. The needs of the human self are different from those of the physical body, and both this book and the book 'Life in the Hereafter' discuss this aspect in detail.

Having convinced our intellect of the presence of a self, we then proceed to convince our intellect of the need to develop it with a view to living a better life in this world and of being assured of the opportunity of further development in the life in the hereafter. However, human intellect only pursues what it considers to be beneficial to its own interest. The question which arises here is, 'how to convince oneself of the need for Quranic guidance?' The Quran draws our attention to its guidance firstly by stating that the purpose of human creation is

⁴ The Quran points to the universality of human physical death from the viewpoint of the *Nafs* (self), stating: '*Every self will taste death...*' (3:185). The human self does not die as it is non-physical.

accountability⁵; secondly, by pointing towards the outer universe and its laws; thirdly, asking us to examine our inner world and to reflect and reason using our intellectual faculties; and fourthly, points to our death as a fact, and to the possibility of life beyond our physical existence. Allah then invites us to assume the role of a junior companionship, by establishing an order based on the Permanent Values of the Quran, in order to first develop our own self and then help others on His behalf on a global basis. This will not only remove differences and conflicts, which will otherwise always exist without this Divine guidance, but will create an environment in which every individual will benefit from no man-made subjugation, no slavery, complete true freedom to enjoy the benefits of possessing free will and will then live a life free from fear and grief. The Quran declares that this is not a Utopian idea, but it will come to pass eventually at some stage in this world (9:33) – otherwise, this whole creation of Allah’s would be aimless and without any long-term purpose, and both the Quran and the evidence presented by the universe point to this fact that Allah does not do this.

In order to understand the solution presented by the Quran to resolve human issues in this life, the reader can refer to three other books by the author.⁶ This book is divided into twenty-six chapters of various lengths. All the major Divine attributes have been discussed with their meanings and significance in relation to development of the human self, and their application in the context of establishment of Deen as an Islamic system in the world for the good of the whole of mankind.

I am profoundly grateful to my wife for her help in editing and revising the book. I also acknowledge the help of Mr. Asif Jalil from Karachi, Pakistan in elucidation of some of the terms used in the Urdu version. I am also grateful to Mr. Hussain Kaisrani of Tolu-e-Islam Trust for providing support for this project.

Finally, this work is a translation and as such any ambiguity in the text in the English version which is not present in the Urdu version is my responsibility as a translator and editor and not of the original author. If readers have any question or comment after reading this book, they are welcome to contact the Tolu-e-Islam Trust.

Ejaz Rasool
Glasgow, UK
May 2019

⁵ Taking responsibility for one’s actions is the starting point in the creation of our new self based on *Eimaan*, and as we begin to live our life with an awareness of this responsibility, life becomes more meaningful. In the words of the Quran, this gives birth to a new life e.g. see verse (8:24).

⁶ These books are: *What is Islam?*, *The Life in the Hereafter*, *What Does the Quran Say?*, and *The Quranic System of Sustenance*.

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1 The Human Self and Allah

No-one can deny this fact that the basis of religion is on belief in God. The name of God will change within different religions but acceptance of His existence and belief in Him will be the first condition⁷ everywhere. From this the questions which necessarily arise are: what is God? What is He like? Why it is necessary to believe in Him? What happens by not believing in Him? What is the mutual relationship between man and God?

1.1 The Importance of this Question

These questions are, as is obvious, very important, very difficult and very sensitive, and since the time that the human consciousness has awakened, it has been busy making efforts in investigating to find a satisfactory answer.

The Quran has also raised the edifice of Deen on the foundations of *Eimaan* in Allah (*Eimaan Billah*). Therefore, these questions which are mentioned above also confront a student of the Quran. Because the importance of these questions was also in front of the Quran, it has therefore provided answers to them with great detail and emphasis. But it is obvious that each and every individual can only comprehend these kinds of lofty, abstract truths according to his own personal vision and understanding. In the following passages I have attempted to present in brief words that which I have been able to comprehend in this connection according to my own vision. Since (as noted above) this subject is very difficult and these issues are very delicate, I am sure that readers will peruse whatever is said with full concentration and interest and will attempt to comprehend it with extreme attention and reflection. It may happen that as a result of this hard work and endeavour, even greater avenues of Quranic understanding are opened up to us.

If you traverse any period of human history and cast an eye on any part of the earth, you will find that there is one thing every place, every nation and every era has in common, and that is that people will have devised some sort of Being (either a tangible or abstract thing, or an intangible perceptive power) in front of which they bow down, which they worship, and of whose anger or displeasure they are fearful and whose pleasure they consider to be a reason for blessings and approval for themselves. Leaving aside the civilized and developed nations, if you go to such an island where no outsider has previously stepped (according to history), then no matter how different the population residing there may be in other matters, in this

⁷ There is no doubt in this that some religions e.g. Buddhism are such which deny the existence of God but the state of Buddhists themselves is such that they worship Buddha like a God. Therefore the difference is in name only, the concept being the same everywhere.

common issue their practice too will be equivalent. The famous Greek historian Plutarch (42-107 AD) writes in this regard:

*In wandering over the earth, you can find cities without walls, without science, without rulers, without palaces, without treasures, without money, without gymnasium or theatre, but a city without temples to gods, without prayer, oaths and prophecy - such a city no mortal has yet seen and will never see.*⁸

1.2 Differences in Concept

Along with this it is also a fact that while such an awareness exists everywhere about such a power, its concept and details are different in every place. Within even one country the 'god' of one tribe does not match the 'god' of another tribe. The 'God' of one country is different from the 'God' of another country. The 'deity' of one nation is distinct from the 'deity' of another nation. The '*Eishwar*' (idol) of one sect is disparate from the '*Eishwar*' of another sect. Until a short time previously, the thinking of one group of Western thinkers was that (and it is possible that there may still be supporters of this idea present there) when early man of the initial era observed that some such disasters occurred (e.g. sudden changes in weather, storms and hurricanes, or epidemics of disease etc.) whose causes and remedies were concealed from his eyes and his mind could not grasp them, then there arose in his heart this idea that it could be that there were very great forces present behind these events which were not visible to him. In this way the concept of 'God' was born in the human mind. This concept varied in different countries according to their circumstances and conditions, and in different tribes according to their situation and environment. After this, as time passed and man made continuous progress, this concept also evolved and in this way, gradually, that concept of 'God' came into existence which is presented by the higher religions of the world. This doctrine is called the 'evolution of the concept of God', details of which will be found in Grant Allen's book *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, or in I.G. Frazer's books titled *Golden Bough* etc.

1.3 Repudiation of This

But later thinkers countered this doctrine and asserted that the correct concept of God has always remained the same right from the very beginning. The question of progression and evolution in this simply does not arise. So much so that the modern famous historian, Dr. Arnold Toynbee, has written the following in his book titled *An Historian's Approach to Religion*:

⁸ W. M. Urban, *Humanity and Deity*, p. 15

Professor Schmidt's research shows that the concept of the worship of god presented by developed religions is not a new concept which they have invented. The oldest religion of mankind was also this, which has been renewed by developed religions.⁹

Prof. Schmidt's book, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, from which Dr. Toynbee has quoted the above conclusion, is considered to be the best book on this subject in modern times. In this, he has noted in clear words that '*the concept of that higher deity which exists in the early social life of man, was that very same concept which has been presented by the flag bearers of the monotheistic religions. Therefore, it can be stated with certainty regarding most of the oldest tribes of the human race that this was their concept about God too. Hence, the doctrine of evolutionary religion has been proven to be absolutely bankrupt in the whole field of sociology*'. Since the subject of our book is not to trace the history of the concept of or belief in God, we do not consider it necessary to elaborate further on this point.

1.4 Concept of the Quran

For the purpose in front of us, it will suffice to say only this, that the Quran has informed us that ever since social consciousness awakened in man, guidance of *Wahi* (Divine revelation) commenced descending through the *Anbiya*¹⁰ from Allah. The focal point of this teaching was the correct concept of God, and it is obvious that when the source of this knowledge (*Wahi*) was only one (God), then this concept will also remain one from the beginning to the end (and was only one). But what used to happen was that a messenger would come and would present this high and supreme concept about Allah with great clarity; after some time, this reality would disappear from the eyes of the people, and man, engrossed in his physical senses, would begin mixing the colours of his own thoughts into this clear and transparent concept of Divinity. Sometimes he would make these things his god from which he was afraid and fearful; sometime into those things from which he had some expectations; sometimes he would erect statues of those mental and imagined gods because of their greatness and holiness and carve idols. Hence, these different gods and goddesses – *Inder*, *Agnee*, sun, moon, Ganges, Jumna, snake, cow, bull – all are varying forms of the manifestation of this sentiment of fear and hope (i.e. of dispelling pain and accruing benefit). When, in this way, the darkneses of superstition enveloped the human mind, then another messenger would come and deliver the pure concept of Allah to the people via *Wahi*, and would inform them in clear words that it is the things of the universe which bow to man, not man to the universe: such potentials have been placed in him as a result of which he can harness the things of nature and make use of these according to his choice. The roar of the oceans, the weighty loads of the

⁹ A. Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, p. 18

¹⁰ *Anbiya* – plural of *Nabi*, which denotes the status of a messenger of Allah as a recipient of *Wahi*. (Ed)

mountains, the eruptions of the volcanoes deep in the earth, the twinkling lights and movements of the milky way, the fearsome torrents and steady, calm drift of rivers, the fast and furious gusts of stormy winds, the desolation and awesomeness of petrifying deserts – so much so, that this whole universe and its different and contrasting images are, every one of them, standing with their hands tied before man in his service. Therefore, to bow down before these things and to conceive of them as masters and rulers - means what?

Thus, this process of *Wahi* continued in this pattern and form until the human mind reached nearer to full adulthood; then this virtuous and pristine, pure and transparent, lofty and supreme concept of Allah was given within the Quran in a complete form, and this heavenly Book was preserved and protected for all times. Therefore, the correct concept of Allah¹¹ (which Allah Himself has detailed) is within the folds of the Quran in its original and true form (in which there is not an iota of adulteration by the human mind) and is nowhere outside of it. This is because no world religion of today can claim that the book which they call a Divine book is word for word the same one that their messenger received from Allah Himself.¹² Hence, whichever individual wishes that he could obtain that concept about Allah which Allah Himself has detailed, he has no other option except to turn to the Quran for that. The purpose and intent of this book is to explain what is the concept of Allah which is put forward by the Quran.

1.5 The Divine Self

This is obvious that as far as the Self of Allah is concerned comprehending its form and reality, state and composition, is not a matter within the grasp of the human mind. A finite mind can never even begin to conceive of an infinite one. Leaving aside an immense concept such as Allah, modern philosophers and scientists tell us that time has no beginning and space has no limit. In other words, it is wrong to say that time began at such and such a moment and that some corner of the universe is the final frontier. Neither time started from some point, nor is there any final boundary of the universe – we are informed of this by philosophy and science. But if you exert your mind and try to imagine some space which is ‘without a beginning’ or ‘without an end’, you will see that such a concept simply cannot be grasped by your mind. The more pressure you put on your mind the sooner you will become uneasy. So if this is the state of affairs regarding the concept of time and space¹³, then how can the concept of Allah’s Self (Who is the

¹¹ This concept of Allah will also lead to the confirmation of His existence. It will become clear as we go through the book that this concept cannot be invented by the human mind. (Ed)

¹² Details of this can be found in my book titled *Divine Books of the World Religions* (Urdu).

¹³ Time and space are in any case abstract entities; the state of the human mind is such that we teach a child in the first lesson of geometry that a point has neither length nor width, nor does it gather space, yet it is visible despite this. You cannot even conceive of such a thing which has no

Creator of time and space) come within the domain of human cognition? This is the reason why the Quran has not stated anything about the reality and form of the Divine Self. It has only informed us as to what His attributes are.

1.6 Divine Attributes

The fundamental aspect of the great and unparalleled Quranic teaching is this, that the concept of Allah which arises before us according to these attributes, no higher, purer and more complete concept can be found anywhere else. The truth is that (as will be explained later) ascertaining the purpose and destination of human life itself is dependent on the concept of Allah. Whatever kind of concept an individual has of God, the life of that individual and the social map of that group (or nation) will be of the same kind. It was probably the Western thinker Kant who said that tell me what type of god a nation has adopted for worship and I will tell you everything about the culture and social structure of that nation. Indeed, it is obvious that when the concept of God which is presented by the Quran is unparalleled and without any visible example anywhere, then the purpose and destination which will be that of human life according to this concept, and the paths which will have been put forward by the Quran in order to achieve these, will also be unparalleled and without any visible example (which is called the guidance of *Wahi*). This is the reason why the guidance which the caravan of humanity receives from the Quran cannot be obtained from anywhere else.

1.7 Human Life

We have noted above that whatever type of concept of God (i.e. Divine attributes) is in front of us, our life (individual and collective) will be of the same kind. It is apparent from this that our life has a very profound and fundamental relationship with the concept of God. This is a very important point which it is essential to understand extremely well. One level of human life is that which is called the animal level. This life is one of purely physical existence (water and mud), whose purpose (like other animals) is preservation of self and procreation. This life is the physical life of this world and it ends with death. It is called the materialistic concept of life. But the Quran tells us that human life is not defined by physical existence (animalistic) alone; there is another thing contained within it which is called personality or human self or 'I' or ego. The Quran denotes it using the term 'Divine energy' and calls it '*Nafs*'. The Quran states:

...And breathed into him something of His Ruh (energy) ... (32:9)

length, width and volume, and which is visible despite this and can be perceived. Despite this, we accept the existence of a point, because it is on this very definition that the structure of an important subject like geometry is raised.

The human body keeps changing from moment to moment whereas the human self is not affected by external influences, and if suitable development of the human self takes place, then man can live beyond his physical death and achieve immortality¹⁴.

1.8 Human Self

By denoting the human self using the term ‘Divine Energy’, the Quran has pointed towards a great truth. It has stated:

- (1) Allah has a personality and man also has a personality. It should be clear that the self of man is bestowed on him by Allah and is not a part of the Self of Allah. Personality is an indivisible unity which cannot be divided into parts, and when the human self is not a portion (i.e. part) of the Divine Self, then this belief (of *Vedant*¹⁵ or Mysticism) that the human self will ultimately merge with the Divine Self and in this way the part will join with the whole (as a droplet merges into a river), is contrary to the Quran.
- (2) Wherever there is a personality (self), its basic characteristics will be the same.¹⁶
- (3) Since the personality of Allah is the most complete and highest Self, therefore its attributes and traits are also the most complete and highest. The Quran denotes these as *Asma-al-Husna*¹⁷ – these are the different aspects of this Self.
- (4) The human self in its miniature form (in comparison with the Divine Self) is finite. Therefore, its attributes are also finite (in comparison with the Divine attributes). But at the same time, all those attributes (in finite form) are present in it which are termed *Asma-al-Husna* in relation to Allah, excepting those attributes which are related to Allah’s infiniteness (further details about this will be provided later).

¹⁴ I have dealt with this subject in detail in several other works, such as *Iblees O Adam* (Devil and Man), *Insaan Ney Kiya Socha* (What Man Thought), *Islam Kiya Hai* (What is Islam), *Jabaan e Farda* (The Life in the Hereafter) etc. In *Insaan Ney Kiya Socha* in particular, I have shown with evidence that modern thinkers and scientists are gradually coming closer to the Quran's concept of human personality and accepting that death is not necessarily the end of human existence.

¹⁵ *Vedant* – Hindu belief in reincarnation. (Ed)

¹⁶ Every personality (self) of man will be indivisible, possess free will and the freedom to choose, and the potential to develop etc. (Ed)

¹⁷ *Asma-al-Husna* – the literal translation is balanced names. These are Allah’s attributes as noted in the Quran. (Ed)

- (5) In the Self of Allah His attributes manifest their glory in their completest form. In the human self these attributes are present as realisable possibilities or in a latent, potent or dormant form. The manifesting or actualising of these is the purpose of human life. This is, in essence, what is termed as development of the human self.
- (6) It is obviously necessary for a self which is at a lower level that it should keep some higher self as a standard in front of it for its accomplishment. If man does not have such a standard in front of him then he can never say with certainty and assurance that his self is developing, and if it is, then to what extent. In fact, this is also possible that development of his self (*Tazkia-Nafs*¹⁸) is not occurring at all, while he is absorbed in this self-deception that development of his self is taking place. Hence, it is essential for man that he should keep the Divine attributes in front of him as a standard for the development of his self.

It is for this very reason that the Quran has explained these Divine attributes with such detail and clarity, beauty and proportion, so that there remains no doubt or misgiving, ambiguity or vagueness for these to become a standard for a human being. As these attributes continue to manifest in the human self, he (in the words of the Quran) is 'coloured in the colours of Allah', or he continues achieving 'nearness' to Him.

- (7) The display of these attributes in the human self is not such a matter about which no-one else can have any knowledge of – the manifestation of these attributes occurs through the character and conduct of man which presents itself in a tangible and concrete form in front of everyone. This is essentially what is known as the character of man. Bear in mind that according to the Quran the highest character is the eminence of humanity; there is no concept of 'spirituality' (*Rubaniyat*) other than this. In the Quran there is no mention even of the word 'spirituality'. It has been stated even about Rasul-ullah¹⁹ himself that he was the possessor of *Kbulq e Azeem* i.e. holder of the highest character (68:4).
- (8) Keeping the Divine attributes as a standard in front of oneself, and declaring the manifestation of these in one's self as being the purpose of life, is called *Eimaan* in Allah.
- (9) As previously stated, the human self is received by every individual from Allah but it is received in an undeveloped form. The human self will be

¹⁸ *Tazkia-Nafs* – the Arabic term used for the development of the self e.g. (53:32). (Ed)

¹⁹ Rasul-ullah - this term means the messenger of Allah. Here it refers to Muhammad, the last messenger of Allah. (Ed)

strengthened by whichever deed of man is according to the Quranic programme; whichever is contrary to this, will result in weakening and degradation in it (this is called the Law of Requit). The effects of these deeds become apparent in this world as well as in the life after death. Therefore, the meaning of *Eimaan* in the human self means having *Eimaan* in Allah, *Eimaan* in His Law of Requit and *Eimaan* in the life of the hereafter.

From this it is apparent what the fundamental relationship between Allah and man is, and therefore how important it is to have the Divine attributes before us in their true and unadulterated form. The essential consequence of having *Eimaan* in Allah is of man having *Eimaan* in the existence of his own self which takes him far higher than life at an animal level. This is the fundamental difference between the Western materialistic (mechanical) concept of life and the Quranic concept of life, and it is due to this very difference that the paths of both diverge completely from each other – different paths as well as different destinations. Hear this once again - that for the person who does not have *Eimaan* in his own self, his *Eimaan* in Allah means nothing.

1.9 Basic Attributes of the Self

Now let us proceed a step further. Though every personality trait is significant in its own place, two among these are such that they can be declared as being fundamental i.e. freedom and independence. Independence means not to be dependent on another with regards to one's self i.e. to remain established by oneself without any external support (in Quranic terminology this is called *Samdeat*). And freedom (*Hurriyat*) means to be the possessor of the freedom to choose and of the ability to make decisions. Allah, Who is an Absolute Self and complete, in infinite form is:

*...and know Allah is free from all wants and worthy of all praise (admiration).
(2:267)*

...for your Sustainer is the (sure) Accomplisher of what He plans. (11:107)

This means that in Him the attributes of independence and freedom are infinite (we will discuss *Samdeat* elsewhere). As far as freedom is concerned Allah is the Master of absolute power and limitless authority. But despite this He has Himself imposed some constraints on His powers and controls i.e. self-imposed limitations. For example, the Quran states:

...He has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) mercy ... (6:12)

Allah has made the *Rabubiyat* of the things of the universe His duty (i.e. to provide sustenance and nourishment to them). See! this is a constraint. But by these kinds of constraints no aspersion is cast on the freedom (*Hurriyat*) of this Self. It does not become subservient to another by this. Obedience to external imposed constraints is known as subservience. Obedience to self-imposed constraints is not called bondage. If you reach some place at a specified time by command of another, then this is servitude; however, if you are punctual of your own accord, then this will not be servitude but will be called being principled.

This imposition of limitations by Allah Himself on His absolute powers is the demonstration of a great truth. This means that Allah does not use His powers and forces like an absolute dictator, rather uses these according to laws and procedures. And laws and procedures mean that whatever the demand is of circumstances in the universe, the same kind of Divine attribute manifests. In other words, you can understand it as whatever kind of circumstance there is in the outside world, there is a reaction²⁰ according to it from Allah.

1.10 Meaning of *Sunnat-Ullah*²¹

This reality that in a specific situation a specific attribute of Allah manifests is called the Divine law. And since the attributes of Allah are immutable, therefore the Divine laws are also immutable. The Quran states:

...no change can there be in the Words of Allah... (10:64)

...no change will you find in Allah's way (of dealing): no turning off will you find in Allah's way (of dealing). (35:43)

The pronouncement of this great truth is that you will never find any alteration or modification in the Divine laws. This means that the system of the universe is not functioning according to 'blind forces of nature' but is functioning according to immutable and established laws. The Quran has placed great emphasis on the study of nature and on observing the working of the universe, it calls this the means by which to meet Allah (face to face):

...that you may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Sustainer. (13:2)

²⁰ It should be clear that when the term 'reaction' is used in relation to Allah, then the meaning of this is definitely not like the meaning of a human reaction. In most situations, human reaction is based on emotions, whereas the Divine Self is beyond emotions.

²¹ *Sunnat-Ullah* – translated as the practice of Allah, the way that the Divine laws are established and are immutable. (Ed)

This means that through the study of nature, those Divine laws become unveiled and apparent before man which deal with the operation and functioning of the universe. This is the reason that the Quran declares the study of nature and observation of the universe as being one of the means to have *Eimaan* in Allah.²²

1.11 Man and Obedience of Laws

In the external universe the Divine laws are continuing to work automatically, and everything is obliged to follow them. None among these things has the power in any way whatsoever to contravene these laws - they are all prostrate before them:

Whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth, do prostrate themselves to Allah... (13:15)

Whatever is in the highs and lows of the universe, it is all prostrate before the Divine laws; but since man has been endowed with a self and the fundamental trait of a self is freedom, therefore man has not been created to be forced to obey these laws. He has been given this choice that if he wishes he can obey them, and if he wishes he can go against them:

...let him who will, believe (have Eimaan), and let him who will, reject (have Kufr)... (18:29)

If he obeys these laws then his self will develop, and if he does not then his self will remain undeveloped, and this is a fact:

Truly he succeeds that purifies it, And he fails that corrupts it. (91:9-10)

The individual whose self becomes developed becomes successful and accomplished, and the one whose self remains stifled, is ruined and destroyed. From this, two or three things become apparent to us:

- (1) Obedience of the Divine laws is not like the forced obedience of orders which are imposed externally but is obedience of the constraints imposed by the human self on itself. This is why the Quran has used the word '*Ata'at*' to describe this, which means the carrying out of a task willingly with the full participation of the heart. When a task is carried out under duress, never mind a self undergoing development, it becomes instead suppressed and stifled. By voluntary, wholehearted obedience of Allah's laws (*Ata'at*), the ability of the freedom to choose and intention of the human self expands. The Quran states:

²² Details of this can be found in my book titled *What is Islam*, Chapter 14, *Man and the External Universe*.

On no self does Allah place a burden greater than it can bear ... (2:286)

- (2) Since these Divine laws are the manifestation of the Divine attributes, obedience of them is obedience of the higher standard of the human self itself i.e. the desire and effort to colour oneself in their colour and to adopt this pattern. In other words, the demands of the human self are satisfied through these. For example, just as in the physical world if an individual is thirsty and is told by another to drink water, this will not be the obedience of an 'order' rather it will be the satisfaction of the physical demand of his own body.
- (3) By obeying these laws, on the one hand there is strengthening of the human self and he sees through his own evidence-based vision that his status is higher than the whole of the outer universe, and on the other hand the eminence and greatness of the Divine Self (in comparison to 'own' self) emerges and becomes apparent. As a result, this fact becomes evident that, whereas he is higher and superior to the whole of the universe, his status is far lower when compared to his greatest criterion (the Divine Self). [In *Salat*, *Qayaam* (standing posture) and *Sajda* (prostration) are representations of these very two states. In *Qayaam* the objective is the affirmation of the human self and its superiority compared to the whole universe, and in *Ruku* (bowing) and *Sajud* (prostration), the willing obedience and subservient status of the human self when compared to the Divine Self].
- (4) From this it also becomes clear that there can be nothing in the universe like unto man, because in the universe the only possessor of personality is man. Because the Western materialist considers himself (like other things of the universe) to be a product of matter, he can therefore become absorbed in this world of colour and fragrance, but the one who holds *Eimaan* in the Quranic concept of life finds himself to be unique in this physical universe. His companion can be another possessor of a self, i.e. one human being can be the companion of another at an equal level, and at a higher level the companion of man can be Allah Himself. This is the reason that Rasul-ullah has called Allah '*Al-Rafiqul-Aala*' (Companion of a higher status).

1.12 Companion of Allah

The subject of companionship with Allah leads us towards another important aspect of reality. We observe that in the outer universe the results of the Divine laws manifest themselves in a tangible form in front of us, some rapidly, others far later. For example, the seed of any tree contains the potential that if it is nourished according to the Divine law then one day it will become a tall and sturdy tree for

all to see. This outcome can come to fruition in front of us during our own lifespan. But there are some schemes of nature which are such that their results become established after many thousands of years. For example, for the first life cell to reach to the human form, after traversing different evolutionary stages, occurred after millions of years.

But we also observe that if man joins hands with that of nature, then not only is there a significant reduction in this time period within which some act had to bear a result (solely according to the laws of nature), but there is also a manifold increase in its beauty and attraction, utility and benefit. That same plant which under normal circumstances blossomed with flowers after six months and that, too, in only one colour, in the laboratories of Europe can bear multicoloured flowers within twenty-four hours. This means that when man becomes the companion of the Divine laws, then swiftness is added to the creative programme of Allah and beauty is created in its outcome.

The form in which the Divine laws, as bearers of results, exists in the outer universe is also that same form which exists in the human world. For example, the Quran declares:

Nay, We hurl the truth against falsehood, and it knocks out its brain, and behold, falsehood does perish! (21:18)

This principle is functioning in the universe that there is a continuous battle between *Haqq* (truth) and *Batil* (falsehood) in it, and in this clash *Haqq* smashes the head of *Batil* and thus *Batil* ultimately becomes destroyed and eradicated. In other words, constructive forces ultimately overcome destructive forces and in this way the universe keeps advancing forward while traversing through its evolutionary stages. As the Quran has stated, this is the law of nature:

... Verily a day in the sight of your Sustainer is like a thousand years of your reckoning. (22:47)

... in a Day, the measure whereof is (as) fifty thousand years. (70:4)

But if human companionship is united in this then this victory of *Haqq* can materialize in a few days. But this companionship can only materialise from those men who have a solid conviction in the truth of the Divine laws, and who are busy making efforts and taking actions for the development of their self according to these (this is what is called *Eimaan* and righteous deeds). A group of such individuals is called a *Jamaat e Momineen* or *Hizbullah*²³. As a result of the efforts and actions of this *Jamaat* such a society comes into existence in which the Divine laws

²³ *Hizbullah* – this means the party of Allah i.e. those who follow His laws. (Ed)

continue to become effective and manifest results within the minimum of time, and in this way the development of the members of the society continues to take place.

1.13 Individual and Society

The Quran has stated in very clear terms that development of the human self cannot take place as a lone individual, this can only take place within a *Jamaat* (a Quranic society). Addressing the individual, it states:

Enter you, then, among my servants! Yes, enter you My heaven. (89:29-30)

If you wish to enter paradise then enter the *Jamaat* of the men of Allah. In another verse it is stated:

...and be with those who are true (in word and deed). (9:119)

This is the reason that the Quran has declared the solitary cloisters of monasteries and the places of worship of mystics as a concoction of the human mind (57:27) which is contrary to the Deen defined and presented by Allah. The Deen of Allah becomes established within a society. Deen provides the principles and values for the mutual relations of mankind. If some individual goes to a jungle where there is no other human being, then he needs neither Deen nor *Eimaan*, nor can development of his self take place, nor is there any form of evolution of human life. In fact, he cannot even live life at a human level. Therefore, Deen demands collectivism, and the development of the self of an individual is only possible within a society.

1.14 Formulation of a Nation

Now let us take another step forward. When any two human beings in the world set the aim of their life as being only one i.e. there is only one objective and destination in front of them, and the pattern according to which they wish to mould their life is also the same, then the creation of mutual harmony in their outlook and vision is a natural outcome – this is what is called unity of thought and vision, or the sharing of *Eimaan*.

This is that unity of thought and vision which the Quran declares as being the reason for the coming together of people i.e. no matter where two persons of the world live, whatever may be their colour, language, race or nationality, if they place the Divine attributes in front of them as external criteria and are engrossed in efforts to develop their self according to these, then both these human beings (despite having differentiations of colour, race, language or nationality) will be

members of one *Jamaat* and will be citizens of one nation. The Quran has stated this to be the very criterion for the formulation of nationality. The unity which is produced among men in this way is far stronger and longer lasting than the bonds of blood, colour, language and the relationships of nationality. If this unity keeps spreading, and ever greater numbers of human beings in the world harmonise together in this way and become of one 'colour', then through this the whole of mankind will become one universal brotherhood. It is obvious from this that the necessary outcome of *Tauheed* of Allah (i.e. keeping His Self as a criterion in front) is the oneness of humanity. Apart from this there is no other basis for the oneness of humanity. The aim and objective of the Quran is that gradually all human beings, by making the *Tauheed* of Allah as the practical model of their life, become one universal brotherhood, and in this way all those differences due to which today the world is turning into a den of beasts, are eliminated.

1.15 *Eimaan* in Allah

From the above explanations this reality becomes apparent to us as to what the concept of Allah is according to the Quran, and what it means to have *Eimaan* in Allah. After this it also becomes clear why the Quran makes this demand from all the human beings of the world that they should have *Eimaan* in that Allah Whose concept the Quran has presented. Leaving aside a few atheists in the world, every person, every tribe, every nation is convinced of the existence of God in some form or another. But the Quran declares that your belief in God in this way is not, in truth, the acceptance of God; this amounts to recognition of that God whose concept is coined by you or other men like you. For example, an individual says that I believe that gold is a good metal, its colour is white, humid air causes it to rust, and striking it against a hard material shatters it into pieces, and since it is the lightest metal in the world, it is therefore commonly used in the construction of airplanes. It is obvious that the individual who becomes convinced of the existence of the metal holding these characteristics by calling it 'gold', is in fact denying the existence of (real) gold. Only that person who is convinced of its correct and true characteristics will be acknowledged as accepting the existence of gold. Hence, the belief in God of the individual who may be convinced about God but is not aware of the correct concept of His attributes, is equivalent to denial of the true God. Therefore, *Eimaan* in Allah will be accepted²⁴ only from the individual who has conviction in that Allah Whose attributes are detailed by the Quran; and those attributes are not noted anywhere other than in the Quran.

²⁴ Acceptance here means that the human self must have the correct concept in mind in order to benefit from this for the development of the self. It may appear harsh, but this is something we experience in our daily life as well. Though we may genuinely believe something to be true this will not make it a fact, thus we may be holding on to something which is false that will affect our subsequent thought process. (Ed)

1.16 Characteristics of Quranic *Eimaan*

Not only is it the case that the concept of Allah which the Quran presents is not available anywhere else, but the concept of the relationship which the Quran details between Allah and man also cannot be found anywhere else. As we have seen, the Quran tells us that:

- (1) Allah has control and power over the whole of the universe, but He uses His sovereignty according to His Own laws made by Him, and there is never any change in these laws. In other words, this whole system of the universe is busily functioning within these defined and established laws which are operational and immutable. These very laws are also functioning in the human world which means that every deed of man produces a defined effect and there is never any exception in this. Though every man has a choice in doing whatever deed he wishes, it cannot happen that he performs a deed of one kind but creates the effect of some other. Whatever kind of deed it is, the same kind of outcome will result. These results are established according to the laws defined by Allah.
- (2) Excepting those attributes which are purely related to the omnipotence and omniscience of Allah (e.g. that none has created Him, nor has He come into existence from nothing), the fundamental attributes of the human self are the same as the attributes of the Divine Self, with this difference that these attributes of the human self are finite and in a constrained form, and are also undeveloped. Their development can only take place provided that man keeps the Divine attributes as a standard in front of him. This is the fundamental relationship between a human being and Allah. That which is termed as obedience of the Divine laws is not the obedience of the orders of (Allah forbid) a tyrant or absolute dictator, but instead is obedience of the guidance through which development of the human self takes place. By obeying these instructions, the demands of this human self are satisfied.

It is also clear from this that when we mention the Divine attributes (*Asma-al-Husna*), then it is also in fact a reference to the attributes (finite and in a constrained form) of our own self. This is why it is stated in the Quran:

*We have revealed for you (O men!) a Book in which is a message for you...
(21:10)*

Surely, We have sent a Book in your direction in which is your *Zikr*. (The meanings of *Zikr* are eminence and importance and also to mention).

In the words of Iqbal²⁵:

*Muhammad is Yours, so is Gabriel, and the Quran too,
But this sweet Word, is it Your representation or mine?*

- (3) As the human self keeps developing, he continues to become a participant in the creative programme of Allah. In this way the relation of Allah and man becomes one of companionship in which Allah is, however, the Companion with the higher status.

This relationship between Allah and man will not be found anywhere else other than in the Quran. Among the followers of religion in the east the relationship of man with God is only this much that man worships God because this is the command of God, which man has to obey whether willingly or unwillingly. If an individual does not obey His command, then God becomes angry. In order to appease Him it is necessary to make offerings to Him, or to gain intercession through someone 'closer' to Him. When He becomes pleased in this way, the wishes of man are met, and if He remains angry, then man becomes stuck in misfortune.

Contrary to this, according to the philosophers and thinkers of the West, the relevance of God is only related to the outer universe in which His laws (in the form of natural laws) are operating. It is the task of man to study these laws, and by employing them, harness the forces of nature and bring them into his use. As for the human world, in this men will need to resolve their matters through the use of their own intellect and wisdom; for these there are no immutable principles and laws.

Another concept of the relationship with God is that of those people who have faith in 'spiritualism'. They claim that they have a direct contact with God. They talk to God, hold meetings with Him, get the supplications of people accepted from Him, He discloses hidden matters to them etc., etc. The concept of these kinds of connections is also against Quranic teaching. Whatever Allah wished to impart to mankind is conveyed in a complete form for the last time in His Book (the Quran). The only means of contact now with Allah for human beings is by following His Book.

From this, this reality will have become evident to you, why the Quran has proclaimed to the 'God worshippers' of the world:

So if they have Eimaan as you have Eimaan, they are indeed on the right path. . .
(2:137)

²⁵ Sir Dr. Muhammad Iqbal – Poet of the East.

If these people accept *Eimaan* in the way that you (*Jamaat e Momineen*) have accepted it, only then can you acknowledge that they have found the correct path of life. If they do not accept *Eimaan* like this and continue to believe in God according to their own concepts, then in the register of Allah they will not be counted among those who have ‘*Eimaan* in Allah’ i.e. according to the Quran this will not be called *Eimaan* in Allah. Furthermore, this much should also be fully understood, that the practical concept of having ‘*Eimaan* in Allah’ means to obey His commands and laws. The Quran does not count that individual who accepts Allah in words yet obeys the commands of non-Allah (other than Allah), as being among the followers of Allah:

...if any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah has revealed, they are (no better than) Unbelievers. (5:44)

Those people who do not make decisions according to the Book of Allah are the ones who are called *Kafir*²⁶.

1.17 *Asma-al-Husna* (Balanced Attributes)

Not only has the Quran mentioned the Divine attributes in general terms but by declaring these as *Al-Asma-al-Husna*, has drawn attention towards another fact. *Husna* is derived from *Husn*, and this is the name of precise proportion. If the proportion of a thing is even slightly disturbed, its *Husn* no longer remains. This is why historians have said that ‘if Cleopatra had had a slightly flatter nose, the map of history would have been something else’. The meaning of *Asma-al-Husna* is that, whereas these attributes of Allah are most supreme and most complete, infinite proportion is also found in them. The fact is that correct (and constructive) results can only be derived from attributes and traits when there is precise proportion and balance present in these attributes and traits. No prescription can be effective until there is precise proportion in the weight of its constituent medicinal ingredients. Taking this concept further, this reality will become evident that, for example, water is life-giving but only in that situation when there is a correct proportion of it in the human body. If there is even the slightest decrease or increase in its proportion, then human health is adversely affected; not only does health deteriorate, but if its proportion exceeds a limit (as happens in the case of drowning) then this can result in immediate death. Another example is of

²⁶ *Kafir* - this term is used for those who do not accept the Quran as a revelation from Allah. The word is normally translated as non-believer. Its root *Kufr* (K-F-R) has many facets which include to knowingly deny truth, to prevent, to defy Divine laws. Basically, it means to cover or conceal. It means open denial, not hypocrisy (which is concealed). It also means withholding the means of subsistence which Allah has created for the benefit of the whole of humanity. (Ed)

arsenic, which is a killer chemical, but if it is given in a correct dose it promotes life and sustains strength.

Moving away from the physical world, let us enter the domain of ethics in which this same reality can be seen to be working. For example, being gentle is a pleasant trait but if it exceeds a certain limit, then this becomes disgrace. Forgiveness and overlooking something are good traits within limits, but if these limits are exceeded then it becomes cowardice. Spending wealth is necessary for life, but if it deviates towards excess it becomes wastefulness, and if it is held back then it becomes miserliness. Therefore, attributes and traits only produce pleasant effects when their proportion is correct. In other words, in order to establish correct results it is absolutely essential that there is balance in the attributes.

1.18 Apparently Contradictory Attributes

In the same way that there are Divine attributes in the Divine Self, similarly when there is development in the human self, there is a need for its attributes also to have balance. You will see that the whole teaching of the Quran revolves around this central point. It is stated clearly in it which attribute should manifest itself on what occasion, and to what extent this manifestation should be. Allah gives both life and death (23:80). He is also the giver of severe punishment (2:165) and the One Who returns with mercy (2:160). To the superficial gaze there appears to be a contradiction in these attributes, but for the visionary who descends from the surface and reaches down into the depths of reality, he can say with full surety and certainty based on evidence that there is no contradiction in understanding and stating it as such - that water can both promote life as well as end life. This was the superficiality of vision as a result of which Christianity stated that God is Mercy and that salvation is only through His Grace, not through deeds. And on the other hand, Hinduism created the philosophy of '*Karm-yog*', according to which there is no escape whatsoever from the punishment resulting from a wrong deed (big or small). (The doctrine of reincarnation is based on this assumption). In opposition to both these beliefs, the Quran informs us for example, that:

- (1) Arsenic, if used in appropriate measure, is useful.
- (2) If it exceeds this proportion slightly, then its harmful effects will ensue.
- (3) And if it greatly exceeds a certain limit then it becomes fatal.

Point (3) is that condition where the Law of Requitel will be declared as being a severe punishment (*Azāab*) i.e. holder of fatal consequences. But under point (2) it is obvious that by taking suitable actions the dangerous effects of arsenic can be removed. This is called *Tanwabiyyat* (returning). This reality is expressed by the Quran in these words:

...For those things that are good, remove those that are evil...(11:114)

This is called *Afw* in Quranic terms. The proper place for these matters will come later, where explanations will be provided of Allah's various attributes in detail. We thought it necessary to illustrate it briefly at this stage so that this reality becomes clear:

- a. What the true meaning of the apparently opposing attributes of the Self of Allah is.
- b. What the significance of the attributes being proportionate and balanced is.
- c. When these attributes become reflected in the self of an individual with correct proportion and balance, he will be declared as the holder of a balanced personality; and the degree to which a balanced personality epitomises true contentment and real peace and happiness, there is no need to say anything further about that.
- d. And it is obvious how balanced that society itself will be which consists of such individuals whose personalities are balanced; and the level of peace and tranquility in which humanity will live because of the establishment of such a society, there is no need to elaborate further on that either.

In relation to the Divine attributes, these matters will also not be available anywhere other than in the Quran. This fact will also become apparent from these details later, with what beauty and finesse the ethical values become defined, and with what ease the clash between good and evil becomes resolved which has perturbed and muddled the intellectual world from the beginning till today. (Further discussion regarding this point will come a little later on).

1.19 The Infinite Attributes of Allah

At this stage this much further clarification is necessary that some of Allah's attributes are such that their precise definition (like the form and reality of the Divine Self) is beyond the cognitive limits of our intellect. For example, it is stated in the Quran that *'He is the First and the Last'* (57:3). We have already previously stated that the concept of such a time which has no beginning anywhere can never even enter our mind, nor can we even conceive of the concept of a space which has no limits.

When we state about Allah that He is the First, we simply cannot truly and correctly comprehend His infinitude. Our mind will of a certainty make its beginning from some point or other. Similarly, when we state about Him that He is the Last, then our mind cannot conceive of this either - it will definitely come to a standstill at some point or other. Hence, we cannot make a true estimate of

Allah's being the First and the Last. The most we can say is that 'when there was nothing, there was Allah - and if there had been nothing, there would be Allah'.

The Quran does not, in any case, demand anything more than this from us.

1.20 Permanent Values

Leaving aside such few attributes, the rest of the Divine attributes are those which in modern terminology are called ethical attributes. For example, *Rabubiyat*, *Razzaqiyat*, *Rehmaniyat* etc.²⁷ These are those attributes which are called the Permanent Values. In the Quranic system of life these values have great significance, in fact we can say that the whole structure of this system (*Ad-Deen*) is raised on these foundations.

From this the question arises, why does man need these Permanent Values. He should solve his problems through the use of his intellect and reasoning. There is no doubt in this that man has been endowed with the ability of intellect and reasoning, and this is that trait which differentiates him from other animals. This is why the Quran places great emphasis on the use of intellect and reasoning, and knowledge and vision. According to the Quran, those people who do not make use of intellect and reasoning are:

For the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah are the deaf and the dumb – those who understand not (do not use intellect). (8:22)

And

Many are the Jinns (nomadic inhabitants) and men, We have made for hell: they have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle – no, more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning). (7:179)

Through the use of knowledge and intellect, by studying the things of the universe, man harnesses the undiscovered forces of nature, and in this way becomes eligible for the 'prostration' of the angels (universal forces) before him.

1.21 Battle of Wits

But whereas in the outer universe human intellect becomes so useful in reaping beneficial results, when this same intellect is applied to the human world, then here

²⁷ *Rabubiyat* – means sustenance, *Razzaqiyat* – means nourishment, *Rehmaniyat* – means development. These are discussed in detail later in the book. (Ed)

it plays a strange game; or we can say that so long as the issue remains confined to controlling the forces of nature, human intellect continues to work without conflict and resistance. But as soon as the question of the use of these forces arises, this very same intellect becomes the cause for mutual clash and upheaval among men. For example, in the research for nuclear power, scientists all over the world are busy working in great peace and calmness in their respective laboratories. But once the nuclear bomb is ready, then conflicts erupt among the nations of the world over its use, and these clashes ultimately take on the shape of war, in which these same forces of nature which were to become the cause for the development of humanity, become instead the cause for the destruction of mankind. Why does this happen? This is because the demand of the intellect of every individual, every group and every nation is that it should protect itself, its own tribe and its own nation. It has no interest in the protection of the interests of any other individual, group or nation i.e. human intellect only sees its own interest - it has no concern about the welfare of others. Hence, when there is a clash of interests between different individuals or nations, then a battle of wits commences in their intellects. In other words, it can be understood that the sentiments of benefitting oneself and avoiding harm to oneself are included within the animal instincts of man.

The task of the intellect is to fulfil the demands of the human emotions. For example, there is a beautiful painting in the keeping of an individual and we desire to obtain it (this is the demand of our emotions). However, that individual does not wish to part with this painting (from this point conflict arises in our emotions). Now our intellect moves forward and informs us of various trickeries on how to acquire this painting. Contrary to this, the intellect of the opponent tells him what steps should be taken for the protection of this painting (this can be called the battle of wits). Now it is obvious that the one whose intellect is sharper will be the one who is successful. After this, the opposing party will be on the lookout for an opportunity to take revenge on him – this is, in fact, what is called disorder. This means that the intellect of man follows on behind his emotions, just like the paws of a dog follow its nose (the smell of its prey).²⁸

1.22 Decisions Through Laws

For the eradication or solution of these conflicts, a human society devises certain principles which are implemented equally on all the people who live within this society. These principles are called laws. This means that the various citizens of this society accept this fact that in the case of conflicting matters, instead of following their own desires and their own intellects, they will make decisions according to these accepted principles. The individual who does not decide according to these principles is forced by the society to abide by them. It is obvious

²⁸ At this stage these pointers are considered enough. Further details of these issues are available in my other books *Iblees O Adam*, *Insan Nay Kia Socha* and *What is Islam?*.

that these principles (laws) have great significance in the social life of man. The demand of this requirement is:

- (1) In the formulation of these principles there should be no intrusion of the emotions of any particular individual, any particular party, or any particular nation.
- (2) And these principles should not be such that whenever it is wished these can be changed.

1.23 Immutable Laws

The Quran states that the formulation of these kinds of principles is not within the capacity of human intellect. This is because (in human matters) the intellect can never be free from emotions. Therefore, these principles should be obtained from such a place which is high above human emotions, and for Whom all human beings (not just men of one nation or one era but all of mankind) are equal. Obviously, such a status cannot be of anyone other than that of the Self of Allah.

Permanent Values are those immutable and unchangeable principles which have been received from Allah for the guidance of the whole of mankind so that they can make their decisions in accordance to them. For the practical application of these principles, human society will work out bye-laws and sub-clauses according to the requirements of its own era, but there will be no authority to make any changes or modifications, or any deletions or additions in these principles. As has already been written, these immutable principles or Permanent Values are those Divine attributes which are termed as (with a view to comprehension) 'ethical principles.

1.24 Understanding the Quranic Principles

We have stated above that the formulation of these immutable principles (Permanent Values) is not within the capability of the human intellect. This does not mean that in order to understand these principles, and after understanding them to reach this conclusion that these are indeed true in their claims and do fulfil their aim, is also outwith the scope of the intellect - not at all. The intellect can understand them but there is an essential condition for this, which is that just as a scientist carries out observation and study of the outer universe using his intellect and vision in an objective manner, and does not allow his emotions and biases to influence them, if in the same way attention and analysis is applied to the Quranic principles, then their truth emerges and becomes evident. The Quran itself has informed us of the technique by which to verify the truth of its claims. In Surah *Yunus* it is stated:

No, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof has reached them: thus did those before them make charges of falsehood: But see what was the end of those who did wrong! (10:39)

The first thing which is stated here is that denial of the Quranic proclamations is done by those people who do not comprehend its factual realities based on knowledge (27:84) i.e. it is essential that in order to understand the Quranic facts the level of knowledge up to which human knowledge has reached within a particular era should remain in front of man. 'Up to the level of knowledge of this era' is said because, as the level of human knowledge continues to rise, the Quranic truths keep on becoming uncovered to the same extent.

The second thing it has said is that it is essential that the thinker who is pondering on the Quranic facts should study world history and become aware of the circumstances and conditions of previous nations. He will see what the outcome was of the nation which lived its life according to the principles of the Quran, and what were the consequences for the one that went against them. It is for this purpose that the Quran has repeatedly placed great weight on the study of history.

And the third technique is this, that a society should be allowed to be shaped according to the Quranic principles. The outcomes of this society will themselves reveal whether or not these principles are based on truth and fact. This is called the pragmatic test.

When thinking and reasoning about the facts of the Quran is performed in this way, then its truths will become uncovered one by one. But (as already noted) the condition is that this thinking and reasoning should not be allowed to become contaminated by emotions. As long as human emotions are not kept within the guidance of *Wahi*, the truth can never reveal itself before us. The Quran states:

...And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah? For Allah guides not people given to wrongdoing. (28:50)

1.25 Problem of Good and Evil

In any event, this reality has also become evident to us that those Permanent Values or immutable principles according to which a human society should be shaped are indeed based on the Divine attributes. From this the significance of having the Divine attributes in front of us in an accurate manner can also be estimated.

We have already stated that through the correct concept of the Divine attributes and by their being balanced attributes (*Asma-al-Husna*) as per the explanation of

the Quran, this most complicated problem of good and evil becomes automatically resolved. Briefly, it can be understood as follows: that the deed which is the cause for development, strength and integration of the human self is a good deed (and it is obvious that these can only be those deeds which are in accordance with the Permanent Values or the Divine attributes), and the deed which produces weakness and disintegration in the human self is evil (and it is obvious that these can only be those deeds which are contrary to the Permanent Values). This is the only criterion in the world for good and evil. From this it can also be judged what the relationship is between the Divine attributes and the human self, and what their importance is.

1.26 Comprehensiveness of Divine Attributes

From the above explanations this reality becomes evident that there is no corner of the outer universe and no area of the human world which is such that it is not connected to the Divine attributes. Whether it is the life of an individual in the human world, or the collective life of mankind, the correct shaping and accomplishment of all is on the pattern of the Divine attributes. These same attributes become the higher standard for the development of the self of an individual. And it is from these very attributes that those immutable principles are shaped, and it is by acting according to them that human society becomes a model of paradise. It is to these that the present successes as well as the future ascension of a human being are linked. By remaining dissociated from these, life can never reach the human level and instead remains stagnant at the animal level (indeed, sunk even lower than this).

It is evident from this what the importance is of the correct concept and knowledge of the Divine attributes in human life. This is the reason that the Quran has placed so much emphasis on *Eimaan* in Allah. (The very meaning of *Eimaan* in Allah is to have concrete conviction in the Divine attributes). This is that very basis on which the whole edifice of human life is raised – this is that very seed from which the ‘virtuous’ tree of righteous deeds bears fruit. In the words of Iqbal:

Life is built by deeds, Paradise as well as Hell.

Therefore, *Eimaan* in Allah is essentially that focal point around which the whole universe of man revolves, and this is the reason that the Quran has explained the Divine attributes with such detailed clarification and exposition. Since this is not available anywhere in the worlds of religions and philosophies, therefore the teaching of the Quran is without parallel or example. And because a complete

concept of these attributes is given within it, there remains no need therefore for any other book (this also means any *Nabi* or *Rasul*)²⁹ after this.

In the following pages, the Quranic explanations of these Divine attributes will appear before you.

²⁹ *Nabi* – the recipient of *Wabi* (the Divine revelation) from Allah. *Rasul* - the role as a messenger to pass this *Wabi* on to mankind. Both are the roles assigned to the same individual. (Ed)

2. *Ilaah* (god)

2.1 Linguistic Meaning

According to the dictionary, *Ali'ba*, *Ilay'bi*, *Ya'labu* means to seek refuge from someone after becoming fearful, or to become awestruck; and *A'laba*, *Ya'lobu* means to give protection to someone, or to take them into peace and security. In relation to these meanings, *Ila'hun* will mean such a being from whom protection can be sought when in danger, to whom supplication can be made for the removal of difficulties, and from the perception of whose greatness and immensity man becomes awestruck. Some consider that this word is derived from *La'ba*, *Ya'lebu*, which means to hold high status and to be hidden from sight.

Some say that *A'laba* means that that person has become a slave, and *Alla'habu* means that he has made him his slave. From this viewpoint, *Ila'hun* will mean such a being whose supremacy and sovereignty should be accepted, whose law should be obeyed, and whose rule should be adhered to.

Note how the traits noted above can be found in some form or another among the various concepts which the human mind has established about 'god'. Their being supreme and great, hidden from sight, becoming awestruck by its perception, turning to it for help in times of anxiety caused by troubles, prostrating before it with lowliness and humbleness and obeying its orders - in other words, *Ila'hun* is that comprehensive term which encompasses every kind of concept of 'God'.

The Quran has used the word Allah for the Divine Self (details will be given in the next chapter) i.e. Allah is the name of the Self of God, the description of Whose attributes is spread throughout the pages of the Quran like sparkling pearls. For example, we say that Allah is *Rabeem*, Allah is *Kareem* – so *Rabeemi* and *Kareemi* are attributes of Allah. The view of most about this word (Allah) is that it is in fact a combination of *Al-Ila'hun*. Through frequent usage the word has gradually evolved to become Allah from *Al-Ila'hun*. In the Arabic language, by prefixing *Al*, a common noun becomes a proper noun. From this perspective the meaning of Allah will be that particular *Ilaah* Whose concept the Quran has put forward.

The focal point of Quranic teaching is *La-Ilaha-i-Lallah*³⁰ i.e. there is no such being, no such power in the universe which can be acknowledged as *Ilaah* – such a being is only the One Who is called Allah by the Quran. In other words, this then means that it is only the law of Allah which is such Whose obedience should be adhered to in the universe; from Whom means of protection should be sought; Who

³⁰ *La-Ilaha-i-Lallah* – traditionally translated as 'There is no god but Allah'. (Ed)

should be made a shield for all troubles and difficulties. This law of His is so great and high, and master of so much power and supremacy, that man becomes lost in awe at the thought of His greatness and omnipotence. Looking at it from this angle, *Ilaah* brings forward the concept of Allah as a Being, and from another angle it is also His attribute. It is for this reason that we have commenced our illumination from the term *Ilaah*, so that after this the name of His Being (Allah) comes before us, and then the attributes of this Self, one by one, keep on becoming a source for the shining light of the heart and vision.

We have stated above that the fundamental point of Quranic teaching is *La-Ilaaha-i-Lallab*. This proclamation has two parts. One ideological i.e. assurance of this matter and acceptance of this fact that there is no such power in the world before which one should prostrate, which should be obeyed, which should be accepted as master, and which should be considered as the focus of attention to meet one's needs – this is a negative aspect. This is a passive part of this teaching i.e. whatever is in the mind about 'subjugation' should be forgotten, and when in this way the land is cleared, then a new structure should be erected over it. This is a positive aspect i.e. after rejecting all powers, acceptance of this fact that there is one and only one such power whose obedience is essential and prostrating in front of which is appropriate i.e. Allah. Removing all powers from the path in this way and creating a direct connection of man with Allah is the fundamental teaching of the Quran. And since the principal teaching of the Quran is not a new teaching but is the same message which is coming from Allah right from the beginning, therefore every messenger would renew this very same message.

2.2 Teaching of Different *Anbiya*³¹

For example, the Quran states about Noah:

We sent Noah to his people: He said: 'O my people! Obey Allah, you have no other Ilaah³² (god) but Him...' (23:23) See also (7:59)

Regarding a messenger who came after Noah:

And We sent to them a messenger from among themselves (saying): 'Obey Allah! you have no other Ilaah but Him. Will you not fear Him (the consequences of not following Him)?' (23:32)

Regarding the messenger Hud:

³¹ *Anbiya* – plural of *Nabi*. (Ed)

³² We have seen earlier that *Ilaah* is a comprehensive word which cannot be translated by any single word. Therefore, we will not translate *Ilaah* in these verses, but in its place will simply write it as such.

...He said: 'O my people! Obey Allah, you have no other Ilaah but Him...' (7:65)

About the messenger Saleh:

...He said: 'O my people! Obey Allah, you have no other Ilaah (god) but Him...' (7:73) also see (11:61)

And the messenger Sho'ib:

*...He said: 'O my people! Obey Allah, you have no other Ilaah but Him...' (7:85)
See also (11:84)*

About the messenger Ilyas:

Will you call upon Baʿ³³ (Ilaah) and forsake the Best of Creators – Allah, your Sustainer and Cherisher, And the Sustainer and Cherisher of your fathers of old? (37:125-126)

Towards the end of his life Jacob also took this pledge from his offspring. The Quran states:

Were you witnesses when death appeared before Jacob? Behold, he said to his sons: 'What will you follow after me? They said: 'We shall follow your Ilaah and the Ilaah of your fathers - of Abraham, Ismail and Isaac – the one (True) Ilaah to Him we bow (in Islam)'. (2:133)

And about the messenger *Dhu al Nun* (Jonah of the fish):

And remember Dhu al Nun when he departed in wrath: he imagined that We had no power over him! But he cried through the depths of darkness: 'There is no Ilaah but You: Glory to You: I was indeed wrong!' (21:87)

Moses also said the same to his people when they petitioned him for an idol to be carved for them for worship:

He said: 'Shall I seek for you an Ilaah other than the (true) Allah, when it is Allah Who has endowed you with gifts above other nations?' (7:140)

This was because at the Divine Station of *Tur* he (Moses) was entrusted with this same commandment:

³³ *Bal* – this was the name of a deity. (Ed)

'Verily, I am Allah: There is no Ilaah but I: So serve you Me (only) and establish Salat to celebrate My message. (20:14)

This was also the teaching of Jesus which he will affirm in front of Allah:

And behold! Allah will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Did you say unto men, 'Follow me and my mother as Ilaahs in derogation of Allah?' He will say: 'Glory to You! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, You would indeed have known it...For You know in full all that is hidden'. (5:116)

2.3 The Teaching of the Quran

This same teaching, protected and preserved in complete form, was passed on to the whole of mankind via Rasul-ullah³⁴. The Quran states:

... 'Can you possibly bear witness that besides Allah there is another Ilaah?' Say: 'No, I cannot bear witness!' Say: 'But in truth He is the Ilaah, and I truly am innocent of (your shirk of) joining others with Him. (6:19)

In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated:

But if they turn away, say: 'Allah suffices me; there is no Ilaah but He, on Him is my trust. He is the Sustainer of the Throne Supreme'. (9:129)

In Surah *Ra'ad*:

... Say: 'He is my Sustainer! There is no Ilaah but Him! On Him is my trust, and to Him do I return!' (13:30)

This teaching was revealed via *Wahi* (revelation):

Say: 'What has come to me by Wahi is that, your Ilaah is one Ilaah: Will you therefore bow to His Will (follow His laws)?' (21:108)

The same *Wahi* is referred to in another verse as follows:

Say you: 'I am but a man like you: It is revealed to me by inspiration (through Wahi), that your Ilaah is one Ilaah...'(41:6)

Then it is stated:

³⁴ Rasul-ullah – the last messenger of Allah, Muhammad (PBUH). (Ed)

Say: 'Truly am I a warner, no Ilaah is there but the one Allah, Supreme and Irresistible'. (38:65)

Emphasis is placed on this same teaching by the following words:

Know, therefore, that there is no Ilaah but Allah... (47:19)

In another verse it is stated:

Allah! There is no Ilaah but He: and on Allah, therefore, let the Momineen (believers) put their trust. (64:13)

This was mention of the messengers individually. Collectively, it is stated:

Not a messenger did We send before you without this Wahi sent by Us to him: that there is no Ilaah but I: therefore follow and serve Me. (21:25)

This is that teaching whose source is the Divine guidance. Whatever errors occurred in this teaching, they were all the created machinations of the human mind. Allah Himself is a witness on the established evidence-based truth of this teaching, His angels (forces) are a witness, and those learned scholars are a witness who establish a system of justice in the world:

There is no Ilaah but He: that is the witness of Allah, His Malaika and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no Ilaah but He the exalted in Power, the Wise. (3:18)

The pristine concept of the true *Ilaah* is found within the Quran:

And your Ilaah is One Ilaah: there is no Ilaah but He, Rehman and Raheem³⁵. (2:163)

That *Ilaah* about Whom it is declared:

Allah is He, other than Whom there is no Ilaah, Who knows (all things) both secret and open, He is Rehman and Raheem. Allah is He, other than Whom there is no Ilaah, the Sovereign, the Quddus³⁶, the source of peace (and perfection), the Provider

³⁵ *Rehman and Raheem* – both these terms have a common root *Rehm* (R-H-M) which has basic meanings of softness, provision of means of protection and cover. It is related to sources of sustenance and nourishment. *Rehm* also means a mother's womb which provides nourishment without any recompense to a child. For further details see *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol. 1, p. 548. (Ed)

³⁶ *Quddus* – means someone being free from all kinds of faults and blemishes; an attribute of Allah. The root is *Q-D-S*. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol. 2, p 337. (Ed)

of peace, the Preserver of safety, the Exalted in might, the Irresistible, the Supreme. Glory to Allah! Beyond is He above the partners they ascribe to Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms, to Him belong the most balanced attributes, whatever is in the heavens and the earth do follow His laws and He is the exalted in might, the Wise. (59:22-24)

He is that *Ilaah* whose attributes are the following:

Allah! There is no Ilaah but he – the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede in His presence except as he permits (as per His Law)? He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills (per His Law). His Knowledge and Sovereignty extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. For He is the Most High, the Supreme. (2:255)

Man makes as his god the one whom he believes to be the possessor of some authority and power. And the Quran uproots from its foundation even the very concept of this, that other than Allah anyone else possesses any authority and power at a fundamental level. Therefore, when no-one else other than Allah even possesses any authority and power, then how can there be any god (*Ilaah*) other than Him? The Quran states:

Say: 'Think you, if Allah took away your hearing and your sight, and sealed up your hearts, who – an Ilaah other than Allah – could restore them to you?' See how We explain the signs by various symbols, yet they turn aside. (6:46)

At this point in time we have only briefly mentioned a few attributes of the true *Ilaah*. Since detailed explanations of all the attributes of Allah will be given in the following pages, it is therefore not necessary to go into these details in this chapter. At this stage it is also essential to make this much clear, that the true *Ilaah* of the Quran is the *Ilaah* of the whole of mankind:

The Ilaah of mankind. (114:3)

He is the One Allah of everyone, irrespective of colour, race, nation, country, and when there is only one *Ilaah*, then the whole of mankind is one brotherhood in which racial or national differentiation can have no place. This concept of universal brotherhood and unity of mankind takes birth from the concept of the *Ilaah* of the Quran. The Quran has also informed us of this fact that the creation of the whole of mankind originated from a single cell (39:6) and all human beings are part of one universal brotherhood, among whom the common value

connecting them is the Oneness of Allah. (Details of these matters will be found at their respective places).

2.4 Addressing Intellect and Reasoning

It is not the way of the Quran to make someone accept a belief contrary to intellect and reasoning; it always appeals to a true intellect and a good heart. When it extended an invitation towards one *Ilaah*, it was not because (Allah forbid) it could not bear to watch the ‘gods’ of other religions or other nations being worshipped, but was because it is a fact that there can only be one *Ilaah*:

If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other Ilaahs besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! But glory to Allah, the Rabb of the Throne, (high is He) above what they attribute to Him! (21:22)

Details of this aspect are stated in another verse as:

No progeny did Allah beget³⁷, nor is there any Ilaah along with Him: (if there were many Ilaahs), behold, each Ilaah would have taken away what he had created, and some would have lorded it over others! Glory to Allah! (He is free) from the (sort of) things they attribute to Him. (23:91)

Though this is merely a short sentence, from the viewpoint of meaning there is a world of realities concealed within it. By reflecting on the coordination and harmony of the system of the universe, this reality will become evident that this great and mighty scheme is following a special programme, and that there is a precise synchronization and mutual relationship in the constituents of this machinery which mesmerizes the intellect. This amazing complex cannot function with this degree of order and precision unless the authority controlling it is not one. In the presence of two forces possessing different intentions this system cannot function for even one moment. In the movement and revolution of the sun, if there is even a difference of one thousandth of a second, the solar system will disintegrate within a moment. Discoveries of science have made this reality clear that those things of the universe which seem apparently independent, isolated and unrelated, are in fact also mutually dependent upon each other and interrelated. From this it is clear that if there are two, or more than two, permanent beings possessing powers of freedom to choose in arranging the affairs of the

³⁷ This is a statement of fact which requires our profound attention. Whatever we as human beings acquire as we live our life becomes a part of our self, which we cannot pass on to our children e.g. our experiences, education, training, knowledge etc. Allah’s Self is infinitely developed, and He is non-physical as we understand our body; hence there is no question of even having any thought of progeny of Allah. According to the Quran, there is nothing in the universe like Him and He is beyond the ability of human imagination and conception. (Ed)

universe, then the consequence will be a dichotomy of outcomes! The Quran has used one word, *La-Fasadata*, for this consequence in which the true picture of 'dichotomous outcomes' or anarchy is present. When every link in the chain of some system is working correctly in its own place, then that system is functioning optimally, and not being in a state of optimum is called *Fasad*, in which that system becomes disturbed and dispersed, and becomes non-functional, and the mutual coordination and synchronization between its constituents disappears. This *Fasad* is created as a result of commands from more than one authority. If there are two fully autonomous drivers inside an engine, then by imagining the consequences which will ensue from the implementation of their own individual intentions, the detailed meaning of *La-Fasadata* can be comprehended. The concept of different gods (whether these are permanent entities like *Aharman o Yazdan*³⁸ or different disciples of one *Brahma* like a goddess or god, or manifestations of his different powers e.g. *Shiv*, *Vishnu* etc.) is a remnant of the infantile intellectual period of the human mind, when it used to be thought that there is no coordination and harmonization between the different parts of the system of the universe, instead, they function separately from each other. Winds blow by their own force, therefore there is a need for the god *Dayo*. Rain happens with its own force, therefore there is a need for the god *Inder*. Birth, life and death – there is a need for a separate god for each and all. But when human intellect, having reached its adulthood, witnessed this state of the universe through observations and experiences that '*split the heart of a particle, and blood will drip from the sun*'³⁹, then where is the possibility for such a belief that the system of the universe is functioning under more than one authority?

The Quran, which assesses realities on the anvil of knowledge and intellect and erases superstition and ignorance, has stated that that Being is the possessor of infinite powers and limitless authority. And He is not in need of this - that various agents and workers should become His hands and arms and assist Him by being in charge of various departments in order to manage and organise the universe.

Turning away from the physical universe, if we look at the social, public and cultural life of man, there too the modern era is the best (or worst) model of the *Fasad* (confusion and conflict) which is produced by the belief in many 'gods'. The fire of these troubles and conflicts, dissatisfaction and absence of tranquility is raging because men have kept separate 'gods' carved out, and the 'god' of one is engaged in battle with another. (Details of these gods will be given later). In place of all these different 'gods', make one real *Ilaah* the centre and then see if all this chaos converts into peace or not. This chaos exists only because the human mind has created more than one *Ilaah*. The '*Ilaah*' of one nation does not allow another nation to exist. The 'god' of one nation is devouring up the people of another

³⁸ *Aharman o Yazdan* – two gods in ancient Persian belief system. (Ed)

³⁹ A quote from M. Iqbal, philosopher and poet. (Ed)

nation. Every 'Ilaah', taking its own 'subjects' and its own party with it, is overpowering the other. Everywhere there is conflict, there is not a vestige of equilibrium to be found anywhere. The solution of the universal ideology for which man is searching will be found only in this doctrine, that the God of all countries and nations i.e. the whole of mankind, is only one Allah and also that the whole world should follow only His laws. This is the reason why the Quran has opposed *Shirk*⁴⁰ so severely because no system can remain in its correct state through *Shirk*. Warning after warning is given not to propose any other *Ilaah* with Allah:

And make not another Ilaah an object of obedience along with Allah: I am from Him a warner to you, clear and open! (51:51)

This is because everything of the universe is changing and heading towards an end, therefore no entity among these is capable of running the system of the universe permanently on one pattern:

And call not, besides Allah, on another Ilaah. There is no Ilaah but He. Everything that exists will perish except His own Face.⁴¹ To Him belongs the command, and to Him will you be brought back. (28:88)

There is no power in the world which is such that it is capable of sharing in His sovereignty and power. His is the only Law which is operational in the universe:

Or have they an Ilaah, other than Allah? Exalted is Allah far above the things they associate with Him! (52:43)

2.5 Incredulity at the Belief of *Tauheed* (Oneness)

Since the concept of focusing all forces into one Self was based on the reality of an organised world and mutually harmonised universe and this fact appeared to be a novel thing to the human mind, when this concept was presented to them, they therefore expressed extreme astonishment. (And what kind of truth has there been which knowledge and reasoning presented before man, and to which ignorance and superstition did not object?) They stated with disbelief:

⁴⁰ *Shirk* – associating others with Allah and following other laws along with Quranic laws i.e. mixing man-made laws with Quranic laws, establishing and following a system other than Deen as revealed in the Quran. The Quran declares that this practice will lead to ruin in this life as well as the next e.g. see verse (2:85). This has been dealt in the author's book titled *Islam: A Challenge to Religion* p. 36 (Ed)

⁴¹ Other than His Self, everything is changing. Sovereignty belongs only to Him and everything is heading to Him. This meaning is taken from the Urdu book by the author. (Ed)

Has he made the gods (all) into one Ilaah? Truly this is a strange thing! (38:5)

And taking this concept to be (Allah forbid) a meaningless thing, they would disparage it with mocking laughter:

For they, when they were told that there is no Ilaah except Allah, would puff themselves up with pride. (37:35)

And would call the one presenting it (Allah forgive) insane:

And say: 'What! Shall we give up our gods for the sake of a poet possessed?' (37:36)

But the Quran took no notice of this rebuff and evasion because it had full certainty that following the progression and advance in knowledge and intellect, when the secrets of the universe open up before man, he would be automatically obliged to accept this truth that there can only be the Will of One Being working behind this system. In order for the universe to function with such equilibrium and discipline, unity of law is indispensable:

Those who adopt, with Allah, another Ilaah: but soon will they come to know (what the truth is). (15:96)

This is why it is a proclamation of the Quran that those people who have conviction in more than one god have no evidence with them in support of this claim:

Or have they taken for obedience other Ilaahs besides Him? Say: 'Bring your convincing proof...' (21:24)

In this verse *Burhan* (proof, evidence) has been demanded, but as noted in another verse, this is merely a way to state that they do not possess any *Burhan* in any case:

If anyone invokes, besides Allah, any other Ilaah, he has no authority for this...23:117)

Furthermore, it has also been declared that since the claimants of these beliefs have no logic or evidence, on the discovery and disclosure of the facts they will come to realise in how great an error they were trapped, and the state in which they will find themselves from this humiliating defeat does not require further elucidation.

2.6 Humiliation and Ruin of Man Through *Shirk*

The true reality of *Shirk* only becomes revealed to man when he becomes aware of the worth of his own eminence and personalised self. He comes to know at that moment how worthless he had made his own self as a result of making these lowly things as his gods. This is why it is stated:

Take not with Allah another object of obedience; or you (O man!) will sit in disgrace and destitution. (17:22)

In another verse:

... Take not, with Allah, another Ilaah (object of obedience) lest you should be thrown into hell, blameworthy and rejected. (17:39)

In Surah *Shu'ara* it is stated:

So call not on any other Ilaah with Allah, Or you will be among those under the penalty. (26:213)

In Surah *Qaf* it is stated:

... Who set up another Ilaah beside Allah: throw him into a severe penalty. (50:26)

The servants of Allah (*Ibaad-ur-Rehman*) never bow down before anyone else because they are cognisant of the eminence of their self:

Those who invoke not, with Allah, any other Ilaah... (25:68)

2.7 Tyrannical Forces

Among the example of these servants of Allah, the companions of the cave are quoted who had made a resolve to not bow down before anyone other than Allah.⁴² How could tyranny tolerate seeing such a purpose flourish and how could the religious elite bear this kind of rebellious slogan against their 'gods'? Therefore, it is obvious what kind of dangers and difficulties they would have had to face. Ultimately, the consequence was that they were obliged to leave their settlement and take refuge in a cave⁴³:

⁴² The narrative of the companions of the cave is detailed in Surah 18, *Al-Kahf*. The Quran does not specify the number of companions. (Ed)

⁴³ For further details see the Urdu book *Shola-e-Mustoor* by the author.

We provided strength to their hearts: Behold, they stood up and said: 'Our Sustainer is the Rabb of the heavens and of the earth: never shall we call upon any Ilaah other than Him: if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity! These our people have taken for obedience Ilaahs other than Him: why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do? Who does more wrong than such as invent a falsehood against Allah?' (18:14-15)

And notwithstanding the era of the companions of the cave, those who wish themselves to be considered as a 'god' have always utilised tyranny. Pharaoh had said the same to Moses:

He said: 'If you do put forward any Ilaah other than me, I will certainly put you in prison!' (26:29)

And intoxicated by power and authority, he mocked:

Pharaoh said: 'O Chiefs! No Ilaah do I know for you but myself: therefore, O Haman! Light me a kiln out of clay, and build me a lofty palace, that I may mount up to the Ilaah of Moses: but as far as I am concerned I think he is a liar'. (28:38)

In another verse it is stated:

Pharaoh said: 'O Haman! build me a lofty tower, that I may attain the ways and means of reaching the heavens, and that I may mount up to the Ilaah of Moses: but as far as I am concerned, I think Moses is a liar!' Thus was made alluring in Pharaoh's eyes, the evil of his deeds, and he was hindered from the path; and the plot of Pharaoh led to nothing but perdition (for him). (40:36-37)

But the end that resulted for Pharaoh also portrays to us that when a *Mushrik*⁴⁴ makes a claim without presenting proof and evidence, to what extent this is based on truth. When his helplessness became apparent to him then this reality became clear to him that, in truth, there can only be One *Ilaah*:

...At length, when overwhelmed with the flood, he said: 'I believe that there is no Ilaah except Him whom the children of Israel believe in: I am of those who submit (to Allah in Islam). (10:90)

'Pharaoh said, there is no *Ilaah* other than me' – from this the meanings of *Ilaah* becomes clear. The invitation of Moses was that, having freed them from the slavery of Pharaoh, Bani Israel should be settled in an environment of freedom

⁴⁴ *Mushrik* – the one who commits *Shirk*. (Ed)

where they could purely follow the laws of Allah. The claim of Pharaoh was that in his country obedience and submission could only be to him, therefore Bani Israel could not be given permission to adopt obedience to the laws of someone else. From this it is obvious that *Shirk* is not only that man prostrates before idols made of stones, but a far bigger *Shirk* than this is that man obeys the man-made laws of men in place of the Divine laws.

2.8 Shirk of Zoroastrians

The Magi (Parsees, who call themselves followers of Zoroaster) believe in two permanent gods – one a god of virtue and one of evil; one a god of light and one a god of darkness. The Quran has repudiated this dogma as well:

Allah has said: 'Take not for obedience two Ilaahs': For He is just One Ilaah: then fear Me (and Me Alone). (16:51)

2.9 Trinity

Christians believe in three gods: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. This dogma is also false:

They do blaspheme (do Kufr) who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One Ilaah... (5:73)

The Greek belief of Triad which became the Hindu belief based on spirit, matter and God, is also included in this.⁴⁵

2.10 Ahbaar and Ruhbaan (Religious Scholars and Priests)

The people of the Book had made priests and religious scholars associates of Allah. Through the path of reverence, shrouded in the veil of human holiness and saintliness, this belief becomes embedded in the mind, and in this manner makes its home in the depths of the heart in such a way that its eradication becomes extremely difficult:

They take their priests and their anchorites to be their sustainers in derogation of Allah, and Christ, the son of Mary; yet they were commanded to follow but one Ilaah: there is no Ilaah but He... (9:31)

⁴⁵ The belief of Hindus is also like that of the Trinity. Believing from ancient times in Brahma (God), *Prakarti* (matter), and *Atma* (spirit/soul), they hold a conviction in 'one in three and three in one'. The famous theologian and philosopher, Ramanuja, was a proponent of this belief and it this very belief which is found in his philosophy.

These people of the Book were told that making a god out of the *Anbiya* and messengers, priests and religious scholars, is not a teaching from Allah, rather it is the consequence of your own deliberate concoctions:

... There is no Ilaah except Allah; and Allah is indeed the Exalted in Power, the Wise.
(3:62)

2.11 Invisible Faces of *Shirk*

Other than these tangible faces of *Shirk*, the Quran describes such an aspect of *Shirk* which the human eye cannot perceive. Describing this indiscernible thing as *Shirk* is only possible by that Allah the All Knowing, All Seeing, Who is acquainted with even the thoughts which pass through the depths of the heart. He states:

Do you see such a one who takes for his Ilaah his own passion? Could you be a disposer of his affairs for him? (25:43)

In another verse:

Then see you such a one as takes as his Ilaah his own vain desire? Allah has, knowing (him as such) left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, (and understanding), and put a cover on his sight. Who, then, will guide him after Allah? Will you not then understand? (45:23)

Keep these Divine verses in front and then cast your eyes on any part of the current day civilised world, and then sometimes peep and search into the most delicate corners of your heart, and then see how many worlds of facts and realities are concealed within this one verse. We have already seen that the Quran declares that chaos arises through accepting more than one *Ilaah*. Just ponder, is the reason for this chaos and mayhem that is erupting from all sides today not simply this, that every human heart is becoming an abode for idols? Every group and every nation has made their own desires into their gods and under the influence and control of these 'gods of desires and emotions', no distinction between right and wrong is retained. Right is that through which an aim is achieved (according to Lenin and Machiavelli) and wrong is that which obstructs the achievement of aims. These are those idols which have turned the world into hell. These idols are not carved at the home of some sculptor but are in fact continually moulded in the factory of the human mind. Their abode is not some temple but the human heart. The idol of possessions and progeny, the idol of prestige and status, the idol of wealth and prosperity, the idol of regime and government, the idol of nation and

race - and Allah knows⁴⁶ what kind of *Laat* and *Manat* and what kind of *Habl* and *Uzza*⁴⁷ are concocted in the human mind at every moment.

This is that frightening and terrifying cliff edge of *Shirk* from which, having slipped, man falls straight into the dreadful destruction and ruin of hell. The Quran has stated that these are those people who go astray despite knowledge. Knowledge differentiates between *Haqq* and *Batil*, but once emotions overwhelm the intellect and desires overpower the mind then knowledge and intellect are never able to show the right path. Having reached this stage, man's ears become deaf to the bells of danger, veils descend over his eyes, his heart becomes rusty and he cannot see the consequences of the results of his deeds. According to George Bernard Shaw, 'Europe is flowing along on a river of emotions and does not consider what kind of an ocean of ruins its end is'⁴⁸. There is no dearth of knowledge in Europe, but all the knowledge is being used in this endeavour, to find what kinds of techniques can be most effective and implemented most rapidly for its own supremacy and for the slaughter of others. The very cause for Allah's earth being so constricted for mankind today is the fact that this knowledge is functioning in submission to the emotions. Man has made his own desires into his deity. If knowledge works globally according to the true *Ilaah* and His laws, then this same hell will become a paradise. Knowledge will, at this time too, still think of making guns and ammunition, but after the gun is made, its direction will not be decided according to the vested interests of men. The decision whether the gun will be used to halt the evil of a tyrant, or whether its target will be the home of weak and feeble nations, will not be made by the manufacturer of the gun but will be made by another power. This is that very point where man is in need of heavenly guidance and *Wahi*. When man uses the outcome of his knowledge according to the laws of Allah, then this same knowledge which today is the destroyer of humanity will become a blessing for humanity. And then the true meaning of '*There is no Ilaah, but Allah*'⁴⁹ will be comprehended.

Cast an eye one more time on the attributes of the real *Ilaah* which have been presented to you in the previous pages and see if there is any such aspect of life omitted for which there is the need to seek another '*Ilaah*':

- a) Who gives life
- b) Provider of nourishment
- c) Provider of sustenance
- d) Who bestows peace and security

⁴⁶ This means that if we use the light of the Quran then we, too, can identify all of these man-made idols. (Ed)

⁴⁷ *Laat, Manat, Habl, Uzza* - these are idols of the era when the Quran was revealed. (Ed)

⁴⁸ Bernard Shaw uttered these words prior to the war in Europe (1939). This war made it clear what that ocean of destruction was in which Europe drowned through its own hands. For further details see *Insaan Ney Kiya Socha* (What Did Man think).

⁴⁹ *La-Ilaaha-il-Lallah* - this is the Arabic as already noted earlier. (Ed)

- e) Who is always watching
- f) Who solves problems
- g) Who sets things right in all matters
- h) In Whom complete trust can be placed
- i) Who is called out to in times of hopelessness
- j) Who has control of benefit and harm
- k) Who has knowledge of both the visible and the unseen
- l) Who has power over all
- m) Who is Owner of supremacy
- n) Who is beyond any fault
- o) Master of masters
- p) The True Sovereign
- q) For Whose life there is no end
- r) To Whom all turn for help

Can there be another being other than this Being Who is capable of having obedience to Him accepted, Whose sovereignty should be acknowledged and before Whose laws man should bow? After this, think, what is the meaning of *La-Ilaha?*

But not only *La*, after this *Illa* as well i.e. after the negative comes the positive, the affirmation; construction after destruction; acceptance after refusal; after *La-Ilaha - il-Lallah*. Let us now go to *Illa* after this *La* because just as acknowledgement of the true Allah is impossible until every non-divine force has not been rejected, in this same way mere rejection is also anarchy and chaos until there has not been acceptance of Allah. *La-Ilaha-il-Lallah* – this is the complete Eimaan.

3 Allah

As has already been stated under the previous topic, the personal name of God according to the Quran is Allah which is a combination of *Al* and *Ilaah* i.e. that One *Ilaah* Whose concept is presented by the Quran, and Whose attributes have been explained in it in such great detail.

3.1 Grasping the Reality of the Self

What is Allah? What kind of Being is He? What is the form and reality of His Self? Where did He come from? These are those questions whose answers are outwith the scope of human intellect. Intellect is, in actuality, the name of those collective outcomes which man achieves through his knowledge and observations, and it is obvious that the means through which man obtains knowledge are finite. So when those means are finite, then the product of those means will also be finite, and how can the finite conceive the infinite? What can that man who so far has not even been able to determine what he himself is, determine as to what Allah is? How can that individual who is restricted in reaching the reality of a machine encompass the form and reality of the creator of the machine? Knowledge of the composition of the Divine Self is beyond the scope of human vision. This is the reason that the Quran does not demand visual recognition of Allah – it demands acceptance of *Eimaan* (in Allah).

3.2 *Eimaan* and *Irfaan* (Recognition)

The second method by which to evaluate something which man is not able to comprehend directly is to appraise something which is similar to it; however, that Being (Self of Allah) has no example like it and is invisible:

...there is nothing whatever like unto Him... (42:11)

Therefore, how can the form of Allah be envisioned by the human mind?

Habituated to perceiving things via his senses, man always desires that even the most abstract realities should display before him in the physical form, or at least that this metaphysical reality should be interpreted in such a way that it can form a tangible concept in his mind. This was that fundamental error as a result of which man adopted the worship of idols. Since Islam is a Deen of intellect and reasoning, it therefore closed all those doors through which the paths of this kind of superstition could enter the human mind. It has not mentioned any such example about the Divine Self which may, as a consequence, cause the human mind to drift towards some concrete and visible form of Allah. The Quran wishes to preserve

reality as reality; it does not wish to convert the Divine Self into a sculpture in order to fulfil a demand of the human mind.

3.3 Divine Attributes

As has already been written, the reality and form of the Divine Self are beyond the boundaries of perception. However, no-one (barring a few atheists) denies the existence of God. This denial by atheists is also not really a denial but merely a twisting of words. According to believers the power which is maintaining direction and order in the universe is God, and according to non-believers it is nature. Their minds can neither encompass the form of the Divine Self nor can they express the reality of nature. The human mind can determine the process of cause and effect up to the extent of the physical world but cannot reach the truth of the first cause.

The things by which the concept of Allah is imprinted on the mind are His attributes i.e. what powers Allah is Master of, what are the various ways in which His laws operate in the system of the universe etc., etc. Through the correct concept of the Divine attributes, the correct *Eimaan* about the real Allah takes birth in the human heart, whereas through the incorrect interpretation of these attributes, man becomes a follower of falsehood. The Quran has explained the Divine attributes in such detail and with such precision that man is enabled to establish the correct concept of Allah according to these. No religion among all the religions of the world is such that it can state with surety and certainty that its heavenly book is free from any tampering and additions and pure from contamination by the human mind. Leaving aside the claiming of this with certainty and surety, they admit and agree that they do not even possess the book of the founder of their religion in its original form.⁵⁰

3.4 God As Invented by the Human Mind

So it is obvious now that the kind of concept which the human mind will manufacture about god according to these books which have been tampered with, will only be a prototype of those human ideas themselves i.e. the attributes of god will merely be an extended form of human attributes themselves. For example, man has two hands and god will be given four hands. Man can pick up a stone, so god will be able to lift a mountain. Man has a height of around five or six feet, so god will have a height of fifty or sixty feet. The gods and goddesses of India and the statues of Greek idols are manifestations of this very belief. Outwith man himself and the signs of nature, the human mind is not capable of constructing any other concept of god, and the greatest inherent proof of this fact is that other Divine books have been adulterated by the human mind.

⁵⁰ Details of these matters will be available in my book titled, *Mazhab-e-Aalim ki Asmaani Kitabein*.

3.4.1 Concept of God in Vedas⁵¹

For example, according to the heavenly book claimed by Hindus, *Vedas*, *Rig Vedas* 10, Hymn 90, Mantra 12-13 and *Rig Vedas* 31, Mantra 11-12 has the following:

The Brahman was born from his mouth, and from both his arms the Kashtri caste of people were born. The ones who are the Vaish were born from his thighs, and from both feet of Parmeshwar the poor Shudar were born. The moon was born from his mouth and from his eyes the sun was born; the goddesses Inder and Agni were born from his mouth, and from his breath the air was born!

Or, for example, in *Rig Veda* 31, Mantra 13 contains the following:

The middle class was given birth from the navel of Parmeshwar (god), and the upper class was given birth from his head. The two ears of Parmeshwar bore the Earth, and the planets and astral bodies were born from his ears.

In *Atharvaveda*, *Kanda* 11, Hymn 2, Mantra 5-6, God's form is described as follows:

O Lord of our life! The supreme Soul! Greetings to your face. Greetings to your eyes also, your skin, your limbs, and greetings to you and your belly, greetings to your tongue. Greetings to your face, and to your teeth, and greetings to the smell of your teeth.

3.4.2 Worship of Snakes

In *Yajurveda*, Hymn 13, Mantra 6-8:

Prostration to the earth-dwelling snakes, and our prostration to those snakes that are in the wind or heavens. And our prostration to those snakes who either come with arrows or are in the crops, or those snakes that are in their holes. And let our prostrations be accepted by those snakes that live in the rays of the sun or live in waters.

3.4.3 Prostration to a Razor

In *Yajurveda*, Hymn 3, Mantra 63:

O razor! You are the doer of all things and are made of good iron. Prostration to you that you do not harm this child.

⁵¹ The quotes as detailed from this are translated from the Urdu version by the author. (Ed)

3.4.4 Prostration to Fever

In *Atharvaveda, Kanda 1, Hymn 25, Mantra 4*:

May prostration to the winter fever be accepted and I also prostrate to the summer fever known as Roru. May my prostration to the fever that occurs daily, every second and third day be accepted!

It is obvious that the concepts of things considered worthy of worship as mentioned above are the creation of the limited thinking of man. Kant has written that whatever type of god a nation adopts for its worship, that god is a reflection of the culture and civilisation of that nation, because it is a requirement of the holiness and status of this god that man should present it in the best attire. Therefore, the god proposed by any nation i.e. that god which is a product of the human mind, will make evident the endpoint of the state of intellectual evolution of that nation.⁵²

3.4.5 The Belief of Avatar⁵³

The belief of avatar is also a reflection of this same inclination of man. Whenever man observed any trait in a human being which was less commonly found among the general masses, that human being was immediately considered as being superhuman and conceptualised as a god in the shape of man. By adopting this very belief of avatar, Christianity moulded it into the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. In his book '*Researches in Oriental History*', Dr. Brown⁵⁴ has proven with prodigious research and effort that the divinity of Christ is simply an echo of this belief of avatar. Apart from this, many Christian researchers have reached the conclusion that most of the current teaching of Christianity is taken from the ancient teaching of Buddhism. This is why the famous historian Max Muller writes in his book '*Science of Religion*':

The language of Buddha and his pupils and the language of Christ and his companions are found to have strange similarities. It appears to be as if many tales and metaphors of Buddhism are drawn from the time of the Bible, although it is obvious that these existed in the world well before the start of the Christian calendar (A.D.).⁵⁵

⁵² This is a very powerful statement of fact which can be verified through evidence by examining the state of the human world up till now. (Ed)

⁵³ Avatar - a manifestation of a deity or released soul in bodily form on earth; an incarnate divine teacher. (Oxford Dictionary)

⁵⁴ Dr George W. Brown, *Researches in Oriental History*.

⁵⁵ This is translated from Urdu as quoted in the book by the author. (Ed)

Ernst von Bunsen writes in his book ‘*Angel-Messiah of Buddhists, Essenes and Christians*’:

It is a strange fact that whatever is seen about the life and teaching of Buddha in the oldest records which are available regarding Buddhism, is noted to be glaringly similar to those narrations about Christ which are found in the Bible. It is not possible that this should be called pure coincidence, and this surprising thing increases further when it is seen that these narrations are found only in Pauline Epistles and the Fourth Book. There is no mention of these in the books before these.⁵⁶

Our purpose in mentioning this is that when man devises a god using his own mind, then god becomes merely a man. From the attributes which the Quran has detailed about Allah, the Supreme and Omnipotent, it becomes clear how great the difference is between human thoughts and this teaching of the Quran, the source of which is beyond the reach of the human mind.

3.5 He is One

A detailed description of each of the Divine attributes in turn will be covered in subsequent chapters. But there are four attributes among them which are such that they are mentioned by the Quran in a short Surah in such a way as if these are the fundamental attributes of Allah. This Surah is as follows:

Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah the Eternal, Absolute (As-Samad); He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him. (112:1-4)

Before moving on to other attributes, we wish to discuss these four attributes under this topic. The fundamental attribute of the Divine Self is *Abdeat* (Oneness). Though *Abad* and *Wahed* generally mean one i.e. one with whom there is no other, in *Abdeat* the aspect of uniqueness is predominant. The fundamental character of a self (personality) is that it is unique in itself. No self can share in another self. This is called its individuality. Therefore, the Self of Allah is *Abad* (alone) and none shares in it. It is unique and no-one else can be included in it.

3.5.1 *Batil*⁵⁷ of the Belief of Magians

By virtue of the self being *Abad* (one), firstly this belief of the Magians that *Abrman* and *Yaẓdan* are two permanent entities as gods is falsified:

⁵⁶ This is also translated from Urdu as quoted by the author in the book. (Ed)

⁵⁷ *Batil* – falsehood. It is the opposite of *Haqq* which means truth. (Ed)

Allah has said: 'Take not (for obedience) two Ilaahs; for He is just One Ilaah: Then fear Me (and Me alone)'. (16:51)

3.5.2 Rejection of the Belief of Trinity

And secondly, the Christian belief of Trinity that Father, Son, Holy Spirit are three in one and one in three gods, is refuted:

O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your Deen: nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) a messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him; so, have Eimaan in Allah and His messengers. Say not 'Trinity': desist, it will be better for you, for Allah is One Ilaah: glory be to Him, (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs. (4:171)

In another verse it is stated:

Surely, they do Kufr who say Allah is one of three in a Trinity. For there is no Ilaah except one Ilaah. If they desist not from their word, verily a grievous penalty will befall the deniers among them. (5:73)

3.5.3 Gods and Goddesses

One form of *Shirk* is that others be declared as partners in the Divine Self i.e. more than one god should be accepted. Another form is that other powers should be considered as sharing in His tasks, commands and Will. According to the belief system of Hindus, Brahma is the one who creates, Vishnu is the one who sustains, and Shiv is the one who confers death. Aside from these, there are hundreds of goddesses and gods who are regulators of the various departments of fate and destiny. But the Quran declares that:

... They have no protector, other than Him; nor does He share His command with anyone whatsoever. (18:26)

When none can share in His command and Will, then how can he become a disposer of affairs:

Say: 'Shall I take for my protector any other than Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? And He it is that feeds but is not fed'. Say: 'Nay! but I am commanded to be the first of those who bow to Allah (in Islam), and be not you of the company of those who join gods with Allah'. (6:14)

3.5.4 Worship of the Messengers

After gods and goddesses, man made the messengers of Allah into gods and no followers of any religion in the world escaped from this. So much so, that the condition of the followers of Buddhism and Jainism, in whose teachings there is not even the concept of a god, also became such that worship of Buddha and Mahavir was instigated a short time after their deaths. Confucius had condemned the worship of gods but worship of Confucius himself began to then take place in the temples of China. The other religion of the people of China is Taoism whose founder was Lao-Tze. He also did not teach worship of idols, but despite this worship of his statue is also taking place for the last two thousand years.⁵⁸ In Japan, along with the statues of Buddha, the manifestations of their 'god' i.e. the sword and the mirror are also worshipped, which according to their ancient religion of Shinto the goddess of the Sun had placed into the keeping of her grandson i.e. the first King of kings of Japan.

3.5.5 Statues of the Founders of Religion

In Christianity, along with the divinity of Christ, statues of Jesus and Mary are worshipped. The belief of avatar among the Hindus is also a reflection of this worship of messengers. Or, as has been noted earlier, worship of the messenger by the Christians is a replica of the avatar belief of Hindus. The Quran has closed the door to worship of the messengers so firmly that no reverent belief of the human mind can open it.⁵⁹ Only one verse is quoted here in this regard:

It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Book, and wisdom, and messenger-hood, should say to people: 'Be you my followers rather than Allah's'. On the contrary (he would say): 'Be you followers of Him Who is truly the Sustainer of all; for you have taught the Book and you have studied it earnestly'. (3:79)

In other words, those people who have begun the worshipping of the messengers, this is their own invented path. No messenger of Allah directed them to do this. The messengers of Allah used to come to teach obedience of Allah, not to have themselves worshipped. But what is the cure for the human mind that did not desist from making Allah's messengers as god!

⁵⁸ Socialism is now becoming normal in China according to which no *Eimaan* remains in any type of god. Therefore, for them worship of 'gods' has either become tales of the distant past or will only exist among those conservative fundamentalists who will not have been affected by the atheistic beliefs of socialism. Such people will, however, be rare there.

⁵⁹ Details of this aspect will be available in my book *Iblees O Adam*.

3.5.6 Worship of the Religious Clergy

After the messengers, the turn comes of the religious scholars and saints i.e. the religious clergy, who are initially considered to be the means of reaching God, and subsequently are themselves made into gods. The Magi of Magians, the Brahman of Hindus, the Lama of Buddhists, the priest of Christians - worship of all of these takes place. The Quran locked these windows as well, stating:

Yet there are men who take (for obedience) others besides Allah. As equal (with Allah) they love them as they should love Allah, but those with Eimaan are overflowing in their love⁶⁰ for Allah. If only the unrighteous could see, behold, they would see the punishment: that to Allah belongs all power, and Allah will strongly enforce the punishment⁶¹. (2:165)

3.5.7 Invitation to the People of the Book⁶² to *Tauheed*⁶³

In relation to this aspect of *Shirk*, the Quran has also invited the people of the Book to *Tauheed*, stating:

Say: 'O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: that we follow none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah'. If then they turn back, say you: 'Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)'. (3:64)

3.6 Beliefs of Materialism

This is the devising of god out of tangible things, but the Quran does not treat the symptoms of disease, instead it addresses the root cause of the disease. Its sight is directed on the finest of finest non-tangible causes and effects on the foundation of which the structure of tangibles arises. We see clearly that the system of nature works on the principle of cause and effect. Effects are established as a result of the accumulation of causes. Man, accustomed to physical forms, considers these effects as existing in themselves, in other words he thinks that these characteristics are intrinsic within these things. This is that idea which is the basis of materialism. An individual observes that the one who consumes arsenic dies after a short interval. He thinks that this property is intrinsically present within arsenic that it is life severing. He sees that if seeds are sown after making the land level and soft,

⁶⁰ 'Love' as referred to here means to follow Allah's laws as revealed in the Quran. (Ed)

⁶¹ This is the consequence, based on the Law of Requit, of going against the Divine laws. (Ed)

⁶² Those who are known to have received Allah's revelation i.e. Christians and Jews. (Ed)

⁶³ *Tauheed* – oneness of Allah, sometimes translated as monotheism. In practical terms it means following the Permanent Values of the Quran. (Ed)

and if it is watered at suitable times, then crops will sprout from it. He thinks that these potentials are intrinsically present within these things, and when outcomes are what are known as the accumulation of these causes, then no need remains for an 'external' power.

Man, in his infancy, used to consider those things from which benefits were accrued as being worthy of respect, and used to be frightened of those things from which loss was incurred. Therefore, he used to prostrate before them. By worshipping them, he wished to keep them happy. The cow, the Ganges, the tulsi plant, the poplar tree; or on the other hand, snake, thunder, earthquake, all were declared as being worthy of worship under the influence of these very sentiments. When man progressed a little further, though he gave up worship of these things, he now began the worship of those human beings through whose hands these things were being received. Having abandoned the worship of the tulsi plant itself, he began worshipping the Jogi who was handing out these same leaves from his lap. Whether this worship is of the leaves or of the one who hands out the leaves, it happened according to the same sentiment i.e. it was thought that these properties - that they can result in profit or cause harm - are intrinsically present in these things or people. Though this era of worship no longer remains today, the sentiment due to which this worship used to take place still endures. Even now, when he recovers from a disease, although he does not thank the bottle of medicine which became the means for his recovery, he certainly considers the doctor who prescribed the medicine as the bestower of healing. This is the second stage of human intellect. When this same intellect achieves maturity, then at that stage, in the same way that men of today consider thanking the bottle of medicine itself as being contrary to intellect, he will also stop thinking that a man like himself has the power to provide healing. At that time his eyes will accept this truth that in the universe the effect of every deed is manifested according to the established laws of Allah. By operating according to this law, we gain health and strength, and by disobeying it disease and ultimately death occurs. The status of experts on different subjects is no more than this, that they possess knowledge of the Divine laws. They absolutely do not possess the authority or control to change these laws or to establish effects contrary to these laws. This is that truth which the Quran has noted as follows (via the lips of Abraham):

'Who created me, and it is He Who guides me; Who gives me food and drink. And when I am ill it is He Who cures me; Who will cause me to die and then to live (again)'. (26:78-81)

In other words every event manifests itself here according to the law of Allah.

3.7 Human Jurisdiction

And then not only is it that the Quran defines this concept merely about ‘things’ and not about human beings, considering things to have intrinsic effectiveness is definitely ignorance, but not as dangerous as considering human beings to be absolute sovereigns. The reason for tyranny and cruelty in the world and oppression is because this thing has been imprinted in the minds of subjugated human beings that powerful human beings are masters and owners of all powers. They can confer sustenance and can also snatch it away; they can kill and can grant life also. It is according to these beliefs that human beings who are masters of power and authority force others to become their slaves, and these are those same *Arbab-un-min-doon-Allah* (gods other than Allah) whose ‘worship’ has been done in every era till now. The Quran teaches *Tauheed* in this matter as well – it declares that the Master of all powers is solely the law of Allah, therefore no human being has this right that he should impose his rule on other human beings. Yusuf (Joseph) says to his companions in the prison:

‘O my two companions of the prison! (I ask you) Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah, the One, Supreme and Irresistible? If not Him, you follow nothing but names which you have named⁶⁴ - you and your fathers - for which Allah has sent down no authority; the command is for none but Allah: He has commanded that you follow none but Him: that is the right Deen, but most men understand not.’
(12:39-40)

3.7.1 Fear Disappears Due to *Eimaan*

Just imagine that if *Eimaan* in this type of *Tauheed* becomes established in the heart of man, then does any power remain in the world from which man will be fearful? If he is ever fearful, it will be due to going against the Divine laws, apart from this he will not be fearful of anyone. This is the reason that the Quran has stated the attribute of *Momineen* as being:

...there is no fear, nor shall they grieve. (10:62)

⁶⁴ The Quran has pointed to a great truth here where human beings give a certain name or title to something and suddenly it assumes some great significance e.g. a name given to a stone such as a diamond, and suddenly it becomes very precious. Another example is where an ordinary human being is termed as His Royal Highness – yet he is only a mortal like any other man in the street. (Ed)

3.8 *Samdeat*

The second verse of Surah *Ikhlās* whose first verse has been noted in Section 3.5, is:

Allah As-Samad. (112:2)

The word *Samad-un* has appeared in the Quran only once, but this word contains within it such a comprehensive meaning that its explanation can be challenging. It is commonly translated as ‘Allah is least concerned’ and the meaning taken from this is that he is very disinterested. From this ‘disinterestedness’ the mind immediately thinks of a sovereign, autocrat, king (dictator) who does not care about any rule or law and carries on doing whatever comes to his mind, regardless of whatever the consequences may be, and that in this same way (Allah forbid) Allah does not care. There is no doubt in this that He is the Supreme Being and Ruler of all rulers and is Sovereign Himself, but this is not the meaning of His being ‘unconcerned’. The meanings of *Samad* are such a One Who is not dependent on anyone else for any of His affairs; such a leader towards whom one should turn in difficulties and during campaigns; such a high and mighty rock that, when the spectre of floodwater encircles all around, then He is the only source of protection and rescue for the aid of man. From *Samdeat* the meaning is that Allah is not reliant on anyone in any of His matters. This is the fundamental attribute of a developed personality that it does not owe its being, survival and strength on external supports.⁶⁵ It remains alive and established due to its own inner strength. And since the Self of Allah is the most complete Being, in His case one cannot therefore even imagine the need for any external support. Contrary to this, every other thing which wishes to exist is in need of His support for its existence. This is the meaning of *Allah As-Samad*.

3.9 Belief in Progeny of God⁶⁶

The third verse of Surah *Ikhlās* states:

He begets not, nor is He begotten. (112:3)

The belief in progeny of God is a very old one. As has been written earlier, because man used to base the god created by his own mind on his own form, that is why he would combine all the human characteristics in this god. For man, children are

⁶⁵ This is the reason that the Quran repeatedly emphasises to create a self based on *Eimaan* and righteous deeds so that it is not influenced by the outer human world in anyway. (Ed)

⁶⁶ The word ‘God’ has been used here as this is a non-Quranic belief, and not related to Allah. (Ed)

the greatest of blessings and a big support, therefore why would he keep his 'god' deprived of this? And in any case, when he observed that the process of reproduction is only operational through conception and birth, then it could not enter his mind that any being, even if it is God, can be free from this. According to Zoroastrians their most ancient god *Mithra* is regarded as the son of the god *Ahura Mazda*. This same belief, according to Clement Wood and Dr. Brown, having reached Rome, became the belief of Christ as being the son of God. Among Hindus, over and above progeny, gods were also considered to have wives. The wife of *Sheva* is *Parvati* and their son is *Ganesb*. The daughter of Brahma, who is the highest of all gods, is called *Sarswati*. In Ragved Mandal No. 1, Sowkat No. 22, Mantra No. 12 it is stated:

'In this task, I call upon Indra's wife and Waran's wife Agni, to drink sowm, and for my well-being'.⁶⁷

3.9.1 Origin of the Creation of the Universe According to Hinduism

In ancient Hindu religion, the system of the birth of creation is the same one that could be conceived during the era of infancy of the human mind. We present one example here with apologies to the refined feelings of our readers, from *Shatpath Brahmin* and also *Brabdar Neik Upnashid*, according to which:

'Parmeshwar could not copulate due to the fact of being alone. Therefore, he desired a wife for himself and grew as big as a man and woman are when copulating. Then this Ishwar cut himself up in two parts and became a wife from one half and a man from the other. Then the wife hid, and kept changing into a cow, a mare, a she-donkey, an ewe etc. And Parmeshwar kept changing into a bull, a horse, a donkey and a ram etc. From this mating cows, horses, donkeys, single-hoofed animals, sheep etc. were produced'.⁶⁸

The need to quote these things is only to illustrate this point, how along with establishing the correct concept of Allah, the Quran also continues to contradict all the wrong and false beliefs in the world. He did not produce anyone through copulation – not only does this contradict Christ and *Uzair* as being sons (of God), but it also contradicts every one of those beliefs according to which the beginning of the birth of creation is accepted to be via the process of fathering and reproduction from God. All of the aspects of the Quran cannot become clearly evident until the different beliefs of the different religions of the universe are not in front of us. The pattern of the Quran is this, that after contradicting all wrong beliefs, it etches the correct concept in the mind. In order to demonstrate these

⁶⁷ Translation by Prof. Raja Ram Shastri.

⁶⁸ *Swami Atmanand in Vedarth Prakash*, pp. 83-84.

wrong beliefs we occasionally have to quote those excerpts which may be unpleasant to our aesthetic sense.

3.9.2 Procreation and Creation

Although the meanings of both procreation and creation are to create, as far as the concept of the self is concerned, there is a difference of heaven and earth between them. In procreation (i.e. birth through copulation), a part of the creator transfers and becomes part of the one being created. This matter is against the concept of the self (personality). The self is an indivisible entity, no part of which can be separated from it, neither can any part of one self become the cause for the creation of another self. Therefore, in relation to the self, the very concept of procreation is false. Contrary to this, in creation no part of the creator separates from him, nor does that part become part of the creation. Therefore, from the aspect of the self an act of creation will take place, not an act of procreation. Procreation is a trait of the animalistic level of life. Creation is an attribute of the self – at a fundamental level of the Divine Self, and following from that, of the human self.

Therefore, those religions which have associated the process of procreation with God, are clueless about this fundamental concept of the self. You can see how all these superstitions are contradicted from all sorts of directions and aspects in the Quran. The Quran states:

They say: 'Allah has begotten a son': Glory be to Him – Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth; everything follows His commands. To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: When he decrees a matter, He says to it: 'Be, and it is.'⁶⁹ (2:116-117)

3.9.3 Creator of Everything

This means that He brought this system of the universe into existence from nothing in such a way that whatever thing He initiated an intention about, it came into existence. How pure and pristine this concept is, and to what an extent He, the True Allah, is master of powers! The Quran states:

He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: no son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion: it is He Who created all things, and ordered them in due proportions. (25:2)

⁶⁹ This does not mean that things are created immediately in their final form. It means things commence being created according to the Divine laws as discussed in Chapter 4. (Ed)

In Surah *Maryam*:

It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, 'Be, and it is'. (19:35) See also (4:171, 10:68-69, 23:91)

The belief of the progeny of Allah is so wrong and baseless that no-one can provide any evidence for it. This is the reason that today the followers of those religions among whom this belief is prevalent produce such strange and bizarre interpretations and make efforts that it should be understood that these things are merely metaphorical – it does not mean real progeny.

3.9.4 Acceptance of Reality by Christians

This acceptance by the followers of these religions is in itself proof of the truth of the Quran. Some time ago the Lord Bishop of Canterbury had constituted a commission to investigate to what extent the existing Gospels are trustworthy and to what extent their teaching can be called Divine. In the report of this commission, inter alia, this is also written, that whatever is found in the Gospels regarding Christ being the son of God has no more reality than the status of fiction and that it is an intolerable slander on the Divine Self.

3.9.5 Consorts of Gods

Regarding the belief in Hinduism of a wife of god, this has already been mentioned. In the religion of ancient Babylon, the goddess of agriculture *Ashter's* marriage with the spirit of the date *Tummuṣ* used to be professed. In the Egyptian religion the marriage of the goddess of the oasis (*Isis*) with the god of the Nile, *Osiris*, used to be avowed. The concept of a consort of god is present in the mythologies of Greece and the religious tales of Rome. *Ops* is the wife of the Greek god *Chronos*, and *Hera* the wife of *Zeus*, *Rhea* is the wife of the Roman god *Saturn*, and *Juno* the wife of *Jupiter*. One of the reasons for the belief in the progeny of god and relatives was probably this, that in the mutual fights of tribal life, the members of one family would be supporters of one another (this is why in this regard there is mention of mutual fights in the tales of Hinduism and the Greek gods). Therefore, they may have thought that these gods should also have near and dear ones who can be helpers, but the true Allah is not in need of help from anyone:

Say: 'Praise be to Allah, Who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion: nor needs He any to protect Him from humiliation: Yes, magnify Him for His greatness and glory!' (17:111)

The reality of belief in the progeny of God is this much, that the mind of earlier man shaped god in his own form, and this belief subsequently continued in generation after generation due to the blind following in the footsteps of the forefathers. No-one evaluated it critically using knowledge and intellect:

Further, that He may warn those (also) who say, 'Allah has begotten a son': No knowledge have they of such a thing, nor had their fathers. It is a grievous thing that issues from their mouths as a saying. What they say is nothing but falsehood! (18:4-5)

After the arrival of knowledge, claimants of these beliefs are themselves embarrassed from these and attempt to hide these under the guise of metaphors and similes.

3.9.6 Belief of Daughters of God

Not only sons but daughters also were attributed to god. And this belief existed among those people who, if a daughter was born into their own house, would be sunk in mourning. In the social structure of Hinduism the extent to which a girl is a recipient of 'respect and value' is well known! But with Brahma a daughter is accepted. This belief was also prevalent among Arabs that angels are the daughters of god, and their own state was such that they used to bury their daughters alive. The Quran states:

And they assign daughters for Allah! – Glory be to Him! – And for themselves (sons – the issue) they desire! When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! (16:57-58)

A similar belief to the one among Hindus of gods and goddesses existed among Arabs about angels i.e. that they have been put in charge of the duties of death and fate and are masters of various departments of the system of the universe. In this regard, relations used to be assumed between them and God: they were made goddesses and declared as being the daughters of God. The Quran states:

Yet they attribute to some of His servants a share with Him! Truly is man a blasphemous ingrate avowed! What! Has He taken daughters out of what He Himself creates, and granted to you sons for choice? When news is brought to one of them of (the birth of) what he sets up as a likeness to Allah Most Gracious, his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! (43:15-17) See also (21:26-27, 16:57, 43:19)

3.9.7 Erroneous Belief of the Relationship of Jinns with God

During the era of man's ignorance, belief in Jinn was commonplace i.e. non-perceptible (invisible) forces which were believed to interfere in human matters

and influence them. Like other nations, this belief was commonplace among Arabs as well.⁷⁰ In any case, the belief among Arabs was that Jinns also maintained relationships with God:

And they have invented a relationship between Him and the Jinns (the universal invisible forces): but the Jinns know that they (have indeed) to appear before His Judgement Seat! (37:158)

3.10 Last Verse of Surah *Ikhlas*

The last verse states:

And there is none like unto Him. (112:4)

The word *Kufu-wun* used in this verse has also only appeared in one place in the Quran. Its meanings include similar, equal, equivalent and incomparable. Its meaning is clear i.e. that unparalleled and incomparable Being Who has no-one sharing in His Self and attributes. No-one is equal to Him, is similar to Him, or is comparable to Him:

...there is nothing whatever like unto Him... (42:11)

Therefore, there remains not the slightest possibility even for a belief such as avatar or *Ilaah* (god).

This is that concept of *Tauheed* which the Quran presents about Allah, and regarding that God who is ‘incomprehensible’, it expounds those things from which the correct *Eimaan* about this Absolute Self can be engraved on the human heart. Be aware that the word Allah has been mentioned in the Quran about seven hundred times and quoting all of these verses is problematic, therefore it has been noted briefly under this topic. Detailed explanation about the Divine attributes will be found under other topics.

3.11 Clarification of One Important Point

Before moving forward, it appears essential to clarify one point. Since the Quran is the revelation of Allah, therefore the attributes of Allah which have been explained in it are based on truth, they are not the guesswork of human intellect. In other words, these attributes do not mean that man, for the satisfaction of his yearning to worship, established the concept of some deity in the workshop of his

⁷⁰ In the Arabic language the meaning of Jinn is literally ‘being hidden from the eyes’. Details about what the reality is about Jinn according to the Quran are covered at length in my book *Iblees O Adam*.

mind, and then attributed various traits and allocated different names to this conjectured god according to the world of his own concepts. In the same way that (without using a metaphor) accepting this reality that the sun is a mighty stellar body which having risen in the morning provides light and heat is not merely a ‘conjectured’ belief, but is the acknowledgement of a proven fact, similarly *Eimaan* in the Divine Self and *Eimaan* in His attributes according to the Quran is not a conjectural belief but is acknowledgement of a fact. But the question is this, by acknowledging this fact, what is the benefit to man? Why is acceptance of this essential? The first thing is actually this, that acceptance of reality is in itself proof of human eminence. You can say that the sun does not provide light and heat but provides darkness and coldness instead. Your intellect and reasoning will be ridiculed, and suspicion will arise about your sanity. But *Eimaan* in the attributes of Allah is not only essential on the basis of acknowledging fact but is also the holder of very high and important objectives. We have already discussed these aims in Chapter 1 but because this point is very important, and together with the fact that it is off the beaten track of the worlds of intellect and beliefs, therefore we think that to bring it to our attention repeatedly is not without advantage. We realise that repetition is a flaw in a book but if in order to elaborate and explain some very important reality some particular point is presented more than once, then this cannot be considered to be a meaningless repetition. In this book repetition at some places has been allowed because of this need. (Even the Quran itself presents different aspects repeatedly in order to expound the truth).

The essential aim of *Eimaan* in Allah which has been mentioned above is that the aim of the life of man according to the Quran is to establish the kingdom of Allah on this earth. Man has been created superior to all creation and for all the forces of nature together to serve him. His responsibility in life is to bring everything in the universe under his control while remaining himself under the obedience of the laws of Allah, and by producing strength in his self in this way, to implement the laws of Allah in the whole world. That *Jamaat* which accomplishes this responsibility towards humanity is called a *Jamaat e Momineen* i.e. that *Jamaat* which has *Eimaan* in the Divine Self and Divine attributes according to Quranic teaching. Because this is a supreme responsibility which this *Jamaat* carries out, it is essential that, within the confines of human limitation, the reflection of the Divine attributes radiates in the members of this *Jamaat* with the immensity of their fullest possible potentials.⁷¹ The image of His light should reflect in the mirror of his heart; this unparalleled and incomparable, this ‘beyond the limits of imagination,

⁷¹ The Quran has not defined the limits of human potentials for the purpose of development of the self. This process continues in the next life as well, therefore a *Momin* should never for a moment think that the development of his self has an upper limit – his goal in life should be to resolutely follow the righteous path under the guidance of Allah i.e. according to the Quran. The higher the level of development of his self, the greater is his capacity to get increased responsibility from Allah (2:286). The ultimate sacrifice in this life is to lay down one’s life in the cause of Allah (9:111). (Ed)

idea, thought, guess, presumption' outline of these shining attributes of Allah the Supreme should be seen imprinted on the face of the earth in the visible personas of these highly realised selfs⁷² of this *Jamaat*. The apparel of the hearts and minds of the selfs of this *Jamaat* should be 'coloured' in the beautiful and brilliant colours of the Innovator of ever new and unique creations:

The Colour of Allah: and who can colour better than Allah? And it is He Whom we follow. (2:138)

Hence, having *Eimaan* in the Divine attributes means that a *Momin* should, according to the expanse of human constraints, by obedience of the Quran, try to create these attributes within himself and in this way, by achieving 'Divine closeness', keep progressing forward by treading through the stages of the process of evolution of humanity. A *Jamaat* of these kinds of *Momineen* is responsible for establishing and sustaining the kingdom of Allah in this world and their Allah is *Rabb-il-Alameen*. By giving birth to the brilliance of *Rabubiyat* within their own selfs, they also administer sustenance and nourishment of others. Allah is *Razzaq* (Sustainer) – in them, too, there should be the brilliance of *Razzaqiyat*. He is *Rabeem* and *Kareem* - the pearls of their rain bearing cloud of generosity and blessings should also be distributed for all. He is *Jabbar* and *Qabbar* – they, too, should possess this much power through which, by curing every rebellious and tyrannical Pharaoh-like human being, they can reform the whole world, and so forth. This is the true purpose of *Eimaan* and conviction in the Divine attributes, otherwise Allah is Allah, whether someone accepts Him or does not. If the whole world closes its eyes, even then the sun will continue to be the source of light and heat, as it is today. Even when nothing was there, Allah was Allah, and at the time when nothing else is left, even then Allah will remain.

3.12 Outcome of Conviction in *Tauheed*

Now let us look at the short verses of Surah *Iklas* in which four Divine attributes are noted, what their practical effect on human life is. What is the practical outcome of having *Eimaan* in these attributes?

By having *Eimaan* in one Allah, man becomes free from the slavery of all the false 'gods' of the world. By becoming the follower of One only, he becomes the ruler of the whole universe. He bows at His door, and the world bows in front of him.⁷³ He becomes His, and the whole universe becomes his.

⁷² The author uses the word '*Quds*' to describe the self. The root of this word is *Q-D-S* which comprises the following meanings: free from all kinds of faults and blemishes, to remove all faults, to strive to the utmost. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 2, p. 337

⁷³ It should be kept in mind that the Quran forbids the bowing of any human being before another human being. This statement refers to the forces of nature. (Ed)

And when this *Jamaat* has *Eimaan* in this reality that their Allah is One, then its essential consequence is that this *Jamaat* will be as one as well. A *Jamaat* accepting the Oneness of Allah should be one nation; if believing in two gods is *Shirk*, then the division of this *Jamaat* into two factions is also *Shirk* (never mind dividing into hundreds of sects). This is why the Quran states:

...and be not you among those who join gods (Shirk) with Allah – those who split up their Deen and become (mere) sects – each party rejoicing in that which is with itself!
(30:31-32)

It is a practical *Shirk* for the Muslim Ummah to be divided into sects and parties: this is because the practical proof of the belief of *Tauheed* of a nation which has *Eimaan* in One Allah is to become and remain as one nation. The foundation of the oneness of a nation is based on this great truth that all the individuals of this nation should follow only one law; the aim of their life should be one. The practical manifestation of having *Eimaan* in One Allah is obedience of His law. Therefore, *Tauheed* of Allah means the oneness of His Law and the practical consequence of oneness of the law means oneness of the nation. The scope of this oneness will keep expanding and the oneness of mankind will manifest. Hence, the final outcome of *Tauheed-e-Allah* is the oneness of humanity, and the practical means of attaining this is the establishment of this system in which the Divine law is followed. There should be no obedience of the commands and laws of any other than this; this system is called an Islamic Government.

3.13 Effect of the Attribute of *Samad*⁷⁴

Hence, when a *Momin* makes this proclamation that His Allah is *Samad*, along with this he also makes an effort to create the attribute of *Samdeat* within his own self. *Samdeat* means that Allah, the One and only, does not require the help of anyone else for the accomplishments of His intentions, rather the whole of the universe requires His help in its difficulties and challenges. The condition of the nation which has *Eimaan* in Allah-*Samad* should also be the same, that it should not be dependent on others for the fulfilment of its plans, rather it should be the possessor of such vast powers that the whole world should turn towards it in their troubles. The utterance of Allah-*As-Samad* repeatedly on the tongue, while the practical state is that of being dependent on others for every need, cannot be the way of the Muslim Ummah. And today the state of our dependency has become such that not only are we dependent on others for meeting our material needs but have also borrowed the ideas and concepts of others.⁷⁵ Neither is any ideology our

⁷⁴ *Samad* – absolutely independent.

⁷⁵ This state is the result of failing to comprehend the truth and significance of the Quranic guidance. (Ed)

own, nor any principle, neither is our heart our own, nor our mind. The curse of this apish mentality has overwhelmed us to such an extent that we consider imitation of the way of life of others to be a matter of immense pride. The Quran states:

When in their insolence they transgressed (all) prohibitions, We said to them: 'Be you apes, despised and rejected'. (7:166)

That nation which was given the reins of duty to lead the world is today lagging behind the whole world. What, is this the conduct of life that a nation which has *Eimaan* in Allah-*As-Samad* should have had?

Then the nation which possesses this *Eimaan* that its Allah bears no relation of blood and race to anyone, that He is *Rabb-il-Alameen* and the only way any relation with Him can be established is on the basis of obedience and *Taqwa*, is it possible that that nation will declare the criteria for the division of humanity to be based on colour and blood, race and tribe? Being separated into nations and castes on the basis of race and colour and being divided into tribes and parties are the infantile concepts of the era of ignorance for the eradication of which Islam arrived. Islam came to create such a paradise that the moment an individual proclaims *La-Ilaha-i-Lallah* he enters this paradise like a drop merges with the ocean, such that even if all the forces of the world came together and tried, they would not be able to differentiate this drop from the ocean. One by one, Islam destroyed the self-erected walls of colour, race, language and geographical boundaries (nations), and in this way placed the heavenly message of the unity of mankind in front of the world. According to it there is one and only one criterion for the division of mankind i.e. *Eimaan* and *Kufr*. All those on planet earth who have accepted *Eimaan* belong to one *Millat*⁷⁶ and those who deny this fact belong to another nation.⁷⁷

And when a *Momin* accepts this fact that there is no associate or partner with his Allah, then with this he also announces this truth that the nation establishing the government of Allah (without sharing in His Rule) should also be without associates in the human world.⁷⁸ This is the reason why the Quran has called the *Jamaat* of *Momineen* as being superior and above all others (3:139).

Reflect closely on these four short verses of Surah *Akhlaas*, and see how by acceptance of the attributes of Allah what supreme principles are held within them

⁷⁶ *Millat* – people of one ideology. (Ed)

⁷⁷ It should be borne in mind that this division is based on ideology, while keeping the whole of mankind as one community on the basis of physical needs. (Ed)

⁷⁸ This is in order to avoid compromising Allah's laws by mixing them with non-Quranic laws, as this will not lead to the benefits which are only achieved by following the Quran alone. (Ed)

for the practical life of the *Jamaat e Momineen*.

- (1) The one nation of Islam, in which there should be no infiltration of any kind of sectarianism or division into parties; one centre and the focal point of this centre one *Jamaat*; one flame and circling around it those selfless ones who are willing to lay down their lives.
- (2) Such a nation which is not dependent on anyone else for the accomplishment of its aims and the establishment of its plans, instead the whole world should look to it for help and assistance.
- (3) And then differentiation in this nation based on race and blood should be considered a false distinction – the criterion for differentiation among mankind should be *Eimaan* and *Taqva* and nothing else.
- (4) No nation in the world could equal this one *Millat*, this should be the most supreme and in front of everyone.⁷⁹

In light of these facts, one recitation of Surah *Ikbilas* should in practical terms produce this effect. But just reflect on what our state is today? These sanctified verses of Surah *Ikbilas* are read in those same words even today, in which the Muslims of the era of Rasul-ullah recited them, but is it the case that the same outcome is also produced today which was established in that great time? Consider after all, why is there this difference? It is because today there are only Quranic words remaining in front of us, their spirit has vanished from our vision.

⁷⁹ Thus serving as a model of earthly paradise for the whole of humanity. (Ed)

4 *Khalq and Amr (Creating and Directing)*

One fundamental trait of the personality is creation i.e. every developed self has an attribute that it should create.⁸⁰ But consider, what are the stages of creation? An engineer wishes to construct a house. Its first stage is this that he forms the intention in his heart to construct a house, then he prepares a map in his mind, then he draws this map on a sheet of paper, then he constructs the house according to this map. The house appears before people at that point when it takes the form of a building made of bricks or stones.

4.1 Two Stages of Creation

But it is obvious that before coming into this concrete form, the map of the house was in the mind of the engineer and even before the map came into the mind, its intention was in his heart. Therefore, in the process of the construction of the house, one stage was that when that house was in the intention and knowledge of the engineer and the second stage was that when it came into concrete and visible form in front of the eyes. Though both these stages are continuous links in the construction of the house, it is apparent that from the viewpoint of its state and its nature there is a big difference between the two of them. The Western philosopher, Pringle Pattison, has complained that in the English language there is only one word i.e. creation for these two stages whereas in the Arabic language there are separate words for each one of these two stages.⁸¹ The Quran has used these different words for the manifestation of these two stages. The first stage (when that thing to be created is formed in the stage of intention and knowledge, or you could say, when it does not yet appear in a tangible and visible form before our eyes) is called the domain of *Amr*. And the second stage (when that thing becomes visible in tangible form) is the sphere of *Khalq*. The Quran states:

...*Is it not His to create and to govern (Khalq and Amr)? (7:54)*

By stating this, these two stages have been related to Allah i.e. everything from its initial stage to the last stage comes into shape and is formed according to His law.

4.2 Literal Meaning

Al-Amara-to is the term used for those small stones which are placed in plains and deserts so that the limits of an area or the signs of a path can be determined from these. From this it is evident that in the word *Amr-un* the aspect of a sign, pointer or direction is prominent. In other words, we can say from this that before 'being',

⁸⁰ The difference between creation and procreation has been discussed in the previous chapter.

⁸¹ Quoted by M. Iqbal in his lectures titled *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

everything is moving in the direction of ‘becoming’⁸² i.e. that thing which has not yet come into being but is progressing towards that direction in which, having advanced further, it will adopt a specific shape and existence. This stage (when it is proceeding in the direction of becoming) is called the domain of *Amr*. Starting from the knowledge and intention of Allah all those stages are included in this up to when it is still in a formless state. This is one meaning of *Amr*.

4.3 *Amr* and Law

An engineer imagines the idea of some machine. The meaning of this conception is that he makes a sketch in his mind that if the parts of this machine are like this, and if this kind of arrangement is put into it, then if it is put into motion with this type of power then that machine will begin to function, and from that these kinds of results will be achieved. It is obvious that in this creative action one item is that machine which exists in front of us in a solid shape and the second is that plan or law according to which this machine remains in operation. This plan or stage of this law is hidden from our eyes though we can estimate or find information about this machine through intellect and reasoning.

The situation which is that of a machine is the same state of all the things of the universe. In the existing system of the universe everything has been created according to a specific plan and is functioning according to a specific law. This part which is related to a plan or law is linked to the domain of *Amr*. At this point it is essential to further understand that we can comprehend this much as to under which law a certain thing moves and is effective, but we cannot say why only that law was made for it and why another law was not devised. This is called the *Mashe’at* of Allah i.e. keeping in view the whole of the universe, Allah made whatever type of law was deemed suitable. Our concern is with the ‘how’ of this, not with the ‘why’. This is the reason why in some verses the word *Amr* also contains the meaning of order or decision. In other words, Allah’s decision was like this, His command was like this. He made this law according to His decision, in the matter of which He possesses complete sovereignty. It is obvious from this that that part of the domain of *Amr* where laws are formed for the things of the universe is outside the sphere of limits of our intellect, although where this *Amr* manifests in the form of physical laws, we can determine these through our observation, study and reasoning. These are called the laws of nature. In order to understand this, we can say that the ‘pre-natural’ stage of the laws under which the things of the universe function, is called the laws of *Mashe’at*, and the stage after this, the laws of nature.

⁸² In English it will be said ‘in the process of becoming’.

Just as in the outer universe there are Divine laws functioning, similarly in the human world every action produces its effect according to a specific law. Mankind receives these laws through *Wahi*, therefore the word *Amr* is sometimes also used for *Wahi*. This means that *Wahi* determines that direction, travelling according to which, the caravan of humanity can reach its intended destination.

Keeping these different meanings of *Amr* before you, reflect on the relevant verses of the Quran and the truth will become apparent.

4.4 Be! and It Is (*Kun-Fa-Ya'koon*)

Let us first of all take the creative stage of 'pre-nature'. In many places of the Quran it is stated:

Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is, 'Be', and it is! (36:82)

There are two issues here which require to be understood; one is that, after forming an intention Allah does not in actual fact say the word *Kun* (like us) – its meaning is that immediately along with His intention the process of creation commences. The second is that *Fa-Ya'koon* does not mean that the moment Allah said *Kun* that that thing came into existence in its final form. In many places of the Quran this reality has been made clear that the evolutionary process is continuing in the universe and the schemes of Allah take a period of thousands and thousands of years from their starting point to reach the state of completion. Hence, *Kun-Fa-Ya'koon* means that together with the intention of Allah the creative programme of this thing commences, and its completion takes place later at its own time. What we have said about 'by saying *Kun* the creative act of this thing commences and its completion takes place later in its own time' is stated according to the human concept of time in which there is a past, a present and a future time. With Allah these differentiations in time means nothing; in front of Him there is always an eternal now, therefore with Him there is no time differential between *Kun* and *Fa-Ya'koon*.

After creation, let us now come to the law. We have already stated that one stage of the Divine law is that where these laws are determined, and we can know nothing about this stage nor why these laws are of this type. The second stage is that in which these physical laws are implemented and actioned in the universe. The Quran has called this *Amr* also. In other words, the physical laws of the universe are also called the '*Amr* of Allah'. In Surah *Al-A'raf* it is stated:

Your Sustainer is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six stages⁸³ (which occurred in succession one after the other), then He established Himself on the (Throne) of authority: He draws the night as a veil over the day, each seeking the other in rapid succession: He created the sun, the moon, and the stars, (all) governed by laws under His command (His Amr). Is it not His to create and govern? (Khalq and Amr). Blessed be Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds! (7:54) See also (16:12)

In Surah *Ar-Rum*:

And among His signs is this, that heaven and earth stand by His command (Amr)... (30:25)

4.5 Allah's *Amr* in the Heavens and the Earth

Not only are the earth and various planets established as a result of His *Amr* but He has instilled these properties in them so that they continue to carry out the tasks assigned to them according to a defined procedure:

So He completed them as seven firmaments in two stages and He assigned to each heaven its duty (Wahi) and command (Amr)... (41:12)

All the manifestations of nature are busy in the deliverance of their duty according to this very *Amr*. Ships float about on the surface of the oceans according to this same system (22:65). Winds blow all around according to it so that they can assist these vessels in travelling hither and thither (30:46, 45:12).

4.6 Management of Affairs

Once He had created these characteristics in all things, that Sovereign of '*Khalq* and *Amr*' has not (Allah forbid) sat back and suspended His creative activity, but even after the creation of the universe the 'management of affairs' continues unabated, and this process is being accomplished from the same centre of power and authority (throne of supreme power). The Quran declares, ask them:

Say: ...and Who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?... (10:31)

And replies:

⁸³ The word used here is *Yaum*, the literal meaning of which is a day, but also means a long period, duration, stage etc. (Ed)

Verily your Sustainer is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six stages, then He established Himself on the throne (of authority), regulating and governing things... (10:3) See also (13:2, 65:12)

The creative stages of the universe are mentioned in these two verses of Surah *Al-Sajda* in such a beautiful and balanced way that even the scientific discoveries of the modern time are enthralled by this. First it is stated that ‘Allah passed this universe through six different stages to give it the present form’ (32:4) and after this stated that Allah’s pattern of creation is that in the domain of *Mashe’at* a scheme emerges. He begins the scheme of this *Mashe’at* from its lowest level; after this, traversing through various phases according to His ‘*Amr*’, it continues to rise and progress towards its point of completion (35:10). The duration of these evolutionary stages is of thousands and thousands of years according to your calculation and estimate (32:5). (In fact, according to some schemes, fifty thousands of years (70:4)).

4.7 The *Amr* of Allah Always Returns to Him

Because all the concealed secrets of the ‘system of *Amr*’ are within the sphere of knowledge of that same Master of *Amr* and *Khalq*, therefore all the total affairs of the universe, having gained maturation under those beneficial schemes, are gradually advancing towards that intended destination which has been determined for them:

To Allah do belong the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him goes back every affair (for decision)... (11:123)

In the system of the universe, the sequence of events and occurrences is established on this very pattern that every scheme reaches its destination stage by stage. The Quran states:

...that Allah might accomplish a matter already enacted. For to Allah do all questions go back (Amr). (8:44).

So that Allah may complete this *Amr* which is about to happen and all matters (after gaining maturation) return towards Allah’s defined objective. See also (57:5). And then these matters are not such that a scheme was begun and then abandoned on the way and another thing was started, or that in some matters ultimate success was achieved and in some others failure. Such things occur in human endeavours; the status of Allah is above and beyond this, His *Amr* is absolute, and His every scheme is assuredly successful:

...For Allah will surely accomplish His purpose (Amr): verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion. (65:3)

...and Allah's Amr (command) must be fulfilled. (33:37) See also (4:47)

Indeed, Allah assuredly takes His *Amr* (scheme) to its final end; He has fixed a scale for everything because His every *Amr* is always accomplished.

Every *Amr* has to reach its objective (54:3). After traversing through various stages and objectives it has to realise a certain status at a defined place. To take these determined scales to their objectives all causes and effects are created, some of which can be grasped by the human intellect whereas some are beyond his understanding:

...And Allah has full power and control over His affairs; but most among mankind know it not. (12:21)

4.8 Allah's Chastisement is also Related to His *Amr*

In the same way that Allah's *Amr* (Divine law) is operating in the outer world, similarly the outcome of deeds is established in the human world according to His law (*Amr*) - the results of the deeds of individuals as well as those of nations. That which is commonly called reward and punishment is another name for the consequences of deeds according to the Law of Requit. When destruction falls upon nations as a result of going against the Divine law, this is also termed as the *Amr* of Allah i.e. this too takes place according to Allah's Law of Requit. The Quran has described the destruction and obliteration of past nations in these very words.⁸⁴ At this point, a few examples are given as illustrations. For example, in relation to the flood of Noah his nation was told:

Say: 'O my people! Do whatever you can: I will do (my part): but soon will you know – who it is to whom comes a penalty of ignominy, and on whom descends a penalty that abides.' (39:39-40)

...then when comes Our command (Amr), and fountains of the earth gush forth...
(23:27)

When the son of Noah said to his father that I will go to some mountain and take refuge, his father informed him:

⁸⁴ For details see my books *Jooy e Noor*, *Barq e Toor* and *Shola e Mastoor*.

The son replied: 'I will betake myself to some mountain: it will save me from the water'. Noah said: 'This day nothing can save from the command (Amr) of Allah, any but those on whom He has mercy'...(11:43)

And when the time came for the cessation of this destructive flood, it was commanded:

...And the water abated and the Amr (command) was ended...(11:44)

In relation to the destruction of the nation of *Ad* it was stated:

So when Our decree issued (Amr arrived)...(11:58)

The same was also stated about the people of *Thamud*:

When Our Amr came...(11:66)

Lot was provided with knowledge about this *Amr*:

And We made known this decree (Amr) to him, that the last remnants of those (criminals) should be cut off by tomorrow. (15:66)

The punishment which overwhelmed the nation of *Shoaib* was also called Allah's *Amr*:

When Our Amr was issued...(11:94)

When *Bani Israel* commenced worshipping of the calf in the absence of *Moses*, he said on his return:

...did you make haste to bring on the judgment (Amr) of your Sustainer? (7:150)

Regarding the hypocrites of the time of *Rasul-ullah*, it is stated:

...perhaps Allah will give victory, or a decision according to His Will (Amr). Then they will repent of the thoughts which they secretly harboured in their hearts. (5:52)

About the people of the Book, it is stated:

...But forgive and overlook, till Allah accomplishes His purpose (Allah's Amr arrives): for Allah has power over all things. (2:109)

Allah's law is that whatever kind of tree the seed is of, that same tree will grow from it, and from this tree those same type of flowers and fruit will appear. It is obvious that to make the seed grow into a tree and for the tree to bear its fruit, many forces of nature are functioning through mutual cooperation. Man has acquired knowledge of many forces among these, while some are such towards which his human mind has not yet reached. It may be that there are some effects among them whose reality and form are beyond the limits of the comprehension of man. Those forces which cause the Divine law to be productive are called *Malaika*⁸⁵ in Quranic terminology.

4.9 *Malaika*⁸⁶ and Allah's *Amr*

The Quran has stated about the *Malaika* that they carry out every task according to the *Amr* of Allah.

...and they act (in all things) by His command (Amr). (21:27)

And:

...they guard him by command (Amr) of Allah... (13:11)

They descend by His *Amr*:

We descend not but by command (Amr) of your Sustainer... (19:64)

And they are the custodians and messengers of Allah's *Wahi*:

He does⁸⁷ send down His angels (forces) with inspiration of His command (Amr)... (16:2)

4.10 *Wahi* is also Allah's *Amr*

Wahi which is sent is also through Allah's *Amr*:

*...By His command (Amr) does he send⁸⁸ *Wahi* to any of His servants... (40:15)*

Regarding the Book of Moses, it is stated:

⁸⁵ Details of this are given in my book *Iblees O Adam*.

⁸⁶ *Malaika* – commonly translated as 'angels', this term denotes the forces of nature in the universe, both discovered and undiscovered to date. See root *M-L-K* in *Lughat ul Quran*, Vol 2, pp 535-538. (Ed)

⁸⁷ Used to send down, because the process of *Wahi* ended after the demise of Rasul-ullah.

⁸⁸ Used to send.

*You (O Rasul) were not on the Western side when We sent Amr to Moses...
(28:44)*

Here *Amr* means the *Wahi* of Allah. In another verse it is stated:

And We granted them clear signs in Amr...(45:17)

And We provided clear signs to Bani Israel of *Amr*. Here, the purpose of *Amr* is also Allah's *Wahi* or Sharia commands for Moses. In the next verse it is stated:

Then We put you on the path of Sharia⁸⁹: so follow you that and follow not the desires of those who know not. (45:18)

4.11 *Amr* Meaning Deen

In these verses, by *Amr* is meant Deen, and Deen and *Wahi* are one and the same thing. This is why the Quran and its commandments are also called the *Amr* of Allah in another verse. In Surah *At-Talaq* in relation to commands regarding woman, it is stated:

That is the command (Amr) of Allah, which He has sent down to you...(65:5)

In other words, those laws which are given through *Wahi* so that human society can be shaped according to them.

4.12 Allah's *Amr* and *Laila-tul-Qadr*⁹⁰

Differentiation in affairs took place that night in which the revelation of the Quran commenced (difference between *Haqq* and *Batil*):

In that (night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom. By command, from Our presence...(44:4-5)

That very night which is called *Laila-tul-Qadr*:

Therein come down Malaika and Ar-Ruh by the law of their Rabb, carrying every Amr. (97:4)

⁸⁹ Sharia – this refers to the path of Deen. (Ed)

⁹⁰ *Laila-tul-Qadr* - the literal meaning is 'Night of Criteria/Standards/Scales'. Metaphorically it could mean the dark period in human history when mankind was lost due to the absence of Allah's guidance. (Ed)

4.13 *Ar-Ruh*⁹¹ is Allah's *Amr*

And *Ar-Ruh* is also Allah's *Amr*.

(O Rasul!) They question you regarding Ar-Ruh. Say: 'Ar-Ruh (comes) by command of my Sustainer: of knowledge (of Allah's affairs) it is only a little that is communicated to you. (O men!) (17:85)

Here, by *Ar-Ruh* is meant the *Wahi* of Allah. Further details of this will be available in the book *Iblees O Adam*.

4.14 *Amr* Meaning Command

In some places *Amr* has also been used to mean command e.g. the *Anbiya* used to provide guidance according to Allah's *Amr* (command of Allah):

We made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our command (Amr)...(21:73)

In another verse the word *Izn* is used for this. It is stated about Rasul-ullah:

And as one who invites to Allah by His Izn and as a Lamp spreading Light. (33:46)

The Imams of Bani Israel also used to provide guidance according to Allah's *Amr*.

And We appointed, from among them, leaders, giving guidance under Our command (Amr)...(32:24)

Here, *Amr* can mean the Divine laws and also the Deen of Moses because as we have seen above the meaning of *Amr* is Deen and also the Divine laws. In these verses too, the meaning of *Amr* will be the Divine laws. The reality is that as far as the outer world or human society is concerned, by command or *Izn* or *Amr* is meant the Divine laws, according to which all these affairs are conducted.

4.15 *Izn* and *Amr*

In Surah *Al-Saba* there is mention of those 'Jinns' who used to serve Solomon. While mentioning them, the synonymous words *Izn* and *Amr* are quoted in one verse:

...And there were Jinns who worked in front of him, by the Izn of His Sustainer, and if any of them turned aside from Our Amr...(34:12)

⁹¹ *Ar-Ruh* – this means the *Wahi* of Allah. (Ed)

By 'Jinns' is meant those uncivilised tribes who used to carry out various tasks in the kingdom of Solomon. (Details will be available in my book *Iblees O Adam*).

5 *Khalqiyat* (Creation)

It has been noted under the previous topic that according to the programme of Allah there are two phases of creation. The first phase is of the domain of *Amr* in which the thing to be created is in its non-visible and non-perceptible form. The second phase is of creation in which that thing comes before us in a visible form. This is an arbitrary division as the term *Khalq* can otherwise be used at every stage.

5.1 Linguistic Meaning

The linguistic meaning of *Khalq* is to measure something, to estimate it, to make something according to some other thing, to set aright the proportion and balance of something. From these meanings the essence of *Khalq* will be to make something according to a specific standard and estimate by creating proportion and balance between various elements. Seen from this aspect *Takhleeq* will also have two steps. One is to bring different elements into existence from nothing, for which the Quran has used the words *Badee* and *Fatir* (their explanation will come later), and the second step is to keep producing ever new things from these created elements by employing different formulations. In this it could also be that when a thing (according to a specific order and scale) has been created once, it can be repeated in the same way i.e. it continues to be made over and over according to the same pattern, and it can also be that new additions keep taking place in the created things. The Quran has mentioned both these aspects.

5.2 Beginning and Repeating

A question is posed about the first phase:

... Who originates creation, then repeats (Yu-ee-du-hu) it... (27:64)

And a response is given:

It is Allah Who begins creation; then repeats (Yu-ee-du-hu) it; and your every step moves towards His defined stages. (30:11)

A few verses later, the Quran states:

It is He Who begins creation; then repeats (Yu-ee-du-hu) it; and for Him it is most easy... (30:27) See also (29:19, 10:34)

The meaning of *Yu-eedu-hu* is not merely 'repeating', it also means to give rotation.⁹² This means that following the commencement of its creation, by giving it rotation and passing it through different revolutionary stages in this way He (Allah) takes it to its point of completion. This process of the passing of things of the universe through various stages and phases to their point of completion can be comprehended by man, and now it has also become apparent as a scientific fact (according to the modern theory of evolution), but the start of the creation i.e. the process of its coming into existence from nothing cannot come within the grasp of the human intellect. This is why the Quran has not gone into the details of this. By saying only this much it has moved forward, that Allah:

To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth...(2:117)

Say: 'Shall I take for my protector any other than Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth (from nothing)? (6:14)

Being *Badee* or *Fatir* in this way is the same as that which is expressed through the words 'Be! and it is'. The meaning of 'Be! and it is' has been explained in Chapter 4. At that point this was made clear that from this it is not meant that everything sprouts out from somewhere just like that. In the system of the universe the creation of everything comes into being according to a specific Divine law. For the seed to become a tree, and for the drop of water to become a pearl, many stages have to be traversed. Regarding all these matters it is noted in the Quran that by passing through different stages, different phases and different levels, these acquire their final and complete form. This is why from 'Be! and it is' is meant that for the commencement of something Allah does not require any materials and causes, their beginning is according to His command and intention, and then according to His Own determined laws those things adopt their final form by passing through various stages.

5.3 Heavens and Earth

This is a fact that Allah Alone has created the entire system of the universe, but the Quranic technique is that it explains in numerous ways that reality which it wishes to engrave more profoundly on the heart. For example, it is stated as a question:

Or, who has created the heavens and the earth...(27:60)

⁹² The term used means passing something through various stages of development and testing e.g. the creation of the earth went through many stages before it was possible to make it habitable for human beings. (Ed)

Who is it that has created the heavens and the earth? And another time this fact is brought forward by this method, declaring that even if these people who oppose the Quran in this way are asked, who is the creator of the heavens and the earth, they too will acknowledge this fact that the creator of the system of the universe and the earth is indeed Allah. For example:

If you were to question them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth?' They would be sure to reply, 'These were created by Him, the exalted in Power, full of Knowledge'. (43:9) See also (29:61, 31:25, 39:38)

At some places this same truth is explained in this way that whatever is in the physical world, its Creator is that same true Allah, however, if you accept a god other than Him, then specify what did this god create? After mentioning the creations of the heavens and the earth in Surah *Luqman*, the Quran states:

Such is the creation of Allah: now show Me what is there that others besides Him have created; nay, but the transgressors are in manifest error. (31:11)

Then He gives answers to these questions Himself, that this is their omission that they are making gods of others. All this is created by Him and He is the Creator of all:

All Hamd⁹³ is for Allah Who created the heavens and the earth and Who made the darkness and the light... (6:1)

Along with this the Quran also made this reality clear that Allah did not create this system of the universe futilely and pointlessly, without purpose and meaning, without aim and need, but created it with infinite wisdom. There is a specific purpose for its creation. Since materialists are not convinced of the existence of a metaphysical force behind this system, their belief is that all things of creation have come into existence via blind nature, just like that without any purpose, need, aim and reason, and will end in the same way. Repudiation of this belief is done in the Quran using different means and techniques. It states:

Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between! That were the thought of Kafirs! But woe to Kafirs because of the fire (consequences of denial)! (38:27)

⁹³ *Hamd* – usually translated as ‘praise’, here it means that both the visible and non-visible creation, including man himself, present enough evidence that Allah is the Creator of everything, and the expression of this appreciation is included in *Hamd*. (Ed)

5.4 Knowledge of Things and Islam

This is why it is said that the task of the *Jamaat of Momineen* should be this, that they should take the things of the universe one by one, and after lifelong experimentation and observation and a period of research and investigation, prove this that Allah has not created anything uselessly and without purpose. Today the West expresses pride on this aspect that they have made great progress in the physical sciences. There is no doubt that this is in fact a reason for pride and acclaim. When the Quran stated that Adam deserves the prostration of angels to him and the system of the universe has been subjugated to man, then those individuals or nations who harness the forces of nature, fulfill this aim. But fourteen hundred years ago, the Quran had stated about the *Jamaat e Momineen*:

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. Men who reflect (Zikr) in the Laws of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth. (thus reaching this conclusion) ‘Our Sustainer! Not for naught have You created this! Glory to You! Give us freedom from the penalty of the fire’. (3:190-191)

From this it also became clear what is meant by ‘*Zikr*’ of Allah i.e. reaching this truth through observation and study of nature that this system is functioning according to Divine laws, and nothing in the universe is created futilely and without purpose. But the difference between a *Momin* thinker and a Western thinker will be that, after discovering the things of nature, the Western thinker will wander around in the valleys of conjecture and speculation to determine their purpose and need. Though he will determine the properties and characteristics of the different ‘constituents of the universe’, he will declare the sum total of these individual constituents i.e. the whole of the universe, as being purposeless and meaningless. He will search for the benefits and advantages of ‘creation’ (created things) in microscopic detail, but regarding the Creator of this beneficial and advantageous creation, he will hold the belief that He is (Allah forbid) a ‘blind nature’ which is devoid of aim, intent and wisdom. In other words, he will term each individual part of a machine as being useful but will declare the sum total of these parts, i.e. the machine, to be purposeless, and will consider the Creator of this machine (Allah forbid) as being ‘intellectually blind’.

You can now conclude yourself whether this is the following of intellect or the death of intellect! Contrary to this, a wise *Momin* will prove from these very same discoveries, that the creation of the universe is not the work of a ‘blind nature’ but is the act of such a Being Who is Wise, Knowledgeable, All-Seeing and All-Knowing. From the usefulness of its parts, he will prove that the whole machine

is beneficial and advantageous, and from the usefulness of the whole machine, that the Creator of the machine is knowledgeable and wise, and from this he will reach the conclusion that this system of the universe has not come into existence without necessity and purpose, instead it has been brought into existence for the achievement of a grand and splendid purpose under the auspices of the infinite wisdom of Allah, All-Wise and All-Seeing. In other words, a wise *Momin* will keep strengthening this *Eimaan* of his, which was based on the ‘unseen’, in the light of the dynamic and lively results of tangible and evidence-based experiments and experiences, with vision and knowledge, and in this way will prove that:

*...I do invite unto Allah – on evidence clear as the seeing with one’s own eyes...
(12:108)*

5.5 Science and Muslims

The style of a Muslim is that standing, sitting, walking about, he should keep reflecting and pondering on everything which is present in the universe. When moving, he is invited to the attraction of the pleasantness and beauty of the lilies and poppies; and when he sits, he can visualize millions of suns concealed within each and every particle of sand; and when he lies down, the star studded ceiling of the heaven discloses its long concealed secrets of astronomy to him; and in this way, by pondering on each and everything, he should prove that:

...Not for naught have You created this universe...(3:191)

What a display of shutting the eyes to reality it is to allege about such a Deen that it is against knowledge of the sciences. But how can we complain about others, when Muslims themselves demonstrate by their own conduct that these alive and perennial verses of Allah, the Ever-Living and Established, are for the purpose of reciting for mere ‘*Sawab*⁹⁴’ and by ‘Allah’s *Zikr*’ is meant the counting of rosary beads. And then by proclaiming that this system of the universe is not false, pointed towards another fact. The doctrine of some philosophers is that there is no existence of the things which we see all around us anywhere outside of the human mind; these are just manifestations of our thoughts, nothing exists in itself outside of this. This type of belief is also to be found among Hindus, according to which they call this universe *Maya* (mirage) i.e. which does not exist in itself, rather is merely the name of the self-deception of the human mind. Discussion of the philosophical aspect of this belief will be carried out at another place but by conceiving the universe to be an illusion and mirage, the deadly effects which this has on the practical life of man do not require further explanation. This is why the Quran made it clear that this system of the universe is not *Batil* (false) but is *Haqq*

⁹⁴ *Sawab* – this term is used for the concept of obtaining some unseen reward in the hereafter. For further details see *The Life in the Hereafter* by the author. (Ed)

(truth). Its creation is *bil-Haqq* and holds a purpose. Furthermore, the meaning of *bil-Haqq* is for the establishment of constructive effects:

See you not that Allah created the heavens and the earth bil-Haqq? If He so will, He can remove you and put (in your place) a new creation! (14:19) See also (16:3)

5.6 The Universe Has Been Created *bil-Haqq*

Bil-Haqq also means that everything is created with a view to a specific purpose. Wherever it has been placed in this grand machinery, it fits precisely, and it is busy working to fulfil that purpose for which it has been created. By this the mind shifts to this fact that the power which is running this system is not some blind nature but is a knowledgeable and wise Being Who Himself is *Haqq* and whatever He has created is also *Haqq*. In other words, by the very fact of this system of the universe being *Haqq*, this provides evidence of the Creator of the universe being *Haqq*. These are those verses, those signs from which the heart of a *Momin* achieves the paradise of contentment and assurance:

Allah created the heavens and the earth Bil-Haqq: verily in this are signs for Momineen. (29:44) See also (30:8)

This system of the universe being *bil-Haqq* is an established fact. There is never the slightest discrepancy within the system under which it is unwaveringly functioning. If it had come into existence purely by chance, it would have been scattered and dispersed long ago. Do you not see that whenever there is the slightest error in the functioning of a system of railways i.e. it moves away slightly from '*Haqq*', then how much devastation results in it. Hence, this subjugation of the sun and the moon, this alternation of the night and day, this process of everything carrying out its assigned tasks according to its own respective measures according to precise time and defined scales, does it not point to this fact that all this is the consequence of the infinite wisdom of a Wise and All-Knowing Being:

He created the heavens and the earth bil-Haqq: He makes the night overlap the day, and the day overlap the night: He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law) so each one follows a course for a time appointed. Is He not the Exalted in Power – He Who protects as per His laws. (39:5)

From these verses we come to know that this system of the universe is not created by chance without purpose and necessity:

We created not the heavens and the earth and all between them, merely in (idle) sport (Laa'ebbeen⁹⁵)! (21:16) See also (44:38-40)

Where by the use of one word *Laa'ebbeen* (sport), the Quran points to the creation of the universe being *bil-Haqq*, it also invalidates a false belief by this. It is a belief of Hindus that *Parthwi* (earth) and *Akaash* (sky) is the *Laila* (playmate) of *Ishwar* (God). In other words, by the creation of the earth and heavens, God is playing a sport (Allah forbid) and is entertaining himself. When he becomes bored with the sport then, just as children demolish their sandcastles themselves, he, too, will scatter and disperse this system. Related to this, the name of one God (Shevjee) among them, *Natrajan* i.e. a Raja of players, is a very big player. This is the reason why the Quran did not consider it sufficient to merely declare it as *Batil* (false) but by adding the word *Laa'ebbeen* to it, contradicted this belief with forcefulness. Clearly, fourteen centuries ago no one in Arabia would have known that this kind of belief even existed in the world.

5.7 Reflection in the System of the Universe

Then, since this scheme of the universe is created in truth (*bil-Haqq*), that is why it has been repeatedly emphasised to reflect and ponder on it. That thing which has come into form by chance without any purpose and need, or which has been made merely for sport, who gives an invitation to ponder and reflect on it? The question of reflection and reasoning only arises when some system is working under some special wisdom. At one place it is stated:

Do they see nothing in the government of the heavens and the earth and all that Allah has created? (7:185)

And at another place that there are signs for people of wisdom and intellect in the manifestations of nature:

Among His Signs is this that He created you from dust; and then - behold, you are men scattered (far and wide)! And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts); verily in that are signs for those who reflect. And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are signs for those who know. And among His Signs is the sleep that you take by night and by day, and the

⁹⁵ *Laa'ebbeen* – the root of the word is L-Ain-B. It means work which is useless but from which one can derive pleasure; to be non-serious about a thing; movement without a result; useless deed. This is about those who think that life is merely a plaything or a joke, they do not take life seriously. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 2, pp 471-2. (Ed)

quest that you (make for livelihood) out of His Bounty: verily in that are signs for those who hearken. And among His Signs, He shows you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope, and He sends down rain from the sky and with it gives life to the earth after it is dead: verily in that are Signs for those who are wise. (30: 20-24)

5.8 The Beauty of Creation

And not only this, but an invitation is extended to reflect and ponder on this system of nature and witness whether in such a grand system of the universe which astounds the intellect, is there any fault, any error, any omission, any disorder, any unsuitability, any lack of proportion, any mistake, any crease visible anywhere? Is there any chance to point the finger at anything?

He Who created the numerous heavens one above another: no want of proportion will you witness in the creation of Ar-Rehman. So turn your vision again: see you any flaw? Again, turn your vision a second time: your vision will come back to you dull and discomfited, in a state of worn out. (67:3-4)

To the superficial glance no order and connection, no proportion and balance is visible in this system of the universe. But as human knowledge and experience keep expanding, his research takes him towards this absolute conclusion that there is no crease in the Divine creation, no wrinkle in the blanket of lunar light.

5.9 Increase or Decrease in Creation is According to Allah's Will

Then, if this system of the universe had somehow come into existence by chance, then whatever was made initially would have remained as such. Those who accept soul and matter to be from the past hold this very belief. They say that whatever number of souls have been created, there can be no decrease or increase in it nor can matter decrease or increase; only forms change now, alterations keep taking place in the moulds; or on the other hand, the doctrine of the materialists of Europe that, 'what is life but the appearance of arrangements of elements, what is death but the disintegration of these elements'. According to them, the system of the universe is the name given to the various stages of the process of evolution, otherwise nothing here can increase or decrease.

But the universe created by Allah, the Wise and All-Knowing, is not of this type that after creating it He sat back (Allah forbid) as if He had become a useless limb. European philosophers think that the system of the universe is like a clock which once wound up, keeps running automatically. This doctrine is also a product of the human mind, it is not based on fact. To think that the Being which possesses this capability that He can bring the universe into existence from nothing and formulate such laws according to which this functions with balance and

synchronisation, that after doing so much, His powers became suspended and He sat back idle, is not knowledge but ignorance. The Possessor of such great powers - and idle! Does your intellect concede this? What, does evidence and observation also demonstrate this? Suspension emerges at that time when all energies end and life changes into death. The living One, and living with powers, and along with this established, He can never die. Leaving aside death, He cannot even doze off:

...No slumber can seize Him nor sleep...(2:255)

Therefore, the doctrine of suspension i.e. Allah sitting back idle, is a sign of shutting the eyes to facts. In the veins and arteries of the system of the universe, His Wisdom and Will is continuously functioning and working. He creates, then according to the law of *Mashe'at*, He has knowledge about the reality of what is not meant to remain any longer and He removes it, and that which has the ability to remain, He retains it:

Allah does blot out or confirm what He Wills: with Him is the mother of the Book (Divine laws). (13:39)

Having created, He has not now become oblivious of His creation:

And We have made, above you, many tracts; and We are never unmindful of creation. (23:17)

Not only beauty and adornments but keeps creating ever new creations:

...He adds to His creation as per His Will...(35:1)

Up till now there was mention of various aspects of creation. But the Quran has summed up all details and specifics into one sentence when it stated:

...the Creator of all things...(6:102) See also (39:62, 40:62)

This was the general aspect i.e. this proclamation that He is the Creator of everything. But to instill the truth in the mind in an unambiguous way, the Quran has made it clear by illustration with an example, that none other than Him has ever created anything:

*Say: 'Have you seen partners of yours whom you call upon besides Allah? Show me what it is they have created in the earth. Or have they a share in the heavens?' (35:40)
See also (46:4)*

At one place this same question is asked in the form of a negative question:

O mankind! call to mind the grace of Allah unto you! Is there a Creator, other than Allah, to give you sustenance from heaven or earth? There is no Ilaah but He: how then are you deluded away from the truth? (35:3)

5.10 False Gods are Themselves a Creation

Those whom you worship (whether they are human beings or signs of nature) are themselves creations of Allah:

Those whom they invoke besides Allah create nothing and themselves created. (16:20)
See also (52:35-36)

These false gods are not only idols of clay and stones but are also living gods whose worship is carried out during their life or after their death. It is stated about their helplessness:

Yet they have taken, besides Him, gods that can create nothing but are themselves created; that have no control of hurt or good to themselves; nor can they control death nor life nor resurrection. (25:3)

At another place it is stated that if there had been another creator other than Allah, and if the creations of both had mingled together, then there could also be this doubt that there may be another creator. But when this is not the case, then how can one be deceived:

...or do they assign to Allah partners who have created (anything) as He has created, so that the creation seemed to them similar? Say: 'Allah is the Creator of all things: He is the one, Supreme and Irresistible.' (13:16)

Leaving aside some big thing, other than Allah no-one can create even the smallest of things⁹⁶ (22:73-74). When all these things which the erroneous vision of man converts into gods are created by Allah, then the Creator certainly knows what potentials there are in His Creation for various tasks. Hence, when He (the Creator) says that no-one possesses the capability to create anything in My creation, then this is a statement of the state of reality:

Should He not know – He that created? And He is the One that understands the finest details and is well acquainted with them. (67:14)

⁹⁶ This is in reference to Allah's ability to create from nothing. This point is elaborated later by the author. (Ed)

He is fully aware what potentials are hidden in His creation and where the limits of their potentials come to an end:

...for He is well-versed in every kind of creation. (36:79)

It should be made clear that wherever in these verses it is stated that no god other than Allah has the power to create, by this is meant to bring into existence something from nothing. Otherwise, the other meaning of creation i.e. producing something by a new arrangement of different elements is that act of creation⁹⁷ for which man possesses the ability. When the Quran declares Allah as being the best of Creators (23:14, 37:125), there is a reference in this to the fact that there can be creators other than Allah. But He is the best of Creators i.e. that ultimate beauty and adornment, complete balance and proportion which is found in the creation of Allah cannot be found in the creation of others.

In the light of this discussion, reflect that when a *Jamaat* consists of those individuals whose selves are becoming developed (i.e. the attributes of Allah are manifesting in their selves), then the first trait of this *Jamaat* will be that it should become a partner in the creative programme of Allah. The fundamental trait of a *Momin* is creation, and creation also of such a type that, just as an attribute of Allah is that when He makes an intent about something then that thing becomes manifest and emerges, the state of a *Momin* should also be such that (within the constraints of being human) when he intends to do something then this intent should assuredly reach its completion. In the same way that his Allah is not dependent on an outsider for the completion of His intents, similarly the state of the *Jamaat* of *Momineen* should be such that in the attainment of their aims they are not reliant on outsiders. This *Jamaat* will be the cause for the creation of ever new aims, lively objectives, and bright and sustainable wishes in the world.

When their Allah is not a static Being of inertia and an idol of stone but instead is a Creator and Maker, then does it suit them to spend a life that is static and suspended like stones? They should also be creators and makers (within the confines of being human). They should be the creator of their own world and in the creation of this new world, no-one should be their equal or comparable – this is the very secret of being a *Momin*, this is the essence of his being, and this is the very proclamation of the Quran.

⁹⁷ Whatever man creates is through the use of those potentials and intellect which are bestowed by Allah. Here, the Quran draws our attention to this matter, to relate all creation to His Self. (Ed)

6 *Rabubiyat* (Sustenance)

After creation (*Takhleeq*), the first stage is *Rabubiyat*. This has already been explained that by *Kun-Fa-Yakoon* (Be! and it is) does not mean that by Allah saying 'Kun' (Be), that thing at once comes into existence in its completed form. By this is meant that the process of its creation commences and by gradually going through evolutionary stages, it reaches its point of completion. Taking something from its point of initiation gradually towards its stage of completion and providing complete guidance for this is called *Rabubiyat*, and the one Who does this is called *Rabb*. The general meaning of this will be the One who provides 'nourishment' i.e. *Rabubiyat* will mean that in order for something to be taken through all of its stages from its beginning until its completion; to oversee and supervise; provide nourishment; make it grow and enable it to reach its completion; from a water drop till it becomes a pearl; till a seed becomes a tree; till water and clay turns to the form of a man; whatever kind of stages arise en route to be watchful and to accommodate them, providing those means which are sufficient for its requirements and on which its life depends.

6.1 Displays of *Rabubiyat*

This arrangement that along with the birth of a child fountains of milk should gush forth for its nourishment, was not a matter within the control of a human; this is a manifestation of the marvel of *Rabubiyat* of that Creator of the Universe. Then also reflect on these links in this process of *Rabubiyat* that, following the birth of a child and up to a period of two to two and a half years, how changes occur automatically in this diet of his according to the demands of his nutrition. Because in the beginning the stomach of a child is fragile, therefore at the beginning the composition of the milk contains proportionately more water and less fat. As the child grows its stomach continues to develop the ability to digest a stronger diet and along with this ability, stage by stage, the proportion of water in the milk reduces and fat composition increases, although the milk producing 'machinery' is still the same and the constituents from which the milk is produced in the mother also remain unchanged, so much so that when the child develops the strength and ability to digest other food, then these springs of milk dry up. For those children who are placed on artificial feeding, charts are prepared for their diet which detail how the proportion of water and milk will decrease and increase in relation to age. The principle of this proportion is defined on this process of nature which it keeps in view in relation to the child's diet. From this one system it can be understood whether this arrangement is that of a 'blind nature' i.e. could the inventor of this process from which man, who possesses so much intelligence and understanding, knowledge and experience, obtains guidance to prepare food for the child, be a 'blind nature'? This is just an example, otherwise you will see that whichever thing

you cast your eye on in this wide and expansive system of the universe, whatever means of sustenance are needed are all present from the direction of nature from the beginning to the end at every stage for its survival and strength. For human life air, water, light and food are indispensable constituents. The state of air is such that wherever man is, whether travelling or not, low or high, day or night, ample air remains automatically around him and he is not even aware at what moment he takes a breath; so much so, that even during sleep this action continues to function automatically. This is the same situation with light. By reflecting on the system of 'water supply' which Allah's system of *Rabubiyat* has made for water to reach every place, the intellect and vision become lost in amazement. The rays of the sun take clean and distilled water from the brackish water of the oceans by evaporation to the heights of the atmosphere and leave contaminations behind. This freshwater floats around hither and thither in the vessels of the clouds, and wherever it is needed, the mouth of this vessel is opened. Whatever is beyond necessity is kept stored in the reservoirs of snow on the tops of the mountains which during the days of summer gradually keeps flowing to the plains. Whatever proportion of water is required on the plains is used, and the remainder flows forward and again joins the ocean, and some by being absorbed into the earth, remains stored in the form of underground wells and springs. Could this system even be imagined by a 'blind nature'? Could all this organisation and arrangement have just happened to come into existence? Just look at food, what is there which is not produced in the land, and all this is provided without any cost! There is no tax or restriction on anything. Perhaps it could be said that it appears from the kinds of troubles that man has to bear in order to sustain his life and for the sake of his body and soul, that he is subject to cruelty from every direction. But by looking at it a bit more closely you will yourself reach the right conclusion. *'My Saki blessed me with transparent wine, devoid of intoxication. Whatever colours you see belong to my goblet'*⁹⁸

6.2 Non-Divine Economic System

The system of Allah, *Rabb-il-Alameen*, was indeed the possessor of conveniences and comforts, but when man took it into his grasp and began the distribution of Allah's bestowed resources for his own ends and objectives, then clouds of troubles appeared over mankind. These troubles and difficulties are self-created by man. If the means of nourishment are distributed according to the Divine laws, then see how man will spend a life of paradise. What an irony it is that an ant and a sparrow should live its life in peace and tranquility whereas the life of man, the 'most superior among the creation', should be worse than hell! While a child remains in the care of nature, no deprivation or difficulty reaches it (if it does come then it is as a consequence of man's self-created system), but the moment he gives

⁹⁸The author does not give a reference for this quote. It may be a couplet by Iqbal. (Ed)

up his mother's milk and enters the world of the human system, then mountains of problems begin to descend on him. The aim of the Quran is that that system of life which man having taken into his own hands has turned this earthly paradise into hell, should be established on those lines which Allah, *Rabb-il-Alameen*, has fixed for the universal *Rabubiyat* of mankind. These laws are preserved in the pages of the Quran whose beginning is with this verse:

Every type of Hamd is for Allah who is the Sustainer of whole of the universe. (1:2)

6.3 *Rabb-il-Alameen* (The Sustainer of All Worlds)

In other words, the attribute of Allah which is mentioned foremost in the Quran is that of *Rabubiyat* and this *Rabubiyat* is not for any particular species, any particular group, any particular nation, rather is the *Rabubiyat* for the whole world – the *Rabubiyat* for the whole system of the universe. The word *Rabb-il-Alameen* has been reiterated nearly forty times in the Quran so that the significance of this comprehensive system of *Rabubiyat* becomes firmly engraved on the human heart. To explain this, it is stated in another place:

Pharaoh said: 'And what is the 'Sustainer and Cherisher of the worlds'?' (Moses) replied: 'The Sustainer and Cherisher of the heavens and the earth, and all between - if you want to be quite sure.' (26:23-24)

This reality of the *Rabubiyat* of the universe has been repeated at nearly fifteen different places in the Quran in varying ways. At some places the *Rabubiyat* of mankind is referred to:

Say: I seek the protection (of the laws) of the Sustainer and Cherisher of Mankind. (114:1)

Say! I wish to come within the protection of the laws of the Sustainer of mankind. Or at another place by condensing all these details, summarised it in one line, stating that He is the *Rabb* of 'all things':

Say! 'Shall I seek for my Sustainer other than Allah, when He is the Sustainer of all things?'...(6:164)

He is also the Creator of everything and the Sustainer of everything too. In this amazing system of the universe, from the finest particle to the massive stellar bodies, and beyond even these only Allah knows to where, from the beginning to the ultimate end of everything, in every phase of life, providing all sustenance to it and keeping an eye on everything, is a trait pertaining only to the majesty of Allah, *Rabb-il-Alameen*. For example, it is stated in the Quran:

...the Sustainer of the Throne of Honour (*Arsh-e-Kareem*)⁹⁹. (23:116)

In other words, the master of that centre of forces from where this whole system of the universe is functioning in such a beautiful and balanced way is only Allah. The creation of all that exists, *Rabubiyat* and administration and management, is solely within His grip and hold. Regarding the different departments and the various aspects of the system of nature also, it is stated in various verses that Allah is the owner and controller of it all:

*He is the Rabb of Sirius*¹⁰⁰ (*the Mighty Star*). (53:49)

In Surah *Ar-Rehman* it is stated:

Rabb of the two Easts and Rabb of the two Wests. (55:17)

At another place He is called *Rabb ul Mashariq*¹⁰¹ (37:5). *Rabb ul Masharaq* and *Al-Magharib*¹⁰² (70:40) in Surah *Al-Maarij*, and at one place as *Rabb ul Falaq*¹⁰³ (113:1). Similarly, He has been called the *Rabb* of Makkah, the centre of Islam (27:91) and also *Rabb ul Izzat*¹⁰⁴ (37:180) i.e. possessor of sovereignty and power.

As has been noted above, if the economic and social system of the world is managed according to the Divine laws, then man will never have to face any difficulty or hindrance about the resources of life. This is what is meant by accepting Allah as our *Rabb* i.e. shaping our society according to His system of *Rabubiyat*. This is indeed the aim and manner of life of the *Jamaat e Momineen*. The proclamation of this very matter was made through these words which were stated by Rasul-ullah:

Say! 'Shall I seek for my Sustainer other than Allah, when He is the Sustainer of all things'? ... (6:164)

No other is a shareholder with Him in this *Rabubiyat*:

(That Quran) Which gives guidance to the straight path, and we have Eimaan therein: we do not associate any with our Rabb. (72:2)

⁹⁹ This is repeated about six times.

¹⁰⁰ This can also mean intellect and consciousness.

¹⁰¹ *Mashariq* is the plural of *Mashraq* which means East.

¹⁰² *Magharib* is the plural of *Maghrib* which means West.

¹⁰³ *Falaq* means dawn.

¹⁰⁴ *Izzat* means power.

This means that the system of our society will be purely according to Allah's law of *Rabubiyat* – not this, that some parts are taken from these laws and some from human ideas, and in this way through their amalgamation to formulate a code of laws. This is a blatant *Shirk* for which there is absolutely no permission in Islam. Man as a *Momin* cannot associate anyone else in Allah's system of *Rabubiyat*. Hence, an example is mentioned in Surah *Al-Kahf* of a *Momin* man who states:

But for my part that He is Allah, My Rabb, and none shall I associate with my Sustainer. (18:38)

This doctrine, that creation is in the hands of another god (*Brahma*) and *Rabubiyat* is in the hands of another god (*Vishnu*), is a sign of ignorance about the reality of Allah. Everything is created by this One Allah, and only He is the One Who by taking everything through the stages of life conveys them to their completion:

Say: Is it that you deny Him Who created the earth in two Days (stages)? And do you join equals with Him? He is Rabb of the Worlds. (41:9)

Rabubiyat is neither in the hands of some god or goddess nor in the hand of any man. This fact is not in need of any explanation that a man only bows before another man when he thinks that my needs of life are in the control of another. The blessing of Allah has spread the means of sustenance on the vast and wide face of the earth for the whole of mankind without expectation of any remuneration or return (41:10) (equally for every needy person). But the usurping powers commandeer these resources into their own possession, and after this they get done whatever they wish from the hungry masses of humanity. Pharaoh, in proof of his claim of being 'god', had declared this very thing:

I am your sustainer, most high. (79:24)

And this is not only related to the one Pharaoh of Moses, the pharaohs of every era do all of this to maintain the strength of their 'godliness'. The Quran came to eliminate tyranny from the world. Hence, it has reiterated this truth in various ways nearly nine hundred and fifty times that your *Rabb* is Allah alone – *Rabubiyat* is not in the control of any other. That which you think - that the means of sustenance of life are in the hands and control of tyrannical forces - this will only be like this till that time that you think like this. When you stop thinking like this and acquire *Eimaan* in this that the ownership of *Rabubiyat* is only with that Being of Allah, then a revolutionary change will take birth in you, your viewpoint will transform, and when such a change occurs in your psychological state, then no power of the world will be able to make you accept their 'godliness'. The state of those who accept Allah as *Rabb* is indeed unique:

In the case of those who say, 'Our Rabb is Allah', and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the universal forces descend on them: 'Fear you not!', nor grieve! but receive the Glad Tidings of Jannat, the which you are promised! (41:30)

In Surah *Al-Ahqaf* it is stated:

Verily those who say, 'Our Rabb is Allah,' and remain firm (on that Path), on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (46:13)

6.4 True Freedom

When the human heart becomes home to such a strong *Eimaan*, then man never bows before anyone other than Allah. Other than at His door, he does not supplicate before any other portal, and he does not remain the servant of any other than Him. This is itself the declaration of the true *Rabb* Himself:

Your Rabb has decreed that you follow none but Him ... (17:23)

Hence, the meaning of having *Eimaan* in Allah's *Rabubiyat* is that, other than Allah, the sovereignty of no-one else should be accepted. Bowing before every possessor of power in the world by believing it to be a master, tendering your begging bowl in front of whichever high edifice is sighted, is humiliation of the human self and is the stripping of humanity. This is exactly what Yusuf had told his jailhouse companions:

O my two companions of the prison! Are many gods differing among themselves better, or the One Allah, Supreme and Irresistible? (12:39)

6.5 Chains of Slavery

But, of course, man does not confine his means and sources of imprisonment and bondage to one place only – he purchases the chains of slavery from various nooks and crannies. If one chain is placed on him forcibly, he puts on ten more chains voluntarily. These are those chains which find their way through the paths of reverence and adoration to become installed in his heart and mind. The Quran has mentioned in numerous places those people who were told in clear terms to accept one *Rabb* as their Allah, but derogating Allah, they declared the *Anbiya* and the angels themselves as their *Rabb*:

Nor would he (a man of Rabb) instruct you to take angels and Anbiya for gods and patrons. What! would he bid you to Kufr after you have bowed your will to Islam? (3:80)

They went even further than this and accepted their scholars and their elders as their masters:

*They take their priests and their anchorites to be their gods in derogation of Allah ...
(9:31)*

6.6 Obedience of Religious Clergy and Scholars

What is the acceptance of scholars and clergy as being masters other than this – the affirmation of their words without any logic or reasoning, and the acceptance of these as being worthy of obedience in the same way as the *Wabi* descended from Allah, and to declare their deeds as having the status of being beyond criticism, and to believe them to be masters of those hidden powers which are solely attributed to the Being of Allah. But the difficulty is that when we read these verses of the Quran, after saying that these are but the tales of past nations, these have nothing to do with us, we move forward, even though the Quran does not narrate these historical examples in order that this ‘story telling’ may become the means to help us slumber (Allah forbid). It narrates these events and stories of past peoples and the circumstances and way of life of previous nations in order to infuse life into the Islamic Ummah, and wishes to tell them how former nations, having reached these precipices of destruction and ruin, slipped. So that you too should not slip by reaching these cliffs. But the state in which we are today is apparent - that same Muslim who was told to invite the people of the Book to:

...come to common terms as between us and you: that we follow none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, gods and patrons other than Allah... (3:64)

This was the very teaching of the Quran, that obedience of other than Allah should not be adopted. So much so, that even the messengers whose status was the highest after the status of Allah, they also extended invitations towards the obedience of Allah, they never used to teach obedience of their own selves:

It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Book, and Wisdom, and the messenger-hood, should say to people: ‘Be you my followers rather than Allah’s’: on the contrary (He would say) ‘Be you followers of Him Who is truly the Cherisher of all: for you have taught the Book and you have studied it earnestly’. (3:79)

But this truth should once again be understood, that the practical meaning of accepting Allah as *Rabb* is that we shape our system in accordance with the Divine laws; other than this there is no other form of acceptance of Allah as *Rabb*. This is that system in which no human being remains at the mercy of another human being and therefore does not accept subjugation to anyone. The *Jamaat* through

which this kind of system of *Rabubiyat* is established is called the *Jamaat* of *Rabba'niyeen*. Among them, every individual is concerned about the *Rabubiyat* of others and in this way the development of all the individuals of humanity continues to take place. Within this 'development' their physical sustenance is included as well as the accomplishment of all latent human potentials. The focal point of Islamic teaching is the establishment of this very system of *Rabubiyat*.¹⁰⁵ *Rabubiyat* is an important trait of a developed self and its manifestation takes place automatically through the *Jamaat e Momineen*.

(Since, as has already been noted, the word *Rabb* occurs nine hundred and fifty times in the Quran, this is why it is difficult to note all these verses here. Those verses will appear at other places).

¹⁰⁵ Further details are covered in my book titled *The Quranic System of Sustenance*.

7 Razzaqiyat (Provision of Rizq)

That means of sustenance which is received from some direction as a gift is called *Rizq*. But there is one distinction in its basic meaning and that is that it should be received at the time that it is required. Hence, the meaning of *Rizq* is that means of sustenance which is received freely from Allah according to the need of everything without any effort or repayment. It should be made clear that 'getting *Rizq*' does not mean that ready baked bread is put into the mouth of man. By *Rizq* is meant that all the resources for the physical needs of man are present in the earth which every needy one can obtain. This wide and vast surface of the earth is the banqueting table (*Maida*) for the numerous and diverse favours of that Allah *Razzaq* which is spread out equally for His creation. The One Who has created creation has also made arrangements for its *Rizq* Himself:

It is Allah Who has created you: further, He has provided for your sustenance; then He will cause you to die; and again He will give you life. Are there any of your 'Partners' who can do any single one of these things? ... (30:40)

7.1 Rizq from the Heavens and Earth

He has organised the system of the universe in such a way, and it is busy in carrying out its duties in such a manner, that all the means and resources of *Rizq* keep appearing before man:

Who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy; and sent down rain from the heavens; and brought forth therewith fruits for your sustenance... (2:22)

Accumulating stores of water in the lofty skies and then producing life-giving *Rizq* from the dead land through these - these are all the amazing displays of His attribute of *Razzaqi*:

It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth and sends down rain from the skies, and with it brings out fruits wherewith to feed you ... (14:32)

Rain is both a cause for the production of *Rizq* and is *Rizq* in itself because water is an indispensable part of *Rizq*:

...and the fact that Allah sends down sustenance from the sky, and revives therewith the earth after its death... (45:5)

The initial source of life is also water and the cause for its continuing existence too. The continuous flow of the stream of life is a result of its blessings:

... We made from water every living thing... (21:30) See also (50:9-11)

7.2 System of *Rizq* is in Allah's Hand

This system of *Rizq* is established through the planned execution of the Creator of the heavens and earth and none can dare to deny this fact. Even the materialist who verbally denies the existence of God will also accept this fact that this system is not the handiwork of man. This is another matter that he will give the name of 'laws of Nature' to this system. But who is going to deny this fact that 'laws' can never be implemented without the existence of a deciding power with the freedom to choose - this Being is called Allah:

Say: 'Who is it that sustains you (in life) from the sky and from the earth? or Who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And Who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? and Who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?' They will soon say, 'Allah' ... (10:31)

The Quran, with its unique style of reasoning, by presenting the awesome system of the universe to us, directs the human mind to the Oneness of Allah. This is because the overwhelming wonder of the system of the universe draws man to reach this conclusion that the Will of a Being with freedom to choose and possessing intent is working behind this system. And its integrity and harmony points to this fact that the Being possessing free will is 'One' and Alone i.e. in the whole of the universe there only one law is in action:

Or, Who originates creation, then repeats it, and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? (can there be another) god besides Allah? Say, 'Bring forth your argument, if you are telling the truth!' (27:64) See also (35:3)

7.3 No-one else Possesses Authority over *Rizq*

This was the general aspect of this belief that only Allah provides *Rizq*. Alongside this, the practical aspect of this is also made evident that other than Him no-one else is the controller of *Rizq*. By combining these two parts the completion of *Eimaan* takes place:

*And follow others than Allah, such as have no power of providing them, for sustenance (*Rizq*), with anything in the heavens or the earth, and cannot possibly have such power? (16:73)*

In this short verse the Quran has negated all those ‘gods’ whose obedience and subjugation is accepted because man (of his own accord) thinks that the provision of *Rizq* is in their control. But the reality is that regardless whether the gods and goddesses are of the era of ‘superstition’ or are human gods of the era of ‘civilisation and enlightenment’, *Rizq* is not in anyone’s hand, it is only in Allah’s hand, and when *Rizq* only comes from His direction, then leaving Him, how can there be slavery and subjugation to someone else?

...The things that you follow besides Allah have no power to give you sustenance: then seek you sustenance from Allah, serve Him, and be grateful to Him: to Him will be your return. (29:17)

If He shuts off the sources of sustenance, then no power can open them:

Or who is there that can provide you with Sustenance if He were to withhold His provision? ... (67:21)

Leaving aside the shutting off of all means of sustenance, if there is even the slightest variation in this system e.g. clean and pure water rising from the sea becomes clouds and all its contaminants (which are responsible for its salinity) remain behind in the sea – if any change occurs in this system and the seawater becomes clouds just as it is and in the same format begins to rain upon the earth, just consider how with even with this minor change what the state of the world will become. Through this balanced system He provides *Rizq* to mankind and desires nothing in return:

... We ask you not to provide sustenance: We provide it for you ... (20:132)

This is the distinction between the true Sustainer and ‘false gods’.

7.4 Beneficial *Rizq*

All the things which Allah has created as *Rizq*, those are *Tayyab*¹⁰⁶, pure, beneficial and pleasant, apart from the consumption of those which Allah Himself has forbidden. Hence, those things which Allah has declared to be *Halal* and beneficial, no-one has the right to label them as being *Haram* and detrimental:

Say: Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah, which He has produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He has provided) for sustenance? ... (7:32)

¹⁰⁶ *Tayyab* – a thing which provides pleasure to the human senses, being and personality, which is pleasing to eat, hear, see and smell. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 2, pp 117-118.

In another verse it is stated that Allah has provided for you *Rizq* of pleasant things (16:72).¹⁰⁷ But those things which He has created as *Halal* and beneficial, pure and useful, man makes them *Haram* and harmful through the intervention of his hands. Some examples of turning these from beneficial to injurious, useful to harmful, are glaringly clear. Water is absolutely life-giving but when it overflows and exceeds limits, then this same water becomes a cause for fatalities. Hence, it is also important to keep in view the defined scales in the use of everything. Transgressing the limit of these scales is called *Asraaf* (exceeding the limits) which is destructive. The Quran states:

...eat and drink: But waste not by excess ... (7:31)

In another verse it is stated that Allah has produced various kinds of fruits for you, so eat these fruits, and when you harvest the crop, then from that distribute His share as a right as well. The Quran states:

...But waste not by excess, for Allah loves not the wasters... (7:31)

And do not exceed the limits because He does not like those who exceed limits. This is that breaking of laws, the effects and consequences of which manifest intrinsically very quickly.

7.5 Observing the Divine Limits

But certain situations are such where the consequences and effects of breaking the laws do not become apparent immediately, and man does not perceive them discernibly. This is that point where the guidance of a visionary is needed. A kidney stone does not form in a day. It is the consequence of months and sometimes years of a gradual imperceptible process. During this time the patient is not even aware that those things which he is consuming considering them to be extremely beneficial, how harmful these are becoming for him. Here a physician is required, who by diagnosing through symptoms and signs, can say which things are harmful for him. That physician will forbid certain items permanently for him because they do not suit this patient's constitution, and some things he will give permission to be consumed in a specific combination. For the sake of his health this patient will first of all need to have confidence in the expertise of this physician, after this trust he will need to follow his instructions to the letter.¹⁰⁸ If he does not do this, he will not have the fortune to attain good health.

¹⁰⁷ See also (40:64).

¹⁰⁸ Merely keeping the prescription safe or just reading it will provide no benefit.

This example is related to physical health. But for man diseases of the physical body are not as harmful as those harmful diseases which result in damage to his self (personality). Through diseases of the body his current life becomes miserable, but through the second type of diseases both his present life as well as the life to come in the hereafter become a continuous hell. Hence, the Quran which is a complete code for the whole life of man provides full instructions like an expert physician and kind doctor. In this respect, certain things are such regarding which the Quran states that these are not suitable for the disposition of humanity; this is why the command was given to not even go near them. Some are those about which the Quran states that these things are intrinsically useful and beneficial but the manner in which they are utilised results in a difference in their effects.

7.6 Prescribing *Halal* and *Haram*

If we pick fruit from our own orchard and eat it then it is beneficial and *Halal*, but if we steal fruit from the orchard of another and eat it, then that same fruit is *Haram* and harmful i.e. both fruits are of the same kind, their properties are similar, if their constituents are analysed there will be no difference in the composition of both. But due to the difference in the ‘manner of use’ there will be the difference of life and death in their result. A materialist cannot comprehend this distinction. He states that the same kind of things can be purchased with the money from a thief as with the money from a labourer. In order to understand this difference (as explained in the first example), it is essential to have conviction in the expertise of the physician and this is what is called *Eimaan*. This is what is absent in the heart of the materialist and its consequence is that today no ‘health’ is visible in any aspect of human life. The whole of Europe and as a consequence the whole world is turning into such a hell whose flames are turning humanity into a heap of ash.

It should be made clear that having conviction in the ‘expertise of a physician’ is initially in the form of ‘*Eimaan* in the unseen’ but after this the results of its treatment will convert this ‘*Eimaan* in the unseen’ into conviction based on evidence.

In any event the Quran, like a compassionate physician, emphasises that whatever is bestowed by Allah as *Rizq*, should be consumed using pure methods and not through *Haram* means i.e. firstly, do not set yourself to make decisions about *Halal* and *Haram* yourself, instead act according to that same decision that your ‘expert physician’ has made:

Say: ‘See you what things Allah has sent down to you for sustenance? Yet you hold forbidden (Haram) some things thereof and some lawful (Halal).’ Say: ‘Has Allah indeed permitted you, or do you invent (things) to attribute to Allah?’ (10:59)

There is another point implicit in the consumption in a 'pure manner' of those things which have been declared as *Halal* by Allah. This means that it is not essential that an individual must eat all the *Halal* things of the world. 'Pure' means that which produces pleasant and positive results. Therefore, from these *Halal* things, that thing which someone does not like and is not according to preference or is unsuitable for health, should not be consumed. The difference which is present in not eating something in this way and in considering something to be *Haram* is obvious.¹⁰⁹

It has already been stated above that as a result of the method used for obtaining *Rizq*, the nature of *Rizq* and its effects change. If *Rizq* is obtained through legitimate means then this *Rizq* becomes balanced *Rizq*, pure *Rizq* and honourable *Rizq*. This kind of *Rizq* is the portion belonging to those people who have *Eimaan* in Allah and who make efforts under His defined laid down laws.

7.7 Honourable (*Kareem*) *Rizq*

The Quran states:

Those who accept Eimaan and work righteousness, for them is protection and a sustenance most honoured (Kareem). (22:50) See also (8:4, 11:88, 24:26)

The question is, what is it that is known as *Rizq e Kareem* (sustenance with dignity) and how is it obtained? The matter is evidently clear. One society is that in which the means of sustenance are in the grip and control of a few human beings, while the remainder of the population are reliant and dependent on them for their daily bread. They extract work out of these dependent people according to their will; in this way their own dependency forces them into servitude. It is obvious that self-respect and eminence of humanity cannot endure by obtaining sustenance in this way. This is the bread of humiliation and bondage. Contrary to this, an alternative society is one in which the sources of sustenance are not in the ownership of any individual, instead they are the means to fulfil all the needs of the needy, and the people who organise and manage it, administer it in such a way that no individual remains deprived of his needs. In this, no individual is dependent on any other individual nor is he a servant. In this society every individual receives sustenance with respect and dignity.

The teaching of the Quran is that wherever the *Jamaat e Momineen* may be, they should make efforts to establish this kind of Quranic system. If they are successful in this, then that is great. But if they see that the environment there cannot become favourable in any way at all for this type of society, then they should migrate to

¹⁰⁹ See also (2:57), (2:172), (5:88), (7:160), (16:114) and (20:81).

such a land which is favourable for such a society (provided that such a land exists somewhere). They are told that they should not give up and by ‘cutting off their feet’ remain sitting in this unfavourable environment purely under the influence of the fear of dying from hunger if they left this piece of land and moved to another place. They are directed:

O My servants who have Eimaan! truly, spacious is My Earth: therefore, only follow Me! (29:56)

In the terminology of the Quran this is called *Hijrat* (migration). After *Hijrat* the next and final stage is that of *Jihad* and *Qital* (fighting), and it is a fact that among righteous deeds this has the highest status in which a *Momin* presents his greatest and most precious possession, in other words such as his life, in the establishment and strengthening of the Divine system. If the consequence of such a righteous deed is not *Rizq e Kareem* then of what other deed will it be?

Those who have Eimaan, and adopt exile, and fight in the path of Allah as well as those who give (them) asylum and aid, these are (all) in very truth Momineen: for them is the protection and a Kareem Rizq. (8:74) See also (8:26, 10:93)

7.8 Power in the Land and *Rizq* in the Life of the Hereafter

These are those righteous deeds whose consequences are power and statehood, and *Rizq e Kareem* in this world. The life of success and eminence – that life in which man only bows his head before the laws of the One Allah – is the most respectable and steadfast life. However, this *Rizq* does not remain confined to this world only, in the life of the hereafter it is bestowed by Allah as *Rizq e Tayyab*. First of all, consider the Mujahideen who lay down their life in the cause of Allah. In return for the spilling of their sanctified blood, when their nation gains power in the land and as a consequence obtains *Rizq e Kareem* (honoured sustenance) in this life, these martyrs are gifted *Rizq* from their *Rabb*:

Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance (Rizq) in the presence of their Rabb... (3:169)

Those migrants who lay down their lives in the cause of Allah are also given glad tidings of *Rizq e Hasna*¹¹⁰:

Those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, and are then slain or die, on them will Allah bestow verily a goodly provision: Truly Allah is He Who bestows the best provision. (22:58)

¹¹⁰ *Rizq e Hasna* – balanced sustenance which helps in self-development. (Ed)

And when they achieve the life of Jannat as a result of *Eimaan* and righteous deeds, then there too *Rizq* will be bestowed by Allah.

It should be made clear that the people residing in that society which is shaped according to the laws of Allah live a life of Jannat both in this world and in the world of the hereafter too. We are aware of the *Rizq e Kareem* of this life, but we can say nothing about what the nature and state of this *Rizq* will be in the life of the hereafter. But this much is evident from this, that development of the human self will continue to take place in the life of the hereafter, the means and resources for which are termed as the *Rizq e Kareem* of that place.

7.9 Oppression and Tyranny

As has been noted above, the most vulnerable need of man is *Rizq*. In this world cruelty and tyranny, brutality and suppression continue only on this basis that powerful men take control of the means of *Rizq*, and after this get done whatever they want from human beings who are under their thumb. No human being is ready to become the slave of another human being willingly, no-one is agreeable to merrily and blithely put on the shackle of slavery from someone around his own neck. The enslavement of a human being is contrary to the eminence of humanity. But weak and feeble, helpless and beleaguered man becomes ready to accept all forms of enslavement when he is told that by not doing so the doors of *Rizq* will be closed to you. The *Azaab* of hunger is such a severe *Azaab* that in order to save himself from it a human being becomes obligated to accept every demand. Tyranny in the world starts from this very point and is kept propped up through this same force. Hence, in order to eradicate tyranny and subjugation from the world and to raise weak and feeble human beings to the level of humanity, it is essential that this erroneous belief is eliminated from their minds that the *Rizq* of another human being is in the hand of a man. And that this truth be unveiled to him that the sources of *Rizq* are open equally to the whole of the creation of Allah. Every individual has the right to take anything from these according to his need and aptitude. Hence, no human being needs to bow down before another man.

7.10 Slavery and Servitude

This is a humiliation for humanity that a human being should remain in the servitude of another human being merely for the sake of his daily bread. Since Pharaonic forces in the world have imposed this belief on the human mind with great intensity and tenacity that we are the masters of *Rizq*, this is why the Quran has, with equal intensity and reiteration, refuted this *Batil* belief, and in lieu has placed this correct *Eimaan* in man's heart that *Rizq* is not in the hands of any human being – it is only in the Hand of Allah. But as has been stated already, by

'Rizq being in the Hand of Allah', is meant that the means of sustenance should remain in the ownership of that society which distributes it according to the Divine laws. This is that reality which the Quran has explained by stating that the distribution of Rizq and its production and supply is according to the *Mashe'at* of Allah. In the human world the *Mashe'at* of Allah is carried out through the hands of those human beings who assume responsibility to implement His laws. Where the reins of power are not in the hands of these individuals (*Jamaat e Momineen*), the distribution of Rizq does not take place according to the laws of *Mashe'at*; it takes place according to the self-created laws and regulations of men, the consequence of which is an agonizing hell for humanity.

7.11 *Rizq* is in Allah's Hand

In light of these points all those verses of the Quran will be understood in which it is stated that the shortage and abundance of Rizq is in the natural control of Allah. No human being has been given the right to reduce or increase the Rizq of another human being. The Quran states:

...It is Allah that gives (you) want or plenty...(2:245)

Allah does enlarge, or grant by measure, the sustenance (which He gives) to whomsoever as per His will¹¹¹...(13:26) See also (17:30, 28:82, 29:62)

And this is that principle within which there are very great signs for those who possess *Eimaan* because:

See they not that Allah enlarges the provision and restricts it, to whomsoever He wills¹¹²? Verily in that are signs for those who have Eimaan. (30:37)

Do they not ponder on this matter that Allah (according to His law of *Mashe'at*) makes sustenance abundant for the one who wishes, and gives to him who wishes according to a defined measure; in this (His law of *Mashe'at*) there are great signs for those who have *Eimaan*.

The keys of Rizq in the heavens and earth are only in His possession. He is indeed the Master of all the treasures of Rizq:

¹¹¹ The explanation of this aspect has been covered in detail in my book titled *The Book of Destiny*. There is a specific chapter on sustenance (*Rizq*).

¹¹² Enlargement and restriction of Rizq is related to the man-made system under which man lives, which it is necessary to recognise in order to understand how the system of *Rabubiyat* operates. (Ed)

To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth: He enlarges and restricts the sustenance to whom He will: for He knows full well all things. (42:12)

The keys of the treasures of the heavens and earth are with Him. For the one who wishes, He provides more sustenance to him, and for the one who wishes, He gives him measured sustenance, and He has complete knowledge of all matters.

7.12 Evil Resulting from Intoxication of Wealth

We have noted above that when the distribution of sustenance does not take place according to the Divine laws, then the world becomes hell. What happens is that the means of sustenance fall into the hands of a small minority; this group becomes an evil model of arrogance and pride of Pharaonic forces, whose 'principle' is that that which is according to their desire is legitimate and rational, and whatever goes against their desires is evil and false. When this Pharaonic phantom rides the heads of this group, then they force the subjugated human being to prostrate in front of this claim of theirs:

(Pharaoh said to his people) 'I am your sustainer, most high'. (79:24)

These are those Pharaohs and Nimrods who, befuddled by the intoxication of their wealth, oppose every heavenly revolutionary invitation; because one injunction of the heavenly invitation is also this, that the means of sustenance be snatched away from human hands and should be placed in the control of the Divine laws so that the needs of life of every individual of humanity are fulfilled through these without any hesitation and effort, and continue thus through a balanced process. This is that reality towards which the Quran has drawn attention by stating:

Never did We send a warner to a population, but the wealthy ones among them said: 'We believe not in the (Message) with which you have been sent.' They said: 'We have more in wealth and in sons, and we cannot be punished.' Say: 'Verily my Sustainer enlarges and restricts the provision according to His law, but most men understand not.' (34:34-36)

And in whichever habitation We sent some messenger, the prosperous category of freeloaders there always stated this, that we refuse to accept these commandments which have been provided to you. They said that we are greater than you in both progeny and wealth and the punishment which you are warning us about can never grip us. (O Rasul) relate to them that your system in which the distribution of *Rizq* is according to your whims cannot continue here. The distribution of *Rizq* and its provision and restriction should be according to Allah's law of *Mashe'at*.

This very intoxication of indulgence in wealth gives rise to the desire in their hearts to dominate the earth and they wish that they could snatch the reins of the earth and draw them into their grasp, so that they could use the blood of the poor and exploit it for their hedonistic assemblies. Regarding the people of Saba, it is noted in the Quran that Allah had granted them abundant *Rizq* and land but despite this their greed continued to multiply, and they would say:

...Our Sustainer, lengthen the distance between our journeys¹¹³...(34:19)

When the condition reaches such a level, the throne of rebellion and arrogance is toppled in accordance with the immutable law of Allah, and such a system whose foundations are based on dominating the earth and on gluttonous blood sucking becomes the cause for its own destruction. After the glaring condition of the people of Saba, it is stated:

...so We made them as tales and dispersed them all in scattered fragments...(34:19)

So we made this nation a tale from the past. And they were scattered like grains of sand.

7.13 Consequences of Transgression

This same immense truth is narrated in the form of a simile in Surah *An-Nabl* in which it is stated that the people of a town used to spend their life in great peace and tranquility. Sustenance was plentiful and there were all kinds of comforts. After this they began to be ungrateful for the favours of Allah, the essential consequence of which was that the hell of hunger and fear engulfed them. After this it is stated:

Then eat of what Allah has provided for you (which is) lawful and good. And be grateful for the favour of Allah, if it is (indeed) Him that you obey. (16:114)

This means that if the system of a society is established according to the Divine laws then an abundancy of sustenance prevails in it, and every individual lives a life of peace and tranquility. But if this system becomes shaped according to self-created human laws, then social imbalance is produced from this, whose consequence is nothing but destruction and ruin. This is why it is stated regarding the previous nations (people of the Book):

¹¹³ One interpretation of this could be 'give us more land'. (Ed)

If only they had stood fast by the Law, the Gospel, and all the revelation that was sent to them from their Sustainer, they would have enjoyed happiness from every side... (5:66)

Contrary to this, spurning these principles becomes the cause for misery and humiliation for man:

But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down... (20:124)

By having unwavering *Eimaan* in these Divine laws (the Quran) and acting tirelessly according to them, 'honourable sustenance' is availed:

Those who have Eimaan and work righteousness, for them is protection and a sustenance most honourable. (22:50)

In another verse it is stated that this 'honourable sustenance' is the natural consequence of their *Eimaan* and righteous deeds:

That He may reward those who have Eimaan and work deeds of righteousness: for such is protection and a sustenance most generous. (34:4)

7.14 Quest for Allah's *Fadl* (Blessings)

If efforts are made according to these laws for obtaining sustenance, then it is known as the 'quest for Allah's *Fadl*'. *Fadl* commonly means an increase, but in most places in the Quran it has been used to refer to economic conveniences (the chapter on *Fadl* itself will come later). Since these conveniences are bestowed by Allah without any effort or expectation, therefore it is called '*Fadl Ullah*'. But since these conveniences do not reach man automatically, it is necessary for man to desire and search for these and this is called the 'search for *Fadl Ullah*'. Regarding those who set out looking for this *Fadl Ullah*, the Quran has stated:

...others travelling through the land, seeking of Allah's bounty...(73:20)

In Surah *Al-Jumma* it is stated that, after finishing with *Salat*:

And when the Salat is finished, then may you disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah...(62:10)

It also states about the *Muhajireen*¹¹⁴:

¹¹⁴ *Muhajireen* - those who migrate in the cause of Allah. (Ed)

...to the indigent Muhajirs, those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure... (59:8)

The same was stated about the *Jamaat* of the companions of Rasul-ullah:

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

From these verses it is clear that although Allah's bestowed *Rizq* is present in the earth for the nourishment of mankind, in order to gain it desire, search, effort and struggle is essential - without this no-one gets *Rizq*. Secondly, the meaning of this desire and quest does not mean that every individual (or group) should gather to himself whatever much *Rizq* he can and leave nothing for others. This is wrong – the correct system is that all members of society, according to their own individual ability and capacity, should exert themselves in gaining *Rizq*, and whatever is achieved (under a collective system), they should make it freely available for the nourishment of all individuals. In the terminology of the Quran this is called '*Infaaq Fi Sabeel Ullah*' which you will find emphasised in the Quran from the beginning till the end.

7.15 Making Available in the Cause of Allah

For example, if you turn over the first page of the Quran, the definition of *Muttaqeen* will appear first of all. Along with other attributes one of their glaring traits is stated as being:

...and keep open Rizq (for others) out of what We have provided for them. (2:3)

They keep the *Rizq* bestowed by Allah open to be spent in His cause. Along with this, read the following:

... Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous (Muttaqee) of you... (49:13)

From this it will become clear that in the view of Islam, in order to achieve honour and respect, it is necessary to keep available the outcome of our hard work in 'the cause of Allah'. In relation to '*Infaaq Fi Sabeel Ullah*', the following verses also require attention – (2:254, 3:179, 4:37-39, 9:74-76, 13:22, 14:31, 22:35, 28:54, 36:47, 63:10). By keeping these verses in view, the true meaning of this great verse will become apparent to you.

7.16 *Rizq* of all Living Things is the Responsibility of Allah

In one verse of the Quran it is stated:

There is no moving creature on earth, but its sustenance depends on Allah... (11:6)

It is said that if Allah is responsible for the *Rizq* of every living thing, then why does so much of creation die hungry. But while saying this, it is forgotten that the responsibility of Allah is only as long as you keep yourself under His established system. When you go outwith His system and begin to consider yourself to be free from the protection of His system, then at that moment His responsibility will also be removed. Keep yourself within His system and then see how His ‘responsibilities’ are fulfilled. Imposing a Pharaonic system devised by men over ourselves, and then expecting those outcomes which are specific to the Divine system, if this is not blatant ignorance, then what else is it? What can the outcome be of the one who takes shelter under a ramshackle building during an earthquake other than destruction. If he comes under the impregnable roof of Allah, then see if Allah assumes responsibility for his protection or not:

...whoever rejects evil and has Eimaan in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks... (2:256)

This ‘dependable support’ is that Divine system, after which no need remains for any other support. When the system of Allah was established on this earth, at that time the people had come to understand what the correct meaning is of the verse (11:6). An official from Kufa (a town in Iraq) once came to Medina and found that the Caliph Umer was eating bread made from barley. He said, what, can the leader of the *Momineen* of such a grand state not even consume bread made from wheat? The reply received was that Umer can only eat bread made from wheat when he is sure that every human being within the boundaries of his Caliphate has bread made from wheat available to him. Until this fact is established with certainty, how can Umer consume bread made from wheat? Now just consider, can any human being remain hungry in such a system of government? The commencement of Quranic teaching is with these very words, *Alhamdo Lillah e Rabb-il-Alameen* i.e. all kinds of *Hamd*¹¹⁵ is for that Allah Who is *Rabb-il-Alameen* – His attribute of *Mahmoodiat*¹¹⁶ is because He is *Rabb-il-Alameen*; He is the Nourisher and Sustainer of the whole of the universe. Hence, the *Mahmoodiat* of the nation in this world which will be responsible for the establishment of that government, will also be due to its attribute of *Rabubiyat*. It will be deserving of admiration at that point

¹¹⁵ *Hamd* – the feeling of appreciation and admiration that arises in the human heart on seeing a very rare and delightful sight or thing; an appreciation of the creator of any beautiful thing.

¹¹⁶ *Mahmoodiat* – the attribute which has *Hamd*. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 1, pp 369-372.

when it arranges for the nourishment of all those people who have come under the canopy of the Divine system; and the arrangement to also be such that, just as their Allah has proclaimed about Himself:

I do not want from them any Rizq... (51:57)

Similarly, those people in whose hands is the control of the administration and organisation of this society, they should not extract material for their own luxury and comfort from the toil of their 'people', instead they should be concerned about their *Rabubiyat*. Since I have provided details of this system in my book, *The Quranic System of Sustenance*, in great depth, hence, at this point these explanations are considered sufficient.

7.17 Hunger and Poverty are Allah's *Azaab*

At this juncture it is important to reiterate that hunger and poverty are Allah's *Azaab* (punishment). In Surah *An-Nabl* it is quoted as an example that when a population became ungrateful for the favours of Allah, then as a recompense of this crime:

...So Allah made it taste of hunger and fear like a garment for what they had been doing. (16:112)

In other words, fear and hunger is a chastisement from Allah and to remain secure from these things is His blessing. The Quran states:

... Who provides with food against hunger, and with security against fear. (106:4)

This punishment visits that nation which engages in rebellion against His laws. Its beginning arises from the powerful echelon at the top, and the subjugated category (the poor and the general public) becomes criminal for the crime of accepting this Pharaonic system; hence, just as in the higher echelon the fire of absence of tranquility and disappearance of peace is ignited, Allah's *Azaab* takes the shape of the curse of hunger and poverty in the lower class. But, unfortunately, for some time this belief has become embedded in our minds that the life of poverty and destitution, helplessness and feebleness, dependence and deprivation is the life of those who are closer to Allah – this is the sign of those servants who are closer to Him. These beliefs are the consequence of the continuous propaganda of the creation of the *Ajmi*¹¹⁷ philosophy of life and of 'Christ's preachers', who desire to keep Muslims entrenched in this deception that the 'kingdom of heaven' can only be acquired by the one who is the weakest and most subjugated in the land. We

¹¹⁷ *Ajmi* – the term is used for non-Arab thinking which influenced the early part of the Islamic State and its ideology. (Ed)

have been locked in this deception of monasticism for a long time and do not understand that deprivation and poverty are an *Azāab* of Allah, not a mercy. The natural consequence of *Eimaan* and righteous deeds is power in the land and honourable sustenance. The mark of true *Momineen* is this:

Such in truth are Momineen: they have grades of dignity with their Sustainer and protection, and honoured sustenance. (8:4)

From the above explanations you will have seen that *Razzaqiyat* is an attribute of Allah. In the external universe the manifestation of this attribute occurs automatically but in the human world its *modus operandi* changes. In this, though the means of sustenance are available from Allah free of charge, firstly desire and effort has to be made for the attainment of *Rizq*, and secondly the distribution of *Rizq* has to be carried out according to the Divine laws. All this can only be done by that *Jamaat* whose members manifest this attribute in their selves. It is obvious that when the economic system is in the hands of this kind of *Jamaat*, then how contented mankind will be from the point of view of the provision of *Rizq*. The fact is that the world has not yet been able to even reach that level from where it could see this reality clearly unveiled before it, how the external revolution following on from the 'revolution within the consciousness' causes this earthly being to become such a being who is worthy of heaven. Currently the world wishes to solve the difficulties of its *Rizq* by employing mechanical techniques such as communism which can never succeed. Once it has seen these techniques and procedures through to the end, then after that it will turn in the direction of the Quranic treatment, and the alleviation of its suffering will also be at that very time. To take 'Allah' out of your world and to then desire for peace - such a thought is impossible and is that of the insane.

8 *Rehmat* (Mercy)

The basic meaning of *Rehm* is gentleness and kindness. (*Rehmun*: the uterus of a woman within which the fetus develops and remains protected from external effects). The meanings of *Rehmat* are that gift which fulfills the apparent and hidden needs of someone, and in this way his nourishment takes place just as the fetus is nourished in the womb of a mother. From this respect Allah's *Rehmat* is also another link in the attributes of *Rabubiyat* and *Razzaqiyat*, with this difference that the aspect of gentleness is predominant in this. It also means to cover something and to ensure the provision of the means of protection. When the word *Rehmat* or *Rehm* is used in mutual relations then its meaning will also be of love, nearness and affection. For example, where it is emphasised that parents should be treated with kindness and compassion, this is referred to as *Rehmat*:

And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility (Rehmat)...(17:24)

Where relations between husband and wife are mentioned, this *Rehmat* includes the sentiments of love combined with kind-heartedness:

And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and Rehmat (mercy) between your (hearts): verily in that are signs for those who reflect. (30:21)

Allah also uses the word *Rehmat* for generous provision and economic prosperity (17:28).

8.1 Allah is *Raheem*

The way in which Allah's attribute of *Rabubiyat* has been mentioned with intensity and reiteration in the Quran, similarly His attribute of *Rehmat* has also been mentioned repeatedly. The beginning of its every verse is with the name of Allah, Who is *Rehman* and *Raheem*. At some places that Allah is *Raheem* and *Wadood*, at other places *Rauf-ur-Raheem*, *Tawwab-ur-Raheem*, *Ghafoor-ur-Raheem*, *Aziz-ur-Raheem* and *Birr-ur-Raheem*. In the Quran such names of Allah have appeared at least one hundred fifty times in which *Rehman* and *Raheem* are present. Other places at which *Rehmat* is mentioned are over and above these. In Christianity too, God has been called *Raheem*, but there He is mercy alone (God is Mercy), nothing other than this. But in the Quran *Rehm* is only one facet of the attributes of Allah. Apart from this He has other attributes as well. Indeed, the concept of Allah in the Quran is so complete that after this God, there remains no need for another 'god'. Contrary to this, the consequence of the limited concept of God in Christianity was this, that Europe had to search for other 'gods' for administration, organisation and

justice, and since these gods were carved by the human mind, therefore on lifting the curtain it was learned that these are responsible for ‘persistent conflicts and bloodshed’. If Europe had somehow found the ‘Allah of the Quran’ then its state today would have been something else.

8.2 *Rehman* and *Raheem*

In relation to Allah’s attribute of *Rehmat*, the words *Rehman* and *Raheem* have been used many times; though the root of both these words is the same, from the point of view of the rules of lexicon there is an extremely refined distinction between them. *Raheem* means he whose *Rehmat* remains compulsorily operational continuously and according to a specific pattern and procedure. And *Rehman* means the one whose *Rehmat* manifests swiftly with great intensity. In order to understand this difference, it is necessary to examine the law of evolution of the universe. The law of evolution informs us that the things of the universe, while developing and evolving according to a particular pattern and process, reach their completion. But sometimes it also happens that such a rapid revolution emerges in a certain thing that by skipping over many links of evolution, it suddenly becomes something else from what it was. This is known as Emergent Evolution in terminology. The general nourishment of the universe takes place according to Allah’s attribute of *Raheemiyat* and this sudden or Emergent Evolution according to His attribute of *Rehmaniyat*. This is the reason why the Quran has noted the attributes of *Rehman* and *Raheem* as being separate entities, though the meaning of both are related to the provider of the means of sustenance and sources of protection with kindness and compassion.

This should also remain clear that the term *Rehman* is only applicable to the Being of Allah, whereas in *Raheem* other ‘providers of *Rehmat*’ can also be included, for example it was stated about Rasul-ullah that he is *Rauf-un-Raheem* (9:128).

8.3 Wondrous Displays of Allah’s *Rehmat* in the Universe

The requirement of Allah’s *Rehmat* was that when man was sent to this world, the means for his physical sustenance should be made available automatically. The first and foremost dependence of man’s life is on air (as has been already mentioned). Allah has dispersed this around planet earth in such a fashion that wherever man goes air is around him and the process of its inward and outward flow in man is set in such a way that man, engaged in carrying out all sorts of worldly tasks, does not even notice how the respiratory process is continuously functioning automatically (without his intent and effort). Along with air, the arrangement for light also exists on the same pattern. After light, let us look at water. It has been placed everywhere flowing and protected in such a way that no other water supply system in the world can compete with it. After this the question

of *Rizq* arises. So, for man's need the process of produce from the land is operating with such order and organisation, that there was no power in any machinery that could make it operate in this way. In the Divine distribution of these things there is no distinction between higher and lower, small or great. It never happens that the first ray of the sun strikes the palace of a Brahmin¹¹⁸ and the last and fading rays reach the hut of that of a *Shudra* (a lower caste); that the heavy and effective drops of rain pour down on the fields of a *Jagirdar*¹¹⁹ and the 'sparse and ineffective' portion on the land of a peasant. All this is received through His *Rehmat* and received without any charge or recompense. Allah has declared these favours as His Own *Rehmat*. The Quran states:

Then contemplate the effects of Allah's Rehmat! how He gives life to the earth after its death. Undoubtedly, He is going to give life to the dead... (30:50)

In another verse it is stated:

Among His Signs is this, that He sends the winds, as heralds of glad tidings, giving you a taste of His Rehmat (Mercy), that the ships may sail by His command and that you may seek of His Bounty: in order that you may be grateful. (30:46) See also (7:57)

Only He can do all this, other than Him, no-one else:

Who guides you through the depths of darkness on land and sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy? (Can there be another) god besides Allah? High is Allah above what they associate with Him! (27:63)

The splashes of His bountiful rain pour down at that time when man is completely despairing about the earth reviving to a fresh life:

He is the One that sends down rain (even) after (men) have given up all hope and scatters His Rehmat (far and wide). And He is the Protector, Worthy of all Hamd. (42:28)

For human development, division of day and night was also absolutely necessary, the day to seek a livelihood and the night for the sake of peace; this is also attributed to Allah's *Rehmat*:

It is out of His Rehmat that He has made for you Night and Day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of his Grace; and in order that you may be grateful. (28:73)

¹¹⁸ Brahmin - highest caste according to the Hindu religion.

¹¹⁹ *Jagirdar* - big landowner. (Ed)

8.4 Continuity of Divine Guidance is Allah's *Rehmat*

This was the arrangement for man's physical needs. As far as this part is concerned, animals and man are both equal. But man is not defined by his body alone and his needs are not only physical needs. There is within him another thing other than his body, which is called the human self - and this is that thing which is the reason for his eminence as a human being. Hence, for man the need for the development of his self is also inseparably linked with his physical nourishment.

Development of the human self takes place via that heavenly guidance which is called *Wahi*¹²⁰. Alongside the example of rain, the Quran has also noted this heavenly guidance (30:41-53), and in this respect Rasul-ullah is declared to be a *Rehmat* for mankind from Allah:

*We sent you not, but as a Rehmat for all times*¹²¹. (21:107)

8.5 Who is the *Rehmat* of Messenger-hood for?

But just as the blessing of rain can only be profitable to that land which opens up its breast to absorb the drops of *Rehmat*, and is ready to accept its effect, even if heavily laden clouds came a thousand times on barren land, no fragrant grasses or scented herbs will be produced. Similarly, messenger-hood can only be a sign of *Rehmat* for those who are willing to be influenced by this *Rehmat*. The name of this 'acceptance' is *Eimaan*. Hence, it is stated that though it is true that the messenger is *Rehmat* for all times, but:

... this Rehmat is for those of you, who accept Eimaan...(9:61)

This is because, as stated in verses (30:48-53), neither can the message be made to be heard by the dead and deaf, nor can the path be made visible to the blind. By dead, deaf and blind people is meant those people about whom it is stated in another verse:

... They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless. (7:179)

¹²⁰ Details of this are available in the book titled *Iblees O Adam* under the subject of *Wahi*.

¹²¹ The word used here is *Alameen*, plural of *Alam*, which is translated as world. It could be translated as all the worlds for the whole of mankind for all times. (Ed)

8.6 Messenger-hood is also *Rehmat* for *Nabi* Himself

This was the relationship of messenger-hood to other human beings but for a *Nabi* to receive messenger-hood himself is also due to *Rehmat* from Allah (11:28, 11:63). But no-one receives this *Rehmat* of Allah through his own effort and skill, no human being can become a *Nabi* through his own efforts. Before Rasul-ullah himself received messenger-hood, he had no inkling of this matter that he was going to be selected for this great responsibility (28:86). In another verse it is stated that if Allah had wished, even after revealing the Quran He could have removed it, but it was due to His *Rehmat* that He did not do this (17:86-87).

The decision as to who will be selected for this *Rehmat* of Allah (i.e. messenger-hood) was made under the *Mashe'at* of Allah:

...But Allah will specially choose for His Rehmat whom He will - for Allah is greatest possessor of Fadl. (2:105) See also (3:74, 19:50)

8.7 Books of Revelation are *Rehmat* for Mankind

The aim of messenger-hood and the messenger is to convey the guidance of Allah to the people, and this guidance used to be communicated through these books which used to be revealed to these *Anbiya* (messengers of Allah). Hence, these Divine Books are a *Rehmat* for humanity. Earlier Books were *Rehmat* in their own respective eras. Then, when these were tampered with, that same *Rehmat* was preserved in the Quran in its complete form. Now this very Book is a *Rehmat* of Allah for all mankind and for all times. About the Torah, from among the earlier Books, the Quran states:

And before this (the Quran), was the Book of Moses as a guide and Rehmat... (46:12) See also (6:154, 7:154, 11:17, 28:43)

8.8 The Quran is *Rehmat*

And now the Quran is a *Rehmat*:

And this is a Book which We have revealed as a blessing: so follow it and be righteous, that you may receive Rehmat. (6:155)

There is guidance in it, hence this is *Rehmat* (12:111). It is such a *Rehmat* which removes those differences which former Ummahs had devised in relation to their religions (27:77-78). Not only is it a remover of differences of previous Ummahs, but the Book which eradicates all differences, and this is the evidence for its being a guidance and a *Rehmat*:

And We sent down the Book to you for the express purpose, that you should make clear to them those things in which they differ, and that it should be a guide and Rehmat to those who have Eimaan. (16:64)

Not only for matters in which there are differences but a *Rehmat* which makes every matter clear:

...and We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things, a Guide, a Rehmat, and Glad Tidings to Muslims. (16:89)

The details in it and the manifestation of these is according to the knowledge of Allah, hence there is no possibility of any error anywhere in it - this is also evidence for its being a *Rehmat*:

For We had certainly sent unto them a Book, based on knowledge, which We explained in detail, a guide and Rehmat to all who have Eimaan. (7:52) See also (10:82, 29:51, 31:2-3)

When this Book is such a *Rehmat* then however much mankind celebrates with joy at this gift of *Rehmat*, it is not enough:

O mankind! there has come to you a direction from your Rabb and a healing for your hearts, and for those who have Eimaan, a guidance and Rehmat. Say: 'In the bounty of Allah. And in His Rehmat, in that let them rejoice': that is better than all that they hoard¹²². (10:57-58)

But as has been noted earlier, in order to benefit from this *Rehmat* it is essential to make ourselves willing to accept its effect. Hence, it is stated about the Quran that though it has guidance and warning for the whole of mankind, it will only become a *Rehmat* for those who will maintain conviction in its truths:

These are clear evidences to men and a Guidance and Rehmat to those who have Eimaan. (45:20) See also (7:203-204)

Whoever becomes associated with this source of guidance, Allah will bless him with His *Rehmats*:

O mankind! verily there has come to you a convincing proof from your Rabb: For We have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest. Then those who have Eimaan in Allah,

¹²² This refers to the human trait of accumulation and hoarding. The Quran instructs us to move away from this towards the establishment of Deen by attending to the needs of fellow human beings. (Ed)

and hold fast to Him, soon will He admit them to Rehmat and Grace from Himself and guide them to Himself by a straight way. (4:174-175)

8.9 *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem*¹²³ is *Rehmat*

Examine closely the latter part of the above quoted verse in which it is stated that finding a straight and balanced path in the journey of life is a *Rehmat* of Allah. The forces of *Iblees*¹²⁴ are always busily engaged in these efforts that man, leaving this path, should adopt other ways. Remaining protected from these evil efforts is also a *Rehmat* of Allah. Hence, it is noted about Rasul-ullah himself:

But for the Grace of Allah to you and His Rehmat, a party of them would certainly have plotted to lead you astray... (4:113)

Aside from external influences, remaining protected from the hedonism fuelled whisperings of one's own heart, is also a *Rehmat* of Allah. In the narrative of Yusuf, the wife of the Aziz stated:

'Nor do I absolve my own self (of blame): the (human) self is certainly prone to evil, unless my Rabb do bestow His Rehmat: but surely my Rabb is Protecting, Raheem.'
(12:53) See also (4:83)

This fact should once again be brought to mind that when it is said that one cannot be protected from these whisperings etc. without Allah's *Rehmat*, this does not mean that for this purpose man himself cannot do anything, that this occurs only through Allah's 'mercy and compassion'. This concept is against the teaching of the Quran.¹²⁵ When it is stated that this can only happen through Allah's *Rehmat*, it means that it can only happen in that situation when man follows Allah's *Wahi*, because (as we have seen earlier) the meaning of Divine *Rehmat* is Divine *Wahi* which is now preserved in the Quran. Hence, the only way to remain protected from the intrigues of *Iblees* and the whisperings of the heart is that man should obey the Quran and make use of his emotions under its guidance.

¹²³ *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem* – *Siraat* means straight, while *Mustaqeem* means a path which is well established and clearly defined. (Ed)

¹²⁴ Further details are discussed in my book *Iblees O Adam*.

¹²⁵ This is against the Law of Requital as stated in (45:22) where each self is held accountable for his or her deeds. The Quranic guidance acts as an external criterion by which to recognise emotions and to counter these by taking actions according to the Permanent Values. (Ed)

8.10 Leniencies in *Shariat*¹²⁶ are *Rehmat*

To receive such leniencies in *Shariat* due to which it becomes possible to implement the laws is a *Rehmat* of Allah. For example, in relation to the *Law of Qisas*, the recompense for murder is murder, but together with this it is stated:

...But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude, this is a concession¹²⁷ and Rehmat from your Rabb...(2:178) See also (24:10)

But this concession and *Rehmat* can only be received via the law of Allah, not as a result of the personal sentiment of sympathy of some individual. The implementation of the Divine laws is the responsibility of the Islamic system, and personal sentiments of sympathy should never intervene in their implementation. For example:

The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes: Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah, if you have Eimaan in Allah and the Hereafter Day...(24:2)

8.11 The Law of Requit is a *Rehmat*

This is because it is the Law of Requit itself on which the foundation of the system of the universe is based and this is also a *Rehmat* of Allah:

If they accuse you of falsehood, say: 'Your Rabb is full of Rehmat all-embracing, but from criminal people never will His wrath be turned back'. (6:147)

This is because if there is no recompense for evil deeds, then people will continue to exceed in their rebellion, and life on earth will become intolerable for those who are decent:

If We had Rehmat on them and removed the distress which is on them, they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering in distraction to and fro. (23:75)

¹²⁶ *Shariat* – here this means that which is revealed in the Quran. This is a code of Permanent Values put forward by the Quran as guidance for the establishment of the system of Deen. It is completely at variance with the current religious meaning accorded it by the different sectarian religions of Islam. (Ed)

¹²⁷ It should be made clear that compensation is only for accidental manslaughter, there is no compensation for premeditated murder (4:92-93).

The Law of Requitil is not confined to individuals only, the rise and fall of nations also occurs according to it:

To all are degrees (or ranks) according to their deeds: for your Rabb is not unmindful of anything that they do. Your Rabb is self-sufficient, full of Rehmat: if it were His will, He could destroy you (as per His law), and in your place appoint whom He will as your successors, even as He raised you up from the posterity of other people.
(6:132-133)

8.12 Period of Respite is also a *Rehmat*

An interval has been kept between the commission of a deed and the manifestation of its result so that those who commit an error in ignorance can make amends during this time, and this is called the period of respite and is Divine *Rehmat*:

But your Rabb is Most protecting, full of Rehmat. If He were to call them (at once) to account for what they have earned, then surely, He would have hastened their punishment: but they have their appointed time, beyond which they will find no refuge. (18:58)

If an individual or nation realises that it has taken a step in the wrong direction, then it is necessary for it to immediately turn around and return to the point from where the step in the wrong direction was taken, following which it should step in the right direction. Turning back from the wrong path is called *Taba* and stepping in the right direction after this is called *Aslaba*. By doing this an individual becomes protected from the harmful effects which were incurred as a result of going in the wrong direction, this is called *Maghfirat*. Keeping the provision of these matters within the 'Law of Requitil' is Allah's *Rehmat*.

8.13 Acceptance of *Taubah* is also a *Rehmat*

The Quran states:

Say: 'O my Servants who have transgressed against their selves! Despair not of the Rehmat of Allah: for Allah provides protection (as per His law) from all ill effects: for He is Protecting, Raheem. (39:53)

Provided this error has occurred inadvertently, and is not deliberate and due to arrogance, and after this amends have also been made:

When those come to you who have Eimaan in Our signs, Say: 'Peace be on you: Your Rabb has inscribed for Himself Rehmat: verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and

thereafter repented, and amend (his conduct), lo! He is Protecting (from ill effects as per law), Raheem. (6:54)

But if after this man again adopts rebellion, then he will have to suffer the consequences for this i.e. a one-off repentance cannot be a permanent permit of protection:

It may be that your Rabb may show Rehmat unto you; but if you revert, We shall (also) revert: And we have made hell a prison for those who reject Eimaan. (17:8)

According to the Law of Requitel the natural consequence of wrong deeds is called *Az̄aab* which is the opposite of *Rehmat* i.e. development of the human self takes place under *Rehmat* whereas under *Az̄aab* its development halts and he becomes deprived of human eminence. This is why the Quran has referred to *Az̄aab* as the antonym to *Rehmat*:

He punishes as per His law, and He grants Rehmat as per His law, and towards Him are you turned. (29:21)

In another verse *Rehmat* is mentioned as opposite to destruction (67:28); this is because what greater punishment can there be other than destruction and annihilation? Remaining protected from dangers is also called *Rehmat* by the Quran (36:44). Similarly, to be kept protected from the troubles which come as a deluge with wars is also a *Rehmat* (48:25).

8.14 Getting Freedom from *Azaab* is *Rehmat*

Certain blunders of nations are such that they fall into the pit of degradation forever as a result and from which they cannot escape. But there are certain errors which are such that recovery can be possible from their effects (punishment). This is called obtaining '*Najaat* after *Az̄aab*'. This too, has been termed as *Rehmat* of Allah i.e. instead of some nation being deprived of the sweetnesses of life forever, the possibility of recovery remaining in them is *Rehmat*. Hence, when Bani Israel achieved their escape from the tyranny of Pharaoh, it was declared to be Allah's *Rehmat*:

They said: 'In Allah do we put out trust. Our Rabb! make us not a trial for those who practice oppression; And deliver us by Your Rehmat from those who reject (You).'
(10:85-86)

When the nation of Noah was surrounded on all sides by the *Az̄aab* of destruction, Noah said:

... This day nothing can save, from the command of Allah, any but those on whom He has Rehmat... (11:43)

Similarly, when *Aẓaab* overwhelmed other errant nations, then whichever righteous people were saved from among these was also called Allah's *Rehmat* (7:72, 11:58, 11:66, 11:94, 21:74-75).

8.15 Being Protected from the *Azaab* of the Hereafter is also a *Rehmat*

This was regarding *Aẓaab* as related to this world. The same is stated regarding *Aẓaab* of the hereafter: remaining protected from this is also Allah's *Rehmat*:

On that day, if the penalty is averted from any, it is due to Allah's Rehmat; and that would be a manifest achievement. (6:16) See also (3:116, 40:9, 44:41-42, 76:31)

8.16 Jannat is *Rehmat*

The people of *A'raf* (those at the heights) will say to the inhabitants of hell, look, those same people are in Jannat about whom you used to swear that Allah will not have *Rehmat* on them. Just see, they were the very ones told to enter Jannat, there is neither any fear for you and nor will you be sorrowful:

Behold! are these not the men whom you swore that Allah with His Rehmat would never bless? Enter you the Garden: no fear shall be on you, nor shall you grieve. (7:49)

Glad tidings for this very Jannat are given based on *Eimaan* and righteous deeds (9:21-22). This is evident achievement i.e. a great triumph:

Then, as to those who believed and did righteous deeds, their Sustainer will admit them to His Rehmat that will be the achievement for all to see. (45:30)

8.17 Righteous Progeny

Now observe the great blessings of heavenly *Rehmat* on worldly life. Being bestowed with righteous progeny is by His *Rehmat*. Abraham had become hopeless about having children during his old age. At that time, Allah with His *Rehmat* fulfilled his heartfelt wish with the desired pearl. Hence, when the messengers sent by Allah gave both him and his wife the glad tidings of offspring, she became amazed. Upon that, they responded:

*...Do you wonder at Allah's decree? The grace of Allah and His blessings on you, O you people of the house! for He is indeed worthy of all praise, full of all glory!
(11:73)*

Similarly, regarding the birth of Yahya it is stated:

A recital of Rehmat of your Rabb to His servant Zakariya. (19:2)

After this, the birth of Yahya is mentioned.

8.18 Continuing Resolution of Matters

For human matters to be resolved into a pleasant outcome is also Allah's *Rehmat*. Regarding the people of the Cave, it is stated:

...betake yourselves to the cave: Your Rabb will shower His Rehmat on you and will dispose of your affair towards comfort and ease. (18:16)

8.19 Finding a Righteous Companion

Finding an excellent and supportive companion in the world is also Divine *Rehmat*. It is declared about Aaron in the Quran:

And, out of Our Rehmat, We gave him (Moses) his brother Aaron, a Nabi. (19:53)

To be included in the *Jamaat* of the righteous is such a great *Rehmat* for which the famous *Anbiya* would pray. Solomon, while passing through the Valley of *Namal*, had entreated:

...And admit me, by Your Grace, to the ranks of Your righteous servants. (27:19)

8.20 Power and Authority

This is because through this that great *Rehmat* is attained in this world which is the mark of distinction of the *Jamaat e Momineen* i.e. by becoming established on the land, a nation state and government is acquired. When Yusuf was bestowed with this distinct *Rehmat*, it was stated:

Thus, did We give established power to Yusuf in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased. We bestow of our Rehmat as per Our law, and We suffer not, to be lost, the reward of those who do righteous deeds. (12:56)

Before proceeding, let us also examine how this *Rehmat* is gained. The Quran states:

Allah has promised, to those among you who have Eimaan and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their Deen - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived)¹²⁸, to one of security and peace: They will obey Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me. If any do reject Eimaan after this, they are rebellious and wicked. So establish Salat and establish Zakat; and obey the Messenger; so that you may receive Rehmat. (24:55-56)

Though further details about this illustrious verse will come in their own place, this much is evident here, that in order to become eligible for this *Rehmat* of Allah, the indispensable conditions which require to be fulfilled are as follows:

- (1) *Eimaan*
- (2) Righteous deeds
- (3) Obedience of Allah alone
- (4) Not to make anyone other than Allah as sovereign and ruler
- (5) Establishment of *Salat*
- (6) Establishing the dispensing of *Zakat*
- (7) Obedience of Rasul-ullah¹²⁹

In other words, the strengthening of *Jamaat* by establishing *Salat*, leading to *Imamat*¹³⁰ and organisation; consolidation of the central authority and arranging the provision of the means of sustenance of mankind through the dispensing of *Zakat*; and all of this to be achieved by following the Divine system.

8.21 Elimination of Differences

Since this is the natural consequence of establishment in the land and righteous deeds, hence it endures as such as long as this nation remains firm on *Eimaan* and righteous deeds, and for this the foremost condition is that it does not become captive to the curse of sectarianism and the rivalries of parties. For the Ummah to remain as one Ummah is a *Rehmat* of Allah:

¹²⁸ Without the system of Deen, fear and uncertainty will always exist in the human world. (Ed)

¹²⁹ This means following the Quran as Rasul-ullah followed the Quran (as noted in the Quran). (Ed)

¹³⁰ *Imamat* – leadership within the system of Deen. (Ed)

If Your Rabb had so willed, He could have made mankind one people¹³¹; but they will not cease to dispute. Except those on whom Your Rabb has bestowed His Rehmat... (11:118-119)

In other words, the nation on which there is Allah's *Rehmat* becomes a united Ummah by avoiding differences, and the Quran has been revealed for this very purpose that differences become eradicated:

And We sent down the Book to you for the express purpose, that you should make clear to them those things in which they differ, and that it should be a guide and Rehmat to those who have Eimaan. (16:64)

After this perspicuous Book, differences and sectarianism, distancing from Allah's *Rehmat* and the practical denying of *Tauheed* is (in Quranic terms) the path of *Shirk*:

...and be not you among those who join gods with Allah (Shirk), Those who split up their Deen, and become (mere) Sects, each party rejoicing in that which is with itself! (30:31-32)

The practical meaning of *Tauheed* is mutual harmony and unity in outlook. One Allah, one Rasul, one Book, one straight path and one Ummah treading on this path - then what reason is there for any difference? Unity in thought and deeds is indeed Allah's *Rehmat*, and this is that very conduct of the *Jamaat e Momineen*:

Muhammad is the messenger of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against Kuffar, (but) compassionate amongst each other... (48:29)

8.22 Means of Power and Defence Are a *Rehmat*

This was about the internal organisation for strengthening of the government and state, the revolution of hearts and vision. Regarding the external organisation, it is stated that provision of the means of defence against dangers from enemies is also a *Rehmat*. The barricade created by *Dhul-Qarnain*¹³² which was like a dam built to halt the overflowing flood of invaders, was a *Rehmat* of Allah:

Thus, were they made powerless to scale it or to dig through it. He said: This is Rehmat from my Rabb... (18:97-98)

¹³¹ This is an important point to which the Quran has drawn our attention i.e. this is a natural consequence of giving the freedom to choose to Adam, and it is now man's choice to follow the revelation and be united, or to choose not to accept it and remain disunited, which leads to fear and uncertainty in the world. Indeed, the powerful elite aims to 'divide and rule' and promote 'might is right' as a value to exploit fellow human beings. (Ed)

¹³² *Dhul-Qarnain* – a righteous character referred to in the Quran (18:83-98). (Ed)

Here, another point requires attention i.e. the accomplishment of Deen can only occur with both aspects: there should be *Rehmat* and compassion in their hearts and along with this, there should be such force available that they can counter the opponents. Contrary to this, the Quran states about Christian monasticism (and they themselves claim this as well) that they only have compassion, no force:

...and We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him Compassion and Rehmat. But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them... (57:27)

In other words, they only had one component so Deen was not complete. This is why in the beginning, due to the absence of power, they abandoned worldly affairs and adopted a life of monasticism. But when statehood fell into their hands, for the completion of the second part they have had to become purely worldly, and due to not being able to create a blend between compassion and power they became completely secular. If Europe had gained complete Deen by both these aspects, then it would not have adopted this rebellion in such a way.¹³³

8.23 Hopelessness of *Rehmat* of Allah is *Kufr*

This was that method through which the *Rehmat* of Allah remains in action, but if this *Rehmat* slips away due to the misdeeds of a nation and statehood and government transforms into slavery and subjugation, even then one should not become hopeless about Allah's *Rehmat*. Such hopelessness is *Kufr* because this will be a practical affirmation that the law of Allah does not possess this potential that by living life according to it, the greatness which has slipped away can be restored, and this is what *Kufr* is:

Those who reject (display Kufr) the signs of Allah and the meeting with Him¹³⁴, it is they who shall despair of My Rehmat: it is they who will (suffer) a most grievous Penalty. (29:23)

¹³³ The author has commented in this way in some of his other writings as well. However, Europe knowingly adopted the path of secularism, and even during the eras of religious rule they deliberately followed a path different from Christian values. As the Quran has stated e.g. (12:106), most people will commit *Shirk* deliberately as they do not see any benefit in following the revelation wholeheartedly since it is contrary to their own desires. In today's world, it is becoming abundantly clear that despite the availability of plenty of literature on the Quran, the rich and powerful elites are following the path of their desires, thus ignoring the Law of Requital. They do not hold themselves accountable for their deeds, and do not consider that they can be held accountable for all the wrongs which they are deliberately inflicting on their fellow human beings across the globe. (Ed)

¹³⁴ 'Meeting with Him' – this is usually translated as meeting in the hereafter. However, Allah is everywhere and not confined to one place or space e.g. (57:4), and we do not go and meet Him

This is losing one's way. Abraham stated:

...And who despairs of Rehmat of His Rabb, but such as go astray. (15:56)

This is why Allah stated about His 'Own' servants:

Say: O my Servants who have transgressed against their selves! Despair not of Rehmat of Allah: for Allah provides protection against all excesses: for He is All Protecting, Raheem. (39:53)

That Allah Who gives direction to the rain clouds at that time when the whole world has given up all hope of rain:

He is the One that sends down rain (even) after (men) have given up all hope and scatters His Rehmat (far and wide). And He is the Protector, Worthy of all Hamd. (42:28)

8.24 Infinite Vastness of Means of *Rehmat*

The treasures of Allah's *Rehmat* can never become empty; this is the short-sightedness of man that he measures them according to his own scales:

Say: If you had control of the Treasures of the Rehmat of my Rabb, behold, you would keep them back, for fear of spending them: for man is niggardly! (17:100)

His *Rehmat* encompasses everything:

...Our Rabb! Your Reach is over all things, in Rehmat and Knowledge... (40:7)

This is why when His law of *Rehmat* wishes to extend its hand of beneficence, who can stop Him?

Say: Who is it that can screen you from Allah if (as per His Law of Requital) it be His wish to give you punishment or to give you Rehmat... (33:17) See also (35:2, 39:38)

8.25 Conditions for Deserving *Rehmat*

But His *Rehmat* is always conditional, when these conditions are fulfilled then this *Rehmat* is conferred. For example, when Moses prayed that his Ummah be blessed

anywhere. Here, it means that the consequences of not following the Divine laws are tantamount to 'meeting Him' as His presence is everywhere. (Ed)

with *Rehmats* (till end times), it was stated in response that, following the revelation of the Quran, this *Rehmat* will become conditional on obedience of the Quran¹³⁵:

...but My Rehmat extends to all things. That (Rehmat) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practice Zakat, and those who have Eimaan in Our signs; Those who follow Rasul, the unlettered Nabi, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures), in the law and the Gospel; for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who have Eimaan in him, honour him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will prosper. (7:156-157)

And My *Rehmat* encompasses all things. So I will write *Rehmat* for those people who will act righteously, and will dispense *Zakat*, and will establish *Eimaan* in Our laws. This means those people who will follow this *Nabi* whose coming these people find noted in their Torah and Gospel. He will command them to righteousness, forbid evil, and will declare *Halal* for them that which is pure. He will declare *Haram* that which is impure, and will distance their burdens, chains and impediments from them. Only those people who have *Eimaan* on this (*Nabi*) and will provide strength to him and will help him, and will follow this Light which will be sent with him, will be successful.

And the practical sign of obedience of Allah and Rasul is this - that Muslims become the arms and hands of each other (9:71) and after this make their life absolutely challenging, as the *Rehmats* of Allah are with those people who live a life of continuous Jihad and tenacious efforts in this world of trials and tribulations for the sake of the establishment of Divine sovereignty, and when the time comes they are willing to give up every dearest thing. *Hijrat*¹³⁶ is in fact the name given to this motive, departing from your land is one part of this, and these are the people who can become candidates for the *Rehmat* of Allah:

Those who accepted Eimaan and those who suffered exile and fought (and strove and struggled) in the path of Allah, they have the hope of the Mercy of Allah: And Allah is All-Protecting, Raheem. (2:218)

Not those people who are sitting idly doing nothing and simply waiting for tomorrow. How can you compare those who are 'sitting to those who are racing'?

¹³⁵ 'Quran' here refers to the Divine revelation of the time received by Moses i.e. Torah. (Ed)

¹³⁶ *Hijrat* - usually translated as migration, it has wider connotations. It also means to give up something or to move away. (Ed)

Not equal are those Momineen who sit and receive no hurt and those who strive and fight in the cause of Allah with their possessions and their persons... (4:95-96)

And all of this is not to be carried out on the basis of impulsive or momentary sentiments, but should be performed with determination and solid resolve, because only a rock which is standing firm and balanced on its foundation can face perils, unlike particles of sand which are ever willing to flow away with every roll of a wave. This resoluteness, steadfastness, and not losing heart is what the Quranic terminology calls *Sabr* and the *Rehmats* of Allah are with the *Sabireen* (plural of *Sabir*):

And (remember) Isma'il, Idris, and Dhul-Kifl, all (men) of constancy and patience; We admitted them to Our Rehmat: for they were of the righteous ones. (21:85-86)

This is that attribute which the Quran has explained in clear words:

Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who 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 Allah, and Rehmat, and they are the ones that receive guidance. (2:155-157)

8.26 Regaining Lost Greatness is *Rehmat*

When the state of *Eimaan* and deeds becomes such, then the *Rehmats* of Allah themselves seek out such men; lost wealth, stolen eminences and buried treasures are once again achieved. In the case of the narrative relating to Moses, when those orphan children were given their buried treasure, Allah called this His *Rehmat*:

...So, your Rabb desired that they should attain their age of full strength and get out their treasure - Rehmat from your Rabb... (18:82)

And the recompense for the *Sabr* of Ayub was given in this way, that his lost home and possessions and a lot more together with this were restored:

So, We listened to him: We removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his people to him, and doubled their number, as Rehmat from Ourselves, and a thing for commemoration, for all who serve Us. (21:84)

As a result of *Eimaan* and *Taqwa* a double share of *Rehmats* are awarded, and such a glowing light comes into their hands in the brightness of which the whole world can be led:

O you who have Eimaan! fear Allah, and have Eimaan in His Messenger, and He will bestow on you a double portion of His Rehmat: He will provide for you a Light by which you shall walk (straight in your path), and He will provide means of protection: for Allah is All Protecting, Raheem. (57:28)

This is the technique for not becoming hopeless of gaining *Rehmat*.

8.27 Man's Strange Response

But man is a strange creature; Allah showers His *Rehmat* on him and he adopts transgression, thinking that all this is obtained through his own skills. What Allah? And what *Rehmat* of His? And when these *Rehmats* slip away from him then he becomes as hopeless as if there is no support left for him:

When we give him a taste of some Rehmat from Ourselves, after some adversity has touched him, he is sure to say, this was to happen like this for me ... (41:50)

And:

...And truly, when We give man a taste of Rehmat from Ourselves, he does exult thereat, but when some ill happens to him, on account of the deeds which his hands have sent forth, truly then man displays Kufri! (42:48)

Even though what should have happened was that when the means of sustenance were plentiful and human abilities were freely available (i.e. *Rehmats* of Allah), these should have been utilised according to the laws of Allah (this is what *Shukr*¹³⁷ means i.e. being grateful to Allah). And when, as a consequence of his adopting the wrong path, man becomes deprived of these *Rehmats*, then if adherence to the Divine laws is established more so than before so that the ill effects of the wrong path are erased, then following this these *Rehmats* can be obtained again due to the constructive results of these deeds.

8.28 Supplications for *Rehmat*

Remember! these *Rehmats* are so vital to human life that even Allah's great *Anbiya* used to pray for them (7:151, 27:19); and those big leaders of people as well, who are turned into gods by their followers as a result of their piety and eminence, also remain supplicators for Allah's *Rehmat*:

¹³⁷ *Shukr* - to fill up and express, obedience and the performance of duties which must be done, expression of thankfulness, to give much in return for little. The human efforts to produce full results. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 1, pp 767-770. (Ed)

Those whom they call upon do desire (for themselves) means of access to their Rabb, even those who are nearest: they hope for His Rehmat and fear His Wrath... (17:57)

This same supplication was taught to the *Millat e Islamia* (Muslims) via Rasul-ullah:

And say: 'O my Sustainer! grant Your protection and Rehmat for You are the Best of those who show Rehmat!' (23:118)

Then the way in which the servants of Allah wish for *Rehmat* is reiterated in various places. In the last verse of Surah *Al-Baqra* the comprehensive supplication which is taught is 'and have *Rehmat* on us' (2:286) and at the start of Surah *Al e Imran* it is stated 'and bestow *Rehmat* from Your presence' (3:7, 39:9, 23:109). These are the characteristics of the servants of that Allah who is Himself the best of those Who bestow *Rehmat* and Whose Rasul is a *Rehmat* himself for all the worlds for all time. Hence, that *Jamaat e Momineen* will also be a possessor of *Rehmat*, a cause of *Rehmat* for the whole world, bequeathing the means of sustenance to the whole of mankind and the one that becomes a cause for the development and realisation of their nascent potentials. This is because the attributes of *Rehmaniyat* and *Rabeemiyat* of Allah will be sparkling with their full brilliance within them.

Before proceeding further, it is essential to understand one important point. The fundamental belief of Christians is that God is mercy and the Quran also states that Allah is *Rabeem* and *Rahman*. But there is a very important and fundamental distinction between these two. The belief of Christians is that every human child is born with the burden of sin of his first parents (Adam and Eve) and this burden cannot be removed through the efforts and deeds of man; this can only be removed through the mercy of God and its practical procedure is to have belief in the atonement of Jesus.

The Quran revoked this fundamental doctrine of Christianity. It stated that contrary to this, a human child is born with a clean slate devoid of any former burden and he possesses the freedom of this action that whatever path he wishes, he can adopt. Whatever kind of path he adopts, the consequences of this will become apparent in front of him according to the Law of Requit of Allah.

But if it ever happens that man makes some unwitting error and on realising this he repents over it and makes amends immediately, then an allowance has also been kept in the Law of Requit of Allah for this, so that in this way he can remain protected from the harmful consequences of his error. The inclusion of this provision in the Law of Requit is defined as the *Rehm* of Allah. As an example, you can understand it like this, that it is Allah's law that the person who puts his hand into fire will burn his hand and as a result he will suffer severe pain. But the Allah Who has created the property of burning in fire has, along with this, also

created such medicines the use of which provide relief from the resultant burning and pain. The creation of these medicines is *Rehm*.

9 *In'aam (Naimat, Nu'ama)*¹³⁸

The word *In'aam* originates from *Na'mun* which means a thing or scene possessing such a state due to which the eyes are soothed. *Taneem'atun* is a plant whose leaves are extremely soft and delicate, and green and fresh. The northerly breeze which is very clement is called *Nu'aama*, and along with this a very high star is also called *An-Nuamatu*. From these meanings it is evident that every aspect of human social life being pleasant, spacious, gentle, prosperous, joyful and elevated is a *Naimat*. The attribute of Allah is that He is the giver of these kinds of bounties to man.

9.1 The Path of Those People with *In'aam*

The Quran has taught that the greatest thing of all to be desired is *Siraat e Mustaqeem*:

(O Allah!) Show us the balanced straight path. (1:6)

Siraat e Mustaqeem is the straight path which leads to the intended destination. But because *Siraat e Mustaqeem* was an intangible concept, it is made clear in this manner that it is the path of those righteous beings on whom Allah has bestowed His *In'aam*:

The path of those on whom You have bestowed Your In'aam... (1:7)

The description of these righteous beings is done by stating that these are the *Anbiya*, the truthful ones, the martyrs, and the doers of righteous deeds:

All who obey Allah and the messenger are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of Anbiya, the sincere (lovers of Truth), the witnesses (who testify), and the righteous (who do good): Ah! what a beautiful fellowship! (4:69)

But this still remained a general statement, so details and explanations were given about Allah's *In'aam* in numerous verses under various topics and in various contexts, so that the difference between *Naimat* (bounty) and *It'aab* (punishment) becomes apparent, and so that no individual or nation remains stuck in any error of judgment, or in a state of complacency regarding the evaluation of the consequences of their deeds.

¹³⁸ Generally translated as bounty, grace etc. (Ed)

9.2 The Path of Guidance

First of all the great *Naimat* which has been referred to is *Siraat e Mustaqeem* i.e. the path of guidance which has been mentioned above (1:5-6). In other words, righteousness and guidance are *Fadl* of Allah and His *Naimat* (49:7-8). Contrary to this, misguidance, being astray and debased are His wrath and punishment. This is not the path of those on whom Allah's *In'aamat* (rewards) are showered:

The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray. (1:7)

9.3 *Naima*¹³⁹ of Deen and the World

Islam is that Deen which encompasses both 'religion' and 'world'. It teaches neither the materialism of the West nor the *Sanyas* and Monasticism of the East. Instead it provides guidance for that kind of life whose aura comprises a blend of the two; hence the bounties of Allah will encompass both Deen and *Duniya* (the world), the soul and matter, today and tomorrow. Let us first look at details of the 'bounties of Deen'.

9.4 Bounties of Deen

The advent of *Anbiya* in a nation used to be a *Naimat* of Allah:

Remember Moses said to his people: 'O my people! Call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you, when He produced Anbiya among you'...(5:20)

To the Muslims themselves it was stated that the nomination of the *Kaaba*¹⁴⁰ has been done so that the bounties may be completed on you, and so that you follow the path of guidance (2:150-151). Similarly, receiving the *Shariat* which gives guidance in the problems of life is also Allah's *Naimat*. Hence, while explaining matters related to divorce it is stated:

...But remind yourselves with Allah's Naimat on you, and the fact that He sent down to you the Book and wisdom, for your instruction...(2:231)

9.5 Messenger-hood is Itself a *Naimat*

Messenger-hood (*Nabuwvat*) is in itself a *Naimat* of Allah, hence, after mentioning various *Anbiya* it is stated:

¹³⁹ *Naima* – the plural of *Naimat*. (Ed)

¹⁴⁰ *Kaaba* i.e. Makkah as a symbol. (Ed)

Those were some of the Anbiya on whom Allah did bestow His Naimat, of the posterity of Adam... (19:58)

Pointing towards the manifest victory, protection and guidance of the straight path, it was stated to Rasul-ullah that all *Naima* were completed on him:

Verily We have granted you a manifest Victory: That Allah may protect you from all false accusations of the past and which may come later; fulfil His favour on you; and guide you to the Straight Path. (48:1-2)

In another verse, after reference to Rasul-ullah's earlier circumstances, there is a reminder of the protection provided to him during his orphan state. When you were in search of truth (*Haqq*)¹⁴¹ then the light of guidance was bestowed on you, and you were not left dependent on anyone else for the necessities of life. These are the bounties of Allah, the communication of which is commanded:

Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter (and care)? And He found you looking for guidance, and He gave you guidance. And He found you in need, and made you independent... So as for the bounty of your Rabb - rehearse and proclaim. (93:6-8, 11)

And then the bestowing of the Deen of Islam and its completion was declared as the completion of *Naimat*:

... This day have I completed your Deen for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your Deen... (5:3)

And in the remembrance of Allah's *Naima*, obedience of Rasul-ullah, and as a consequence of this obedience, adherence to the covenant and commitment which was made with Allah for the protection of Deen, is emphasised for Muslims:

And call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you, and His covenant, which He ratified with you, when you said: 'we hear and we obey'... (5:7)

Now let us look at the other side of the picture i.e. a discussion of worldly *Naima*.

9.6 Preference¹⁴² over Nations of the World

Achieving superiority and supremacy above all the nations of the world is Allah's

¹⁴¹ This is an important fact which is noted here i.e. guidance comes to those who seek it. (Ed)

¹⁴² Here supremacy means that the system is to be based on the values of the revelation and not according to man-made laws. (Ed)

Naimat, hence, Bani Israel are repeatedly reminded about this:

O Children of Israel! call to mind My Naimat which I bestowed upon you, and that I provided you supremacy over all other nations. (2:47)

Becoming free from the tyranny of Pharaoh, the provision of shade from clouds, abundance of sustenance, blessings of *Mann*¹⁴³ and *Salwa*¹⁴⁴ - all of these were *Naima* of Allah (2:57). The means of sustenance, dwellings and animals from which man meets the needs of his life, construction of fortified castles on hilltops and in underground caves, attire for daily needs, iron mail for protection in the battlefield - all of these are *Naima*:

It is Allah Who made your habitations homes of rest and quiet for you; and made for you, out of the skins of animals, (tents for) dwellings, which you find so light (and handy) when you travel and when you stop (in your travels); and out of their wool, and their soft fibres (between wool and hair), and their hair, rich stuff and articles of convenience (to serve you) for a time. It is Allah Who made out of the things He created, some things to give you shade; of the hills He made some for your shelter; He made you garments to protect you from heat, and coats of mail to protect you from your (mutual) violence. Thus, does He complete His Naimat on you, that you may follow His laws. But if they turn away, your duty is only to pass the clear Message. They recognise the favours of Allah; then they deny them; and most of them are ungrateful. (16:80-83)

Similarly land, canals and springs, rain and production through rain, animals of burden on the back of the earth, ships on the surface of the oceans (31:31) - all of these are assigned under the control of man so that he keeps the *Naima* of Allah in mind (43:10-13). Through purity and cleanliness together with abundance of economic means in social life, *Naimat* is completed:

...Allah does not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete his Naimat on you, so that you may be grateful. (5:6)

Purification of the heart and vision is also implicit in this aside from physical cleanliness.

9.7 Power in the Land is Allah's *Naimat*

This section was about the individual life. Now let us cast the eye on the collective

¹⁴³ *Mann* - to receive beneficence from Allah with no major effort. It also means favours. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol, pp 542-544. (Ed)

¹⁴⁴ *Salwa* – anything which provides consolation and reassurance. This refers to both physical and psychological needs of human beings. See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 1, p 701. (Ed)

life. The fundamental principle which was laid down was that the nation which has the *Naima* of Allah will achieve superiority over other nations of the world.

O Bani Israel! Call to mind the favour which I bestowed on you, and that I preferred you to all others. (2:47)

Hence, where Bani Israel were reminded of many other *Naima*, they were specifically told that *Anbiya* were sent among them; they were bestowed with power in the land; and such other things were conferred on them which no-one else was given¹⁴⁵:

Remember Moses said to his people: 'O my people! Call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you, when He produced Anbiya among you, made you kings, and gave you what He had not given to any other among the peoples'. (5:20)

9.8 Power is *Naimat*

Hence establishment of rule in the land, power and authority, are all *Naima* of Allah:

...call in remembrance that He made you inheritors after the people of Noah and gave you a stature tall among the nations. Call in remembrance the benefits (you have received) from Allah: that so you may prosper. (7:69)

Similarly, beautiful palaces and fortified castles are also *Naima* of Allah (7:74).

9.9 Increase in Numbers is a *Naimat*

An increase in numbers in a *Jamaat* is also a *Naimat* of Allah:

...But remember how you were little, and He gave you increase... (7:86)

9.10 Victory and Triumph is a *Naimat*

Victory, success and triumph in the battlefield is a *Naimat* of Allah (3:173). To be protected from the clutches of attacking enemies is also a *Naimat*.

O you who have Eimaan! Call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) held

¹⁴⁵ The bounties which are obtained through Deen cannot be obtained outwith the Quranic values. (Ed)

back their hands from you: so fear (the consequences of the laws of) Allah. And on Allah let Momineen put (all) their trust. (5:11)

9.11 Becoming Free from Slavery is a *Naimat*

During the initial period of Islam, many such events occurred in which Muslims were encircled within very difficult situations due to their opponents. Bringing them out protected and safe and returning them victorious and successful, is called a *Naimat* of Allah (33:9). In the same way, compare with the situation of *Bani Israel*: achieving release from the tyranny and subjugation of Pharaoh and receiving freedom from the curse of slavery was called a *Naimat* of Allah for them:

Remember! Moses said to his people: 'Call to mind the favour of Allah to you when He delivered you from the people of Pharaoh'...(14:6)

9.12 Revitalizing a Dead Nation with the Blood of Life

For a nation to achieve life again after death, and for it to be once again numbered amongst living nations, is Allah's *Fadl* (2:242). But we have not yet mentioned that greatest *Naimat* of all as a result of which these *Naima* are achieved. The Quran declares:

And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brethren; and you were on the brink of the pit of fire¹⁴⁶, and He saved you from it. Thus, does Allah make His Signs clear to you: That you may be guided. (3:103)

In other words, mutual unity: for the Islamic nation to become one Ummah, not to be divided into sects and factions, is that *Naimat* of Allah which became the line of distinction between the era of ignorance and the Islamic period. Subjugation of the universal forces by man is a *Naimat*:

Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you 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)

All this is made subject to control by man so that man remains bowed before the

¹⁴⁶ When human emotions, desires and intellect function outwith the guidance of *Wahi*, they only consider their own good. Here, the Quran states that without its guidance you would have remained divided both within your own self and among yourselves, and inner division can never lead to outer unity. (Ed)

laws of Allah:

*... Thus does He complete His favours on you, that you may bow to His Will (laws).
(16:81)*

This is that path of guidance (2:150) which was revealed through Rasul-ullah (2:151). And this is what is called Islam which is a complete Deen, and by reaching which all the *Naima* of Allah are achieved:

... This day have I completed your Deen for you, accomplished My favours upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your Deen... (5:3)

9.13 How *Naima* are Multiplied

Following the achievement of all these *Naima*, and after this for increase and development in them, this principle is established that whoever does *Shukr* for his *Naima*, his *Naima* will continue to multiply, and whoever does *Kufr* of these *Naima*, his *Naima* will be snatched from him. For *Shukr e Naimat* see the topic under '*Shukr*'. Here it will be sufficient to state briefly that to utilise the *Naima* of Allah according to the correct Divine laws is *Shukr e Naimat*, and to obtain advantage wrongly from them, employing them in unjust ways, is *Kufr*. For example, when the Muslims were bestowed with the *Naimat* of government and state, it was with this purpose:

Those who, if We establish them in the land, establish Salat and organise Zakat, enjoin the right and forbid wrong... (22:41)

As long as they kept fulfilling this purpose the state kept on expanding, and when they turned *Shukr e Naimat* into *Kufr e Naimat* i.e. started taking illegitimate advantage of this great bounty of Allah, the state turned from the 'kingdom of Allah' into a dictatorship, and gradually that *Naimat* was snatched away and then they became bound up in the painful chastisement of humiliation and ruin.

To keep in mind this same purpose, Bani Israel were also instructed: Remember! all these *Naima* have been made available cheaply for you; as long as you continue to display *Shukr* for these, these will continue to multiply, but if you do *Kufr e Naimat* then you will be bound in a severe punishment:

And remember! your Sustainer caused to be declared (publicly): 'If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you; But if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed.' (14:7)

9.14 Submission to Other than Allah is *Kufr* of *Naimat*

The fundamental and intrinsic form of being grateful for *Naima* is to have *Eimaan* in One Allah and to have *Eimaan* in Allah means to completely deny ‘non-Allah’ (which the Quran calls *Batil*). Other than Allah, no other rebellious power should be followed nor should any other law be accepted other than His. If this disobedience is done, it will be *Kufr* of *Naimat*:

And Allah has made for you mates (and companions) of your own nature, and made for you, out of them, sons and daughters and grandchildren, and provided for you sustenance of the best: will they then believe in vain things, and be ungrateful for Allah's favours? And obey others than Allah, such as have no power of providing them, for sustenance, with anything in heavens or earth, and cannot possibly have such power? (16:72-73)

This is because man achieves all *Naima* by obeying the laws of Allah. To relate these to some other power is to declare *Shirk* in opposition to *Tauheed*, and is *Kufr* in opposition to *Shukr* (16:53-55). This reality is explained as follows by an example:

Allah sets forth a parable: a city enjoying security and quiet, abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place: Yet was it ungrateful for the favours of Allah: so Allah made it taste of hunger and terror like a garment (from every side), because of the (evil) which (its people) wrought. And there came to them a Messenger from among themselves, but they falsely rejected him; so the wrath seized them even in the midst of their iniquities. So eat of the sustenance which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good; and be grateful for the favours of Allah, if it is He Whom you follow. (16:112-114)

9.15 *Kufr* of *Naima* by the Leaders of a Nation

According to the teaching of the Quran this *Kufr* and *Shukr* are not confined to individuals only; from the point of view of the collective, its effect is very profound. It is apparent therefore that this *Kufr* will commence from the higher echelons who are called national leaders. The consequence of their *Kufr* is that they fall into the pits of hell, taking the whole nation along with them. The Quran states:

Have you not turned your vision to those who have changed the favour of Allah into blasphemy and caused their people to descend to the house of perdition? Into Hell? They will burn therein, an evil place to stay in! (14:28-29)

The reality is that the nation which, like a herd of buffalo, becomes habitual in following behind men with eyes shut without looking around, meets this same

sorry end. Contrary to this, the Divine law saves and removes those people who make use of their heart and mind, intellect and vision, and do not let go of their hold on *Shukr e Naimat* from the encirclement of hell. So, when the nation of Lot was engulfed from all sides by the exemplary hell of destruction and obliteration, then Allah saved those individuals among them who practiced *Shukr* because of their being grateful:

We sent against them a violent tornado with showers of stones, except Lot's household; them we delivered by early dawn as a Grace from Us. Thus do we reward those who are grateful. (54:34-35)

This is why it is instructed to always entreat Allah for the ability to perform *Shukr e Naimat* (46:15).

9.16 Psyche of Man

But as has been noted in the previous chapter, man happens to be a strange creature. When Allah showers His *Naima* on him, he contravenes His laws, avoids them and sidesteps them. But when these *Naima* begin to be snatched from him as a consequence of his *Kufr*, then he becomes hopeless and despondent:

Yet when We bestow Our favours on man, he turns away and becomes remote on his side, and when evil seizes him he gives himself up to despair! (17:83)

In this appalling environment of deprivation and despair he then returns to the Divine laws, and then in recompense for his being on the right path, he achieves his seized *Naima* and lost treasures again. But after this he again forgets them, and associating these *Naima* to others, begins to do *Shirk*:

...but when He bestows a favour upon him as from Himself, (man) does forget what he cried and prayed for before, and he does set up rivals unto Allah... (39:8)

9.17 Egotistic Attitude

And at other times he exceeds even this, and the menace of egotism embeds itself in his mind, and he starts declaring that I have received all this as a result of my own planning and my own knowledge and skill. What Allah! And what laws of His!

Now when trouble touches man, he cries to Us: But when We bestow a favour upon him as from Ourselves, he says, 'This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge (I have)! Nay, but thinking like this is the cause for destruction, but most of them understand not! (39:49)

At this point it is important to understand this much that whatever man receives, it is as a consequence of his effort and action. But the question is what part of this endeavour is due to his own effort and what part due to those potentials which he has received automatically. If an individual possesses a higher level of intellect, then he has not purchased this brain himself, he has received it without any effort and payment. This individual earns more compared to the individual who has not received a good brain and declaring it to be the result purely of his own skill, he does not consider anyone else to have a share in it. The Quran declares that the relatively higher earnings of this individual is the consequence of those intellectual potentials of his which were bestowed on him free. Hence by calling this part of his income his own skill, he should not become the sole owner, instead this should be allocated for the common sustenance of mankind according to the Divine law.¹⁴⁷ This is also the condition of man that he never holds himself responsible for his trouble and worry. Firstly, he tries to hold someone else responsible for this and if this is not possible, then he states that God has unjustly humiliated me, I was not in any way at fault:

Now, as for man, when his Rabb tries him (as per law), giving him honour and gifts, then says he, (puffed up), 'My Rabb has honoured me.' But when He tries him, restricting his subsistence for him, then says he (in despair), 'My Rabb has humiliated me.' (89:15-16)

This is not the truth – no-one receives *Naima* without any reason, nor are those which have been gained then snatched away without any cause. For this there is an established immutable law of Allah and this law is that in the (good or bad) state of any nation no change occurs till the time that that nation does not produce a change within itself. Changes in the external world are in fact manifested according to changes in the internal psychology of this nation.

9.18 Immutable Law

The Quran states:

Because Allah will never change the grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) selves: and verily Allah is He Who hears and knows (all things). (8:53)

A severe chastisement becomes imposed on that nation which changes the *Naima* of Allah itself in this way:

¹⁴⁷ Details of this are covered in my book titled *The Quranic System of Sustenance*.

Ask the Children of Israel how many clear (Signs) We have sent them. But if any one, after Allah's favour has come to him, substitutes (something else), Allah is strict in punishment. (2:211)

Hence, for this purpose that the significance of being grateful does not remain concealed from the eyes, it is emphasised that *Naima* be displayed. Bani Israel were repeatedly reminded to always keep the *Naima* of Allah in front of them:

O Children of Israel! call to mind the (special) favour which I bestowed upon you... (2:40) See also (2:122)

Then, addressing the whole of mankind, it was instructed not to let Allah's *Naima* disappear out of sight:

O mankind! Call to mind the favours of Allah unto you... (35:3)

So much so, that even Rasul-ullah was told to display the *Naima* of his *Rabb*:

But the bounty of your Rabb - rehearse and proclaim! (93:11)

For the same warning it is stated that on the Day of Judgment there will be a question regarding every *Naimat*, about how did you spend and utilise it:

Then, shall you be questioned that Day about the favours. (102:8)

9.19 Let us Recap

From the above discussion this reality has become apparent to us that finding the path of guidance is a *Naimat* of Allah, and that is why messenger-hood and revelation, the Book and wisdom are bounties of Allah which are bestowed on a nation. By walking on this path of guidance the successes, eminences, triumphs and accomplishments of the world are attained. Wealth and prosperity, authority and rule, home and hearth, wife and children, grand palaces, fortified castles, increase in *Jamaat*, supremacy and power over enemies, all of these are *Naima* of Allah. Contrary to this, the snatching away of these *Naima* and the overshadowing of some nation by humiliation and ruin is Allah's punishment. Gratitude for these *Naima* is that these should only be used for those purposes which have been defined by the Divine laws. As a consequence of this gratitude these *Naima* will continue to increase and will keep multiplying, and the roots of a nation will continue to become sturdier. Contrary to this, if a wrong advantage is taken from these, then this is *Kufr* (denial) of these *Naima* and as a result these *Naima* are snatched away; these begin to transform into decline; and since the life of nations is counted not in days but is reckoned in centuries, these *Naima* are therefore

snatched away gradually in such an imperceptive way that a superficial glance does not perceive any discernable difference in the state of this nation. This is why man often falls into the trap of thinking that no accountability whatsoever is being taken of the injustices of this nation. So much so that even the nation itself ridicules the immutability of the Law of Requit, mocks it, and in the intoxication of wealth and power does not understand that it is standing at the foot of a mountain containing a volcano within which a silent fire is unceasingly multiplying, until this volcano erupts and the unleashed storm of wave after wave of molten lava engulfs them in its fold, and then no possibility of salvation, no route of escape remains for them, and in its place only their tales remain.

There are thousands of worlds of wisdom and vision, lesson and instruction implicit in the law which the Quran has explained regarding being deprived of *Naima* (the snatching of *Naima*) i.e.:

Because Allah will never change the favour which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) selves: and verily Allah is He Who hears and knows (all things). (8:53)

In relation to the rise and fall of nations this is a great law. As the explanation of this law will be found at another place, a brief summary will suffice here. First of all this reality has been exposed in it that though Allah is definitely Omnipotent, His status is not like that of our worldly rulers who, when they are pleased, bestow a full treasure chest and when they are vexed, snatch it away. The laws of His Will are fixed, and this system of the universe is functioning due to these same laws. The conduct and organisation of human life also function according to this same code. Furthermore, reward or punishment of Allah is not something which is imposed on man ready made from outside, rather it is the natural consequence of the inner change within man. This is an important point which will be easier to understand through a tangible example. For example, it is the property of water that it is liquid, it flows down a slope, it takes on the shape of whatever container it is poured into. But when this same water, by absorbing cold within it, creates such a change within itself that it turns into a slab of ice, then it remains neither liquid nor does it flow down a slope, nor can it adopt the shape of every container i.e. it is the same water but due to an internal change it has now become the follower of some other clause of the law of nature. Now it is not a liquid but has turned into a solid and the properties of this state have now been created in it. Now if this water wished that it could retrieve its snatched traits then it will have to produce changes within itself i.e. it will need to become liquid again through heat. Following this change, its former properties will automatically return. Or looking at another aspect, when this same water absorbs more heat then it will change from liquid into gas. Now it will turn into another form and the law governing this form will become applicable to it. Instead of flowing down a slope, it will now rise up, will become lighter than air; if it now wished to retrieve its

snatched properties, then it will have to produce a change within itself as a result of which the same properties will return.

Now just reflect on this state of affairs that every Muslim prays numerous times to Allah:

Show us the straight path, the path of those on whom You have bestowed Your favours...(1:6-7)

But does not grasp that if despite this, his condition is not like those people on whom Allah has bestowed His favours and bounties, then what is its secret? The secret is that same one which has been mentioned above. On the one hand he prays, and on the other hand Allah tells him that a reward can only be bestowed on you once you create the potential for it within yourself - the result will manifest itself. Therefore, we should look at what the change was which those people who benefitted from Allah's bounties had created within themselves, and when those bounties have been gradually snatched away, then which change was it that resulted in this. And today, if there is the desire to retrieve these same snatched *Naima*, then what kind of change is required to be created within us in order to achieve this. Maintaining our state fixedly as a solid slab of ice yet cherishing the desire for the property of a liquid - if this is not self-deception then what else is it? Remember! the way that the law of Allah is immutable regarding changing the states of water, it is similarly immutable regarding the life and death of nations of the world (35:43). The law of Allah is a living reality and nothing becomes made from mere sacred desires and beautiful wishes. 'So long as your glance is not on the realities of life, your glass will not be able to compete with the rock'¹⁴⁸.

9.20 A Doubt

It is stated that when a Muslim prays to Allah to help him to tread on the path of those people who have received Allah's *Naima* (1:7) and the characteristics of these people who achieved these *Naimas* is that they are righteous, truthful, martyrs and *Anbiya*, then:

All who obey Allah and the messenger are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of Anbiya, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous: Ah! what a beautiful companionship! (4:69)

From this it is then deduced that a Muslim, while following the path of a *Nabi*, can himself become a *Nabi* and as a result of this logic some people offer proof of the

¹⁴⁸ This may be a couplet by M. Iqbal. (Ed)

features of messenger-hood. This line of argument is based on absolute ignorance of the teaching of the Quran.¹⁴⁹

9.21 Another Doubt

It is often said that all those amenities and prosperities which the Quran has called the *Naima* of Allah are available to Western nations. From this aspect they will be declared as nations possessing bounties, although they deny even the existence of God and also do not accept His defined human values – what is the answer to this?

The response to this is that there are two parts of the laws of Allah. One is those laws which are related to the material universe, these are called natural laws. Whichever nation harnesses the forces of nature according to these laws will achieve prosperities and successes and in this there is no distinction between a *Kafir* and a *Momin*.

But the second part of the laws of Allah is that one which is related to human life. The nation which harnesses the forces of nature but does not bring these into use according to these laws will neither itself find internal peace and tranquility, nor will the rest of mankind live in contentment and peace in relation to them just as is happening today. But for the nation which utilises the outcome of the forces of nature according to human values, the development of their own self will keep taking place, and the rest of the world will also live in peace and tranquility under its shadow. Such a nation is called a *Jamaat e Momineen*. On this basis all the nations of the world will be divided into three categories:

- (1) That nation which, having harnessed the forces of nature, utilises these according to the Permanent Values of humanity will be called a *Jamaat e Momineen*.
- (2) That nation which, having subjugated the forces of nature, utilises these according to their own desires and interests will be a *Jamaat of Kuffar*.
- (3) And that nation which does not even harness the forces of nature will not even reach the status of humanity; it will live life at an animal level.

¹⁴⁹ Details of this will be available in the book titled *Mairaj e Insaniyat* under the chapter on the finality of messenger-hood.

10 *Fadl* (Abundance)

In the Arabic language the word *Fadl* is taken as being the opposite of ‘scarcity’ i.e. something being plentiful and not scarce, greater than need. Generally, this word is used for economic conveniences, but it can also be used for superiority, higher rank, hierarchy etc. Indeed, also for rewards and gifts, favours, acts of generosity and donations i.e. giving beyond what is someone’s due or to give as a favour without expecting anything in return. For example, in Surah *Al-Baqra* it is stated:

...And do not forget liberality between yourselves... (2:237)

The Bestower of these kinds of rewards and favours, raining down such bounties, is Allah, the greatest giver of *Fadl* (3:174). And the one who is showered with the *Fadls* of Allah is the possessor of *Fadl* i.e. ‘*Ulul Fadl*’. In Surah *An-Nur*, after the incident of *Ifk* (slandering), it is stated:

Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want, and those who have left their homes in Allah's cause... (24:22)

10.1 Messenger-hood is a *Fadl* of Allah

As with *Naima*, Allah’s *Fadl* too can be divided into each of the two categories of Deen and *Duniya* (world). Let us first consider the department of Deen.

Nabuwwat is Divine *Fadl*, and receiving it is dependent on the Will of Allah, not on the skill and endeavour of someone. A brief mention has been made of it in the previous chapter on *In’aam*. The people of the Book, in particular the Jews, used to say that whoever does not follow our Deen and is not from among the Bani Israel, how can he be a *Nabi*? In response it is stated:

...Say: ‘All bounties are in the hand of Allah: He grants them to whom He wishes: And Allah cares for all, and He knows all things’. (3:73)

In the same connection, at another place it is stated:

... But Allah will choose for His Special Mercy whom He will - for Allah is Possessor of abounding Fadl. (2:105) See also (2:90, 17:86-87)

10.2 The Quran is Allah's *Fadl*

Nabuwwat was meant to be the *Wahi* of Allah which is now preserved within the Quran, hence the Quran is also Allah's *Fadl* and *Rehmat*. For mankind to receive it is also Allah's *Fadl*, and as a consequence of this, whatever the universe of humanity achieves is also His *Fadl* and *Rehmat*:

O mankind! verily there has come to you a convincing proof from your Rabb: For We have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest. Then those who have Eimaan in Allah, and hold fast to Him, soon will He admit them to mercy and grace from Himself and guide them to Himself by a straight path. (4:175-176)

Hence, the Quran is such a supreme bounty and highest favour that no matter how much happiness is displayed by mankind on receipt of it, it will be insufficient:

O mankind! Surely, there has come to you a direction from your Rabb and a healing for the diseases in your hearts – and a guidance and Rehmat for the Momineen. Say: ‘ In the bounty of Allah and in His Rehmat – in that let them rejoice’; that is better than all that they hold. (10:57-58).

Along with the Quran, the conduit for the Quran, Rasul-ullah himself, was also a great *Naimat* for humanity and this was also a *Fadl* and *Ihsan* of Allah:

O Nabi! Truly We have sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, and warner, and as one who invites to Allah's (grace) by His leave, and as a lamp spreading light. Then give the glad tidings to Momineen, that they shall have from Allah a very great bounty. (33:45-47) See also (62:2-9)

10.3 Inheriting the Quran is a Great *Fadl*

This Book, the teaching of which was provided by Rasul-ullah, was received by the Muslim Ummah as an inheritance. This inheritance is in itself a supreme *Fadl*:

Then We have given the Book for inheritance to such of Our servants as We have chosen: but there are among them some who wrong their own selves; some who follow a middle course; and some who are, by Allah's leave, foremost in good deeds; that is the highest Grace. (35:32)

(It is possible that in this verse being 'foremost in righteous deeds' is defined as the supreme *Fadl*. Even then it is the same, because by inheritance of the Quran the aim is for the *Momineen* to keep progressing in righteous deeds).

10.4 Practicable *Shariat* is Divine *Fadl*

The uniqueness of this Book is that the *Shariat* in it is not such a burden which when you lift it, it cannot be lifted, rather it is such an easy code which can be followed with ease. It is not some kind of chain as a result of which the human capacity to reason and to act becomes a captive, nor any kind of commandment which is impracticable. The receiving of such a *Shariat* is also a *Fadl* of Allah:

Say: 'See you what things Allah has sent down to you for sustenance? Yet you hold forbidden some things whereof and some things lawful'. Say: 'Has Allah indeed permitted you, or do you invent things to attribute to Allah?' And what think those who invent lies against the Day of Judgment? Verily Allah is full of bounties to mankind, but most of them do not do Shukr. (10:59-60).

Support of this is given in Surah *An-Nur*, where it is stated that those people who accuse righteous women with some slander will have to bring forth four witnesses to support their claim, and if they cannot do this then they will be punished. This is because to try and stain the chastity of someone is not any ordinary crime. But along with this it is also stated that if some man accuses his wife and cannot obtain a witness, then he should take an oath as proof of his claim. This exception has made the law easier. This allowance is declared to be a *Fadl* of Allah:

If it were not for Allah's grace and mercy on you, and that Allah is Oft-Returning, full of Wisdom. (24:10)

10.5 Righteousness and Guidance are a *Fadl* of Allah

Therefore, getting guidance and righteousness from the Quran and treading on this straight path is Allah's *Fadl* (49:7-8). The former *Anbiya* also used to proclaim receiving guidance and righteousness as Allah's *Fadl*. Hence, in his sermon in the prison Yusuf states:

'And I follow the ways of my fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and never could we attribute any partners whatever to Allah: that (comes) of the grace of Allah to us and to mankind: yet most men are not grateful'. (12:38)

10.6 Saving Oneself from Being Misguided is Allah's *Fadl*

But evil forces are always busy in the effort to divert people from the path of righteousness and guidance. About Rasul-ullah himself it is stated:

But for the grace of Allah to you and His mercy, a party of them would certainly have plotted to lead you astray. But (in fact) they will only lead their own selves astray, and

to you they can do no harm in the least. For Allah has sent down to you the Book and wisdom and taught you what you knew not (before): And great is the grace of Allah unto you. (4:113)

This is why the *Momineen* are directed to not follow the whisperings¹⁵⁰ of Satan by leaving Allah's guidance. This is also a great *Fadl* of Allah and it is from this that the development of the human self takes place (24:21). Details of the effects which are established in the worldly life as a result of this human self-development will be covered later.

10.7 The Blessing of the Hereafter is a *Fadl*

To be successful in the life of the hereafter is also a Divine *Fadl*. Hence, at numerous places the rewards and favours of Jannat have been declared as *Fadl* e.g. (35:34-35, 44:51-57, 57:21). This supreme *Fadl* is intrinsically linked to righteous deeds:

... But those who have Eimaan and work righteous deeds will be in the luxuriant meads of the gardens: they shall have, before their Rabb, all that they wish for. That will indeed be the magnificent Fadl (of Allah). (42:22)

This is that same *Fadl* and blessing with which the martyrs laying down their life in the path of Allah are rewarded (3:168-170). And achieving companionship of these very people is considered to be a *Fadl* of Allah:

All who obey Allah and the messenger are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of the Anbiya, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous: Ah! what a beautiful fellowship! Such is the bounty from Allah: And sufficient is it that Allah knows all. (4:69-70)

10.8 Divine *Fadl* in Worldly Matters

Now see the amazing display of Allah's *Fadl* in worldly matters – this system of the universe in which, on the one hand, such a vast arena has been left open for the struggles and endeavours of life, and on the other hand so many means have been made available for comfort and pleasure - this is *Fadl* for mankind:

It is Allah Who has made the night for you, that you may rest therein, and the day as

¹⁵⁰ The root of the word used here is W-S-W-S, which means the passing of bad thoughts through the mind i.e. the thoughts of self-interest which emotions create in the heart (or mind), or which mischievous people incite in someone's mind (7:20, 114:4-5). See *Lughat-ul-Quran*, Vol 2, pp 715-716. (Ed)

that which helps to see. Verily Allah is full of Grace and Bounty to men: yet most men give no thanks. (40:61)

10.9 The Life of Eminence is a Divine *Fadl*

This was a reference to the general favours in the system of nature. Now let us consider the rewards of *Eimaan* and righteous deeds. The Quran has explained one thing as a basis and foundation, and that is that by following Deen man achieves a life of distinction, and that not even a common or average level of life, never mind a life of humiliation and deprivation. And a life of eminence is a *Fadl* of Allah:

O you who have Eimaan! if you keep in view the laws of Allah, He will grant you a criterion (to judge between right and wrong), remove from you (all) evil (that may afflict) you, and protect you: for Allah is the Possessor of Fadl unbounded. (8:29)

Such a nation should always be counted among the nations which are alive. For a dead nation to get life is also a *Fadl* of Allah:

Did you not turn your vision to those who abandoned their homes, though they were in thousands (in number), for fear of death? Allah said to them: 'Die': Then He restored them to life. For Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but most of them are ungrateful. (2:243)

10.10 Achieving Powers is a *Fadl*

Similarly, obtaining positive powers is also a *Fadl* of Allah. In the story of Solomon, when it is noted that the Queen of Saba (Sheba) becomes obedient and a follower, Solomon, after witnessing these astounding forces, exclaimed:

...he said: 'This is by the grace of my Rabb! to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful'...(27:40)

At another place it is noted that Solomon had a grand army which was mostly based on horse cavalry and that Solomon had full knowledge of the rules and principles regarding these contingents. This is also called the *Fadl* of Allah (27:16). Dawood (David) had expertise in the technique of producing iron mail armour; this has also been called Divine *Fadl* (34:10-11).

10.11 Victory and Triumph is Allah's *Fadl*

Gaining victory and success against an enemy and returning from the battlefield successful and triumphant is also a *Fadl* of Allah (3:172-173). At another place the

word '*Fadl*' is mentioned as the opposite of 'trouble' in the battlefield from which its meanings are further elucidated (4:72-73). Leaving aside the battlefield, what instance is there in this world of challenges when we are not faced by some obstacle; life itself is the name of persistent struggle, continuous effort, and Jihad without end. Hence, success in the Jihad of life is a *Fadl* of Allah. Contrary to this, if some trick of an enemy becomes effective, some stratagem of his overwhelms, or by becoming entangled in some deception of his, such a step is taken which goes against the interest of the *Millat*, then this is obedience of Satan. Remaining protected from this is also a *Fadl* of Allah (4:83).

10.12 Divine *Fadl* By Spending in the Path of Allah

This is because by trapping him in their deceptive net, Satanic doubts (the sentiments of human self-interest) try to divert him from the path of guidance. For example, the requirement of the Quranic system of sustenance is that whatever is beyond one's needs should be passed on to the societal system so that the requirements of others who are in need are met from this. But the individual self-interests of man scare him by telling him that if you gave all this to 'others' then what will be left for 'yourself'? You will die of hunger. Even though the truth is that what is apparently considered as giving to others is, in reality, giving to your 'own self'. This is because watering the roots of a tree is for the sake of growth and blossoming of the branches and leaves. Growth of the collective life of a *Millat* is the cause for the success and prosperity of individuals. The Quran has stated this fact in the following words after giving the command for *Infaaq*¹⁵¹:

The Evil one threatens you with poverty and bids you to conduct unseemly. Allah promises you His protection and bounties. And Allah cares for all and He knows all things. (2:268)

10.13 Establishment of Peace is Divine *Fadl*

The greatest desire and yearning of man is that he should live in peace and tranquility. But those people who (somehow) acquire power and authority snatch away the peace of others and unleash chaos in the society. But in opposition to them another *Jamaat* is caused to stand up, which halts these transgressors from their excesses and in this way establishes peace in the society. This is also termed as the *Fadl* of Allah:

...And did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief: But Allah is full of bounty to all the worlds. (2:251)

¹⁵¹ *Infaaq* – to keep wealth and the means of sustenance available for all. (Ed)

Those people who acquire power in the world think that they can now do whatever their hearts desire, there is no-one around to question us. If it is in truth like this, then there will be unbridled chaos in the world. But it is not like this. Here, the Law of Requit of Allah is functioning according to which the result of every deed (including even the thoughts passing through the mind) is of a surety established. This law, and its functioning without any favour, and its implementation is in itself Allah's *Fadl*.

Those who reject Eimaan will suffer from that rejection: and those who work righteousness will spread their couch (of repose) for themselves: that He may reward those who have Eimaan and work righteous deeds, out of His Bounty. For He loves not those who are Kafireen. (30:44-45)

10.14 Who Attains *Fadl*

We have seen what the different forms of Divine *Fadl* are and in what varying manners and techniques it is operating. The question now is, who receives this *Fadl* and how is it obtained? For this it is stated in very clear words that this *Fadl* of Allah is obtained by the one who deserves it and the conditions to deserve it are that man should continuously assess his own self on the highway of life, to see whether his step has gone in the wrong direction? If he realises that he has stepped on to the wrong path, then at some point he should return to that point from where he had taken a step in the wrong direction (this is called *Tauba*), and after this he should tread on that path which the Divine law (the Quran) has specified for him. As a consequence of this, that traveller becomes deserving of Allah's *Fadl*. In a nutshell, only he attains *Fadl* who deserves it:

Seek you the protection of your Rabb, and return to Him; that He may grant you enjoyment, good (and true), for a term appointed, and bestow His abounding grace on all who abound in merit... (11:3)

And after this 'return' (*Tauba*), not only is the loss compensated but far more than the heart's desire is received (42:25-26).

10.15 Getting Respite is also *Fadl*

The Law of Requit of Allah is an established fact according to which every deed produces its own effect. But there is a time interval between the time that a deed is done and for its consequence to manifest tangibly before us (just as there is an interval between the sowing of a seed in the soil and the ripening of the crop). If during this interval man, abandoning the wrong path, adopts the right path, and carries out such deeds whose constructive results are far weightier, then due to this the destructive effects of his former wrong conduct are eradicated. This is

called ‘receiving forgiveness’. In other words, his righteous deeds secure him from the ill effects of his former unpleasant deeds. This is called ‘*Maghfirat*’. Therefore, this time of respite (in which recovery is possible) is a *Fadl* of Allah. Attention has been drawn to this fact in various places in the Quran e.g. (2:64, 27:71-73). In the battle of *Uhd*¹⁵² when a tactical error was committed by a *Jamaat* of Muslims and because of this they had to withdraw, then after this they were ‘accorded forgiveness’ because of their ‘*Tauba*’ i.e. when they produced unity again within their dispersed forces and stood up against the enemy with courage and fortitude, their defeat turned into victory. This is also termed as a *Fadl* of Allah (3:151). Similarly, in the incident of *Ifk* it is stated that when those people who made a mistake accepted their error, and in this way turned back from their wrong path, the punishment of destruction on the nation was averted from them (24:12-14). This is also called Allah’s *Fadl*.

10.16 Reward Exceeding Effort

This was the state of errors and mistakes. As far as righteous deeds are concerned the reward received for these is far greater than human calculation and this is also called Allah’s *Fadl* (4:32, 4:173, 24:38, 35:29-30). The word *Fadl* has been used in numerous places in relation to economic conveniences. For example, in Surah *Al-Jumma* it is stated:

And when the Salat is finished, then may you disperse through the land, and seek of the bounty of Allah... (62:10)

This was the *Fadl* which Rasul-ullah and the *Jamaat e Momineen* used to search for:

... seeking grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure... (48:29)

At another place it is stated about the *Muhajireen*¹⁵³:

...while seeking grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure... (59:8)

10.17 How Does This Occur?

The Quran has specified in very clear terms that wealth and authority, triumph and success, the joys of life, and abundance of sustenance - so much so that all that which is known as ‘*Fadl*’ - are achieved by following Deen. If Muslims forsake their Deen, then Allah will confer all this on some other nation. It is stated in Surah *Al-Maida*:

¹⁵² The second battle fought between the Muslims and the Quraish of Makkah in 624 AD. (Ed)

¹⁵³ *Muhajireen* – group of Muslims who migrated from Makkah to Medina in the time of Rasul-ullah due to various reasons. (Ed)

O you who have Eimaan! if any from among you turn back from his Eimaan, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, lowly with the Momineen, mighty against the Kafireen, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault. That is the grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom He pleases. And Allah encompasses all, and He knows all things.
(5:54)

10.18 In Summary

We have seen that the Self of Allah is *Dul Fadl al-Aẓeem* (which is the most complete and supreme Self) i.e. master of every kind of *Fadl* (i.e. highest *Fadl*). He bestows *Fadl* on the whole of mankind (according to His law).

From this it is evident that the society which is based on those individuals whose self has become developed will have all these favours and bounties available to it, and it will make these freely available for the *Rabubiyat* of the whole of mankind. Therefore, in order to determine if some society has been shaped according to the Divine laws (Allah's Deen) or not, it will have to be seen whether that society has the conveniences of life available to it in ample abundance or not (this is called *Fadl*), and then whether these conveniences have been made freely available to mankind or not. That nation which is itself weak and deprived or is keeping the forces of nature and the means of sustenance confined to some special group (nation or country), and does not consider every child of Adam as an equal partner in it, such a nation has nothing to do with the system of life (*Ad-Deen*) defined by Allah. You can consider that the selfs of the individuals of this nation have not been realised.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ This is an extremely profound statement – according to the Quran, the human self is created by each individual him or herself by living life voluntarily within the Permanent Values. This is called acquisition of *Eimaan* (2:177), as a consequence of which an individual performs righteous deeds which lead to development of the self, which will then work for the establishment of Deen for the good of all mankind. Immortality in the life of the hereafter is for this type of self according to the Quran. (Ed)

11 *Munn*¹⁵⁵ (Munificence)

In relation to *Fadl*, *Rehmat*, and *In'aam*, the Quran has also mentioned another attribute which it has defined by the word *Munn*¹⁵⁶. The meaning of *Munn* is to give someone something without any effort or hardship, or any charge or expectation of any return, just as the means of sustenance (air, light, water, *Rizq* from the land) have been provided to all of mankind without any charge or expectation of any return. This is an attribute of Allah, the manifestation of which should also be manifested in 'His servants'.

But if an individual, after giving someone something without any charge, then reminds him of this favour for the rest of his life, then this *Munn* becomes a burden. In these situations, the word *Munn* will not be an attribute, rather it will be a flaw.

With respect to *Munn* being free of any charge, it is stated in the Quran regarding those prisoners of war from the enemy side who fall into your hands during a battle that:

*...thereafter either leave them with generosity or after taking ransom*¹⁵⁷...(47:4)

At another place it is noted that if you give something to someone without any charge, then do not give it with the intention that you will get something more in return:

Nor expect, in giving, any increase (for your own self). (74:6)

Regarding the meaning of 'becoming a burden', it is stated in Surah *Al-Baqra*:

Those who spend their substance in the cause of Allah and follow not up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, for them their reward is with their Rabb: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (2:262)

A little later in another verse it is stated:

¹⁵⁵ Since the word *Ihsan* is prevalent among us for this attribute, therefore the translation of *Munn* will be with this word whereas the reality of the meaning of *Ihsan* is quite different from this.

¹⁵⁶ *Munn* is the name given to a weight which is heavier than a *Ratl*. The *Munn* prevalent among us (*Maund*) also refers to this weight.

¹⁵⁷ The Quran stated this value at a time when slavery was widespread thus emphasising the significance of human freedom and respect. (Ed)

O you who have Eimaan! cancel not your assistance by reminders of your generosity or by injury... (2:264)

From this it becomes clear as to what the correct meaning of *Munn* is. Now let us see in what forms *Munn* manifests itself from Allah.

11.1 Nabuwwat is a Favour of Allah

Nabuwwat is conferred free of charge. When the people of previous nations said to their *Anbiya* that you are human beings exactly like us, how can you be messengers, in response to this they replied that this is true:

... True, we are human like yourselves, but Allah does grant His grace to such of his servants as He pleases... (14:11)

The appearance of a *Nabi* among a nation is also Allah's *Munn*:

Allah did confer a great favour on Momineen when He sent among them a messenger from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error. (3:164)

11.2 Receiving Guidance is Allah's Favour

This is why this matter was further clarified and explained:

They impress on you as a favour that they have embraced Islam. Say, 'Count not your Islam as a favour upon me: Nay, Allah has conferred a favour upon you that He has guided you to Eimaan', if you are true and sincere. (49:17)

This is because messenger-hood was not a commerce (Allah forbid) for the promotion of which the 'shopkeeper' has to be embarrassingly obliged for the favour of a customer.

11.3 Getting Wealth and Authority is Allah's Munn

Subjugation and enslavement are Allah's punishment. For a nation to achieve freedom from this chastisement and to become endowed with prosperity and authority is Allah's *Munn*. When Bani Israel were repressed under the tyranny of Pharaoh and Allah wished to transform their lowliness into supremacy, then it was stated:

And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in Eimaan) and make them heirs. To establish a firm place for them in the land, and to show Pharaoh, Haman, and their hosts, at their hands, the very things against which they were taking precautions. (28:5-6)

This is the real *Munn* which ensues from the direction of Allah. Contrary to this, another type of *Munn* is that one which comes from those ‘gods’ that man himself makes as his deities. And that *Munn* is of the kind of compassion that a butcher displays towards his goat by raising it. When Pharaoh stated to Moses that ‘you are very ungrateful, just remember how many favours we granted you and now how you are returning that favour’, in reply, using a few brief words with a single stroke Moses described that reality as a result of which Pharaonic politics stood exposed. Moses stated:

And this is the favour with which you do reproach me, that you have enslaved the Children of Israel. (26:22)

Yes, you are recounting those favours to me in return for which you have enslaved *Bani Israel* like this.

11.4 Gaining Freedom from Slavery is *Munn*

This ‘favour and blessing’ was that from which gaining freedom was in itself *Munn* and the real favour which came from Allah was this:

And surely, We bestowed Our favour on Moses and Aaron. And We delivered them and their people from (their) great calamity. (37:114-115)

But this *Munn* had indeed commenced from that very time when Moses was saved in his childhood from the clutches of Pharaoh. The Quran states:

And indeed We conferred a favour on you (Moses) another time (before). ‘Behold! We sent to your mother, by inspiration, the message’. (20:37-38)

Following this comes the narrative about floating Moses (in a casket) onto the river. Hence, protection from the clutches of someone’s cruelty is also Allah’s *Munn*.

When a cruel human being or some tyrannical nation becomes ensnared in punishment due to the consequences of their crimes, then those people who are kept protected from this punishment have the *Munn* of Allah on them. When Qarun was encircled by his arrogance, and the burden of his worship of capitalism buried him in the ‘depths of the earth’, then those people who used to gaze at his

wealth and say how unjust it is that we are not able to get these riches, the next day they prostrated in gratitude and said:

...had it not been that Allah was gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up! Ah! those who reject Allah will assuredly never prosper. (28:82)

Now this secret became evident to them that the mere attainment of riches is not true success and fortune, it is essential to have the correct system along with this. In the beginning it was generally the poor who accepted *Eimaan* in Rasul-ullah. In this new society (which was established according to the Divine laws) the status of these poor people was higher even than the biggest leaders of the Quraysh. Seeing this, these leaders used to be infuriated and burn with resentment as to how much honour and respect is being given to these 'lowly' people. This psyche of theirs is described in the following words:

Thus did We try some of them by comparison with others, that they should say: 'Is it these then that Allah has favoured from amongst us?' Does not Allah know best those who are grateful? (6:53)

From these verses it is clear that Allah provides the means of sustenance and guidance free of charge to mankind, and following this, does not remind anyone of this favour. In the society in which the selfs of individuals develop (according to the Divine laws), the need of every needy one is fulfilled free of charge and then there is no reminder of this favour to them. One sign of a developed self is that it gives to the needy free of charge and even the thought of any return does not arise. In explicit words they tell those whose needs they fulfil that:

We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. (76:9)

12 *Ghadab* and *It'aab* (Recompense)

It has been noted in the first chapter that among the Divine attributes there are also those attributes which seem to be contradictory e.g. He is *Rabeem* (Merciful), and also *Qahhar* (Vanquisher). But if we look into this more deeply, then it will become plain that the question of these attributes being contradictory does not even arise. If you support someone who has been wronged, then this will be a display of your sentiments of mercy and sympathy but for the support of a wronged person it is necessary for you to prevent an oppressor from cruelty. For this you may also need to use force (according to need). From this it will be said that on the one hand you are extremely merciful and on the other hand extremely stern. But by paying close attention it will become evident that both attributes are indeed two sides of the same coin. Sympathy with the victim and sternness against the oppressor is a requirement of justice. Since the Divine attributes are complete in all aspects, it is essential that if He is *Ghafur ur Rabeem* then He should also be *Shadeed ul Aqaab*. But together with this, it is also necessary that to whatever extent an attribute needs to be manifested at any particular time, only that proportion of the attribute should be displayed. This is known as the Divine attributes being balanced (*Asma-al-Husna*) i.e. for there to be complete equilibrium and proportion in these attributes.

Under the previous topics we have seen how the Divine attributes (*Rehmat, Ina'am, Fadl* etc) manifest themselves. Now the other side of the picture comes before us which shows us how His other types of attributes e.g. *Ghadab, La'nat* etc. are displayed on which occasions. From this, this fact will also become evident that these types of (apparently) opposite attributes will also be demonstrated by the individual whose self is developed. Such individuals will on the one hand be merciful among themselves, and on the other hand will be very stern towards the *Kuffar*. But these attributes will comprise very precise proportion, and because of this the self of this person will itself be balanced, which is called a Balanced Personality. And for the nation which is based on such individuals, the society of that nation will also be balanced, and a guarantor of world peace and security.

12.1 Meaning of *Ghadab*

First let us look at the Divine attribute of '*Ghadab*'. We generally take the meaning of *Ghadab* as that of being angry, and when a word of anger is uttered then the mind immediately submits to such a sentiment under the influence of which man, having lost his mental balance, becomes fiery and in this state of insanity he does all that which he himself later rues. But when this word is related towards Allah, then its meaning will not be that of anger, rather this *Ghadab* will, in actuality, be another name for the Law of Requital. The purpose of this is a recompense for

crimes. When the people of the Book used to criticise the Muslims, saying why do you have *Eimaan* in the Quran, then in response it was stated:

Say, 'Shall I inform you of (what is) worse than that as penalty (as per the Law of Requital) from Allah? (It is that of) those who incurred the curse of Allah and His Wrath...'(5:60)

In other words, *La'nat* and *Ghadab* are two different states of punishment for deeds. Similarly, when Bani Israel adopted worship of the calf, they were told:

Indeed, those who took the calf (for worship) will obtain wrath from their Rabb and humiliation in the life of this world, and thus do We recompense the inventors (of falsehood). (7:152)

From this it becomes evident that Allah's *Ghadab* is another term for the punishment of deeds. In this there is not even an iota of that emotional psyche which is found in human *Ghadab* i.e. anger. It is people themselves who invite this *Ghadab* of Allah by their own deeds and become deserving of it. Addressing Bani Israel, it is stated:

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

But when, having fallen into the trap of Samri¹⁵⁸ they adopted worship of the calf, Moses, witnessing this on his return, stated in anger:

...He said, 'O my people, did your Rabb not make you a good promise? Then, was the time (of its fulfillment) too long for you, or did you wish that wrath from your Rabb descend upon you, so you broke your promise to me?' (20:86)

12.2 Who are Deserving of Allah's *Ghadab*?

The Quran has noted those deeds due to which Allah's *Ghadab* descends from the circumstances and conditions of past nations, and what the state of these nations becomes as a result of this. When the nation of Ad was invited by the messenger Hud towards the Oneness of Allah, they rejected it because of their rebellion, and began to say that the path on which our forefathers have been treading is right for us. At this Hud stated:

...punishment and wrath have already come upon you from your Rabb... (7:71)

¹⁵⁸ *Samri* may have been an individual among the Bani Israel or may be a symbolic reference. (Ed)

And this *Ghadab* came down in such a form that:

...And We cut off the roots of those who rejected Our Signs... (7:72)

Even the roots of this nation were severed. How are the roots of nations severed? When the penalty of the *Ghadab* of Allah falls on them, what does their state become? Regarding this, the Quran has explained it in very clear terms so that every nation can see for itself whether it is from among these condemned people or not. For example, when the collective crimes of Bani Israel increased beyond an extreme limit and there was no possibility remaining of their improving, and the time for the manifestation of the results of their deeds arrived, it was stated about them:

Shame is pitched over them (like a tent) wherever they are found, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah and from men; they draw on themselves wrath from Allah, and pitched over them is (the tent of) destitution... (3:112) See also (5:80, 2:61, 7:152)

12.3 Allah's *Ghadab* due to Rejection of the Quran

Following the revelation of the Quran, this *Ghadab* descends because of rejection of the Quran, because the path on which man needs to tread to reach the intended destination can only be found through obedience of the Quran. Other than this, Allah's guidance is nowhere else. So those people who adopt other paths by leaving this guidance will surely head towards ruin and destruction – this is called Allah's *Ghadab*. It is stated about these people:

Miserable is the price for which they have sold their selves, in that they deny (the revelation) which Allah has sent down, in insolent envy that Allah of His Grace should send it to any of His servants He pleases: thus have they drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath. And humiliating is the punishment of those who reject Eimaan. (2:90)

This is because rejecting the Quran is in fact like disputing with Allah as to why He has declared only this to be the straight path (*Sirat e Mustaqueem*) which has been preserved in the Quran. Now it is apparent that the consequence of this kind of attitude of these people will be the same as that of the opponents of truth and reality. It is about these very people that it is stated:

But those who dispute concerning Allah after He has been accepted, futile is their dispute in the sight of their Rabb: on them will be a penalty terrible. (42:16)

12.4 Recipients of Allah's *Ghadab* Omit the Duty of Forbidding Evil

The state of the nation which deserves Allah's *Ghadab* is such that they see each other immersed in evils but no-one forbids anyone from this. Promoting good and forbidding evil is a very vital duty. But when evils become so common in a nation that the society does not even consider evils to be evils, no-one even prohibits anyone, or moral courage becomes so weak that no-one can even pick up the courage to prohibit it, or hypocrisy increases to such an extent that in order to be popular (to be liked by all) man keeps agreeing with everyone, then at that time Allah's chastisement encircles that nation. When Allah's *Ghadab* descended on the Bani Israel, this had become their very condition. The Quran states:

Nor did they (usually) forbid one another the iniquities which they committed: evil indeed were the deeds which they did. (5:79)

12.5 Mutual Enmity

Not only this, but mutual enmity takes birth in this nation; they become thirsty for each other's blood. Due to their mutual differences, they resort to war and murder. All of this was done by Bani Israel and it is towards this that the attention of the Muslim Ummah is drawn by the Quran, that remember:

If a man kills a Momin intentionally, his recompense is hell, to abide therein (forever): And the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him. (4:93)

12.6 Absconding from the Battlefield

It is not sufficient to merely be united and in agreement with one another, it is also essential to remain resolute and steadfast against the enemy. The nation which loses courage in the battlefield and takes flight is encompassed by Allah's punishment from all directions. This is the reason why the *Jamaat e Momineen* is told:

O you who have Eimaan! when you meet the Unbelievers in hostile array, never turn your backs to them. If any do turn his back to them on such a day - unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own)- he draws on himself the wrath of Allah, and his abode is hell - an evil refuge (indeed)! (8:15-16)

This is because at such a time there is the fear of the entire nation being imprisoned in the *La'nat* (curse) of enslavement by others due to their cowardliness, and subjugation and enslavement is a very great *Ghadab* of Allah. Hence, when the

Momineen were given the glad tidings of victory in Makkah, then regarding those hypocrites and *Mushrikeen* of Makkah who were about to become subjects, the Quran stated:

And that He may punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the polytheists men and women, who imagine an evil opinion of Allah. On them is a round of evil: the wrath of Allah is on them: He has cursed them and got hell ready for them: and evil is it for a destination. (48:6)

The *Ghadab* of Allah is about to be manifested on them i.e. humiliation and disgrace is going to descend on them due to their deeds.

12.7 Friendship with the Condemned

Leaving aside being caught oneself in the wrath of Allah, even companionship with the condemned is dangerous. This is because just as by going near someone with leprosy there is the chance of being infected by germs, in the same way by befriending those people on whom the wrath of Allah has descended the human heart and mind becomes inclined to accept their infectious diseases. And those virtuous and pure abodes of the hearts which had the potential to house the *Rehmat* of Allah become graveyards of rotten and repulsive bones over which vultures hover and shriek. The Quran states:

O you who have Eimaan! Turn not (for friendship) to people on whom is the Wrath of Allah... (60:13) See also (58:14)

12.8 Rejecting Islam after Accepting It (*Irt'daad*)¹⁵⁹

This was about friendship with those who are condemned and the *Kuffar*. But whoever having once treaded on the right path then leaves it, and adopts wrong paths, his end is absolutely clear. It is stated about them in Surah *An-Nahl*:

Anyone who, after accepting Eimaan in Allah, displays Kufr, except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in Eimaan - but such as open their breast to Kufr, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful penalty. (16:106)

It is generally understood that only he adopts *Kufr* after *Eimaan* i.e. only he becomes a *Murtad* who openly announces his departure from Islam and adopts some other religion. Undoubtedly this is *Irt'daad*. But *Irt'daad* is not only confined to this. The Quran also tells us of those forms where an individual calling himself a Muslim becomes a *Mushrik*. Details of this will be found under the topic of

¹⁵⁹ *Irt'daad* - apostacy (47:25) (Ed)

Eimaan and *Shirk*. Here it is sufficient to say only this much, that we should not remain complacent thinking that since we call ourselves Muslims therefore Allah's *Ghadab* (wrath) cannot manifest on us no matter what we may do, because the ones who invite *Ghadab* are only those people who, leaving this religion, adopt some another religion. Remember! a *Momin* is only the one who lives his whole life precisely in accordance to the laws of Allah. The consequence of this kind of life is so clearly evident that there is no difficulty in distinguishing between these people and those who adopt some other path. Who is not aware of what the prosperities and deprivations of life are?

12.9 Life of a *Momin* and One Condemned Cannot be the Same

This is why it is stated that the lives of both of these cannot be alike:

Is the man who follows the good pleasure of Allah like the man who draws on himself the wrath of Allah, and whose abode is in hell? A woeful refuge! (3:162)

When these two cannot be the same, then it does not become difficult either to judge between them as to who is a *Momin* in the real sense and on whom is the wrath of Allah; who is favoured with His bounties and who has the wrath of Allah on him; who is on the straight path and who has lost his way. The life of a *Momin* is a life of distinction.

Every day we offer prayers in every *Rakat* of *Namaz* that O Allah! may we not tread on the path of those people who became deserving of Your wrath and condemnation. But we never pay attention to this fact as to whether our life is like those people who were showered with the favours and blessings of Allah, or is it like those who became engulfed in His wrath? The Quran has detailed the distinctive outlines of both kinds of life with such clarity that there is no difficulty in differentiating between the two. Hence, it is not at all difficult to determine this matter either, as to whether our life is the life of a favoured nation, or that of a condemned one.

To live life like that of a condemned nation while harbouring the desire for the successes and prosperities of a favoured nation, if this is not self-deception then what else is it? These are the kinds of prayers which are returned and thrown back in the face of the supplicant.

From the above discussion this truth becomes apparent to us that regarding the nation in which the selfs of the individuals have become developed i.e. the Divine attributes are manifesting in it:

1. 'The life of this nation will never be like those on whom the 'wrath of Allah' has descended.
2. That nation will be the possessor of such powers that it will be able to present with evidence the destructive effects of their deeds to those nations who are treading on the wrong path i.e. it will be able to punish them for their crimes, and in this way demonstrate the system of justice and fairness by its practical establishment in the world. This is called the establishment of the sovereignty of Allah and this is the system which is responsible for worldly peace.

13 *La'nat* (Deprivation from Allah's Bounty)

In the previous topic we mentioned the *Ghadab* of Allah as opposed to *In'aam*. This topic cannot be completed until *La'nat* as opposed to *Rehmat* is also not explained. A misunderstanding of the meaning of the word *La'nat* has created a great misconception among us. Non-Muslims complain that the Quran (Allah forbid) is full of profanity – ‘the God of the Muslims tosses *La'nat* at *Kuffar*’. This misconception is based on the fact that we attribute the same meaning to the word *La'nat* as the one prevalent among us. Otherwise, if the correct meaning of this word is before us, then this matter cannot be a cause for complaint for anyone.¹⁶⁰

The meaning of *La'nat* is to remove, to keep something afar - its meaning is absolutely clear. The individual whose self becomes developed, and the nation which lives its life according to the laws of Allah, benefit from the prosperities (Divine bounties) of life. Whoever lives life contrary to these laws remains far from these prosperities and becomes deprived of these; this is called the *La'nat* of Allah i.e. absence from His blessings and eminences, remoteness from His *Rehmat* and *Naimat*. And since being deprived of Allah's *Rehmat* is a very great misfortune, therefore in this respect *La'nat* is a curse.¹⁶¹ Hence, when the word *La'nat* is used with reference to Allah, its meaning will be deprivation from His bounties, and when it is uttered from the direction of other than Allah, then its meaning will be of such a curse in which the meaning of misfortune and deprivation will be implied. Therefore, wherever in the Quran words synonymous to *La'nat* have been used, in them also there is the connotation of being afar and of deprivation. For example, it is stated about the people of Madyan:

As if they had never dwelt and flourished there! Ah! Behold! How the Madyan were removed (from sight) as were removed the Thamud! (11:95)

13.1 Being Denied Allah's *Na'ima*

Here the word used for annihilation is *Bo'd* which means being kept away from and deprived i.e. whoever has moved away from the *Rehmat* of Allah, his destruction is assured. About Satan the Quran states:

(The Pagans), leaving Him, call but upon female deities: They call but upon Satan the persistent rebel! Allah did curse him... (4:117-118)

¹⁶⁰ And this is not only confined to non-Muslims, some Muslims also ironically present this reason to justify their profanity.

¹⁶¹ Here the word curse does not refer to a profanity but to an adverse outcome. (Ed)

The word *Mara'da* means being deprived, being without, therefore the meanings of Satan as *Mareed'un* designates the one who is deprived of goodness and obedience, just as barren sand is described as being devoid of vegetation because there is no sign of any greenery in it, and this is why its meaning is also to be without flora. *Shaja'ra Amra'do* means that tree on which there is no leaf. Hence, in the Quran the tree of *Zaqum* has also been called the tree of *Mal'un* i.e. the tree on which there is *La'nat* (17:60). And *Shaitan e Mal'un* has also been called *Shaitan e Rajeem* (15:34-35, 38:77). The meanings of *Rajeem* are also to be condemned and kept at a distance. That weapon which is thrown at a distance is also described as *Rajeem*. Hence, a catapult by which a stone is hurled at a great distance is called *Marjam*. In the same way the word *Sob'qa*¹⁶² has been used in the meaning of *La'nat* (67:11). The meaning of the word *Sob'qa* is also that of a distance. The term *Makan e Saheeq*, which means a place far far away, has been used in the Quran.

From these explanations you will have seen that the meanings of the word *La'nat* and its synonyms are of being kept far away i.e. of causing to be deprived. And its meaning is clear i.e. those on whom there will be Allah's *La'nat* will be kept far from His bounties, in other words, will be kept deprived. From this you can judge what iota of hate or enmity or profanity is there in the use of this word? The difficulty here is that many words are used in their original language for some other meaning whereas in a different language some other sense is taken from them. In order to establish the correct meanings of the words of the Quran, one should look at the original Arabic language and the Quran itself, not the words of one's own language and their usage. (I have established the meanings of all the synonymous words of the Quran in this way in my *Lughat-ul-Quran*).

13.2 *La'nat* Occurs Due to the Law of Requit

As we have seen under the subject of *Ghadab*, Allah's *La'nat* does not rain down without a cause, rather it is a natural consequence of the wrong deeds of man i.e. this is a part of the Law of Requit itself. When the people of the Book used to criticise the Muslims about what this thing is which they have accepted as *Eimaan*, in response it was stated:

Say: 'Shall I point out to you something much worse than this, (as judged) by the treatment it received from Allah? Those who incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath... (5:60)

Thus Allah's *La'nat* is indeed another name for the punishment of deeds. In Surah *Al-Araf*, following the decisions on the Day of Judgment, there is mention of a

¹⁶² The word *Sob'qa* also means far away. The word *Makan e Saheeq* has appeared in the Quran which means a place very far away.

dialogue between the denizens of hell and the inhabitants of paradise. In this, a crier addressing the denizens of hell, will proclaim:

... The La'nat of Allah is on the wrong-doers; Those who would hinder (men) from the path of Allah and would seek in it something crooked: they were those who denied the Hereafter. (7:44-45)

Almost identical words are quoted in (11:18-19). This means the *La'nat* of hell will be received in return for adopting a crooked path and hindering others from the straight path.

13.3 On Which Nations Does *La'nat* Rain Down?

By describing the state of affairs of past nations, the Quran has presented this reality before us as to the consequences of which crimes the *La'nat* of this world and the hereafter descended on these nations; and then also made this clear what is called *La'nat* of this world and what the *La'nat* of the hereafter will be. Referring to when the nation of Ad was destroyed by the *Azqaab* (punishment) of Allah, the Quran states:

Such were the Ad People: they rejected the Signs of their Rabb; disobeyed His messengers; And followed the command of every powerful, obstinate transgressor. And they were pursued by a curse in this life, and on the Day of Judgment. Ah! Behold! for the Ad rejected their Rabb! Ah! Behold! removed (from sight) were Ad the people of Hud! (11:59-60)

As with the people of Thamud, *La'nat* on the people of *Madyan* has been mentioned earlier (11:95). These same words have been used in verse (11:68) regarding the Thamud. The people of Pharaoh also had *La'nat* both in this world and in the hereafter (11:99, 28:42). It is stated about Bani Israel that:

But because of their breach of their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard... (5:13)

After this a list of their crimes is detailed (5:13) and this was not just confined to Bani Israel - whichever nation breaks the covenant will receive this same punishment. Having a covenant with Allah means that once you have accepted *Eimaan* in Allah, then you made this pledge with Him that you will keep your life under the obedience of His laws. If, after this, you freed your life from His obedience, then this is breaking the covenant with Allah and practical disobedience of the covenant even if you keep claiming a thousand times with your tongue that you accept it. Bani Israel also never made this proclamation that we deny the existence of Allah:

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 abode. (13:25)

Another severe accusation has also been levelled against Bani Israel because of which they were made deserving of *La'nat* i.e.:

Nor did they forbid one another the iniquities which they committed: evil indeed were the deeds which they did. (5:79)

13.4 Mutual Distrust and Enmity is Allah's *La'nat*

Now let us examine what the details are of the *La'nat* mentioned above. The Quran states:

...Amongst them We¹⁶³ have placed enmity and hatred till the Day of Judgment... (5:64)

It was not only that the Jews had merely adopted a rebellious and mutinous attitude, they had converted Allah's Deen into a children's play park. There was no respect and value for it in their eyes; they used to ridicule it and mock it, and it is obvious that when some nation's scale of *Eimaan* and conduct sinks to such a depth, then how can they cultivate higher moral sentiments in their hearts? (4:46)

It is apparent that the pleasantries of life can be obtained by practically following the correct system of life, and the correct system of life cannot be found anywhere other than the Quran. Therefore, the nation which refuses to accept the truth of this system, or merely accepts it verbally but does not adopt it practically, remains deprived of these pleasantries. This fact has been brought forth in various places in the Quran (2:88-89, 4:47, 33:64-65).

Not only is it that the nation which completely avoids this system remains deprived of its pleasant effects, but even that nation which after having adopted it then abandons it will also face the same consequence (as is happening to us). Hence, it is stated in Surah *Al e Imran*:

How shall Allah Guide those who reject Eimaan after they accepted it and bore witness that the messenger was true and that clear signs had come unto them? but Allah guides not a people unjust. Of such the reward is that on them (rests) the curse of Allah, of His forces (angels), and of all mankind. (3:86-87)

¹⁶³ Here, Allah has related it to Himself – it means as per His laws. If a people do wrong, then they suffer these effects as a consequence. (Ed)

Allah's *La'nat* means to be deprived of those pleasures and prosperities which were attained through living life under the Divine system. After this the second form of living is that man, using intellect and reasoning alone, harnesses the forces of nature and in this way benefits from the conveniences of life for a while. But the nation treading on the path of a 'wrong religion' declares the world as being worthy of loathing and in this way remains deprived of the forces of nature as well, and this is the *La'nat* of *Malaika*. After this the third form is that even if there is no supremacy over the other nations of the world, then at least there should be equality with them, so that they can take advantage of those benefits which are generally available to mankind. But no-one respects this kind of humiliated and disgraced nation, and in this way they remain deprived even of those advantages which were available to them as ordinary human beings – this is the '*La'nat* of human beings'.

This is the outcome of that nation which having once treaded on the correct path of Deen, again adopts the wrong path. You may be searching for the signs of such a nation in the pages of history, but you do not require any quest or effort for this; just place a mirror in front and look into it and see your face - it will become evidently clear which nation it is that the Quran has referred to in these words.

After this the question which will surely arise is whether this deprivation and misery of ours will remain forever, or is there any possibility of escape from it? The Quran states that there is no reason to become despondent; if even now you abandon this wrong path and adopt the correct path of the Quran, then you can once again benefit from the bounties of life in this way:

*Except for those that repent after that and make amends; for verily Allah is All
Protecting, Raheem. (3:89)*

This means that when you bring about a change in your state, then Allah's other attribute will manifest itself. (Have you perceived what this means for apparently opposing attributes being present in the Divine Self?).

13.5 *La'nat* due to Denial of Truth

La'nat is not only the consequence of denial of truth, whoever buries reality, hides the truth, also remains deprived of bounties (2:159). According to the Quran, the meanings of *Eimaan* are that man, after having achieved conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah, should live his life under that system which is responsible for the implementation of these laws.¹⁶⁴ Obedience of this system is 'obedience of

¹⁶⁴ This is called the system of Allah which was first of all established by Rasul-ullah.

Allah and Rasul'. It is apparent from this that any action by members of this society which is the origin for any trouble (or damage) within the society, will be a very great crime. The Quran has termed this as wronging 'Allah and Rasul' and the consequence of this is stated to be deprivation of those bounties which were achieved through association with this system. The Quran states:

Those who annoy Allah and His Messenger - Allah has cursed them in this World and in the hereafter and has prepared for them a humiliating punishment. And those who annoy Momin men and women without any cause, bear (on themselves) a calumny and a glaring crime. (33:57-58)

13.6 La'nat for Killing a Momin

When *La'nat* is deserved for hurting the *Momineen*, then a severe crime such as the killing of a *Momin* can never remain without any consequences:

If a man kills a Momin intentionally, his recompense is hell, to abide therein (forever): And the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him. (4:93)

This is because all of these are matters due to which turmoil is unleashed in the system of a nation, conflicts arise, and chaos is that evil for the eradication of which the Quran is revealed. This is that very accusation which is levelled against the *Kuffar* (47:22-23).

13.7 Slavery is a La'nat

In the previous topics it has been seen that power and authority are among the bounties of Allah. Hence, a life of subjugation and deprivation is Allah's *La'nat*. This is the reason why the Quran has declared the words '*Maghlub*'¹⁶⁵ and '*Mal'un*'¹⁶⁶ to have synonymous meanings (33:60-62). For example, when the Muslims were given the glad tidings of victory in Makkah, then regarding those *Kafireen* who were going to be subjugated, the Quran declared:

...On them is a round of evil: the wrath of Allah is on them... (48:6)

Not only a life of deprivation and misery in this world but a life of hell in the hereafter also, which is a life of *La'nat* in its own right (9:68, 40:52).

¹⁶⁵ *Maghlub* – means under the subjugation of another. (Ed)

¹⁶⁶ *Mal'un* – on whom is *La'nat*. (Ed)

13.8 Blind Obedience is a Cause for *La'nat*

After explaining these crimes (as a result of which there is deprivation from bounties), the Quran has drawn attention to that basic and fundamental crime which is the true root cause of all these crimes, and that crime is the practice of following behind others blindly instead of making use of one's own intellect and reasoning. Hence, the Quran has outlined the state of those nations entering hell in these words:

He will say: 'Enter you in the company of the people who passed away before you - men and jinn - into the fire'. Every time a new people enters, it curses its sister-people (that went before), until they follow each other, all into the fire. Says the last about the first: 'Our Rabb! it is these that misled us: so give them a double penalty in the fire'. He will say: 'Doubled for all': but this you do not understand. Then the first will say to the last: 'See then! No advantage have you over us; so taste you of the penalty for all that you did'. (7:38-39)

This was that very matter which Abraham asserted in response to his people:

And he said: 'For you, you have taken idols besides Allah, out of mutual love and regard between yourselves in this life; but on the Day of Judgment you shall disown each other and curse each other: and your abode will be the fire, and you shall have none to help you'. (29:25)

This means that this wrong path is not as a consequence of the use of intellect and reasoning, instead, you have only adopted it because you are friends of one another, and what one does, the other blindly begins to do. And this blind obedience takes root from this, that man begins to consider some people as lords in his mind, accepts them as his leaders, and then whatever he hears from them or whatever is passed to him in relation to them, he starts following with eyes closed. This conduct is a cause for the humiliation of humanity and when the truth becomes evident, then man himself accepts how misleading this conduct is. The intensity and emphasis with which the Quran has explained this will be detailed at another place. Here, consider only this much, how this conduct becomes deserving of Allah's *La'nat*. Another aspect of the life of the denizens of hell is presented in the Quran as follows:

And they would say: 'Our Rabb! We obeyed our chiefs and our great ones, and they misled us as to the (right) Path. Our Rabb! Give them double penalty and curse them with a very great curse!' (33:67-68)

13.9 *La'nat* as a Result of Not Reflecting on the Quran

But by understanding this, do not satisfy yourself that these are the narratives of past nations – that these have nothing to do with us. The Quran has stated in very clear terms that those people who do not make use of intellect and reasoning in the Quran, and blindly follow the path on which a nation is treading, they remain deprived of those bounties which were acquired by following (the Quran) with the use of reasoning and comprehension:

Such are the men whom Allah has cursed for He has made them deaf and blinded their sight. Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Quran, or are their hearts locked up by them? (47:23-24)

Not reflecting on the Quran and not making use of one's eyes in its light - if this is not Allah's *La'nat* then what else is it? What! is there still any need to ask why we are disgraced?

14 *Qahhar*¹⁶⁷ (Omnipotence)

Since the word *Qabar*¹⁶⁸ is also used in relation to the meanings of anger and rage, it was considered suitable therefore to include it in the same vein as *Ghadab* and *If'aab*. The meaning of *Qabar* is not anger and rage but is supremacy and authority. When the courtiers of Pharaoh complained that leaving Moses and his people free like this will result in them fomenting revolution, Pharaoh told them not to worry, I will deal with them:

Said the chiefs of Pharaoh's people: 'Will you leave Moses and his people, to spread mischief in the land, and to abandon you and your gods?' He said: 'Their male children will we slay; their females will we save alive; and we have over them complete power and authority.' (7:127)

From this it is apparent that the meaning of *Qabar* is supremacy, authority, power and control. But in order to understand the correct meaning of Allah's *Qabar* (and *Jabar*), it is important to show how these words were used among the Arabs. When a bone is broken then pieces of wood are placed above and below it and bound tightly, as a result the bone fuses after some days. This method of treatment is called *Jabar* i.e. that kind of power and force by the application of which (joined bones are not broken but) broken bones are joined together.

On the other hand, *Labm un Maqbur'un* is the name of that meat which is softened by placing it over fire and in this way making it edible i.e. turning its hardness into softness through heat, so that it can be brought into correct usage. It is obvious that there is an element of both power and force in *Jabar* and *Qabar*. But ordinary men will use this force for conflict, therefore from their side *Jabar* and *Qabar* will be evil. But when this same force (*Jabar* and *Qabar*) is used from the direction of Allah (or from the direction of His system which will be responsible for the implementation of the Divine laws), its aim will be to make it better. Briefly, it can be understood that the meaning of *Qabar* (and *Jabar*) here will be to keep the rebellious forces within the grip of the laws. From this the meaning of *Qahiro*¹⁶⁹ (6:18) will be easily comprehended. The complete verse is as follows:

If Allah touches you with affliction (as per His laws), none can remove it but He; if He touches you with happiness (as per His laws), He has defined scales for everything. He is Supreme watching all His servants; and He is the Wise, acquainted with all things. (6:17-18)

¹⁶⁷ *Qahhar* – this is an attribute of Allah.

¹⁶⁸ This is the root of *Qabar* which means omnipotence. See *Lughat ul Quran*, Vol 2, pp 388-389. (Ed)

¹⁶⁹ *Qahiro* means the one who does *Qabar*.

Remember! there is no other possibility for man to counter the harm which reaches him through disobedience of the laws of Allah except by returning to His laws. This is the same condition for seeking good. This is because the scales of good and bad are established according to His laws, over which He has complete control. No individual can go outwith the grip of His laws; these encompass everything. But this supremacy of His is not that of tyranny and corruption - He is aware of every issue and His every decision is based on wisdom.

The matter is absolutely clear. The system of the universe is not functioning under blind forces; the effect of every deed in it is established according to His laws. If adversity falls on someone, then that too comes in recompense of his deeds according to the Law of Requit of Allah. And if the pleasantries of life are obtained, then their condition is also the same. Allah has established scales (laws) for these matters, and not only has He established laws, but He is so Sovereign and Omnipotent that His laws continuously carry on establishing their own respective results. Nothing in the universe is outwith the grip of these laws. If there was no law here or the grip of these laws was weak, then this system of the universe would turn upside down. Similarly, the law of Allah is functioning within the world of human beings, and He has established such forces which continue establishing the consequences of human deeds:

*He is Omnipotent keeping watch over His servants, and He sets guardians over you...
(6:61)*

Hence, the meanings of *Qahir* and *Qahhar* are being the Possessor of Supremacy and Authority, Owner of Absolute Sovereignty, above everyone, the One Who has no-one outwith His grip, and no law of another works other than His. This is why Yusuf had stated to his companions in the prison:

...are many gods differing among themselves better, or the One Allah, Supreme and Omnipotent? (12:39)

14.1 Owner of All Kinds of Authorities

This is because when every kind of control and authority belongs to Him, then how can there be different and separate 'gods'? In Surah *Ar-Ra'd* it is stated:

Say: 'Who is the Rabb of the heavens and the earth?' Say: '(It is) Allah'. Say: 'Do you then take protectors other than Him, such as have no power either for good or for harm to themselves? Say: 'Are the blind equal with those who see? Or the depths of darkness equal with light?' Or do they assign to Allah partners who have created as He

has created, so that the creation seemed to them similar? Say: 'Allah is the Creator of all things'...(13:16)

O Rasull! ask these people Who is the Sustainer of the heavens and the earth? They say it is Allah: other than Him there is no other god. Then say to them, when He is the Sustainer, then why is it that you have created others as your god besides Him, who (leaving aside the provision of profit or loss to others) do not possess any authority to provide profit or loss to their own self. Say to them (when this is the state of affairs, then think for yourselves) can the one who sees and the one who is blind be the same? Can this be the case that darkness and light become equal, or is it that the gods professed by these people have also produced similar creations in the same way that Allah has created them, and in this way the matter became doubtful for them (i.e. that not only Allah but others can also become gods)? After these explanations the Quran states:

... Say! 'He is the One, the Supreme and Omnipotent'. (13:16)

In Surah *Al-Zumar* it is stated that Allah does not need progeny to help Him because He is Self-Sustaining (39:4) and alone and exercises control and authority over every matter. He has no need for any companion or supporter. In the verse after this it is stated that following the creation of the heavens and the earth, He set the system of the universe into motion on an exact scale. The alternations of day and night, the predetermined fate of the moon and the sun all manifest according to His authority and direction because He is Allah the Omnipotent and All-Preserving (39:5) and the provider of protection. In the same strain it is also stated in Surah *Sa'ad* that He is All-Powerful and Omnipotent and protecting (38:65-66). Dynamisms in the universe occur according to His law:

One day the Earth will be changed to a different Earth. And so will be heavens, and (men) will be marshalled forth, before Allah, the One Irresistible. (14:48)

In Surah *Al-Momin* it is stated:

The day whereon they will (all) come forth: not a single thing concerning them is hidden from Allah. Whose will be the dominion that Day? That of Allah, the One the Irresistible! (40:16)

This is the correct meaning of *Qabbar*, not the one which is commonly understood among us which leads the human mind immediately towards associating it with tyranny and oppression, brutality and cruelty. Allah is beyond this as stated by the Quran:

*...the Rabb of Honour and Power! He is free from what they ascribe to Him.
(37:180)*

From the above explanations it is evident that in a developed personality where on the one hand there are attributes of affinity and love, on the other hand there are also attributes of power and control, so that through them rebellious forces can be checked from causing upheaval. The system of justice in the world can be established through the hands of these kinds of nations.

This is that reality which Iqbal¹⁷⁰ has expressed in these words:

*Firm, protective, visionary and mending,
These four elements together make a Muslim.*

¹⁷⁰ M. Iqbal - *Zarb e Kaleem*, p53.

15 *Al-Jabbar ul Mutakabbir*¹⁷¹

As with *Qahbar*, the correct meaning of *Jabbar* is not generally comprehended among us. From this also the mind moves towards the meaning of the use of force and coaxing. And this is because the correct meanings of these words are hidden from our eyes. As has been explained under the previous topic, the meaning of *Jabbar* is to fix some problematic issue in such a way that force is made use of. For example, when a bone is broken it is tied suitably between two wooden splints as a result of which it knits together. This method of treatment is called *Jabbar*. Hence, that wood by which this bone is tied in this way is called *Jibbara-tun* and the bandage with which it is tied is called *Jabeera*. Therefore, *Jabbar* means that Being Who has tied up all the system of the universe within the power of His laws in such a way that nothing can move even an inch from its defined position, and in this grip there is not an iota of injustice or duress, rather it is completely based on wisdom and understanding and it is in order to make the system of the universe function on a pattern of balance. Hence, *Jabbar* also means that Being Who puts right every disorder; in this technique of treatment and reformation, control and authority is also included. When man lives life according to a wrong pattern then conflict will surely arise in his life. If he now wishes his own reformation, then he will have to tie himself up within the chains of the laws of Allah. He will have to bring the stream of life within the concrete shores of the confines and limits of Allah. After this his 'broken bones' will join together; his conflicted state will be reformed. This is the correct meaning of *Jabbar*. In the Quran this term has appeared only once for Allah (59:23).

15.1 Human Attribute of *Jabbariat*

But when this same attribute is referred to human beings who will use it to enact cruelty on the weak and subjugated, then this will be a flaw, because no human being has this right that he should make another human being his subject and submissive to him on the basis of power and might. Whoever does this will be called cruel and tyrannical and will be rebelling against the Divine law. Anyone adopting such a path will remain in loss and condemned. In Surah *Ibrahim* it is stated:

...and frustration was the lot of every powerful obstinate transgressor. (14:15)

In Surah *Al-Momin* it is stated:

¹⁷¹ The Exalted in ight Who puts things in order e.g. using a force to join and heal broken bones.

*... Thus, does Allah, seal up every heart - of arrogant and obstinate transgressors.
(40:35)*

But when these very same forces will be used to establish a system of justice and reform in the world, then these will become a model of the Divine attributes. This is the difference between the manifestation of power by a developed self and the use of force at an animal level.

15.2 *Al-Mutakabbir*

In the verse quoted above the word *Mutakabbir* has also appeared along with *Jabbar-un*. When this word is used for ordinary human beings then its meaning will be those people who, merely intoxicated by power and authority, consider themselves to be superior to other human beings, and in this way declare it to be their right to rule others. But when this same attribute is referred to Allah, then its meaning will be supremacy and sovereignty, and authority and greatness. The word *Al-Mutakabbir* has also appeared only once (with *Al-Jabbar-un*) in the Quran (59:23). It is stated in Surah *An-Nisa*:

For Allah is Most High, Great. (4:34)

In Surah *Al-Jathiyah* it is stated:

*To Him be Greatness in the heavens and the earth: and He is Exalted in Power, Wise!
(45:37)*

This is the greatness which will be apportioned to that *Jamaat* (Hizbullah) which will be responsible for the establishment of the system of Allah in the world, and in the personalities of whose members the Divine attributes will be reflected. This type of greatness will suit them, because the kind of greatness which the Quran has declared as flawed is that greatness which is devoid of truth. In Surah *Al-A'raf* it is stated:

Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of truth... (7:146)

Similarly, in Surah *Ha-Mim (Fussilat)* it is stated:

Now the Ad behaved arrogantly through the land, against truth and reason... (41:15)

Hence, the expression of greatness which is based on truth is not bad; this is the fundamental trait of that self in which there is the reflection of the Divine attributes. This greatness will be achieved as a result of producing constructive

results in connection with benefits to mankind and this is the pattern of those individuals whose self has been developed.

16 *Al-Muntaqim – Zun-tiqaam*

In relation to the Divine attributes, from the point of view of the prevalent understanding among us of those words which lead to wrong meanings, one word among them is also '*Intiqaam*'. One attribute of Allah is *Zun-tiqaam* which is commonly translated as the 'revengeful one' and because of the prevalent meanings of being revengeful, the mind immediately thinks of anger and rage. This is because among us a shade of rage is definitely included in '*Intiqaam*' (revenge). But as we have noted under the topic of '*Ghadab*', Allah is far above the sentiments of anger and rage which are found among human beings. *Naqmun* means the middle part of a path. Hence, the meaning of *Intiqaam* will be that those animals which scatter away from the path should be gathered together and brought into the centre of the path again, so that they can tread in the right direction. It is apparent this also means that this is the consequence of wrong deeds according to the Law of Requit. Hence, when it is stated that Allah is *Zun-tiqaam* then this will mean that He punishes criminals for their deeds according to the Law of Requit.

16.1 The Law of Requit

After mentioning the rebellion and transgression of Pharaoh's people, it is stated:

So, We exacted retribution from them: We drowned them in the sea, because they rejected Our Signs and failed to take warning from them. (7:136) See also (43:55)

In connection with the evil deeds of the criminals of past nations it is noted:

So We exacted retribution from them: now see what was the end of those who falsified! (43:25) See also (3:137)

In another verse it is stated:

And who does more wrong than one to whom are recited the signs of his Rabb, and who then turns away therefrom? Verily from criminals We shall exact Retribution. (32:22)

About the liars and deniers too of the era of Rasul-ullah it is stated:

... We shall be sure to exact retribution from them. (43:41)

When the Law of Requit of Allah seizes then no-one can escape from its grip. This is the retribution of Allah:

One day We shall seize you with a mighty onslaught: We will indeed (then) exact Retribution! (44:16)

He warns the criminals, but they do not take any advantage of this warning and remain rooted in their obstinacy and rebelliousness. After this, the penalty of their deeds confronts them and then no-one can free them from this grip of Allah's hell:

Truly strong is the grip of Your Rabb. (85:12)

About the people of Lot it is stated:

And (Lot) did warn them of Our punishment, but they disputed about the warning. (54:36)

This is the meaning of Allah's *Intiqaam*, and because of this very *Intiqaam* He is *Zun-tiqaam*:

Never think that Allah would fail his messengers in His promise: for Allah is Exalted in power - Allah is powerful in exacting retribution. (14:47) See also (3:4, 39:33-37)

From these explanations it is clear that the meaning of Allah's *Intiqaam* is the destructive consequence of evil deeds according to the Law of Requit. This will also be the meaning of '*Intiqaam*' by the *Jamaat e Momineen* who will implement Allah's laws. Their *Intiqaam* will not be based on some personal grievance or enmity; instead their love and opposition will both be for the sake of 'Allah'. And the reality is that what is commonly called enmity will also carry the element of reformation among them. Amputating a gangrenous finger and throwing it away appears to be hard-hearted, but to the one whose eyes are on the good of the whole body, he knows that in this amputation and truncation the sentiment of kindness and compassion is also present. Details of these matters will be available under the topics of 'War and Jihad'¹⁷². Here, the aim is only to state that the *Intiqaam* of the servants of Allah, who reflect the Divine attributes within themselves, will also be to reform the system of humanity. In this there will be no personal sentiment of revenge and enmity hidden beneath it. This is because the nation establishing the Divine laws will, in truth, become the means of implementing 'Allah's *Intiqaam*' within human limits, and will not seek personal revenge. The power to forbid evil and to seize is the fundamental attribute of a developed self and this is its '*Intiqaam*'.

¹⁷² See the chapter on War and Jihad in the book *Mairaj e Insaaniyat* by the author. (Ed)

17 Allah's Knowledge

If Allah is uninformed about the matters of His Own creation, then what sort of Allah can He be? This is why the description of Allah's knowledge is given in great detail and with great emphasis in the Quran. And the reality is that the coordination and harmonization, organisation and management of this system of the universe which leaves intellects awestruck, can be done only by this Being Who has complete and full knowledge of everything from a drop of water to the ocean, and from a tiny particle to the sun; such knowledge in which there is not an iota of guesswork or conjecture, speculation or doubt, sure knowledge and complete knowledge. Just as Allah's Self is the most complete, in the same way His knowledge is also the completest.

17.1 Knowledge of Everything of the Universe

The Quran has stated the comprehensiveness of Allah's knowledge in three words in such an all-inclusive way, that as the human intellect continues to ponder on it, it becomes entranced i.e.:

...and of all things He has complete knowledge.¹⁷³ (2:29)

Sustainability and continuity are contained in the word *Aleem-un* i.e. not this, that sometimes He has knowledge and at other times He does not - rather, He has knowledge of everything at all times. These words are constantly repeated at various places in relation to different subjects with the aim of engraving them on man's heart; and in such a way that, if you cross reference these words in their respective verses in relation to different contexts, then this fact will automatically become evident as to how much the reiteration and emphasis of these was required. For example, see verses (2:231, 2:282, 21:81). In Surah *Al-Hadid* it is stated:

He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent: and He has full knowledge of all things. (57:3)

This same fact is stated in alternative words as follows:

...My Rabb comprehends¹⁷⁴ in His knowledge all things...(6:80)

¹⁷³ The three words in Arabic are (*Wa Ho'wa*) *BaeKullay Shay'an Aleem*. (Ed)

¹⁷⁴ The word used here is '*Wa'siya'*' which includes the concept of vastness, abundance, power, encompassing everything. See *Lughat ul Quran*, Vol 2, pp 711-712. (Ed)

These words are also repeated in different ways at various places e.g. (7:89, 20:98, 40:7). The word *Wa'siya* (as used in the above verse 6:80) is explained in another verse in the following way:

... and that Allah comprehends, all things in (His) Knowledge. (65:12)

At another place it is stated:

...and takes account of every single thing. (72:28)

17.2 Knowledge of Every Atom in the Heavens and Earth

This was an overview. Details of this will be found in various places in the Quran. In Surah *Al e Imran* it is stated:

From Allah, verily nothing is hidden on earth or in the heavens. (3:5)

The same has been reiterated in (14:38, 29:52, 35:38). At another place the Quran states:

... Who knows all the secrets in the heavens and the earth... (25:6) See also (5:97, 10:61, 34:3, 49:1)

There is no living thing about whose affairs He is not aware:

...He knows the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit: All is in a clear Book (of Allah's Knowledge). (11:6)

17.3 Knowledge of the Manifestations of Nature

The changes which continually manifest in natural phenomena, and the manner in which every part of the system of the universe is engaged in carrying out its assigned duties - He has knowledge of it all:

He knows all that goes into the earth, and all that comes out thereof; all that comes down from the sky and all that ascends thereto, and He is Raheem and Ghafoor. (34:2)

In Surah *Al-An'am* it is stated:

With Him are the keys of the unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf does fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything

fresh or dry (green or withered) but is (inscribed) in a clear Book (of Allah's Knowledge). (6:59) See also (57:4)

17.4 *Eimaan* in Allah's Knowledge Has an Effect on Human Deeds

As has been already written, correct *Eimaan* in the Divine attributes specifically influences the practical life of man. For example, Allah is All-Knowing; He knows everything. Even if all human beings accept *Eimaan* in this Divine attribute, He will still be All-Knowing and All-Aware just as in that situation where not a single individual accepts *Eimaan* in this fact. He was even All-Knowing and All-Aware at that time when no human being existed. Hence, the *Eimaan* of a human being has no effect whatsoever on Allah's attributes, from this it is his own life which is reformed, his own point of view is transformed and a change occurs in his mentality.

If it is a strong conviction of some individual that, leaving aside the tangible deeds of life, Allah is cognisant of even the inner intentions of his heart, and together with this he also has *Eimaan* in this fact that no deed can remain without a consequence, then imagine to what extent his life will be under the obedience of the Divine laws. What a respectable and useful member of the community of humanity he will be; and if such an *Eimaan*, instead of being in a single individual, emerges in the heart of a *Jamaat*, and then moving forward from a *Jamaat*, the majority of mankind comes towards this, then this world which today has become an absolute hell due to a dearth of this *Eimaan*, will transform into such a paradise in which there will be an environment of peace and tranquility from every direction. This is that objective for which the Quran repeatedly brings Allah's attributes to our attention with so much repetition and clarity, and emphasises so greatly in having a strong *Eimaan* in them.

17.5 Knower of All Hidden and Manifest Deeds of Life

Regarding human deeds, the Quran informs us that whatever you hide and whatever you manifest, Allah is acquainted with all these matters:

Say: Whether you hide what is in your hearts or reveal it, Allah knows it all: He knows what is in the heavens, and what is on earth. And Allah has power over all things. (3:29)

In Surah *Al-Maida* it is stated:

...But Allah knows all that you reveal, and you conceal. (5:99)

In Surah *Al-Inaam* it is stated:

...He knows what you hide, and what you reveal, and He knows the (recompense) which you earn (by your deeds). (6:3) See also (24:29)

At another place it is stated:

...and knows what you hide and what you reveal. (27:25) See also (36:76)

In Surah *An-Nabl* it is stated:

And Allah does know what you conceal, and what you reveal. (16:19) See also (16:23)

In Surah *Taba* it is stated:

If you pronounce the word aloud, (it makes no difference): for verily He knows what is secret and what is yet more hidden. (20:7)

In Surah *An-Naml* it is stated:

And verily your Rabb knows all that their hearts do hide. As well as all that they reveal. (27:74) See also (28:69)

At another place it is stated:

...For He knows what is manifest and what is hidden. (87:7) See also (2:284, 21:110, 33:54, 43:80, 47:26)

17.6 Self-Deception of Hypocrites

When Allah's knowledge encompasses everything that is current and hidden, manifest and secret in this way then it is obvious how much self-deception those people are ensnared in who consider that they can say one thing with their tongues while concealing another thing in their hearts, and that no-one can have any knowledge of it. It is about these very ones that it is stated:

Know they not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal? (2:77) See also (4:63, 5:61)

This is because Allah is aware of the secrets of the bosom and confidences of the hearts:

...Allah knows well all the secrets of the heart. (3:119) See also (5:7, 11:5, 29:10, 31:23, 39:7, 64:4)

And informed us in very clear words:

He knows of the tricks that deceive with the eyes, and all that the hearts conceal. (40:19) See also (50:16)

When He is cognisant of even the thoughts passing through the depths of the hearts, then how can the whisperings and secret trickeries of people be concealed from Him. The Quran states:

See you not that Allah does know (all) that is in the heavens and on earth? There is not a secret consultation between three, but He makes the fourth among them, nor between five but He makes the sixth, nor between fewer nor more, but He is in their midst, wheresoever they be: in the end will He tell them the truth of their conduct, on the Day of Judgment. For Allah has full knowledge of all things. (58:7)

Nothing can be concealed from Allah:

But Allah has full knowledge of what they secrete. (84:23)

17.7 Knowledge of Past and Future

This is not the place for a philosophical discussion about time. Here, it is sufficient to understand this much that since man's knowledge is finite, he has therefore divided the infinite system of time into past, present and future parts. But Allah's knowledge is infinite, hence for Him the question of past, present and future does not even arise. Before Him, (in the words of Iqbal¹⁷⁵) 'there is an eternal now', hence:

...He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them... (2:255) See also (20:110, 21:28, 22:76)

This infinite knowledge of His is not only about existing human beings, but is also about all those human beings who have passed away, and of those who have yet to come:

To Us are known those of you who hasten forward, and those who lag behind.¹⁷⁶ (15:24)

¹⁷⁵ M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. (Ed)

¹⁷⁶ This verse is more related to those who advance in the path of Allah, and those who remain behind. (Ed)

As with time, the state of space is also such that some things are present in front of man (which he can see) and some are unseen, but in the 'eyes of Allah' there can be no difference between seen or unseen (present or absent), everything is in front of Him at all times. This fact is explained by the Quran in these three words¹⁷⁷:

He knows the unseen as well as that which is manifest. (6:73) See also (23:92, 32:6, 39:46, 59:22, 62:8)

This is termed as knowing all in full (5:116, 9:78) i.e.:

...And He is witness to all things. (34:47)

17.8 Knowledge of the Unseen is Only for Allah

Allah possesses knowledge of the unseen and this knowledge is confined to His Being. Other than Allah, no-one else (on their own) possesses knowledge of the unseen. Rasul-ullah was told:

...The unseen is only for Allah...(10:20)

In another verse it is stated:

Say: None in the heavens or on earth, except Allah, knows what is hidden...(27:65)

After this, this is made clear that man is not aware of the knowledge of the unseen. In Surah *Maryam* it is stated, have you also seen that individual who denies our law and categorically declares that he will receive progeny and wealth:

Has he penetrated to the unseen, or has he taken a contract with (Allah) Most Gracious? (19:78)

Regarding the deniers, liars and objectors of the messenger-hood of Rasul-ullah, along with other matters the Quran also states this:

Or that the unseen is in their hands, and they write it down? (52:41) See also (53:35, 68:47)

Even the messengers themselves do not have knowledge of the unseen. Noah said to his people:

¹⁷⁷ The All-Knowing, the Unseen, the Witness. (Ed)

*I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden...
(11:31)*

When the people of Hud demanded that you bring forward the punishment about which you are frightening us, he stated:

He said: the knowledge (of when it will come) is only with Allah...(46:23)

Rasul-ullah himself accepted that knowledge of the unseen is not with anyone except Allah:

Say: I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden...(6:50)

In another verse it is stated:

They ask you about the (final) hour - when will be its appointed time? Say: The knowledge thereof is with my Rabb (alone)...(7:187)

Hypocrites were those people who had one thing in their heart and something different on their lips. They used to remain intermingled with the Muslims and used to also come into the presence of Rasul-ullah. The Quran states about them:

Or do those in whose hearts is a disease, think that Allah will not bring to light all their rancour? Had We so willed, We could have shown them up to you, and you would have known them by their marks: but surely you will know them by the tone of their speech! And Allah knows all that you do. (47:29-30)

The Quran states, not only about Rasul-ullah, but also about all the *Anbiya*:

One day will Allah gather the messengers together, and ask: 'What was the response you received (from men to your teaching)?' They will say: 'We have no knowledge: it is You Who knows in full all that is hidden.' (5:109)

17.9 Wahi is Related to the Unseen

The lack of knowledge of the messengers of Allah about the unseen was due to their status as human beings. The revelation which was received from Allah was based on unseen knowledge i.e. no human being could know these facts based on his personal knowledge. This is that unseen (*Wahi*) about which the Quran states:

*He (alone) knows the unseen, nor does He make any one acquainted with His mysteries, except a messenger whom He has chosen: and then He makes a band of watchers march before him and behind him (to safeguard His revelation). (72:26-27)
See also (3:179)*

From this it is clear that knowledge of the unseen of the messenger is a part of the *Wahi* which is sent to him and is not outwith it. On this basis, whatever was given to Rasul-ullah in relation to unseen knowledge is preserved within the Quran.

The narratives of past nations and details of the messengers of Allah from the past which are noted in the Quran are based on this unseen knowledge. For example, in relation to the narrative of Maryam, it is stated:

This is part of the tidings of the things unseen, which We reveal unto you by inspiration... (3:44)

After detailing the story of Noah, it is stated:

Such are some of the stories of the unseen, which We have revealed unto you: before this, neither you nor your people knew them... (11:49)

The same is stated in the narrative of Yusuf that 'this is from among the facts of the unseen which are being revealed upon you' (12:102).

17.10 False Gods Have no Knowledge of the Unseen

Other than through *Wahi* no-one possesses knowledge of the unseen, whether they are ordinary human beings or 'gods' created by men. In fact, regarding these false gods¹⁷⁸ it is specifically stated that they have no knowledge about anything, even though people worship them and make them their intermediaries because (in their assumption) they possess knowledge of the unseen due to their 'status of being courtiers in the Divine court':

They serve, besides Allah, things that hurt them not nor profit them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allah.' Say: 'Do you indeed inform Allah of something He knows not, in the heavens or on earth?' Glory to Him! and far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)! (10:18) See also (13:33)

Their status is actually such that they do not even know this much as to when they are going to be resurrected after death:

¹⁷⁸ Other than Allah, every god is false (*Batil*).

Say: None in the heavens or on earth, except Allah, knows what is hidden: nor can they perceive when they shall be raised up. (27:65)

Among these 'false gods' are included all those *Pirs, Fakirs*, holy men, saints etc. about whom their devotees state (we do not worship them but) that they possess knowledge of the unseen, not only during their lifetimes but even after their death – this belief is against the Quran. We have seen in previous pages that, according to the Quran:

- (1) Other than Allah no-one else possesses knowledge of the unseen and;
- (2) Whatever amount of knowledge about the unseen Allah needed to pass on to mankind, He passed it on through *Wahi* via the messengers.

This process of *Wahi* ended on Rasul-ullah, hence, no individual can possess knowledge of the unseen (no matter how near to Allah he may be considered to be). Whoever claims this, is in reality claiming messenger-hood (receiving *Wahi* from Allah), regardless what name he gives to it e.g. *Kashf, Albaam, Muhaddassiat, Basharaat* etc.¹⁷⁹ Whoever holds this belief that a certain elderly saint has knowledge of the unseen, is accepting the continuation of messenger-hood after its cessation, which is a blatant opposition of the Quran. The state of man is such that he cannot even say with certainty whether the consequence of some matter will be favourable for him or a loss. Hence, in this connection the Quran states:

...But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knows, and you know not. (2:216)

This is because man has been given very little knowledge as compared to the knowledge of Allah:

... of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you (O men!). (17:85)

At this point it is important to comprehend another reality also. This system of the universe is functioning according to the laws established by Allah. One part of these are known as the laws of nature. Man can obtain knowledge about these laws, and it is now apparent that:

- (1) If some matter has to be according to some procedure and law and;
- (2) If some person has knowledge of this law,

then he can tell in advance how some event will turn out. It is obvious that this cannot be called knowledge of the unseen - it will be called knowledge of the law e.g. experts on the laws governing the sun, moon and rotation of the earth can tell

¹⁷⁹ These are the various methods claimed by which to obtain knowledge of the unseen. (Ed)

hundreds of years in advance when there will be an eclipse of the sun, moon or earth; how big this will be and how long it will last. And in this 'forecast' of theirs there will not be the slightest variation. This will not be called knowledge of the unseen but will be called a consequence of the knowledge of the laws governing the solar system.

But this type of 'forecasting' will be able to be carried out about those things of the universe which have not been given any kind of freedom to choose and intent. Such a claim can never be made about something which has the freedom to choose e.g. a scientist will forecast when there will be a solar eclipse, but even if there are ten such scientists gathered all together, they will not be able to tell where a fly sitting in front of them on a table is going to land again.

And when they cannot even forecast this small matter about the future of a fly, then who can forecast anything about the future of a possessor of freedom to choose and intent, such as a human being? The knowledge of this cannot belong to anyone other than Allah.

But in some places in the Quran such a technique of expression has been employed by which a superficially thinking individual can harbour a passing doubt in his heart that Allah does not possess knowledge (Allah forbid) of the true state of affairs. These are those places where it is stated that We have done this in this way so that We can know (*Lae-Nalama*) what each among you is like.

On similar lines in which it is stated that We have done it like this, *Lae Nablu'wannakum* (which is commonly translated as) so that We test you, from this the thought also arises, does Allah not know the truth of the matter that He wishes to test man?

This is, in reality, another way to state that 'Allah did it like this so that this reality can emerge as to what will be your reaction, how much strength has been acquired within you, how much development has taken place in your potentials, how much your self has been realised'.

'*Ibtala'* means to manifest the real state of something. The purpose of human life is for the self of a human being to become developed. In the world different situations appear before man. At these junctures man can see to what extent his self has become developed. The level to which his self has become developed will be the same extent to which he will be able to confront these situations. This is what the Quran has called *Lae-Nalama* at some places and *Lae Nablu-wanna-kum* etc. at other places. The correct meaning of these words is: 'so that this truth becomes evident that...'. From this the matter becomes unequivocally clear that by 'testing' this does not mean that Allah is not knowledgeable of their deeds; He

knows full well their deeds. The purpose of this is that the reality becomes evident both to them and to others about how much strength and perseverance is in them.

17.11 Meaning of *Lae-Nalama*

From the above explanations this reality has become apparent to us that Allah possesses knowledge of both the seen and unseen. He is acquainted with even the thoughts which pass through the depths of the heart. There is not an atom in this universe about which He does not have complete knowledge. Hence, the verses in which words such as *Lae-Nalama* appear do not mean that Allah wishes to gain knowledge about these matters. The purpose of these is to make reality clear and manifest. For example, it is stated in Surah *Saba*:

But (Iblees¹⁸⁰) had no authority over them, except that We might differentiate the man who has Eimaan in the Hereafter from him who is in doubt concerning it: and your Rabb does watch over all things. (34:21)

The meaning of ‘*Lae-Nalama*’ is so that We can differentiate, inform by separating, so that this fact becomes evident as to who has *Eimaan* in the hereafter and who doubts it. With these meanings the aim becomes completely clear. When the command was given regarding possession of the *Qibla* (Makkah), the purpose for this was given as:

... and We appointed the Qibla to which you are used, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels... (2:143)

In order to stop tyranny and subjugation and for the establishment of the Divine order, it was stated in relation to the wars which the Muslims were obliged to fight, that even if you face defeat somewhere, this is not something to fear:

...Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and men by turns: that Allah may know those that have Eimaan, and that He may take to Himself from your ranks witnesses (to Truth). And Allah loves not those that do wrong. (3:140)

In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated:

Or think you that you shall be abandoned, as though Allah did not know those among you who strive with might and main, and take none for friends and protectors except Allah, His Messenger, and the Momineen? But Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that you do. (9:16)

¹⁸⁰ *Iblees* – human desires and emotions which prevent him from coming towards the Quranic guidance. For more details see *Lughat ul Quran*, Vol. I, pp 182-184.

The last part of this verse is telling us clearly that the purpose of providing such opportunities is to manifest the strength of *Eimaan* of these people, otherwise what matter is there that Allah is not aware of? In a verse of Surah *Muhammad* this fact is further clarified:

And We shall provide such opportunities until it becomes clear to those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience; and We shall surely make your real state manifestly clear. (47:31)

The verse which comes before this states ‘...and Allah is completely aware of your deeds’ (47:30). In Surah *Al-Hadid* it is stated that We have sent the messenger, Books, and sharp-edged swords along with them, so that:

...that Allah may test who it is that will help, unseen, Him and His messengers... (57:25)

As a result of this the hypocrisy of the hypocrites becomes openly manifest. *Momin* and hypocrite become separated and differentiated (3:166-167). The truthful one and the liar become recognisable (29:11). This is the purpose of defining the limits of Allah and the differentiation between *Halal* and *Haram* (5:95).

From this it is clear what the true meaning of this part is, that ‘Allah can know what each among you is like’. Elucidation of this will be found in this verse of Surah *Anfal* in which it is stated about the prisoners of war that if you prove by your behaviour that you are no longer inclined to create trouble, but instead desire peace and reconciliation, then no kind of danger will reach you - instead you will have much to gain:

O Nabi! say to those who are captives in your hands: ‘If Allah finds any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will provide protection... (8:70)

Here also the aim is to say this, that if you can prove by your conduct that your intention is pure, then you will receive all kinds of protection and amenities, although Allah knows all. He knows who is hiding what in his heart:

... Well does He know what you are intent upon... (24:64)

He also knows who the denier is (69:49), who is the troublemaker, and who is righteous (2:220). He has knowledge of who is following His guidance and who is misguided:

Your Rabb knows best who strays from His way: He knows best who they are that receive His guidance. (6:117) See also (53:30-32, 68:7).

17.12 Omniscient, All-Knowing, All-Seeing and All-Hearing

As has been written previously, *Eimaan* in the knowledge of Allah exerts a great influence on our deeds. Allah also has knowledge of those things regarding which we are certain that no-one else in the world is aware of other than ourselves; this is because He is Omniscient. He is also aware of those deeds and circumstances of ours which we do not tell anyone else about - this is because he is All-Knowing. He is also watching us at those times when we think that no-one is watching us - this is because He is All-Seeing. He also listens to those secret whispers of ours about which we have self-satisfaction that no-one hears them - because He is All-Hearing. Wherever we may be, He is with us:

...And He is with you wheresoever you may be¹⁸¹. And Allah sees well all that you do. (57:4)

Whatever righteous deed you do, Allah is aware of it (2:197). And whatever you spend in His path, openly or secretly, He has full knowledge of it (2:215, 2:270-271, 2:273, 3:92). He is aware of not only righteous deeds but every kind of deed:

...For Allah is not unmindful of what you do. (2:85) See also (35:8, 2:95, 16:91, 42:25, 13:42, 29:45, 47:30)

It has been noted repeatedly in the Quran that Allah is *Aleem*; this has been mentioned nearly one hundred and twelve times. Similarly, His being All-Seeing is referred to at many places:

...and know that Allah sees well what you do. (2:233) See also (2:96, 2:237, 2:265, 3:163, 11:112, 41:40, 49:18, 57:4)

This is an error of judgment on the part of man that he thinks that no-one is watching him:

Thinks he that none beholds him? (90:7)

What, does man think that no-one is watching him, though the reality is that Allah watches all his servants (3:20). This fact has been mentioned at nearly forty places. At some places this same fact has been noted using the word *Khabeer* (being aware):

¹⁸¹ We have to ensure that we are with Him i.e. through the Quran i.e. being conscious of this fact all the time. (Ed)

...And Allah is well acquainted with what you do. (2:234) See also (2:271, 3:153, 11:111, 27:88, 58:13)

This has been reiterated about thirty-six times.

Then, in the same way that He watches everything, He also listens to every word, no matter in what solitude it is uttered:

Say: 'My Rabb knows (every) word (spoken) in the heavens and on earth: He is the One that hears and knows (all things).' (21:4)

He is All-Hearing and All-Seeing (58:1, 22:61). This has been reiterated at least forty-two times.

17.13 The Law of Requit

When this is the state of the expanse of Allah's knowledge, then which matter can be concealed from Him? As far as man is concerned, the meaning of Allah being Omniscient and All-Hearing is that there can be no kind of omission and error in the working of the Law of Requit. The consequence of every good and bad deed (no matter how miniscule it may be) will appear before man:

Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it. (99:7-8)

This is the truth and state of knowledge of the most complete Being (Allah). In the same way that that Being is infinite, similarly, His knowledge is also infinite. It is evident now that the knowledge of that individual who develops his self according to the criteria set by the attributes of Allah will also keep multiplying along with the development of his self. This is the reason that the Quran has declared the *Momineen* to be holders of knowledge and vision, and possessors of intellect and foresight. On the other hand, it has declared in clear terms that those people who do not make use of knowledge and intellect are inhabitants of hell. They live life at the animal level - they are the worst of creation (8:22). This is because the fundamental difference between man and animals is only that of the self. Hence, those human beings whose self remains dormant and undeveloped never even rise to the level of being human.

It is evident from this how knowledgeable, visionary, hearing and perceptive that society will be which takes on the responsibility for the establishment of the Divine system. This was that fact towards which that old lady inhabiting an area of Syria had drawn the attention of the Caliph Umer, when in reply to his question as to whether she had passed the information of her problems on to the Caliph, she

replied that if the Caliph cannot make arrangements to remain aware of the circumstances of every member of his state, then he has no right to establish rule in the name of Allah the Omniscient.

By Caliph (or *Ameer ul Momineen*) is meant that member of the *Jamaat e Momineen* whose self has attained the highest development among them. The *Jamaat e Momineen* itself consists of those individuals who are ‘coloured in the colours of the attributes of Allah’ i.e. who are (within human limits) *Aleem*, *Khabeer*, *Samee* and *Baseer*.¹⁸²

¹⁸² *Aleem* -All-Knowing, *Khabeer* - All-Aware, *Samee* - All-Hearing, *Baseer* - All-Seeing. (Ed)

18 *Qudrat*

Qadrin means to make an estimate. In general terms, estimation and the application of scales is called procedure and law. This means that the management and organisation of the universe is being conducted according to those laws which have been established by Allah. A law is not the name of some tangible force. It is a principle or formula according to which a scheme functions and leads to some outcome. It is obvious that in order to make some law or principle lead to a consequence there is need for a force. If there is no implementing power behind a law, then that law possesses no meaning. The balance and perfection with which the Divine laws are in operation in the universe makes it clear that the force which is working behind them is complete and exalted. This Divine power is termed force at some places and *Qudrat* at other places. The word *Qudrat* points to this reality that the power of Allah (Allah forbid) is not the power of a tyrannical dictator which works blindly but is the power of One Who has absolute wisdom which is utilised in making His laws produce results. In Surah *Ad-Dariyat* it is stated:

For Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance, Possessor of Power, Steadfast. (51:58)

This is why the Quran enjoins not to associate anyone with Him¹⁸³ because since every kind of power is with Him alone, then how can anyone be an associate and share with Him?

Yet there are men who take others besides Allah, as equal (with Allah): They love¹⁸⁴ them as they should love Allah. But those of Eimaan are overflowing in their love for Allah. If only the unrighteous could see, behold, they would see the penalty: that to Allah belongs all power, and Allah (His Law) is strict in punishment. (2:165)

Here, it is stated that all power belongs to Allah alone. In Surah *Al-Kahf* it is stated:

... There is no power but with Allah... (18:39)

¹⁸³ The Quran places repeated emphasis on this important matter of knowing the truth and then having *Eimaan* in it. It is an important issue of the human belief system that we must not believe in something which is not true, no matter how much we are convinced of its being the 'truth' – if we fail to do this, then our self will not be the same as the one created through *Eimaan* as per the Quran e.g. (2:177). For example, the concept of Allah put forward by the Quran is evidence-based fact, and *Eimaan* in this is not the same as belief in the concept of gods prevalent among various religions as discussed earlier in this book. (Ed)

¹⁸⁴ The meaning of love here means obedience.

18.1 Omnipotent (Possessing Absolute Power)

At other places the word *Qadirun* appears:

See they (who deny the hereafter as noted in 17:98) not that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, has power to create the like of them? ... (17:99)

In Surah *Ya-sin* it is stated:

Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof? Yea, indeed! for He is the Creator Supreme, of Skill and Knowledge! (36:81)

It is not that He has become weary following the creation of the heavens and the earth that He cannot recreate these things, or that after their death He cannot bring human beings back to life again:

See they not that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and never wearied with their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Yea, verily He has power over all things. (46:33)

18.2 Power to Give Life Again

For the All-Powerful One Who has brought the system of the universe into existence from nothing, how can it be difficult for Him to give life again? He possesses power over every matter:

Say: Travel through the earth and see how Allah did originate creation; so will Allah produce a later creation: for Allah has power over all things. (29:20)

In Surah *Al-Qiyamah* it is stated that the Allah Who created man from an infinitesimal thing:

Has not He the power to give life to the dead? (75:40)

In Surah *At-Tariq* it is stated:

Surely (Allah) is able to bring him back (to life)! (86:8)

So *Qadir* that if He wished, every atom of the human body will be brought back:

Nay, We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers. (75:4)

If He desires, He can erase mankind from the face of the earth and bring another creation in their place:

If it were His will, He could destroy you, O mankind, and create another race; for He has power to do this. (4:133)

After rejecting the belief of the divinity of Christ, it is stated:

In blasphemy indeed are those that say Allah is Christ the son of Mary. Say: Who then has the least power against Allah, if His will were to destroy Christ the son of Mary, his mother, and all - everyone that is on the earth? For to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He creates as per His Mashe'at. For Allah has power over all things. (5:17)

18.3 Control Over the Source of Life

And this is very easy. We do not need to go far – just take water for instance on which life is so dependent. If He changes the nature and property of water or changes its existing process, then see how in place of life, death ensues everywhere!

And We send down water from the sky according to (due) measure, and We cause it to soak in the soil; and We certainly are able to drain it off (with ease). (23:18)

This is because the system of the heavens and the earth is functioning under His *Amr*; the laws of nature are the manifestation of His Will:

Allah is He Who created seven (numerous) firmaments and of the earth a similar number. Through the midst of them (all) descends His command: that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah comprehends, all things in (His) Knowledge. (65:12)

18.4 Control Over the Replacing of Nations

In the same way that His law of life in the manifestation of nature is functioning and continuing, similar laws are also functioning in the fate of nations and countries. The rise and fall of nations, their life and death, and their change and replacement, all takes place under the domain of these very laws:

... We can certainly substitute for them better (men) than they; And We are not to be defeated (in Our Plan). (70:40-41)

Because the laws according to which all this takes place were established according to the *Mashe'at* of Allah, this is why it is stated at another place that acquiring

government or losing it is based on Allah's *Mashe'at*. In other words, all this happens as a result of those laws which He has put in place according to His *Mashe'at*.

Say: O Allah! Lord of Power (And Rule), You give power to whom You Will (as per Your law) and You take away power from whom You Will. You bestow with honour whom You Will and You bring down whom You Will (as per Your Mashe'at). In Your hand is all command. Verily, over all things You have power. (3:26)

O Allah, You are the Only Sovereign and authority of the universe. The acquisition and loss of government, receiving power or humiliation, all takes place according to Your law of *Mashe'at*. The source of every kind of authority is in Your Hand; nothing lies outwith Your sovereignty.

He possesses power over that nation which defies His established laws to bring destruction on it from 'above and below' according to His Law of Requit:

Say: He has power to send calamities on you, from above and below, or to cover you with confusion in party strife, giving you a taste of mutual vengeance - each from the other. See how We explain the signs by various (symbols); that they may understand. (6:65)

It was this type of hell of destruction and ruin which descended on the opponents of Islam (the Quraysh of Makkah) through the hands of Rasul-ullah and his *Jamaat*. Regarding this, the messenger was told:

And We are certainly able to show you (in fulfilment) that against which they are warned. (23:95) See also (43:42)

This was that 'sign of Allah' for which these people were becoming so desperate and anxious:

They say: 'Why is not a sign sent down to him from his Rabb?' Say: Allah has certainly power to send down a sign: but most of them understand not. (6:37)

This is the very law for the rise and fall of nations. This was the law of falsifying the signs of Allah under which the destruction of previous nations happened and even today, under this same law, the stars of fortune of worldly nations are formed and destroyed. According to this law, when the effects and consequences of its deeds of life descend on some nation, then no power in the world can save them from their effects. This is because the grip of Allah is the grip of a Being Who possesses power and authority, not the grip of one who is weak and frail from which one is able to escape:

The (people) rejected all Our Signs; but We seized them with such penalty (as comes) from One Exalted in Power, able to carry out His Will. (54:42)

In contrast to those who deny, there are blessings of His mercies for the righteous from this same All-Powerful Allah:

As to the righteous, they will be in the midst of gardens and rivers, In an assembly of truth, in the presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent. (54:54-55)

Therefore, obtaining blessings and favours, or these being snatched away, is according to the law of this same Omnipotent Allah:

...it is (only) Allah who prevails over all things. (18:45)

18.5 Correct Meaning of *Ila'ae*

In the Quran, the word *Ila'ae* has also been used for the manifestations and displays of nature by Allah, which is commonly translated as a '*Naimat*' (bounty). Hence in Surah *Ar-Rehman* the translation which will be commonly found is, for example:

Then which of the favours of your Rabb will you deny? (55:13)

There is no doubt that this word is also used for favours, but in the Arabic language *Ila'ae* is also used in the meaning of *Qudrat*. Hence, Ibne Jareer Tabri has written its meaning as *Qudrat*.¹⁸⁵ And regarding the verse on the birth of Jinns from fire, Imam Razi has written that *Ila'ae* means *Qudrat*.¹⁸⁶ Therefore, at other places in the Quran where this word has also appeared, apart from Surah *Ar-Rehman*, its meaning as *Qudrat* rather than *Naimat* (favour) appears more suitable. In Surah *Al-Araf*, where the messenger Hud stated to his people that Allah has made them heirs after the people of Noah and provided strength and prosperity to their generation, after this the Quran states:

...Call in remembrance the power from Allah: so that you may prosper. (7:69)

A little further on, when the messenger Saleh addressed his people to remind them about the time Allah made them heirs after the people of Ad and settled them in this land in such a way that you construct palaces in the meadows and make castles by carving the mountains, after this it is again stated:

...so bring to remembrance the power from Allah...(7:74)

¹⁸⁵ *Tafseer Ibne Jareer*, Vol. 27

¹⁸⁶ *Tafseer Kabeer*, Vol. 8

In Surah *An-Najm*, in connection with the destruction and ruin of former nations, it is mentioned that Allah overturned their habitations rising above the face of the earth, and His punishment encircled these dwellings:

Then which of the powers of your Rabb, (O man,) will you dispute about? This is a warner, of the (series of) warners of old. (53:55-56)

It is also clear from these verses that there is a need here to mention the power of Allah, not a reference to the favours of Allah.

From the above explanations we have seen that a complete Self possesses complete power. Hence, the degree to which a human self keeps developing will result in a corresponding increase in its powers. The manifestation of a self is through power but these powers of his are not that of a sandstorm or a hurricane which carry on causing destruction blindly. These forces remain confined within the bounds of law and procedure and are employed in the development of humanity. To mete out punishment to criminals for their crimes is also one aspect of the development of humanity. This is because if destructive forces are not checked in the world then development becomes impossible. The Quran wishes to establish such a society in which the selfs of all individuals are developing, and their energies are utilised for the welfare and growth of mankind. These are the ones whom it proclaims as the balanced Ummah and the righteous Ummah. Due to the absence of this Ummah, the world today is becoming an abode of hell.

18.6 *Taqdeer* (Destiny)

The root of the word *Taqdeer* is also from *Q-D-R* from which the word *Qudrat* is derived. In this respect, I had originally included a chapter on *Taqdeer* in the first edition of this book. Later, I felt that the subject of *Taqdeer* is so big and the problem is so complicated that it cannot be explained in any book cursorily, for this it needs a book in its own right. Consequently, I wrote a book on the problem of *Taqdeer* which is published under the title '*Kitab ul Taqdeer*' (The Book of Destiny). Due to the existence of this book, there is no need now for this chapter whose connection was with the issue of *Taqdeer* and *Mashe'at*. Because of this, it has been deleted from this book. Those readers who are interested in the problem of *Taqdeer* and desire to understand it in detail should read this book i.e. *Kitab ul Taqdeer*.

19 ***Arsh* and *Kursi* (Throne and Sovereignty)**

To express the sovereignty and supremacy, control and authority of Allah, the word *Arsh* also appears in the Quran. The literal meaning of *Arsh* is a roof:

How many populations have We destroyed, which were given to wrong doing? They tumbled down on their roofs (Arsh). And how many wells are lying idle and neglected, and castles lofty and well-built? (22:45)

This word is also used in relation to every lofty building or railing etc. built around the rooftops of tall buildings:

And your Rabb taught bee to build its cells in hills, on trees, and in (men's) habitations (Arsh). (16:68)

This word is also generally used to mean the seat of government. In the story of Yusuf, it is stated that when his parents arrived:

And he raised his parents high on the throne. . .(12:100)

Mention of the throne of government of the Queen of Saba has appeared in the Quran in these words:

...and she has a magnificent throne. (27:23) See also (27:38-41)

Hence the word *Arsh* is used for control, authority, government etc. In modern times, its meaning can be interpreted suitably through the word 'control', all this is encompassed in 'control'.

The other word is *Kursi*. Its meaning is reality and foundation, but it is also used to mean supremacy and authority, as well as knowledge.

19.1 **Meaning of Allah's *Arsh* (Throne)**

Both of these words have been used in reference to Allah's control and sovereignty, and vastness of knowledge. For example, in Surah *Al-Mominoon* it is stated, do you think I have created you useless without any purpose? After this it is stated:

Therefore exalted be Allah, the Master, the Reality: there is no god but He, the Rabb of the Throne of Honour. (23:116)

In another verse it is explained in these words:

Say: 'Who is the Rabb of the seven heavens, and the Rabb of the Throne (of Glory) Supreme?' They will say, (They belong) to Allah. Say: 'Will you not then be filled with awe?' Say: 'Who is it in whose hands is the governance of all things, who protects (all), but is not protected?' If you know. (23:86-88)

19.2 Government of the Universe

In other words, the explanation of 'the Possessor of the Throne of Greatness' is done by stating that everything is in His grip, control and power. It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel*:

Say: If there had been (other) gods with Him, as they say, behold, they would certainly have sought out a way to the Lord of the Throne! Glory to Him! He is high above all that they say! Exalted and Great (beyond measure)! (17:42-43)

At another place this 'elevated high status' is referred to as 'highly raised level':

Raised high above ranks (or degrees), (He is) the Lord of the Throne (of Authority) ... (40:15)

By stating that along with Being the 'Possessor of *Arsb*', We do whatever We wish, He has referred to His sole rule and control:

Lord of the Throne of Glory, Doer of all that He intends. (85:15-16)

This is because if there was someone else sharing in His sovereignty and control, intent and authority, then there would have been chaos in the system of the universe :

If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! but glory to Allah, the Rabb of the Throne: (High is He) above what they attribute to Him! (21:22)

Because other than Him, there is no other being who is capable of becoming *Ilaah*. Greatness and government, resplendence and balanced authority, belong only to Him. The central control of the universe is in His hand alone:

Allah! There is no god but He! Rabb of the Throne Supreme! (27:26)

Since the whole system of the universe operates according to His laws (this is the meaning of control), therefore any individual (or group) who follows His laws will not remain in need of any other crutch:

...Say: Allah suffices me: there is no god but He: On Him is my trust, He the Rabb of the Throne Supreme! (9:129)

It is His control and authority which is in the heavens and earth:

Glory to the Rabb of the heavens and the earth, the Rabb of the Throne (of Authority)! (He is) far above those things which they attribute to Him (due to ignorance). (43:82)

19.3 Istwa alal Arsh (Established on Throne)

The first phase was the creation of the universe, the second was the organisation and management of the world. This planning of affairs, management and organisation, establishment and control, and pragmatism and dealing with the world is declared by the Quran as being *Istwa alal Arsh*, by which is meant the central control of the universe. The meaning of *Istwa* is to maintain an established and sustainable posture. In the tale of Noah, it is stated:

And when you have embarked on the Ark (Istwaita) - you and those with you, say: 'Hamd be to Allah, Who has saved us from the people who do wrong.' (23:28)

And when that vessel, having saved itself from the blows of the violent storm, banked at Judi, it was stated about it:

... The Ark rested on Mount Judi... (11:44)

This word is also used for the firm and stable way in which one sits on the back of animals:

In order that you may sit firm and square on their backs... (43:13)

When man progresses from childhood and adolescence and becomes an adult, his body parts and energies become mature and attain strength. This state is also described using the word *Istwa*. Regarding Moses it is stated:

When he reached full age, and was firmly established (Istwa), We bestowed on him wisdom and knowledge: for thus do We reward those who do good. (28:14) See also (53:6)

In this same way, when a tiny sapling becomes a sturdy tree and reaches strength and maturity, this state is also described using this same word:

...it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem... (48:29)

And when this word comes together with *Ila*, then its meaning will be to draw attention, such as:

It is He Who has created for you all things that are on earth; then He turned to the heaven, and made them into seven (numerous) firmaments; and of all things He has perfect knowledge. (2:29)

At another place it is stated that He created the earth in two 'days' (periods):

Then He paid attention to the design of the heaven... (41:11)

From these explanations it becomes known that the meaning of *Istwa* is to maintain control and authority based on an established process (or to be directed to create improvement and strength in something); hence, the meaning of *Istwa alal Arsh* will be to maintain control and authority over the organisation and management of the universe. This is that authority and supremacy through which the running of the affairs of the system of the universe is carried out i.e. the way in which everything of the system of the universe is seen to be busily carrying out its assigned duties is the obedience of the implemented commands by Allah's throne of power:

Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see; is firmly established on the throne (of authority); He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law)! Each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He does regulate all affairs...(13:2)

19.4 Regulation of Affairs

This has been mentioned in Surah *Al-Araf* also (see 7:54). In Surah *Yunus*, after mention of the creation of the heavens and the earth, it is stated:

...and is firmly established on the throne (of authority), regulating and governing all affairs...(10:3)

This 'regulation of affairs' is explained at another place in this way:

It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth, and all between them, in six days¹⁸⁷, and is firmly established on the Throne (of Authority): you have none, besides Him, to protect or intercede (for you): will you not then receive admonition? He rules (all) affairs from the heavens to the earth: in the end will (all affairs) go up to Him, on a day, the space whereof will be (as) a thousand years of your reckoning. (32:4-5)

The explanation of these matters will be found at their own place. Here, take note of just this much that '*Istma alal Arsh*' has been referred to regarding those regulations of affairs as a result of which the system of the universe is established; and under the command of which the manifestations of nature are busily engaged in performing their respective duties. In Surah *Al-Hadid* it is stated:

He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and is moreover firmly established on the Throne (of Authority). He knows what enters within the earth and what comes forth out of it, what comes down from heaven and what mounts up to it. And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees well all that you do. To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: and all affairs are referred back to Allah. (57:4-5)

19.5 The Basis of the System of the Universe is on *Rehmat*

The foundation of the organisation and management of the universe is on *Rehmat* i.e. all things of the universe obtain their means of sustenance from the direction of Allah. This is why it is stated:

(Allah) Rehman (i.e. Provider of sustenance) is firmly established on the throne (of authority). To Him belongs what is in the heavens and on earth, and all between them, and all beneath the soil. (20:5-6)

In Surah *Hud*:

He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne was over the waters - that He might provide you opportunities, (so that you find out about yourself that) which of you is best in conduct... (11:7)

19.6 Allah's *Arsh* is on Water!

This does not mean that His *Arsh* is floating around on water. As has been stated above, the meanings of *Arsh* are of control and authority, sovereignty and rule. Water is specifically referred to because water is in fact the fountain of life:

¹⁸⁷ A day here means a period, as explained in the later part of the verse. (Ed)

... We made from water every living thing... (21:30)

It is a fact (which is also supported by the discoveries of science) that the beginning of life occurred from water and its survival is based on it too. Hence, by 'His *Arsh* being on water' is meant that His is the only control and authority on the source of life. Furthermore, this point is also worthy of attention that after mentioning 'Arsh on water' here, reference has been made to *Ibtela*¹⁸⁸. At another place the aim of life and death is also stated to be testing and accountability through deeds. It is stated:

He Who created Death and Life, that He may provide opportunities to you to see which of you is best in deed... (67:2)

In other words, this means that the *Tafseer* (interpretation) of 'His *Arsh* is on water' is implicit in the words 'death and life' and the meaning is clear from this that He is also the Master of the source of life. This interpretation is present in many places in the Quran that death and life are in His control and authority alone e.g.:

How can you reject Eimaan in Allah? Seeing that you were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and again to Him will you return. (2:28)

19.7 Holders of *Arsh*

How the organisation and administration of this astounding and great system of the universe functions, how the orders from the centre of governance of this Allah of the universe descend and are executed - encompassing these matters is outwith the intellect and understanding of man. The nature and reality of the works of Allah, the implementation of which is ongoing in this universe, cannot come within the comprehension of man. At the most, he has been provided access to knowledge of things (knowledge of nature); beyond the knowledge of physics, he has no reach. Hence, the verses relating to those matters which are about metaphysics are in Quranic metaphors i.e. those realities which are expounded via allegories. In the same context, there is a verse about the 'holders of *Arsh*':

Those who sustain the Throne (of Allah) and those around it remain busy in performing defined programme of their Rabb... (40:7)

On the Day of Judgment, *Malaika* (angels) will also be around the '*Arsh*':

¹⁸⁸ *Ibtela* - this has two meanings, one is to obtain information about one's welfare or to acquire information about him; the second meaning is for the condition of something to become known, whether good or bad. See *Lughat ul Quran*, Vol 1, pp 186-188. (Ed)

And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne (Divine) on all sides, carrying out the defined tasks assigned from their Rabb... (39:75)

At another place it is stated:

And the angels will be on its sides, and eight will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Rabb above them. (69:17)

19.8 Ascertaining Dimension and Direction

It has been noted that Allah's *Arsh* is not the name of some material thing which is kept at some specific place. The 'carrying' of it is also not like the carrying of a material throne, rather from this is meant the obedience or the establishment of Allah's laws. The Quran has explained these matters metaphorically, otherwise to assign some solid throne to Allah, to fix it at some specified place, and to actually assign some angels to carry it, is to wrongly assess the concept of Allah. His Being is above and beyond the definitions of dimension, direction and space. When Pharaoh mockingly told Haman, come build a high structure for me so that I can climb it and see where the *Rabb* of Moses sits, the Quran stated that he has diverted from the right path: what knowledge does he have about that Who is called Allah (40:36-37). Hence, attribution of dimension and space about the Being of Allah is based on a wrong perception about Him. His grandeur is such that:

...He is with you wherever you are... (57:4)

Similarly, the state of His Throne of governance is such that it encompasses the expanse of the heavens and earth:

...His control does extend over the heavens and the earth... (2:255)

This is the Quranic concept of *Arsh Ilahi* (Allah's throne). Whichever *Jamaat* of the *Momineen* becomes responsible for the establishment of Allah's sovereignty in this world, and how it will be known to be the holder of Allah's *Arsh*, is a separate subject for discussion, which is not pertinent at this point. Simply observe this much at this point, that when the state of that Allah Whose power and control, authority and intent, supremacy and reign, sovereignty and dominion is this, then how boundless and unchained will be the powers of those people in whom these attributes reflect. Weakness and powerlessness, helplessness and hopelessness, inability and feebleness, subjugation and slavery will not be able to get anywhere near them. They will themselves be the possessors of power, and will be the providers of protection and nourishment for all those who are weak and deprived in the world. Since they will be the living manifestation of the powers of Sovereign Allah in this world, therefore control over the sources of life will be theirs alone.

Their throne of rule will be spread to every corner and their seat of authority established everywhere. This is the very nature of the magnificence of the men of Allah in the world, and it can be determined from this to what extent His attributes are reflected in them. Having their heads buried in the lap of dust cannot be the conduct of the men of *Rabb Al-Arsh Al-Aẓeem*. What is the status of the powers of Allah's men? According to Iqbal:

*Can anyone estimate His powers?
Fates are transformed by the glance of a Momin.*

But a developed self manifests both the attributes of majesty and eminence.

*The one in whose bosom there is the dew of tranquility,
The hearts of rivers quake in the face of that storm.¹⁸⁹*

¹⁸⁹ This is also from Iqbal. (Ed)

20 *Mala'kut* (Power)

The control and authority, power and supremacy of Allah which are mentioned in the previous chapters have also been expressed using the word *Malak*. This word also essentially means sovereignty and authority and from this viewpoint it is taken to mean government and kingship. By kingship is not meant for an individual to be a king but to be a holder of authority. When the laws in the universe are of that same Allah, then it will be declared that it is His rule alone in the whole kingdom:

Unto Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and He takes it. Except for Him you have no protector nor helper. (9:116)

This has been reiterated at various places so that this established fact can become very clearly embedded in the mind (see 2:107, 7:158, 57:2). From the context and perspective of these verses it will become known how the attentions of man, removing them from all other directions, have been concentrated on this focal point that sovereignty and rule in the heavens and earth is His alone, because He has brought the universe into existence, created the universe and the earth from nothing. And after this, He creates whatever He wishes according to His Divine laws. This is why it is His authority which is over the whole of creation, and it is His laws which are operational in it:

...For to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He creates what He wishes. For Allah has power over all things. (5:17) See also (42:49)

20.1 Rule over the System of the Universe

His authority and rule are not just confined to the creation of the universe; after this the whole system of the universe is functioning according to His command. His control is over every manifestation of nature and not a single thing can go against His law. This is what is called right rule and kingship:

See you not that it is Allah Whose established programme all beings in the heavens and on earth do follow, and the birds with wings outspread? Each one knows its own (mode of) duties. And Allah knows well all that they do. Yea, to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and to Allah is the final goal (of all). See you not that Allah makes the clouds move gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a heap (layer upon layer)? Then will you see rain issue forth from their midst. And He sends down from the sky mountain masses (of clouds) wherein is hail: He strikes therewith whom He wills (as per His law) and He turns it away from whom He wills, the vivid flash of His lightning well-nigh blinds the sight. It is Allah

Who alternates the night and the day: verily in these things (displays of nature) is an instructive example for those who have vision. (24:41-44) See also (39:5)

It was following the observation of this awe-inspiring organisation and arrangement of the manifestations of nature that Abraham reached this conclusion, that the Being managing this great system of the universe is definitely such that it is not under the obedience of anyone, and the whole of the universe is under His command:

So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude. (6:75)

20.2 No Other Has a Share in the Rule of the Universe

Such a sovereignty in which He has no associate or partner:

He to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: no son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion: it is He who created all things and ordered them in due proportions. (25:2)

It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel*:

Say: Hamd be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion: Nor He needs any assistance due to any weakness: magnify Him for His greatness and glory! (17:111)

This is because just as nothing in the universe is outwith His control, similarly no tiny atom is outside the sphere of His knowledge. Everything is in front of His 'eyes', everything is under His watch:

Him to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is witness to all things. (85:9)

Hence, to contemplate someone else partaking in His rule and sovereignty is ignorance because an associate and partner can only be that one who possesses some inherent control or authority. But when the fact is that no single thing of the universe possesses any intrinsic power (all is bestowed by Allah), then which entity will be a sharer and partner in His Divinity and dominion. Therefore, it is stated:

What! Do they take for intercessors others besides Allah? Say: 'Even if they have no power whatever and no intelligence?' Say: 'To Allah belongs exclusively (the right to

grant) intercession¹⁹⁰: to Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: In the end, it is to Him that you shall be brought back.’ (39:43-44)

At another place it is stated:

*And blessed is He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all between them: with Him is the knowledge of the Hour of Judgment, and to Him shall you be brought back. And those whom they invoke besides Allah have no power of intercession – only he who bears witness to the truth, and they know.
(43:85-86)*

Those who are declared as gods by people other than this King of kings (Allah), do not have the authority equivalent to even an atom in the vast expanse of the universe:

...Such is Allah your Rabb: to Him belongs all dominion. And those whom you invoke besides Him have not the least power. (35:13)

20.3 Allah’s Sovereignty in the Life of the Hereafter

The domain of sovereignty of Allah is not confined to this world only, the life in the hereafter is also within the boundaries of His sovereignty. This is because the differentiations between ‘today and tomorrow’ are the creation of our observations. In His ‘vision’ past, present and future have no difference. Just as He is the sole Sovereign from the lowest point to the highest, without any limits of ‘space’, similarly He is the Master of all from the beginning till the end, without any constraints of ‘time’. Hence, if it is His rule today, then tomorrow will be His rule also. When it is asked:

... Whose will be the dominion that Day? (40:16)

The reply is:

...His will be the dominion the day the trumpet will be blown...(6:73)

In Surah *Al-Hajj*:

On that Day, dominion will be that of Allah...(22:56) See also (25:26)

In another verse it is stated:

¹⁹⁰ The meaning of this will be explained at another place.

To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and the day that the hour of judgment is established, that day will the dealers in falsehood perish! (45:27)

Hence, the verdicts of punishment and protection will be according to the laws of this Ruler of rulers:

Do you not Know that to Allah (alone) belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth? He punishes as per His law, and He provides protection as per His law: and Allah has power over all things. (5:40) See also (3:189), (5:18), (5:120), (48:14)¹⁹¹

20.4 Dominion Over the Earth and the Heavens

It is apparent from the previous explanations that sovereignty in the universe belongs to Allah, the control of authority is in His hand alone. The Quran states:

... Who is it in Whose hands is the governance of all things... (23:88)

Then it states:

So glory to Him in Whose hands is the dominion of all things: and to Him will you all be brought back.¹⁹² (36:83) See also (67:1)

This is why one attribute of Allah among His balanced attributes is also that of ‘*Malik ul Quddus*’ (59:23, 62:1). The true King, pure from all faults, above and beyond all weaknesses:

Therefore, exalted be Allah, the King, the Reality: there is no god but He, the Rabb of the Throne of Honour. (23:116) See also (20:114)

In the external universe Allah’s governance is continuously ongoing directly, but in the human world organisation and functioning occurs via human hands. This is called government and authority, and Allah has put laws in place for the receipt and loss of the power of government and authority. From this it is clear that when all this is received and lost according to His laws, then it will be absolutely correct to state that He is indeed the Ruler of rulers, even though in the human world, according to His Divine law, He passes on the organisation and running to those people who have this ability, and when they no longer retain this ability then He snatches it away from them:

¹⁹¹ Details of these verses is not the place here.

¹⁹² Verses like this mean that every step man takes is in His direction regardless. (Ed)

...Lord of Power (And Rule), you give power to whom You will (as per the law), and You strip off power from whom You will (as per the law) ... (3:26)

This is because everything is in His ownership:

To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth... (22:64)

And when the ownership is His, then He is also the real King:

Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, are busy carrying out completion of His programme: to Him belongs dominion, and to Him belongs Hamd: and He has power over all things. (64:1)

20.5 Splendour of Greatness

In the whole of the universe the governance is His, then who can be greater than Him. Hence, greatness in the universe is also His:

To Him be glory throughout the heavens and the earth... (45:37)

This is that Allah to whose obedience the Quran extends an invitation:

...Such is Allah your Rabb: to Him belongs all Dominion... (35:13)

(This subject has been confined to Allah's general control and governance. How His rule becomes established in this world is a separate topic which will be dealt with at its own place).

The fundamental trait of a complete self is to become the possessor of the freedom to choose and make decisions. Therefore, the scope of responsibilities will be in direct proportion to the extent to which the human self becomes developed. The truth is that to judge to what extent a self is developed, it should be observed to what extent it is the possessor of freedom to choose and make decisions; it should be seen to what extent it makes its own choices and decisions. If an individual does not make decisions on his own behalf but follows behind the decisions of others (whether ritually or under duress), then consider that his self is not developing. Obedience can only be of the laws of Allah, and that too with full conviction of the heart and mind. Within the confines of these laws, man should be fully autonomous in making his own choices and decisions - this is how a developed self is identified.

That *Jamaat* in which the selfs of its members become developed like this will be the possessor of the freedom to choose and make decisions. It will be the one

which will have the right to govern, but its government will not be to make individuals obey its orders, instead it will be for the obedience of Allah's laws so that in this way their own selves can also become developed.

21 *Ah'ya* (Life) and *Ima'tat* (Death)

The scope of Allah's power and authority is so wide that death and life is also in His hand alone. What is the source of life? This is that question which continues to be unfathomable by those who are thinkers and researchers (regardless of whether they are philosophers from the past or scientists of the modern era). The maximum to which investigations of science have so far reached is how life appeared on the face of this earth. But they can say nothing about where life actually came from. The Quran informs us that Allah is *Al-Hayyu* i.e. He Himself is alive¹⁹³ and life in the universe is a creation of His. In other words, just as matter is a creation of His, similarly, life is also a creation of His. And this is that thing which is not in the control of any other (i.e. creating life is not possible by anyone else), though He has established laws for the strengthening (and weakening) of life, according to which it can be strengthened and can also be destroyed. Therefore, since its ultimate destruction (called death) occurs according to His established laws, He has stated the same about death as with life, that it is within His control. This is the meaning of those verses of the Quran in which it is stated 'He is the One Who gives life, He is the One Who gives death', for example:

Unto Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and He takes it. Except for Him you have no protector nor helper. (9:116)

In Surah *Al-Hadid* it is stated:

To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: It is He Who gives Life and Death; and He has Power over all things. (57:2)

In Surah *Yunus*:

It is He Who gives life and Who gives death, and your every step goes towards Him. (10:56)

This reality has been repeated at different places in the Quran. By reflecting on these verses, it will become evident how miraculous this style of expression of the Quran is in the way that it presents one principle many times through cross reference of verses, and at every place it seems as if this matter is being narrated for the first time. Through this repetition and emphasis, the principle in view becomes embedded in the mind with all its splendour and brilliance. For 'He is the One Who gives life and death', keep the following verses in view and then see

¹⁹³ He is life and no-one gave Him this life. This is an important point to understand as acquisition of *Eimaan* and reflection on these Divine attributes and acquiring them (within human limits) will give us life. (Ed)

to what extent the above style happens to appeal to the heart (15:23, 23:80, 40:68, 44:8, 50:43, 53:44).

21.1 Evidence from Nature

To those people who deny the existence of Allah, life and death is presented as an evidence in front of them. It is stated:

How can you reject Eimaan in Allah? Seeing that you were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and your every step goes towards Him. (2:28)

In Surah *Al-Hajj*:

It is He Who gave you life, will cause you to die, and will again give you life. But truly man is a most ungrateful creature. (22:66)

21.2 Negative Aspect

This was the positive side of this subject i.e. that Allah alone is the master of death and life. Together with this, its negative aspect is also explained so that the truth becomes well engrained in the heart. It is stated:

Yet have they taken, besides him, gods that can create nothing but are themselves created; that have no control of hurt or good to themselves; nor can they control death nor life nor resurrection. (25:3)

21.3 The Materialist

Among European scientists there exists a group whose belief is that when a particular arrangement is created among the elements of matter, then life becomes automatically created within them merely by chance, and then when this arrangement becomes disturbed due to (physical) perturbations of the environment, then death takes place. This group is not a product of the modern era; references to their existence are given from the times of the Greek philosophers. At the time of the revelation of the Quran this also existed; it is to them that the Quran refers when it states:

And they say: 'What is there but our life in this world? We shall die and we live, and nothing but time can destroy us.' But of that they have no knowledge: they merely conjecture. (45:24)

Did you notice what the final outcome of this atheistic (materialistic) doctrine is? It is this, that life is the name of this physical life only, which ends with dying. After this, there is no life. The Quran gives surety of the continuity of life, and those who have conviction in the Quran have *Eimaan* in this. Hence, after noting this doctrine of atheism, the Quran has declared in clear words that the truth is not that which these people profess; the truth is this:

Say: 'It is Allah Who gives you life, then gives you death; then He will gather you together for the Day of Judgment about which there is no doubt': But most men do not understand. (45:26)

To what extent the ideology of the materialists regarding death and life is merely conjectural and speculative and does not meet the criteria of factual knowledge - in fact, how people are arising from among them who are contradicting the doctrine of death and life of their previous scientists - this is not the place for this discussion.¹⁹⁴ At this point note only this much, how the Quran, after rejecting every false doctrine, has clarified this fact that not only is life created by Allah but death also occurs according to His law. Hence, there is no difficulty for Him that after death He bestows life again, and this decree is based on knowledge, not on conjecture and speculation.

Let us see the practical consequence of this *Eimaan*. For man, the biggest arena of danger for his mistake is the risk of death. Man continues to do anything in order to save his life¹⁹⁵, for this, he bows his head to the ground before every possessor of power and authority.

But when a *Momin* creates the conviction within himself that a human being does not end through death, rather life continues to go forward, then the electrifying energies of courage and boldness, bravery and initiative, race through his heart and veins. He does not fear any human being and proceeds forward in the arena of life with head held high, clothed as in a shroud, fully intoxicated by the conviction of *Eimaan*, to lay down his life for the truth. There is no chain of the world which can imprison his freedoms, no tyrannical power which can become an impediment in his path of *Eimaan*. These are those men of high self-awareness, and followers of Allah, due to whose valours the system of truth and justice is established in the world, and whose *Eimaan*, like the light emitted by a lofty lighthouse in the stormy waves of events, serve as a torch of guidance. A developed self is able to recognise this fact. Just consider to what extent the system of a society which is shaped through the hands of such individuals will be willing to lay down its life for the sake of consolidating the Permanent Values.

¹⁹⁴ This has been covered in the book titled *The Life in the Hereafter: What does the Quran say?*

¹⁹⁵ We can only prolong our physical life and delay our inevitable physical death up to a point. (Ed)

22 *Tawakkul* (Conviction)

Have you seen an airman jumping from an aircraft? The aircraft is flying at a height of fifteen to twenty thousand feet with a speed of three hundred to four hundred miles per hour. From it, an airman jumps out with great calmness and comes to land on the ground with great comfort and ease. Have you ever pondered why this airman jumps out with such calm and ease? This is because he has a parachute which deploys with the slightest touch and is so strong that despite such a weight and such speed its string does not break, nor does its fabric tear. With the help of this parachute, the airman descends. It is merely this strong trust in this parachute which persuades this airman to jump from such a height. If he does not have such confidence and trust in it, then never mind jumping, he will not even dare to look down from the aircraft. In the Arabic language this kind of trust and conviction is called *Tawakkul*.

We have seen in the previous pages that Allah's immutable laws are working in both the outer universe and the human world. Since the effects of these laws present themselves in a tangible form in the outer world, this is why it is easy to have certainty and trust in them. But as far as the human world is concerned, firstly, their effects are non-perceptible, and secondly, these effects manifest over a very long period of time (evolutionary pace). These effects will manifest according to the scales of human calculation at that time when these laws become implemented through the hands of a *Jamaat e Momineen*. It is obvious that when this *Jamaat* rises up with these laws, at that time their effects will not be in front of this *Jamaat*. The question is, what is the nature of that power on the basis of which this *Jamaat* will become prepared for such a life-threatening and patience testing campaign. That force cannot be any other than this, that they have complete trust and conviction in the strength and immutability of the Divine laws. Without this they will not be able to take even one step. This is why it is stated that:

For, Momineen are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their Eimaan strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Rabb; Who establish Salat and make it available (for mankind) what We have given them for sustenance: such in truth are the Momineen: they have grades of dignity with their Rabb, and protection, and honourable sustenance. (8:2-4)

The *Tawakkul* of a *Jamaat e Momineen* is not merely a theoretical belief; they have complete conviction in this matter that whichever individual (or group) has trust in the laws of Allah, he no longer remains in need of any other support or crutch. These laws are sufficient to achieve his aim. They also have full conviction in this fact that every scheme of Allah assuredly reaches its point of completion. It never

happens that it breaks somewhere in the middle or that it ultimately proves to be a failure. This is because:

... 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. (65:3)

22.1 Tawakkul of Anbiya

When *Tawakkul* is among the traits of *Eimaan* of the *Momineen*, then it is obvious how much stronger and unwavering will be the *Tawakkul* of the *Anbiya* on Allah. The reality is that when the *Anbiya* used to proclaim the truth, according to the common worldly standard they were usually helpless and weak, devoid of resources and without friends and support; and the first reaction to their invitation was that every rebellious and unruly force would rise up with its full might to oppose them. In this horde of unfavourable circumstances and difficulties, this was the tremendous power of *Tawakkul* on Allah which did not allow any tremor in their resolve, or any falter in their firm footedness. The whole world would be against them but in their glittering eyes there were no signs of fear, and no crease of worry could be seen on their glowing foreheads. Noah is encircled by the rebels, opposing forces are bent upon causing all types of harm, but with *Tawakkul* al Allah, he proclaims with heightened fortitude that:

...O my people, if it be hard on your (mind) that I should stay (with you) and commemorate the signs of Allah, yet I put my trust in Allah. Get you then an agreement about your plan and among your partners, so your plan be on to you dark and dubious. Then pass your sentence on me and give me no respite. (10:71)

In other words, do all of this and then wait and see whether it is your treacheries, your partners in crime, and your companions in this planning that are more powerful, or that law of Allah in which I have reposed my trust! How superb is this challenge and with what courage and certainty it is being presented? The proclamation of this 'weak and feeble' servant of Allah was heard by the world, and after that its consequence was also witnessed, how the rebellious and disobedient opponents were destroyed all together. It was in similar circumstances that Hud stated to his people:

...so scheme against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, My Rabb and your Rabb! There is not a moving creature, but He has grasp of its fore-lock. Verily, it is my Rabb that is on a straight path. (11:55-56)

The messenger Shoaib also stated the same:

...I only desire (your) betterment to the best of my power; and my success (in my task) can only come from Allah. In Him I trust, and unto Him I look. (11:88) See also (7:89)

The foremost symbol of the Islamic system, Abraham, a model of righteousness, also gave such an earth-shattering and tremor causing challenge to his people, and stated:

... We are clear of you and of whatever you follow besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and detestation forever, unless you have Eimaan in Allah and Him alone... Our Rabb! in You do we trust, and to You do we turn in repentance: to You is (our) final goal. (60:4)

Other than these individual examples, it is generally noted regarding all of the *Anbiya* that when their people rejected and falsified them and turned against them in opposition, then they in turn responded thus:

... True, we are human like yourselves, but Allah does grant His grace to such of his servants as He wills. It is not for us to bring you an authority except as Allah permits. And on Allah let all men of Eimaan put their trust. No reason have we why we should not put our trust on Allah. Indeed, He Has guided us to the Ways we (follow). We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us. It is only Allah in whom those who wish to put their trust, should put their trust. (14:11-12)

In the early period of Rasul-ullah's invitation towards *Haqq*, the way that the flame of Lahab¹⁹⁶ remained in conflict with the light of Mustafa¹⁹⁷ is such a glaring example of rebellion and unruliness on one side, and conviction and determination on the other side, to which the world is a witness. In this torrent of opposition, the way that the dignified being of Rasul-ullah manifested unwavering *Tawakkul* on Allah is the best model for every claimant of *Eimaan*. Alone and isolated, surrounded from every side by enemies, yet his proclamation is:

... Say: 'See you then? the things that you invoke besides Allah, can they, if Allah wills some penalty for me, remove His penalty? Or if He wills some grace for me, can they keep back His grace?' Say: 'Sufficient is Allah for me! In Him trust those who put their trust.' Say: 'O my People! Do whatever you can: I will do (my part): but soon will you know - who it is to whom comes a penalty of ignominy, and on whom descends a penalty that abides.' (39:38-40)

How unfavourable the circumstances are, yet how strong is the trust in the laws.

¹⁹⁶ Historically, Abu Lahab was the uncle of the last messenger who opposed his messenger-hood vehemently until his death. (Ed)

¹⁹⁷ Another name by which the last messenger is known. (Ed)

This is the hallmark of *Tawakkul* (trust and conviction). Human beings usually endeavour that if relations spoil with strangers to allow it, but to not spoil relations with near and dear ones, because in times of trouble the support of near and ones can be trusted as compared to outsiders. But for the one who stands up to raise the voice of *Haqq*, the criteria for ‘dear ones’ and ‘outsiders’ is totally different. The near one is the one who says yes to the invitation towards *Haqq*, the outsider is the one who evades it. This is why the claimant of *Haqq* does not care whether relationships with near and dear ones remain on good terms or turn sour. He does not even think of counting on their support and companionship, so how can he be afraid of spoiling his relationship with them? The Quran states:

And admonish your nearest kinsmen and lower your wing to Momineen who follow you. Then if they disobey you, say: 'I am free (of responsibility) for what you do!' And put your trust on the Exalted in Might, the Raheem. (26:214-217)

Surah *At-Tauba* was a proclamation of war against all the rejectors of the laws of Allah. After this proclamation it is stated:

But if they turn away, say: 'Allah suffices me: there is no god but He: On Him is my trust, He the Rabb of Al-Arsh, Supreme!' (9:129) See also (13:30, 67:29)

22.2 Only the *Tawakkul* of the One on *Haqq* is Genuine

Amongst those who were engaged in rebellion and transgression, the Jews participated the most in this opposition. It was instructed, do not be apprehensive of their opposition, Allah's Law of Requital will very soon make a decision as to what the end result is of those who transgress from the righteous path, you should continue giving the invitation with resolve and fortitude, and after that:

So put your trust in Allah: for you are on (the path of) manifest Truth. (27:79)

Apart from those who were openly rebellious, there was also a group of hypocrites who would whisper in secret. It was stated, what do you care about their intrigues either - your trust is on that Allah who is aware of every matter, both seen and unseen:

They have 'obedience' on their lips; but when they leave you, a section of them meditate all night on things very different from what you tell them. But Allah records their nightly (plots): so keep clear of them, and put your trust in Allah, and enough is Allah as a disposer of affairs. (4:81) See also (58:10)

You should not be fearful of the negative maneuverings from the open opposition of these *Kuffar*, and the unceasing covert intrigues of the hypocrites; keep following

Allah's laws, Allah's support and blessing will be like a shadow covering you at all times:

O Nabi! Fear Allah, and hearken not to the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites: verily Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom. But follow that which comes to you by inspiration from your Rabb: for Allah is well acquainted with (all) that you do. And put your trust in Allah, and enough is Allah as a disposer of affairs. (33:1-3) See also (33:48)

22.3 Wakil (Disposer of Affairs)

Tawakkul means trust and confidence, therefore the meaning of *Wakil-un* will be the one who can be trusted and confided in, the one to whom one's affairs can be assigned – this is the practical demonstration of trust and confidence. Whatever thing is given into the keeping of this individual in whom there is trust and confidence, he supervises and protects it fully. Hence, all these traits are included in the term *Wakil-un* and it is on this basis that Allah is proclaimed as *Wakil-un*:

That is Allah, your Rabb! there is no god but He, the Creator of all things: then obey Him: and He has power to dispose of all affairs. (6:102) See also (11:12, 39:62)

Creator of the universe, Sustainer of everything, overseeing all - then from who else above Him will problem solving and resourcefulness, protection and supervision be available:

Yea, unto Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth, and enough is Allah to carry through all affairs. (4:132)

This is why it is stated that in the journey of life, when you ask for protection, ask for His alone; when you raise your eyes for companionship and help, then only look towards Him; and when you place trust and confidence, then do it only in Him:

(He is) Rabb of the east and the west: there is no god but He: take Him therefore for (your) Disposer of Affairs. (73:9)

Do not take any other than Him as a guardian, do not trust in the protection of anyone else. This was the command given to Bani Israel in the Torah:

We gave Moses the Book and made it a guide to the Children of Israel, (commanding): Take not other than Me as disposer of (your) affairs. (17:2)

And whoever places his trust in someone else as a result of doubt in the heart, feebleness of *Eimaan*, and due to the whispering of *Iblees*, then he will ultimately see all his supports to be flimsy, all his aids hot air, and all his guardians turn out to be weak and helpless. The truth is that if man abandons Allah's laws and places his trust on some other constitution and code, then this can never ever protect him. In other words, whoever does not make the laws of Allah his *Wakil*, can have no other *Wakil* in the world, or that no power which is contrary to the laws of Allah can provide supervision and protection. Hence, it is announced to Rasulullah:

If it were Our Will, We could take away that which We have sent you by inspiration: then you will not find any to plead your affair in that matter as against Us, except for mercy from your Rabb: for his bounty is to you (indeed) great. (17:86-87)

22.4 Non-Quranic and Quranic *Tawakkul*

This is the Quranic meaning of *Tawakkul*. Contrary to this, let us see what meaning is perceived amongst us of *Tawakkul*. Amongst us, the state is such that when an individual does not work, sits idle at one place, abandons all means and resources, does not make any effort or struggle to achieve anything, lays his head down on the hard work of others, then it is said about him that he is sitting having '*Tawakkul* on Allah', that he is very *Mutawakkul*. And this thing is counted among virtuousness and saintliness, 'praiseworthiness and religiosity'. The more he continues to increase in such *Tawakkul*, the more he is considered as being worthy of respect. However, can you imagine such a thought that this could be the teaching of Islam? That Islam which is the doctrine of a life of persistent endeavour, continuous struggle, ceaseless effort and hard work, action upon action, Jihad and wholehearted Jihad. Can it comprise such an instruction due to which all the practical powers of man are paralysed and all his lively energies become stunted? What, will this be the only meaning of *Tawakkul* in Islam - 'seal on lips, ears deaf, eyes shut' - to become static and lifeless with hands idle in laps, and remain a burden on the shoulders of humanity like a corpse?

Islamic teaching can never teach this. This is absolutely a non-Islamic doctrine and is the consequence of non-Quranic concepts of life i.e. those concepts which declare the eminence of humanity to be the desertion of intellect, abandonment of desires, and dereliction of resourcefulness. These are those non-Quranic beliefs which have turned the electric being of a 'Muslim' into a heap of ash, and that same *Tawakkul* which was once displayed in the form of a lightning sword in the hands of those who were prepared to sacrifice their lives in the path of Allah, has become a chain wrapped around his ankles.

Quranic *Tawakkul* teaches us that when a matter confronts us, firstly see which of Allah's laws are applicable to it, then through consultation with your companions, deliberate on its constituents and implications. In this way, when you arrive at a firm decision, then pursue it with a concrete resolve, and have full trust and confidence in this Divine law according to which you acted. This was the teaching which was given to Rasul-ullah (and through him to the Muslim Ummah). Thus, it was stated to him:

...and consult them in affairs. Then, when you have taken a decision put your trust in Allah. For Allah keeps them as friends those who put their trust (in Him). (3:159)

The correct meaning of *Tawakkul* has been presented in very clear terms in the narrative of Bani Israel. Moses told his people:

O my people! Enter the holy land which Allah has assigned unto you, and turn not back ignominiously, for then will you be overthrown, to your own ruin. (5:21)

Take note that it is stated here that 'this land which Allah has written for you, made it your destiny, has come to be your share according to Divine distribution, rise and occupy it'. But:

They said: 'O Moses! In this land are a people of exceeding strength: Never shall we enter it until they leave it: if (once) they leave, then shall we enter.' (5:22)

This was that nation whose practical abilities had become debilitated, whose efforts had weakened and whose courage had become demoralized. It did not wish to rise of its own accord but wished this instead, that all of these tasks could be accomplished automatically and that the rewards of these could fall into their laps while they sat doing nothing. This was that kind of '*Tawakkul*' which is prevalent nowadays among us. But within this same nation those people who had understood the correct meaning of *Tawakkul* said:

(But) among (their) Allah-fearing men were two on whom Allah had bestowed His grace: They said: 'Assault them at the (proper) gate: when once you are in, victory will be yours; But on Allah put your trust if you are Momineen'. (5:23)

From this it has become evident what the correct meaning of *Tawakkul* is i.e. when you rise with determined resolve for the achievement of an aim then the support of the Divine law will be by your side. But Bani Israel did not accept this true meaning of *Tawakkul*. They were convinced of that meaning of *Tawakkul* which is prevalent among us today. They said that when that particular land has been destined for us, then what need is there for us to exert any effort? Whatever is written in our fate will surely eventually be received by us automatically. It was

because of this wrong belief that they had reconciled to live this slavish easy-going life of humiliation and failure:

They said: 'O Moses! while they remain there, never shall we be able to enter, to the end of time. Go you, and your Rabb, and fight you two, while we sit here (and watch).' (5:24)

What, is this not the same reply which the proponent of 'non-Quranic *Tawakkul*' also demonstrates wherever he is, through his conduct at every stage in the struggle of life today? The question is, whether with this kind of '*Tawakkul*' did they get that land which had become the destiny of Bani Israel? How could they get it? As a consequence, the command was given that when their condition is such:

Allah said: therefore, will the land be out of their reach for forty years: In distraction will they wander through the land: But sorrow you not over these rebellious people. (5:26)

After forty years of wandering through the desert and living in the wild, the previous generation faded away in the plains of Sinai and a new generation took birth, which developed according to the revelation of Allah in the free environment of the wild. It arose, grew, and with full efforts and endeavours occupied that land which had been destined for Bani Israel.

It has become apparent from this what the correct meaning of *Tawakkul* is and what the incorrect meaning is. This was why Moses had emphatically instructed his people to learn to trust correctly in Allah because it is only through this that you will be able to achieve *Najaat* from the hell of slavery and subjugation:

Moses said: 'O my people! If you do have Eimaan in Allah, then in Him put your trust if you submit (your will to His)'. They said: 'In Allah do we put our trust. Our Rabb! make us not a trial for those who practice oppression; And deliver us by Your Mercy from those who reject (You)'. (10:84-86)

This was the same supplication of Moses and Aaron and in reply it was stated:

Allah said: 'Accepted is your prayer (O Moses and Aaron)! So stand you straight, and follow not the path of those who know not. (10:89)

By *Tawakkul* and the acceptance of supplication is meant that whatever campaign you have made a resolve on, stand firm on it and adopt that technique which is according to the Divine law, success will be assured.

When Noah said to his people, do whatever comes into your minds, my *Tawakkul* is on my Allah, did he then sit down after this with hands clasped doing nothing? Not at all! With full determination and hard work, he constructed a boat under the guidance of the revelation of Allah, and when the deluge of the flood arrived, he launched the boat into the wild torrent, stating, O Allah! whatever preparation I could make in order to be saved from the destruction of this storm, I did following Your command. Now this boat is at Your disposal, if there is support from Your law then this will reach the shore. So the world observed that in this storm, which did not allow any sign of rebelliousness and disobedience to remain, if anything survived it was that same ark which this sincere servant of Allah had made with his gentle hands, and which was handed over to the mercy of the waves with trust in the Divine law.

22.5 Muslims of the Earlier Era and *Tawakkul*

After mentioning these stories of former Ummahs, let us now return to that era in which the deeds of life of the sincere devotees of Allah were the practical interpretations of the Quranic principles of life. Let us see what the meaning of *Tawakkul* was during that era. In Surah *Al-Anfal*:

Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies, and others besides, whom you may not know, but whom Allah does know. Whatever you shall spend in the cause of Allah, shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly. But if the enemy incline towards peace, do you (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah: for He is One that hears and knows (all things). Should they intend to deceive you - verily Allah suffices you: He it is that has strengthened you with His aid and with Momineen; And (moreover) He has put affection between their hearts: not if you had spent all that is in the earth, could you have produced that affection, but Allah has done it: for He is Exalted in might, Wise. O Nabi! sufficient unto you is Allah, and unto Momineen who follow you. (8:60-64)

Reflect on these great verses and see what kind of system has been established by the Quran for *Tawakkul* on Allah, victory from Allah, success and prosperity, Divine protection, abundance from Allah. Let us see what the different links of this process are: the system will automatically become evident:

- (1) The presence of the messenger (and after the messenger, the successor of the messenger i.e. the living centre of the system)
- (2) A *Jamaat e Momineen* to carry out the obedience of the righteous central authority
- (3) That *Jamaat* in the hearts of whose members one outlook and mutual attachment has been created through mutual love and affection.

- (4) Such material power should exist in this *Jamaat* which, visible and invisible, is sufficient to counter all enemies, and as a consequence of which fear is instilled in the hearts of the enemies.
- (5) At the time of need, everything is sacrificed for this great aim.
- (6) With this manifestation of power, the state of morality is such that as soon as the enemy yields for peace, they also immediately agree.
- (7) If the enemy deceives, let it deceive, but they themselves will never deceive. They are transparent in all matters.
- (8) Equipped with all these resources and wherewithal, and with the wealth of this high character (*Taqwa*), maintain *Tawakkul* in Allah and remain desirous of His aid and companionship.

When this system takes birth, then the consequence of having *Tawakkul* in Allah will be:

...If there are twenty amongst you, patient and persevering, they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred, they will vanquish a thousand of the Unbelievers: for these are a people without understanding. (8:65)

These were the Mujahideen, bound as a pearl necklace with this system, the state of whose hearts was such that when they were informed that the enemy is preparing to oppose them in great numbers and laden with weapons, instead of being fearful they become even more courageous, and would assert with the complete conviction of their hearts: 'So what! if the enemy is powerful, the One on Whom we trust is Omnipotent':

Men said to them: 'A great army is gathering against you': And frightened them: But it (only) increased their Eimaan: They said: 'For us Allah suffices, and He is the best disposer of affairs'. (3:173)

What was the outcome of this unwavering and lofty *Tawakkul*?

And they returned with grace and bounty from Allah: no harm ever touched them: For they followed the good pleasure of Allah: And Allah is the Rabb of bounties unbounded. (3:174)

These were those results through the reminder of which *Taqwa* and *Tawakkul* were emphasised. It is stated:

O you who have Eimaan! Call in remembrance the favour of Allah unto you when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) held back their hands from you: So, fear Allah. And on Allah let Momineen put (all) their trust. (5:11)

It was the immense force of *Taqwa* and *Tawakkul* which, despite the lower numbers and relatively fewer material resources, bestowed such resolve, steadfastness and extreme courage on the Muslims that they were never fearful even of the greatest battles. The opponents could not fathom this secret. They would concoct the strangest of fables in the interpretation of this, and not only they, but the European historian who is ignorant of the powers of *Eimaan* and *Taqwa*, has not been able to understand even to the present time what the secret was behind these unparalleled powers of the Muslims. And when, due to his lack of vision and perception, he cannot reach the truth, then he begins to fabricate exaggerated fictional tales. This was the same state of the hypocrites. Although their tongues were familiar with the words *Taqwa* and *Tawakkul*, their hearts were strangers to the spirit of these words. This is why they would say sarcastically, look how arrogant the intoxication of their Deen has made them, the *Jamaat* is only a handful yet is aiming to conquer the earth and the heavens:

Lo! the hypocrites say, and those in whose hearts is a disease: 'These people, their Deen has misled them'. But if any trust in Allah, behold! Allah is Exalted in might, Wise. (8:49)

But along with this, this reality was made clear to the Muslims that Allah's victory is dependent on this: that you do not lose courage; do not demonstrate cowardice; the practical proof of *Tawakkul* is that you remain firm footed. Consequently, its example was illustrated in the Battle of Uhad. It was those same Muslims who had come out into the battlefield for the sake of truth and *Haqq*, but right from the beginning two groups became disheartened at the instigation of the hypocrites, and in this way the spirit of *Sabr* (firmness of heart) and *Tawakkul* (unwavering trust in Allah's laws) became weakened. Consequently, that same enemy which only yesterday was defeated by a small *Jamaat* of only three hundred and thirteen men in the Battle of Badr, overpowered them in the battlefield of Uhad:

Remember two of your parties meditated cowardice; but Allah was their protector, and in Allah should the Mominen put their trust. (3:122)

22.6 Migration and *Tawakkul*

Only that environment can be congenial for a *Momin* in which life can be spent according to the laws of Allah; other than this every other environment is unsuitable for him. If the environment in some place is unfavourable, then the duty falls on him to make it suitable. But if, despite his efforts, it cannot be made favourable, then the other alternative is that, rather than breathing in this poison laden atmosphere, he should move to some such place where either a suitable environment already exists, or the possibilities to make it favourable are greater.

This is what is known as *Hijrat* (migration).¹⁹⁸ Such a situation demands great courage. Man has an affinity for his surroundings, the attraction of relationships also ties one down; then, over and above everything else, the sources of income are well established and their forms are defined. To abandon all of these and move to a 'new world' demands great *Sabr* (perseverance) and supreme *Tawakkul* (trust in Allah). These are the attributes which are declared to be invaluable character traits. It is stated:

To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah, after suffering oppression, We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world; but truly the reward of the hereafter will be greater. If they only realised (this)! (They are) those who persevere in patience and put their trust on their Rabb. (16:41-42)

Details of this aspect are cited in Surah *Al-Ankabut* in these words:

O My servants who have Eimaan! truly, spacious is My earth: therefore, only follow My commands! Every self shall have a taste of death, in the end to Us shall you be brought back. But those who have Eimaan and work deeds of righteousness - to them shall We give a home in heaven, lofty mansions beneath which flow rivers, to dwell therein for aye; an excellent reward for those who do (good)! Those who persevere in patience and put their trust in their Rabb. How many are the creatures that carry not their own sustenance? It is Allah who feeds (both) them and you: for He hears and knows (all things). (29:56-60)

How migrants and trustees obtain *Rizq* and what the conditions are for its attainment, has already been discussed under the topics of *Razzaqiyat* and *Fadl*. At this point it only needs to be seen that *Sabr* and *Tawakkul* are those forces on the basis of which a *Momin* progresses forward, avoiding all those thorny bushes on the way which impede his path. These were those factors which were hindering the *Kuffar* from acceptance of *Haqq*:

They say: 'If we were to follow the guidance with you, we should be snatched away from our land'. Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, to which are brought as tribute fruits of all kinds, a provision from Ourselves? but most of them understand not. And how many populations We destroyed, which exulted in their life (of ease and plenty)! now those habitations of theirs, after them, are deserted, all but a (miserable) few! and We are their heirs! (28:57-58)

This was because they considered their skills and expertise to be sufficient in themselves and opted for rebellion against the laws of Allah. They depended on those ideals which were not enduring. They chose to hold on to those supports

¹⁹⁸ Details of this will be found in the book titled *Mairaj e Insaaniyat*.

which were themselves going to end one day. If man is going to trust, it should be in the One Who is alive and will remain alive for eternity. Only the law of this living and sustaining Allah is such in which man should put his trust:

And put your trust in Him Who lives and dies not... (25:58)

Only this Being is worthy of trust, and complete trust can be placed only in Him:

...such is Allah my Rabb: In Him I trust, and to Him I turn. (42:10)

This is the *Eimaan* of a *Momin* and his way of life i.e. complete trust and confidence in the laws of Allah. It is also clear from this that the individual whose self is developed and in whom the Divine attributes are reflected in this way, that individual and the *Jamaat* consisting of such individuals and their established system will possess this great character trait that complete trust and full confidence can be placed in every matter of theirs. They will not deceive anyone and will not cheat and betray anyone. Their every commitment and agreement will be firm. Whenever they say anything to anyone, he will be assured that it will happen like this. The world will trust them with the same certainty and assurance that they themselves trust the firmness of Allah's laws. Just think how much peace and tranquility will result due to this kind of *Jamaat* in the world and the existence of such a system. The Quran wishes to create these kinds of individuals and this type of system.

23 **Willayat (Companionship)**

The basic meaning of *Al-Waliyu* is to be close and near to someone. We have seen in the previous chapters that the relationship between Allah and man is of mutual companionship. From this aspect they are declared to be *Wali* of each other. But it is essential for this companionship that man obeys the laws of Allah. In this regard, when it is said about man that he is 'Allah's *Wali*', then from this will be meant that by having the status of being obedient to Allah's laws, he is a companion in the creative programme of Allah; and when it is said about Allah that He is the *Wali* of man, then from this will be meant that He becomes the companion of whoever obeys His laws. In this regard (that the laws of Allah are obeyed), *Willayat* also means sovereignty and authority, government and supremacy, and protection and supervision. But when it is said about two human beings that they are *Wali* of one another, then from this will be meant equality of companionship and friendship e.g.:

The Momineen, men and women, are protectors one of another... (9:71)

In Surah *Al-Kahf* there is the example of two owners of orchards. One of them is so intoxicated by his prosperity that He even denied the supremacy and authority of Allah, and began to think that everything was being attained purely as a result of his own skill and expertise, no part is played in it by the laws of Allah. The consequence was that all his prosperity was ground into dust. After quoting this example, the Quran states:

There, the (only) protection comes from Allah, the true One. He is the best to reward, and the best to give success. (18:44)

Here, the meaning of *Willayat* is of guidance and of finding a solution, and this is specific for the Being of Allah, the obedience of Whose laws is essential. It is stated in Surah *Al-Anfal* in relation to the mention of the *Momineen* and *Muhajireen* (those who migrated):

...As to those who accepted Eimaan but came not into exile, you owe no duty of protection to them until they come into exile... (8:72)

Here, the meaning of *Willayat* is that of companionship and friendship, and this is that relationship which is specific to Islamic unity and affection within a *Millat*.

23.1 Only Allah is *Wali*

A *Momin* who has a firm conviction that in the stages of life true victory and support can only be achieved through the obedience of Allah's laws, who has *Eimaan* from the depths of his heart in this great truth that trust and certainty can only be placed in His laws, will assuredly search for real peace and tranquility only in the protection and guidance of Allah by turning his face away from 'non-Allah' forces. In Surah *Al-Baqra* it is stated:

Let there be no compulsion in Deen¹⁹⁹: Truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects evil and has Eimaan in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things. Allah is the protector of those who have Eimaan: from the depths of darkness²⁰⁰ He will lead them forth into light. Of those who accept Kufr their patrons are the evil ones: from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness. They will be companions of the fire, to dwell therein forever. (2:256-257)

The support of Allah's companionship and supervision is so strong that it can never break. Other than this, of all the other supports none is such which can provide security and protection for man in the struggle of life:

The parable of those who take protectors other than Allah is that of the spider, who builds (to itself) an abode; but truly the flimsiest of houses is the spider's house; if they but knew. (29:41)

This is because it is His Being which is the sole source of all power, He is Master of death and life, All-Powerful over all things:

What! Have they taken protectors besides Him? But it is Allah, He is the protector, and it is He Who gives life to the dead: It is He Who has power over all things. (42:9)

Who other than such a Being, Master of such powers, can be so capable and be made master and chief, guardian and organiser, and whose laws and commands should be obeyed?

¹⁹⁹ Through this verse the Quran dispels all claims of the use of force to compel anyone to its guidance. *Eimaan* is acceptance of Quranic guidance willingly after convincing the human intellect, based on evidence, that there is great benefit in acceptance of what is given in the Quran. It is absolutely voluntary and is our choice. This is covered in detail in the book *What is Islam* by the author. (Ed)

²⁰⁰ There is no inner guidance within human beings. As a consequence, we all tend to follow our personal desires. We use our intellect to fulfill our desires which then creates conflicts in the world. The Quran offers its guidance to eliminate these conflicts. (Ed)

Say: 'Shall I take for my protector any other than Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? And He it is that feeds but is not fed'. Say: 'Nay! but I am commanded to be the first of those who bow to Allah (in Islam)' and be not you of the company of those who join gods with Allah. (6:14)

From this the reality becomes clear that the meaning of making Allah a *Wali* is that obedience should only be of His laws - this is Islam, this is the practice of a *Wali* of Allah. In another verse it is stated:

Say: 'Who is Rabb of the heavens and the earth?' Say: (It is) Allah. Say: 'Do you then take protectors other than Him, such as have no power either for good or for harm to themselves'?...(13:16)

What will you gain from having one who has no control over his own profit and loss as a companion and helper? (It should be borne in mind that profit and loss i.e. the consequence of human deeds, only manifest according to the laws of Allah. Hence, stating that no individual is in control of his gains and losses is a manifestation of a fact). This is why support and companionship can only be of Allah according to Whose laws the entire system of life is busily in action:

Unto Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and He takes it. Except for Him you have no protector nor helper. (9:116) See also (2:107, 32:4)

Such a Patron Who does not need another's patronage, Who is not dependent on the aid of another:

Say: 'Hamd be to Allah, who begets no son, and has no partner in (His) dominion: Nor (needs) He any to protect Him from weakness (free from all this)'. Magnify Him for His deserving greatness²⁰¹. (17:111)

Man searches for some support and pursues a patron at that time when the tempest of hopelessness and despair engulfs him from every direction, and it is evident that in the dark clouds of futility and bleakness, the ray of light of true hope can only appear via the sparkling Divine laws. It is He Who brings life to the parched land, Who gives rise to the joyous spring of success and jubilation after anguish and desolation:

He is the One that sends down rain (even) after (men) have given up all hope and scatters His mercy (far and wide). And He is the Protector, worthy of all admiration. (42:28)

²⁰¹ Since Allah with His attributes serves as a higher model for human self-development, hence recognising and understanding His attributes and their significance is essential. (Ed)

Those who, having abandoned Allah, make others their masters and patrons i.e. begin to obey the self-created laws of men, will learn in a very short period of time indeed what the true status of these ‘gods of wax’ was and what a self-deception it was to rely on them:

They call on such deities, besides Allah, as can neither hurt nor profit them: that is straying far indeed! They call on one whose hurt is nearer than his profit: evil, indeed, is the patron, and evil the companion! (22:12-13)

This is because the end is obvious of the individual who places on sand the foundation of his castle which he has for his protection. These are those ends and consequences toward which attention is drawn through historical evidences:

Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those before them? Allah brought utter destruction on them, and similar end awaits those who reject Allah. That is because Allah is the protector of those who have Eimaan, but those who reject Allah have no protector. (47:10-11)

23.2 The *Kuffar* and Unjust Have No *Wali*

The entities which those who turn their faces away from Allah make as their patrons and masters, protectors and guardians, are themselves dependent for help and support on others. Hence, when the time comes all the veils of deception are lifted and this fact becomes manifest to them, that:

...and the wrong doers will have no protector nor helper. (42:8)

What can be the end of such people other than destruction and annihilation?

Verily Allah has cursed Kafirren and prepared for them a blazing fire, To dwell therein forever: no protector will they find, nor helper. (33:64-65) See also (45:10)

Ultimately, this was the evident failure and ruin towards which the attention of those who spurned *Haqq* was drawn, and they were warned about the consequences of their evil path, that remember:

... Whoever, forsaking Allah, takes Satan for a friend, has of a surety suffered a loss that is manifest. Satan makes them promises and creates in them false desires; but Satan's promises are nothing but deception. (4:119-120)

23.3 *Willayat of Satans*

As has been explained in great detail in my book titled *Iblees O Adam*, by Satan is meant:

- (i) Those emotions of man himself which provoke him to rebel against the obedience of Allah's laws, and furthermore;
- (ii) Those rebellious forces which cause people to obey them instead of the laws of Allah.

The pattern of every force of evil is that they try to appease their hangers-on and close affiliates with toys and keep their expectations of hope alive with false promises. This is why obedience of such forces and trust in their friendship ultimately takes them down into the pit of destruction and ruin. It was this very fact that Abraham had pointed to when he said to his father:

'O my father! serve not Satan: for Satan is a rebel against (Allah) Most Gracious'. 'O my father! I fear lest a penalty afflict you from (Allah) Most Gracious, so that you become to Satan a friend'. (19:44-45)

Association with, and obedience of those who choose to rebel against Allah, takes man into their class. It was against this that the progeny of Adam was warned, but as with gold plating, there is such a glitter and fascination in falsehood and deception, that at the slightest glance diverted away from *Haqq*, man becomes ensnared in the trap of *Batil*:

Behold! We said to the angels, 'Bow down to Adam': They bowed down except Iblees. He was one of the Jinns, and he broke the command of his Rabb. Will you then take him and his progeny as protectors rather than Me? And they are enemies to you! Evil would be the exchange for the wrong doers! (18:50)

The forces of *Iblees* and the disciples of Satan are incessantly busy in the pursuit of suppressing the voice of *Haqq*. This is why they continually secretly advise their followers that wherever they see an invitation to *Haqq* and truth, to initiate opposition to it:

...But the evil ones ever inspire their friends to contend with you... (6:121)

Those people become entrapped in the nets of deception of these satans who are in actuality not on the right path but consider in themselves that they are on the guided path:

Some He has guided: others have (by their choice) deserved the loss of their way; in that they took the evil ones, in preference to Allah, for their friends and protectors, and think that they receive guidance. (7:30)

These satans persist in continuously making the wrong path of life attractive in the eyes of these people, so that they can never come to the right path. The end of such people is obvious:

By Allah, We (also) sent (Our messengers) to peoples before you; but Satan made, (to the wicked), their own acts seem alluring; he is also their patron today, but they shall have a most grievous penalty. (16:63)

These are those people who consider their own wishes and delusional desires to be reality, and considering realities to be nothing but playthings, never reflect seriously on them, and never confine the storm laden tides of their desires within the shores of Allah's commands in order to take the stream of life on to the right course. It is about them that it is stated:

Leave alone those who take their Deen to be mere play and amusement and are deceived by the life of this world. But proclaim (to them) this (truth): that every self delivers itself to ruin by its own acts²⁰²; it will find for itself no protector or intercessor except Allah... (6:70)

Who can save from destruction the one who has withdrawn himself from the protection of Allah?

23.4 Willayat and Obedience

As has been written earlier, the meaning of having *Eimaan* on Allah's *Willayat* is that nothing else should be obeyed other than His laws, no-one else should be declared worthy of obedience. If you are to bow, it is to be only before His commands; if servitude is to be adopted it should only be to this true Patron. This is a glaring aspect of the practical demonstration of *Eimaan* in Allah's *Willayat*. It is stated in Surah *Al-Kahf*:

...with Him is (the knowledge of) the secrets of the heavens and the earth: how clearly He sees, how finely He hears (everything)! They have no protector other than Him; nor does He share His command with any one whatsoever. (18:26)

²⁰² A very important fact is stated here which requires profound reflection. It is a law that fire burns regardless of whether one is aware of its property to burn or not, and whoever puts his finger into it in ignorance of this, will still end up with his finger burnt. Similarly, the Divine Law of Requital is working within us, and whether we are aware of it or not, it impacts on our inner self. (Ed)

His *Willayat* is such in which no-one else's command can operate. In His sovereignty the currency of someone else cannot function. Obedience is purely to Him:

Is it not to Allah that sincere devotion is due? But those who take for protectors other than Allah (say): 'We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah'. Truly Allah will judge between them in that wherein they differ. But Allah guides not such as are false and ungrateful. (39:3)

Obedience can only be of Allah's laws, other than this, obedience of anything else is not legitimate.²⁰³ This is what is known as guidance of Allah, apart from which there is no other guidance which is deserving of being called guidance, no matter in what shape it presents, in what garb it is clothed, in what form it is concealed, and by what name it is called. Rasul-ullah was told:

Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with you unless you follow their form of creed. Say: 'The Guidance of Allah, that is the (only) Guidance'. Were you to follow their desires after the knowledge which has reached you, then would you find neither protector nor helper against Allah. (2:120)

This guidance of Allah is within the Quran and its obedience is the obedience of Allah, and from this the *Willayat* of Allah can be achieved:

Thus, have We revealed it to be a judgment of authority in Arabic. Were you to follow their desires after the knowledge which has reached you, then would you find neither protector nor defender against Allah. (13:37)

In matters of life this code of laws is the true path of guidance, it is what is known as the *Shariat* of Allah, and by the obedience of this Allah becomes the *Wali* of human beings:

Then We put you on the (right) path: so follow you that (Way), and follow not the desires of those who know not. They will be of no use to you in the sight of Allah: it is only wrong-doers (that stand as) protectors, one to another: but Allah is the protector of the righteous. These are clear evidences to men and a guidance and Rehmat to those of assured Eimaan. (45:18-20)

It is stated to those who accept the Quran as a code of life:

²⁰³ The point to consider here is that these laws exist as an external standard and do not require human acceptance in order to function. It is up to each one of us to recognise their existence and then use our free volition to accept or reject them and subsequently live with the consequences of our decision. (Ed)

And Allah gave them a reward in this world, and the excellent reward of the hereafter. For Allah loves those who do good. O you who have Eimaan! If you obey those who do Kufr, they will drive you back on your heels, and you will turn back (from Eimaan) to your own loss. Nay, Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of Helpers. (3:149-150) See also (11:113)

It is only obedience of the Quran which is legitimate, other than this obedience of anything else cannot be called guidance:

Follow (O men!) the revelation given unto you from your Rabb, and follow not, as friends or protectors, other than Him. Little it is you remember of admonition. (7:3)

Whoever, leaving the Quran, begins to follow other doctrines of life, cannot have any share in Allah's *Willayat* and guidance:

...He whom Allah guides is rightly guided; but he whom Allah leaves to stray, for him will you find no protector to lead him to the right path. (18:17) See also (17:97, 42:44)

23.5 Allah's Companions (*Auliya*²⁰⁴ Allah)

Obedience and servitude solely of Allah, i.e. obedience of the Quran and other than this not to consider anyone else worthy of obedience and submission, are the traits of the companions of Allah. The natural consequence of this is that these people cannot have any kind of fear and grief:

Behold! verily on the companions (obedient servants) of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve. (10:62)

This is because:

Those who have Eimaan and (constantly) guard against evil; for them are glad tidings, in the life of the present and in the hereafter; no change can there be in the words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme felicity. (10:63-64)

Turning the abode of the human heart into peace and tranquility is a very great blessing, but not that mirage-like peace and tranquility which is gained through the giving up of desires and the monasticism of shunning contact with the world, rather that peace and tranquility which is the natural consequence of accomplishments in this world and successes of the hereafter. And this is achieved through correct *Eimaan* and deeds:

²⁰⁴ *Auliya* – plural of *Wali* which means companion. (Ed)

In the case of those who say, 'Our Rabb is Allah', and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the cosmic forces (Malaika) descend on them: (these state) 'Fear you not!', 'nor grieve! but receive the glad tidings of the garden (of Bliss), the which you were promised!' We are your protectors in this life and in the Hereafter: therein shall you have all that your self shall desire; therein shall you have all that you ask for! (41:30-31)

Bring this fact once more to mind that this condition of the companions of Allah (obedient men of Allah), that they do not have any kind of fear and grief, is the consequence of obedience of the laws of Allah. Hence, the individual who becomes a follower of the laws of Allah will be included in the category of the companions of Allah (*Auliya Allah*). There is no separate group as such of *Auliya Allah*, no separate *Jamaat*. There are no special signs for their recognition. All Muslims are *Auliya Allah*, provided that they live their life under the obedience of the Quran, and the essential consequence of this obedience is establishment on the earth. Thus, *Auliya Allah* is actually another name for *Millat e Islamia*, the Islamic State, which is responsible for the dissemination and interpretation of the commands of Allah and the implementation of the laws of Allah in the world. Among them there is nothing secret, no concealed knowledge, no hidden way of life. The clear and manifest teaching of the Quran, the clear results of this teaching, the clear objective, and the clear methods to achieve this objective - this is the straight path of the Quran (*Sirat e Mustaqeem*). It is declared that this is the glaring trait of *Auliya Allah* that they will have no kind of fear and grief. At the time of the 'creation of Adam', addressing mankind, it was stated that you will spend your life in such a world where at every step the rebellious forces of transgression and mutual enmity will have spread their nets. Only the one who continues to obey the guidance of Allah will remain protected from this conflict and confrontation. The Quran states:

...and if, as is sure, there comes to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (2:38)

It has been made clear here that the procedure through which to remain protected from fear and grief is that the guidance of Allah be followed. And since it is stated about the *Auliya Allah* that they will not have any kind of fear and grief, it can therefore be deductively known from this that *Auliya Allah* is the name of those who follow the guidance of Allah i.e. all *Momineen* are *Auliya Allah*. This belief or concept which is prevalent among us that there is a special group of '*Auliya Allah*' who are possessors of 'spirituality', is not a Quranic concept. According to the Quran, when the Islamic State establishes its system according to the laws of Allah, then this state is the one which will be called *Auliya Allah* i.e. that nation which,

through obedience of the laws of Allah, will become the companion of Allah in making the creative programme of Allah and the system of *Rabubiyat* universal.

According to the division put forward by the Quran, two distinct groups have emerged in front of us. One is that which obeys the laws of Allah, and other than Him, do not bow down before anyone else. This group is of the *Auliya* Allah. This will be called *Hizb ul Momineen* or *Millat e Islamia*. In opposition to this the other group is that which, instead of obeying *Wabi* and the guidance of Allah, declares as doctrine and procedure the path of life defined by human beings. This group is *Auliya* Satan, the *Jamaat* of deniers. Now it is obvious that between these two groups no kind of relationship of the heart, no reason for any togetherness, no commonality of outlook, no mutual harmony, no compatibility, no understanding will be possible.

23.6 Relations of Friendship with Outsiders

Both have different ideologies, both have a separate *Kaaba* - how can there be compatibility of hearts between them? This is why the former (*Jamaat e Momineen*) are informed in very clear and unambiguous words that:

Let not Momineen take for friends or helpers Kafir rather than Momineen: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah: except by way of precaution, that you may guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (to remember) Himself; for the final goal is to Allah. (3:28)

In Surah *An-Nisa* it is stated:

O you who have Eimaan! Take not for friends Kafir rather than Momineen: Do you wish to offer Allah an open proof against yourselves? (4:144)

This is because, as noted earlier, the *Momineen* are companions and helpers of one another, and the *Kuffar* are friends of one another. Where is the possibility for oneness between Islam and *Kufri*?

Those who have Eimaan, and adopted exile, and fought for Eimaan, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another. As to those who accepted Eimaan but came not into exile, you owe no duty of protection to them until they come into exile; but if they seek your aid in Deen, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance. And (remember) Allah sees all that you do. Those who practice Kufri are protectors of one another: Unless you do this, (protect each other), there would be tumult and oppression on earth, and great mischief. (8:72-73)

It is stated in Surah *At-Tauba*:

The Momineen, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they establish Salat, practice Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise. (9:71)

About the Jews and Christians it is stated:

O you who have Eimaan! take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily Allah guides not a people unjust. (5:51)

Reflect carefully how this reality is unveiled in clear words that whichever group an individual maintains a friendship with, he will be considered to be one of them, because friendship is another name for relationships based on the affinity of hearts. Wherever an individual's heart is, he will be counted there, particularly those people who ridicule your Deen, who view these immutable truths with scorn, criticise and belittle them, even the slightest inclination of the heart towards them is enough to take one towards the pit of hell:

O you who have Eimaan! take not for friends and protectors those who take your Deen for a mockery or sport, whether among those who received the Scripture before you, or among those who are Kuffar; but fear you Allah, if you have Eimaan (indeed). (5:57)

This is because:

Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allah, His Messenger, and the (fellowship of) Momineen, those who establish Salat and organise Zakat, and they bow down before Allah's laws. (5:55)

23.7 Friendship with Hypocrites

In the above lines there is mention of no friendship with those people who openly reject *Eimaan*, who are obviously distinct from the *Jamaat e Momineen* and have a different path of life. But there is also such a group which, despite claiming to have *Eimaan*, is not part of the group of those who have *Eimaan*. Their *Eimaan* never goes further than the level of their throat, they display their connection to the Islamic system for the sake of their vested interests and aims, but in truth their

only interest is their own advantage and objectives. Regarding this masked, cloak and dagger *Jamaat* of hypocrites, it is stated that:

They but wish that you should reject Eimaan, as they do, and thus be on the same footing (as they): But take not friends from their ranks until they migrate in the way of Allah (leaving behind enemies). But if they turn renegades, slay them and fight them wherever you find them; and take no friends or helpers from their ranks. (4:89)

Details of the hypocrites will be given at its own place; here it is essential to state this much that like the *Kuffar*, there is no separate group of hypocrites. This is only a name for a *Jamaat* of those who claim Islam, their Islam is limited to their tongues only, no evidence of this is obtained from their conduct. These people seem to apparently be with us but in their hearts are with others. They are equal partners in the benefits from the system but will never support it in times of difficulty. The search for false power is their way of life and the pursuit of wrong status is their aim; wherever they can get power, no matter how it is obtained, they will grab it without hesitation. It is about them that it is stated:

To the Hypocrites give the glad tidings that there is for them (but) a grievous penalty; Yea, to those who take for friends Kafireen rather than Momineen: is it power they seek among them? Nay, all power is with Allah. (4:138-139)

23.8 Who Are Our 'Own'

And let us proceed and see how the Quran wishes to keep an obvious demarcation and very clear difference between *Kufr* and *Eimaan*. In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated:

O you who have Eimaan! take not for protectors your fathers and your brothers if they love infidelity above Eimaan: if any of you do so, they do wrong. Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline: or the dwellings in which you delight - are dearer to you than Allah, and His Messenger, and the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His decision (as per law): and Allah guides not (as per His law) the rebellious. (9:23-24)

The one who is an enemy of the system of Allah is an ill-wisher of that *Jamaat* which rises for the establishment of this system, what relationship can they have with those who exist for this supreme aim and die for its sake. The relationship of friendship can never exist between these two:

O you who have Eimaan! Take not my enemies and yours as friends (or protectors), offering them (your) love, even though they have rejected the Truth that has come to you, and have (on the contrary) driven out the Messenger and yourselves (from your

homes), (simply) because you have Eimaan in Allah your Rabb! If you have come out to strive in My Way and to seek My good pleasure, (take them not as friends), holding secret converse of love (and friendship) with them: for I know full well all that you conceal and all that you reveal. And any of you that does this has strayed from the straight path. (60:1)

A couple of verses after this verse it is stated that in this matter the pattern of life of the first leader Abraham and his companions is the best model for you 'when they told their people that we are disgusted with you, and from all of those whom you obey after having rejected Allah'. The Quran states:

There is for you an excellent model to follow in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people: 'We are clear of you and of whatever you follow besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred for ever, unless you have Eimaan in Allah and Him alone... (60:4)

The reality is that Islam establishes the criteria for relations, affection, unity and love differently from the rest of the world. Those who, after accepting *Eimaan* in Allah and His messenger, live their life according to His code of laws, are all members of one brotherhood and members of one nation; and those who are outwith this system are members of another *Jamaat*, no matter if they are the closest of relations or the dearest of friends. The relation of father and son (Noah and his son), the relation of son and father (Abraham and his father), the relation of husband and wife (Lot and his wife), all relations of near and dear ones (Rasulullah and the Quraysh tribe, Bani Hashem), all break up if the connection of Islam is not shared among them. And those who become associated in this connection become members of one brotherhood, even if previously no kind of reason for commonality is shared according to worldly standards, such as race, language, nationality, tribalism and relatives. This is because the foundation for their mutual association and companionship is based on this supreme truth that they all have one *Wali* and *Maula*. About the Jews it is stated:

If only they had Eimaan in Allah, in Nabi, and in what has been revealed to him, never would they have taken them for friends and protectors, but most of them are rebellious wrong-doers. (5:81)

This is because, after accepting *Eimaan*, these people would have become members of a new community, they would have accepted Allah as their *Wali* and *Maula*, and then there would have been no relationship left with the *Kuffar* because the *Wali* and *Maula* of *Kuffar* are satans:

... We made the evil ones friends (only) to those without Eimaan. (7:27)

The difference between a *Momin* and a *Kafir* is indeed this - that a *Momin* only accepts the sovereignty of Allah, only adopts obedience and submission to Him. But a *Kafir* lives his life under the system devised by men; rejecting Allah, he obeys men and thus by accepting them as masters, he places his trust in their supremacy and companionship. What can be the consequence of this other than hell:

Do those who do Kufr think that they can take My servants as protectors besides Me? Verily We have prepared hell for Kafireen for (their) entertainment. (18:102)

These same people have also been called wrong doers because they do not maintain companionship (*Willayat*) and obedience at their correct place. They all become members of one brotherhood no matter what name it may have, and in opposition to *Haqq* they are companions of one another, regardless of how numerous their mutual individual differences may be:

...it is only wrong-doers (that stand as) protectors, one to another: but Allah is the protector of the righteous. (45:19)

23.9 Opportunities for *Willayat* of Allah

When there are these two categories whose aims of life are mutually exclusive and whose paths of life are mutually opposing, then it is obvious that conflict and confrontation between them is inevitable. The forces of *Batil* will always remain engaged in this pursuit that the voice of *Haqq* is never able to be raised, and for this they will use every tyrannical tactic of theirs. This is that point where the *Willayat* of Allah becomes a shield for the *Jamaat* supporting the protection of *Haqq*. In the early life of the Muslims when they were given permission to engage in battle, it was stated:

And why should you not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? Men, women, and children, whose cry is: 'Our Rabb! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect; and raise for us from You one who will help!' (4:75)

Hence, on one side the supplications of the oppressed and indigent arose fervently from their hearts, and on the other side the *Willayat* of Allah sprang forth in the shape of the armies and soldiers of the *Auliya* Allah (companions of Allah). The command was issued:

Those who have Eimaan fight in the cause of Allah, and those who do Kufr fight in the cause of evil: so fight you against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan. (4:76)

In other words, rebellious forces will appear to be fearsome and menacing, but really will be very weak and unstable because their trust is completely dependent on the *Willayat* (i.e. companionship, support, protection, friendship, obedience and supervision) of *Batil* and deception; and the trust of the *Jamaat e Momineen* is on the *Willayat* of Allah. Hence, the *Jamaat* whose *Wali* (planner, guardian, protector and watcher) is stronger is the one which will ultimately be successful and prosperous. Allah states:

O Nabi! strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them. Their abode is hell, an evil refuge indeed. They swear by Allah that they said nothing (evil), but indeed they uttered blasphemy, and they did it after accepting Islam; and they meditated a plot which they were unable to carry out: this revenge of theirs was (their) only return for the bounty with which Allah and His Messenger had enriched them! If they repent, it will be best for them; but if they turn back (to their evil ways), Allah will punish them with a grievous penalty in this life and in the hereafter: They shall have none on earth to protect or help them. (9:73-74)

It was said to these *Kuffar* and hypocrites i.e. the ones who were rebellious and shunned *Haqq*, on what false pretences are you so arrogant? You cannot escape from the grasp of the Law of Requit, no helper and guardian can make you free from the grip of this law:

Not on earth nor in heaven will you be able (fleeing) to frustrate (His Plan), nor have you, besides Allah, any protector and helper. (29:22) See also (11:20, 42:31)

The grip of the Divine law is not such that you can obstruct it in any way whatsoever or find any such protector and guardian in opposition to it who can save you from the consequences of your deeds. There is only one way to do this, that you should acknowledge His invitation and obey His laws, and in this way come under the shadow of His protection. Then you will not have any kind of fear and grief. If you will not accept His invitation, then no-one can be your helper:

If any does not hearken to the one who invites (us) to Allah, he cannot frustrate (Allah's Plan) on earth, and no protectors can he have besides Allah: such men (wander) in manifest error. (46:32)

23.10 The Immutable Law of Nature

And this is not some new thing or a chance *Amr* (event) that the righteous will reap success and victory in their opposition to the *Kuffar*, rather it is one law from among the absolute laws of nature, and one rule from its unable to be changed immutable rules. Just as it is an immutable law of nature that with the arrival of light darkness can no longer remain, similarly this is also an immutable law that

Batil in opposition to *Haqq*, the *Kuffar* in opposition to the *Momineen* - these can never succeed:

If those who do Kufr should fight you, they would certainly turn their backs; then would they find neither protector nor helper. (Such has been) the practice (approved) of Allah already in the past: no change will you find in the practice (approved) of Allah. (48:22-23)

Hence, there is no reason to be afraid or fearful of these people:

And strive in His cause as you ought to strive. He has chosen you and has imposed no difficulties on you in Deen; it is the way of your father Abraham. It is He Who has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation); that the Messenger may be a witness for you, and you be witnesses for mankind! So, establish Salat, establish Zakat and hold fast to Allah! He is your protector - the best to protect and the best to help. (22:78)

In Surah *Al-Anfal* it is stated:

And fight them on until there is no more tumult and oppression, and there completely prevail Deen of Allah and everywhere; but if they cease, verily Allah does see all that they do. If they refuse, be sure that Allah is your protector - the best to protect and the best to help. (8:39-40)

When the reality is such, then loss of courage by the righteous in the battle between *Haqq* and *Batil* will be an indication of this *Amr* that they lost sight of this immutable law of Allah (even if momentarily). Hence, in the battle of *Uhad* when two groups showed signs of slight weakness, then it was stated regarding this:

Remember two of your parties meditated cowardice; but Allah was their protector, and in Allah should the Momineen put their trust. (3:122)

The Pharaonic forces of *Batil* provoke such qualms so that fear of their power entrenches in the hearts of the righteous but those who have full trust in the *Willayat* of Allah have nothing to fear:

It is only the evil one that suggests to you the fear of his votaries: be you not be afraid of them, but fear Me, if you are Momineen. (3:175)

23.11 Recognising Allah's *Wali*

The shining attribute of a *Momin* is that he should not fear any power which is other than Allah and should enter the arena fully prepared to oppose *Batil*. For

him, death is a sport. The one who fears death is the one who considers life to be only the life of this world. For the one for whom the process of life also continues after death, in fact life traverses its further evolutionary stages in that phase, what reason can there be to fear death. His state is such that *'as death arrives, a smile appears on his lips'*. This is why it is stated:

Say: 'O you that stand on Judaism! If you think that you are friends to Allah, to the exclusion of (other) men, then express your desire for death, if you are truthful!' But never will they express their desire (for death), because of the (deeds) their hands have sent on before them; and Allah knows well those that do wrong. (62:6-7)

This is because they are aware that no matter how many claims they might make with their tongues, there will be no helper and protector other than Allah at the time of the manifestation of results. (6:51, 42:46). At that point the *Maula* of the *Kuffar* will be hell (57:15), and no friend (*Maula*) will be of any use to any other friend (*Maula*) (44:41). Regarding those people who make others their *Maula* and patron other than Allah, Allah is overseeing their deeds (42:6). There, each and every atom of good and evil will become manifest.

A *Momin* has this *Eimaan* that his *Wali* (guardian and caretaker) is Allah. This is the correct relationship between a human being and Allah. Hence, Rasul-ullah was informed:

...Allah is your Protector...(66:2)

And the *Momineen* are taught these supplications, that:

... You are our protector; help us in victory against those who are Kafir. (2:286)

23.12 Whose *Wali* Does Allah Become

But the question is, how can this *Willayat* of Allah be attained? Whose *Wali* does Allah become and how? Regarding this, the Quran has informed us in absolutely clear terms that, remember, the people who are successful are:

...He will be their friend, because of their deeds. (6:127)

Allah becomes a *Wali* as a consequence of deeds; His *Willayat* is only for the righteous:

For my protector is Allah, Who revealed the Book, and He will choose and befriend the righteous'. (7:196)

There is one and only one way to make Allah one's *Wali*, and to be His *Wali*, and that is that righteous deeds should be according to His revealed Book; other than this there is no other suitable means. The mere wishes and desires of someone will not bear results. It is a clear decision of Allah that:

Not your desires, nor those of the people of the Book (can prevail): whoever works evil, will be requited accordingly. Nor will he find, besides Allah, any protector or helper. (4:123) See also (4:173)

The human self develops through the obedience of the laws of Allah (which are preserved in the Quran), which means that man continues to become a reflection of the Divine attributes (within human limits). In this way, Allah becomes the *Wali* of man and man becomes the *Wali* of Allah, and this is the correct relationship between man and Allah.

The Ummah which takes shape by the coming together of these kinds of individuals is called the *Jamaat* of *Auliya* Allah. Whatever it becomes the protector and guardian of in this world, that then becomes secure and protected from all kinds of danger. This protection and security is an essential consequence of this Divine system which is shaped through the hands of the *Jamaat e Momineen*.

24 *Durr e Manthoor*²⁰⁵

24.1 Miscellaneous Attributes of Allah

Other than the attributes of Allah which have been mentioned in the previous pages, there are many other attributes which have also been noted in the Quran. If all of these attributes were to be explained in detail, then there would be a requirement for many volumes for this. Hence, we will confine ourselves to only a brief summary of the remaining attributes. If you study the Quran in the light of these brief introductions, then the details will become apparent to you yourselves. If you wish to understand their wider meanings, then refer to my work titled *Lughat-ul-Quran* for this.

24.2 *Al-Hakeem* (The Wise)

The reins of a horse are called *Al-Hakamah*. The task of a rein is to not allow the animal to become out of control and unruly, but to make it go at the correct speed on the right path. Hence, *Al-Hikmah* means to retain matters within the correct boundaries and to not allow any among them to go here and there. That person is called *Hakeem-un* who, with correct proportion and balance, keeping its every requirement in view, makes everything with great beauty and precision, in fact, accomplishes all matters in this way. In the light of these connotations, this reality will become clear that when Allah is called *Al-Hakeem*, what the meaning of this will be. Since this Divine attribute is very fundamental and important, it is therefore mentioned in the Quran at many places e.g. *Hakeem-in-Khabeer* (11:1), *Hakeem-un-Aleemun* (6:139) etc.

From this it is evident how every matter will be based on wisdom in a society which consists of those individuals whose self is a holder of the Divine attributes.

24.3 *Al-Haleem* (The Forbearing)

The person whose nerves are weak becomes provoked at the slightest thing; his emotions are inflamed by the most minor of criticisms. Contrary to this, in the individual whose energy is developed there is calm in his temperament, his nerves and limbs are strong, he is rightly trained, he is mature, stable, reflective and serious. He does not become provoked by every small issue, pays serious attention to matters, reaches decisions with pragmatism and care, and then stands firmly resolved on this decision. Such an individual is called *Haleem-un*. The meaning of

²⁰⁵ *Durr e Manthoor* – literally ‘scattered pearls’. These are some Divine attributes which the author has grouped together in this chapter. (Ed)

Allah as *Haleem-un* is that His Law of Requitel does not become ‘inflamed’, rather it takes deeds towards their results according to rules and laws. And if, during this period, reformation is carried out in these deeds, then it provides a means of protection from their ill effects. See how the Quran has expressed this fact, in Surah *Al-Baqra* it is stated:

Allah will not call you to account for thoughtlessness in your oaths, but for the intention in your hearts; and He is all Protecting, Most Forbearing. (2:225) See also (2:235)

In the battle of *Uhad*, a small blunder was made by some of the Mujahideen, as a result of which victory turned into a temporary setback. In relation to this event it is stated:

Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met, it was Satan who caused them to fail, because of some mistake they had done. But Allah Has blotted out (their fault): For Allah is Protecting, Haleem (Most Forbearing). (3:155)

In order to understand the Quranic meaning of *Haleem*, these two verses are sufficient in themselves. Apart from these verses, this word has also been used at some seven or eight other places e.g. (2:263, 4:12, 5:101, 17:44, 22:59, 33:51, 35:41, 64:17).

24.3 *Al-Ghafoor, Al-Ghaffar, Al-Afuwwo*²⁰⁶

When there is an outbreak of an epidemic disease in some place, most of the population usually becomes its victim, but despite this some people remain protected from this attack. These are the people in whom there is a greater immunity. This strength of theirs keeps individuals protected by countering the harmful effects of the disease. This is called *Maghfirat*.²⁰⁷ According to Allah’s Law of Requitel every deed establishes its own effect. If the weight of the deeds producing constructive effects of some individual or nation are greater, then it remains protected against the destructive effects of these deeds (harmful effects), which are made by it in error or omission. This is called the attribute of *Ghaffari* and *Ghafuri* (2:281). This attribute has also been mentioned at numerous places. *Affwan Ghafur-un* (22:60) is also mentioned at a few places i.e. the One Who instead of taking notice, moves forward (the One Who overlooks) – the meaning of this is the same as that of *Maghfirat*. The meaning of *Maghfirat* is not that of ‘forgiveness’ merely for the sake of it.

²⁰⁶ All these terms are related to providing protection (Ed)

²⁰⁷ *Maghfirat* – this is covered in detail in Chapter 6 of the author’s book titled *The Life in the Hereafter: What does the Quran say?* (Ed)

24.4 *At-Tawwab* (Returning)

You may be travelling somewhere and on the way you take a wrong turn at a crossroads. After travelling some distance, you come to realise (or someone else informs you) that you have gone in the wrong direction. From here, in order to go in the correct direction, it is necessary that you come back to that same place from where you had stepped in the wrong direction. This kind of ‘return’ is called *Tauba*. We have seen that, according to Allah’s Law of Requit, there is an interval between a deed and the manifestation of its result. If during this period, man abandons this wrong path and adopts the right path, and then does such righteous deeds as a consequence of which protection is obtained from the harmful effects of the previous error, then that individual is saved from destruction and ruin. This Divine attribute is called *Tammabiyat*:

...For He is Oft-Returning. (110:3)

Man is *At-Ta’eb* (the one who returns) and Allah is *At-Tawwabo* (the One Who returns to this man swiftly).

24.5 *Rauf-un*²⁰⁸

The words *Rehmat* and *Raft* are almost synonymous with this difference that the word *Rehmat* means to bestow means of nourishment, and the meaning of *Raft* is to remove those impediments which are obstructing the path of an individual’s development. This is the reason why the attributes of *Rauf-un* and *Raheem* are generally mentioned in the Quran together:

Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, and that Allah is full of kindness and mercy, (you would be ruined indeed). (24:20)

In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated:

...but He turned to them (also): for He is unto them Rauf-un, Raheem. (9:117) See also (2:143, 16:7, 16:47, 22:65; 57:9, 59:10)

At one place in Surah *At-Tauba* one attribute of Rasul-ullah is also cited as *Rauf-un Raheem-un* (9:128). This will be the same state of those followers of Rasul-ullah in whose self the Divine attributes are reflected.

24.6 *Al-Wadud* (Love and Mercy)

²⁰⁸ *Rauf-un* - to eliminate impediments from the path of nourishment. (Ed)

Mo'addat and *Rehmat* are also two branches of the same tree. In Surah *Ar-Rum* it is stated:

And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are signs for those who reflect. (30:21)

This is why in one place in the Quran *Wadud* appears alongside *Rabeem*, and with *Ghafur* at another place. The messenger Shoaib stated to his people:

But ask protection of your Rabb and turn unto Him: for my Rabb is indeed full of Mercy and Loving-Kindness. (11:90)

In Surah *Al-Buruj*, after mentioning reward and punishment, it is stated:

And He is all Protecting, full of Loving-Kindness. (85:14)

It should be made clear that the blessings of the rain bearing clouds of Allah's *Rehmat*, *Maghfirat*, love etc. are according to His special laws, and in order to benefit from these blessings, we have to make ourselves deserving of them. How will that land which is barren benefit from this? Regarding Allah's love it is stated:

O you who have Eimaan! if any from among you turn back from his Eimaan, soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, lowly with Momineen, mighty against Kuffar, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault. That is the grace of Allah, which He will bestow on whom as per His Mashe'at (law). And Allah encompasses all, and He knows all things. (5:54)

These are the conditions for Allah's love and *Mo'addat*, by fulfilling which we can make ourselves worthy of them!

24.7 *Al-Kareem (Eminent)*

Among the Arabs, the word *Kareem* had wide ranging meanings. You can understand it as follows, that they would use the term *Al-Kareem* for the one about whom they wished to assert that he encompasses all the lofty traits and pleasant attributes of humanity. The possessor of all kinds of status and respect, deserving of all types of dignity and admiration, holder of boundless generosity, large-heartedness and philanthropy, kindness and compassion - a developed self is a mirror image of all of these balanced attributes. From this it is evident what its aim and meaning will be when this word is used for Allah. In Surah *An-Naml* it is stated:

... And if any is grateful, truly his gratitude is for his own self; but if any is ungrateful, truly my Rabb is free of all needs, Supreme in Honour! (27:40)

This means that He is not in need of anyone's *Shukr* (gratitude) nor can the *Kufr* of anyone do any harm to Him, rather His *Fadl* and blessings will rain down upon the one who displays *Shukr* (gratitude). In Surah *Al-Infitar* it is stated:

O man! What has seduced you from your Rabb Al-Kareem? Him Who created you. Fashioned (passing through various stages) you in due proportion and provided you with a just balance. (82:6-7)

In other words, the creation of man and then his balanced status is all due to the *Fadl* and *Karam* of Allah. Here, Allah is called *Kareem* but at another place He is called *Akram*:

Proclaim! And your Rabb is Akram (Most Bountiful), He Who taught (the writing knowledge through) the pen, taught man all that which he knew not. (96:3-5)

At the time of the creation and balancing of man, He is *Rabb-e-Kareem*; and at the time of the education of man He is *Rabb-e-Akram*. The distinction between *Kareem* and *Akram* is the same as that between creation and education. Creation and balancing are also due to His *Karam*, as well as education. But compared to creation, education is a greater *Karam*. That is why the word *Akram* (Bestower of extremely great *Karam*) has been used for this.

24.8 *Al-Burro* (Infinitely Righteous)

The meaning of *Al-Burro* is Master of boundless expanses, Creator of vastness in the path of life. This attribute has also appeared alongside *Raheem*. It is stated about the inhabitants of paradise that they will say:

But Allah has been good to us and has delivered us from the penalty of the scorching wind. Truly, we did call unto Him from of old: truly it is He, Al-Burro, Al-Raheem! (52:27-28)

24.9 *Al-Hafeez*²⁰⁹, *Ar-Raqeeb*²¹⁰, *Al-Mohaiman*²¹¹, *Al-Hayyu*²¹², *Al-Qayyum*²¹³, *Al-Muqeeet*²¹⁴

When Allah is the Creator, Sustainer and Nourisher of the whole of the universe; He possesses knowledge of everything, is the Knower and the Aware, then it is obvious that He is also the custodian of everything:

...and your Rabb does watch over all things. (34:21) See also (11:57)

In another verse it is stated:

...and Allah does watch over all things. (33:52) See also (4:1)

When the sons of Yaqub (Jacob) requested their father to send the younger brother of Yusuf along with them, promising to protect him, Jacob responded, what protection can you offer:

...But Allah is the best to take care (of him) ... (12:64)

During the reign of Solomon, it is stated about the 'Jinns' who used to be busy in carrying out tasks:

... and it was We Who guarded them. (21:82)

In Surah *Al-Hashr* the term *Al-Mohaiman* also appears with the same meanings (59:23). In Surah *Al-Baqra* it is stated that the supervision and protection of the universe does not weary Allah, because neither is sleep for His eyes nor dozing for His mind. He is Alive in such a way that for His Life there is no end or decline. Everything is established according to His command and He is not dependent on anyone for His existence:

Allah! There is no god but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep... and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them... (2:255) See also (3:1, 20:111, 40:65)

He is Guardian over everything:

²⁰⁹ *Al-Hafeez* – the Protector

²¹⁰ *Ar-Raqeeb* – the Guardian

²¹¹ *Al-Mohaiman* – the Custodian

²¹² *Al-Hayyu* – the Living One and the Giver of Life

²¹³ *Al-Qayyum* – the Established One

²¹⁴ *Al-Muqeeet* – the Caretaker

...And Allah has power over all things. (4:85)

Al-Hayyu is a supreme attribute of Allah. The most important thing in the universe is life, not only is it important, but is spellbinding for the intellects as well. This is because (as noted under the subject of 'Life and Death') human research has not yet been able to determine the answer to this secret as to what the origin of life is. The Quran has stated that Allah's Self is *Al-Hayyu* i.e. He is alive in Himself and is the Bestower of life on others. It is obvious that when this attribute becomes reflected in the human self, what its own state will become, and how beneficial its outcomes will be. Its own state will be such that it will not be able to die even with death, it will become the possessor of immortal life, and the state of its attributes will be such that it will provide the means of nourishment of life to others. And that society which will consist of such individuals, and the system which will take shape through their hands, will contain the means of sustenance of life in abundance for every single individual of humanity - not only for physical life, but for human life also i.e it will contain the means of nourishment for the development of the selfs of all individuals.

24.10 *Awwal O Aakhir* (The First and The Last)

Allah is above and beyond the limits of time and space. When there was nothing, He was present. When there will be nothing, He will be present:

He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent ... (57:3)

He is present and a witness everywhere:

...for Allah is witness of all things. (22:17)

These are those attributes which specifically belong to the Self of Allah and no-one else can be associated in them.

24.11 *Qareeb-un* (Nearness)

When He is present everywhere then it is also erroneous to think that He is residing at some specific place. Allah states:

When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the supplication of every suppliant when he calls on Me... (2:186)

In Surah *Hud* it is stated:

...certainly, for my Rabb is near, ready to answer (supplication). (11:61)

In Surah *Al-Saba* it is stated:

... it is He Who hears all things and is near. (34:50)

Even closer than the jugular vein:

...for We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (50:16) See also (56:85)

We cannot comprehend anything about how Allah's Being is present everywhere and is closer to us than our jugular vein.²¹⁵ But as has been already noted, our relationship with Allah is linked via His laws. Hence, we should recognise that His Law of Requitil is all-encompassing in such a way that wherever we are and in whatever state we may be, we cannot hide from the eyes of His law; even the fleeting thoughts passing through our heart and the stealthy glances of our eyes cannot remain outwith the domain of its grasp. In other words, our every deed, thought and intention will of a surety establish its effect according to Allah's law.

This will be the state of that society which becomes shaped according to the Divine laws. In it, too, every deed will of a surety manifest its effect; neither anyone's hard work will go wasted, nor will a criminal be able to escape the consequences of his deed.

24.12 *Al-Lateef* (The Intangible)

But despite being so close, so *Lateef* that He cannot be seen:

No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension yet is acquainted with all things. (6:103) See also (22:63, 31:16, 33:34, 67:14,)

Lateef also means the dispenser of kindness:

Gracious is Allah to His servants... (42:19)

Allah deals with His servants (in providing guidance) compassionately. In another verse it is stated:

*... Verily my Rabb does treat with leniency according to His Mashe'at (law)
...(12:100)*

²¹⁵ The concept of Allah given in the Quran points to the fact that He has to be everywhere to create the universe, to be able to add to His creation on a continual basis, to cause it to function according to His laws and for the effective functioning of the Law of Requitil. (45:22). (Ed)

24.13 *Ash-Shaheed* (Present and Watchful)

So *Lateef* that He is not visible to the eyes, but so near that He is present and watching everywhere, and is a witness to all things:

...for Allah is witness to all things. (58:6) See also (4:33, 5:117, 22:17, 33:55, 34:47)

No matter how secret a deed may apparently seem, it cannot hide from Allah's knowledge because He is a witness to every deed:

...when Allah is Himself witness to all you do? (3:98) See also (11:46)

When some such matter is presented for which no witness can be found, Allah is a witness to that too. After mentioning the decision in a case involving Dawood and Solomon, it is stated:

... We did witness their judgment. (21:78)

And We were a witness on their decision, and not only a witness to this one verdict, wherever there is *Haqq*, Allah is a witness to it. Just reflect! when a messenger comes and proclaims that whatever I say is not from myself, but this is a message which has been revealed for you from your Allah, obviously this is a very great proclamation, and for the verification of its truth there is a need for a very great witness. Who is this witness? The Quran states:

But Allah bears witness that what He has sent unto you He has sent from His own knowledge, and Malaika bear witness: But enough is Allah for a witness. (4:166) See also (3:18)

Witnessing the messenger-hood of Rasul-ullah:

...and We have sent you as a messenger to mankind. And enough is Allah for a witness. (4:79)

Such a messenger whose message of guidance and righteousness is going to overpower every constitution and way of life in the world:

It is He Who has sent His messenger with guidance and Deen of Haqq, to proclaim it over all Deen (man-made systems): and enough is Allah for a witness. (48:28)

Let us examine the various links of the process of guidance and righteousness. The first pronouncement of the proclaimer of *Haqq* appears to be that of an apparently helpless and isolated individual. People falsify it due to mischief and enmity and in this way a battle commences between *Haqq* and *Batil*. All the apparently visible means of support seem to be with the forces of *Batil*, and *Haqq* is envisioned as being in a state of helplessness and powerlessness. At this juncture, no-one who is merely looking at worldly means and causes will forecast that *Haqq* will emerge victorious from this battle. But there is also such a witness present who makes an unequivocal proclamation that ultimately the victory will be of *Haqq*, and then the results will show what a supreme truth this evidence was based on. The Quran states:

Say: 'What thing is most weighty in evidence?' Say: 'Allah is witness between me and you; This Quran has been revealed to me by inspiration, that I may warn you and all whom it reaches. Can you possibly bear witness that besides Allah there is another god?' Say: 'Nay! I cannot bear witness!' Say: 'But in truth He is the one Allah, and I truly am innocent of (your blasphemy of) joining others with Him. (6:19) See also (10:29, 17:96, 29:52, 46:8)

The meaning of Allah being a witness in these matters means that when reflection and reasoning is applied to the Quran in the light of knowledge and vision, then it will become a witness itself of being from Allah. And when you will reason and reflect on the system of the universe, from there, too, this fact will become evident to you how resolutely the laws of Allah remain in operation, and how constructive their results are; this will be the evidence of the *Malaika*.²¹⁶ Similarly, when the results of the Quranic system will manifest themselves, from them too, evidence of the Quran being *Haqq* will become available. Moving on from this, the life of a *Momin* and the conduct of the *Jamaat e Momineen* will itself be an evidence of this fact that these people are flagbearers of *Haqq*. The fact is that every developed self is a witness of *Haqq*.

24.14 *Al-Haseeb* (The Reckoner)

When He is a witness on every deed, then it is apparent that He is also the One keeping account of all deeds and actions. Not a single atom can be outwith the sphere of His Law of Requit. In front of His knowledge both the hidden and the manifest are the same, therefore no deed can venture outwith the limits of accountability:

...whether you show what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah calls you to account for it ... (2:284) See also (15:92-93)

²¹⁶ The Quran has called the forces of nature *Malaika*. For further details see the book by the author titled *Ibles O Adam*.

And He does not need any helper or companion for this, He is sufficient in Himself to take account:

... *But all-sufficient is Allah in taking account. (4:6) See also (4:86, 33:39)*

Every single atom comes within the grip of accountability:

We shall set up scales of justice for the day of judgment (the day of manifestation of consequences), so that not a self will be dealt with unjustly in the least, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account. (21:47)

And this 'accountability' will not only be on the 'Day of Judgment', rather this process begins right here. According to His Law of Requit and law of respite, some results have a delayed appearance and others a more rapid one, but accountability commences immediately in any case. This means that the effect of every deed begins to establish itself along with the time that it is committed; the fact that its tangible and visible result becomes apparent to us following an interval of time is another matter. Regarding this, it is stated that:

... *He is swift in calling to account. (13:41)*

Hence, it is stated regarding the consequences of denial and defiance against which the *Kuffar* of Makkah used to be warned:

Whether We shall show you (within your life-time) part of what we promised them or take to Ourselves your self (before it is all accomplished), your duty is to make (the message) reach them: it is our part to call them to account. (13:40) See also (24:39, 40:17)

His accountability is very strict and the outcome of His accountability is extremely well executed:

How many populations that insolently opposed the command of their Rabb and of His messengers, did We not then call to account - to severe account? and We imposed on them (as a consequence of their deeds) an exemplary punishment. (65:8)

Details about how this accountability takes place, and how these results manifest will be covered in some future volumes.²¹⁷ Here, it is sufficient to say that these things do not come from somewhere outside, rather this accountability continually imprints within the human self itself, though it all takes place according to Allah's Law of Requit:

²¹⁷ See 'The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran Say?' (Ed)

Every man's fate We have fastened around his own neck: on the day of judgment We shall bring out for him a scroll, which he will see spread open. (It will be said to him:) 'Read your (own) record: sufficient is your self this day to make out an account against you'. (17:13-14)

This has also been stated in different words as: the responsibility for the accountability of every individual resides with Allah:

For to Us will be their return; then it will be for Us to call them to account. (88:25-26)

When the formation of a human society is through the hands of those individuals whose selfs reflect the attributes of Allah, then accountability for the deeds of every individual continually takes place in it; neither the good deed of anyone remains without a recompense, nor can any crime hide. In this, no-one is let off the hook, nor is any injustice done to anyone - the scales of justice are present and the deeds of the life of the people.

24.15 *Ash-Shakir, Ash-Shakoor*

The fundamental meaning of *Shukr* is the fullest results of deeds. Therefore, *Ash-Shakir* and *Ash-Shakoor* mean the Provider of the fullest recompense for human deeds:

What can Allah gain by your punishment, if you are grateful and you have Eimaan? Nay, it is Allah that recognises (all good), and knows all things. (4:147) See also (2:158)

He is such an appreciator of good that whatever you spend in the path of Allah (for the establishment of the Divine system), He gives recompense for it far beyond its worth:

If you loan to Allah, a balanced loan, He will double it to your (credit), and He will grant you protection: for Allah is most ready to appreciate (service), Most Forbearing. (64:17)

In Surah *Fatir* it is stated that those people who establish the system of *Salat* and organise *Zakat* in obedience of the Book of Allah invest their possessions in such a commerce in which there can never be any loss. Allah has set up this type of commerce for this very purpose:

For He will pay them their meed, nay, He will give them (even) more out of His Bounty: for He surely provides means of protection, most ready to recompense for deeds. (35:30)

When these people enter paradise their proclamation there will be nothing but this:

And they will say: 'Hamd to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) sorrow: for our Rabb is indeed All Protecting ready to appreciate deeds'. (35:34)

24.16 *As-Salaam, Al-Momin*

The Quran has described the ultimate successes of human life with one comprehensive word and that word is *Salaam*. Just consider! what is the aim of all human endeavours and the meaning of all human struggles and challenges other than that he should attain security, a life of peace and tranquility, a life of contentment and security. That life in which there is no fear and grief, no kind of sadness or sorrow; in which there is complete serenity and calmness, but not that deceptive peace which is achieved by the extinguishing of wishes and the giving up of desires; rather, that tranquility of heart which is attained after harnessing the universal forces and utilising the outcome according to the Divine values. This is because *As-Salaam, Al-Momin* are also Allah's attributes (the Bestower of peace and security):

...the Source of Peace, the Guardian of Eimaan ... (59:23)

It should be clarified that the meaning of *Salaam*, other than that of peace and security, is also to make something complete (*Musallam*). The Self of Allah is the most complete. The self of the individual who obeys His laws also becomes complete. This is that *Salaam* (to become complete) towards which the system of Allah invites us:

But Allah does invite to the home of peace: He does guide (whosoever wishes) as per His Law of Mashe'at to a way that is straight. (10:25)

Allah extends an invitation to the abode of peace through the Quran:

... There has come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book. Wherewith Allah guides all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leads them out of darkness, by His will (as per law), unto the light, guides them to a path that is straight. (5:15-16)

This is because the abode of security with Allah is for those who acquire *Eimaan* on His perspicuous Book and tread on the straight path:

This is the way of your Rabb, leading straight: We have detailed the signs for those who receive admonition. For them will be a home of peace in the presence of their Rabb: He will be their friend, because of what they practiced (righteousness). (6:126-127)

This is that righteous path in which there is security for those who tread on it:

...and peace and security to all who follow guidance! (20:47)

And Allah's guidance is now nowhere other than in the Quran, therefore it is proclaimed about that blessed night²¹⁸ in which the revelation of the message of security and peace commenced:

Peace and security in all matters (in this blessed night), this until the rise of morning!²¹⁹ (97:5)

The Quran is the centre for the education of the mind and heart for Muslims, hence it is a source of peace and security from the beginning to the end. The political centre of the Islamic nation is the *Kaaba*²²⁰ therefore it is also the holder of peace and tranquility:

...whoever enters (its confines) it attains security... (3:97)

Reflect how dire the need is for the world to have such a piece of land which no tyrant's evil hands have the power to reach; where man, having once arrived, can breathe in a completely free and dynamic environment; where there is no kind of fear and grief; where everything he possesses is safe and protected. This centre of peace and refuge is the *Kaaba* because it is the centre of Allah's Rule in the world, and it is obvious that the domain of the centre of that system which is the source of peace and security will automatically be as the inherent provider of peace and tranquility.

²¹⁸ Or in the era of darkness.

²¹⁹ The dark era of ignorance (the night) in which the light of the Quran descended to guide man to the light of the dawn. This is metaphorical and does not refer to a specific 'night'. (Ed)

²²⁰ The Quran uses the word '*Bakka*' to imply an abode of security (3:95). The *Kaaba* was the first such abode. (Ed)

24.16.1 Glad Tidings of Peace to Righteous People

The *Anbiya*, whose beings were the cause for Divine favours, were blessed with glad tidings of peace and security. It is stated about Noah and his followers:

The word came: O Noah! Come down (from the Ark) with peace from Us, and blessing on you and also on peoples who are in your company ... (11:48) See also (37:79)

It is stated about Abraham:

Peace and salutation to Abraham! (37:109)

About Moses and Aaron it is stated:

Peace and salutation to Moses and Aaron! (37:120)

Similarly, about the messenger Ilyas it is stated:

Peace and salutation to such as Elias! (37:130)

About Yahya it is proclaimed:

So peace is on him the day he was born, the day that he died, and the day that he shall be raised up to life! (19:15)

Similarly, it is stated about Jesus:

So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life! (19:33)

It is stated about all the messengers:

And Peace and security on the messengers! (37:181)

About all the righteous people it is proclaimed:

Say: Hamd be to Allah, and peace and security on his servants whom He has chosen. (Who) is better? Allah or the false gods they associate (with Him)? (27:59)

All these people are those in whose self is the reflection of the attributes of Allah, hence, for them there is peace and security.

24.16.2 Peace and Security in Paradise

The society which is formed via the hands of such individuals whose self, having become developed, is a model of the attributes of Allah, is like a mirror in this world of the life of paradise. And when these people will go to the next life after this world, they will have the reward of a life of paradise there.²²¹ Paradise of the hereafter is defined by evolutionary stages of life and only those individuals will be able to tread these stages whose self has been developed. It is stated about these individuals:

The righteous will undoubtedly be (in comfort) amid gardens and springs. (Their greeting will be): 'Enter you here in peace and security'. (15:45-46) See also (50:34)

In Surah *Ad-Dukhan* it is stated:

As to the righteous (they will be) in a position of security. (44:51)

There will be no disagreeable talk there, salutations of peace and security will reach their hearing from all directions²²²:

They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of peace: And they will have therein their sustenance, morning and evening. (19:62) See also (56:26)

In that life no vain talk will fall on their ears, whatever they hear will be greetings of peace and security. All the supplications and speech of the inhabitants of paradise will be for peace and tranquility:

(This will be) their exclamation therein: 'Glory to You, O Allah!' And 'Peace' will be their greeting therein! and the close of their call will be: 'Hamd be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds!' (10:10)

The inhabitants of *A'raf* will send this gift of peace (*Salaam*) to those in paradise:

²²¹ Human life is one continuous spectrum which carries on beyond physical death. The state of development which our self has reached at the point of death is the same state which then has to continue beyond physical death albeit on a different plane of existence. This aspect is covered in detail in the book by the author *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran say?*. (Ed)

²²² This is one of the signs of achieving righteousness in this life as well, where the *Momineen* dislike vain talk and lies such as are broadcasted via the media everywhere. However, these are required to be heard and analysed as part of accountability as per the Law of Requital. Being saved from this in the hereafter will be a recompense for their efforts in this life during the process of their endeavours in establishing the Islamic system. (Ed)

...they will call out to the companions of the paradise, 'peace on you'...(7:46)

The *Malaika* will come and extend greetings of felicitations to the companions of paradise:

...and Malaika shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation): 'Peace unto you for that you persevered in patience! Now how excellent is the final home!'
(13:23-24) See also (16:32, 39:73)

24.16.3 *Salaam* in the Islamic Society

The *Momineen* have been directed to follow the style of greetings and communication which will be in paradise in this life as well. Or, in other words, it can be said that the form of mutual supplications and greetings which has been defined for the existing social interaction of Muslims will be the same in the life of paradise too. Just consider, that if life becomes shaped on Islamic lines, then how, right here in this world, a paradise of peace and security will come into existence! About the social life of Muslims, it is proclaimed:

O you who have Eimaan! enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that you may always heed this (your mutual relation is of peace and tranquility). (24:27)

Not only in strangers' houses, but also when you enter your own dwellings, present greetings of peace and tranquility to your own household:

...But if you enter houses, salute each other - a greeting of blessing and purity as from Allah ...(24:61)

Just imagine how much that society, whose members have this state that when they encounter one another they shower blossoms of peace and serenity over one another, will be like that of the life of paradise. When Muslims were cognisant of the truth of the teaching of the Quran and were following it in the truest sense, then this same *Salaam* which has become merely a lifeless ritual, was a lively manifestation of their mutual discipline and cooperation, and harmony of hearts. Today, this *Salaam* is the sum total of two words which appear mechanically on the tongue superficially from the level of the throat, these do not have any link with the heart, even though the aim of the Quran was that words should be the means of expression of the sentiments of your heart, and should be a mirror of your deeds. If there is no mutual harmony between the heart and the tongue, words and deeds, then these words can have no weight in the Quranic scales.

Rather, this is that hypocrisy which is deserving of the worst kind of condemnation from Allah:

Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not. (61:3)

This is why in the Islamic social system '*Assalaam-o-Alaikum*' is not merely the sum of two words but is a demonstration of the relationships of the hearts of the members of the society, those relationships which are established on the foundations of mutual respect and love, welfare and promotion of tranquility. In this society when one person meets another person, he says to him that I desire that you live in peace and security from every respect. Its first meaning is this, that you remain assured that no kind of hurt will come to you from my direction. In reply, the other person, whilst also expressing this desire, says '*Wa-Alaikum-Salaam*' i.e. both these individuals make this avowal that we do not envisage any threat from one another, instead we have full and complete assurance that we will live in mutual peace and harmony. This was the meaning of '*Assalaam-o-Alaikum*' in Islamic society.

Now let us also consider another aspect of this mode of social life. Today, our state is such that an individual who considers himself superior in some way expects that others will say *Salaam* to him. He considers it demeaning to do it first himself. But let us see what teaching the Quran gives us in this regard. Among mankind, who can have a higher status than Rasul-ullah. The elevated status and dignity of that eminent being on whom having *Eimaan* is compulsory cannot be encompassed! But the Quran states:

*When those come to you who have Eimaan in Our signs, Say: 'Salaam be on you':
Your Rabb has inscribed for Himself Rehmat ... (6:54)*

This means that the desire for peace and security for the members of the Ummah, and the institution of a practical programme for the accomplishment of these desires should stem from the centre of the system itself.

The root of Islam is *S-L-M*. Amongst us the general meaning of Islam is taken to be the 'Religion of Peace and Security'. This is also correct that Islam is a Deen of peace and security, but peace and security is a passive state i.e. absence of conflict and disorder - there is no active aspect in this.

But when we pay attention to the other meaning of *S-L-M*, then the active aspect emerges and becomes apparent to us. That other meaning is to become complete, to complete the self of an individual by addressing a deficiency. If we view it from this aspect, then Islam is the name of that system in which every individual resides in peace and security, and his human potentials and the latent abilities of his self

are also continuously becoming complete. In this way Islam becomes a beautiful mix of both passive and active aspects.

24.17 *Al-A'la*²²³, *Al-Azeem*²²⁴, *Al-Ali'yu*²²⁵, *Al-Mut'aal*²²⁶

On the face of the earth, man is the holder of the highest status of all, and in the scales of humanity, the individual whose personality is the most developed is considered as holding the highest status. The Self of Allah is the completest, hence, His status is also the highest. Man cannot even imagine the greatness and supremacy of which He is the possessor:

...for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory). (2:255) See also (42:4)

In another verse:

He knows the unseen and that which is manifest: He is the Great, the Most High. (13:9)

Holder of the highest status and along with this, also Wise:

...and He is Most High, Most Great. (42:51)

Undoubtedly, He is the holder of wisdom and authority:

... high in dignity, full of wisdom. (43:4)

Following on from knowledge and wisdom, for human beings the criteria for high status is sovereignty and supremacy. However prodigious the possession of power, accordingly great is the possession of stature. But the Quran does not accept the sovereignty of anyone other than Allah. Hence, if sovereignty belongs to Him, then supremacy and authority are also only suitable for Him:

... the command is with Allah, Most High, Most Great! (40:12)

No-one is included in this sovereignty of His:

That is because Allah - He is the Reality; and those besides Him whom they invoke, they are but vain falsehood: verily Allah is He, Most High, Most Great. (22:62) See also (31:30, 34:23)

²²³ *Al-A'la* – The One above everyone

²²⁴ *Al-Azeem* – The One possessing greatness

²²⁵ *Al-Ali'yu* – The Most Superior

²²⁶ *Al-Mut'aal* – The Holder of the highest status

He is the true Ruler:

High above all is Allah, the King, the Truth... (20:114) See also (23:116)

Therefore, all types of greatness are for Allah, He is the true master of the universe. It is only appropriate for man that, by virtue of being the highest in the whole world, he should bow down before this holder of the highest status (Allah). Everything in the universe should be serving man, but he in turn should remain active in completing the defined and declared programme of the true King of kings:

Then establish the supremacy and greatness of your Rabb in the world! (56:74) See also (56:96)

In another verse:

Glorify the name of your Guardian Rabb, Most High. (87:1)

This is because no one can claim to have equality with Him, He is far beyond this:

...and far is He above having the partners they ascribe unto Him! (16:1)

His Being is pure and beyond *Shirk*, pure and above all those things which the human mind associates towards Him:

...Praise and glory be to Him! (for He is) above what they attribute to Him! (6:100)

Free from all those attributions which are asserted about Him due to ignorance:

Glory to Him! He is high above all that they say! Exalted and Great! (17:43)

24.17.1 Exalted Servants of Allah

It is apparent that if Allah the Exalted and Highest is the holder of such an elevated status, then at what heights the men establishing His rule in the world will be, at such heights that no other nation can even come close to. It is declared about them:

So lose not heart, nor fall into despair: for you must gain mastery if you are true in Eimaan. (3:139) See also (47:35)

In the same way that in the whole universe their Allah is alone and without any associates due to His exalted stature and illustrious supremacy, similarly, no-one from amongst the whole of mankind can be a competitor of this *Jamaat* of His servants. But this loftiness and eminence of theirs will be neither the product of rebellion and arrogance, nor the source of its creation. One kind of 'higher stature' is Pharaoh, who had declared:

...I am your Lord, Most High. (79:24)

But his proclamation was based on self-deception. Arrogance and transgression can never be true superiority. Superiority is only that which is achieved by obeying the Divine laws, only that can be considered to be established which includes prostration to these. True greatness was never the share of Pharaoh, it was the share of Moses. When the confrontation with the magicians of Pharaoh took place and Moses feared that the people may be influenced by the tricks of the magicians, it was stated:

We said: fear not! for you will have the upper hand. (20:68)

This is because truth is essential for true supremacy and the truth was only with Moses, not with the people of Pharaoh. This is why it is stated that the plans of the opponents of *Haqq* and truth are always defeated, and Allah's command reigns supreme:

...and humbled to the depths the word of Kafirun. But the word of Allah is exalted to the heights: for Allah is Exalted in might, Wise. (9:40)

Therefore, every kind of greatness and majesty is for Allah, for the Deen of Allah, and for that nation which is the cause of establishment of Deen in the world.

24.18 *Al-Mateen* (The Powerful), *Al-Aziz* (The Omnipotent)

Izzat also means power but such a power which also comprises dominance. Hence, the meaning of *Aziz* will be a possessor of supremacy. In *Matanat* too, the meaning of power is implied but such a power in which there is no slack and no deficiency. Therefore, a *Mateen* will be that kind of possessor of power whose planning and implementation is strong and firm. The Quran states:

Those who reject Our signs, We shall gradually visit with punishment, in ways they perceive not; respite will I grant unto them: for My scheme is strong (and unfailing). (7:182-183) See also (68:45)

This is because Allah is the Master of all forces, and is *Mateen* and supreme:

For Allah is He Who provides Sustenance, possessing power, Al-Mateen. (51:58)

The word *Aziz* has been used for Allah in numerous places in the Quran. In some places He is *Aziz-un Hakeem* (2:240) i.e. that Being Whose supremacy is not based on blind power (Allah forbid) but is based entirely on wisdom and righteousness. In some places He is *Aziz-un Zuntiqam* (3:4) i.e. His supremacy is in order to administer reward and punishment for deeds in full accordance with the procedure of the Law of Requital. Under the rule of the weak, neither the deserving receive their due nor the criminals their recompense. This is why in order for there to be justice, established supremacy and sustainable control is needed. It is because of this that He is also mentioned as being *Qanwayun Aziz* (22:40) i.e. His control has not come into action purely by chance but is the result of His infinite powers. When the people of Pharaoh became gripped by the consequences of their crimes, it was stated:

...but We seized them with such penalty (as comes) from One Exalted in Power, able to carry out His Will. (54:42) See also (37:180)

Whoever is looking for *Izzat* (power) will have to obey His laws because real power cannot be found anywhere else:

If any do seek for glory and power, to Allah belong all glory and power ... (35:10)

He bestows power to those who are in search of power, but how?

... To Him mount up (all) words of purity: It is He Who exalts each deed of righteousness ... (35:10)

In this way this power comes into the share of His righteous servants:

...But power and glory belong to Allah and His Messenger, and to Momineen; but the hypocrites know not. (63:8)

Hypocrites are seekers of power associated with others, what a deceptive vision and omission of the heart this is:

To the hypocrites give the glad tidings that there is for them (but) a grievous penalty; yea, to those who take for friends Kafireen rather than Momineen: is it power they seek among them? Nay, all power is with Allah. (4:138-139)

All *Izzat* is for Allah, and (bestowed by Him) for His messenger and the *Jamaat e Momineen* because they are the heirs and followers of this Book which is *Aziz* in itself:

...And indeed, it is a Book of exalted power. (41:41)

There is no doubt in this that it appears to us as if the deniers of this Book are also possessors of power and glory, but their power is like the adornment of fake gems which in appearance may dazzle the eyes, but can never satisfy the test of a true measure:

But the state of Kafireen is such that they are lost in self-glory and separatism. (38:2)

But the state of the deniers of truth is such that they are stubbornly fixed to the assumed lie of their false pride. These are the people whose state is such that:

When it is said to him, 'fear the consequences of going against the laws of Allah', he is led by arrogance to (more) crime. Enough for him is hell; an evil bed indeed. (2:206)

That hell where they will have to spend a life of extreme humiliation. And it will be said to them about this punishment:

Taste you (this)! Truly were you mighty, honourable! (44:49)

And all of this because these people had deceived themselves by setting false standards for power and respect. The criterion for power is only this:

...But power and honour belong to Allah, and His Messenger, and to Momineen ... (63:8)

In other words, true *Izzat* and *Takreem* is achieved by the elevation of character, not through deception and injustice.

When the Quran declared that established and sustainable *Izzat* and *Takreem* is for the *Jamaat e Momineen*, and such an *Izzat* too in which no other nation could be their equal, then it is clear from this that we existing Muslims, who (unfortunately) are counted amongst the lowest of nations, cannot call ourselves *Momin*. A *Momin* and a life of humiliation are two contradictory entities.

24.19 *Al-Baari, Al-Musawwar* (The Creator)

It is stated in Surah *Al-Hashr*:

He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms ... (59:24) See also (2:54)

The fundamental trait of a developed self is that of creation. We have written in detail about Allah's attribute of creation at the start. *Al-Baari* and *Al-Musanmar* are also in fact about the phases of the process of creation. Creation means to make a new thing by creating a particular proportion and order among different elements. In this new order the extraneous and superfluous bits are separated, this is the trait of *Baari*. Following this, giving it a particular form is the attribute of sculpturing (shaping and mapping). It is these phases of creation and balancing which have been explained at another place in these words:

Him Who created you. Fashioned you in due proportion and gave you a just bias; In whatever form He willed, did He put you together. (82:7-8)

The first phase is creation, after this producing proportion and symmetry by trimming and shaving, balancing and harmonising, and plotting the correct map by adjusting all the finer points, as a result of which all the glittering adornments of beauty and display come together to become a lively miracle of tapestry:

And you have a sense of pride and beauty in them... (16:6)

This last phase is of giving form and shape:

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases (as per His law) ... (3:6)

Such a multifaceted creation that the map of one does not match that of another, and of such beautiful proportion that - if the 'instruments' of sight, smell and breathing were only as unsymmetrical parts and devoid of any kind of proportion, even then these would have met physical needs in this way - these became thousands of attractions of beauty and splendour:

...and has given you form, and made your forms balanced and beautiful ... (64:3)

Can this be called conjuring by some 'blind' nature (Allah forbid)? If the allure and uniqueness of some entrancing painting by an artist can be considered as being the verbal testimony of his artistic expertise, then why can the beauty and display of the rainbow colours and *Attar* of this gallery of the universe not be taken as evidence of the unparalleled creativity of its Creator? Creator, and together with being the Creator, also *Baari* and *Musanmar*.

...So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators! (23:14)

In addition, *Al-Musawwar* not only means the One who devises outlines and shapes, it also means the One Who bestows form as well, and this is an important fundamental attribute. Students of philosophy know that, according to Aristotle, the existence of something is another name for its form. In other words, (he states) when something adopts a certain form then at that time we say that it has come into existence. In the perceptible world there is no existence for a formless thing. Hence, when the Quran declares Allah as *Al-Musawwar*, then by this is also meant that He brings every one of those things into existence by giving it a special form.

24.20 *Al-Waase (Without Limits)*

Experts in astronomy tell us that when they study any one system of the galaxies, they are left amazed and bewildered on beholding its infinite expanses, at how far the limits and boundaries of this universe are spread out! This is the state of a small portion of one department of the system of the universe; just try and imagine, what this whole and spectacular universe will be like? But from where can that imagination be obtained in which even the outline of these infinite expanses can be encompassed. And if this is the state for the universe, then how can the expanses of the Creator Himself be accommodated in someone's sphere of conception, imagination, perception and assumption! The Possessor of such infinite unparalleled expanses, boundless spans and depths – to attribute time and space to such an Allah?

Praise and glory be to Him! (for He is) above what they attribute to Him! (6:100)

The truth is that association of time and space can be declared to be appropriate for physical entities, but personality is far above these references:

To Allah belong the east and the west: whithersoever you turn, there is the presence of Allah. For Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (2:115)

Allah's attribute of *Waase-un* generally appears in the Quran along with the attribute of *Aleem-un* (2:247, 2:268, 3:73, 5:54). Hence, this expanse is in reality the expanse of His knowledge and wisdom. Since this expanse is infinite our limited mind cannot therefore conceptualise it, although even we are aware of this much that in comparison to the body, how much wider the world of the human self is. The world of the self is certainly very eminent, but the world of the human intellect is also immensely expansive. To what extremities our concepts and thoughts reach cannot even begun to be imagined.

By descending from the vastness of Allah's knowledge, if we wish to observe how He is *Al-Waase* in our economic and social world, then by establishing a social

system according to His laws we can see how in this every single grain converts into seven hundred grains:

The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it grows seven ears, and each ear has a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase as per His law of Mashe'at: And Allah possesses great expanse and He knows all things. (2:261)

This is why it is stated that when you are obedient to Allah's commands then this concern as to where sustenance will be obtained from should never grip you. Organise the social and economic system on the lines of Allah's laws and then see how His boundlessness bestows without measure (4:130, 24:32). Details have been covered under the subject of *Rizq*.

24.21 *Al-Wahab* (Giver of Free Bounties)

Mohbat is stated to be that gift which is given neither for any expectation of any return nor as remuneration for work. Whatever kind of sustenance is available in the universe for the nourishment of humanity is all of it this kind of gift from Allah. This is why another attribute of Allah is also *Al-Wahab*. For the nourishment of humanity, other than the means of sustenance, the guidance of *Wabi* holds very great significance. This is also bestowed by Allah as a *Mohbat*. In this, there is neither any question of a return by the Giver (Allah), nor any skill and effort expended by the receiver (*Nabi*). This is that guidance which every traveller in the journey of life needs all the time, this is why the supplication of the *Jamaat e Momineen* is:

Our Rabb! (they say), 'Let not our hearts deviate now after You have guided us, but grant us mercy from Your own presence; for You are the Grantor of Bounties without measure'. (3:8)

About those who reject this guidance, it is stated:

Or have they the treasures of the mercy of Your Rabb, the Exalted in Power, the Grantor of Bounties without measure? (38:9)

The treasures of *Rehmat* (blessings) of Allah (*Al-Wahab*) are only with Him, hence the whole world is dependent on Him whereas He is free from all. In the human world the state of those individuals whose self reflects this attribute of Allah will also be this, that they will gift the means of sustenance to the rest of humanity without expecting anything in return. This is what is known as the system of *Rabubiyat* which is shaped through the hands of the *Jamaat e Momineen*.

24.22 *Al-Ghani* (Free of All Needs)

When man coined²²⁷ an idol from his own mind and moulded it in his own form, he determined those same traits for this idol which his mind was able to devise. At the most, he was able to accord it the status of a worldly monarch. For him, there could be no greater status than this. After that, when he observed that worldly monarchs have their orders obeyed by their subjects and teach them obedience to the monarchy, all this happens in this way so that no disturbance arises in the kingship of these monarchs, and the degree to which the subjects are obedient and compliant is the same degree to which the rule of this king will be strong and his kingdom will be enduring. If this king receives dues from his subjects and accepts taxes, this will also be so that his rule becomes strengthened. Therefore, in all these matters that king will be reliant on his subjects. Even though he may not say this out loud and he hides this dependency of his behind the screen of the law, the truth will remain that he is dependent on his people. This is why when man gave the status of a god to the idol devised by his own mind, together with this he also assumed it to be essential that God is dependent on the worship of his servants - He is in need of their offerings and gifts in the same way that worldly kings are in need of them. But when the Quran introduced the real Allah to the world, it also made this fact clear that obedience of the laws of Allah is in the interest of human beings themselves. There is no 'personal interest' of Allah hidden in this. This is why He does not have any need for the worship and 'offerings' of men; He is free from these things; He is *Mustaghni*; this is all for our own benefit. If some patient acts on the instructions of a doctor, then in this there is benefit to the patient himself, the doctor is free from this (*Mustaghni*). If some student obeys the instructions of his concerned teacher, his own advantage is in this, the teacher has no personal need in this. Similarly, Allah is free from the *Kufr* and *Eimaan* of human beings. He does not like *Kufr* because man lands in the destruction of hell as a result of this. He likes *Eimaan* because this becomes the cause for the success of man:

If you reject (Allah), truly Allah has no need of you; but He likes not Kufr for His servants (as not advantageous to you): if you are grateful, He will like it for you (i.e. it is to your advantage). No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. In the end, to your Rabb is your Return, when He will tell you the truth of all that you did (in this life). For He knows well all that is in hearts. (39:7)

Pointing towards the consequences and the end of those ungrateful people of former nations, the Quran states:

That was because there came to them messengers with clear signs, but they said: 'Shall (mere) human beings direct us?' So they rejected (the Message) and turned away. But

²²⁷ Gods created by human thoughts. (Ed)

*Allah can do without (them): and Allah is free of all needs, worthy of all Hamd.
(64:6)*

Moses told his people:

And Moses said: 'If you show ingratitude, you and all on earth together, yet is Allah free of all wants, worthy of all praise. (14:8) See also (64:6)

Gratitude and *Kufr*, obedience and rejection, all are for the self of man himself:

...Any who is (so) grateful does so to the profit of his own self: but if any is ungrateful, verily Allah is free of all wants, worthy of all Hamd. (31:12) See also (27:40)

Endeavour in the journey of life, and making an effort and taking action, is for the benefit of man himself. Whoever makes efforts in the correct way will benefit from their results himself. Whoever sits down and does not use his arms and legs, will face the consequences of this:

And if any strive (with might and main), they do so for their own selves: for Allah is free of all needs from all creation. (29:6)

Depending upon the nature of the deeds of an individual, the level of his status will be decided accordingly:

To all are degrees (or ranks) according to their deeds: for your Rabb is not unmindful of anything that they do. Your Rabb is self-sufficient, full of mercy ... (6:132-133)

The 'tasks and prayers' defined by Deen are also for the good of the people themselves, Allah is not in need of these prayers and rites. In relation to Hajj it is stated:

*...Hajj thereto is a duty men owe to Allah, those who can afford the journey; but if any do *Kufr*, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures. (3:96)*

And it became a duty on men from Allah that if they had the ability to reach there, then do 'Hajj' of this house. But whoever rejects this, remember that the Self of Allah is free from the whole world.

The basis of the system of *Rabubiyat* is on *Infaaq* i.e. keeping open the proceeds of one's efforts in order to spend in the cause of Allah. The meaning of this 'cause of Allah' is also the sustenance and nourishment, well-being and welfare of mankind; Allah is not in any need of our possessions and wealth:

O you who have Eimaan! Give of the good things which you have earned, and of the fruits of the earth which We have produced for you, and do not even aim at getting anything which is bad, in order that out of it you may give away something, when you yourselves would not receive it except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is free of all wants, and worthy of all Hamd. (2:267)

As has been noted under the subject of ‘the belief in progeny of Allah’, because offspring are a support at that time when man becomes in need of help from others, this is why, based on ignorance, people also established the belief in progeny of Allah. But the Quran emphasises how much this idea is *Batil* and based on an ignorance of reality. What possible support does Allah need from someone? Everything in the heavens and earth are in His ownership, He is free from the whole of the universe, why would such an Allah require the support of progeny?

They say: ‘Allah has begotten a son!’ - Glory be to Him! He is self-sufficient! His are all things in the heavens and on earth! No authority you have for this! say you about Allah what you know not? (10:68) See also (22:64, 31:26)

Everything in the heavens and the earth is His, He is the Master and Creator of the whole of the universe.²²⁸ He is free from, and above and beyond even the slightest possibility of any need and dependency; He is totally free of the need from anything in the universes for all times.²²⁹

The truth is that (as noted previously) the fundamental characteristics of the self are freedom and independence. A developed self is self-sufficient and free from the need of the support of others. Therefore, how can the Self of Allah be dependent on anyone? This will be the same state of those whose self is a reflection of the Divine attributes. They, too, will not be dependent on others in the world, and that society which will be shaped through their hands will also not require the support of others.

Among us the translation of *Al-Ghani* (or *As-Samad*) is commonly done as ‘could not care less’, Allah ‘does not care’. This phrase is handed down as a tradition in every religious family. But by ‘could not care less’, such a false concept arises in the mind about Allah, which is not only inappropriate to associate with Him, but is completely contrary to His Eminence. ‘Could not care less’ means the one who does not take into account any rule and law, does not care about any principle and code of conduct. He does whatever comes to his mind, and whatever he wishes,

²²⁸ And even of multiverses, as modern research indicates that there is the possibility of multiple universes. (Ed)

²²⁹ This fact becomes obvious when one looks at those Divine attributes which are attributable to Him exclusively i.e. He is the First and the Last. (Ed)

he decides accordingly. This concept about Allah is completely against that concept which Allah has provided about Himself in the Quran.

I have also translated *Al-Ghani* in the above noted verse as 'free from needs', though from this respect 'free of all needs' means the one who is not dependent on any single thing. No objection can be raised over this translation, but I think the word *Mustaghni* is more appropriate and comprehensive. The meaning of *Mustaghni* is that though He may have everything, He is not dependent on any one of those things. This is *Istaghna*, which has far wider meanings other than freedom from needs and not being dependent on others. Hence, the Self of Allah is completely *Mustaghni*. *Istaghna* is a fundamental attribute of a developed (human) self.

24.23 *Al-Fattah* (The Differentiator)

The meaning of *Fatab* is to open, to differentiate between *Haqq* and *Batil*. From this it also becomes clear what the correct meaning is of what the Quran calls *Fatab*. According to the Quran, this is an immutable law of nature that *Haqq* will remain dominant and *Batil* will be subdued. At whatever point in whatever confrontation this natural differentiation between *Haqq* and *Batil* openly manifests, it will be declared as *Fatab*. Hence, wherever the Quran mentions *Fatab* for the *Momineen* the meaning of this is not victory but the supremacy of *Haqq*, and because this differentiation of *Haqq* and *Batil* is according to Allah's law, hence Allah is *Fattab* and *Fateb*. In Surah *Al-Araf* this meaning has become clearly evident. Regarding the invitation of the messenger Shoab and his people's rejection of it, it is stated that Shoab informed them:

And if there is a party among you who accepts Eimaan in the message with which I have been sent, and a party which does not have Eimaan, hold yourselves in patience until Allah does decide between us: for He is the best to decide. (7:87)

Here, the word *Hakim* has been used for the one making a decision. Two verses after this, this supplication is noted from the lips of Shoab:

...Our Rabb decide between us and our people in truth, and You are the best of those who give decision. (7:89)

Here, the word *Fateb* has been used for the 'decision maker' i.e. the one who makes the differentiation between *Haqq* and *Batil*. It is stated about Rasul-ullah himself:

Say, 'Our Rabb will bring us together; then He will judge between us in Haqq. And He is the Knowing Judge.' (34:26)

These two groups gathered together at one place, and then after this such a glaringly evident decision was reached among them that every particle of *Badr* and *Hunain*²³⁰ is a witness on this. Such a verdict that after this no question remained of the mixing of *Haqq* and *Batil*. Both became distinctly separate, and established such a criterion till the Day of Judgment that no doubt could remain for anyone in the differentiation of *Haqq* and *Batil*. In Quranic *Lughat* (language) this is indeed the very meaning of *Fateh*. Now you can understand that when words like *Fateh* and victorious are used for a *Momin*, what the correct meaning of these words will be i.e. the one who differentiates between *Haqq* and *Batil* according to the Divine laws. This is that delicate but extremely important difference between a worldly *Fateh* and a Quranic *Fateh*, by overlooking which the superficial glance cannot differentiate between Hulagu Khan²³¹ and Umer Farooq, even though in front of one there was a desire for personal supremacy, while in front of the other was the differentiation between *Haqq* and *Batil* as a result of the manifestation of Allah's attribute of *Fattab* - that differentiation which is carried out according to *Haqq* and knowledge. This is because Allah is such a *Fattab* Who is *Haqq* and Omniscient. In the human system of life these decisions of Allah take place according to the Quran, because the Quran is the proclaimer of decisions:

Indeed, the Quran is a decisive statement, and not a meaningless thing. (86:13-14)

In other words, a proven reality in itself and the maker of fully clear decisions between *Haqq* and *Batil*. Hence, this is that Book of the code of laws for Allah's court and the implementation and execution of this code will be the manifestation of Allah's authority and decision making.

When the Quran states about the *Jamaat e Momineen* that they achieved *Fatab*, then the aim from this is not only that their enemies were defeated and that they overcame them, by this is also meant that because of this those impediments were removed which were an obstruction in the path of their advancement, and in this way the 'doors opened' before them to ever expanding avenues in their life. Therefore, every *Fatab* of the *Jamaat e Momineen* is a new chapter for further growth, and this process is a limitless one.

24.24 *Al-Haqq* (The Absolute Truth)

Allah is *Haqq*, anyone who is called out to other than Him is *Batil*:

That is because Allah is Haqq, and that which they call upon other than Him is Batil, and that Allah is the Most High, the Grand. (22:62) See also (22:6, 31:30)

²³⁰ These are two battle grounds where there was a fight between Muslims and the *Kuffar* in the era of Rasul-ullah. (Ed)

²³¹ A Mongol ruler, grandson of Ghengis Khan. Wikipedia. (Ed)

Haqq is that which is established; immutable; cannot be erased; is established in its place; meets all the criteria of reality; proves to be true on every criterion of knowledge and vision; whose outcomes should always be constructive; which should meet every constructive demand of the era. Contrary to this, *Batil* is that which is erasable; which cannot remain; which merely exists in skepticism; speculation and conjecture, in reality has no existence; that which produces destructive effects. Only the Being of Allah is *Haqq*. The forces of *Batil* only appear to be powerful so as long as *Haqq* does not present itself. When *Haqq* appears, then *Batil* becomes destroyed. The foundation of the whole invitation of the Quran is on this great principle alone, that the Being of Allah is the only *Haqq*, anything other than Allah is *Batil*. It appears to be merely a minor issue but as we continue to reflect on it, ever greater realities will keep becoming unveiled. First of all, that the Being of Allah is an established fact; not this, that the desire for worship of the devotees has carved a god from their own mind. The Being of Allah was worthy of submission even then when no forehead was familiar with the pleasure of prostration, and will still be worthy of submission even at that time when no manifestation of servitude and obedience will remain. This is because He is *Haqq*, and a manifest *Haqq*. This is a different matter that someone may deliberately shut his own eyes, but no doubt can arise in *Haqq* being *Haqq* because of this. Today eyes can be shut, but at the time of the manifestation of consequences there will be no possibility to do this:

That day, Allah will pay them in full their deserved recompense, and they will know that it is Allah who is evidently perfect in justice. (24:25)

But becoming aware of this truth at that time will be of no benefit, the time for turning your face away from *Batil* and coming to *Haqq* is now:

For that is Allah, your Rabb, the Haqq. And what can be beyond Haqq except Batil? So how are you averted (away from Haqq)? (10:32)

The meaning of accepting Allah as *Haqq* is to have *Eimaan* on this evident reality that governance and sovereignty is only for Him, it is not legitimate to accept the obedience and rule of anyone other than Him. He is the sole possessor of all greatness and supremacy:

So exalted is Allah, the Sovereign, the Haqq; there is no deity except Him, Rabb of the Noble Throne. And whoever invokes besides Allah another deity for which he has no proof - then his account is only with his Rabb. Indeed, Kafirren will not succeed. (23:116-117) See also (20:114)

Having *Eimaan* in Allah's being *Haqq* means that whatever is from Him should be

accepted as *Haqq*. He Himself is *Haqq*, therefore He has created the universe with *Haqq*:

It is He who created the heavens and the earth in true (proportions): the day He says, 'Be,' behold! it is. His word is the truth. His will be the dominion the day the trumpet will be blown. He knows the unseen as well as that which is open. For He is the Wise, well acquainted (with all things). (6:73)

The universe has been created with *Haqq*, and the Quran has been revealed with *Haqq* for the guidance of the human world:

...that it is Haqq from their Rabb ... (2:26)

Hence, today *Haqq* is within the Quran i.e. in the universe the things of nature are a manifestation of *Haqq*, and in the human world the laws of the Quran are models of *Haqq* - this system is that Deen of *Haqq* which is going to overcome all of the man-made systems of human beings:

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and Deen of Haqq to manifest it over all Deens, although they who associate others with Allah detest it. (9:33) See also (48:28, 61:9)

Allah is *Haqq*; the universe of nature is created with *Haqq*; His messenger is sent with *Haqq*; the Deen brought by him is *Haqq*; and the *Jamaat* is the heir of the Book, the flagbearer of *Haqq*; other than this all the remainder is *Batil*. *Haqq* is that which will remain while *Batil* is the one which will disappear. Only that will remain whose connection is with *Haqq*. This is the only truth, all the rest are fictional tales!

By stating that the universe is created *Bil-Haqq*, the Quran has lifted the curtain on an extremely erroneous perception of the human mind. Plato presented this concept that this visible universe does not possess its own existence, that things with their real existence are in the 'state of metaphors', and that whatever is seen in the universe is a shadow of these things. Going forward, this (*Batil*) concept became *Yog* amongst Hindus and the foundation of mysticism (Sufism) amongst Persians and Muslims. Hindus stated that all the world is *Maya* (deception). Amongst us, mysticism presented the concept of unity of existence, according to which it is said that existence is only of God, other than Him there is no existence of anything else.

By stating this, that the universe is created *Bil-Haqq*, the Quran has uprooted all these *Batil* concepts and beliefs. The universe possesses its own existence and has been locked within the chains of Allah's laws so that man can benefit from it (this is what is meant by conquering the universe).

24.25 Hameed-un, Majeed-un (The Praiseworthy, The Majestic)

Keep in view all those attributes which are expounded in the Quran about Allah, and then see which is that attribute of beauty and excellence due to which His Self is exalted, and which is that trait of fault and decay from which His Being is not free. Adorned with all the accoutrements of beauty and resplendence, possessing all majestic excellence, all balanced attributes belong to Him alone (59:24). Every kind of appreciation and praise, and every manner of admiration and respect is for Him alone. This is why the very beginning of the Quran is with this infinite proclamation:

All Hamd for that Allah Who is Rabb of all worlds. (1:2) See also (45:36)

But in the Arabic language the word *Hamd* has a fundamental and supreme feature. You are on vacation in some country. Suddenly, such a view appears in front of you at some location which is very pleasing and worthy of attention, seeing which you spontaneously utter the word 'wow' - this will be defined as *Hamd* i.e. this will be *Hamd* for the creator of that view. Hence, when it is said about Allah that this is *Hamd* for Him, then this will mean that every beautiful corner of the universe is a talking picture of the creative programme of Allah, on seeing which sentiments of appreciation and admiration arise involuntarily from the heart. Note in what kinds of styles the Quran has detailed this reality:

Hamd to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth ... (35:1) See also (6:1)

In Surah *Al-Momin* it is stated:

It is Allah Who has made for you the earth as a resting place, and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape - and made your shapes beautiful, and has provided for you sustenance, of things pure and good; such is Allah your Rabb. So glory to Allah, the Rabb of the worlds! He is the Living (One): There is no god but He: call upon Him, giving Him sincere devotion. Hamd to Allah, Rabb of the worlds! (40:64-65) See also (31:25)

He is the Creator of everything, and after creation, selects these things according to His immutable laws for evolutionary phases, and is managing this system in a beautifully balanced way. Hence, the first and the last *Hamd* is only for Him:

Your Rabb does create and choose as He wills²³²: no choice have they (in the matter): Glory to Allah! and far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)! And your Rabb knows all that their hearts conceal and all that they reveal. And He is Allah: There is no god but He. To Him be Hamd, at the first and at the last: for Him is the command, and to Him shall you (all) be brought back. (28:68-70) See also (34:1, 30:18)

24.25.1 Khalqiyat, Razzaqiyat, Rabubiyat

He is the *Khaliq* (Creator) and the *Raziq* (Sustainer and Nourisher) too. Hence, Who other than Him can be deserving of praise and admiration? :

Allah enlarges the sustenance (which He gives) to whichever of His servants He pleases (as per His Law of Mashe'at); and He (similarly) grants by (strict) measure, (as per the law)²³³: for Allah has full knowledge of all things. And if indeed you ask them who it is that sends down rain from the heavens and gives life therewith to the earth after its death, they will certainly reply, Allah! Say, 'Hamd be to Allah'! But most of them understand not. (29:62-63)

Khaliq and *Raziq*, and the Bestower of all favours; bestowing in those circumstances when man is overwhelmed by hopelessness as a consequence of visible means and causes:

He is the One that sends down rain (even) after (men) have given up all hope and scatters His Mercy (far and wide). And He is the Protector, Worthy of all Hamd. (42:28)

His *Rabubiyat* does not end with material needs only but guidance is also bestowed from Him for the fulfillment of human eminence. This is why, if His dignified benevolence regarding physical needs are a cause for *Hamd* and appreciation of Him, then in the field of guidance and direction His generous mercy is deserving of even greater appreciation and admiration than this:

Hamd be to Allah, Who has sent to His servant the Book, and which is free from all types of convolutions and complexities. (18:1)

That exalted Book about which it is stated that 'Batil cannot approach it from any direction, in front or from behind' and which has been sent by:

...One full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Hamd. (41:42)

²³² According to His law of *Mashe'at*. (Ed)

²³³ In the human world it is human beings who carry out these responsibilities. For details of the system of *Rabubiyat* see the author's book titled *The Quranic System of Sustenance*. (Ed)

When 'knowledge' was bestowed on Dawood and Solomon, they bowed in gratitude in appreciation and *Hamd* of Allah:

We gave (in the past) knowledge to Dawood and Solomon: And they both said: 'Hamd be to Allah, Who has favoured us above many of his Momineen servants!' (27:15)

Rasul-ullah also stated the same in gratitude of the glorious blessings of Islam and the Quran:

Hamd be to Allah ... (27:93)

Regarding the attributes of the *Momineen*, it is stated that they are *Hamidun*, all are doers of *Hamd* of Allah (9:112).

24.25.2 The Law of Requitul – Reason for *Hamd* and Appreciation

The code of laws (guidance and direction) is received from Allah for this reason that people can be made aware of the Law of Requitul. They are to be informed that the essential consequence of obedience to the laws of Allah is success and prosperity, and the natural consequence of disobedience will be annihilation and ruin. When the punishment of destruction and ruin descends on some nation because of their rebellion and transgression, then though it will only seem to be a point at which to learn some lesson, in truth for those possessing vision this will be an opportunity for *Hamd* and appreciation of Allah, because if His Law of Requitul is not implemented and executed with such coordination and discipline, then the integrity of the universe will be shattered. Balance and proportion in the world are maintained according to this very law. These are those opportunities in relation to which it is stated:

Before you We sent (messengers) to many nations, and We afflicted the nations with suffering and adversity, that they might learn humility. When the suffering reached them from us, why then did they not learn humility? On the contrary their hearts became hardened, and Satan made their (criminal) acts seem alluring to them. But when they forgot the warning they had received, We opened to them the gates of all (good) things, until, in the midst of their enjoyment of Our gifts, on a sudden, We called them to account. when lo! they were plunged in despair! Of the wrong-doers the last remnant was cut off. Hamd be to Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds. (6:42-45)

When the people of Lot were engulfed in the punishment of Allah because of their deeds, and Lot and his companions remained protected from this punishment, then after narrating this event it is stated:

Say: Hamd be to Allah, and peace on his servants whom He has chosen (for his Message). (Who) is better? Allah or the false gods they associate (with Him)? (27:59)

Similarly, when the people of Noah were engulfed in difficulties due to the flood, and Allah saved Noah and his companions from the tyranny of an unjust and rebellious people, then at this stage it was stated:

And when you have embarked on the Ark - you and those with you, say: 'Hamd be to Allah, Who has saved us from the people who do wrong'. (23:28)

This was only a partial narration of different events. In Surah *Al-Saffat* this very principle is explained as a rule, that in the battles of *Haqq* and *Batil*, Our messengers and forces always remain victorious and supreme and the forces of *Batil* become destroyed and annihilated. After citing this principle, it is stated:

Glory to your Rabb, the Rabb of Power! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him)! And Salaam (peace and security) on the messengers! And Hamd to Allah, the Rabb of the Worlds. (37:180-182)

24.25.3 Muqaam e Mehmud (Status of Eminence)

Indeed, this was that path by treading on which Rasul-ullah achieved his status of *Mehmud*²³⁴:

And (O Messenger) spend some time in the small watches of the night: (it would be) an additional task for you: soon will your Rabb raise you to a Station of Hamd! (17:79)

Reaching the status of *Mehmud* is guaranteed by treading on the path of *Hamd* defined by Allah, Who is deserving of all *Hamd*. This is the fulfilment of the eminence of humanity. This is the zenith of life. This is the ultimate aim, and those who are worthy of *Hamd* and appreciation are those righteous ones who achieve this status. These are those people whose developed self is the manifestation of the Divine attributes, and thus become deserving of *Hamd* and appreciation i.e. when the world witnesses those great achievements of theirs which become guarantors for the *Rabubiyat* and prosperities of mankind, then songs of praise and appreciation flow spontaneously from the lips of people.

²³⁴ *Mehmud* – from *Hamd*, the one whose character is praiseworthy according to the Permanent Values. (Ed)

24.26 *Tasbeeh*

Everything in the universe has its head bowed before that law according to which it is to live its life, and for which it has been created:

...while all creatures in the heavens and on earth have, willing or unwilling, bowed to His Will, and to Him shall they all be brought back. (3:83)

The things of nature are busy in fulfilling whatever task has been assigned to them, and in this way are prostrating in front of the commands of Allah:

Whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth do prostrate themselves to Allah (acknowledging subjection), with good-will or in spite of themselves ... (13:15)
See also (22:18)

The interpretation of this *Tasleem* and *Sajud* is explained in Surah *An-Nabl* as follows:

And to Allah does obeisance all that is in the heavens and on earth, whether moving (living) creatures or Malaika: for none are arrogant (before their Rabb). They all revere their Rabb, high above them, and they do all that they are commanded. (16:49-50)

Consider the words *Yafa'loona-ma-Yuma'roon* ('and they do all that they are commanded'), which is the prostration itself of these things. This is in effect their submission (*Aslama*) i.e. they are engrossed in accomplishing whatever task has been assigned to them. Nothing slackens in the slightest in this task, nothing moves even an inch either way from its designated path, and it is on this that the system of the universe is dependent. The words *Aslama* and *Yasjudu* appear in the verses quoted above. In some verses the words *Sabba'ha*, *Yo'sabbibo* (*Tasbeeh*) have been used for the same meaning:

The seven (numerous) heavens and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His Hamd; And yet you understand not how they declare His glory! Verily He is Oft-Forbearing, All Protecting! (17:44)

The meaning of *Sab'hun*²³⁵ is to float, a steed galloping swiftly, i.e. the way in which the arms are stretched out to their maximum whilst swimming; similarly when the horse stretches its legs fully and sprints, this is called *Sab'hun*. This is why the meanings of swiftness and distance (stretching the arms and legs far and wide) are

²³⁵ About the stellar bodies it is mentioned in the Quran '*...all (the celestial bodies) are swimming along, each in its rounded course*' (21:33, 36:40). How comprehensive is the use of the word swimming for depicting the movement of these celestial bodies in space.

both contained in this word. Hence, *Sabba'ha-fil-Ard* means 'travelling to far away lands.' The Quran states:

*True, there is for you by day prolonged occupation (Sab'han Taweelan) with duties.
(73:7)*

Therefore, when it is stated that everything in the universe is immersed in doing 'Tasbeeh' of Allah, from this it will be meant that these are busy in action with full swiftness in carrying out those duties which have been assigned to them.

24.26.1 Tasbeeh and Hamd

Now let us also reflect on another example. You have a machine in front of you whose every part is fitted at its proper place. The whole machine is functioning extremely efficiently, there is no fault anywhere, no lapse, it is solid, strong, durable, established in its proper place, alive results are constantly appearing according to the purpose for which it is constructed. As soon as you observe this machine, you will be profuse in your expression of appreciation and praise of its designer. Words of admiration about him will appear on your lips spontaneously. This machine will be wholly a representation of its designer. Every pleasing picture is a sonnet in praise of the innovation and magical display of its artist. Every marvellous sculpture is a living testimony of the skilful art of its sculptor. When this is the state of only these small things, then is this amazingly vast and awesome machinery of the universe, which is busy in action with such organisation and discipline, beauty and balance, not the fully alive praise and *Hamd* of its unique and unparalleled Creator? Every single atom in it is the walking and talking picture of its superlative beauty and adornment. Are these pictures and their rainbow colours which transfix the eyes not hymns of praise of the brilliance of their Creator (*Al-Musawwar*)? Thus, for the eye that sees, everything which is busy in carrying out its assigned duties is the living evidence of *Hamd* and praise of its own Creator, the Omnipotent *Rabb*. Its persistence in action is the flowing vastness in *Hamd* and admiration of Allah, and its every motion is the perpetual melody of appreciation and applause. Keep these explanations in mind, and then reflect on those verses in which Allah's *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed* are referred to, and the meaning will unveil itself and become apparent to you.

24.26.2 Tasbeeh by the Manifestations of Nature

The Quran states:

See you not that it is Allah Whose praises (Yo-Sabbiho) all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds (of the air) with wings outspread? Each one knows its own (mode of) Salat and Tasbeeh. And Allah knows well all that they do. (24:41)

Dawood and Solomon, who were bestowed with a great realm and abundance of knowledge and wisdom, used to remain busy in singing praises in Allah's *Tasbeeh*, and along with them, other things of nature also:

... it was Our power that made the hills and the birds celebrate Our praises, with Dawood: it was We Who did (all these things). (21:79) See also (34:10, 38:18)

Thunder from the clouds which excites dread and fright in the hearts is in reality fulfilling its duty and responding in obedience to commands, proclaiming the greatness and power of Allah, and is the drumming forebearer of the blessings of the rain to follow:

Nay, thunder pronounces His praises, and so do Malaika, with awe ... (13:13)

There is mention of '*Tasbeeh*' by the manifestations of nature at many places:

Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, let it declare the praises and glory of Allah ... (57:1) See also (59:1, 61:1, 62:1)

It has been explained at the beginning about the *Malaika* that they remain bowed down in front of the Divine commands, and 'only do that for which they are given a command.' This is indeed their *Tasbeeh* and *Taqdees*²³⁶. This was what the *Malaika* had said in the story of Adam:

... whilst we do celebrate Your praises and glorify You ... (2:30)

At another place it is stated:

Even those who are in His (very) presence are not too proud to serve Him, nor are they (ever) weary (of His service): They celebrate His praises night and day, nor do they ever flag or intermit. (21:19-20) See also (7:206, 41:38, 42:5)

These can also be taken to mean *Malaika*. Obedience is implicit in their nature, hence they remain in perpetual obedience and do not become fatigued by it, because this is a trait of their nature.²³⁷

24.26.3 *Tasbeeh* by Human Beings

This was the *Tasbeeh* and *Hamd* of those things of nature and of those who carry out Allah's designated tasks. Now let us examine the *Tasbeeh* and *Taqdees* of human

²³⁶ *Taqdees* – to perform a task with great precision, free from all faults and blemishes. (Ed)

²³⁷ The whole life of a river spent in flowing.

beings. The state of the system of nature and *Malaika* is that they are absorbed in the performance of whatever task they have been charged with (16:50). They are busily engaged in fulfilling their duties. They can never adopt rebellion and disobedience against the Divine laws; they do not even possess the ability for defiance and transgression; they do not even have the choice for disobedience. But contrary to this, man has the choice to transgress, he can also rebel against the Divine laws and can also ignore them. So, in the same way that everything in nature is always busily ‘performing *Tasbeeh*’ (doing obedience), every human being cannot be described as being similarly engaged at every moment in *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed*. He will only be considered as being engaged in *Hamd* and praise (*Tasbeeh*) at that time when he is obeying those laws which have been defined as a code of life for him. The extent to which he is immersed in the obedience of these commands is the extent to which he will be considered as being absorbed in *Tasbeeh* and *Hamd* of Allah. The whole life of the *Anbiya* (messengers of Allah) used to be spent in obedience to the Divine laws, therefore their every breath used to be a sacred refrain of *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed*. They used to be busy continuously and persistently in Allah’s ‘*Tasbeeh*’. In the early phases of their invitation, the onslaught of difficulties and opposition would encircle them from all four sides. Though the un-favourableness of circumstances used to appear very discouraging, in these difficulties and obstacles they were directed to not be fearful of the hostile circumstances and to remain busy in the accomplishment of your duty with determination and fortitude. The greater the opposition is, the greater you should become busy in the obedience of Allah’s commands, ultimately success will certainly be yours:

Therefore, expound openly what you are commanded, and turn away from those who associate gods with Allah. For sufficient are We unto you against those who scoff, those who adopt, with Allah, another god: but soon will they come to know. We do indeed know how your heart is distressed at what they say. But remain engaged in ‘Tasbeeh and Tahmeed’ of your Rabb and be of those who prostrate (Sajda) themselves (in front of Divine laws). And serve your Rabb until there come unto you the hour that is certain²³⁸. (15:94-99)

Here, the meaning of ‘*Tasbeeh*, *Tahmeed* and *Sajda*’ is clear i.e. complete obedience of the Divine laws, applying His Rule to yourself and then to the whole of the world in a practical sense, and then to stand firm and steadfast on this. This ‘*Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed*’ is emphasised at numerous places :

²³⁸ As per the Law of Requit, time is required for collective deeds to bear results. Here, the Quran instructs patience and perseverance, as the consequences of evil deeds will finally catch up with those people who persist in wrongdoing. (Ed)

And put your trust in Him Who lives and dies not; and do Tasbeeh with His Hamd; and enough is He to be acquainted with the errors of His people. (25:58) See also (20:130, 40:55, 50:39, 52:48, 76:26)

24.26.4 Key Meaning of *Tasbeeh*

In the narrative of Moses, the meaning of *Tasbeeh* becomes clearly apparent when he received the command for Jihad against the transgression and disobedience of Pharaoh, and because this campaign was very tough, he prayed to Allah:

(Moses) said: O my Rabb! expand me my chest; ease my task for me; and remove the impediment from my speech, So they may understand what I say: and give me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother; add to my strength through him, and make him share my task: that we may celebrate Your Hamd without stint, and remember You without stint: for You are He that (ever) regards us'. (20:25-35)

After this it is described in detail how the supplication of Moses was accepted, how he received the backing and support of Allah, and how he succeeded in his campaign. The tyranny and subjugation of Pharaoh was drowned in the destructive flood, and in his place the throne of Allah's sovereignty was established, and in this way Allah's '*Tasbeeh* and *Zikr*' became widespread everywhere. In place of human laws, the sphere of Allah's laws became established – this is the practical aspect of *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed* of Allah. This was the very mission of the *Anbiya*, and after them, this is the aim of the heirs of the Book of Allah i.e. the *Jamaat e Momineen*:

Only those have Eimaan in Our signs, who, when they are recited to them, fall down in prostration, and celebrate the Hamd of their Rabb, nor are they (ever) puffed up with pride. (32:15) See also (33:42, 48:9)

24.26.5 *Tasbeeh* of a *Momin*

This *Tasbeeh* is the same as that which has already been briefly mentioned in the narrative of Moses i.e. persistently persevering in efforts for the establishment and continuation of Allah's rule, dedicating life for the achievement of this supreme objective - this is the *Tasbeeh* and *Tahmeed* of the *Jamaat e Momineen*:

When comes the help of Allah, and victory, and you do see the people enter Allah's Deen in crowds, celebrate the Hamd of your Rabb, and seek for His protection: for He is surely Oft-Returning (in Grace and Mercy). (110:1-3)

This is the *Hamd* of a *Momin* and this is his *Tasbeeh*, that he should live his own life according to the Divine laws and become the cause for the establishment and

implementation of these laws in the whole world. Now consider that when the Muslims had correctly comprehended what the meanings of *Hamd* and admiration, and *Takbeer* and *Taqdees* were, what the state of their life and the state of the world was then, and after that when *Deen* remained only the name for the ‘counting of rosary beads’, what their condition had transformed into. In the words of Iqbal:

*Either a continuous Takbeer in the expanse of the heavens,
Or Tasbeeh and ritualised practices in the lap of dust.*

*That Deen of the one conscious of his own self and in obedience to Allah,
This religion of the mullah, of dead and lifeless things.*

24.27 Subhaan-Allah

As has already been written, the meaning of ‘distance’ is also implicit in the meaning of *Sabbun*, hence *Subhaan* means ‘far from all kinds of faults’, pure and sacred. Therefore, if *Hamd* is a positive attribute (i.e. the presence of all goodness and abilities), then *Tasbeeh* contains within it a negative view (i.e. absent from all kinds of faults and decline, and pure); that same *La* (no) and *Illa* (but) which is glaringly visible in every aspect of the Divine attributes:

They say: ‘Allah has begotten a son’: Glory be to Him. Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: everything follows His laws. (2:116)

In other words, this means that Allah is far above the false belief that people have established about Him. He is far beyond this, and is free from all of these kinds of faults and pure from all flaws:

No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him: (if there were many gods), behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have lorded it over others! Glory to Allah! (He is free) from the (sort of) things they attribute to Him! (23:91)

That Being is pure and above all of these kinds of wrong concepts and false beliefs. In many verses, after referring to the false belief of ‘offspring of Allah’, it is stated that Allah is far from this, He is free from such utterances. See verses (4:171, 10:68, 16:57, 19:35, 21:26, 39:3, 43:81).

Besides the belief of progeny, other entities are also associated with Allah. He is far above this false belief as well. He is the origin of all powers, the Creator and Master of the entire universe. What need does He have for which He should take partners with Him. If there were more than one god in the universe, then the whole system of the universe would be in chaos:

If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! but glory to Allah, the Rabb of the Throne: (High is He) above what they attribute to Him! (21:22) See also (17:42)

In many verses this great fact has been proclaimed that the Being of Allah is far above and free from this *Shirk* (association of partners with Him) which people do (6:100, 9:31, 10:18, 12:108, 16:1, 28:68, 30:40, 39:67). In Surah *Al-Maida* it is stated that on the Day of Judgment Jesus will be asked:

And behold! Allah will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Did you say unto men, obey me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah?' He will say: Glory to You! never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, You would indeed have known it. You know what is in my heart, though I know not what is in Yours. For You know in full all that is hidden. (5:116)

The *Malaiika* will be questioned and they will also give a similar answer (34:41). Even when the righteous devotees of Allah, who have been turned into gods by people without reason, are enquired about this, they too will reply in the same way (25:18).

At some places where greatness and supremacy, and exaltation and sovereignty have appeared, *Subhaan-Allah* has been mentioned, because the meaning of acceptance of His greatness is that it should be acknowledged about Him that He is free and above any faults and decline:

Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof? Yea, indeed! for He is the Creator Supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite)! Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is, 'Be', and it is! So glory to Him in Whose hands is the dominion of all things: and to Him will you be all brought back. (36:81-83)

Other than the above places, this word has also been used in a few other verses with the same meanings e.g. (17:93, 17:108, 21:87, 30:17, 36:36). By reflecting at all these points, this reality will become clear that wherever the Quran has emphasised the greatness and supremacy of Allah through *Hamd* and appreciation, it has highlighted this point through *Tasbeeh* and *Taqdees* that He is free from all flaws, and pure from all kinds of weaknesses and flaws, and He is far above the kind of concepts which the human mind devises.

The only correct concept about His attributes is the one which the Quran defines. Hence, no individual can have a correct *Eimaan* on Allah until that time that he has *Eimaan* in the Quran, and to acknowledge the Quran as being from Allah, it is essential to have *Eimaan* in the messenger-hood of Rasul-ullah:

...that is the established Deen: but most among mankind understand not. (30:30)

25 Metaphorical References

At some places in the Quran such words have been used about Allah which refer to human body parts e.g. hand, eye etc. It is obvious that this is merely a metaphorical reference in which these words are used figuratively according to our mode of conversation, otherwise these words cannot be applied to that Being about Whom the proclamation of the Quran itself is, 'there is nothing whatever like unto Him' (42:11), with the meanings with which we use them e.g. in Surah *Al-Qasas* it is stated:

...Everything (that exists) is perishable except His Being (Face) ... (28:88)

The literal meaning of the word *Waj-hun* is face but it is evident that the meaning here cannot be a 'face'. The meaning is apparent from the translation. In another verse it is stated:

All that is on earth will perish: But will abide (forever) the Being (Face) of your Rabb, full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour. (55:26-27)

In Surah *Al-Baqra* it is stated:

To Allah belong the east and the west: whithersoever you turn, there is the presence of Allah. For Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (2:115)

Here, the meaning becomes even clearer i.e. Allah is present everywhere. Apart from *Waj-hun* the word *Yad-un* (hand) has also been used at a few places. For example, it is stated in Surah *Al e Imran*:

...Say: All bounties are in the hand of Allah: He grants them to whom He pleases (as per His laws) ... (3:73) See also (57:29)

It is obvious that the meaning of *Yad* here is not of a 'hand' but is of control and authority. It also means this in our own language. Regarding Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishaq (Isaac) and Yaqoob (Jacob), it is stated in the Quran:

And commemorate Our servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessors of power and vision. (38:45)

The meanings are evident that they were possessors of power and vision. Therefore, the meanings of *Yad-un* are of authority and control, power and influence. In Surah *Ad-Dhariyat* it is stated:

With power and skill did We construct the firmament: for it is We Who create the vastness of space. (51:47)

At the location of Hudaibiya²³⁹, when the followers of *Tauheed* (the Oneness of Allah) presented all their possessions of life in the path of Allah and made a covenant to sacrifice all for the sake of the proclamation of *Haqq*, it was stated:

Verily those who plight their fealty to you do no less than plight their fealty to Allah: the hand of Allah is over their hands ... (48:10)

In other words, these people are selling their possessions and their lives into the hands of Allah, they are the sellers and Allah is the purchaser. Here, too, the meaning of *Yad* (hand) is clear. In Surah *Az-Zumar* it is stated:

... On the Day of Judgment, the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand: Glory to Him! High is He above the partners they attribute to Him! (39:67)

Here also the meaning of hand is of control and authority. In the story of Noah, it is stated that Allah said to him:

But construct an ark under Our eyes and Our inspiration ... (11:37)

Obviously, the meaning of 'under Our eyes' means construct an ark under Our supervision. From these verses it is clear that these words are used purely metaphorically and this style of expression is prevalent in every language, otherwise such a concept cannot even be considered about the Being of Allah, Who is present everywhere and is All-Seeing and All-Knowing, and is free and pure from every kind of material reference, that He possesses a body like that of human beings. Leaving aside possession of a body, no glance can find Him:

No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension yet is acquainted with all things. (6:103)

There was no great need to provide an explanation on this subject because after everything that is noted in the Quran about the Divine attributes, and all that has been written in the previous pages, there remains not the slightest need to tell any man possessing vision that the Being of Allah is free and beyond all tangible references. But at the same time the need for these pointers was felt necessary so that no doubt should linger in any heart about these verses of the Quran, and so that this fact becomes clearly evident that wherever in the Quran such words are

²³⁹ This is in reference to the historical pact which was agreed between the Quraish of Makkah and Rasul-ullah at this place which was located en route to Makkah (around A.D. March 628). (Ed)

used metaphorically about Allah which refer to human body parts, what their true meaning is. It is a clear proclamation by the Quran about the Being of Allah:

...there is nothing whatever like unto Him ... (42:11)

And under this topic this is the final word and decisive declaration. The truth is that He is the Being of Allah; even the self of man himself is far removed from references to the body and its parts. Personality simply cannot be in a tangible form, it can only be recognised through its attributes.

26 *Zalikum-Allah* (This is Allah)

It is proclaimed in the Quran:

...such is Allah, your Rabb: to Him belongs (all) dominion. There is no god but He: then how are you turned away? (39:6)

The foundation of Quranic teaching is:

...there is no god except Allah ... (37:35)

Although it is a short sentence of four words, if you examine it closely, all four corners of the universe have been enfolded in it. 'There is no such being whose laws should be obeyed – but yes, there is the One Being of Allah'.

Whatever has been written in the previous pages (and other than this, whatever supreme attributes are noted in the Quran), are the high edifice of this established foundation, the encircling sphere of this focal point, and the flourishing and evergreen interpretations of this truth. Take each single pristine attribute of Allah and keep putting it in place of an *Ilaah*, one by one every aspect of the Quranic teaching will keep becoming complete – other than Him no one possesses the authority of *Rabubiyat*; other than Him there is no Creator; other than Him no-one has any power; the fountains of *Rizq* are solely in His control; other than Him, governance belongs to no-one; serving anyone other than Him is not legitimate; and so on and so forth.

Reflect once again on this foundation of Quranic teaching, and just consider that when a believing *Momin*, with full knowledge and conviction, and with vision based on evidence, proclaims from the depths of his heart that '*there is no god except Allah*', then to what an extent this revolutionary proclamation of his becomes the cause for dynamic and seismic movement in the arena of the world. Rejection of every non-Allah power in the world, rebellion against every man-made system of human beings, revolt against every code of life which is anti-humanitarian, not because there is some prejudice or arrogance against them, but for the proclamation of this sublime reality that man simply cannot devise such a system of life in which the growth and development of the human self can take place.²⁴⁰ Only that Being can do this Who has bestowed personality on man.

To journey through all four corners of the whole world in a focused manner with head held high, not because of arrogance and pride, but for the demonstration of

²⁴⁰ This is how the best can emerge from the human self and man can truly discover the higher purpose of his life. (Ed)

this supreme truth that no man is in possession of this right that he should make another man prostrate before him. If there is any prostration, then it should only be in front of the laws of that Allah in front of Whom there is a right to prostrate. If there is any obedience, then it is only of the commands of this One Being, in the obedience of Whom the secret of human eminence lies. Prostration before any of the manifestations of nature, denial of the eminence of humanity and bowing your head before a human being like yourself, is an extreme humiliation of the self:

...if anyone assigns partners to Allah, is as if he had fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds, or the wind had swooped (like a bird on its prey) and thrown him into a far-distant place. (22:31)

This is why Shirk has been declared to be the greatest of injustices (31:13) and there is nothing more unjust than this. This is denial of one's own self and acceptance of the divinity of those who are at the most men just like us:

Verily those whom you call upon besides Allah are men like unto you ... (7:194)

That individual who has handed over an invaluable entity such as human eminence and dignity of the self to others, then after this what can still be remaining behind about which he can have any kind of reticence or hesitation whatsoever to sell? Such a human being is the slave of his own hedonistic desires. In comparison to the code of laws of Allah, any human system of life whether it is devised by oneself or by someone else is subservience to other than Allah, the essential consequence of which is humiliation and ruin; and is such a hell of absence of peace and dearth of tranquility, the life invading and worldwide blaze of which engulf every corner of human life. Contrary to this, the individual who has *Eimaan* in the immutability of Allah's laws, confines all worldly and intellectual forces within the shores of this great and supreme code, takes the ark of life steadily towards that paradise where there is no kind of fear and grief:

In the case of those who say, 'Our Rabb is Allah', and, further, stand straight and steadfast, Malaika descend on them: 'Fear you not!' (they say), 'nor grieve! but receive the glad tidings of the paradise, the which you were promised!' (41:30)

Having *Eimaan* in Allah and denying every power other than Allah, this is the secret of life, this is the true life:

... Whoever rejects evil and has Eimaan in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold, that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things. (2:256)

But *Eimaan* is only that *Eimaan* whose origin is conviction of the heart and whose manifestation is individual purity of character and conduct, and which is a

collective system of life, not that which remains limited merely to the movement of the tongue, while the practical life of man is falsifying it. What is the value of a body which is so soul-less?

As has already been written at the start, the definition of the Being of Allah is beyond the cognitive perception of man. Whatever knowledge He wished to pass to man, He gave it via His attributes which are expounded in the Quran.²⁴¹ Hence, whatever we can learn about Allah is only that much which the Quran notes. Other than this, there is no other means by which we can recognise the Being of Allah or can obtain knowledge about Him. For a *Momin* this is the final point of knowledge and the last boundary of appraisal. We can neither advance beyond this, nor can the effort to go beyond this bear results. Islam is a simple and straightforward, clean and transparent syllabus of teaching and code of action. It contains neither aimless philosophical arguments, nor meaningless conjectures about the idea of the world. The meaning of Islam is *Eimaan* in Allah according to the Quran revealed on Rasul-ullah, which should be the focus of all aspects of intellect and reason, and to continue to reflect the Divine attributes within oneself within human limitations and covering all aspects of actions in life. The *Jamaat* possessing this *Eimaan* and such deeds is called the Muslim Ummah, and their natural outcome is establishment in the land i.e. implementation of this system on this earth whose practical formation was done by the last messenger of Allah and his companions – this is Islam. Other than this, all the rest are inventions and conjectures of the human mind which have no connection with the truth. Whatever people say about Allah (from conjectures and their minds), He is far above and beyond it. Whatever is said about Allah outwith the Quran is a conjecture of the human mind. The True Allah is He about Whom the Quran has declared:

*...Such is Allah your Rabb: to Him belongs all dominion. And those whom you invoke besides Him have not the least power (not even equivalent of an atom).
(35:13)*

When the consciousness of man opened its eyes, he remained wandering in search of that point on reaching which he could then say with full conviction and assurance, that this is Allah. This was the ultimate end of his curiosity and the eminence of his humanity. In search of this ultimate aim, for eons he wandered and searched through deserts and jungles, but the human mind alone could not find the secret of this objective anywhere, neither in the schools of Greece, nor in the firehouses of Persia, nor in the temples of India, nor in the cloisters of Rome. Whenever, and wherever any sound of the eternal melody of Allah's *Wabi* reached the ear, signs of vivacity in his eyes and of illumination on his forehead began to

²⁴¹ The Quran is a complete Book of guidance from an infinitely developed Being which, if viewed and studied in this way, will clearly reveal its significance. (Ed)

sparkle. But as soon as that sound vanished, he again became lost in that same valley of bewilderment. This continued to happen until that time that these eternal melodies of these scattered songs became enfolded into such a real instrument which became the guiding voice of the caravan of humanity. The name of this truth-bearing instrument is the *Quran-ul-Az'eem* (the Exalted Quran).

For the first time, the Quran informed man that *Eimaan* in Allah is the foundation for *Eimaan* of man in his own self, and the meaning of *Eimaan* of man in his own self is *Eimaan* in this fact:

- (1) Man is not just the name for his physical body; other than the body, he also possesses another entity which is called the human personality.
- (2) If suitable development of the human self takes place, then those attributes continue to come alive, within the confines of human limits, which in relation to Allah are called the Balanced Attributes²⁴². A self which is developed in such a way remains alive after the death of the physical body, and in order to traverse further evolutionary stages sets out on the journey of the world of the hereafter.
- (3) This kind of development of the human self takes place within that society which is shaped according to the Divine laws (the Quranic system of life). This society is responsible for ensuring the provision of all necessary means for the nourishment of the body and self of all individuals of humanity.
- (4) Without this kind of system of society, man lives a life of hell both in this world and in the life of the hereafter also.

Rasul-ullah demonstrated this by establishing this type of Quranic society and transforming the world into a paradise; and today the hell of this world can only be changed in this way into a paradise when this kind of society is once again established in the world. Other than this, there is no other way for success and emancipation of the world. This is the aim of having *Eimaan* in Allah according to the Quran.

Let us recap this reality once again:

1. There are certain attributes of Allah which are specifically for Him alone, and no-one else can be a partner in them e.g. He is the First and the Last etc. The remainder of His attributes can be manifested through the human self but only within human limits. The proportion to which these attributes manifest in an individual will be the same extent to which he will be called a possessor of righteousness and character.

²⁴² The Quran calls these *Al-Asma-al-Husna*.

2. The Divine attributes which are noted in the Quran are that external criterion by which every man can assess whether development of his self is taking place or not, and if it is taking place, then to what extent. If this external criterion is not in front of us, then man ails from this self-deception that he simply assumes that he is progressing forward in 'spirituality'. Remember! 'Quranic spirituality' is another name for balanced righteousness and character.
3. The non-Quranic concept of 'spirituality' which is called mysticism is purely an individual sentiment; this is why when these claimants of spirituality are asked what proof do they have that they are traversing the stages of spirituality, they have no other answer to this than – 'the state of intoxication can only be understood by the one who himself drinks wine'. This state cannot be made comprehensible to others. This is complete self-deception. According to the Quran, development of the human self emerges naturally through the character and righteousness of an individual. As has already been stated, the extent to which the character and righteousness of an individual (within human limits) will be a reflection of the attributes of Allah will be the same extent to which his self will have become developed.
4. When we have stated that the manifestation of the development of the human self occurs through the righteousness and character of an individual, then it becomes clear from this that it is not that kind of an intoxication the effects of which can only be enjoyed by the one who is drinking an intoxicant himself. The display of the talents of a developed self is in the collective life of human beings, because character and behaviour can only be known at that time when one man has to deal with another man.
5. We have also seen that aside from being numerous and different, at certain places the Divine attributes are also mutually opposing. For example, He is *Raheem* and *Kareem*, and also *Jabbar* and *Qahhar*. The meanings of character are that wherever any kind of manifestation is necessary for an attribute, that attribute should be exhibited. If in place of *Adl* the attributes of *Afw*, and in place of *Rehm* the attributes of *Qahhariat* are displayed, then disorder can emerge in the system of the world from this. The question is, how can it be ascertained as to which attribute should manifest in which situation. You will see that generally in the Quran at the end of its verses some attribute of Allah will be noted. If you delve deeper into these verses, then this fact will become evident that whatever kind of issues and details are noted in these verses, then in that situation this attribute should be exhibited which appears at the end of these verses. By reflecting and reasoning on the Quran on these lines, this ability develops in man where he can ascertain as to what kind of Divine attribute was manifested in what kinds of events and occasions. In such situations, this same kind of

attribute should be manifested by him – *Afw* in the situation of *Afw*, *Adl* in the situation of *Adl*.

6. You will observe that the greatest amount of destruction in the world has not occurred through the hands of those who were deniers of God; the majority of destruction happened via the hands of those who were God worshippers, who by taking one of the attributes of God, kept exceeding it in intensity and extremeness. For example, *Rehm* is one attribute of God. Christianity created such an extreme position in this attribute, that in their religion the concept of *Adl* and the Law of Requitil simply did not remain. The consequence of this was that a flood of sins appeared amongst them and crimes spread like an epidemic. ‘Confessions and pardoning’ started to sell in the bazaar like fruits and vegetables, and the ‘representatives of God’ started selling paradise for pennies. This was that belief of transgression and excessiveness in the Divine attributes, in order to stop which, the Quran stated that all the Divine attributes carrying their complete balance (beauty) are concentrated in the Being of Allah. While maintaining the balance of these attributes, call on Allah:

The most beautiful attributes belong to Allah: so call on him by them; but stay away from such who transgress in His attributes: for what they do, they will soon be requited. (7:180)

Cut off your relations from those people who take some of these attributes and run off in one direction. Their belief is taking them towards misguidance. You should stay away from them, soon they will find out how laden with destructive consequences their belief and path were.

The right path is solely this, that at whatever place whatever kind of Divine attribute’s manifestation is required, this attribute should manifest there, and in whatever proportion it is required at this point. Among the Divine attributes there is neither such an attribute which should be abandoned, nor is there such a one in which transgression and excessiveness should be adopted. All His attributes possess the best results at their own places. It is on this basis that His attributes are proclaimed with the definition of *Al-Husna*. These attributes with this beauty and balance will not be found in any of the religions of the world. These are noted only in the Quran and this is why *Eimaan* in this Allah can be called *Eimaan Billah*, which is introduced by the Quran. This is the reason why the Quran also demands *Eimaan Billah* from those people who have *Eimaan* in God according to their own idea and concept. From this, this fact also emerges in front of us as to what the practical meaning of *Eimaan Billah* is. The practical meaning of this is that His attributes are declared to be an external criterion to assess this fact as to whether the self of an individual is or is not developing, and if it is developing, then to what extent. From this it is clear that *Eimaan* in Allah serves as the foundation for man to have *Eimaan* in his own self.

Remember! the individual who is in denial of his own self (i.e. considers himself as the possessor of life based only on his physical body and that's it), he cannot have *Eimaan* in Allah. This is because for the individual who becomes a 'denier of the existence of his self', the question of his being a '*Momin* of Allah' simply does not arise. But it can be expected about the individual who accepts the existence of 'his self' that one day he may become a '*Momin* of Allah'.

And this is only possible by having *Eimaan* in the Quran.

